

Città Narrata

Storytelling City



Municipality of Potenza
Department of Culture



WELCOME

Potenza is a “vertical” city overlooking the Basento valley. It boasts a historical and artistic heritage that surprises anyone who lets their curiosity guide them: the remains of its medieval walls, evidence of the Roman era and the noble architecture that embellishes the historic centre tell the story of centuries of history, conquests and rebirths.

Strolling through the ancient heart of the city, you will encounter welcoming urban landscapes, such as Piazza Mario Pagano, the city’s living room surrounded by elegant buildings and dominated by the Teatro Stabile, a symbol of Potenza’s cultural vitality. You will come across the Cathedral of San Gerardo, patron saint of the city, with its precious works of art, and the Guevara Tower, an ancient defensive bastion that has now become a venue for exhibitions and cultural initiatives. Starting from Via Pretoria, the decumanus, every street or alley hides a fragment of history: medieval churches, monasteries, epigraphs, palaces and carved portals enrich the itinerary of those who wish to discover the authentic and intimate face of Potenza, a city animated by an open and hospitable community.

A journey that does not end in the historic centre but continues in the urban fabric extra moenia: to the north, with the Archaeological Museum and the Provincial Art Gallery, the Library Centre and the Villa di Santa Maria, the city’s botanical garden; and then all around, from the village of San Rocco to the Montereale park, to the remains of the Roman era, the bridge of S. Vito and the Villa di Malvaccaro, echoed by the modern Musmeci bridge, and much more.

This brochure has been created to accompany you on your discovery of our city, to help you experience it in an authentic and engaging way. Whether you are an art enthusiast, a history lover or simply eager to explore new places, you will find in these pages an invitation to open your eyes and your heart to beauty.

With the “Città narrante” (Storytelling City) project, we wanted to renew digital content and information media to make cultural heritage even more accessible. Along the way, you will find special tables with QR codes: simply scan them with your smartphone to access multimedia content, narratives and insights, discovering the history of the main places of interest in the town centre.

An innovative and engaging way to experience Potenza as a large open-air museum, where every corner tells a story and every step is a pleasant discovery.

The Councillor for Culture
Roberto Falotico

The Mayor of the City
Vincenzo Telesca



IN THE WAKE OF HISTORY

Every city, whether small or large, has its own distinctive history. A tapestry of stories that can be read like the pieces of a mosaic that make up Italy. The history of the city of Potenza can be read in its streets and squares, in its cathedral and town hall, in its convents and churches, in its gates and markets, in its topology and in the transformation of its natural environment. The history of our city starts with “material documents” and maintains its stronghold in the walled city of medieval origin, which, in a geographical and temporal sequence, sees the passage of time through consolidation and transformations due to political and economic events, demographic and natural dynamics. Our interest lies in the people, the stones and the papers, the actors of what is now an elegant city, whose heart is an intact medieval village, the latest evolution of previous settlements, once ruled by the Romans, Lombards, Normans and Saracens. Potenza certainly experienced a turning point in its urban layout during the Angevin and Aragonese periods, with the establishment first of the De Guevara and then the Loffredo families and the arrival of the Franciscans. This appearance of the city, enriched during the viceregal period, remained essentially unchanged until the 19th century.

On 8 August 1806, Potenza was elevated to the capital of the Province of Basilicata by Joseph Bonaparte, through Law No. 132, which reorganised the provinces of the Kingdom of Naples. From then on, a broad process of modernisation of the city began, leading to profound changes in its urban layout.

THE DIFFERENT FACES OF POTENZA

Potenza is the highest provincial capital in Italy (819 m), with slopes covered in maple, chestnut and fir woods. Tradition and modernity, ancient villages and escalators (the longest in Europe), a city rich in charm, with a significant cultural fabric and an important commercial and food and wine tradition make Potenza a destination for cultural tourism.

For visitors who want to learn more about this city, but also for its inhabitants, the “Potenza Città Narrata” (Potenza Narrated City) tour has been designed, starting from the Cathedral of San Gerardo and ending at Palazzo Loffredo (National Archaeological Museum), after retracing the medieval city walls through the gates, churches, palaces and squares, museums and the theatre, historical and cultural testimonies in which to discover the true identity of the city. The route continues beyond the walls to highlight the main places of historical and artistic interest found around the historic centre but also in more outlying areas, such as the Roman monuments, from the Villa di Malvaccaro to the Ponte di San Vito sul Basento, along the axis of Via Herculia.

THE PLACES

In the historic centre

1. Cathedral of Saint Gerard Bishop
2. Courtyard of the Sacred Heart
3. Bishop's Palace
4. Gate of Saint Gerard
5. Scafarelli Palace
6. Two towers and city walls
7. Gate of Saint John
8. Corrado Palace

10. Church of Saint Francis
11. Convent of Saint Francis
12. Government Palace and Prefect's Villa
13. Mario Pagano Square
14. Francesco Stabile Theatre
15. Church of St. Michael and village
16. Palazzo Marsico
17. Church of St. Lucy and village
18. Portasalza and Via Pretoria
19. Palazzo Alianelli
20. Church of the Holy Trinity
21. Piazza Duca della Verdura
22. Palazzo Giuliani
23. Bank of Italy
24. Piazza Matteotti
25. Temple of San Gerardo
26. Palazzo di Città
27. Palazzo del Fascio
28. Statue of a child with clasped hands - Piazza Matteotti
29. Chapel of Blessed Bonaventura and village
30. Palazzo Pignatari, formerly Palazzo Ciccotti
31. Palazzo Biscotti
32. Monastery of San Luca
33. Porta di San Luca
34. Palazzo Bonifacio
35. Guevara tower
36. Palazzo Loffredo
37. Scale del Popolo

Epigraphs

- 38. *Cn. Papirius Claudianus* (CIL X, 140) - Portasalza
- 39. *Mummia Iconio* (CIL X, 146) - Chiesa di San Michele
- 40. *C. Brittius Primigenius* (CIL X, 151) - Via Pretoria
- 41. *Vitalia* (CIL X, 171) - Cattedrale
- 42. *Mefitis Utiana* (CIL X, 131) - Palazzo Loffredo
- 43. *Sodales Fortunenses* (CIL X, 174) - Porta San Luca

