

L'ISOLABELLA PERIODICO

Tourist Information in **Lampedusa, Linosa and Lampione**

Delagie Islands
**Exploring Lampedusa,
Linosa, and Lampione!**

Past, Present, and Future of Three Mediterranean Gems



www.lisolabella.it

YEAR XVI - WINTER 2025

IN ENGLISH 

The Pelagie Islands: Tourism, Sustainability, and Culture. Why Choose Them?

Lampedusa and Linosa, pearls of the Mediterranean, offer a unique blend of natural beauty, culture, and hospitality. **Laura Casano**, Tourism Councilor of the Municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa, discusses the transformations that have impacted tourism in the archipelago, the challenges, and future opportunities. From extending the tourist season to sustainability and the role of the Pelagie Islands in Agrigento Italian Capital of Culture 2025, this interview provides an in-depth look at initiatives and a vision aimed at establishing the region as a model of excellence for authentic and responsible tourism.



The Pelagie Islands are a true jewel of the Mediterranean, offering a perfect combination of pristine nature, culture, and hospitality. Our crystal-clear waters are renowned worldwide, and places like Rabbit Beach, described by Domenico Modugno as "God's swimming pool," or Tabaccara, where the phenomenon of "floating boats" occurs, are just a few examples of our wonders. The Pelagie Islands also boast significant historical and cultural heritage, such as the Dammusi, the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Porto Salvo, and the Archaeological Museum, which preserve the deep roots of our history. The hospitality of the locals in Lampedusa and Linosa completes the unique experience for visitors.

What are the distinctive characteristics of the Pelagie Islands?

How has tourism evolved in recent years?

Tourism in the Pelagie Islands has experienced exponential growth. Today, we welcome visitors from all over Italy and beyond, drawn not only by our natural beauty but also by our traditions and the uniqueness of our territory. The tourist season, once limited to the summer months, has now extended into late autumn, thanks to an increasingly diverse offer. Events such as the Festival of Our Lady of Porto Salvo strengthen the connection between tourists and our local culture, making the Pelagie Islands an attractive destination year-round.

What is the vision for the future of tourism in the Pelagie Islands?

Our goal is to make tourism year-round, ensuring that Lampedusa and Linosa are attractive in all seasons. In addition to beach tourism, we aim to promote nature-based, cultural, and conference tourism, highlighting the unique features of our archipelago. The Pelagie Islands have all the characteristics to become an ideal destination not only in summer but also in winter for those seeking peace, nature, and authentic hospitality.

What initiatives are planned for 2025, the year of Agrigento Italian Capital of Culture?

The year 2025 is an extraordinary opportunity for the entire region. In collaboration with the province, we are working on a series of cultural events that will enhance the entire area, including the Pelagie Islands. Our archipelago will play a central role in presenting

the Mediterranean as a crossroads of cultures, a theme that deeply defines us. Meetings, exhibitions, and events will be organized to highlight our uniqueness and our connection with the rest of the Mediterranean.

How are you promoting sustainable tourism?

Sustainability is at the heart of our vision. Thanks to funding from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), we are developing projects to transform the Pelagie Islands into a green development model. Initiatives include energy and water efficiency improvements with desalination plants, sustainable mobility with electric and assisted-pedal vehicles, and waste management with plastic-free ecological stations. Additionally, we are developing renewable energy systems to significantly reduce environmental impact. These projects not only protect our environment but also ensure a better future for local communities and visitors alike.

What advice would you give to first-time visitors to the Pelagie Islands?

The Pelagie Islands offer an unforgettable experience. Lampedusa, with its golden beaches and crystal-clear coves, and Linosa, with its volcanic charm and unique tranquility, represent two complementary souls of our archipelago. The hospitality here is genuine: from the warm welcome of the locals to the charm of local traditions, every detail will make you feel at home. I recommend diving into our sea, one of the clearest in the Mediterranean, and exploring the history and nature that make these islands so special. ●

Lampedusa Airport: The Beating Heart of Tourism in the Pelagie Islands

We interviewed **Carlo Massimo Zaccarini**, CEO Chief Executive Officer (left) and **Biagio Picarella**, COO Chief Operating Officer (right) of Lampedusa International Airport. The result is an interesting insight into the airport's latest developments and projects; an opportunity to discover services, accessibility, and initiatives that will further enhance the travel experience.

Massimo, what is the importance of Lampedusa International Airport in the development of tourism in the Pelagie Islands?

Lampedusa Airport is the gateway connecting the island of Lampedusa to the mainland. The airport infrastructure is a major strength of the island, strategically valued by tour operators and tourists who, with just a few hours of flight, find themselves in a paradise



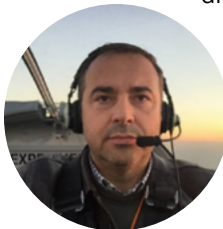
island without requiring additional means of transport, as is often the case when reaching other desired destinations.

What are the main tourist flows passing through the airport? Are there predominant nationalities among visitors?

Currently, 99% of recorded visitors are national, with the remaining portion being international, primarily from Asian countries and the UK. We are working to increase international tourist flows..

How does the airport contribute to improving island accessibility, especially during peak season?

Planning begins in October of the preceding year. By analyzing inbound traffic data, we aim to identify new catchment areas and strengthen existing ones. The airport remains the main



means for reaching the paradise of Lampedusa, which is why we actively cooperate with the Municipality of Lampedusa and all tourism service providers.

Biagio, how many and which air routes are active to Lampedusa? Are there plans for new destinations?

The connection route with the international hub of Milan Malpensa begins on March 31 with two weekly frequencies, increasing to three in June and later to five weekly. Following this, flights to Bergamo, Venice, Bologna, Rome, Milan Linate, Forlì, Perugia, Malta, Verona, and Naples are available, in addition to connections with Catania and Palermo.

Are there plans to enhance air connections during summer?

During the peak season, flights to Catania and Palermo, as well as Milan Linate and Rome Fiumicino, will be intensified.

What services does the airport offer to enhance the travel experience for tourists?

Summer 2025 will bring several new features: an improved first-floor departure terminal experience for long waits, with a "Work Area" equipped with high desks where passengers can work both standing and seated on stools. Additionally, several tables will be isolated from the rest of the area with glass partitions to create a quieter space. There will also be power outlets for device charging. A children's play area and seating with a view of the aircraft parking area will be available. Furthermore, two corners for selling local products and a bar in the airside departure terminal area will be introduced. The entire area will have

free high-speed Wi-Fi.

Biagio, Lampedusa is a naturalistic destination with environmental sensitivities: what sustainable policies has the airport adopted?

