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SOUTHERN TUSCANY: ARCHEOLOGY, THERMAL SPRINGS TO RELAX IN AND EXQUISITE FOOD

Are you spending your holidays in Florence and feel like discovering something different about Tuscany? If "yes" is your answer, you can organize a short trip to wild Maremma by simply hiring a car. This itinerary includes a walk around Pitigliano, Saturnia's natural thermal springs and a delicious dinner in Scansano, very well known for its wine production.

Pitigliano is surely one of the most peculiar places in Maremma, it stands on an abrupt **tuff buttress** high above three rivers and has been inhabited since Etruscan times. This beautiful little town is home to a series of **artificial cuts** into the tufa rock to varying depths ranging from less than 1 meter to over 10 meters; at the bottom of these cuts there are **carved channels**, apparently for water.

Although their purpose has never been made clear officially, there are **three main theories** about these paths: they might have been roads, quarries or water conveyance schemes, radiating outward from the buttress of Pitigliano, down to the rivers and back to the top of the plateau surrounding the town. Some Etruscan inscriptions are said to have been found on the walls of the cuts, but this is not documented enough and all around the area, however, lie many ancient **Etruscan necropolises**.

From Pitigliano, in about 30 minutes drive on SR 74, you can reach **Saturnia**, where 800 litres per second of **sulphurous water at 37°C** gushes into a wide natural pool, flowing over a waterfall and down to a series of other **natural pools carved in the rock**.

Saturnia takes its name from the Roman god **Saturnus**, who grew tired of the continuous human wars and sent a thunderbolt to earth, that created a spring of warm water which would pacify human beings. Only a couple of kilometres outside Saturnia also lies the famous **Terme di Saturnia thermal springs and spa complex**: here you can either relax in the warm sulphuric waters of the waterfalls and pools or in the wellness centre, with therapies and massages.

And now the time has come for you to taste **exquisite food** of course! We suggest you to drive 30 minutes away from Saturnia and get to **Scansano**, which is very well known for its typical homonymous wine called **Morellino di Scansano**. Once here, look for a porterhouse or a wine bar and ask for a **wild game dish** or some **typical cheese**, accompanied by a glass of Morellino di Scansano.

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