

# The fabulous tale of the utopian city

Art installations, sounds and light design



Campo  
maggiore

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LA CITTÀ DELL'UTOPIA

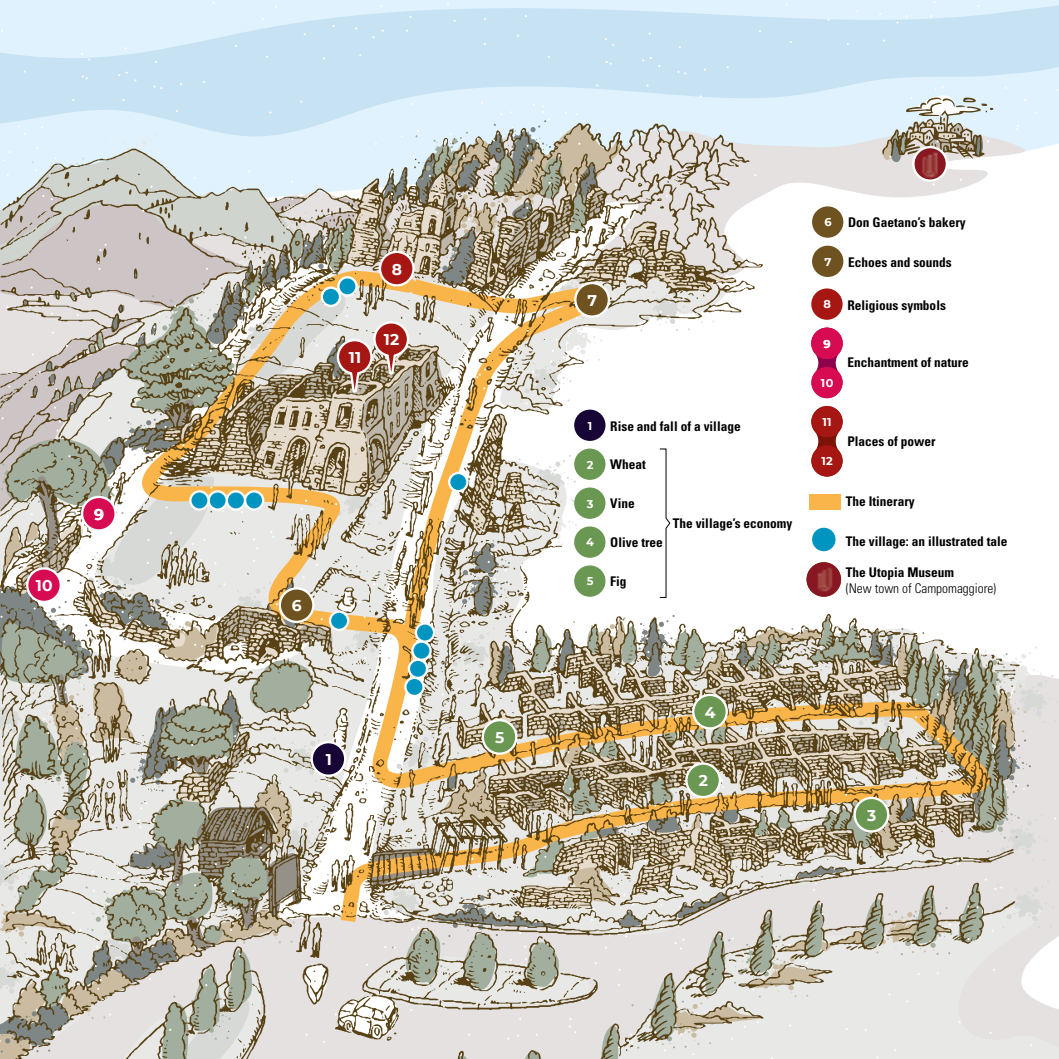
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**Campomaggiore: founded on 30th December 1741  
abandoned on 10th February 1885 due to a landslide**

On the 30th December 1741, a noblewoman - Marianna Proto, widow of Count Nicola Rendina - signs the deed of foundation of Campomaggiore with the few people who have settled in the emerging town. Those who have decided to live there, are granted a plot of land of twenty palms for the construction of their house, arable fields and other benefits. In return, the settlers commit to pay taxes, in kind or cash, and carry out work for their lords. But at the end of the 18th century, Teodoro Rendina, Marianna's nephew, will be the true protagonist of the cultural, economic and urban growth of the village. Inspired by architect Giovanni Patturelli, one of Francesco Collecini's pupils, Teodoro designs the town's road system and grid plan. He builds a new square, Piazza dei Vigi, which is the focal point of the entire urban layout, along with the Rendina's palace, the town hall, the Carabinieri Real's headquarters, the new parish church, and all the shops and workshops of the community. Later, his nephew, Marquis Gioacchino Cutinelli-Rendina, scholar of botany and expert on agriculture, will give further impetus to the rural economy as well as the creation of new neighbourhoods, continuing the innovative tradition that will make Campomaggiore a symbol of progress. In 140 years, the population increases from about 80 to 1525 inhabitants.