Extra moenia

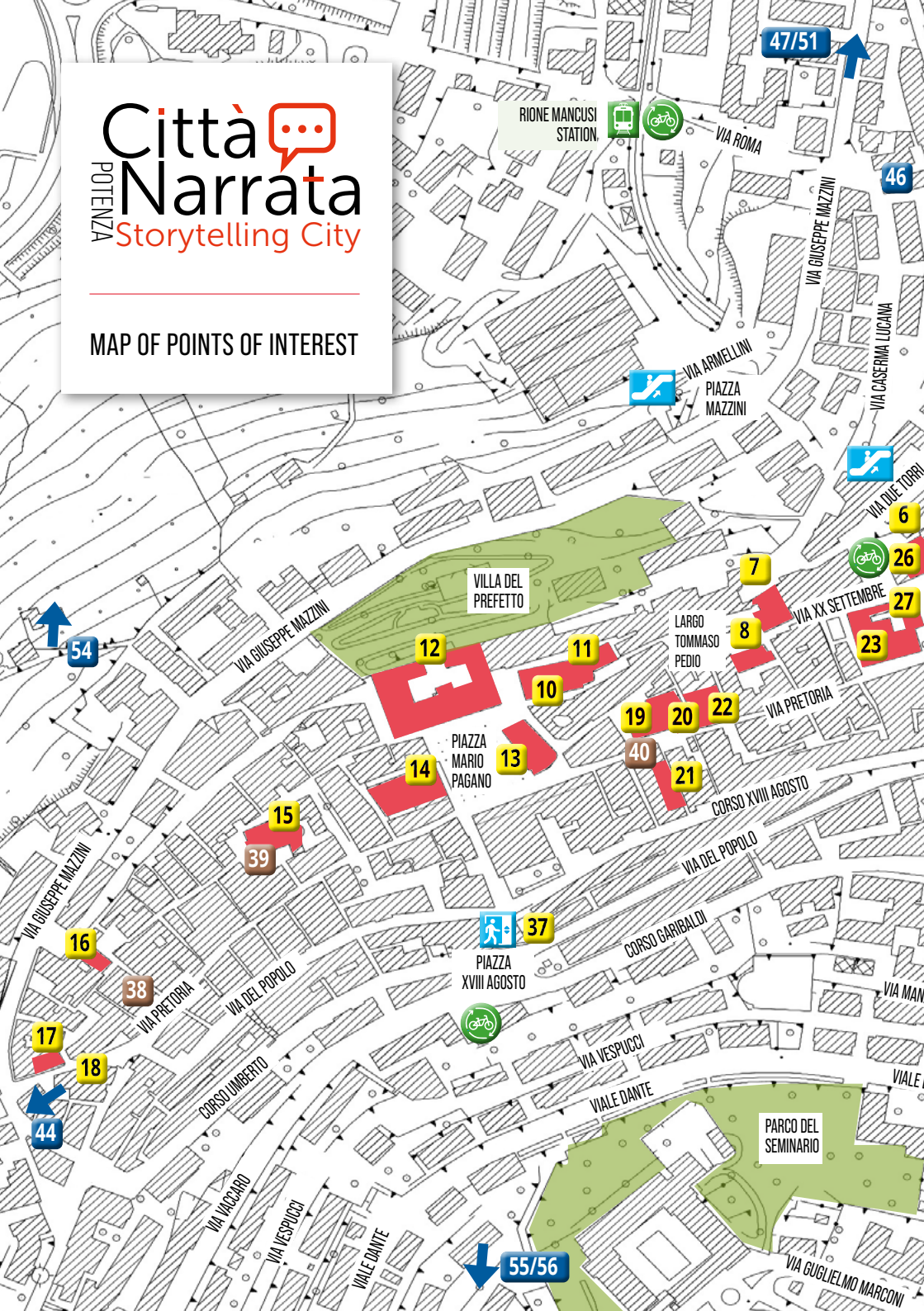
- 44. Montereale
- 45. Church of San Rocco
- 46. Chapel of Our Lady of Loreto or of the Most Holy Annunciation
- 47. Church of Santa Maria del Sepolcro
- 48. Lucania Barracks
- 49. Santa Maria Municipal Villa
- 50. Provincial Archaeological Museum
- 51. Provincial Art Gallery
- 52. San Vito Bridge
- 53. Church of Sant'Antonio La Macchia
- 54. Roman Villa of Malvaccaro
- 55. Musmeci Bridge
- 56. Railway Station

