

I T A L Y

FRIENDLY FIRE

ITALY AND ITS FATAL ATTRACTION
FOR FIREARMS

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CITIZENS OF OLIENA (NUORO) SHOOTING DURING THE RELIGIOUS RITE OF "S'INCONTRU" (AN ANCIENT RITE THAT CELEBRATE THE CATHOLIC EASTER) HELD ON EASTER DAY'S MORNING. THE WHOLE COMMUNITY (HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE) MEET IN THE ONLY SQUARE OF THE VILLAGE TO CELEBRATE

ITALY IS A SHOOTING STAR IN EUROPE BECAUSE OF ITS ECONOMIC STAGNATION LASTING FROM MANY YEARS, BUT ALSO BECAUSE ITS FIREARMS PRODUCTION IS A REALLY ADVANCED INDUSTRY, ABLE TO INFLUENCE EVEN THE USA MARKET. THE STATES, INFACIT, ARE THE DESTINATION OF 38% OF GUNS, CARBINES AND RIFLES PRODUCED BY ITALIAN SPECIALIZED FIRMS (LIKE BERETTA, TO NAME JUST ONE). ITALIAN FIREARMS EXPORT IS WORTH A TURNOVER OF 2,650,000,000 BILLION EUROS (2014 DATA). THE REAL NUMBERS ARE APPROXIMATE MOST OF THE TIME AS A HUGE PERCENTAGE OF FIREARMS SALES AND POSSESSIONS GO BEYOND LEGALITY.

OVERALL ESTIMATES TALK ABOUT 9 MILLION FIREARMS CIRCULATING IN THE COUNTRY. THESE NUMBERS HELP TO (PARTIALLY) UNDERSTAND WHY ITALY OWNS THE EUROPEAN RECORD MURDERS WITH FIREARMS, WITH THE PROVINCE OF NUORO LEADING THIS SAD RANK. IN THIS PART OF SARDINIA, ONE RESIDENT OUT OF TEN OWNS AT LEAST A GUN OR A RIFLE, NOURISHING THE HIGHEST RATE OF MURDERS AND WOUNDING IN ITALY. ALSO ITALIAN POLICE IS BY FAR THE MOST ARMED IN THE EU WITH 420,000 FIREARMS ON DUTY – GERMANY IS A FAR SECOND WITH AROUND 300,000.

A THORNY TRUTH IS EMERGING, SOMETHING THE YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHER MATTIA MICHELI CALLS IRONICALLY “FRIENDLY FIRE”: IN ITALY THERE’S A PECULIAR FASCINATION FOR FIREARMS. A SEDUCTION PASSING OVER THE LIMITS IMPOSED BY LAW, STATING THAT TO POSSESS A FIREARM A PSYCHOPHYSICAL TEST MUST BE PASSED. IN SHOOTING RANGES AND MUNITIONS STORES, IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WHERE 810,000 HUNTING LICENCES HANG AROUND, AMONG WEAPONS CONVENTION’S HABITUES AND THE ENTHUSIASTS WITH THEIR COLLECTION OF SHINING RIFLES HANGED ON THEIR LIVING ROOMS, THERE’S A ROOTED LOVE/HATE FEELING FULFILLING THEM MORE THAN ANY OTHER TRASGRESSION.

BECAUSE IF A FIREARM IS BEAUTIFUL, AND NICELY CRAFTED AS THE ETERNAL “MADE IN ITALY” MOTTO GUARANTEES, IT REASSURES AND SATISFIES ENOUGH TO WEAR THIN THE TABOO OF THE EXTREME LOADED GUN UNTIL ITS GRADUAL, FINAL DISAPPEARANCE.



