

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY IN ARTIFICIAL CAVITIES HYPOGEA2015

Italy, Rome March 11/17, 2015 - hypogea2015.hypogea.it - hypogea2015@gmail.com



PROGRAM OF THE GUIDED TOUR "UNDERGROUND NARNI", MARCH 17, 2015

Duration:	from 8.00 to 20.00
Difficulty:	as specified for each hypogeum
Individual participation fee:	Euro 40.00
The participation fee includes:	transfer by coach and daily insurance. The guided tour is under the care of the Cultural Association "Subterranea", Narni
The fee does not include:	food and what not above specified

Program

The Umbrian town *Nequinum* was conquered in the III cen. b.c. E. by the Romans, who founded the Latin settlement Narnia (a name used in past century by C.S. Lewis for his famous *Chronicles*). The town is crossed by the Flaminia way and preserves significant monuments of the Roman period, such as an imposing bridge built by Augustus and the long aqueduct named Formina. Destroyed during barbarian invasions, the town reached its maximum splendor in the Middle Ages, as shown by the urban characteristics and by the several historical buildings, among which the fortress and many churches; the Cathedral, S. Francesco, S. Maria Impensole and S. Maria Maggiore (now S. Domenico).



The Formina aqueduct. Photo courtesy of Serena Novelli

THE FORMINA ACQUEDUCT

EXCURSION WITH A LIMITED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: MAXIMUM 35

Difficulty: no special speleological technique is required. Helmet with light, boots and change of clothes, because of the presence of water at least to the knee.

The Roman aqueduct "Formina" is credited to the "curator aquarum" Marcus Cocceius Nerva and is dated 27 c.E., when Tiberius was emperor. The aqueduct has a length of about 13 km and keeps a slight, constant slope. It goes through hill slopes, crosses three mountains by means of as many tunnels and goes over a few streams on bridges in *opus quadratum*. The association Subterranea offers the opportunity of discovering a fascinating underground route inside the only Roman aqueduct open to the public in Italy. It is possible to walk for 700 m, enough to realize the difficulties overcome by the workers during the digging and to admire the wonderful concretions; the exit is through a steep spiral staircase dug into the rock in a well 18 m deep. A change of clothes and shoes is necessary. The visit is not recommended for those who suffer from claustrophobia and for people weighing more than 100 kg.

THE UNDERGROUND OF THE CHURCH OF S. DOMENICO: THE INQUISITION CELLS

Difficulty: none

The visit begins under the convent of S. Domenico by entering a XII-century church, discovered as late as 1979 by the speleologists of UTEC; the church contains some of the oldest frescoes in town. Through a passage in the wall one enters a room with a Roman cistern, likely the remnant of a *domus*; further on, through a long tunnel, one reaches a large room where the interrogations by the Inquisition took place. This fact is known through various documents found in the Vatican Archives and in the Trinity College in Dublin.

A small cell, unique of its kind in Italy, documents the sufferings of the prisoners, one of which has left an intriguing message with esoteric and masonic symbols, not yet completely deciphered.



The Inquisition cells in S. Domenico convent. Photo courtesy of Marco Santarelli

THE ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL CISTERNS

Difficulty: none

The visit goes on in the underground of S. Maria Impensole, where Roman structures with two cisterns are found; on top of these an VIII century church was built, later exploited to build a romanic church. The tour in "Underground Narni" ends inside the Lacus, the large Early Medieval cistern located under the fountain in Garibaldi square, formerly square of the *Lacus*.