

ETNA

NATURE TRAILS



PROVINCIA REGIONALE
DI CATANIA



MOUNT ETNA AND MOTHER NATURE

From dense green forests to dark volcanic caves, from fertile fields to sterile lava desert, the variety of natural wonders makes the Mt Etna region a truly astounding place. The best way, perhaps the only way, to really appreciate the beauty of Mt Etna is to explore the many paths and trails which criss-cross the mountain's flanks. Go on a journey of discovery and learn about Mt Etna's many records. It is the largest volcano in Europe, 3,323 metres high with a perimeter of 250 km (155 miles) while its lava covers a surface area of 1,260 sq. km.

It is home to the third largest cavern in the world, as well as Europe's deepest. It is guardian of the most southerly glacier in our hemisphere and the site of the world's biggest horse chestnut tree, the Castagno dei Cento Cavalli, which is 28 m high and 52 m in circumference. Going up the mountainside, once past the many overgrown 'dagale' (islands of fertile ground in the midst of lava rock), you will reach the dense woods of oaks, chestnuts, poplars, beech and birch trees, the scene made all the more beautiful by the bursts of colour in the undergrowth: the intense yellow of Etna broom, the red-brown hues of the spurge, the flame red of the briar rose, the lilac flowers of the soapwort.

We would be right to envy the many hundreds of species, including small mammals, birds, amphibians, and reptiles, which inhabit this splendid setting. This unique biodiversity becomes all the more stunning against the backdrop of eruptions from one of the world's major active volcanoes. You can admire the green sheen of the forests and the slick black of the lava desert as you peer over the edge of the Valle del Bove, a huge depression (18 km in perimeter with a surface area of 37 sq. km); the sheer sides of the valley can soar (or plunge) to 1,000 metres.

Once you get to the top you will be amazed at the panorama that spreads out before you: to the south stretches the most extensive flatland in Sicily, the Plain of Catania; to the east, the crystal blue waters of the Ionian Sea; to the north, the green-robed Nebrodi Mountains, an incomparable vista complete

NORTH FACE



Excursions

The summit craters and the 2002 eruption

Excursions to the summit craters leave from the Etna Nord-Piano Provenzana tourist halt at 1,810 m above sea level. You can get there from Linguaglossa on the "Mareneve" road, which is manageable by bikes as well (if you are reasonably fit). The route takes you through the Ragabo pine forest, which has a number of clearings to stop in as well as tourist halts with different facilities. You can continue up to the craters on foot in the company of a qualified guide, or in comfortable off-road mini-vans which stop off at the 1809 craters (at an altitude of 2,400 m) before carrying on to the top of the volcano where an incomparable, unforgettable, panorama awaits you. But in a sense the trip starts even before you arrive. Lava from the 2002 eruption poured down into the stretches of pine forest and here and there the green mantle is lacerated, revealing centuries-old trees burnt like twigs. From the square of the recently rebuilt Piano Provenzana, you can look down on the tendrils of now cold lava. It is an exceptional sight.

1 Gurridda Nature Trail

difficulty level: easy

gradient: 140 m

length of trail: around 1,5 km

duration: about 1 h

observation posts: 4

Accessible to disabled people.

The trail can be reached along the Randazzo-Maletto stretch of the SS (Strada Statale) 120 route. It passes through an area that features a number of rivers, the Saracena, Alcantara and Flascio, whose waters empty into Lake Gurridda. The lake serves as a halt for many species of migratory and non-migratory birds, such as ducks, coots, grey and purple herons, lapwings and plovers, which gather here in great numbers, especially during winter and spring. At the start of the trail, you can find a farm with an old winery where you can sample local produce. Apart from the very peculiar forms of the lava here, another feature of the area are the vineyards immersed among the cool pine forests, unique in that they spend much of the winter submerged under the overflow from the River Flascio. The view is enchanting: the bulky majesty of Monte Spagnolo and Monte Maletto stand out against the northwest slopes of Mt Etna.