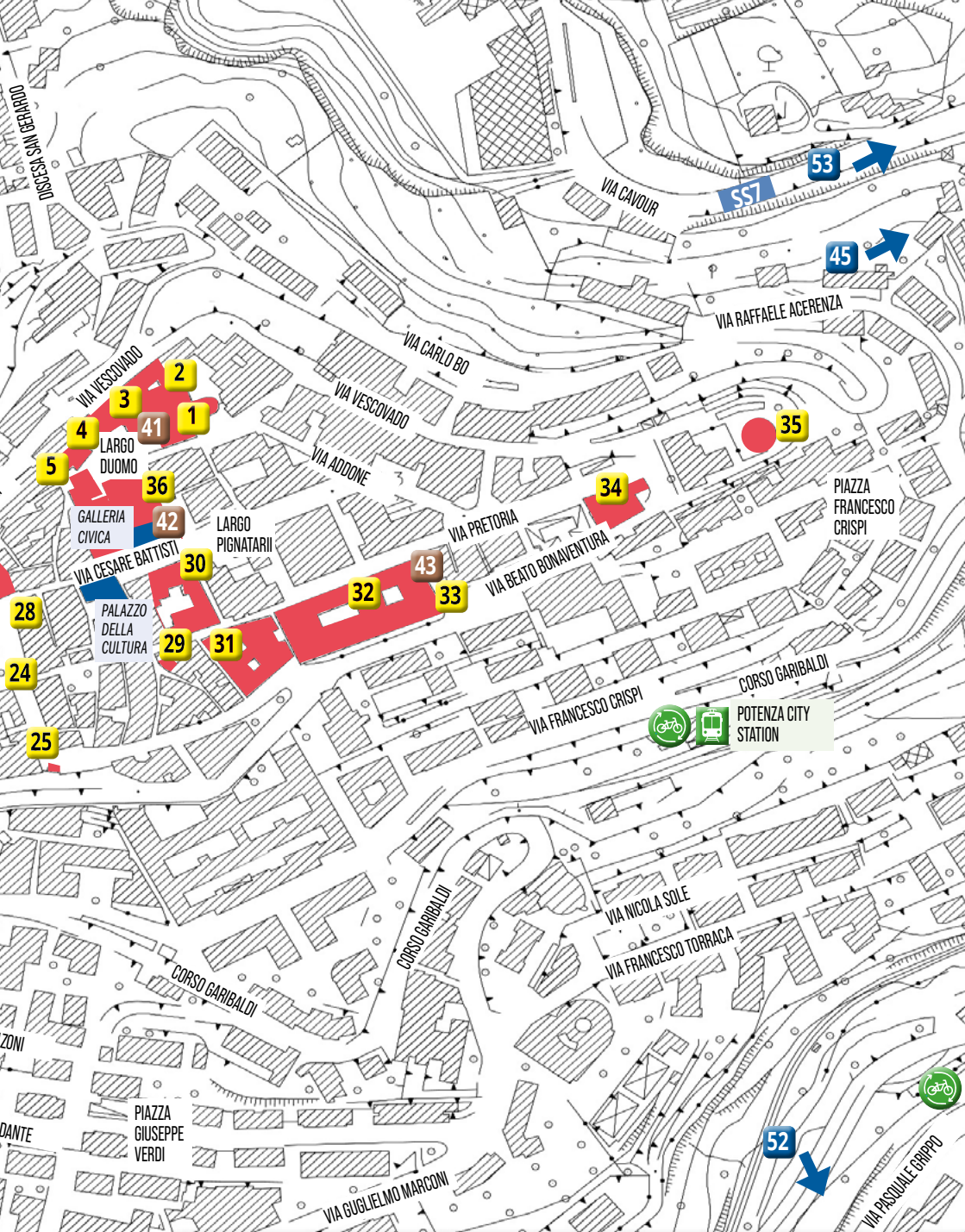


Città Narrata

POTENZA
Storytelling City

MAP OF POINTS OF INTEREST





LEGEND



OLD TOWN



URBAN STOPS ON THE APPULO
LUCANE RAILWAY LINE



EPIGRAPHS



BIKE SHARING



EXTRA MOENIA



MOBILE STAIRS AND LIFTS
TOWARDS THE HISTORICAL CENTRE



1. CATHEDRAL OF SAINT GERARD THE BISHOP

The building, erected on the crest of the hill behind the medieval public road and dedicated since time immemorial to the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Assumption, has an 18th-century exterior designed by the architect Magri, a pupil of Vanvitelli, on commission from Bishop Giovanni Andrea Serrao (1783-1799). Its ancient and venerable history, marked by earthquakes such as that of November 1980 and tenacious rebuilding, is evidenced by the discovery, during consolidation and restoration work carried out in the late 1970s, of fragments of a mosaic floor and some masonry structures, including one in the shape of an exedra, beneath the floor of the presbytery area. Dating back to the 5th-6th centuries, they can be traced back to the chapel of Saint Oronzo, an African martyr and the first patron saint of the city. The second phase of construction, linked to the change of dedication to Gerardo della Porta (1111-1119), canonised by Pope Callixtus III, dates back to a period between the 12th and 13th centuries and is attributed to Bishop Bartolomeo (1197-1206). All that remains of this phase is the magnificent stone bell tower, probably the work of Sàrolo da Muro. Oberto, bishop of Potenza in 1250, erected a chapel to St. Gerard and placed a gilded wooden statue of the patron saint inside. Documents from the Sacred Visits of 1566 and 1571 carried out by Bishop Tiberio Carafa show that the cathedral was decorated with numerous frescoes on the walls and in the chapels, and accompanied by a silver reliquary arm of St. Gerard. The vault is currently covered with frescoes commissioned in 1933-34 by Bishop Augusto Bertazzoni from the painter Mario Prayer, who also intervened after the air raids of September 1943. Since the summer of 1968, Potenza Cathedral has had bronze doors on its main façade, the work of Calabrian sculptor Giuseppe Niglia, depicting the Redeemer, the Turks and the people of Potenza.

2. COURTYARD OF THE “SACRED HEART”

To the north-west of the cathedral church is a courtyard, bordered on the opposite side by the bishop's palace and the “Sacred Heart” clergy house.

Here, a modern brick kiln (dating from between the 17th and 18th centuries) was found in excellent condition, with one side covered by the ancient bell tower, which tilted in 1826 due to an earthquake. It cannot be ruled out that this was a glass furnace, as the opening for the bellows at the bottom of the firing chamber remains. In addition, a “logette” tomb was unearthed, i.e. with a narrow compartment (the “logette”) for the skull, which housed an important figure. Its date can probably be linked to the existence of the *antiqua fabrica* immediately preceding the Romanesque cathedral, mentioned in a 13th-century epigraph. The tomb was reused at different times and the only grave goods found were an iron bracelet and a globular bone pendant.



3. BISHOP'S PALACE

To the left of the cathedral is the bishop's palace. This imposing building has a rectangular layout and runs along the extramural road, also serving as a city wall. It has undergone recent renovations, but its original architectural appearance has remained unchanged. The front façade is in exposed stone; a pair of pilasters, superimposed on the portal, support a cornice with the episcopal coat of arms in the centre. A large balcony window with a shaped stone lintel rests on the cornice. It was in this palace that Bishop Andrea Serrao was assassinated in 1799.



Marble sarcophagus

A decontextualised monument, used in the past as a shrine for the remains of Bishop San Gerardo, is the strigillated marble sarcophagus, dating from between the end of the 2nd and 3rd centuries, which must have been found not far from the Bishop's Palace, where it is currently kept. At the corners of the monument are two erotes who, as a sign of mourning, hold two torches pointing downwards, while in the central panel, although very incomplete, three female images are carved in relief, not without philosophical evocations: the three Graces. The representation follows traditional iconography, according to which the two on the sides are portrayed frontally, while the one in the centre is shown from behind.



4. PORTA DI SAN GERARDO

The Porta di San Gerardo was built in the Norman period (11th-12th century) along the northern section of the walls; it takes its name from the cathedral of the same name located nearby. The gate opens between the Bishop's Palace and Palazzo Scafarelli and provided direct access within the walls to the bishop's curia.

The passage is characterised by a lowered barrel vault surmounted by a small window, perhaps the last remnant of an ancient guard post, while on the outside there is a block structure of the buttress.



5. PALAZZO SCFARELLI

An 18th-century palace belonging to one of the wealthiest families in Potenza. The building has retained its original bourgeois style, contributing to the dignified setting of the square, and still belongs to the Scafarelli heirs today. It is accessed through a double round-arched portal on which the family's bronze coat of arms is visible. Of particular interest are the masks with rings on the external façade, used to tie up horses.



6. TWO TOWERS AND CITY WALLS

Potenza was probably fortified in the 11th century during the Lombard domination.

We know that in the 15th century, the Count of Guevara donated large sums of money for the reconstruction of the walls, even though the city was already fortified. The two towers are among the few visible remains of the ancient walls.

7. SAN GIOVANNI GATE

Built in the Norman period (11th-12th century), the San Giovanni Gate owes its name to the hospital run by the Fatebenefratelli di San Giovanni di Dio (from the 13th to the 16th century).

The ancient gate has a round arch crossed by a stepped ramp. The gate, now incorporated into modern buildings, was previously flanked by two watchtowers. A tower with four arched windows remains on the left side.



8. PALAZZO CORRADO

The original building fabric, as can be seen from the 19th-century cadastral plan, was very different from the current one, as the Largo del Plebiscito was practically non-existent until the demolitions of 1930. The only architectural elements bearing witness to the past are visible on the first floor of a building overlooking Via Caserma Lucania: the stone mullioned window with a central column bearing a capital with floral motifs, dating back to the 13th-14th century, and the nearby balcony on corbels from the same period.

From an examination of the walls and an architectural analysis of the building, it has been deduced that the mullioned window and the portal are elements that have been reused in a different position from their original one.



Panorama of the City



10. CHURCH OF SAN FRANCESCO

A typical Franciscan church, its style reflects the simplicity of a single-nave layout, characterised by a sloping exposed stone roof and a central rose window with stained glass.

Founded in 1274, the church of St. Francis of Assisi has a beautiful 16th-century wooden portal composed of eight series of panels representing the Christological monogram of St. Bernardine of Siena.

On the left wall are three single-lancet ogival windows with double splay dating back to the 13th century. Also on the left side, in a niche, is a depiction of the martyrdom of St. Sebastian by G. Todisco da Abriola (1545-1566). On the right wall, you can admire the limestone tomb of De Grasis from Potenza, dated 1534.

Also noteworthy are the polychrome wooden crucifix in the apse (17th century) and the murals of Saint Clare and Saint Francis in the two niches along the right wall of the church, frescoes from the first half of the 14th century.



11. CONVENT OF SAN FRANCESCO

The convent complex dedicated to San Francesco stands on the remains of an ancient proto-Romanesque oratory. The inscription on the church portal, at the base of the archivolt, indicates that it was founded in 1265. Between the 16th and 19th centuries, it was called the “Great Convent” because it housed a prestigious theological school. Today, only the six-arched portico of the cloister remains, at the end of which there is a beautifully crafted wooden door with a 15th-century limestone portal.



