

Piazza d'Azeglio

The 19th Century Florence itineraries: Squares and Music

The 19th Century Florence itineraries – designed significantly to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the unification of Tuscany to the newly born unified state (1859 – 2009) – will take citizens and tourists on the discovery of the traces of a Century that left a profound impression on the face of Florence. The idea is to restore the role of 19th Century Florence within the collective imagination, alongside the Florence of Medieval and Renaissance times. This is why one of the Century's typical customs will be renewed: the military band concert in a city square.

27 September 2009
Piazza d'Azeglio
From 11.30 to 12.30
Musica d'ordinanza
del 1° Reggimento
Granatieri di Sardegna



Ever since the year 1786, when the earliest military bands were formed, the *Musica d'ordinanza del 1° Reggimento Granatieri di Sardegna* has played a leading role. It is thanks to this long tradition that the *Musica d'Ordinanza* has succeeded in adapting to the modern musical scene without losing that particular style and ceremony that have always been a mark of the Grenadiers. The result is an atmosphere which combines the artistic and the military, thanks to the formality and ceremoniousness of the performance. The *Musica* of the 1st Regiment is conducted by Warrant Officer Domenico Morlungo and performs on special occasions in Rome and the rest of the country. It is a unit of the "Compagnia di Rappresentanza del Battaglione Granatieri Assietta", which gets its name from the Alpine plateau on the border with France where the Grenadiers repulsed the French troops during the War of the Austrian Succession. The band wears the historic uniform dating back to 1848.



The Granatieri di Sardegna

who are this year celebrating their 350th anniversary, are the oldest military unit in the Italian Army. They are in fact the descendents of the *Reggimento delle Guardie* of the Duchy of Savoy, established in 1659 by Duke Carlo Emanuele II. In 1720 the Dukes of Savoy became Kings of Sardinia, but it was only 130 years later, in 1852, that the "Brigata Granatieri" ultimately took on the title of *Granatieri di Sardegna*. The Grenadiers – part of all the armies of the time, including the small army of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany



– were "special forces" selected for their outstanding physique and courage, in order to get close enough to the enemy to throw hand grenades. The grenades on their cap badges bear witness to their speciality. Divided at various times into two or three regiments, the Sardinian Grenadiers fought with the Sardinian-Piedmontese Army in the Wars of Succession of Spain (1701-12), that of Poland (1733-35) and Austria (1742-48); in the First War of Independence (1848-49), in the Crimean War (1855-56) and the Second War of Independence (1859). Having become part of the newly formed Italian Army

(1861), they took part in the Third War of Independence (1866), the campaign in Eritrea (1895-97) and the one in Libya (1911-12), as well as the First World War and the war in East Africa (1935-36). During the Second World War they were in the Balkans (1941-42). Returning to Italy and deployed around Rome, they were among the units which from 8 to 10 September 1943 attempted to prevent the German occupation of the city. Re-formed on 15 May 1944, they took part in the War of Liberation with a battalion in the Gruppo di combattimento Friuli.



1859
2009



Con la partecipazione di



In collaborazione con



27 September 2009, Piazza d'Azeglio

Themes dealt with along the route are: the house (in the Piazza) of Pellegrino Artusi, who 'unified Italy' from the gastronomic point of view, and with his famous recipe book (*L'Arte di mangiar bene*) contributed also to the unification of the Italian language; the nearby Cimitero di Porta a Pinti, known as the English Cemetery on account of the many foreigners who not only chose to live permanently in Florence but also to be buried there; and finally the presence of a large and ancient Jewish community which in 1874-1882 built the new Synagogue in the vicinity: one of the first large buildings devoted to any religion other than Catholic.

10.00 Piazza d'Azeglio, opening of an **information booth** where visitors may book for the afternoon visits and receive a free copy of the recipe book *A tavola con l'Artusi. Ricette per tutto l'anno*.

10.00 - 18.00

Piazza d'Azeglio, Small Exhibition and Market of Antiques and Things of the Past, organized by Confesercenti.

Band of the First Grenadier Regiment

This military band will march through the streets of the city centre, making stops in the main piazzas along the following route: **Piazza Signoria** (8,30) At the start of *Corri la vita* (*Run your life*) foot race, **Piazza Duomo** (9,00), **Piazza SS. Annunziata** (10,30), **Piazza D'Azeglio** (11,30). (Hours are only approximate and can change slightly)

12.00

A stage performance dedicated to the memory of Pellegrino Artusi.

12.15

Final concert by the Military Band and departure for Piazza SS. Annunziata.

15.00/15.30

Start of the **guided** visits to the Synagogue, Piazza d'Azeglio and the English Cemetery, starting from Piazza d'Azeglio.

17.00/17.30

Start of the guided visits to Piazza d'Azeglio and the English Cemetery, setting out from Piazza d'Azeglio.

18.00

Closure of information booth.

The guided visits may also be booked by telephone at 055 2654753 from Monday 21 September. 055 2654753.



