

ITALY

LOCKTOWN



Photos by: Stefano Carnelli, Massimo Di Nonno, Alessandro Gandolfi, Gianluca Meduri, Simone Raeli, Sergio Ramazzotti, Bruno Zanzottera

parallel zero



Bobbio (Piacenza, Emilia-Romagna). Ponte Gobbo (Hunchback Bridge).



Scurati (Trapani, Sicily).

Rediscovering hamlets in the age of Covid

In Italy, hamlets were generally built so as to keep others at a distance: in medieval times they were castles or fortified citadels built to protect and prevent enemy attacks. Areas of high ground always offered a strategic advantage and they needed defending: hundreds of imposing stone edifices were built to protect the summits.

Today – due to the Covid-19 pandemic – keeping one's distance is now a necessity, and as a result hamlets, often forgotten and far off the tourist beaten track, are being rediscovered or discovered for the first time as ideal holiday destinations: a few houses, a few local residents, no crowds, no mingling.

Italy boasts hundreds of perfectly preserved medieval architectural gems. They've stood atop their respective hill for centuries, like rooks in a game of chess, with their guard towers, crenellated walls, arched doorways and, of course, the church that someone is always willing to open out of hours. In some cases the hamlet is still surrounded by a gaping moat that centuries of soil sedimentation have failed to fill in.

Everything, except the need for self-defence, is exactly as it was the day the foundations of those walls were first laid. And that typical hamlet atmosphere suddenly seems appropriate for our lives today, lives in which, over the past year, have seemed suspended in time.



Irma (Brescia, Lombardy). Ancient wash house.



Roghudi Vecchio (Reggio Calabria, Calabria).



Piazza Armerina (Enna, Sicily). A guest at a wedding outside the Santissimo Crocifisso church.



Polvese Island, Lake Trasimeno (Perugia, Umbria).



Province of Campobasso (Molise).



Casalmaggiore (Cremona, Lombardy). The passage of the Mille Miglia car race in piazza Garibaldi.



Morterone (Lecco, Lombardy). Transhumance.



Scurati (Trapani, Sicily).



Piazza Armerina (Enna, Sicily). Villa Romana del Casale, a restorer at work on the mosaics.



Foligno (Perugia, Umbria).



Serra San Quirico (Ancona, Marche). The medieval citadel.



Pentadattilo (Reggio Calabria, Calabria).



Tropea (Vibo Valentia, Calabria).



Cervara di Roma (Lazio).



Mamoiada (Nuoro, Sardinia).



Matera (Basilicata).



The 12th-Century St. Antimus abbey in the vicinity of Montalcino (Siena, Tuscany). Collecting olives from the trees in the orchard.



Tropea (Vibo Valentia, Calabria).



Irma (Brescia, Lombardy).



Barumini (South Sardinia). Just married at the archaeological site with the Giara of Gesturi in the background.



Piazza Armerina (Enna, Sicily). The fountain in front of the Santissimo Crocifisso church.



Randazzo (Catania, Sicily). Mount Etna in the background.



Mamoiada (Nuoro, Sardinia). The Badu Orgolesu farm.



Montefalco (Perugia, Umbria).



The countryside around Montecarotto (Ancona, Marche).



Curon Venosta (Reschen Pass, Bolzano). The apex of the old bell tower of the ancient church emerges from the Reschen lake.



Sabbioneta (Mantua, Lombardy). A guest at a wedding in the town centre.



Serra San Quirico (Ancona, Marche). Le Copertelle, a covered walkway built for defensive purposes in the circle of medieval walls.

Parallelozero, via Donatello 19/a, Milano Italy
info@parallelozero.com - www.parallelozero.com
+39 02 89281630

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