Since 2023, we have initiated a fleet renewal plan, transitioning to electric vehicles. Parking lot lighting is now LED-based, and as part of our four-year investment plan, gradual replacements of terminal and aircraft parking lighting with LED technology are planned.

Are there future projects to make the airport greener?

New environmental indicators set by ENAC and ENEA will guide a study on terminal energy efficiency and the implementation of measures to mitigate consumption.

How is technology being used to improve efficiency and passenger experience?

Starting in 2025, upon request from accommodations, guests will be able to check in directly at their hotel reception desks, avoiding terminal queues and extending their time enjoying the island.

Massimo, what are the main challenges the airport faces considering its geographic location and seasonal influx?

The high seasonality of the airport necessitates dynamic strategies to support the increased passenger and aircraft flow from both a logistical and human resource perspective. In collaboration

with all tourism operators, we need to extend the tourist season to at least nine months of consistent tourism on the island. Lampedusa, with its beauty, climate, and hospitality, has the potential to achieve this.

Biagio, how is the increase in flights and passengers managed during peak season?

Planning is the cornerstone of our organization. By analyzing past seasonal trends, we adjust plans to enhance passenger services and ground services for airlines.

Massimo, what are the main short- and long-term goals to improve the airport?

2024 concluded with 350,000 passengers, marking a 3-4% growth trend. This figure raises considerations about the terminal's future capacity. Long-term goals include constructing a dedicated arrivals terminal and redesigning the existing terminal for departures only. A short-term goal is to enhance appeal with a VIP area and accommodate private commercial flights.

Biagio, what kind of feedback do you receive from tourists about their travel experience through Lampedusa Airport?

Since 2024, a service charter is available in digital format on www.aeroportodilampedusa.it. This charter was drafted based on data collected during Summer 2023 via passenger surveys on service quality. The survey was also conducted in Summer 2024, and its data will be included in the next charter. Comparative analysis shows satisfactory improvements in airport performance and passenger satisfaction. Published targets aim for continuous service improvement.



Are there plans to enrich the passenger experience, such as relaxation areas, exhibition spaces, or local product promotions?

The first-floor relaxation area of the terminal will offer spaces and services to make

waiting for flights as comfortable as possible.

Massimo, does the airport work in synergy with local institutions and tourism operators to promote Lampedusa and Linosa as destinations?

Collaboration with the local administration and the island's business community is crucial for the overall development of the tourism sector.

What initiatives have been implemented to strengthen the relationship between the airport and the territory?

AST Aeroservizi is at the forefront, promoting the creation and development of a broad participation consortium aimed at systematically organizing the tourism sector and promoting the region. A dynamic organization capable of positioning itself in the market with innovative tourism products, with the goal of fostering experiential tourism year-round.

The airport operates year-round: how is tourism managed during the off-season?

Our professionalism demands that we manage passenger flows consistently. As mentioned multiple times, we are actively working to extend the tourist season in Lampedusa, making the island accessible throughout the year.

Massimo, what actions could encourage greater airport use even during winter months?

Tourism proposals should aim to highlight all the potential of the Pelagie Islands. Land and Sea are the islands' strengths, and tourism offerings must

focus on these two fundamental aspects.

Massimo, looking to the future, what image would you like Lampedusa Airport to represent for visitors to the Pelagie Islands?

The image of an infrastructure capable of connecting the island to the rest of Europe, inclusive for those who want to enjoy a favorable and comfortable climate during the winter months. We will work tirelessly in this direction.



What is your message to tourists choosing Lampedusa and Linosa as destinations and taking their first step by arriving at your airport?

Lampedusa creates an immediate sense of love; visitors want to return and never forget it. The

sea, the salt, the sand, the colors, and the food become part of you, creating an unforgettable experience. Come to Lampedusa, and you will discover it through the emotions that will stay with you forever. •



il tuo volo per *your flight to
Lampedusa
SUMMER 2025



VIAGGI
IN CANTIERE

Viaggi in Cantiere s.r.l. Via Ulisse Maccaferri, 30 - 92031 Lampedusa AG



viaggiincantiere.it



viaggiincantiere@libero.it



091 347 688

Rabbit Island (Isola dei Conigli)

Photo by Tommaso Sparma



The "Isola di Lampedusa" Nature Reserve



Curated by
Elena Prazzi
Reserve Coordinator



For information:

Local office headquarters: Via V. Emanuele, 25 - Lampedusa

Website: www.legambienteserve.it/isola-di-lampedusa

Phone: 0922 971611

In this page: Coastal section of the Reserve (Tommaso Sparma)

Page 10 (top): Caralluma Europaea in Lampedusa (Legambiente)

Page 10 (bottom): Specimen of a colubrid snake in Lampedusa (Legambiente)

Page 11: Rabbit Beach and Islet seen from above (Luca Siragusa)

Page 12 (top): Caretta caretta nest in incubation (Legambiente)

Page 12 (center): Hatchling turtles just emerged from the nest in Lampedusa (Legambiente)

Page 12 (bottom): Volunteers working at Rabbit Beach (Legambiente)

The Isola di Lampedusa Nature Reserve was established in 1996 by the Sicilian Region and entrusted to Legambiente Sicilia for management. Covering approximately 360 hectares, it includes much of the island's southern coast and protects a great variety of habitats and an extraordinary wealth of flora, making it a true treasure trove of rare species. Within the protected area, plant species absent in the rest of Italy can be found, such as *Caralluma europaea* (present only in the rocky environments of Lampedusa, the coasts of North Africa, and limited areas of southern Spain) and *Centaurea acaulis* (which grows spontaneously in North Africa). Ten species exist exclusively in Lampedusa, including *Daucus lopadusanus*, a small wild carrot found in coastal environments, and *Chilaidenus lopadusanus*, whose fragrant shrubs characterize the vast plains of the Reserve. The fauna is also of great biogeographical interest, particularly reptiles, all of North African origin. The most common are the gecko and the skink, while the common striped lizard (*Psammodromus algirus*) is found only on Rabbit Islet, which is today the only Italian site of this reptile. The protected area is also home to two species of snakes: the hooded snake and the Montpellier snake. Birdlife is also highly significant: Rabbit Islet



is the kingdom of the yellow-legged gull, kestrels nest along the ridges of the valleys, and the sheer cliffs serve as ideal nesting sites for Eleonora's falcon, which migrates from Madagascar each spring to reproduce.

Additionally, due to its geographical location, the island acts as a bridge between the African and European continents, providing a crucial stopover for migratory birds crossing the Mediterranean. When weather conditions are unfavorable and birds are exhausted, the presence of small land fragments in the middle of the sea can be their only hope for survival. Thus, in spring and autumn, Lampedusa becomes enriched with numerous bird species. The Nature Reserve, with its diverse habitats, serves as an ideal sanctuary where these animals can rest and regain strength in a protected and secure environment.

