

- HOME
- MARYLAND
- NATION/WORLD
- BUSINESS
- SPORTS
- ARTS/LIFE
- OPINION

Search:

Site Web enhanced by Google

MARKETPLACE JOBS CARS REAL ESTATE SHOPPING

advertisement



Get our *Guaranteed Best* Available Rate or your first night's *FREE!*



Book now >

Go anywhere. Stay here.®

Arts/Life > travel

## Pilgrimage to Atessa

*A mother and son search for their roots in a small Italian village and discover there are no clear guideposts when traveling in the past.*

By Frank D. Roylance

Sun Staff

Originally published June 23, 2002

It appeared that pictures and memories were all we would bring home. It was much more than anyone in our family had ever known of Atessa, yet I couldn't help wishing I had done more planning, more digging for connections.

My mother, though, seemed content to just brush by her father's ghost. "I would have loved to have seen his initials on a tree," she said. "But I didn't think we could have found out anything more if we had stayed. I was happy to see it."

By the time Mario and I rejoined the others, Mom was unable to walk any farther. Mario led me back to the lot where we had parked, then rode back with me to pick up my family.

Not content to send us on our way from there, he walked ahead of the car, leading us down, out of the maze of streets, until we came to an intersection I recognized.

Embarrassed to suggest it, but too grateful for his help not to, I offered to pay Mario for his time and efforts on our behalf. As I had feared, he looked wounded by the offer, and politely refused. Lamely, I promised to send copies of the photos I had taken.

<< Previous

Talk about it

E-mail it

Print it

Contact us

XML RSS feed

### Photos



Seeking roots in Italy (Baltimore Sun)

### Related Articles

Award-winning travel coverage

ADVERTISEMENTS

Get our *Guaranteed Best* Available Rate or your first night's *FREE!*



Go anywhere. Stay here.®

Book now



The balance of our week's adventure took us by train to Florence, where we slowed our pace and learned to rest in the heat of the afternoon. In Venice, my mother was happy to glide past the sights by water, while Christy, Helen and I explored on foot.

When we return one day to Atessa, I promised myself, we will explore more carefully, eat more slowly, and stay longer to explore the town where Pasquale grew up, and where, as he assured us in his letter, "we woore quite happy."

### When you go

**Getting there:** There are no direct flights from BWI to Rome. Try nonstop flights from Philadelphia. The best deals are usually packages with the Italian airline Alitalia ([www.italiatourusa.com](http://www.italiatourusa.com); 800-845-3365). Also try Gate1 Travel (800-682-3333; [www.gate1travel.com](http://www.gate1travel.com)). Prices fall sharply in autumn.

**Lodging:** It's hard to beat package deals. Choose from a variety of escorted, fly-and-drive or independent travel deals. On a budget? Three-star hotels may be quirky, but are reasonably priced; ours were clean and well-run.

**Getting around:** In the cities, walk or use taxis. Intercity trains are quick, clean and convenient. Seeking out ancestral villages may require a car. Rent as part of your package, or have your hotel set it up. Expect to pay two to three times U.S. prices for gasoline. Always fill the tank before you return the car. A good guide book is a must.

**Roots travel:** Gather information from family records, parents and grandparents. Search at [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) for any village, province or regional names you turn up. Many towns have Web sites with photos, maps and tourist information. When you arrive, slow down, and keep your schedule flexible.

**Abruzzo:** No Italian roots? Sink some in Abruzzo. Just a few hours from Rome, this region sees relatively few American tourists, yet offers beautiful mountain scenery, national parks, camping, seashore and ancient hill towns. Start at [www.regione.abruzzo.it/turismo](http://www.regione.abruzzo.it/turismo).

**Tips:** In cities, most Italians you'll encounter speak serviceable English. In the countryside, you'll need rudimentary Italian or a phrase book. Traveling with the elderly? Scale back your activities by half. Consider afternoon siestas. Take frequent breaks in shaded piazzas and cafes. Carry a first-aid kit and water. Beware uneven pavement.

[<< Previous](#)

Jump to page: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#)

Advertisement

Copyright © 2006, *The Baltimore Sun* | *Get Sun home delivery*

### Photos



### Best Shots photo gallery

> [Send us photos from your trip](#)

### Travel newsletter

### Sign up for our weekly Travel newsletter

Features travel headlines and tips, plus photos and updates on the local travel scene.