12. GOVERNMENT BUILDING AND PREFECT'S VILLA

Originally, the building was the western wing of the monastery of the Conventual Franciscans. With the suppression of the monastic order and the transfer of the monastery's properties to the state, the building was used as a courthouse in 1810 and, after 1860, housed the first prefect of the province.



The building underwent renovation and expansion until 1908, taking on its current appearance.

Behind the palace, you can admire the gardens of the Prefect's villa, created in 1800 on terraces connected by walkways and balustraded staircases with dense and lush vegetation. A real green "lung" in the heart of the city.

13. PIAZZA MARIO PAGANO

The square was designed by Intendant Iurlo in 1838 and built under the direction of architect Giuseppe D'Errico in 1844. The square, initially called del Mercato (because the Sunday market was held there), later became dell'Intendente (because the Palazzo del Governo, the seat of the Intendente, overlooked it) and was subsequently renamed, after the uprising of 18 August 1860 and the replacement of the Intendente with the Prefect, Prefettura. Around 1870, it was dedicated to Mario Pagano, a jurist born in Brienza in 1778 and executed in 1799 for his active participation in the establishment of the Neapolitan Republic.



14. FRANCESCO STABILE THEATRE

Construction of the theatre began in 1856 with funds donated by a group of wealthy shareholders. However, the work, directed by architects Alvino and Pisanti, only resumed in 1865, after a long interruption due to the earthquake of 1857. The theatre was inaugurated on 26 January 1881





with a performance of *La Traviata*, attended by King Umberto I, Queen Margherita of Savoy and Prince Amedeo. The building, in terms of its structure and decorative features, was designed with characteristics very similar to those of the San Carlo Theatre in Naples. It was only reopened to the public in 1990, due to the 1980 earthquake, after a restoration that, while respecting the original layout, improved its acoustics, lighting and spaces. The stalls, three tiers of boxes and the gallery enclose the orchestra and the stage, all of modest dimensions, in a stylistic and formal balance that makes it a little gem. The theatre is named after the Lucanian composer Francesco Stabile (Miglionico, 20 August 1801 - Potenza, 11 August 1860).

15. CHURCH OF SAN MICHELE E BORGO

The church is thought to have been founded before 1178 (the year of the first recorded mention), as its dedication to St. Michael attests to its Lombard origins.

A church dedicated to the saint most likely existed in Potenza as early as the 5th century. In fact, a 5th-century mosaic found under the floor of the current church of San Michele reveals that it belonged to a late Roman structure that was reused when the first basilica was founded.

The main portal has a double jamb with a double round arch. A horizontal element between the central pilasters emphasises the recessed mason-



ry of the central nave. The sloping roofs of the minor naves and the longer sides of the central nave and the right-hand side nave are lightened by a row of hanging arches. The side entrance to the church opens in the centre of the right wall, inserted into a thickened section of the masonry. The portal is made of stone with exposed ashlar and has, above the lintel, in the lunette, a bas-relief depicting the Madonna and Child flanked, on the left, by the Franciscan symbol and, on the right, by a decorative element with floral motifs. The interior of the church is basilica-style, with three naves and three apses, the central nave being higher than the side naves.

16. PALAZZO MARSICO

Built around 1850 to a design by the architect d'Errico. It overlooks the small square and has a basement and a raised ground floor in stone blocks with six brick pilasters dividing it into five sections; the central section includes a light stone portal with pilasters on a high base with a round arch.

The pilasters end with brick capitals under a simple cornice and corbels that crown the façade. The windows have stone thresholds, supported by two volute corbels, and a tympanum supported by two other corbels.



17. CHURCH OF SANTA LUCIA AND VILLAGE

There are no sources relating to the foundation of the church, which was most likely directly connected to the church of St James the Apostle, outside the walls of Portasalza. Probably built before 1200, the church houses works of art from the late 16th and early 17th centuries, when the village of Portasalza began to take shape. It has a single nave with a polychrome wooden coffered ceiling from the first half of the 19th century with octagonal elements and floral motifs in the centre.



In a niche behind the high altar, you can admire the 17th-century wooden statue of Saint Lucy, a refined work by an unknown southern artist. The valuable 15th-century holy water font comes from the church of Santa Maria del Sepolcro.

18. PORTASALZA AND VIA PRETORIA

The ancient farmhouse Portasalza gave its name to the gate which, until its demolition, was the only controlled vehicular entrance to the city. This city gate was located at the beginning of Via Pretoria, at the current crossroads formed by the two side streets where the Portasalza climb ends. Potenza was one of the Lucanian cities that was reduced to a Roman military colony and therefore one of those in which Sulla established the Praetorium, the Roman command, and the Praetorian camp. The road connecting the Roman camp and the command was called Via Pretoria. Over the years, this road has never changed its name, and still today it extends throughout the historic centre, cutting from east to west, starting from Portasalza to Torre Guevara.



19. PALAZZO ALIANELLI

Built in the 17th century, the palace has undergone transformations following several renovations. It was the residence of the statesman Nicola Alianelli, to whom the side street on which the building faces is now dedicated. A dedicatory inscription has been affixed to the façade of the secondary entrance to the palace. During excavations to consolidate the foundations, a stone letterbox was unearthed, engraved with the year “1824”. Restored to its former glory, it has been placed at the entrance to the palace, visible through the glass window of the main iron door. Outside, the gate of the cell, which was presumably used as a passageway for prisoners awaiting trial, remains unchanged, as the courthouse was located a short distance away.

20. CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

Following recent work carried out in the Church of the Holy Trinity, several inscriptions and a fresco depicting a Majesty on the throne dating back to the 14th century have been brought to light. The original structure probably had a different layout from the current 19th-century plan, which was rebuilt after 1872 following the disastrous earthquake of 1857. from the testimonies of Viggiano and Riviello,

who saw the medieval building, it can be hypothesised that the temple had a Romanesque layout with three naves, similar to that of the church of S. Michele, but with truss roofing in the centre and cross vaults in the side naves. Work did not resume until 1872. The building has a single nave with chapels, a coffered ceiling, a short transept and a semicircular apse.

The current form of the apse is the result of work carried out during the Fascist era and after the Second World War. The only surviving part of the original complex is now recognisable in the two remaining sections of the bell tower.

The only documentation that has survived relating to this church is that preserved in the State Archives in Potenza. The oldest document dates back to 1274 and is a chartula venditionis. The first mention of the church is in a document from 1178, which refers to the churches of San Michele and SS. Trinità and attests to their location in the *Castrum Veteris*, the oldest part of the city, separated from the area of S. Gerardo by a public square. The deed reveals the high cost of housing in this area and the type of social class that lived there. According to Antonella Pellettieri, it was precisely from the *Castrum Veteris* that a slow process of urbanisation began in the early 11th century, leading to ever-increasing expansion towards the outside.



21. PIAZZA DUCA DELLA VERDURA

A small, charming square nestled between buildings, it is connected on one side to Via Pretoria and on the other to Via del Popolo (a boundary road that ran along the city walls) by two stone steps built in September 1844. Initially called Largo Tassiello or Largo della Trinità due to the presence of a gate of the same name that allowed access to the aforementioned

square, it was later named after the Duke of Verdura, the intendant of the Province of Basilicata (1842-1847).

