

Montecassiano



Every time a limit is found,
the city expands from that very point,
following a never-ending spiral.

(Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili*)

The spiral village

Perched on a hill in the Macerata area and enclosed by perfectly preserved walls, Montecassiano reveals itself like a story told in concentric circles: spiral alleys that follow the shape of the hill, brick houses, archways, hidden courtyards, and stone steps worn by time. Everything here leads toward the medieval heart of the village.

At its center pulses Piazza Unità d'Italia, the civic and spiritual heart, with a dramatic staircase leading to the Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta (Collegiate Church of Santa Maria Assunta), a treasure trove of masterpieces such as the monumental altarpiece by Fra Mattia della Robbia and the refined Callido organ. Surrounding it stands the majestic Palazzo dei Priori and a series of churches that narrate centuries of devotion and vibrant community life.

Montecassiano invites you to get lost, allowing yourself to be surprised by unexpected views and panoramas that open up toward the Sibillini Mountains and the Adriatic Sea. From the walls to the square, from noble palaces to the Pinacoteca (Art Gallery), every stone speaks of history, memory, and creativity. It is a place that preserves the beauty of the Middle Ages while continuing to thrive with the energy and warmth of an authentic community.













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DISCOVER

At the court of the Cassiani counts

The origins of Montecassiano date back to Roman times, as evidenced by the artifacts preserved in the Pinacoteca Girolamo Buratto. The village solidified in the Middle Ages as a fortified *castrum*, developing around the court of the Counts Cassiani, from which its name is derived. The medieval walls, still intact today, were equipped with three access gates – San Giovanni, Armando Diaz, and Cesare Battisti – which ensured defense and territorial control.

Over the centuries, Montecassiano experienced alternating dominations, plundering, and reconstructions, reaching a period of prosperity during the Renaissance when churches were enriched and important civic palaces were built.

Among the most precious testimonies is the altarpiece by Fra Mattia della Robbia, among the largest works ever created by the various artists of the Della Robbia dynasty, and the Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta, the spiritual heart of the village.











Today, Montecassiano presents itself as an intact medieval village, capable of combining historical memory with contemporary vitality.

TRADITIONS, CULTURE, FLAVORS, EVENTS

A blend of traditions, flavours and creativity

Montecassiano is a village that thrives year-round, animated by festivals and celebrations that strengthen the community. The Sagra dei Sughitti (Festival of Sughitti), featuring the ancient sweet made from cooked must, marks the autumn, while the Svicolando Festival brings street art to the alleys. The Palio dei Terzieri (Palio of the Districts) reenacts the Middle Ages, the MACSI Festival and Montecassiano Music Festival light up Piazza Unità d'Italia with performances and culture. A moment of deep spirituality is the Processione del Venerdì Santo (Good Friday Procession), which traverses the village in a silence filled with devotion.

The cuisine reflects the authentic flavors of the Marche: cured meats, cheeses, bread, homemade sweets, and local wines such as Rosso Piceno and Verdicchio. The sughitti tell the story of the harvest, transforming the yield into a celebration. The village also preservesancientagriculturalknowledge:organicvineyardsvinified in terracotta amphorae, centuries-old olive groves producing intense and fragrant extra virgin olive oil, and bees that provide different honeys depending on the seasons.



