

ATESSA

3) The nativity scenes

Piazza Oberdan, 66041 (CH)

In the centre of the recently renovated and much improved square, Piazza Oberdan, where there used to be an indoor market, although now replaced by a multi storey car park, there is a permanent exhibition of Nativity Scenes. This exhibition was set up in 2002 by an association called “the friends of the nativity scene”, made up of eight local experts including Father Giuseppe Cellucci and the current President Vincenzo Cicchitti. Apart from seven years of exhibitions, the Association has also participated at prestigious national and international events, including Columbo’s Museum in New Haven in the U.S where the nativity scene of the convent of San Pasquale was exhibited.

The 400 square metres of exhibition space, was opened in December 2007 by Monsignor Bruno Forte and it is a unique example of its kind and perfectly combines the history and surroundings of Atessa, including its roots of religious and civil identity. The first itinerary weaves its way around a kind of architectural container with medieval city doors and street corners typical of the old town centre of Atessa and exhibits of nativity scenes which realistically portray Atessa in the olden days.

The second route is divided into architectural elements from the Roman era and includes 23 scenes from the life of Jesus, made with painstaking expertise from the Annunciation to the Resurrection with paintings featuring focal points such as the birth of Jesus Christ, the Last Supper and the Crucifixion.

A third tour is dedicated to multiethnic nativity scenes and those created by the members of the association. They are made up of all sorts of unusual and weird materials such as wood, stone, plastic, paper, fabric, shells, shellfish and even corn on the cob! The final exhibit is of fairytale dimensions which reveals an amazing underwater nativity scene inside a cave.

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