2 Burò Nature Trail

difficulty level: easy

starting altitude: 1,080 m s.l.

gradient: 140 m

length of trail: around 2 km

duration: about 1 h

observation posts: 4

A nearby cave formed by flowing lava



Etna - ski run

lends its name to the trail which you can reach by taking the Linguaglossa-Randazzo "Quota 1000" road until you get to the drinking trough in the Contrada Santa Caterina area; follow the ESA road for about 2 km (1.25 miles) until you reach the rest stop next to the former farm building called Casa ex-Giusa. The path starts here; it extends over 2 km and covers a gradient of 140 m as it winds its way through a stunning landscape of terraced fields, old paths, dry-stone walls and little cottages in lava stone, immersed in beautiful undergrowth full of stiff spurge, broom, and spontaneous pasture. The breathtaking panorama sweeps from the towering cone of Monte Spagnolo to the summit craters, from Lake Gurridda to the Nebrodi National Park.

3 From Randazzo to Piano dei Dammusi

Start out from the San Giovanni square on the outskirts of Randazzo and drive towards the main Randazzo-Linguaglossa road which you will meet about 2 km further on in the Contrada Santa Caterina area. Cross the main road and head south along a wide, tarmac-covered road and turn off at the third turning on your left; cross the 1981 lava flows, and continue on until you reach the northern edge of Monte Peluso where the road finishes and you have to park and leave your car. Go through a

gate, and a path to the west of the small crater will take you around Monte Spagnolo with its cool beech wood, then through a small wood of pines and cedars. The path will lead you to a shelter used by the Forestry Corps. Twenty metres or so further on and you will reach a track that heads east which you should follow, and after a few hundred metres uphill you will reach Monte Santa Maria. From here, if you keep to your right, you will reach the Piano dei Dammusi, a vast stretch of lava that was produced by the 10-year-long eruption in 1614. Here the lava took on some remarkable forms, including what looks like a tangle of dark red ropes, as well as smooth, flat, hollow folds (the dammusi), and huge, rounded masses (mega tumuli). A few hundred metres further on there is a fork in the path and nearby you will find the entrance to the Grotta dei Lamponi (Cavern of the Raspberries). The right-hand path leads to the lush beech wood of Monte Timpa Rossa and the shelter of the same name, at an altitude of 2,000 m. A few hundred metres along the left-hand path and you will reach two other caverns, the Grotta delle Femmine and Grotta delle Palombe.

4 Case Pirao-Monte Spagnolo- Cisternazza Nature Trail

This very interesting trail goes through the area which was the site of the 1981 eruption. From the panoramic "Quota 1000" Linguaglossa-Randazzo route (coming from Linguaglossa), in the Pirao area a partially tarmac-covered road turns off to the left and climbs the slope until it reaches the forest shelter in Contrada Pirao, where you will leave your car. After about an hour's walk along a wide dirt path you will reach the lava field of the 1981 eruption. The path continues on through the dense beech wood of Monte Spagnolo, the most extensive stretch of woods on Mt Etna, until it reaches a disused hut. From here, on the left you will take a path that goes into the woods and after about 200m you will turn onto a path traced over recently formed lava flows. Go past a vent that opened in 1992 and still emits steaming vapours, and plunge into the thick wood of mixed trees. After about a kilometre you will meet the main stretch of the high altitude trail and will start to descend towards the Saletti shelter. Instead, if you continue you will reach the Cisternazza, a typical water tank surmounted by a

circular building, about 200 m on the right side of the main path. Carry on for about 20 minutes and you will return to the Pirao shelter.



Feasting the Senses

Cooking on the north side of Mt Etna is famous for its delicious main courses, such as the mouth-watering dishes of roast mutton and sausage (heavily seasoned or plain) from Bronte, or stuffed goat from Randazzo. Then there are the many distinctive cheeses, such as the 'piacintinu' from the Nebrodi Mountains, as well as fresh ricotta and strong-tasting tuma from Mt Etna. When in Linguaglossa you must try the local polenta, made from a flour of broad beans and mushrooms and seasoned with robust Val Demone DOP olive oil. There is a wonderful range of fruit and nuts, as well: succulent apples and pears, pine nuts and almonds from Randazzo and Linguaglossa, and fragrant strawberries, the 'red' gold from Maletto where a major festival is organized every May. The north side of Mt Etna also boasts a large number of wineries: from Piedimonte to Castiglione, from Linguaglossa to Randazzo. The area is rich in vineyards that yield the grapes used in making the sumptuous Etna DOC, Rosso, Rosato and Bianco wines, which you simply must try. The vineyards near Lake Gurridda are very peculiar indeed; they are probably the only vines in the world that for most of the winter months are submerged under the overflow from the nearby River Flascio. Their grapes produce a very distinctive ruby red wine.