NEXT APPOINTMENT

11 October
in Piazza Santa Croce

Organized by the Ufficio Promozione Turistica and the Ufficio Centro Storico Unesco

Texts: A. Giordani and G. M. Manetti.



The Piazza and its history

The growth of the city as a result of its becoming, albeit temporarily, the capital city of the Kingdom of Italy, involved those areas which were within the walls but not yet built up. In particular the area to the north-east of the city, the triangle between Porta a Pinti, the church of Sant' Ambrogio and Porta alla Croce, which today includes Piazzale Donatello, Piazza Sant' Ambrosio and Piazza Beccaria. It was then known as "la mattonaia", because of its numerous brick kilns. After the expropriation of the numerous vegetable gardens in the area came the construction of a whole new quarter of the city, also called "della Mattonaia". In its centre, where eight roads converged, a large piazza was designed, based on the scheme of the squares in London, with a garden in the middle surrounded by railings (and only the proprietors of the houses overlooking the square had keys to the gates). In the middle of the piazza was a circular wooden structure, the Teatro Umberto (called after King Umberto I), which perished in a fire in 1889. In 1867 the new piazza was named after the statesman and writer Massimo d'Azeglio, who had recently died.



Pellegrino Artusi

Pellegrino Artusi, who lived at no. 35 in the piazza, must be given credit for introducing the Italian language *even into the kitchen*. The language in which he wrote his celebrated recipe book *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene* puts into everyday Tuscan speech all those expres-

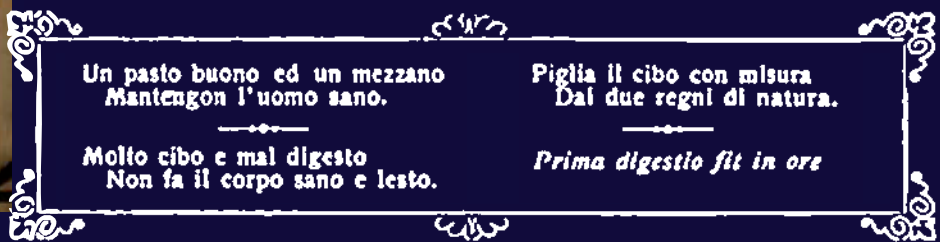
sions which until then, in recipe books and elsewhere, had been expressed by Italianized French words, or indeed directly in French.

Throughout the event a volume containing a small selection of Artusi's recipes will be available free of charge at the information booth.



12.00 Meeting with Pellegrino Artusi

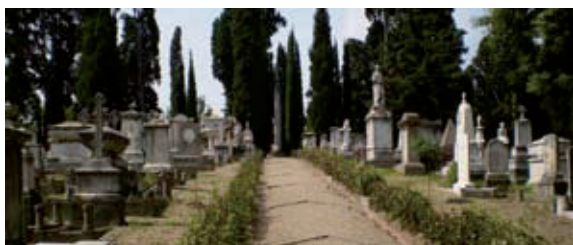
Intermezzo with La Terza Pratica theatrical company



Taking a look at a whole century. The Guided Tours

The Cimitero di Porta a Pinta, ("The English Cemetery")

The plot of land for this famous cemetery, lying just outside the 14th-century walls at Porta a Pinta, demolished at the time when Florence became temporary capital of Italy, was purchased by the Swiss Reformed Evangelical Church, which chose it as a place of burial. Among the international communities of non-Catholic religions represented here (Protestants, Greek Orthodox, particularly Russians and Anglicans) the British are certainly the most numerous, so that it has always been known as the *cimitero degli inglesi*. Of the over a thousand graves, the most famous are perhaps



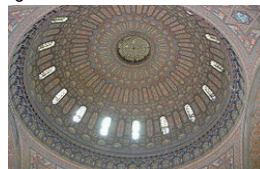
those of the poetess Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the poet Walter Savage Landor and the patron and man of letters G. P. Viessesux. In this enchanted island, amid towering cypresses and ringed by the city's traffic, the visitor breathes an air surreal and otherworldly. It provided inspiration for the masterpiece of the Swiss painter A. Böcklin, *The Island of the Dead*, which

in turn inspired the symphonic poem by the Russian composer Sergei Rachmaninoff.

The Synagogue

In 1868 David Levi, President of the Università Israelitica, bequeathed his worldly goods to establish a Jewish place of worship "worthy of the city". The purchase of a piece of land in the vicinity of Piazza

d'Azeglio, in the new quarter of the "Mattonaia", thus made it possible to build the new Synagogue (1874-1882), designed by Marco Treves and other architects. It is built on a central plan in the Moorish style, faced with white travertine and pink pomato, with a central dome covered with copper sheets of the characteristic green colour and domed turrets flanking the façade. The interior is completely covered with painted arabesques in red and blue, originally with gold highlights.



In the garden in front of the building is a large memorial tablet bearing the names of the 248 Florentine Jews killed by the Nazis, while a smaller tablet is dedicated to the memory of the members of the Jewish community who fell in the First World War.