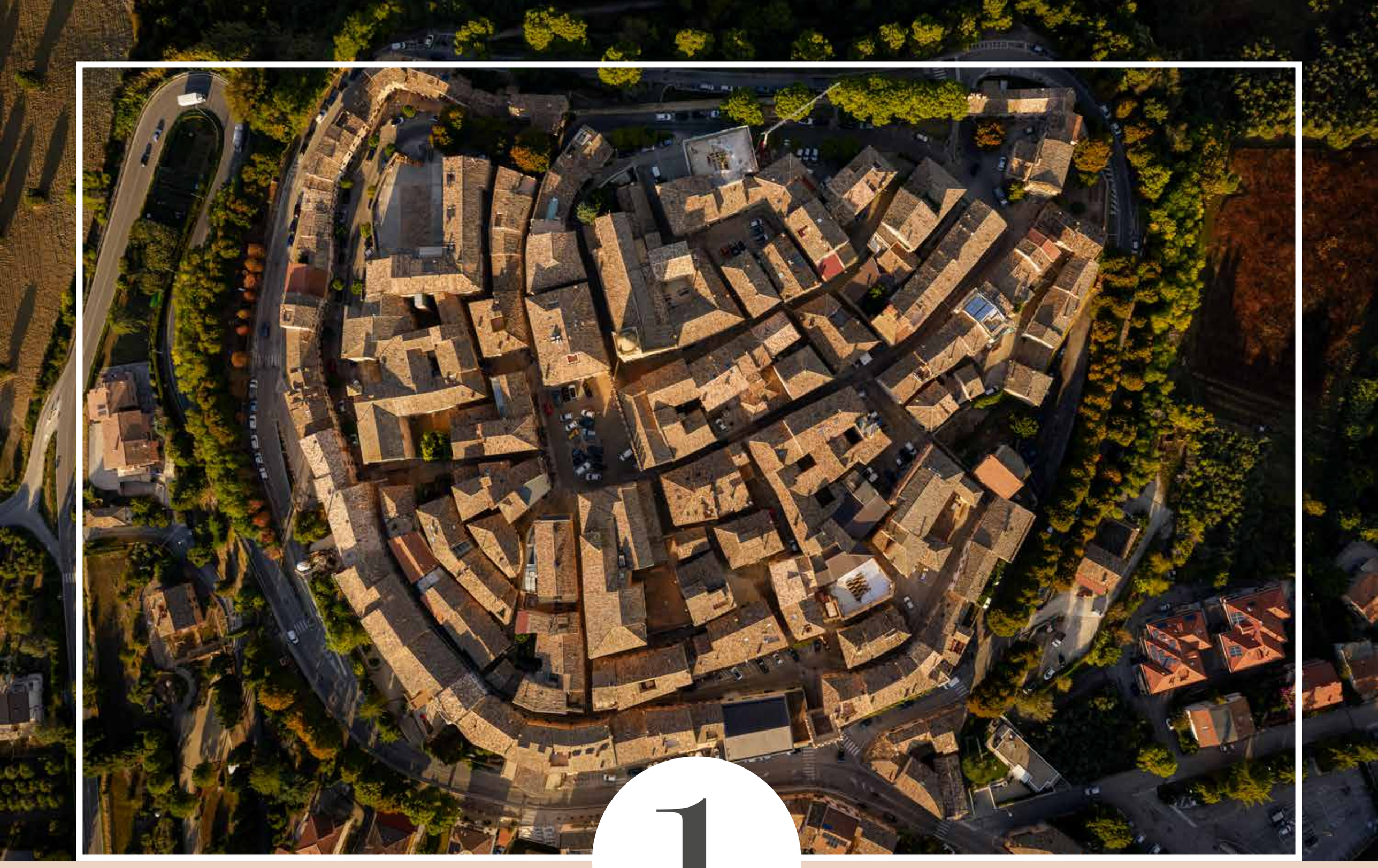
Montecassiano is thus an intertwining of traditions, flavors, and creativity that transforms every event and every product of the land into a living and authentic experience.