Etna - pinewood



Excursions

5 Monti Sartorius Nature Trail

difficulty level: easy
starting altitude: 1,660 m.s.l.
gradient: 100 m
length of trail: around 4 km
duration: about 2 h
observation posts: 6

This trail starts out from Rifugio Citelli which you can reach by following directions from the village of Fornazzo, near Zafferana Etnea. The trail makes its way among the Sartorius Hills, seven cinder cones arranged in a characteristic "button box" formation. The landscape features glades of astragalus, birch trees and black pines, broken up by huge craggy fragments of lava. Once past Monte Frumento delle Concazze, one of the biggest adventitious cones on the flanks of Mt Etna, and the birch wood, you reach the vast expanse of the 1865 lava-flow, which poured down from the Sartorius Hills. As you go down the side of the Sartorius Hills, the imposing bulk of Monte Concazze, right in front of you, will keep you company until you get back to your starting point, the Rifugio Citelli.

6 The 1928 craters

On this excursion, visitors will be able to see the 1928 craters, now extinct, which produced a huge wave of lava that poured through the fertile countryside, destroying crops and in a few days reached and engulfed the town of Mascali (later rebuilt further downhill), until it stopped not far from the sea. From the town of Sant'Alfio, head to the tiny sanctuary in the Contrada Magazzeni area and take the cart track opposite the sanctuary. After an hour's walk through cool chestnut and hazel tree groves, you will arrive at the foot of the towering cone, located in the Contrada Ripe della Naca area. The crater is truly beautiful: amid the solidified folds of lava, volcanic slag and tendrils of magma, there is an easily accessible vent which you can climb down into, in order to see close up the forms the lava can take as it solidifies.

7 Pietracannone Cubania Nature Trail

difficulty level: easy
starting altitude: 1,150 m.s.l.
length of trail: around 4 km

The trail starts out from the Case di Pietracannone and winds its way along the east face of Mt Etna, near the towns of Milo and Sant'Alfio. This stretch is an old country path flagged in lava stone and features a particularly striking 'tacca della neve', a kind of huge hollow where snow was stored during winter for use once the warm weather arrived. The trail skirts the 1971 lava flow, crosses a forest road and then plunges into the dense Cubania pine wood and reaches the Paternò Castello shelter

8 Piano dell'acqua - Monte Calanna Nature Trail

difficulty level: average
starting altitude: 830 m.s.l.
gradient: 180 m
length of trail: around 1 km
duration: about 1 1/2 h
observation posts: 5

From Zafferana Etnea, follow the directions to the 1991-93 lava-flow and then turn onto a short road flagged in lava (it is about 800 m long) that reaches a small plain. The trail starts here. Alongside the glades of broom and the copses of downy oaks, evergreen oaks and ash trees, you can still clearly see the lingering effects of what was one of the most spectacular lateral eruptions of the past few centuries, the lava framing brilliant green 'dagale' where fruit groves flourish. Along the trail you can enjoy the stunning views over the beech woods in the Val Calanna, Monte Calanna, the Salto della Giumenta, the Serra delle Concazze, Piano Bello, Monte Fontane, and Monte Zoccolaro. You are on the edge of the Valle del Bove, a vast lava implosion with rocky flanks that plunge down for 1000 metres. When you get to Portella Calanna you can see the barriers erected to protect the town of Zafferana Etnea from the encroaching lava of the 1991 eruption.