> [Sign up now](#)

### Also see

#### Travel Resources

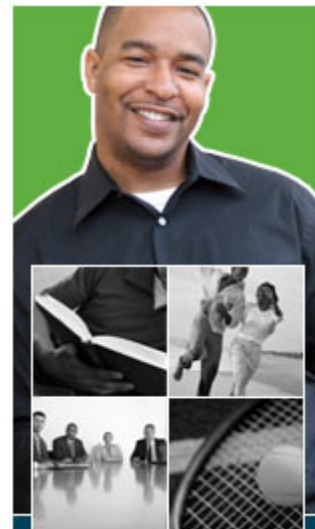
- > [Weather](#)
- > [Airlines](#)
- > [Amtrak](#)
- > [MARC](#)
- > [Light Rail](#)
- > [Metro Subway](#)
- > [Greyhound](#)
- > [Luggage/access.](#)
- > [Travel agencies](#)
- > [Getaway Guide](#)

#### Local airports

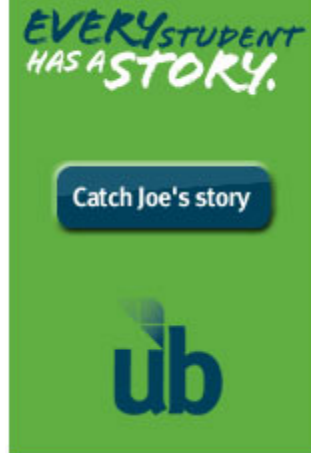
- > [BWI](#)
- > [Dulles](#)
- > [Reagan](#)

#### Travel destinations

- > [Baltimore](#)
- > [Maryland](#)
- > [Chicago](#)
- > [Long Island](#)
- > [Los Angeles](#)
- > [Orlando](#)
- > [South Florida](#)



Not your average Joe.



ADVERTISEMENTS

### Research Studies



Find out more about clinical trials that are currently recruiting participants.

### Contests



Enter to win tickets to movies, concerts, festivals, sporting events and more.

### Events



[Talk about it](#) [E-mail it](#) [Print it](#) [Contact us](#)

## Top travel headlines

- [Going your way](#)
- [Ski where the snow is fresh, the sky is big](#)
- [Passport reminder](#)
- [Ski at Stowe or hit the rails](#)
- [Ski museum honors sport](#)

## Top baltimoresun.com headlines

- [Slow business for snow business](#)
- [O'Malley's new life is a tale of two cities](#)
- [Keiffer Mitchell to run for mayor](#)
- [Horseshoes on horizon](#)
- ['Clean car' idea gains momentum](#)

## Most e-mailed in the past 24 hours

1. [Fast food's slow fix draws city notice](#)
  2. [Ground rent at top of agenda](#)
  3. [Watch & learn](#)
  4. [Peter Schmuck: Road to Miami paved purple](#)
  5. [All signs point to home](#)
- [More most e-mailed](#)

[baltimoresun.com > travel](#)

[back to top](#)

Learn more about the Career Fair and other events sponsored by The Baltimore Sun.

### Special sections



Special sections from The Baltimore Sun.

### Sun Store



Purchase *Sun* photos, page reprints and more.

[Today](#) | [Live!](#) | [A&E Today](#) | [Modern Life](#) | [Travel](#) | [Art/Museums](#) | [Books/Mags](#) | [Movies](#) | [Music/Nightlife](#) | [Restaurants/Food](#) | [Theater/Dance](#) | [TV/Media](#) | [Bay/Beach](#) | [On Campus](#) | [Visitors' Guide](#)  
[Home](#) | [Maryland](#) | [Nation/World](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Arts/Life](#) | [Opinion](#)  
[Marketplace](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Cars](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Shopping](#)

**Contact us:** Submit feedback, send a letter to the editor, submit a news tip, get subscription info, or place an ad.

baltimoresun.com (TM) and sunspot.net (R) are copyright © 2007 by The Baltimore Sun.  
[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

[Maryland Weather](#)

**Classified partners:** [Jobs](#) | [Autos](#) | [Homes](#) | [Apartments](#) | [FSBO](#) | [Boodle Coupons](#)

[Become a mySun member](#) | [Login](#)

Search:

[Site](#)

Web enhanced by 