

# CALTANISSETTA

This is a brief presentation of our city

# The origins

Caltanissetta Municipality of Sicily (421.2 km<sup>2</sup> with 63.153 inhab. In 2017, called Nisseni) provincial capital. The city is located in the heart of the island, at 568 m s.l.m. in the high basin of the Salso river. The historic core occupies the central-eastern section of the urban agglomeration, which has significantly expanded, to NO with more modern residential neighborhoods and with an industrial area . In the past, linked to the agricultural and mining activities (sulfur, potash), of the surrounding territory , the functions , while remaining the incidence of the commercial services sector, have increasingly turned to the public administration sector, while the decline of the productive sectors has negatively affected the local financial structures.

Of ancient origin, but uncertain according to some the ancient Nisa or Nissa, name from which with the addition of the Arabic Qal 'at «castle», the current name would have been derived. In 1087 it was conquered by Roger I the Norman and by him fiefdom to various members of his family; the Aragonese erected it in the county for the Lancias, from whom in the first half of the 14th century. they had the Aragons, dukes of Randazzo; passed in 1407 to the Moncada, they remained until the abolition of feudalism in Sicily in 1812. In 1820 he refused to participate in the Sicilian liberal movements, thus suffering the reprisals of the insurgents; but in 1848-49 he joined the revolution.



# Piazza Garibaldi

Piazza Garibaldi is the main square in the historic center of Caltanissetta. At the center of the square is the bronze statue of the Fontana del Tritone. Historically, the square, before the unification of Italy, had the name of Piazza Ferdinando in honor of King Ferdinand II of Bourbon. On the eastern side stands the imposing Cathedral, while on the western side the Church of San Sebastiano.



# San Sebastiano's Church

One of the most important church in Caltanissetta is San Sebastiano's church. It was built in the 1500 in gratitude to the saint for the deliverance from the plague. In 1664 it was defined "in ruins" and it was almost demolished. Then it was restored in the 1890 by Pasquale Saetta. The church's fontage is made up of various architectural styles. It must be absolutely visited!



# The Cathedral

The Cathedral, named after “Santa Maria la Nova” stands on the stage of Piazza Garibaldi. It was built between 1570 and 1620 and was only open to the public in 1622. The building has a large facade, divided by pilasters flanked by two bell towers.



*Luca Miccichi©Photo*

The interior is divided into three naves supported by fourteen arches, each one dedicated to an Old Testament character. At the point of intersection between the two arms of the cross, above the altar, there is a dome, from which a large wooden crucifix descends. The visitors love: the Immaculate Conception, the Coronation of the Virgin and the Triumph of Saint Michael. These are the masterpiece of the Flemish painter Guglielmo Borremans who worked there in 1720.



# Festivities

The main festivals in Caltanissetta are May 8 and "San Micheli u virdi", in memory of the miracle that freed Caltanissetta from the plague in 1625.

6 August, Feast of the Redeemer, patron of the city, there is a procession for the old part of the city and return to the cathedral.

September 29th, patronal feast of St. Michael the Archangel, introduced following the apparition of 1625; in the same days there is a fair, which already existed in 1550. December 8th, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, co-patron of Caltanissetta, procession from the cathedral to the church of San Francesco all'Immacolata. The simulacrum is reported to the cathedral two weeks later.

December 28th, Feast of the Three Saints and Te Deum of thanksgiving for the escaped danger deriving from the Messina earthquake of 1908 with a procession of the simulacra of St. Michael the Archangel, Immaculate Conception and Redeemer.



# The Christ Redeemer

The Christ Redeemer is an important monument of Caltanissetta, it was created here in the 1900 because of his geological position, on the top of a mount. The official ceremony was the 29 of September because that day is the festivity of Saint Michael the Archangel and a lot of pilgrims come to Caltanissetta from all the parts of the Sicily.



Form the Redeemer you can see all Caltanissetta.  
The basement of the monument is made with gray limestone stones and under the monument there's a small chapel and a crypt. The Christ Redeemer is object of a popular devotion and his festivity is the 6 of August, the day of Christ's transfiguration.

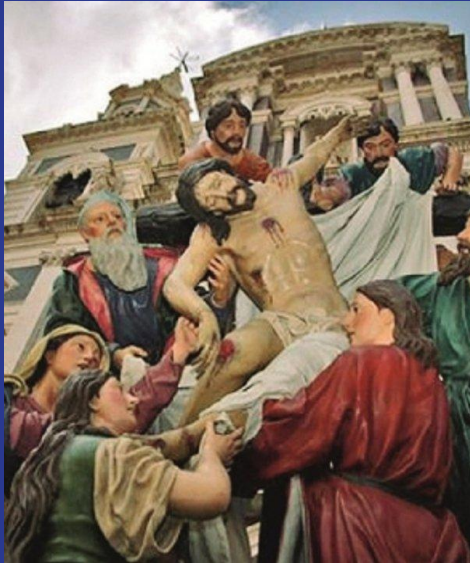


# Le Vare



Le Vare - also called Misteri - are sixteen statuesque groups made of wood, paper mache and plaster, carried in procession on the evening of Holy Thursday. It is one of the most important most important moments of the Holy week in Caltanissetta.

Tradition is very ancient and has its roots in distant centuries, although with different rituals. In the eighteenth century, the visit to the Sepulchres - which today takes place with the tour of the Churches, on the afternoon of Holy Thursday and Friday morning - was solemnized by the Congregation of St. Philip Neri, who wore five papier-maché groups with scenes from the Passion, for the Churches of the City.



# Typical sweet

Nougat is a mainly Christmas dessert. It consists of egg whites, honey and sugar, filled with almonds, walnuts, peanuts or toasted hazelnuts; often covered by two layers of ostia. In the centre of Sicily, in Caltanissetta, the master confectioners continue the tradition of Nissena with the production of Cubaita, the classic Sicilian Nougat.





Greetings from Caltanissetta