To explore and appreciate the uniqueness of the Reserve and its

inhabitants, visitors can follow the various trails within the protected area. These trails allow for the observation of characteristic vegetation, including thyme, squill, and asphodel, as well as remarkable specimens of juniper, carob, mastic, and spurge. The westernmost part of the Reserve offers breathtaking views from atop deep valleys—ancient, inactive river networks that open into

the sea with small sandy coves or stunning suspended valleys.

Rabbit Beach

One of the most renowned and picturesque locations within the Reserve is Rabbit Beach, which offers breathtaking panoramic views throughout the year. Often awarded as the most beautiful beach in Europe and Italy, it holds immense ecological value as a nesting site for the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*). The nesting period in Lampedusa begins in late May and continues until late August. Typically, the female emerges at night, selects a suitable spot on the beach, and digs a 40-50 cm deep hole where she lays an average of 80-100 eggs. Before returning to the sea, she carefully covers the nest, leaving the sun's

warmth to incubate the embryos.

After about 60 days, the hatchlings break through their eggshells and make their way to the surface, ready to journey toward the sea.

Only the females, upon reaching maturity,

will return to land to lay their eggs in the same place where they were born.

Nesting is a highly delicate moment in the life of a sea turtle. Adapted to an aquatic environment, when on land, the turtle moves with difficulty and exerts great effort to complete this extraordinary event. During the different nesting phases, the female is highly vulnerable, and any noise or light source could cause her to return to the sea without laying her eggs. It is therefore essential to implement all necessary precautions to minimize human impact.

Continuous monitoring of the beach, ensured by the staff of the Nature Reserve and Legambiente volunteers, allows for the detection of every nesting event.

Each nest is immediately fenced and

marked to protect it from potential natural predators and human disturbances.

Lampedusa's critical role

in sea

turtle

conservation

has

strengthened in

recent

years,

as additional

loggerhead

turtle nests have been

identified on beaches outside the



Nature Reserve.

Every summer, the Reserve staff conducts daily morning monitoring of the island's beaches to locate any newly laid nests, which are then marked and protected until hatching. In 2024 alone, 15 nests were laid across four different beaches, resulting in the birth of over 900 hatchlings! This remarkable achievement is the result of more than 25 years of dedicated environmental protection efforts led by Legambiente in managing Rabbit Beach. In 1996, when the protected area was established, the entire Rabbit Beach area was on the verge of being overwhelmed by uncontrolled mass tourism. However, today, the beach has been restored to its natural splendor through a series of interventions that have successfully balanced nature conservation and tourism. These efforts include environmental restoration projects, renaturalization initiatives, the creation of designated access trails, and conservation programs for threate-

ned species like the loggerhead turtle.

A further step forward in environmental conservation was taken in 2021 with the introduction of a limited-access system at Rabbit Beach, allowing visitors to enter in two daily shifts. This management decision has significantly improved beach enjoyment while ensuring the protection and preservation of an extremely fragile environment. By reducing overcrowding, this measure has safeguarded the integrity of habitats while also offering visitors a more conscious, respectful, and sustainable experience, which tourists themselves have increasingly demanded. This approach has demonstrated that conservation actions are the primary tool for achieving responsible and sustainable tourism. With the support of visitors, it is possible to ensure the preservation of nature, promoting an environmentally friendly experience that respects both the landscape and the species that inhabit it. •



Guitgia Beach

Photo by Tommaso Sparma



Diving in Lampedusa



Curated by
Simone D'Ippolito
Local expert



In this page: Divers in the waters of the Pelagie Islands (Rocco Canella, Pelagos 2.0)
Page 15: Moments of flourishing marine life (Rocco Canella, Pelagos 2.0)
Page 16: Specimen of a grey shark in Lampione (Rocco Canella, Pelagos 2.0)

Many of you may wonder why to choose Lampedusa as your diving holiday destination. As a diving instructor, I am often asked this question. That is why, this time, I will not be the one answering but rather someone who has already fallen in love with this island and keeps returning year after year. "It's been more than five years," says Gianni from Milan, "that I have been spending my vacations in Lampedusa. Some years, I have even come twice in the same season. I think this island is the best place to spend my holidays. The hospitality of the locals, the quality of the local cuisine, the ease of reaching it (from Milan, there are many direct flights that take less than two hours), and finally, but not least, the variety of diving experiences available here. These are just a few of the reasons that keep bringing me back. When I first arrived, I was already an experienced open water diver. Here, I obtained my advanced certification and a few specialties; today, I am a rescue diver with more than three hundred dives, though not all in Lampedusa. The colorful and rugged walls of Capo Grecale and Punta Cappellone, the



caves of Taccio Vecchio and Punta Parrino, the thrilling and spectacular Secca di Levante, the magnificent rock of Lampione, and the Secchitella of Linosa are just some of the many dives I have done in the Pelagie Islands."

Among the many friends who love Lampedusa is Marco, 36 years old, who visits from Bologna with his family. "After spending three consecutive summers in Lampedusa," says Marco, "I think saying 'perfect' is an understatement. Lampedusa is a stunning island, and the locals make you feel welcome. Here, you will find beautiful beaches where children can play while parents relax under the sun, and young people recover from sleepless nights of local nightlife by basking in the sunshine. In Lampedusa, you can experience the sea in all its forms: fishing, boat trips, sunset cruises with barbecues on board, dolphin and turtle watching. And then, of course, there is diving, where you can see incredible groupers, dentex, rays, moray eels, torpedo rays, lobsters, slipper lobsters, dolphins, and turtles. For those who love the thrill, like me, you can even dive with sharks in Lampione."



Whenever I start a conversation with a diver or an aspiring one, to convince them to spend their holidays in Lampedusa, I like to begin by describing the island's geographical location, because from there, one can start to understand why diving in Lampedusa is so unique. Together with Linosa and the small islet of Lampione, Lampedusa forms the Pelagie archipelago, located about 120 miles from the Sicilian coast and less than 70 miles from Africa. Lampedusa is the southernmost and farthest of all Italian islands. This, in addition to giving it an exotic feel, also makes its seabed an ideal breeding ground for many marine species.

Lampedusa has an elongated structure oriented east-west, resembling a limestone plateau with an extremely varied coastal profile. One side features imposing cliffs shaped by the erosive action of wind and waves, while the other has a gently sloping coastline with numerous inlets and beaches. The island's limestone seabed has also allowed currents to carve out a great number of underwater

caves, which, under the glow of diving torches, are completely covered in color and marine life. Splendid are also the walls that plunge steeply into the crystal-clear sea, offering privileged spots to witness the passage of large amberjacks and dentex, and sometimes even massive tunas.

