



Projet Erasmus+ Namur - Marsala

" Patrimonia "



A la découverte du patrimoine historique, architectural et culturel

# « Pretoria » Square in Palermo



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ISSI « Abele Damiani » - Marsala

# ABSTRACT

## L'histoire

"Piazza Pretoria", also known as "Piazza della Vergogna", a few metres from the "Quattro Canti", is one of the emblematic places of the city of Palermo, rich in history and a magnificent example of urban decorative art.



The square took its current configuration in the 16th century when the Palermo Senate, based on the same square, bought a large fountain, sculpted in Carrara marble by the architect Francesco Camilliani, in order to decorate the space.

The fountain, now known as Fontana Pretoria, fits perfectly into the rich monumental complex that surrounds the perimeter of the square, thanks to the presence of the splendid churches of Saint Joseph and Saint Catherine, Palazzo Guggino, now known as Palazzo Chiamomonte-bordonaro, Palazzo Pretorio, Palazzo Gastone and Palazzo Bonocore.

The fountain dates back to 1554, originally designed for the large garden of Don Pietro di Toledo's villa. The construction in Florence was not completed because of the enormous debts of the nobleman, which forced his son to put it up for sale. The Palermo Senate seized the great opportunity and spent a very large sum to transport the 664 marble pieces from the fountain to Palermo, which were collected by the architect's son, Camillo Camilliani..



The fountain rises on several levels, each of which is characterized by a series of marble pools with allegorical representations of the four rivers of Palermo (Oreto, Papireto, Mareddolce and Gabriele) and large circumcentric pools decorated with animal heads. In addition to large sculptures representing the mythological deities of Olympus, on which stands out the Bacchus (also identified with the Genius of Palermo), placed at the top of the central sculptural complex. The other statues represent different mythological figures, including Venus, Adonis, Hercules, Apollo and Diana.



There are many stories and symbols related to the fountain, first of all the one that says that the name "Shame" is due to the cloister nuns who lived in the adjacent convent, who, seeing the nudity of the statues, judging them noisy and indecent, decided one night to destroy their genital organs.

But still, until the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, history tells us that the fountain became the symbol of the corruption of the powerful and rulers, a reason for extreme shame.

The monumental fountain is surrounded by a wrought iron gate, made by Giovanni Battista Basile, closed for many years and finally, recently, reopened to allow tourists and citizens to pass through.

## Culinary tradition: street food

Palermo is also known for its culinary traditions and for its sale of typical street food products. Palermo's street food is a tradition that has its roots in the city's history. There are many places between the alleys and markets of the Sicilian capital. One of them is the "Vucciria", a typical Palermo district where you can enjoy typical dishes in the street at any time of the day. Gastronomy is based on the use of poor ingredients such as offal. It is the nobles of the animal glued the snout, ears and feet of the calf that are eaten boiled and spiced in a salad.



A dish of excellence is the "Ca Meusea" bread, a stuffed loaf with liver, lungs and trachea reduced to small pieces and fried in lard. You can find it "Schetto" (single) or "Maritato" (married), the latter is served with a grater of salted cheese.



One of the historical places where eating is the old "Focacceria S. Francesco", located in the alleys of La Vucciria. The old focacceria was founded in 1834 and over the years has welcomed its famous characters such as Garibaldi, Pirandello and Crispi.



This sanctuary, typical of Palermo food, is located in Alessandro Paternostro Street 58 and is open every day from 11.00 to 23.00.

(wikipedia,palermoviva.it,turismo.it)