

# Italy's Historic Trains Draw Visitors to Less Popular Areas

今回はイタリアの地方を走る観光列車を紹介した記事です。古い車両が今も活躍し、静かな村や緑の丘をゆっくり進む旅は、時間の流れを忘れさせてくれます。ここには、過去を懐かしむ人々の憧れや郷愁が込められています。文中の「longing」は「強い憧れ」「懐かしい思い」という意味で、a longing for the past（過去への憧れ）、a longing to travel（旅へのあこがれ）のように使います。静かで温かみのある場所を訪れる旅も魅力的ですよ。あなたは、まだあまり知られていない場所を訪れるとしたら、どんな地域や町に行ってみたいですか？



## 1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

As it moves across central Italy, an old train pulling carriages from the 1930s and 1950s crosses the forests of the Majella National Park and the Abruzzo highlands.

Across 100 kilometers, the Park Railway, also known as the Italian Transiberian, travels through valleys and tunnels and over old bridges called viaducts. It offers visitors a view of small, rural and hidden villages in the country.

It was the first of some 1,000 kilometers of rail line to have reopened under a project by Fondazione FS, part of the state-controlled national rail company.

### “Timeless tracks”

The project called "Timeless Tracks" aims to take visitors to forgotten parts of Italy instead of the popular cities.

"These are tracks that have lived through different [eras](#), they have carried soldiers to the front, cows to pasture... they were mistakenly considered unproductive during the 1960s and 70s but are now once again of value," Luigi Cantamessa, who heads Fondazione FS, told Reuters.

Inspired by train travel in Switzerland, the project now carries 45,000 visitors a year across its 13 lines. Fondazione FS expects to open two new ones by 2026, both in the southern area of Sicily.

"What were considered to be the dry branches of Italy's train network, have now proved to be the green shoots," Cantamessa added.

Norma Pagiotti is a 28-year-old from Florence, Italy traveling on the train with two friends.

Pagiotti said, "People are used to cities and places, like Florence, that everyone knows.. but then there are other areas that need to be discovered. (This) is the right kind of tourism that does not spoil the [authenticity](#) of places,"

Caterina Quaranta, from southern Italy, used the term "nostalgic," meaning a [longing](#) for a past time, to describe riding the train.

"The train reminds me of my youth, I feel a bit nostalgic for the things of the past, which were simpler, now everything is fast, short-lived," Quaranta said.

Laura Colaprete, a local guide, said the trains draw Italians and foreigners, families and children, younger people who get off to hike and ride bicycles, and older people "who have time to spare."

## The trip

After climbing up almost 1,000 meters in altitude, the Transiberian's first stop is in Palena, a hilltop town known for its beautiful views over the national park.

Traditional folk music accompanies people getting off the train, with local foods such as lamb skewers and soft pancakes and products by local [artisans](#) awaiting them at the station.

"The train helps several small towns around here. This line was a dead line before," said Gino Toppi, 60, as he helped his wife with the food stand in the small station.

Milan's Bocconi University recently estimated that for every dollar spent by passengers on tickets, as much as three more are spent on food, tours and other [purchases](#). The rail ticket costs between \$32 and \$76.

That helps to support the economy of villages that have long lost population due to the declining birth rate and younger people leaving for the bigger cities.

"There certainly are benefits, this is a way to show my products," said Annalisa Cantelmi, an herbalist, or herb grower. "These tourists are slowly discovering these new territories, their traditions and people," she added.

Giulia Segreti reported on this story for Reuters. John Russell adapted it for VOA Learning English.

Source: Italy's Historic Trains Draw Visitors to Less Popular Areas

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## 2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

**1. era (n.) a specific period of time in history**

Mayu grew up in Japan during the Showa Era.

**2. authenticity (n.) the condition or quality of being real**

The watch came with a certificate to prove its authenticity.

**3. longing (n.) a strong desire for**

I have a longing to see the ocean again someday.

**4. artisan (n.) a person with special skills in making things**

Maurice is a food artisan who specializes in dishes from southern France.

**5. purchase (n.) a thing that is bought**

After receiving the piece of cake, Jill looked happily at her purchase before taking a bite.

## 3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What is the Timeless Tracks project, and what is its purpose?
2. What kinds of things can people enjoy when taking a train trip in the project areas?
3. What are the benefits of the project?
4. Do you know of any areas or towns that preserve the local history and local culture? Where are they? What is special about them? What can people do there?
5. What little-known places or less popular places would you like to visit? Why?