The seabed morphology, water temperature, proximity to breeding areas, and distance from the mainland give the archipelago such unique characteristics that they provide an ideal habitat for many Mediterranean marine species. Here, far from city chaos and immersed in the still untouched and wild nature of Italy's last frontier, our diving centers await to offer you unforgettable emotions. The crystal-clear waters of this rich marine area guarantee fun for divers, snorkeling enthusiasts, and swimmers alike. ●

LINOSA

Linosa: Nature and Tranquility



Curated by
Cristina Errera
Local expert

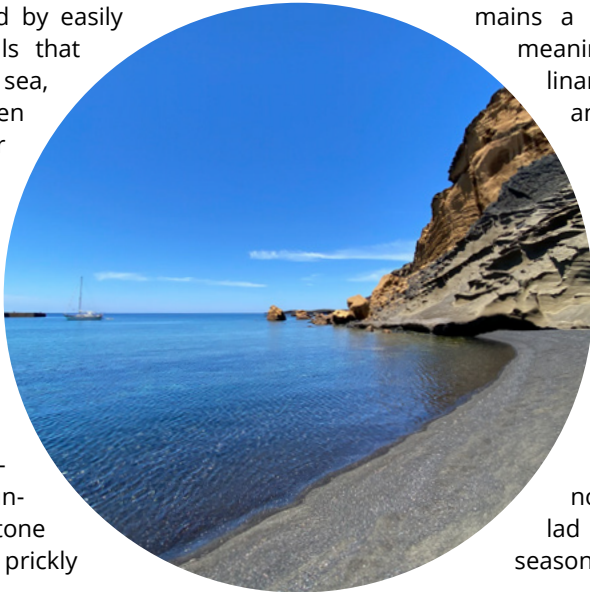
In this page: The volcanoes of Linosa seen from the coast (Cristina Errera)
Page 18: The black sand beach of Pozzolana di Ponente (Luca Siragusa)
Page 19: The spectacle of shearwaters at sunset in Linosa (Andrea Benvenuti)
Page 19 (top): The bay of Pozzolana di Ponente (Cristina Errera)
Page 19 (bottom): Trails on the volcanoes of Linosa (Cristina Errera)

Linosa is the Sicilian island that has best preserved its strong identity. Volcanic, colorful, and silent, it embodies the perfect island for those seeking a relaxing vacation in a nearly untouched natural environment. In less than five square kilometers, Linosa is a treasure in the heart of the Mediterranean. The sea displays all shades of blue and green, the coastline offers rocky outcrops, comfortable piers with ladders, a black sand beach, and many pebble bays. Access to the sea is guaranteed for everyone, without even mentioning the possibility of touring the island by boat, either with a local sailor or by renting a small boat independently. Bays such as I Fili, La Grotta del Greco, and the northern area, which is a succession of stunning caves, can only be admired by sea. However, one does not need to be an expert sailor to enjoy them. Linosa is a gentle island. It is also welcoming to those who wish to explore its interior, as it is entirely traversed by easily accessible trails that run along the sea, lead to hidden viewpoints, or take you to the top of a crater to admire Linosa's beauty from above. The island's agricultural nature has adorned its interior with stunning lava stone walls, endless prickly

pears, mulberry and fig trees, all immersed in the greenery of Mediterranean scrub and myrtle. Colors are one of the island's defining characteristics. Whether it's the imposing red and ochre facade of Pozzolana, overlooking the only black sand beach on the island—home to *Caretta caretta* turtles—or the typical Linosa houses, painted in vibrant and contrasting hues.

For animal lovers, there are unforgettable experiences, such as encounters with the Scopoli's shearwater, a seabird with a mesmerizing call. Linosa hosts the largest colony in the Mediterranean, so don't miss the chance to witness their low-flight spectacle at sunset on an organized tour or learn about their habits with an expert nature guide. Another lucky and very likely encounter is with turtles and dolphins, which, given the calm waters, often come close to the shore. Fingers crossed!

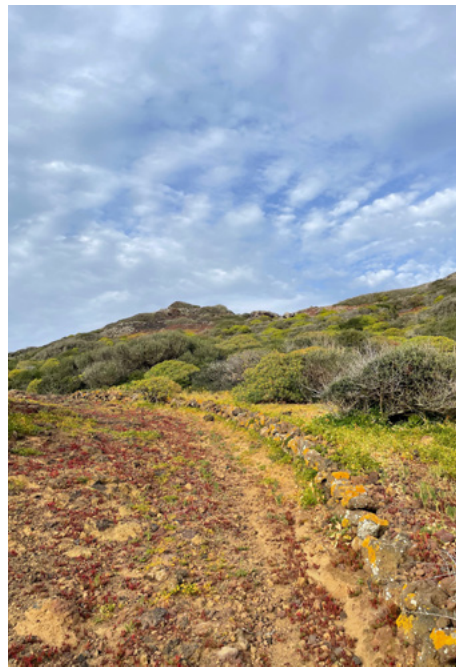
Linosa is a world of its own—enchanted, silent, remote. But it remains a Sicilian island, meaning that its culinary aspect is anything but negligible. On the contrary! The island boasts two standout ingredients: capers and lentils, the island's "gold." It is unthinkable not to try a salad or pasta dish seasoned with ca-



pers, and why not even a dessert (if you find the right restaurant), or the typical island dish—lentil soup. And then there are granitas, caponata, the freshest fish, sfincione... Linosa's cuisine satisfies all palates with its homely simplicity, enhancing flavors that evoke a kitchen where food is cooked with love.

To fully appreciate the island, staying for a few days is recommended, either at the island's only hotel or in a private apartment. However, it is also possible to take advantage of the round-trip hydrofoil connection from Lampedusa and visit Linosa for a day. In this case, relying on a guided tour is advisable to ensure you don't miss anything.