3

MUST-DOs

Five Authentic Experiences to Enjoy in Montecassiano

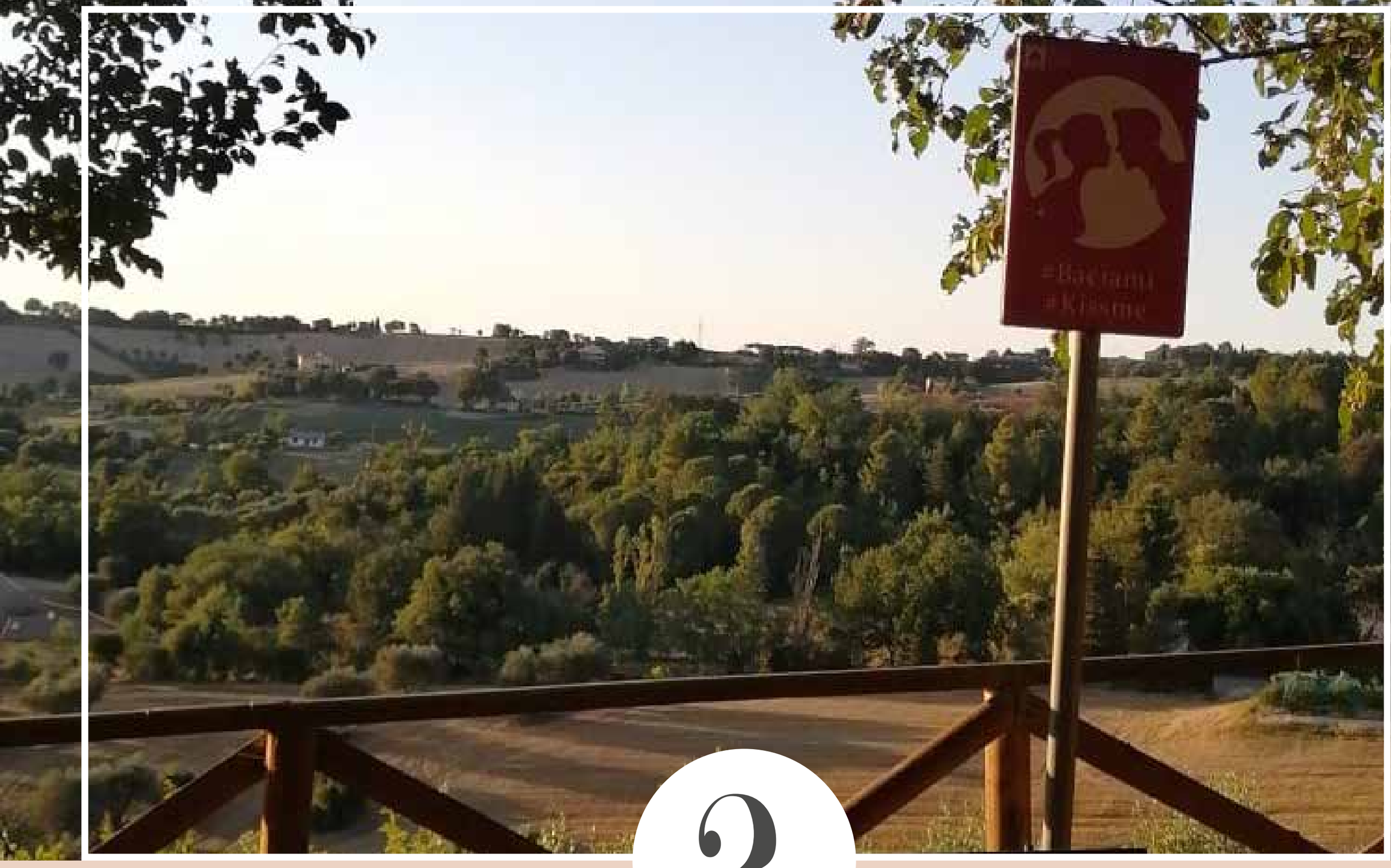




1

GET LOST IN THE MEDIEVAL “ONION” ALLEYS

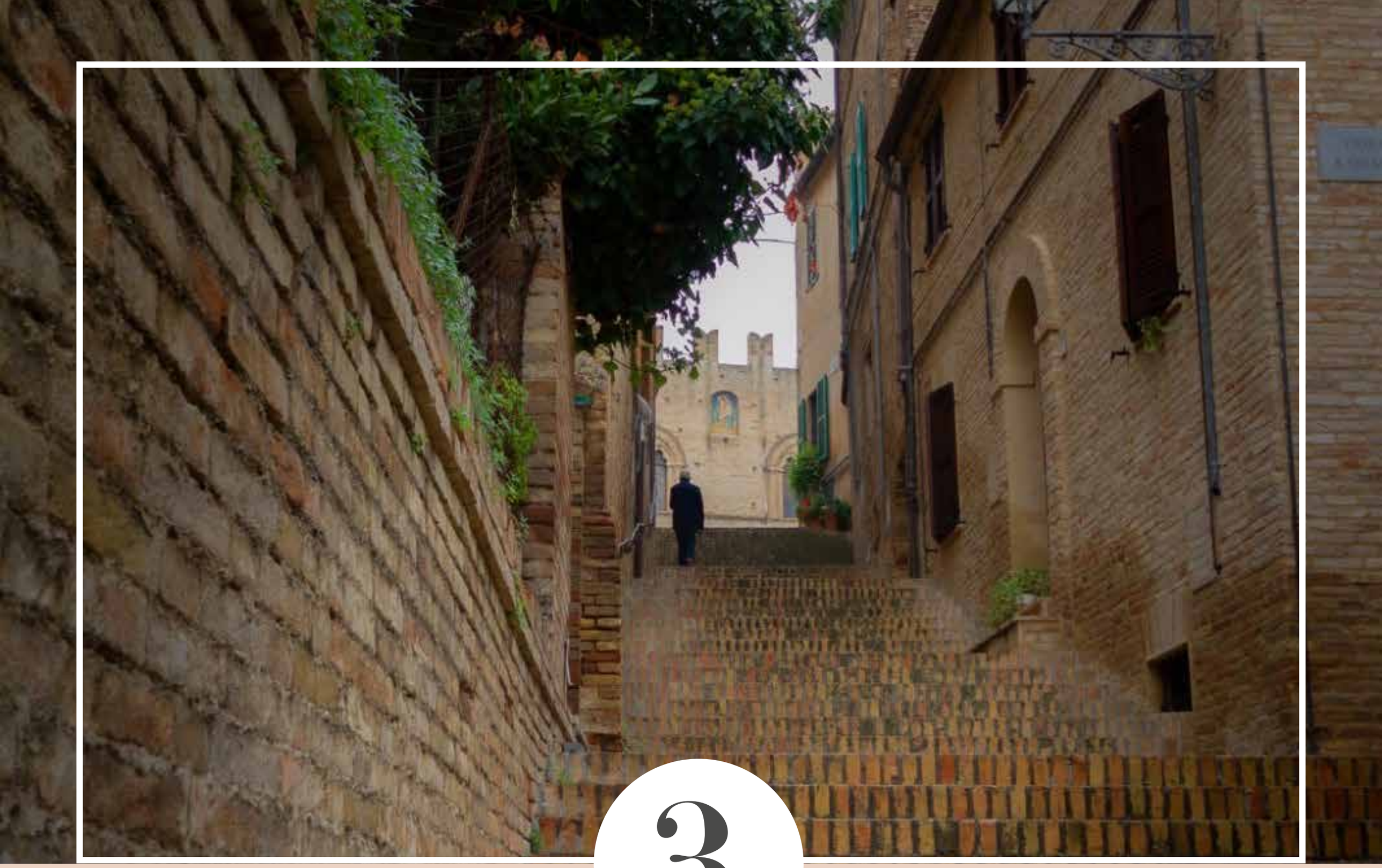
The medieval urban layout of Montecassiano, built in concentric circles following the shape of the hill, invites you to slowly lose yourself among cobbled streets, brick arches, and covered passages. In the alleys of San Francesco and Santa Chiara, time seems to stand still: silence, intimate atmospheres, and sudden glimpses of the Marche countryside provide authentic and unexpected emotions..