9 Monte Zoccolaro Nature Trail

difficulty level: average
starting altitude: 1,472 m.s.l.
gradient: 266 m
length of trail: around 1 km
duration: about 2 1/2 h
observation posts: 5

Not far from the town of Zafferana Etnea, this steep path which climbs to the top of Monte Zoccolaro offers spectacular views over the Val Calanna, the Valle del Bove and the site of the 1991-93 eruption. The trail starts from the "Belvedere" which is at the end of the turn-off for Monte Pomiciaro on the SP 92 Zafferana-Rifugio Sapienza road. To your right there is a wood of poplar trees that has grown up on the edge of the Val Calanna and beyond that there is a vast stretch of apple trees. After this there is a chestnut grove, a beech grove and then a carpet of ferns and broom. If you head further north you will reach Monte Calanna. The hill is surrounded by lava from the 1991-93 eruption. Here the dense greenery gives way to bare lava and you can admire the sensational views of the Valle del Bove, the summit craters, the "Pizzi Deneri", the Serra delle

Concazze and the spur of Rocca Musarra. If you follow the slope you will reach the top of Monte Zoccolaro, kingdom of the golden eagle, the fox, hedgehog, weasel and rabbit.

The biggest chestnut in the world and its 'younger siblings'

The huge chestnut trees known as the Castagno dei Cento Cavalli and Castagno La Nave can be reached easily from Sant'Alfio, following the directions on the SP 84 road. The Cento Cavalli, as the tree is known locally, is the undisputed sovereign of trees on Mt Etna. Its three trunks are part of what was originally a single trunk. At its widest, it measures 52 m in circumference, and is 28 m high, making it the biggest recorded tree in the world. It also one of the oldest, officially over 2.000 years old. A few hundred metres away stands the Castagno La Nave, which is 25 m wide and 15 m high; it also boasts a venerable age; 800 years old. These two marvellous specimens are located in beautifully gentle countryside; a large stream, the Vallone Motta, lined with dry-stone walls, makes its way through the ferns and moss across the Passo Cavallo Wood. And as far as the eye can see there are apple trees, vines and hazel groves. To get to the Ilice del Carrinu (the 'marshland oak'), head for Milo and from there go to the outlying hamlet of Caselle, where there is a firm which presses olives. Next to the building, there is a dirt track which is safe to drive along. It leads to an iron bar across the road. Leave your car here and follow a trail that plunges into a thick copse of chestnut trees. After a few minutes' walk, you will reach the majestic ilex oak, which at 25 m tall and 30 m in diameter and the grand age of 700 years old, is considered the oldest of its kind growing on Mt Etna.

Caves and caverns on Mt Etna

The volcanic caves on Mt Etna are of two main types: fractures, caused by seismic action (earthquakes), and others formed by flowing lava as it drained away from the inside. There are over two hundred caves on the volcano. Some are off-limits to all but the most expert

speleologists. while others are easier to explore. Among the latter, visitors should see the Grotta dei Ladroni (Thieves' Cavern), the Grotta Cassone and the Grotta dei Tre Livelli, which make up a single system with the "KTM" 300 m further downhill, which is the world's third deepest cavern. You have to wear a solid safety helmet to avoid hurting your head if you go into the caves. The Grotta dei Ladroni is hidden in a birch wood, but there are indications to reach it following a path that starts about 10km from Fornazzo along the road from Fornazzo to Piano Provenzana. Explorers will find themselves in a wide, open space, the so-called Salone dei Ladri or Thieves' Parlour which is easy to visit thanks to its smooth floor. In the roof of the gallery that leads to the second cave, known as the Sala Houel, you will notice a number of man-made hollows, once used to store snow during winter that was then turned into ice-creams and water ices when the summer months came. The other two caves open directly onto the road that goes from Zafferana to Rifugio Sapienza. The entrance to the Grotta dei Tre Livelli, some 4 km from Rifugio Sapienza in the Contrada Case del Vescovo area, is partially composed of reinforced concrete (part of the structure bearing the road). There are two gradients, of 2 and 7 metres respectively, which can be climbed using flights of metal steps. The cavern extends upwards until it reaches the volcanic mouth that produced it (and the climb can be quite a tiring challenge) and then downards for 300m. The descent is easier and quite spectacular, made up of huge galleries,