On the 10th February 1885, due to a landslide, Campomaggiore's dream of prosperity, peace and the ideal city is broken. The village slowly collapses downstream, and all its buildings are destroyed. The citizens flee their houses and find shelter in the country houses of the Rendina's family, just upstream of the town, or in the surrounding countryside, powerlessly witnessing the destruction of their houses. Once again, a woman - Cutinelli's wife, Laura Antonacci - becomes the great benefactor who would help displaced people using her own financial resources. She would also fund part of the construction of the parish church in the new village (built upstream). Two women, Marianna Proto and Laura Antonacci, enclose - in a symbolic maternal embrace - the birth and death of a community, guiding the village towards its new fate.





6 Don Gaetano's bakery

7 Echoes and sounds

8 Religious symbols

9 Enchantment of nature

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11 Places of power

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The Itinerary

The village: an illustrated tale

The Utopia Museum  
(New town of Campomaggiore)

1 Rise and fall of a village

2 Wheat

3 Vine

4 Olive tree

5 Fig

The village's economy



The ancient village of Campomaggiore has been named "Old Campomaggiore" to distinguish it from the new town, rebuilt on the surrounding hills. This is a place whose dreams, future projects and even utopias were broken by an unpredictable event: the tragedy of a landslide. Harsh and impressive buildings - some in clearer shape than others - rise, tall and stately, almost hovering in the air, in a precarious balance. Yet, from a short distance, they look powerful and orderly, organised in a strict system like soldiers of a defeated, 'petrified' army, while all around nature continuously transforms the landscape according to the colours of the different seasons. These ruins are revived in the eyes and imagination of visitors, along an itinerary that is filled with artistic and scenic 'presences', illustrations, signs and tales, which inform and arouse visitors' curiosity but, at the same time, give them the chance to live their own personal experience of knowledge and discovery.

Visitors are welcomed by an **hourglass**, which symbolises the passing of time and two dates. On top, 1741 - date of foundation of Campomaggiore - and at the bottom 1885 - date of the landslide and village's decline: between them, just the time of a dream.

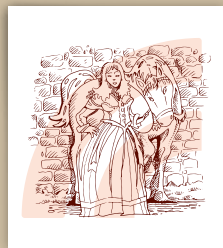


The four essential elements of the village's life and economy are also represented: **wheat, olive tree, vine and fig**, which are the symbols of prosperity, peace, abundance, fertility and generosity of nature.

The baker's shovels of **Don Gaetano's bakery** are stuck in the ground, as guards of a place that was essential for the whole community. Other signs can be found too, to evoke memories of the previous life and functions of those stone perimeters.



An image of the **Virgin of Mount Carmel** rises, as an ethereal guardian and witness, above the remains of the Church dedicated to her, as a token of hope and rebirth for the village's community.



Just next to it, there is the palace of the founding family, the true protagonist of the birth and development of Campomaggiore: **Baroness Marianna Proto**, who signed the foundation deed of Campomaggiore, welcomes the visitor, followed by **Count Teodoro Rendina**, who was the promoter of the town's cultural and urban growth.

Twelve boards with comic strips are placed along the route to depict various moments of the village's life.

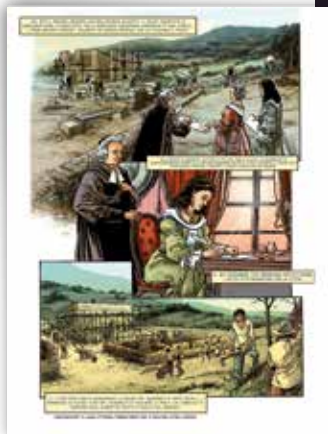


Illustration by Luca Raimondo

Along the itinerary, visitors can listen to an evocative tale, told from the perspective of a little girl who will describe the feelings, moods and insights of a story that is emblematic of many communities and personal experiences.

At night, the village comes to life with the poetry and art of lights, which shine over the ruins together with the moon, covering them with a magical dress of sparkling notes, shadows and presences that seem to be happily dancing to welcome all the temporary inhabitants of a new fabulous utopian city.







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