The urban and rural police regulations established that from 1845 onwards, meat and fish were to be sold in the square. In July 1943, following the expansion of Largo Tassello or Trinità, the gate was replaced by a sort of virtual alleyway.

22. PALAZZO GIULIANI

This palace originally belonged to the ancient Centomani family of Potenza. It is not known whether the Giuliani family took over through collateral branches of the family or by purchasing the property. Certainly, in the 18th century, the palace belonged to the noble Giuliani family, with the family crest prominently displayed on the portal and a balcony that still has the same structure it had two centuries ago. It is said that during the Bourbon period, those condemned to death would cross Via Pretoria from the prisons in Montereale, where the sentence was carried out, escorted by a large number of gendarmes. The condemned, near the Giuliani palace, used to slow down and look up at the aforementioned balcony, because if the noble Giuliani appeared, it meant that the execution would not take place.



23. PALAZZO BANCA D'ITALIA

Built in 1935 on the site of Palazzo Navarra, formerly Palazzo Viggiani, designed by engineer Solimena and architect Murari, it has a rectangular layout around a central atrium covered by a skylight.

A Neo-Renaissance building, it has a rusticated façade on the first floor, while the upper floors feature 16th-century-inspired loggias.



24. PIAZZA MATTEOTTI (FORMERLY PIAZZA DEL SEDILE)

This square already existed in the Middle Ages. The ancient name Piazza del Sedile owes its historical origins to the fact that the university where the people gathered for electoral assemblies was located there. Numerous urban interventions, following several earthquakes, changed its appearance.

25. TEMPIETTO DI SAN GERARDO

The small temple dedicated to San Gerardo, patron saint of the city, was built on the remains of an ancient ice house and is located on the edge of Piazza Matteotti, close to the Muraglione. The sculpture is attributed to the Potenza artist Michele Busciolano. According to the inscription on the right of the statue of the saint, the work was completed in 1865 and depicts a Neo-Renaissance bust on a semi-octagonal base with pillars ending in Corinthian capitals. The aedicule reproduces the façade of a domed building with a semicircular base, closed at the rear. Five fluted columns decorated with leaf capitals rest on a stepped base. The columns support architraves decorated with cherubs and roses. The inscription on the left commemorates two important moments in the city's history: the invasion of brigands in 1809 and the uprising of 18 August 1860.



26. PALAZZO DI CITTÀ

The palace already existed in the Angevin era and was later used as the town hall. The building has been rebuilt several times over the centuries due to damage caused by earthquakes.

Today, it retains its original façade from 1882. The entrance door has a round arch incorporated between two large windows, above which we can admire a continuous balcony supported by voluted corbels and windows framed by pilasters. It is currently the seat of the municipal administration.



27. PALAZZO DEL FASCIO

Originally, there was the chapel of St. Nicholas (15th century), which was then deconsecrated to become the theatre of St. Nicholas (18th century) and subsequently demolished for the construction of a neoclassical building (early 20th century) as the headquarters of the Fascist party. It is currently the seat of the Municipal Council.

28. STATUE OF A BOY WITH HIS HANDS CLASPED

At the corner of Piazza Matteotti and Via Cesare Battisti stands a column surmounted by a statue of a boy with his hands clasped in prayer, on whose head is placed a capital. The date of the sculpture is uncertain, ranging between the 17th and 19th centuries; its original function is equally unclear. Hypothetically, it could be linked to the chapel dedicated to the Madonna del Carmine, deconsecrated in 1850, which according to archival sources stood on this corner of the square. It is widely believed, but completely unfounded, that the current column is the one bearing the inscription *Mefiti sacrum*, found near the chapel of St. Nicholas, once located in what is now Piazza Martiri Lucani.



29. CHAPEL OF THE BLESSED BONAVENTURA E BORGO

Carlo Antonio Gerardo Lavanga, a Franciscan priest of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, known as Fra Bonaventura, after whom the chapel is named, was beatified in 1775.

Originally his birthplace, the façade is very simple in design. The entrance is through a beautiful limestone portal from the church of the suppressed monastery of the Poor Clares of San

Luca, with two winged cherub heads in the centre, above which two vaulted elements enclose a Franciscan coat of arms.

Inside, the chapel consists of a single room divided into two areas by a transverse arch. The red stone altar with Baroque design and the holy water font also come from the monastery of San Luca. On the altar, a large canvas by the painter Vincenzo Busciolano, dated 1907, depicts the Ecstasy of Blessed Bonaventure, while on the walls are depicted a Last Supper and a triptych of the Passion of Christ, works by the painter Mario Prajer dated around 1950. In addition, some relics of the blessed are kept in a wooden urn placed in a niche on the wall and in two small reliquaries made of wood and metal.

30. PALAZZO PIGNATARI EX PALAZZO CICCOTTI

Its origins can be traced back to the 16th century when the building was used as a riding school by the Counts of Potenza, the de Guevara family. In 1604, it passed to the Counts Loffredo, who subsequently sold it to the Addone family, then to the Ciccotti family, and towards the end of the 1800s, due to family ties, it was taken over by the Pignatari family. Only the imposing portal overlooking Largo Pignatari remains of the palace.



31. PALAZZO BISCOTTI

For centuries, the palace was the residence of the Biscotti family, a noble family from Potenza belonging to the 17th-century landed gentry. The main entrance to the building is on Via Pretoria, which leads to an internal courtyard. The façade is made of exposed stone and brick. The round-arched portal is framed by two pilasters and the cornice, on which there is a balcony with a moulded stone lintel. Unfortunately, the stone family crest that was on the archivolt of the portal has been lost.



32. MONASTERY OF SAN LUCA

The monastery of San Luca, like the previous one dedicated to San Lazzaro, was of female origin and followed the Benedictine rule. The scarcity of sources on the monastery of San Lazzaro stems from its sudden and violent disappearance in the mid-15th century, following the plague epidemic that ravaged many southern regions. The monastery was subsequently probably merged with that of San Luca, along with all its assets. The building was enlarged, restored and rebuilt several times over the centuries. In addition to the convent and church, it included a garden in the lower southern part of the building, with a surrounding wall that stretched as far as the current Via Garibaldi. The monastery was suppressed by the decree of 17 February 1861, which abolished monastic orders of both sexes in the provinces of Naples and Sicily. It is currently the headquarters of the Provincial Command of the Carabinieri. Around 1925, the ancient monastery was embellished with the construction of porticoes. The Carabinieri barracks were initially dedicated to Mario Pagano and later to the Carabinieri lieutenant, Orazio Petrucci from Potenza, who died in Kefalonia in 1943.



33. PORTA SAN LUCA

The gate takes its name from the convent of the Poor Clares of San Luca. On either side of the round arch, you can see the limestone blocks to which the hinges that allowed the gate to be opened were attached.



34. PALAZZO BONIFACIO

In past centuries, it belonged to the historic Potenza families Amati, Iorio and Cantorio, and towards the end of the 1800s, it was purchased by the Bonifacio family. The building overlooks Via Pretoria and still retains the style of a 17th-century palace, characterised by its imposing and austere structure, with walls marked by a few openings, making the palace seem closed around the small courtyard, like a fort. The building is topped by an imposing cornice on stone corbels, finished with a stone and brick pediment, and a remarkable stone portal formed by large blocks alternating between one smooth ashlar and one with two ashlars. The remaining openings are small ovals or simple windows with stone frames. On the ground floor, two smaller portals with archivolts and keystones provided access to the building's service rooms. The courtyard is paved and still has some of its original features: three rings fixed to the wall that were used to tether animals, one of which is fixed to a stone keystone. Four 30 cm arrow slits can still be seen under the plaster of the walls opposite the entrance, to the side of the windows, historical evidence of the use of the palace-fortress. The palace is a listed building.