Castagno dei Cento Cavalli

dog-tooth stalactites and “wrinkles” running along the tunnel walls. The entrance to the Grotta Cassone is located in the Pian del Vescovo area, about 7 km from Rifugio Sapienza. It is reasonably easy to get into and explore; the tunnel can reach 8 m in height in places and in certain points is over 10 m wide. The floor is made up of corded lava and the roof is dotted with dog-tooth stalactites and there are folds in the side of the tunnel. Along its 277 m, the gallery goes through a series of surprising changes in shape, from oval to vaulted to triangular and even, at times, keyhole-shaped. On the south face there are a number of other caves: the Grotta delle Palombe, explored by such famous researchers as Mario Gemmellaro and Wolfgang Sartorius, the Grotta Catanese, the Abisso dei Parmetelli, and the Fossa della Lupa. On the east face we find the Grotta Cassone; on the west, the Grotta dell’Intraleo and the Grotta della Neve. A feature of the north face is the very long Grotta dei Lamponi (over 700 m), as well as the Grotta delle Femmine, Grotta Burò, and the monarch of caverns on Mt Etna, the Grotta del Gelo (or Ice Cavern) which is home to a small, permanent glacier, the most southerly in this hemisphere.



Feasting the Senses

The honey here is excellent, and the Milo-Sant’Alfio-Zafferana Etna triangle is a major production area. It comes in many varieties (chestnut, orange blossom, thyme, eucalyptus, acacia, and more) and is used to make sweets and desserts along with the excellent local nuts: hazelnuts, pistachio nuts, pine nuts, almonds, and walnuts. When in Zafferana you must try the ‘sciatore’ biscuits, coated in fine chocolate, and the ‘pizza alla siciliana’, a folded, fried pizza filled with local tuma cheese and anchovies. There are many varieties of cheese, salami and sausage, including the excellent ‘pecorino’ and ‘provola’ cheeses. And a nice way to end your meal is with a glass of limoncello liqueur from Santa Venerina, made with the flavoursome lemons of the Riviera dei Limoni. Enjoy a glass of Etna DOC rosso (red) or rosato (rosè) with your meal. The wines are produced

in the many local wineries around Viagrande, Zafferana and Santa Venerina. A special mention must go to the Bianchi DOC white wines from Milo, judged ‘Superiori’ because of their finesse and excellent aroma.



Furnace lava



Etna - autumn



MOUNT ETNA - 3323 m

Map legend



Hill



Shelter



Cable car



Area of interest



Cave



Wood



Chair lift



Viewpoint



Runway -Route



Point of interest



Craters



High altitude trail



Nature paths



Crater paths



Main roads



Secondary roads



Motorway



Circumetnea railway



Railway

SOUTH FACE



Excursions

10 Monte Salto del Cane

From Nicolosi take the Via San Nicola and head towards the Etna-Sud tourist area. At about 3 km after the second turn-off for Pedara you will come across a little road on the right that climbs upward, half-hidden in the dense foliage of a chestnut glade. Leave the car here. There is a little entrance beside a gate and, beyond the chestnut grove, you come to apple and pear orchards which surround some old cottages. Move through the total silence along a little path to your left. In a few minutes you will arrive at the edge of the crater where the land drops away into an abyss with enormous blocks of tuff littering the bottom: The walls are covered with a thick wood of holm and downy oaks, poplars and robust beech trees surrounded by broom and briar roses. The breathtaking view sweeps over the 1614 lava field on the right, the Monti Silvestri hills, the Montagnola and Monte Escriv , which was created during the 2001 eruption.

11 The Monti Rossi Hills

From Nicolosi, follow the directions for the Monti Rossi tourist area; you will arrive in a wide clearing where you can leave your car. Go around the metal bar and start climbing upwards. After a few hundred yards you will reach a wide glade that features one of the huge lumps of rock thrown out by the volcano, as well as a barbecue grill and wooden picnic tables. A narrow path climbs uphill from here, bordered on the upper side by a restraining fence made from interwoven pieces of wood. At the end of the path you can turn right and head up a steep rise to the

first of the two craters which offers a truly stunning view over the Plain of Catania. Or you can head straight on: the path drops down and then climbs again to the second crater where there is a Forestry Corps look-out tower and a large metal cross. Halfway round the crater's edge, a tiny path leads downhill and back to within a few hundred metres of your starting point. From here, and along the road of the same name, you can reach the Grotta delle Palombe, which is only accessible to experienced, well-equipped speleologists

