

ISCHIA



For the ancient Greeks Ischia was Pithecusae, for the Romans it was Aenaria.

According to the legend, the giant Tifeo created such a multifaceted island, after being imprisoned under Mount Epomeo by Jupiter. This heritage is still visible in the name of several locations of the island, named after part of his body such as “Testaccio” (in reference to his head) , “Panza” (“belly” in local dialect), “Ciglio” (“eyelash”) and “Piedimonte” (“feet”).

Nowadays Ischia is considered a lovely destination for the tourists coming from all around the world. Ischia is *wellness* for its hot spring waters and baths; *green Island* for its sea and for its lush vegetation; *culture* for its history and treasures; *tradition* for its food and wine trails and so much more to discover walking through its beautiful landscapes.

Well known since the times of Homer, the **thermal baths of Ischia** are rich of history. The most ancient spa of the world is **Nitrodi** in Barano; the properties of its spring waters are useful for skin care and gastrointestinal diseases. At the beginning of the 19th century the thermal baths of **Casamicciola** offered its beneficial effect to Giuseppe Garibaldi, the hero of Two Worlds.



The first name given to the island was **Pithecusae**; there are several theories on the origin of this name: the local folklore suggests that the island was named after the ancient Greek word "Pithekos", meaning "Monkey", due to the belief that the island was inhabited by such animals at the time. Instead, the majority of modern theologians attest that the name of the island originated from the ancient Greek word "Pithos", a type of terracotta jug produced by the Euboeans and traded with the Etruscans.

Among the artifacts found on the island, the most important is undoubtedly the **Cup of Nestor**, an ancient clay cup discovered by the archaeologist Giorgio Buchner in 1954, during a tomb excavation in the necropolis of San Montano. The cup is engraved in Euboean alphabet, and represent one of the most important archeological finds that attests to poetry of the time, thanks to its reference to the Iliad. The inscriptions on the cup, to be read from left to right, declare - "*That is the Nestor's cup, good to drink from. Whoever drinks from this cup, him straightaway the desire of beautiful-crowned Aphrodite will seize*". This phrase represents one of the most ancient examples of Greek writing, and an example of trade between the ancient Pithecusae and the rest of the

Mediterranean. Nowadays, the Cup is the main attraction of **Villa Arbusto Museum in Lacco Ameno**.

Around 322 BC the Romans conquered Pitheculae (as well as Naples), and a new dawn began in the history of the island. Under the Roman domination, the Greek name of Pitheculae was discarded in favor of "**Aenaria**", from the Latin word "aenum", meaning *metal*.

The ruins of that ancient city are now visible in the underwater museum in the **bay of Cartaromana**. It is one of the most beautiful underwater archaeological sites in Italy, above the beds of Posidonia seagrass, hiding a fascinating story. Several artifacts were discovered in the site, proving the existence of an ancient port.



The Bay of Cartaromana also hosts the **Aragonese Castle**, iconic attraction of the island. The ancient manor was built by the soldiers of Hiero of Siracuse in 474 BC; in the 16th century the castle became a feudal dwelling, before becoming a Spanish fortress, and, under the Bourbons rule, a political prison.

According to a traditional legend, Michelangelo Buonarroti lived in the **tower of Saint Ann**, also called "*of Michelangelo*" from where he was spending several hours to contemplate his beloved Vittoria Colonna. Actually, the tower was built by John of Guevara around the end of 15th century and recently, a group of restorers coming from the school of art conservator of the University of Dresden, under the supervision of Professor Thomas Danzl, brought to light very beautiful frescoes on the noble floor and along the stairs.

Many other towers can be found in the municipality of **Forio**, which was attacked by Saracens first and Barbarian raids then.

Still in Forio, in the **villa La Colombaia** are buried the ashes of the great filmmaker Luchino Visconti who chose Ischia as good retirement as well as Sir William Walton and his wife Susan who created **La Mortella Gardens**, a green Paradise in the core of Zaro's wood.

Very famous in the world for its ancient fishing village, Sant'Angelo is the most trendy place of the island. It is situated in the municipality of **Serrara Fontana** that preserves the culture of the wine, once one of the main business of the island.

Finally, the **Mount Epomeo** was the ancient wheat belt of the island, enchanting observation platform on the island: from its mountain top, it is possible to enjoy a breathtaking view.