35. GUEVARA TOWER

The Guevara tower is what remains of the castle dating back to the 10th-11th century. This building originally consisted of a cylindrical tower connected to a short walled enclosure.

The tower may date back to the 9th century, coinciding with the renovation of the city walls.

Subsequently, the fortified structure that would transform it into the castle of the Counts of Potenza would have been built around it. Over the last four centuries, the entire complex has undergone countless changes of use and consequent

modifications, from hospice to barracks to hospital, followed by a long period of neglect, until its demolition in the 1960s to make way for a school building. This structure was recently demolished to give the community a new Piazza Guevara with green areas, inaugurated in July 2024.

36. PALAZZO LOFFREDO

Built between the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century on the site previously occupied by the Convent of the Celestines, it was first the residence of the Guevara family, feudal lords of Potenza, then of the Loffredo counts, after the castle was converted into a hospital. At the beginning of the 19th century, the palace housed the Intendenza di Basilicata (Basilicata Administration); around 1825, it became the seat of the “Real Collegio” (Royal College), established by decree of Louis Bonaparte for the higher education of young people in the Province of Basilicata. In 1850, a decree by King Ferdinand II entrusted the College to the Jesuits, who ran it until 1860. After the unification of Italy, the institute was renamed the “Royal Lyceum” and named first after Salvator Rosa, then after Luigi La Vista and finally after Quinto Orazio Flacco. In the 20th century, Palazzo Loffredo housed the Gesualdo da Venosa Conservatory of Music and the Salvator Rosa National Boarding School. Over the centuries, the palace has undergone numerous restoration and consolidation works. The main façade is built around a courtyard enclosed by the two side wings of the building. The large round-arched entrance portal precedes a second, smaller architraved portal. Above the portal is a six-arched loggia with smooth stone jambs. The building has a good distribution of rooms around an internal courtyard; vertical access is provided by a stone staircase in the right wing. The second floor, accessed via an internal staircase in the right wing of the building, opens onto the courtyard with a loggia with windows. Palazzo Loffredo is currently home to the Superintendency for Archaeological Heritage of Basilicata, the “Dinu Adamesteanu” National Archaeological Museum and the civic gallery, where important exhibitions and cultural events take place.



37. SCALA DEL POPOLO

In 1862, Via del Popolo was built and, to ensure a connection between this new street and the historic city, a pedestrian link was created: the “Scala del Popolo”, work on which began in the same year with the demolition of Portamendola and was completed in the mid-1880s.



EPIGRAPHS

38. *Cn. Papirius Claudianus* (CIL X, 140)

Portasalza

D(is) M(anibus).

Cn. Papirio

Claudiano,

scr(ibae) rei p(ublicae) Pote[nt(inorum)],

mater filio

[infeli]cissimo.



Sacred to the Manes. To Cn(aeus) Papirius Claudianus, scribe of the res publica of the Potentini, the mother to her most unhappy son (placed).
CIL, X 140. Dating: 2nd century AD.

The epigraph was discovered in 1858 during work carried out in this area of the city following the demolition of Portasalza. The first line contains a formula that is very common in funerary inscriptions: an invocation to the Manes, the spirits of the dead. This consecration (adprecatio) was intended to make the tomb inviolable. The deceased, C(naeus) Papirius Claudianus, was a scribe of the res publica of Potentini, i.e. a civil servant in the local administration. During the imperial age, Roman municipalities such as Potentia were governed by a college of four magistrates (quattuorviri) who held office for one year; each of them had public slaves and attendants with various specialisations (apparitores) at their disposal. The scribes were at the top of this large group of subordinates and must have enjoyed a certain prestige within the city community. The delicate task they were entrusted with, namely the drafting and updating of the archives of municipal laws and public accounts, required them to take a solemn oath of allegiance at the beginning of their term of office. The position of scribe also represented a social promotion for those who held it, although it was always one step below the municipal ruling class. We can only speculate, given the lack of information about his age, that this brilliant career was cut short by Claudian's premature death, as it was his mother who wrote the dedication to her unfortunate son.

39. *Mummia Iconio* (CIL X, 146)

Churc of San Michele

L. Afarius

Memor

Mummae Ico=

nio contiber=

nali (!) bene merenti

posuit.

L(ucius) Afarius Memor placed this for Mummia Iconio, his well-deserving companion. CIL, X 146. Dating: 1st century AD.



The epigraph is walled up on the outer wall of the right aisle of the Church of St. Michael the Archangel, near the side entrance. The reuse of Latin inscriptions in the Middle Ages was dictated by purely economic needs, i.e. the availability of cheap materials, but also by ideological reasons. In this way, continuity with the Roman past was emphasised, but the difference with the pagan world was also marked by turning or rotating the inscriptions so that they were not immediately legible.

The inscription is dedicated by Lucius Afarius Memor to his deceased companion Mummia Iconio. The term *contubernalis*, which originally referred to a tent mate in a military camp, is used here to define the type of union between two people who could not legally marry. This type of bond was common among slaves who, with their master's permission, chose to live together as spouses. The *contubernium* was also possible between a free man and a slave woman or between a free woman and a slave man; however, it was not legally recognised and did not give rise to civil kinship. In the case in question, we can assume that at least the woman was a freedwoman, i.e. a freed slave, as her surname, *Iconio*, would seem to suggest. Roman slaves, regardless of their geographical origin, often bore Greek names; once freed, they adopted the gentile name, i.e. the family name, of their former masters or mistress, while their original personal name became their surname. The man's family name, *Afarius*, is of Lucanian origin and is the Latinised form of the Oscan nomen *Afaries*.



40. *C. Brittius Primigenius* (CIL X, 151)

Via Pretoria

C. Brittio Primige=
nio; vixit ann(is) III,
Brittius Primigeni=
[us- - -]O[- - -?]
 - - - - - ?

To C(aius) Brittius Primigenius; lived 3 years, Brittius Primigenius... CIL X, 151.
 Dating: 2nd century AD.

The fragment of a funerary stele, walled along Via Pretoria, gives us the dedication to C(aius) Brittius Primigenius, who died at the age of only three, placed there by his father of the same name. They were perhaps freedmen or descendants of freedmen of one of the most important and powerful senatorial families in Lucania: the Bruttii Praesentes. Probably originally from Grumentum, they later moved to Volcei (Buccino) and became related to the imperial family thanks to the unfortunate marriage between Commodus and Bruttia Crispina. The gens always maintained strong ties with their region of origin, where they owned large estates, including the villa investigated in Barricelle, in the municipality of Marsicovetere (PZ).

41. *Vitalia* (CIL X, 171)

Cathedral

D(is) M(anibus).

Vitaliae;

vix(it) ann(is) XVI,

posuit mater

filiae pientissim<ae>.

Sacred to the Manes. To Vitalia; she lived 16 years, her mother placed her most devoted daughter. CIL, X 171. Dating from the late 2nd - 3rd century AD.