12 The Valle del Bove

This huge depression was formed when an ancient part of the volcano (known as the Trifoglio) imploded and collapsed. In places the sides can soar (or plunge) to 1,000 m. To the north the Valle is bounded by the Pizzi Deneri peaks, Rocca della Valle and the Serra delle Concazze. To the south it is bounded by the ridge known as the Schiena dell'Asino, (the Donkey's Back), by the Serra del Salfizio and by the craters of Monte Pomiciaro and Monte Zoccolaro. On the walls we can see the volcanic "dikes", vein-like extrusions of magma laid bare by erosion, while the bare valley floor is a symphony of grey hues, depending on the age of the many layers and folds of lava that piled up here. This is a lunar landscape but until recently two parts of the area, the Piano del Trifoglio (at the foot of the Serra del Salfizio), and the Val Calanna (above Zafferana) were in fact lush pasture land dotted with fruit groves. They were buried under lava during the 1991-93 eruption. One



Etna - *betulla aetnensis*



Feasting the Senses

Mushroom-lovers must sample local mushrooms from Nicolosi, grilled, or sliced and cooked in olive oil with parley and garlic, or used to accompany delicious first course dishes that are seasoned with the subtle flavour of Ragalna olive oil. Then there are the excellent cold meats, such as the 'suppizzata' (salami that has not been matured for very long), and cheeses, such as tuma studded with pepper corns and ricotta, probably the best in Sicily, which you can enjoy on its own or as an ingredient in hundreds of dishes. And you must try the small, fragrant apples from Etna, as well as the many varieties of nuts, such as the hazelnuts and almonds which are used in Belpasso to produce the internationally famous nougat.

of the best places from which to admire the Valle del Bove is from the top of the ridge known as the Schiena dell'Asino. You go past the Etna Sud-Rifugio Sapienza tourist area and continue along the SP 92 route. Right in front of the crossroads with route 401 from Pedara, there is a Forestry Corps gate and beyond that a path that climbs uphill. Go past the pine wood and you will find yourselves in a wide clearing covered in astragalus bushes. To your right the panorama extends to the Ionian Sea. A few hundred metres more and you will reach the top of the Schiena dell'Asino ridge, at the far end of the Serra dell'Acqua gully. The vast lunar basin of the Valle del Bove spreads out below you in absolute silence: dormant volcanic mouths, dikes, channels formed by flowing lava, caves, sand gulleys, and thick layers of tuff. This is one of the wildest and most bewitching places on the whole of Mt Etna.

13 Monte Nero degli Zappini Nature Trail

difficulty level: easy

starting altitude: 1,740 m.s.l.

gradient: 200 m

length of trail: around 4 km

duration: about 2 1/2 h

You set off from Piano Vetore, not far from the Etna Sud-Rifugio Sapienza tourist area, near the Grande Albergo dell'Etna. The trail cuts through old and recent lava beds, spiky hornitos, clusters of broom, and shady pine woods. Along the way you will see sparrows, birds of prey, coal tits, and small mammals such as hares and foxes. You will immediately notice the *cannone* (cannon) a spectacular cylinder of lava produced when the magma cools and solidifies around a tree trunk. The trail will take you past a wood of pine and beech trees and a stream and into a cluster of golden broom. A little further on a wide forest path will take you to another not-to-be-missed delight, the Nuova Gussonea Botanic Gardens. You can take the paved road back to your starting point and on the way see the effects of the first, historic attempt to modify the direction of a lava flow back in 1983.



Silvestri Craters

WEST FACE



Excursions

14 Monte Gallo-Rifugio della Galvarina Nature Trail

difficulty level: average to easy

length of trail: 11 km

duration: about 3 h

The trail starts from Piano Fiera on the slopes of Monte Gallo. You can reach the spot from the SP 92 Adrano-Monte San Leo route and then continue on for 12 km along the deviation for Monte Intraleo. Go past the Forestry Corps gate, there to prevent car access and walk on for a short stretch and then turn right. The trail starts out level and then climbs up through a dense pine wood that skirts Monte Albano. A little further on, near a lava flow, you will reach a fork in the path and you should take the right hand turn and head towards Rifugio della Galvarina. The shelter was refurbished in 1991 and is a perfect place for a rest stop. A cool wood of larch trees stretches out like a carpet over the steep western flank of the volcano, scoured by deep gulleys. Turn back from the shelter for 600m and then carry on towards Monte Leporello, making your way amid old craters and lava flows, until you reach a fork; the left-hand path will take you back to your starting point.