2

BREATHE IN NATURE AND VIEWS AT PARCO DEL CERRETO

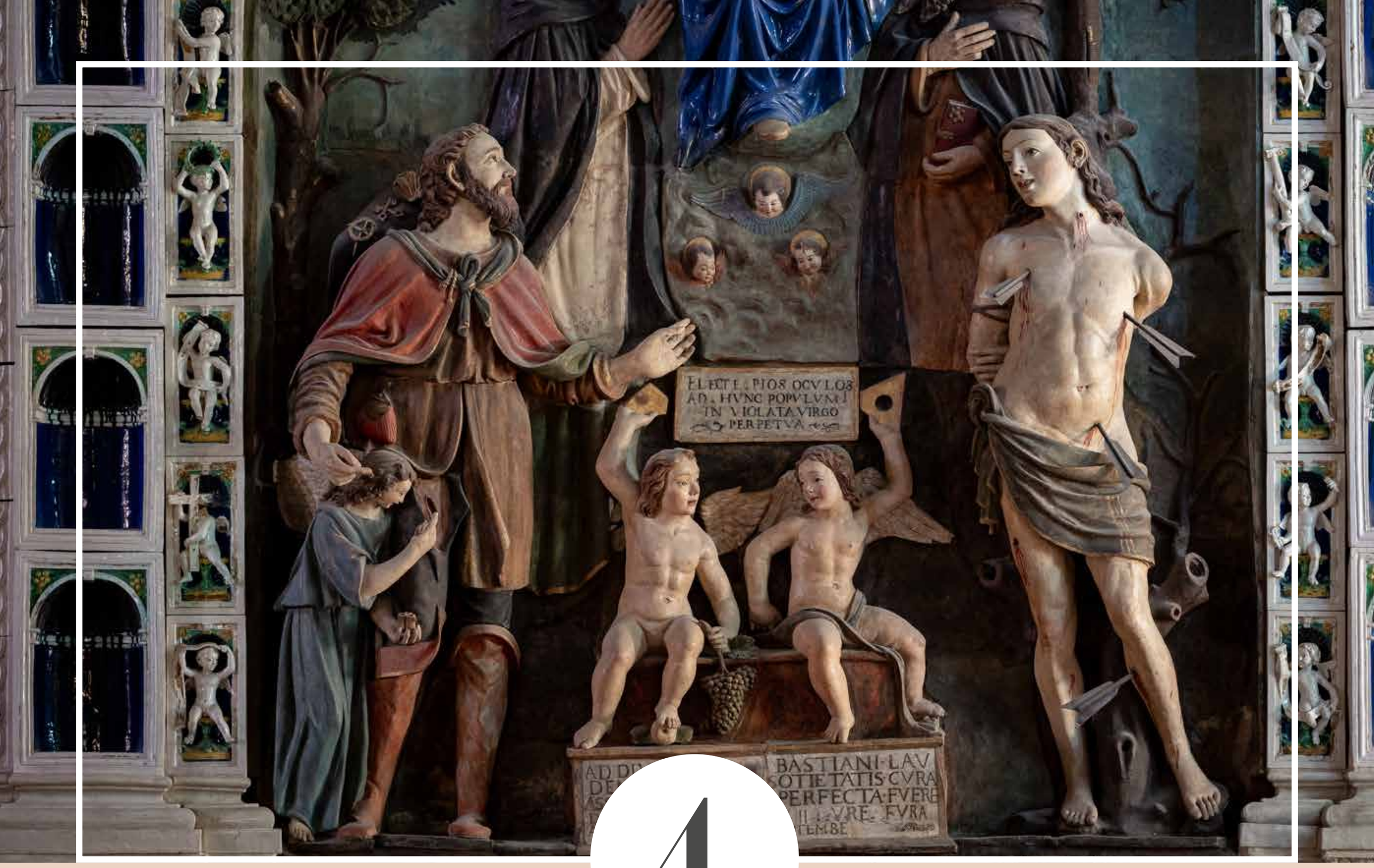
A green oasis that overlooks the Macerata hills, the Sibillini Mountains, and the Adriatic Sea like a natural balcony. Among pines, oaks, mulberries, and aromatic plants, Parco del Cerreto is the ideal place for refreshing walks, contemplative pauses, or simple moments of quiet. Here, nature becomes a travel companion and the perfect setting to conclude a journey through the village.



3

CLIMB THE STEPS OF VIA ROMA

A spectacular staircase, framed by a wide archway, leads to Piazza Unità d'Italia, the scenic heart of Montecassiano and an authentic medieval lounge. Here, the Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta dominates the square with its grandeur, while the Palazzo dei Priori stands on the sides, symbolizing the civic history of the village. Climbing the staircase means embarking on a journey through time, back to the 12th century, when the court of the Counts Cassiani stood here.