Funeral stele surmounted by a triangular pediment with acroteria on the sides, walled into the external wall of the right transept of the Cathedral. The first line contains a formula that is very common in funerary inscriptions: an invocation to the Manes, the spirits of the dead. This consecration (adprecatio) was intended to make the tomb inviolable. The text is very simple, a mother dedicating a tribute to her daughter, who died at the age of sixteen. The deceased, Vitalia, is referred to only by her cognomen, indicating that she was probably a servant.



42. *Mefitis Utiana* (CIL X, 131)

Palazzo Loffredo

Mefiti Utianae

sacr(um),

M. Helvius M. f. Pom(ptina)

Clarus Verulanus Priscus

5 *aed(ilis), IIII vir, q(uaestor), quinq(uennalis), flamen*

Romae et divi Augusti, curator

rei publicae Potentinorum;

d(e) s(ua) p(ecunia).

Consecrated to Mefite Utiana, Marcus Helvius, son of Marcus, of the Pomptina tribe, Clarus Verulanus Priscus, aedile, quattuorviro, quaestor, (quattuorviro) quinquennial, flamen of Rome and of the divine Augustus, curator of the res publica of the Potentini; (monument erected) at his own expense. CIL X, 131. Dating from the late 2nd to early 3rd century AD.



The sacred inscription, walled into the façade of Palazzo Loffredo, testifies to the fact that the cult of the Oscan goddess Mefite Utiana was still alive in the city at the beginning of the 3rd century AD. The deity was already worshipped in Rossano di Vaglio in the 4th century BC. Having survived the Roman conquest, the sanctuary was abandoned in the mid-1st century AD and the cult transferred to Potentia, where it continued to play a role of primary importance. Based on the discovery in the past of other inscriptions dedicated to the goddess, it is hypothesised that her temple stood in what is now Piazza Martiri Lucani, near the probable forum of the Roman city (Piazza Matteotti).

Lines 3 and 4 contain the dedicator's

name, which identifies him as a Roman citizen. They indicate, in order, the praenomen (individual name), the nomen (family name), the patronymic (father's name), the tribe (electoral district), and the cognomen (nickname). The two additional names, Verulanus Priscus, are perhaps the gentile name and surname of his mother, according to a custom widespread among families of the ruling class from the 2nd century AD onwards.

This is followed by an account of his political career (*cursus honorum*). As a municipality, Potentia enjoyed considerable administrative autonomy, with a local senate (*ordo decurionum*) and magistrates elected annually, at least until the 1st century AD, by the *populus*. The magistrates were grouped into a college of four members: two *quattuorviri iure dicundo* and two *quattuorviri aediles*, of lower rank. Every five years, the senior magistrates were responsible for the census and were called *quinquennales*. The *quaestors*, on the other hand, were responsible for public finances. The dedicator was also a *flamen*, a priest in charge of the cult of the deified Emperor Augustus in Rome.

Clarus ended his career as *curator rei publicae*, a position entrusted by the emperor to trusted individuals to restore the finances of municipalities in difficulty. As a rule, *curatores* were not natives of the city, nor were they allowed to have held office there, as they had to examine the magistrates' accounts. The case of Clarus, therefore, represents a rare and significant exception.

43. *Sodales Fortunenses* (CIL X, 174)

Porta San Luca

[---] + [---]ER[---]

+ata ann(os) XX, m(enses)

VIII, dies VIII;

abstulit una dies

5 anima<m>, corpusq(ue)

simitur arsit et in

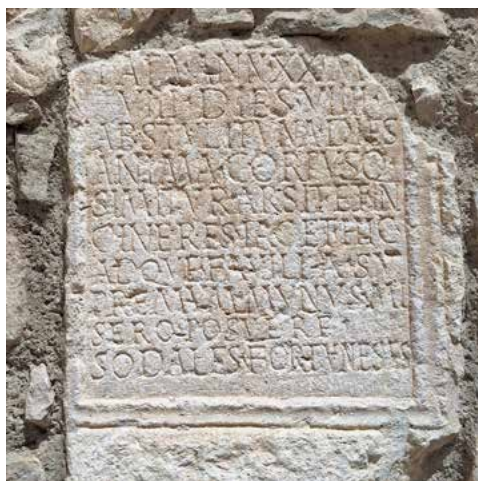
cineres iacet hic

adque favilla. Su=

preum munus mi=

10 sero posuere

sodales Fortunenses.



(...) twenty years, eight months, nine days; in a single day, he took away the soul and the body at the same time, burned it, and here it lies transformed into ashes and sparks. The sodales of the goddess Fortuna dedicated the final funeral offering to the poor man. CIL, X 174. CLE 405. Dating: 2nd century AD.

Roman law prescribed that city cemeteries should be located outside inhabited areas. It is therefore plausible that one of the necropolises of Potentia extended along the south-eastern slopes of the hill on which the city stood. In fact, several funerary inscriptions have been found in this area, particularly in the area that once housed the garden of the Clarisse monastery, now the Orazio Petruccelli barracks. One of these inscriptions is still visible, walled up outside the arch of Porta San Luca, unfortunately with the initial part missing. The name of the deceased has been completely lost, with perhaps only the final part of the cognomen remaining, followed by the precise indication of the years, months and days lived. Starting from the fourth line, the text of the inscription becomes a true poetic composition in hexameters, originally inspired except for the first hemistich, which is taken from the poet Ovid. The verses describe the cremation ritual: the body was laid, together with the funeral bed used for transport, on a wooden pyre and burned together with personal belongings. The misero mentioned in the text must have been a relative of the deceased, belonging to a religious association, the sodales Fortunenses, which took charge of the funeral. In the Roman world, such funeral associations were very common, especially among the lower social classes, including slaves. Their function was twofold: to worship a common protective deity and to ensure an honourable burial for their members and their families. To this end, the members of these associations were required to pay a monthly membership fee, risking expulsion if they failed to do so.



Permanent exhibition “Scale dell’altrove, Strade dell’incanto”
Escalators via Armellini-via Due Torri

44. MONTEREALE

From Portasalza, continuing along Via Orazio Flacco, you reach the Viggiani viaduct, from which you can enjoy vast and intense views of the city and the Lucanian Apennines that surround it. You then arrive at Montereale Park, built on the hill of the same name. The war memorial in the park, originally located in Piazza

XVIII Agosto, is the work of Giuseppe Garbati. The municipal indoor swimming pool and the C.O.N.I. gym, currently undergoing renovation, are also located here.



45. CHURCH OF SAN ROCCO

The building dates back to the second half of the 19th century and was built to replace an older chapel that stood in the same area. The funerary relief reused on the façade of the church of San Rocco dates from between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. The representation of a woman with a veiled head, touching a corner of her veil and holding

a fan in her other hand, reflects a custom of the time. Simple steles and funerary altars with inscriptions, or actual half-length reliefs such as this one, have been found in the areas of the Seminary and the Central Station, in the districts of Betlemme, Montereale, Santa Maria and Bucleto, which at the time were naturally outside the city. In fact, the remains of the deceased, who were cremated, were mainly buried along the main communication routes. The forms of self-representation confirm the political rise of the man, who wears a toga and holds a scroll of parchment, and the role of matron for the woman, emphasised by the gesture of touching her veil.

