



CITTÀ DI VIAREGGIO



Fondazione Carnevale
di Viareggio

VIAREGGIO CARNIVAL 2019



The Viareggio Carnival celebrates in 2019 146 years of life under the sign of a vivid tradition such as the long-established European tradition of Carnival festivals. It is no doubt one of the best known events in Italy. Each year the Viareggio Carnival attracts more than 600.000 spectators gathering to attend the magic of the grand parades of large floats in papier-maché.

The peculiarity of the Viareggio Carnival consists in giant, allegorical papier-maché floats - the biggest ones weighing about forty tons - and expresses today the old knowledge that goes back to the ancient 'trionfi' (war-victory feasting) of the Renaissance, adhering even more to the building techniques of the big sailing boats, a pride of Viareggio traditions.

Every evening, there are carnival celebrations in all of the city's different districts. The most famous bars, restaurants, discos, etc., including the largest hotels in Versilia, host colourful all night masked carnival parties.

Real travelling theatres - the allegorical papier-maché floats are the product of the unequalled creativity, of the extraordinary sculpture and painting skill of Viareggio's 'magicians', and are the highest example of this popular art whose language has spread all over the world.

The parades take place in a ring-like circuit 2 kms. long, on the seaside avenue of Viareggio, best known as La Passeggiata. Here the floats move among the spectators, who can attend the show with no barriers, becoming in turn the protagonists of the parade.

THE GOOD TIMES FACTORY

Since 1873, the Carnival of Viareggio has been the Italian factory of merriment and fun. Every year, the breathtaking parades of papier-mâché giant floats sweeps up the audience in a month-long extensive and enthusiastic celebration. For the entire month of February, Viareggio offers visitors and the community alike an extraordinary program of events, which includes parades along the seaside Promenade, musical all-nighters in the city's different districts, masked dancing balls, fireworks, theatrical performances, cultural events and world sporting competitions.

The most longed-for and anxiously-awaited moment is that of the parade of gargantuan floats – the Corsi Mascherati - scheduled for **Saturday 9, Sunday 17, Saturday 23 February, Sunday 3 and Tuesday 5 March 2019**. Five extraordinary opportunities to admire up close the outstanding allegorical machines created and built by artists from Viareggio while allowing yourself to be swept up in the vibrancy of the masks, of the music and by the beauty of the largest show in the world of its kind.



THE ALLEGORICAL MACHINES

Unique in the world in size, movement, choreography and sensational nature, the giant Carnival floats are true allegorical machines that travel along a ring circuit on the seaside Promenade of Viareggio between breathtaking Liberty buildings and extraordinary squares overlooking the beach. Paper-mâché rules supreme, or better casted and molded paper does. Viareggio-born painter and builder Antonio D'Arliano invented this technique in 1925. Over the years, it has allowed the construction of increasingly large floats that at the same time are quite light. Models in clay, plaster casts and newspaper and glue made of flour and water are the simple ingredients of the greatest show on earth of its kind. Thanks to a unique artisanship, the philosophy of reusing and recycling are the cornerstones of the Carnival of Viareggio.

During the Carnival period, Viareggio and its Passeggiata become a true open air Museum where people, coming from all over the world, meet to enjoy the event together. The parades also include folkloristic bands and performers with the most original masks, offering excitement, culture and tradition in a wide programme of entertainment and fun for children and adults.

Viareggio, the Carnival town, also known as *the Pearl of the Tyrrhenian Sea* for its long sandy beaches, its pine-woods, its beautiful promenade, a natural stage for its Carnival surrounded by the Apuan Alps and the Art Deco architecture of its villas along the seaside, is situated on the northern coast of Tuscany.

THE CITTADELLA OF VIAREGGIO CARNIVAL



This impressive complex, inaugurated in 2001, incorporates sixteen large buildings where the construction of the floats are carried out. During the days of the parade, the large floats leave the *Cittadella* (a series of large buildings including workshops, the *Carnival* museum, a teaching laboratory where the art of papier-mâché is taught and the *Carnival* film and photo archives, where material from 1925 can be found) and march down the purposely built boulevards: *a town fit for the Carnival*.

Inside the *Cittadella* there is also the *Carnival Museum*. Here the paper sketches and models of the floats dating back from 1925 are preserved. There is also an archive containing photographs and video documentaries dating back from the early 1900's

It is possible to visit the **Papier Mâché Museum exhibiting** the models of the recently awarded floats, together with the special works of value. The museum offers an historical review on Viareggio Carnival in a colourful and enjoyable environment typical of the Carnival atmosphere. The second floor of the Museum of Carnival Citadel hosts the **Museum of Contemporary Art "Carnevalotto"**. This unique collection of paintings, sculptures and graphics, created by famous artists, on the theme of the carnival is the result of the fruitful encounter between the world of contemporary art and the imaginative and creative work of the Carnival of Viareggio. At the end of the tour, a video of the history of the Carnival.

On weekends, during the evenings, thousands of people enjoy taking part in the street parties **Rioni** and each year this strengthens the feeling of identity of the people to their roots: a continuous rebirth under the *Burlamacco* sign, the official mask of Viareggio. During the *Carnival* month, there is also a series of plays in *Viareggio's* vernacular language. For four weeks, Viareggio offers the opportunity for having lots and lots of fun!