

Matera, the European Capital of Culture 2019.

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Friday, January 19. Matera has inaugurated its year as the European Capital of Culture. Until December 20, the city of Basilicata will offer its visitors the opportunity to participate in all sorts of events. For Matera, which shares the title of European Capital of Culture with the Bulgarian city of Plovdiv, this year represents a unique opportunity to make known its history and its traditions. Matera, the second largest city in Basilicata, is famous all over the world for its Sassi, the two districts of the city centre inhabited since prehistoric times. Given their uniqueness and cultural value, UNESCO recognized them as a World Heritage Site in 1993. Now the city, which takes Genoa's place as European Capital of Culture, is the first in southern Italy to receive such recognition at the end of a long journey started in 2008 with the presentation of the candidacy. The year of events will be organized around five main themes: *Futuro Remoto*, dedicated to the age-old relationship of man with space and stars; *Continuità e Rotture*, a reflection of the relationship of the city with modernity, the present and its past; *Riflessioni e Connessioni*, an eulogy of the value of slowness in everyday life; *Utopie e Distopie*, an urban laboratory to imagine new possibilities for development; *Radici e Percorsi*, which explores the themes of mobility, combining the tradition of Basilicata as a crossroads of peoples with the possibilities of the 21st century. Four exhibitions will inform visitors about the past and the future of Matera through architecture, with *Ars Excavandi* on the rock cities in the world (from 19 January), culture, with *Rinascimento visto da Sud* (from 19 April), mathematics, with *La poetica dei numeri primi* (from June 21st at Metaponto) and geology, with *Stratigrafie. Osservatorio dell'Antropocene* (from 6 September). Visitors can purchase, for only 19 euros, the "Passport to Matera 2019" to attend all the events of the Matera 2019 official program.

The enthusiasm of Matera 2019 also drives the local economy. Thanks to the acquired visibility, Matera has attracted investments in sectors related to new technologies as well as traditional ones. The "Matera Digitale" project with which the Municipality has created a hub for innovative companies in the ICT, creativity and culture sectors is based on the investments worth millions of large companies in broadband and 5G. The furniture sector is experiencing a new lease on life as reported by the Egoitaliano, which saw a growth in turnover of 18% in 2018.

The President of the Republic Sergio Mattarella and Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte held their speeches during the inauguration ceremony. Mattarella described the occasion as a day of pride for the Materans, for Basilicata and for all those who contributed to the realization of the project. Concluding his speech, he recalled the value of Matera as "a symbol of the Italian South that wants to innovate and grow, healing fractures and soliciting initiatives." Conte's intervention was similar but he also recalled the government's commitment to support innovative projects for the city with investments.

Investorvisa.it offers non-EU entrepreneurs the opportunity to make a donation for the preservation of the Italian cultural heritage in Basilicata: they will be able to support the project of restoration and conservation of the City of Utopia. Thanks to this donation, they can also apply for a visa for investors for Italy.