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A MAN CHECKING THE DETAILS OF A RIFLE IN THE STAND OF A MUNITIONS STORE AT CACCIAVILLAGE, ONE OF THE BIGGEST HUNTING THEMED CONVENTION IN ITALY. CACCIAVILLAGE, BASTIA UMBRA, PERUGIA



AS PENALTY FOR BREAKING A SAFETY NORM IN AN INFORMAL SHOOTING COMPETITION, A SHOOTER IS FORCED BY THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS TO REPEAT HIS PERFORMANCE WITH NO RIFLE.
SHOOTING RANGE LE CROCI, CALENZANO, FLORENCE



PIETRO (10), DURING ONE OF HIS FIRST VISIT
AT A SHOOTING RANGE. TIRO A SEGNO NAZIONALE (NATIONAL
SHOOTING RANGE) PERUGIA. IN ITALY THERE ARE 9 MILLION FIREARMS
FOR AROUND 3 MILLION USERS/OWNERS. TO LEGALLY PRACTICE WITH
AN AIRGUN IN A SHOOTING RANGE YOU NEED TO BE 10 YEARS OLD,
AND MUST BE 14 YEARS OLD TO PRACTICE WITH FIREARMS



DANILO CHECKING HIS SCORE AFTER A SHOOTING SESSION.
TIRO A SEGNO NAZIONALE (NATIONAL SHOOTING RANGE), FLORENCE

“LEGITTIMA DIFESA” (SELF-DEFENSE) JEWELS ON SALE AT THE HIT SHOW, THE BIGGEST FIREARMS THEMED CONVENTION IN ITALY, VICENZA. THE ZANCAN FAMILY (PRODUCING FINE TRADITIONAL ITALIAN JEWELLERY) DESIGNS AND SELLS THESE OBJECTS TO FUND THE LEGAL FEES OF GRAZIANO STACCHIO, A GAS STATION ATTENDANT WHO FACED A TRIAL FOR KILLING A ROBBER IN A NEAR JEWELRY STORE. STACCHIO BECAME A SYMBOL FOR THE WHOLE ITALIAN PRO-FIREARMS MOVEMENT





MEGGY (17), RELAXING DURING A SHORT BREAK AT THE TIRO A SEGNO NAZIONALE (NATIONAL SHOOTING RANGE), PERUGIA



A VISITOR CHECKING GUNSIGHTS IN A STAND OF A MUNITIONS STORE.
CACCIAVILLAGE, BASTIA UMBRA, PERUGIA



WALL PAINTING IN MEMORY OF MARIA PALIMODDE,
THE FIRST WOMAN TO ACTIVELY TAKE PART (SHOOTING)
IN THE "S'INCONTRU" RITE. OLIENA, NUORO



RAFFAELE AND HIS BOAR PASQUALINA RELAXING AT HOME. RAFFAELE AND HIS WIFE DORIANA ADOPTED THE WILD PIGLET, WHICH WAS A PUPPY WHEN IT WAS FOUND ALONE AND UNDERNOURISHED IN THE WOODS. DORIANA'S FARM, FOLIGNO, PERUGIA



A HOUSE FRONTYARD AFTER THE "S'INCONTRU" RITE,
OLIENA, NUORO



EUGENIO (67), A FORMER VETERINARIAN, IN HIS TROPHY ROOM.
EUGENIO'S HOUSE, COLLEPEPE, PERUGIA



LAPO LOST HIS FAMILY WHEN HE WAS 16.
HE WOKE UP FROM COMA IN AN HOSPITAL BED WITH THREE BULLETS
IN HIS CHEST AFTER HIS FATHER SHOT HIS MOTHER TO DEATH
AND COMMITTED SUICIDE. THE DOCTORS TOLD HIM WHAT HAPPENED.
LAPO'S HOUSE, RADDIA IN CHIANTI, FLORENCE



TRASHED AMMO, TIRO A SEGNO NAZIONALE (NATIONAL SHOOTING RANGE), PERUGIA



TWO PERSONAL SECURITY DEFENSE OPERATORS DURING
A DISARM TRAINING SESSION. PRIVATE SHOOTING RANGE,
PASSIGNANO, PERUGIA



ANDREA (25) COLLECTS FIREARMS.
THE TATTOOED SIGN ON HIS RIGHT LEG (B/B)
INDICATES A PARTICULAR KIND OF AMMO. FLORENCE



A WORLD WAR 2 ENTHUSIAST ACTING AS AN INJURED SOLDIER
DURING A MILITARY REENACTMENT, PASSO DEL GIOGO, FLORENCE



POKER TARGETS AT AN OLD WESTERN SHOOTING SOCIETY TOURNAMENT,
DEVIL'S CLUB SHOOTING RANGE, AREZZO



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MARCO (29) AND ELENA (24), FEW MINUTES AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE,
MASSA MARTANA, PERUGIA