Whether for a single day or an entire week, Linosa and its charm steal the heart. Perhaps it's the slow pace of life, the beauty of nature, the deep blue sea, or the warmth of the locals. It is impossible not to be enchanted by this gem set in the Mediterranean. It will capture your heart and leave you with the promise to return. ●



Where Nature Reigns Supreme

17,5 kilometers northwest of Lampedusa, stark and solitary, the islet of Lampione rises from the deep blue of the Mediterranean Sea. Spanning just three hectares of emerged land, the only signs of human presence are an automated lighthouse (from which it takes its name), a small concrete pier exposed to strong currents, and a narrow path connecting the two. Beyond that, seagulls and a few species of lizards dominate the landscape, occasionally joined by migratory birds. Believed to have formed during the Pliocene due to tectonic movements that separated it from Lampedusa, Lampione shares an identical geological composition with its larger neighbor, both being limestone formations belonging to the African continental shelf. As a result, its soil is almost devoid of vegetation. The surrounding waters, teeming with fish, have been a prime destination for diving enthusiasts for decades. •

Photo by
Luca Siragusa



The Fascinating History of a Small Island

A journey to discover the history of Lampedusa, a natural border and, at the same time, a point of contact between continents, civilizations, and different religions.



Curated by
Antonino Taranto
Founder of the Lampedusa Historical Archive Association

Antonino Taranto, known to many simply as Nino, was an absolute reference for history enthusiasts of the Pelagie Islands. He founded the Lampedusa Historical Archive, an association that over the years has shed light on many aspects of the past of Lampedusa and Linosa. Today, its members have embraced his legacy with the aim of enriching it with the same dedication that Nino exemplified.



For information:
Headquarters: Via Roma, 8 - Lampedusa
Website: www.archivioistoricolampedusa.it

In this page: "Departure for the fishing banks," early 20th-century postcard
Page 22: Late 19th-century engraving
Page 23: Via V. Emanuele and the Seven Palaces in the 1930s
Page 24 (top): Casa Teresa's dammuso in the early 20th century
Page 24 (middle): Group of friends in front of a sponge warehouse in 1956
Page 24 (bottom): View of the harbor in the 1950s

Images kindly provided by the Lampedusa Historical Archive Association

Lampedusa's history is closely tied to its geographic position in the center of the Mediterranean: a safe harbor in storms, a place for water and food resupply during navigation. These common needs led to encounters, conflicts, but more often coexistence among people from different backgrounds. These were certainly the reasons why Lampedusa remained a "neutral" island for many centuries—peaceful and shared—where goods and spoils of war could be exchanged in complete tranquility; where a hermit, a forerunner of a multiethnic and interreligious culture, welcomed both Christians and Muslims, allowing them to practice their faith. The name Lampedusa itself appears to reference light, as fires were lit along the coast at night to signal the island's presence to sailors.

The island was inhabited since prehistoric times by small communities engaged in agriculture and fishing. Remains of circular Bronze Age huts are scattered across the island. The Phoenicians, a seafaring people, used it as a base and stopover station in their trade with nearby Carthage. Around 500 BC, the Greeks established one of their colonies here, even minting their own coin featuring Zeus on one side and a tuna on the other. This demonstrates how the island was at the center of thriving trade and exchanges among Mediterranean popu-

lations. The Romans also settled on the island, using it as a stopover and supply point on their voyages to North Africa. It became an important center for producing garum, a prized fish-based condiment. With the fall of the Roman Empire, Lampedusa was devastated and plundered by the Vandals of Genseric, later falling under Byzantine control and then into the Arab world. By 994 AD, about a thousand people lived in Lampedusa, all of the Muslim faith, engaged in fishing, salting fish, and trade.

The island underwent successive dominations, from the Normans to the Angevins and the Aragonese, alternating between periods of settlement and depopulation. When King Louis IX of France landed here in 1254 on his return journey from the Seventh Crusade, he found the island deserted. In the 15th century, Alfonso V of Aragon granted it as a fief to the Sicilian De Caro family, from whom it later passed, through marriage, to the Tomasi family. The new owners never set foot on the island; in fact, they repeatedly attempted to sell it to the English, French, and even the Russians.

However, Lampedusa continued to retain its allure as a "suspended" and neutral place, so much so that Ludovico Ariosto, in "Orlando Furioso," set the epic clash between Orlando of the Paladins of France and Agramante, the Saracen king, on the island.



L A M P E D U S A

Having failed to sell the island—partly due to strong opposition from the Bourbons—at the beginning of the 1800s, the Tomasi family leased it under a perpetual emphyteusis contract to a Maltese family, who established a small agricultural colony. The settlers repurposed the ancient castle, cultivated plots of land, started pastoral activities, and engaged in trade with nearby Malta. Later, about a hundred English settlers joined them, raising concerns among the Bourbons, who feared losing sovereignty over the island. Learning from the Maltese experience, the Bourbons decided to buy Lampedusa from the Tomasi family to establish an agricultural colony. Thus, in 1843, an expedition was organized, sending 120 farmers and artisans from Sicily to the island. Each settler was granted a plot of land to cultivate,

a house, and a small government subsidy. An orderly urban plan was drawn up, leading to the construction of seven “palaces” on the plateau overlooking the harbor and a road connecting the urban center to the ancient castle. Fields were tilled, mills built, new water cisterns constructed, and farmland separated from pasture. King Ferdinand II of Naples visited the island twice during its colonization, closely monitoring its progress and equipping it with the economic and regulatory tools necessary for its development.

However, the initial enthusiasm waned after several years of drought, particularly following the fall of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the unification of Italy. Land grants to settlers were revoked, and many were forced to abandon the island. Those who remained,



with no other means of subsistence, continued deforesting the island for charcoal production. During this period, Lampedusa also became a penal colony. The discovery of sponge beds in the island's waters in the late 19th century brought a period of relative prosperity, which quickly faded with the depletion of the seabed. However, Lampedusa realized its maritime vocation, and the island's economy shifted to fishing and the processing of bluefish. This activity defined island life for decades, providing a dignified livelihood based on fishing in the summer and agriculture in the winter.

The construction of the airport in 1968 ended Lampedusa's centuries-long isolation and offered new opportunities for economic and social development. The island slowly opened up to a new reality: tourism. For the people of Lampedusa, this became a chance for economic redemption; many abandoned fishing and agriculture to become small tourism entrepreneurs. Hotels, residences, restaurants, and guesthouses were built to accomoda-

te the new visitors.

In April 1986, Lampedusa suddenly made headlines when Libyan leader Gaddafi, in retaliation for the U.S. bombing of Tripoli, launched two Scud missiles at the NATO base in Lampedusa. The missiles missed their target, but the event brought the island unprecedented

visibility, even among many Italians who had never heard of it before.

