

## Loreto and the Conero coast

After Lourdes, Loreto is the most popular place of pilgrimage for catholic Christians. In 1290, angels carried the house of Josef and Maria out of Nazareth and put it down in Loreto, so the legend goes. Obviously, it could also have been the crusaders on their way back from the Holy Land. The Santa Casa, as the holy house was called, is surrounded by a huge basilica: the Basilica della Santa Casa, built in several phases between 1430 and 1900. The city of Loreto was built around the theatrical Piazza della Madonna square and the basilica. Inside the Santa Casa is the black madonna of Loreto, a copy of the original sculpture which was destroyed by fire in 1922. Loreto is 30 highway kilometres south of Ancona, on the south side of the Conero peninsula. The slightly longer road along the coast between Loreto and Ancona passes through lovely fisherman's villages and seaside villages like Portonovo, Sirolo, Numana and Marcelli. It is a winding, panoramic route in-between the high Monte Conero and the waves of the Adriatic sea.

### Restaurants in Loreto

- *Vecchia Fattoria*, Via Manzoni 19 Loreto, tel 071 978976. Traditional regional cuisine with fish and local dishes. Menu € 25-46. According to Michelin 2009: a very pleasant surrounding (2 forks) and according to the 'bibe gourmand': excellent food for a reasonable price. With terrace and garden. Closed on Mondays. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners accepted.
- *Pellegrino e Pace*, Piazza della Madonna, tel 071 977106. Classical restaurant at the centre square, with terrace and simple Italian dishes. Menu € 18-27. Mastercard and Visa accepted.
- *Andreina*, Via Buffolareccia 14 Loreto, tel 071 970124. Restaurant with terrace and rural atmosphere, just outside Loreto. Regional cuisine serving surprising (game) dishes and special wine menu. Michelin 2009: very pleasant surrounding (2 forks). Menu € 40-53. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners accepted. Closed for three weeks in July and Tuesdays.

### Restaurants at the coast

- *Da Emilia*, at the bay of Portonovo, tel 071 801109. Simple but attractive fish restaurant with a lovely terrace and view over the sea. Menu € 33-57. One Michelin fork. Closed between November and February as well as Mondays except for August.
- *Giacchetti*, Via Portonovo 171, Portonovo, tel 071 801384. Tasty fish-of-the-day dishes served in an old hotel. Two Michelin forks for the atmosphere. Menu € 38-54. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners accepted. Closed between November and March, as well as on Mondays except for the month of June, July and August.
- *La Costarella*, Via 4 Novembre 35, Numana, tel 071 7360297. Simple family restaurant serving excellent fish dishes. Situated in a steep alley. Menu € 47-68. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners accepted. Closed between November and Easter, as well as Tuesdays, except for June up to and including September.
- *Il Saraghino*, Via Litoranea 209 A, Marcelli, tel 071 7391596. Restaurant with terrace situated just outside the village, by the sea. Fish dishes. Menu € 56-70. Closed from December up to and including February as well as Mondays. Two Michelin forks. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners accepted.
- *Mariolino*, Via Capri 17, Marcelli, tel 071 7390135. Highly recommended for its gastronomic food: local specialties, fresh fish and home-made pasta. Take-away available, for dining on the beach. Menu € 31-54. Two Michelin forks. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners accepted.

### How to get there

Loreto is located at about 78 kilometres from Sopra e Sotto.