15 Piano dei Grilli Nature Trail

difficulty level: easy

length of trail: 12 km

duration: about 3 h

Starting out from Bronte, take a narrow road paved in lava stone that will take you through one of the area's characteristic pistacchio groves and a lava clearing that dates back to 1651, until you reach a Forestry Corps shelter, which serves as the starting point for this excursion. A great time to do it is in spring, when the wide meadows are sprinkled with golden broom and the dense woods of evergreen and downy oaks are teeming with life. The astounding panorama sweeps from the northwest face of the volcano, dotted with large and small cinder cones to four major side cones, Monte Minardo, Monte Peloso, Monte Tre Frati and



Etna - view

Monte Ruvolo, all beautifully unspoiled. Another interesting feature are the stone 'pagghiari', little circular rural constructions, which the shepherds once used as shelters in bad weather. They are made from blocks of lava piled one on top of the other.



Feasting the Senses

The undisputed king of the crops on this side of the mountain is the Bronte pistacchio nut. This truly unique fruit, universally recognized as the world's finest, is delicious on its own and superb as the main ingredient in 'pesto al pistacchio', (to eat with freshly-made pasta from Paternò). or again as a fundamental ingredient in excellent sweets, ice-creams and nougat. Adrano is well-known for its fine fresh vegetables, such as broccoli, broad beans, artichokes and fennel, which you can enjoy tossed in the pan or in salads, seasoned with a splash of delicate olive oil from the slopes of Mt Etna. When in Paternò, you must try the stuffed aubergines, and a wide variety of mouth-watering pasta dishes, and also the cheeses, such as dried ricotta and a particularly flavoursome caciocavallo, which could be accompanied by some excellent salami. The area is also well-known for its fine fruit, peaches, apricots, medlars, local apples (such as the sweet 'puma maiurina', a green apple from Bronte), eating grapes, barbary figs (which grow everywhere and anywhere and yield an excellent fruit jelly), and above all the sumptuous IGP label blood oranges from Paternò; these truly unique oranges can be enjoyed in salad, seasoned with olive oil and balsamic vinegar.



Etna - eruption



Concrezione lavica

USEFUL INFORMATION

REGIONAL PROVINCE OF CATANIA INFORMATION POINTS

Via Etna, 63/65 - Catania - 095 4014070

“V. Bellini” International Airport Fontanarossa
Catania - 095 0937023

Tourist Office, Regional Province of Catania
turismo@provincia.ct.it

Informazioni sull'ospitalità nella Provincia di Catania
<http://turismo.provincia.ct.it/ospitalit/>

Etna Nature Park, Regional Park Authority
095 82111- ufficiostampa@parcoetna.it
www.parcoetna.it; www.parks.it/parcoetna

Etna cable car (Funivia dell'Etna S.p.a.)
Nicolosi 095 914141 - 095 914142

Alpine Guides (Gruppo Guide Alpine) - South Etna
095 7914755 - 389 3496086

Mountain Rescue Corps. (Corpo Nazionale Soccorso Alpino) - North Etna - 347 9028236

National Corps Alpine Rescue (Corpo Nazionale Soccorso Alpino) - South Etna - 340 3961735

Italian Alpine Club (Club Alpino Italiano) (C.A.I.)
Piazza Municipio - Linguaglossa - 095 7153515

Alpine Guides (Guide Alpine) - North Etna
Via M. Amari - Linguaglossa
095 7774502 - 348 0125167

Crater Excursions - S.T.A.R.
Società Gestione Escursioni ai Crateri
095 371333 - 347 4957091 - 346 6002176

© Regional Province of Catania - 2011

Project by
Tourism Office Regional Province of Catania

Graphics and maps
Comunikare.it

Print
Tipografia TM

Photography
Paolo Barone: cover, Etna - ski run, Concrezione lavica, betulla aetnensis, Furnace lava, Etna - autumn

Texts
Archivio APT Catania



PROVINCIA REGIONALE
DI CATANIA
<http://turismo.provincia.ct.it>