In recent years, Lampedusa has returned to the global spotlight due to migration issues from Africa to Europe. The island has rediscovered its ancient role as a bridge between continents and a safe harbor for those seeking a better future, offering a profound testimony of humanity and solidarity. For the first time in its history, the island received a visit from a Pope

in 2013, followed by the Italian President in 2016. By understanding its history, Lampedusa rediscovers its roots and can proudly look to a future where humanitarian commitment coexists with tourism, promoting and preserving the island's extraordinary natural beauty. ●



From the Neolithic to the Romans: The Pelagie Islands in Mediterranean History



Curated by
Maria Concetta Parelo
Archaeologist,
Archaeological and Landscape Park of the Valley of the Temples of Agrigento

Page 26: Obsidian tools from Pantelleria found at the Neolithic site of Cala Pisana

Page 27: Fish processing plant at Cala Salina

Page 27: Area of the fish processing plant at Cala Salina

Page 28: Archaeological site of Piazza Brignone

Page 29: Oil lamps with Christian symbols from the Late Antique Necropolis of Cala Palme

Page 29: Oil lamps from the Late Antique Necropolis of Cala Palme

Photos: Archive of the Superintendency for Cultural Heritage of Agrigento and Lampedusa Tourism Hub

Due to their central position in the Mediterranean, the Pelagic Islands have yielded important traces of human presence spanning from prehistory to the present day. However, these settlements were characterized by discontinuity, as the strategic significance of the islands as landing points on major trade routes was counterbalanced by their considerable distance from the mainland and the scarcity of resources, which made living there extremely challenging. What emerges from archaeological research is that every period of habitation in the islands is linked to historical dynamics affecting the entire Mediterranean. Thus, transmarine contacts for resource procurement in prehistory justify human presence as far back as the distant Neolithic,

while the strategies for industrial exploitation of fish resources during the Roman Imperial period help us understand the rise and prosperity of the fish processing plant at Cala Salina. Moreover, according to a recent hypothesis, the settlement and necropolis of the Late Antique period seem to be the result of the exile of a group of men who were politically and religiously opposed to the rule of the Vandals.

The earliest evidence of human presence

in Lampedusa dates back to the Middle Neolithic, around 7,000 years ago, and was found at Cala Pisana. These findings are of great importance as they document that the Pelagic Islands were involved in the cultural phenomenon that profoundly transformed human life through the introduction of agriculture and livestock farming, leading to the development of new skills, including navigation. Thanks to navigation, groups of people settled on the smaller Mediterranean islands, some of which had valuable resources like obsidian—a

volcanic glass harder than flint, used to produce extremely thin, highly resistant, and sharp blades. The presence of Pantelleria obsidian in Lampedusa demonstrates that the island was not isolated from the trade network



extending from Pantelleria to many regions of the Mediterranean. Additionally, three small segments of sickles indicate that this human settlement's economy was based on both agriculture and livestock farming.

Traces from the Early Bronze Age, around 4,000 years ago, include ceramic fragments and obsidian flakes found at multiple locations across the island. Notably, the ceramics resemble the Mursi-style pottery, characteristic of nearby

Pantelleria and also found in Malta and the Aeolian Islands, within coastal settlements arranged along a route that crossed the Sicilian Channel and extended northward towards the Tyrrhenian, largely bypassing Sicily itself. This route was frequented by Mycenaeans in search of metals. In Linosa, evidence of human activity from the Early Bronze Age also includes funerary architecture. The slopes of Monte Bandiera contain numerous rock-cut tombs typical of that period. Some ceramic artifacts found in Linosa closely resemble those from Mursia-style sites in Pantelleria.

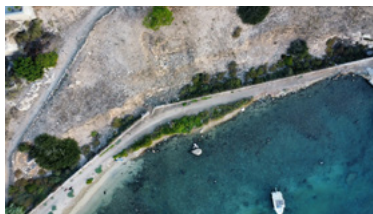
During the Middle Bronze Age (approximately 3,500 years ago), as Mycenaean trade routes shifted toward ports along the central-eastern coast of Sicily, more isolated and less favorable locations for settlement, such as the Pelagie archipelago, were abandoned. Few records exist of human activity on the islands in historical times before the construction of the Roman fish processing facilities. However, a handful of artifacts support the account of Pseudo-Scylax, who wrote that during the Punic era, the Carthaginians controlled the natural harbor of Cala Salina, which was well-protected and marked by watchtowers.

Near Cala Salina, archaeological excavations have uncovered the remains of a fish processing facility preserved on a slope near the shoreline. The structure belongs to the category of Roman *cetariae*, tanks used for salting fish and preparing fish-based sauces such as *garum*, which were widespread along the western Mediterranean coast and often located near modern-day tuna fisheries.

This facility remained particularly active until the second century AD. The excavation of one of the tanks yielded a vast quantity of artifacts, allowing researchers to reconstruct phases of activity within the plant and the commercial relationships that Lampedusa maintained with other Mediterranean centers during the peak of the Roman Empire.

Inside the tank, archaeologists found amphorae and various types of broken and unusable vessels, which had been accumulated to be repurposed as stoppers for amphorae used to

store processed fish. These fragments attest to Lampedusa's strategic position along Mediterranean trade routes, facilitating exchanges between East and West, North and South. The island had particularly strong ties with the Italian Peninsula—home to the senatorial ari-





stocracy managing the fish processing plant—and central Tunisia, from where transport amphorae and kitchen ceramics arrived. This connection linked Lampedusa with major African coastal production centers, including Leptiminus, which also housed a large fish processing facility. Additionally, there were significant trade exchanges with nearby Pantelleria, which produced a distinctive type of cooking pottery widely distributed throughout the Mediterranean. Other finds also document Lampedusa's connections with the Eastern Mediterranean.

The economic and military crisis of the Roman Empire in the third century AD, which led to a temporary decline in the fish processing industry across the Mediterranean, resulted in the closure of Lampedusa's facility and likely the abandonment of the entire settlement where both owners and workers resided. Fishing and fish processing, which still represent key elements of the island's economy today, were thus also crucial factors in Lampedusa's settlement during antiquity. While no organic remains

were found during excavations to determine the specific fish species processed at the facility, the island's geographic location and the imagery on a series of coins attributed to the Lampedusa mint provide strong evidence linking the facility to tuna fishing. The coin series features a bearded deity, likely Zeus, on one side and a tuna on the other, accompanied by the Greek ethnonym Lopadosaion/Lopadosaion.

During the operational period of Lampedusa's fish processing facility, many similar facilities were active along the coasts of present-day Spain, North Africa, Italy, and Sicily. These plants were strategically positioned along the migratory routes of tuna in the Mediterranean, stretching from the Strait of Gibraltar to the Black Sea. Lampedusa, located in a prime spot for tuna migration, was naturally suited for tuna fishing, which must have been particularly lucrative at certain times of the year.