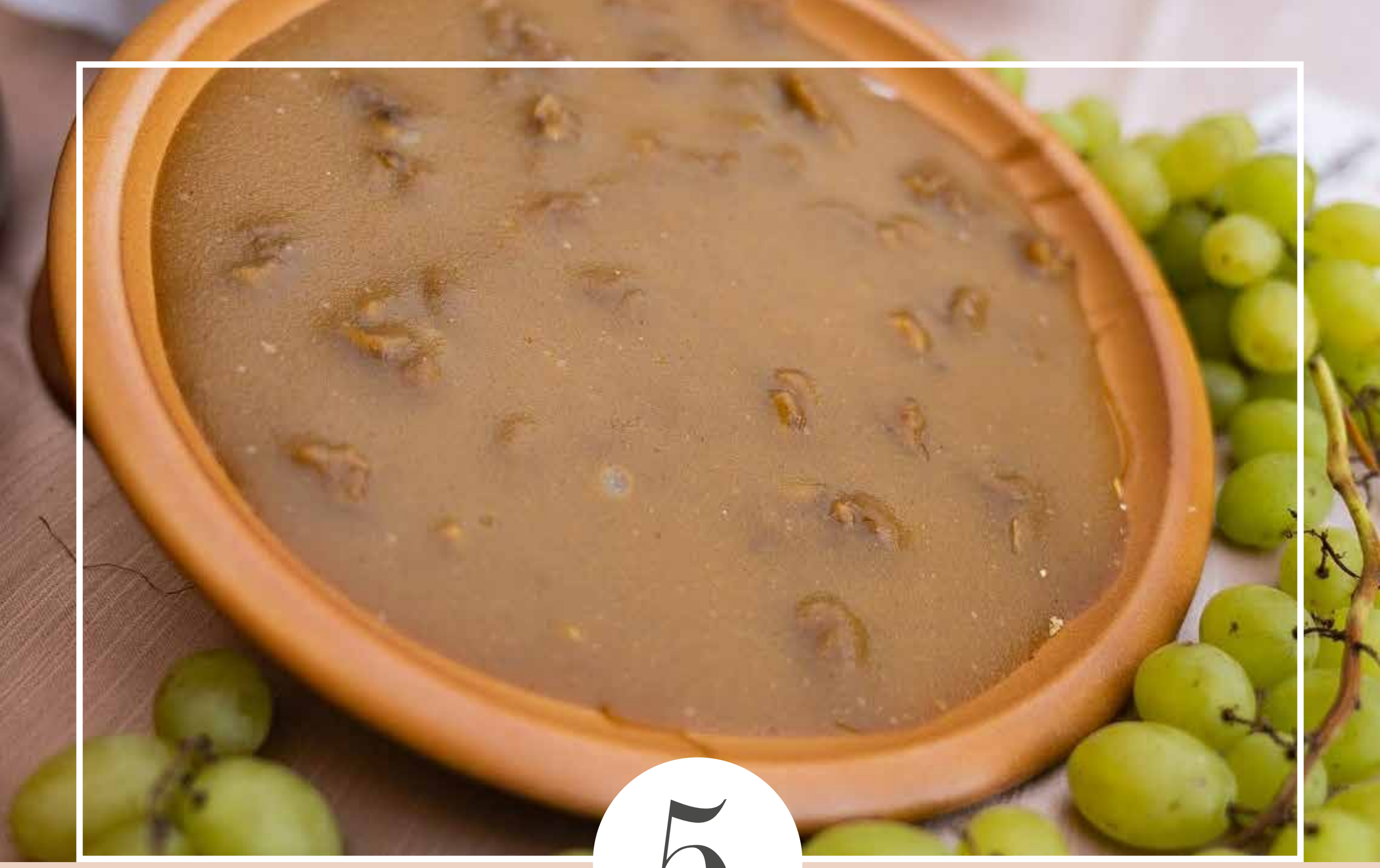
4

ADMIRE THE ALTARPIECE BY DELLA ROBBIA

The Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta houses a unique masterpiece: the altarpiece by Fra' Mattia della Robbia, seven meters high and made of glazed and painted terracotta. The work depicts the Madonna with Child in glory, surrounded by Saint Sebastian, Saint Roch, Saint Peter Martyr, and Saint Anthony the Abbot. Its exceptional nature lies not only in its monumental size but also in the fact that it is the only documented work of one of the last heirs of the famous Florentine della Robbia

workshop, prominent during the Renaissance between the 15th and 16th centuries. Recent restoration has also revealed a precious detail: in the background appears a representation of Montecassiano, which binds the work indissolubly to the village. A rare treasure, unmissable for those who wish to discover the history and art that make Montecassiano unique.





5

TASTE THE “SUGHITTI”, THE HARVEST SWEET

Among the most authentic flavors of Montecassiano is a sweet that smells of peasant history: the sughitti, made with cooked must and corn flour, once offered as a propitiatory rite during the harvest. Even today, during the Sagra dei Sughitti, the village fills with aromas, songs, and conviviality, transforming a simple recipe into a celebration and shared memory. Tasting them means entering the agricultural heart of the territory and reliving a deep connection with the land and its seasons.

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