

ITALY

# SOLVAYLAND

by Michele Martinelli



Saline di Volterra (Italy). The industrial area where various factories related to salt extraction and chemical



Rosignano Solvay (Italy). Swimming near the White Beaches. The name refers to the very white, Caribbean-like beaches washed by the turquoise sea of Rosignano Solvay. These beaches, which are several kilometers long, are the product of a century of chemical discharges.



## **SOLVAYLAND**

### **A land of contrasts**

“Solvay è un’azienda basata sulla scienza, impegnata a contribuire alla fornitura di prodotti materiali che apportano vantaggi alla collettività. Per questo ci prefiggiamo obiettivi di grande portata con la nostra strategia per lo sviluppo sostenibile. Un processo produttivo sicuro e controllato che impiega materiali naturali’. Così recita il sito della Solvay, l’industria chimica che da oltre un secolo opera a Rosignano lungo il litorale livornese. Un territorio nel centro dell’Etruria, ricco di storia e di arte, immerse nei tipici paesaggi toscani fatti di dolci colline e macchia mediterranea.

In realtà secondo un rapporto dell’UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) redatto nei primi anni 2000, il tratto costiero di Rosignano Marittimo risulta nella lista dei 15 luoghi più inquinati del Mediterraneo. Sul sito europeo dell’E-PRTR, (l’European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register) si dichiara che solo nel

2019 Solvay ha scaricato in mare 5,7 t di piombo, 15,7 t di zinco, 1,5 t. di arsenico, 2,9 t di nichel, 122 kg di cadmio, 131 kg di cromo, 41 kg di mercurio, e secondo un rapporto del CNR di Pisa, Solvay ha scaricato in mare nel corso degli anni 400 t di mercurio e altri inquinanti.

La bianchissima spiaggia simil-caraibica bagnata da un mare turchese di Rosignano è il prodotto di un secolo di scarichi chimici che arrivano in mare tramite un fosso nel quale scorre un torrentello color latte con le sostanze sversate dalla fabbrica. Nell’entroterra lo sfruttamento del territorio e delle sue risorse si concentra sull’estrazione di salgemma, creando ulteriori problematiche ambientali. Molti abitanti della zona considerano Solvay un pericolo per l’ambiente e la salute dei cittadini, anche se non mancano i sostenitori verso chi, all’inizio del ‘900, ha favorito la costruzione del paese creando un’economia in questo territorio.



Rosignano Solvay (Italy). Diko, a member of the "Rosignano Solvay 1922" soccer team in the jersey that was created for the club's centenary.



Punta Lillatro, Rosignano Solvay (Italy). Rosignano Solvay's particularly windy sea is a destination for surfers from all over Tuscany. Cristiano is an avid surfer. He lives nearby in Livorno and often comes to practice near the "White Beaches."



Rosignano Solvay (Italy). A child about to enter the water for a swim at the White Beaches. The name refers to the very white, Caribbean-like beach washed by the turquoise sea of Rosignano Solvay, the result of a century of chemical discharges.



Rosignano Solvay (Italy). The carriages of a cargo train loaded with limestone. The mined limestone, from quarries in San Carlo, is transported by long cargo trains to the main plant in Rosignano Solvay.



The Buriano salt mines, Saline di Volterra (Italy). There are numerous brine spills from large pipes (which are not always in perfect condition) into streams leading to the River Cecina. There is no longer any form of life in these waterways, on account of the high levels of salinity.



Vada (Italy). Pipes carrying brine from the salt mines to the main Rosignano Solvay plant wind for dozens of kilometers through natural and agricultural landscape.



Rosignano Solvay (Italy). The Solvay chemical company's main plant as seen from the White Beaches.





Masso delle Fanciulle" "Pomarance (Italy). A girl cooling off in the River Cecina. Solvay has on several occasions shown interest in this wildlife area along the River Cecina for the construction of a reservoir.



The Acquabona Nature Park, Rosignano Marittimo (Italy). Sergio Manzi, an archer with the "Frecce di Santa Margherita" (the Santa Margherita Arrows) from Santa Margherita Ligure.



Saline di Volterra (Italy). A worker at the Locatelli Salt Works. The former state-owned saltworks, which are now operated by Locatelli, have a long history. The plant produces what is considered to be the purest salt in Italy. It is used mainly for food and livestock purposes.

Rosignano Solvay (Italy). A swimmer relaxing near the White Beaches. The name refers to the very white, Caribbean-like beaches washed by the turquoise sea of Rosignano Solvay. These beaches, which are several kilometers long, are the product of a century of chemical discharges.





Rosignano Solvay (Italy). Road signs informing people that they are leaving the village of Rosignano Solvay.



Punta Lillatro, Rosignano Solvay (Italy). A sunbather.

Punta Lillatro, Rosignano Solvay (Italy). Surfers waiting for the perfect wave. The sea at Rosignano Solvay is a destination for surfers from all over Tuscany.