The last phase of habitation in the islands identified through archaeological investigations dates to the Late Antique period. In the modern city area, several

sectors of a settlement have been discovered, with the most significant located west of Piazza Brignone. These were modest dwellings defined by dry stone double-wall constructions. Some of these structures contained small oil presses, offering insight into the activities of the people who lived in Lampedusa between the fifth and seventh centuries. Artifacts from the excavations confirm continued trade between Lampedusa and Africa, Sicily, Pantelleria, Libya, the Aegean, and the Eastern Mediterranean.

On the promontory near the harbor, behind Cala Palme, within a large cave, archaeologists discovered and partially excavated a hypogeal necropolis

dating to the same period as the settlement. The tombs contained small personal ornaments such as rings, bracelets, glass bead necklaces, pendants, and even a belt buckle. Oil lamps, ceramics, fishhooks, and meal remains found above the tombs suggest the practice of *refrigerium*—ritual meals in memory of

the deceased.

As we have seen, even during Late Antiquity, Lampedusa was connected to the broader Mediterranean. However, the island's repopulation does not appear to have been driven by economic productivity or maritime security. Instead, it is believed that political and religious factors motivated settlement. The island's inhabitants were Christians, as were the

Vandals—a Germanic people who had settled in North Africa and frequently raided Sicily. However, while the Vandals had adopted Roman culture and religion, they followed Arian Christianity, in contrast to the Nicene orthodoxy enforced by Rome

and Constantinople. Orthodox Catholics in North Africa, seen as a destabilizing force by the Vandal rulers, fled to Lampedusa to escape persecution and remained there until the seventh century, when they abandoned the island, leaving it uninhabited for a long time. ●



The Cultural Renaissance of the Pelagie Islands

The Regional Archaeological Museum of the Pelagie Islands, located in the heart of Lampedusa, reopens under new management entrusted to Ats Pelagies— a temporary purpose association composed of the Visioni d'Autore Foundation and the company Hub Turistico Lampedusa— through a special partnership agreement promoted by the Archaeological and Landscape Park of the Valley of the Temples of Agrigento. The reopening, which took place in June 2024, marks a significant step towards the enhancement of the island's cultural heritage, merging history, art, and social engagement.

In addition to the Museum, in May 2024, Ats Pelagies also took over the management of other significant cultural assets, including Casa Teresa and important archaeological sites. The Grande Dammuso of Casa Teresa will soon be restored as a center dedicated to rediscovering local traditions, from artisanal crafts to traditional cuisine. Here, visitors will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in authentic experiences that narrate the daily life of the island in past

centuries.

Among the archaeological sites, Cala Salina and the Paleochristian Necropolis of Cala Palme represent two historically significant locations. These sites, already subject to enhancement projects, will continue to attract growing interest from both tourists and scholars.

In November 2025, thanks to the initiative of the Archaeological and Landscape Park of the Valley of the Temples of Agrigento, a new archaeological excavation campaign was launched at the Piazza Brignone site. This marked the beginning of a necessary effort to uncover important traces of the past, expanding knowledge of local history and further enriching the island's cultural offerings. Thanks to this new synergistic management of historically significant sites, Lampedusa is preparing to enter a new phase of cultural and archaeological appreciation. Events, exhibitions, and educational initiatives are already planned to engage not only visitors but also the local community and students, transforming the museum and other sites into true centers of culture and participation.



A Century Since the Birth of the 'Parish Priest of Lampedusa'

In 2025, the centenary of the birth of Monsignor Giuseppe Policardi, a key figure for the Lampedusa community, will be commemorated. Born on May 1, 1925, on the island, he dedicated nearly half a century to pastoral ministry in his homeland, earning the affectionate title of "U Parrinu Nostru" (Our Parish Priest).

His work was distinguished by tireless dedication as an educator and mentor, positively influencing generations of young Lampedusans. Deeply devoted to the Madonna, he took great care in enhancing the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Porto Salvo, creating a spiritual and natural haven for the community. His attentiveness to the sick and needy was exemplary; despite his own suffering, he never hesitated to bring comfort and support to those in need.

To honor his memory, in 2023, his remains were moved from the island's cemetery to the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Porto Salvo, a place he held dear. Additionally, the community has promoted initiatives to keep his spiritual and cultural legacy alive, including the creation of the 2025 calendar featuring previously

unseen photos and the production of the documentary "U PARRINU NOSTRU," written and directed by Gabriele Gismondi and Luca Siragusa.

From this year, the Padre Policardi Association, founded on the 20th anniversary of his passing on June 12, 1998, has been officially recognized as a recipient of the 5x1000 tax donation scheme. Thanks to these contributions, the association aims to implement significant projects, including the establishment of a scholarship for a young Lampedusan aspiring to become a priest, assisting with seminary expenses, or supporting other educational paths for underprivileged youth. Another project under consideration is the creation of a retirement home for the elderly, an essential service for the community.

The centenary of his birth presents an opportunity to reflect on his example of dedication, humility, and love for others—values that continue to inspire the Lampedusa community and beyond. The proposed initiatives demonstrate a commitment to perpetuating his spirit of service through concrete actions for the common good. •

WATCH THE DOCUMENTARY

U Parrinu Nostru **Monsignor Giuseppe Policardi from Lampedusa**

Scan the QR code and watch the documentary
about the life of a pillar of the Lampedusa community.

Direct link:
<https://hubturisti.co/PadrePolicardi>

Associazione Padre Policardi A.P.S.
C.F. 93079940842
ass.padrepolicardi@gmail.com
Via Ruggero Settimo 19, Lampedusa

CULTURE

Kamalé Festival! A Beacon of Culture and Sustainability in Lampedusa



Curated by
Serena Zanna
Marketing Director of the Kamalé Festival

Photos by Adriana Maraventano



Imagine an island in the heart of the Mediterranean that is not only a natural paradise but also a crossroads of cultures, ideas, and hopes. Now, picture an event that brings all this together, transforming Lampedusa—while preparing for an extraordinary 2025 as an integral part of Agrigento Italian Capital of Culture—into a beacon of creativity and innovation. Among the initiatives embodying the spirit of this recognition is the Kamalé Festival. More than just a celebration, this festival is a true declaration of intent: to celebrate life, people, and nature with a clear and engaging philosophy—the "Yesss Life" (www.yesss.life).

Yesss People, Yesss Life: More Than Just a Slogan

What does **Yesss Life** really mean? It is a cry of joy and awareness: living in harmony with the environment, embracing diversity, and sharing authentic experiences. The island, with its natural beauty and ecological fragility, becomes the perfect stage to inspire and raise awareness about issues such as environmental protection and territorial enhancement. And then there are the Yesss People, the soul of the festival: individuals who believe in

hospitality, solidarity, and the beauty of differences. Lampedusa, always a crossroads of peoples and cultures, naturally embodies this spirit. The festival aims to celebrate this innate vocation of the island, giving voice to diverse stories, traditions, and identities, creating a cultural bridge between the local and the global through artistic performances, workshops, and discussions.

