



Discovering the Via Francigena and Parmigiano Reggiano

Placement of information panels along the historic itinerary

Walking along the Via Francigena in the Province of Parma is a journey into the realm of Parmigiano Reggiano. To provide necessary information about it three panels were placed in the municipalities of Fidenza, Medesano and Berceto in June 2019.

"You are in the land of Parmigiano Reggiano": this is the message sent to tourists and pilgrims on their way along the cultural route of the Council of Europe. The initiative is carried out by the Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium, the European Association of the Via Francigena Ways, the Studio Guidotti and the Municipalities of Fidenza, Medesano and Berceto in the framework of the project "Sosta & Gusta". This project was specifically designed to allow pilgrims to learn more about the Italian gastronomic excellence and its unique characteristics known all over the world.

"Connecting the Via Francigena with the territories it crosses via their gastronomy, represents a crucial strategic choice for the consolidation and growth of this very important path that goes through the heart of Europe. In Fidenza we are deeply convinced that this is the right direction, confirmed by the latest 2018 tourist turnout statistics (+ 43.1% compared to 2017)" emphasizes Mr. Andrea Massari, the mayor of Fidenza.



"We were very pleased to join this initiative that further enhances the excellence of Parmigiano Reggiano together with the Via Francigena, an important promotional vehicle for our land, products and tourism in general - says Mr Michele Giovanelli, the mayor of Medesano - The information panel is located in Piazza

Marconi next to the Town Hall - a central place of arrival of the pilgrims and ambassadors of our land.”

"They say that advertising is the soul of commerce and therefore the publicity of a supreme product such as Parmigiano Reggiano, known all over the world, contributes to the success of the Via Francigena and the potential increase of pilgrims we see each year. I like and approve this initiative also because the pilgrims are consumers of this nutritious and natural product" - highlights the mayor of Berceto, Mr Luigi Lucchi.

"This ambitious project, born in 2017 as a result of an historic collaboration with the Consortium, is now a significant example - underlines Mr Massimo Tedeschi, the President of AEFV - of twinning between two protagonists of well-being: the Via Francigena, a candidate for UNESCO World Heritage List, and Parmigiano Reggiano, universally recognized alimentation with incomparable qualities and energy values useful for pilgrims during long walks."

"For over 900 years Parmigiano Reggiano has accompanied the pilgrims along the Via Francigena - says Mr Nicola Bertinelli, the president of the Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium - Little has changed since those times: Parmigiano Reggiano is born every day from the same extraordinary ingredients - milk, salt and rennet - without any preservative or additive. Thanks to the ‘Sosta & Gusta’ project, pilgrims can now eat in our dairies, savouring a product that, besides being delicious, is highly digestible, rich in minerals and naturally lactose-free.”

During the first part of the project the selected dairies welcomed visitors and explained them the stages of processing. Now we would like to expand the initiative, identifying the refreshment and Parmigiano Reggiano selling points located on the Via Francigena way in the stretch from Fidenza to Passo della Cisa. Pilgrims will be able to taste the cheese of different age and biodiversity (Red Cow, Brown Cow, White Modenese, Mountain, Halal and Kosher) without leaving the path.

To help pilgrims discover these points, a map of the Fidenza - Passo della Cisa route was created, with the various addresses indicated.

Useful tools to consult for more information are the website and the official application of the European Association of Vie Francigene (AEVF) as well as the pages dedicated to the Sosta & Gusta project.