46. CHAPEL OF THE MADONNA DI LORETO OR SANTISSIMA ANNUNZIATA

A parchment document attests to its existence as early as 1310. Small in size, it still retains its ancient features, even though it has undergone continuous renovations over the years. This small church is known in dialect as “Madonna D’Lurita”, i.e. Madonna di Loreto, to whom the first country festival of the year, held on 25 March, was dedicated.

It is located at a crossing point for farmers who travelled from Potenza, through the gate of San Giovanni, to work in the countryside north of the city. Inside, you can admire a painting of the Annunciation dated 1824 by the Potenza painter Buonadonna.



47. CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DEL SEPOLCRO

There are many conjectures surrounding the origin of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built in the Potenza hamlet at the crossroads of the ancient Roman roads Appia Nuova and Erculea, where, according to hagiography, the holy bishop Gerard performed the miracle of turning water into wine, or rather, made it flow from a rock. Today, scholars agree that it was a settlement of the Order of

the Templars built in the early 12th century, perhaps on the initiative of the Count of Santasofia, lord of the district of Rivisco, and passed around 1314 under the jurisdiction of Bishop Guglielmo, who added the title of Santa Maria. Rebuilt in 1488, as attested by an inscription on the wall of the narthex dating back to a restoration carried out in 1652 on the initiative of the Count of Potenza, Antonio de Guevara, and entrusted to the Observant Franciscan friars, this remarkable building displays the characteristic features of the Catalan Gothic style in its façade and ribbed apse. Inside, you can admire a monumental Baroque altar with sumptuous stucco decorations, which houses an urn containing the relic of the Blood of Christ, placed there in June 1656 by Monsignor Bonaventura Claverio, who also enriched the central nave with an octagonal coffered ceiling in carved and gilded wood.

The church houses valuable paintings, including an Immaculate Conception with St. Francis and St. Roch (second half of the 16th century), the Madonna of Grace with St. Francis and St. Patrick the Bishop (1582) and an Adoration of the Shepherds by Giovanni Ricca (17th century).

48. LUCANIA BARRACKS

Following the suppression of the monastic orders, the monastery of the Reformed Order of Santa Maria and the convent building were used by the Ministry of War as temporary accommodation for soldiers. The Lucania Barracks, formerly Basilicata, was designed in 1885 by Colonel Carlo Tucci and the first section was inaugurated in 1896 to house a battalion of the 13th Infantry Regiment. The work was completed in 1914 with the addition of the second section. The 81st (1898-1901), 7th (1901-1907) and 29th (1907-1929) Infantry Regiments were permanently stationed there.

The barracks suffered severe damage as a result of the aerial bombardments of 8-9 September 1943, which rendered it unusable until 1965, when it was reopened. On 1 February 1977, the 244th Cosenza Battalion became the 91st Lucania Battalion, ideally linking itself to the Lucanian origins of the ancient Brigade. The building has three floors. The main façade overlooks Via Ciccotti and features stone exterior walls with overlapping rows of mullioned windows.



49. SANTA MARIA MUNICIPAL VILLA

Built in the 19th century, this elegant villa has a beautiful monumental fountain in the centre. The avenues are lined with conifers and various other plants, including centuries-old tall trees reminiscent of the city's ancient botanical garden and the Parco della Rimembranza, which were once located here.



50. PROVINCIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Also in the district of Santa Maria is the Provincial Museum, rich in works of art from Hellenic Metaponto, the Polis of Magna Graecia and Lucania. Many objects come from excavations carried out in the countryside of Garaguso, Accettura and Oliveto.





51. PROVINCIAL ART GALLERY

The rooms on the ground floor of the building, designed by Quaroni and Picentini in the early 20th century (Ophelia project, Provincial Mental Hospital, 1905), house a permanent anthological exhibition of art named after Concetto Valente, director of the Provincial Archaeological Museum from 1928 to 1954. The collection of works by nineteenth-century painters includes *The Arrest of the Neapolitan Patriots on Board a French Bilancella* by Michele Tedesco (Moliterno 1834-Naples 1917), *Horace and Buoso da Duera* by Giacomo Di Chirico (Venosa 1844-Naples 1883), *Mercato di Airola* (Market in Airola) and *Contadina con la brocca* (Peasant Woman with Jug) by Angelo Brando (Maratea 1878-Naples 1955), two portraits of women by Giuseppe Mona (Pietrapertosa 1859-Naples 1930?) and a portrait of *Donna con velo* (Woman with Veil) by Vincenzo La Creta (Marsiconuovo 1860-?).

52. SAN VITO BRIDGE

At the end of the 19th century, the remains of a Roman aqueduct with iron pipes (fistulae), presumably dating back to the end of the 3rd century AD, were still visible on the left bank of the Basento. Currently, this is all that remains of the “San Vito” bridge with Roman foundations, originally named “Sant’Oronzio” after the saint to whom the cathedral of Potenza was initially dedicated. The construction of the bridge is linked to the improvement of the road network, implemented thanks to the construction of the Via Herculia, commissioned by Maximian Hercules, Augustus with Diocletian, during his stay in Grumentum. The bridge is therefore part of a wider economic restructuring project commissioned by the emperor.



53. CHURCH OF SANT'ANTONIO LA MACCHIA

A Capuchin monastery, the church was built in 1530 by Fra Tullio of the Balsamo family of Potenza, among the green tree-lined paths. It has been almost completely rebuilt recently. All that remains of the original building is the cross located 50 metres to the right, before reaching the small church, which is still entrusted to the Capuchins. The completely restored building has a façade made of square stone blocks and a small portico in front of the entrance, flanked by a low bell tower. With a single nave, the church has simple furnishings and a statue of St. Anthony, after whom the small place of worship is named.



54. ROMAN VILLA OF MALVACCARO

The only Roman villa recovered in the Potenza area is that of Malvaccaro. There are some traces dating back to the 1st-2nd century AD, beneath the structures visible today, belonging to a phase of monumentalisation that took place between the 3rd and the first half of the 4th century. The reception rooms of the villa are spread over several levels. Starting from the lower level, decorated with pavonazzetto marble crustae, there was access to the triclinium (dining room), with a

mosaic floor featuring a medallion in the centre with the image of the three Graces and ending to the north with an apsidal coenatio.

Here, on a semicircular masonry sofa (stibadium), undoubtedly made more comfortable by cushions, the guests took their seats. Reclining on the sofa, the guests enjoyed the image of the three Graces, in a setting that the figurative representation of amphorae and baskets of fruit and flowers made evocative of Dionysian banquets.

55. MUSMECI BRIDGE

Designed by engineer Sergio Musmeci, this monumental structure, unique in its kind, connects the city with the motorway junction in the direction of Salerno or Taranto. It is a true work of art created in the late 1960s. The plasticity of its form makes the structure a gigantic and refined sculptural object on an urban scale.



56. RAILWAY STATION

Potenza Inferiore station, now known as Potenza Centrale, was inaugurated on 29 August 1880 and features very sober architecture. A succession of entrances with round arches punctuate the first level of the building, and a front section breaks up the linearity of the main façade. The decoration of the façades is limited to the presence of rusticated corners.



Potenza from Montereale Park

On the following page: Roman villa of Malvaccaro, detail of the polychrome floor mosaic, 4th/5th century AD (via Parigi - Potenza)



Città Narrata

Storytelling City

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