Rosignano Solvay (Italy). A villa intended for Solvay executives. Solvay's residential settlement was characterized by the design of the housing. The houses featured Nordic models and they reflected the company hierarchy.





Ponteginori (Italy). A lifeguard at the Solvay sports facilities.

The Locatelli saltworks. The former state-owned saltworks, which are now operated by Locatelli, have a long history. The plant produces what is considered to be the purest salt in Italy. It is used mainly for food and livestock purposes.





Rosignano Solvay (Italy). Via Ernesto Solvay is the tree-lined street leading to the main entrance of the Solvay chemical plant.



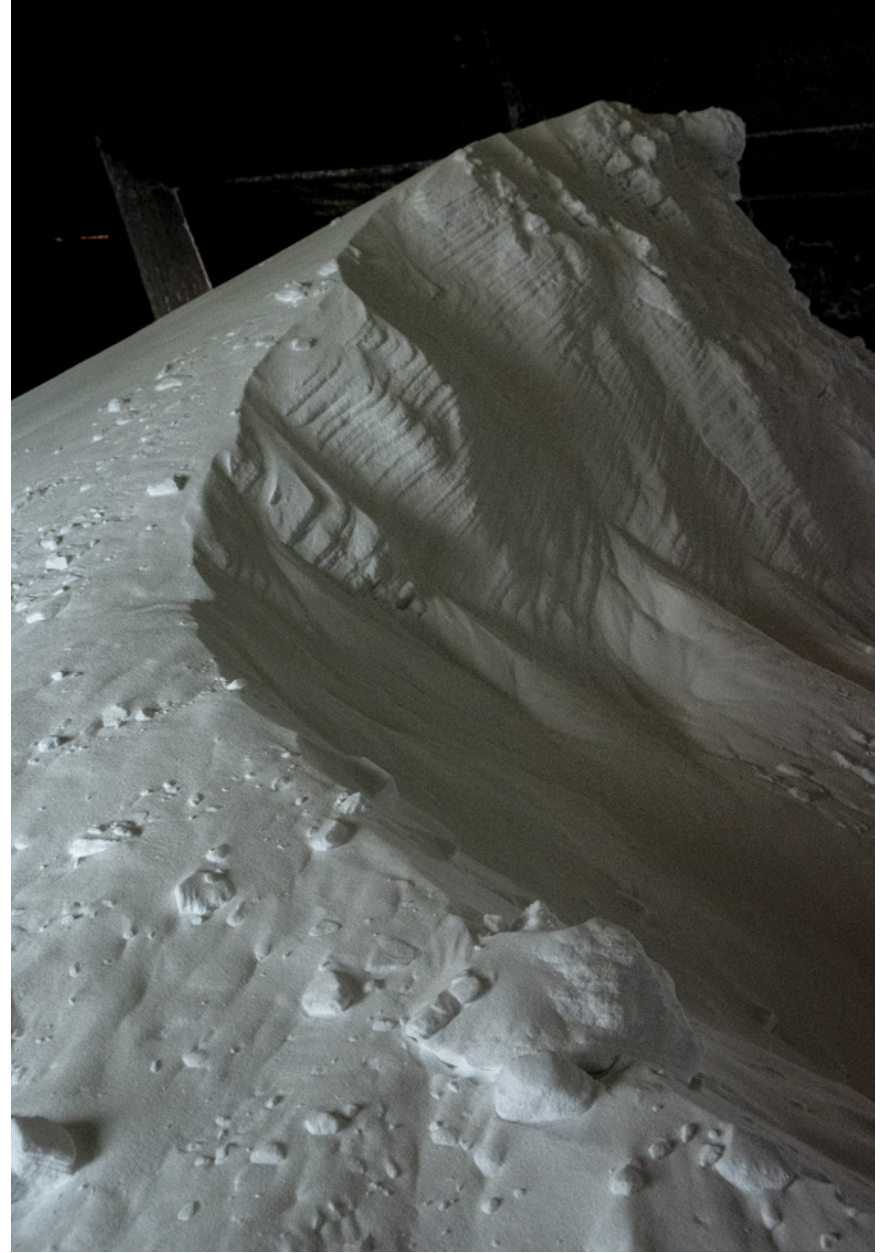
Rosignano Solvay (Italy). Some youngsters playing soccer on the White Beaches.



Gallarose Park, Cecina (Italy). Some Flamingoes inside a waterway. The Gallarose park-zoo-farm is an unusual educational site near the Tomboli nature reserve, not far from the mouth of the River Cecina.



Rosignano Solvay (Italy). The cooling towers at the main plant.



The Volterra Salt Pans (Italy). The precious rock salt extracted from the mines.



Vada (Italy). One of the many bathing establishments near the White Beaches.

Vada (Italy). The skull of a woman dating back to the Roman era, specifically the 1st century AD. It was found during archaeological excavations at the San Gaetano site.







Vada (Italy). Solvay pipes bordering the Roman archaeological area at San Gaetano. According to studies conducted in recent years, it is virtually certain that buildings dating back to the 1st century AD can be found in the subsoil here.

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