SEVENTEENTH STAGE - EUROPEAN TRAIL CORRIDOR E/1.

CALABRITTO ( AV ) - MOUNT POLLARO - CAPOSELE ( AV ).

PERTINENCE IRPINIA TREKKING.

The territory of Calabritto was frequented as early as the 1st century BC. The origin of the name would be found in the Latin "calabrix ", referring to the characteristic vegetation of the place represented by the " sylvan thorn ". The oigins of the Borgo date back to the medieval age. The village is located at 500 mslm and is one of the " Authentic Villages of Italy ".

Worth visiting are the Old Town with its paved alleys, the stone portals of the eighteenth-nineteenth century, the Papio Palace, completely restored preserving its original 18th-century layout, the bell tower of the Holy Trinity and the Church of St. Mary of Constantinople, dating from the Byzantine era. Also worth a visit is the hamlet of Quaglietta, where the entire Old Town, which was half-destroyed by the 1980 earthquake, has been rebuilt and has become a widespread hotel. Of considerable naturalistic value is the Rio Zagarone, the first real tributary of the Sele River, which starts from the mountainous structure of Cervialto, the highest peak in the Monti Picentini Park (1809 mslm).

The trail begins, precisely, from the Centro Storico, right from a lookout overlooking the Rio Zagarone Valley. From here you descend on an asphalt road and, after a few hairpin bends, take a small side road through the lower periphery of the village. At a fork you keep to the right to reach a small bridge that takes you across the Rio. Turn right again and follow a dirt road that runs alongside the watercourse for about a kilometer.

Near a farmhouse and just before another bridge, we turn left, still on a dirt road, leaving the watercourse and, immediately afterwards, pointing to two small stone buildings that remain on the right. We are at the lowest point of the stage ( m 258 asl ). From here begins a steep climb on an ancient mule track with narrow hairpin bends between rocks and stone steps that winds up a ridge dividing the Vallone Acero from the Rio Zagarone Valley, the first real tributary of the Sele River.

At an elevation of 520 mslm you pass by a ruin made of living stone and leave out a detour to the right and a concrete road to the left, to proceed straight ahead and pass near a shed. Here you turn left and skirt another hut and then turn right and follow a path that leads onto a dirt road that you follow for

a few hairpin bends. At a subsequent fork, turn left and leave out the dirt road that descends to the right.

After a while you meet, on the right, a barbed wire, another hut and a large oak tree, past which you turn right and continue uphill passing near a stone ruin ( 740 mslm ). Here, with narrow hairpin bends, you pass another mule track with steps carved into the rock and come to a ridge. Suddenly the Piano d'Acero opens up before us, after about six kilometers from the start and at an altitude of 850 mslm.

Following the N/W direction, we point to a saddle formed by two peaks. We have to pay close attention to the horizontal signage ( where it was possible to affix it ), as there are not many landmarks ( trees, obvious rocks or well-defined track ), except for the two peaks in front of us that exceed 1200 mt. This plateau, until the 50s/60s was all cultivated with potatoes and beans, much sought after and appreciated in the markets.

After passing the plateau, we take the mule track again, which has a zig-zag pattern and passes between the aforementioned peaks ( 1236 mt on the left and 1257 mt on the right ). A slightly downhill section begins, taking us to the Pollaro Plain ( 1180 mslm ). You come to a fork, where you have to keep left to climb Pollaro Mountain. You have to avoid the ferns passing over small rocky promontories bypassing the plateau, then turn left and head for the summit ( 1282 mslm ). From here there is a beautiful panorama over the Rio Zagarone valley, the Marzano/Eremita group, the ridge crossed in the previous stage ( Monte Boschetiello, Monte Altillo ), Polveracchio ( 1790 mslm ), Terminio ( 1809 mslm ), Calvello ( 1579 mslm ), and Alta Irpinia.

After a well-deserved break, we begin the descent on the same steps as the outward journey until the 'junction with the dirt road coming from Calabritto in the middle of the Pollaro plateau (also cultivated with potatoes and now abandoned ). Go straight ahead and pass alongside an ancient well and then intersect the small bed of a stream (almost always dry ). We climb a little and take a path that takes us to the right. We keep the beginning of a gorge on our right and, still climbing, we pass a passage between rocks, after which the descent begins that, after a few hairpin bends, takes us to the beginning of the Vallone Canale.

Here, too, we turn sharply to the right and follow a path that enters, at a bend, a dirt road that descends from Arialunga. Go straight ahead to reach, after a short time, the Canale Fountain ( 945 mslm ), with a live stone structure with six interconnecting basins and a concrete trough. Just before the

fountain, on the left, there is a shelter. Continue downhill and meet a pine forest, keeping Calabritto in sight on the right.

Further on you leave out, on a bend, the dirt road that crosses on the right ( coming from Rio Zagarone ), and continue straight on a cemented road first and asphalt road later. You pass the beginning of the Vallone della Cupa and after about 400 m turn right to cross the stream again. After a while you intersect a cross-country road and keep left. Continue to descend and cross the aforementioned stream for the last time, and then reach the outskirts of Caposele ( 450 mslm ), from which the Sele River springs, which feeds, together with the Cassano springs, the Apulian aqueduct, built in the early 1900s. The Salerno aqueduct also starts from the Caposele springs.

DIFF. E - DIST. KM 17 - DISL. uphill mt 1100 - downhill mt 980 - DUR. h 6.30

PRESENCE OF WATER ON THE ROUTE ONLY AT THE CANAL FOUNTAIN.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STAGE FROM SOUTH TO NORTH.