Lampedusa: From Challenges to Opportunities

Yes, Lampedusa is often in the spotlight due to migration-related challenges. But the Kamalé Festival wants to tell a different story—one of an island rich in traditions, culture, humanity, and unique energy. Imagine taking a cultural walk that leads you to discover natural and archaeological wonders or attending an open-air screening under the starry sky, where the sea and humanity intertwine in unforgettable stories.

And what about the concerts that bring the island to life? Every note is an invitation to fully embrace the experience and immerse yourself in the heartbeat of a culture that celebrates diversity. But Kamalé is also a resource for the local economy: small businesses, artisans, and tourism



operators become an integral part of the festival, contributing to a virtuous cycle that stimulates social and cultural growth. Among the scheduled initiatives are educational workshops for young people, combining art, science, and sustainability, and discussions with international experts who bring fresh perspectives on global issues. These moments not only enrich participants' experiences but also leave a lasting impact on local communities.

Food, Culture, and Inclusion: The Food Area That Brings the World Together

The Kamalé Festival's Food Area is something extraordinary. Here, food is not just nourishment—it is a "universal language" that unites us all. Traditional local dishes blend with recipes from across the Mediterranean, creating a true gastronomic dialogue. Every dish tells a story, every flavor is an invitation to explore a different culture. In this space, individuals with social disabilities take center stage alongside chefs, contributing to the preparation of meals. Together, they break down barriers and build a world where cuisine is, above all, inclusion. Food becomes a tool for unity, creating bridges between people, regardless of differences.

Sustainability and Innovation

Kamalé is not just a festival that celebrates culture but also a model of sustainability. Every choice, from recycled materials to eco-friendly mobility, is designed to reduce environmental impact. But it doesn't stop there—the festival is also an innovation platform where young ta-

lents and entrepreneurs present creative solutions to global problems.

Kamalé Festival: A Dream That Grows and Expands

The Kamalé Festival is also a cultural movement that grows and expands every year. Its goal is to become a staple in the Mediterranean cultural scene, attracting an increasingly large audience and leaving a profound mark on the community. With its unique combination of art, culture, and sustainability, the Kamalé Festival is an example of how a well-designed event can transform a community and propel it toward a better future. And let's not forget digitalization! The festival stays ahead of the times with an online presence and live social broadcasts, allowing anyone to participate and experience the event in real-time. This way, the festival's impact extends beyond Lampedusa, spreading its messages of inclusion, sustainability, and change far and wide. The Kamalé Festival is a call to action. It is an invitation to anyone who believes that culture, diversity, and sustainability can truly change the world. If you are someone who lives life with passion and awareness, embraces diversity, and wants to make a difference, then you are a "Yesss People"!

If you want to learn more about the Kamalé Festival, how to participate, collaborate, or sponsor, visit the official website www.kamalefestival.com. •



Hub
Turistico

NUOV



SERVICE

present



With the patronage
of the Municipality
of Lampedusa and
Linosa

**KAM
ALE**

Yess People Festival

**SEP
25
2025**

*Come,
live,
love
Lampedusa!*



www.kamalefestival.com

Antoine Michel and Music from the Sea

The interview conducted in 2011 by our editorial team with the late Lampedusan artist.



Curated by
Calogero Maria Sparma
Local expert

«Antoine Michel has stopped playing his conga. As the first notes played, the celebration would begin. Events have their time. Memory and music last forever». With these words, shared in a social media post, Claudio Baglioni bid farewell to his friend Antoine, who passed away too soon.

And while life moves on as it naturally does, music remains and continues, passed down to future generations. **Somewhere, at some point in time, someone will surely sing “Kamalé, kamalé...”** and the sound of drums will accompany that song.

Goodbye, Tony.



He was known as a pioneer of border music, a kind of new musical genre blending sounds and languages with a distinctly Mediterranean flavor. It could not have been otherwise for Antoine Michel, the singer-songwriter from Lampedusa, who for nine years (as of 2011, ed.) had been opening Claudio Baglioni's event, O'Scià, on the beach of Guitgia with his songs. We met him at his restaurant, right on the largest of the Pelagie Islands.

How did your musical journey begin, leading you to develop this distinctive sound?

I have loved music since childhood. But my real turning point came in the 1970s, when legendary bands like Pink Floyd and Genesis emerged on the global music scene. At that time in Lampedusa, we organized incredible boat parties, where we would play drums and sing in the most authentic way possible, making sure never to westernize the sound, blending Arabic and Sicilian music and language instead. I must admit, back then, I didn't listen to Baglioni—but fate brought us together on stage.

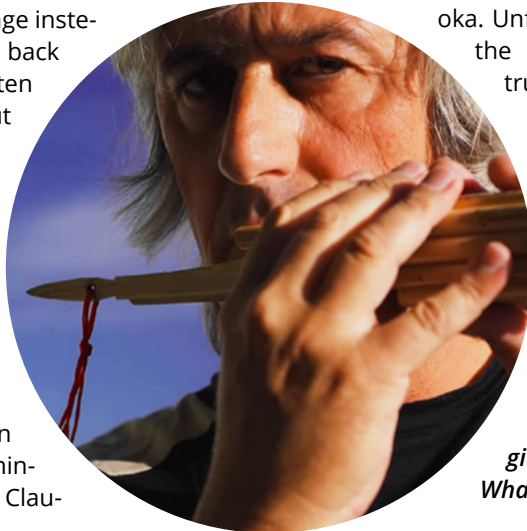
Since you mentioned him, how did you first meet Claudio Baglioni?

One day, I was on a boat, absentmindedly humming Clau-

dio's song "Mille giorni di te e di me." I looked up, and right in front of me, on a passing boat, was Claudio Baglioni himself. I thought, "What a coincidence—I was singing his song, and there he is." That evening, I met him and told him what had happened, saying I found it a bit strange. He replied, "Music comes from the sea." And, indeed, here in Lampedusa, music truly comes from the sea—carried by the currents, bringing everything that the sea carries to this piece of land. Tourists, migrants, emotions—everything the sea brings influences the music. At this moment (in 2011, ed.), I would say the current is coming from the Scirocco.

In 2007, you released your first album, "Yesss!!!"

"Yesss!!!" is all about positivity. You can hear it in the song's English slogan: "Listen to the sound darbuga, is much better than bazuka"—listen to the sound of the darbuga, the Tunisian drum; it's better than the sound of a bazooka. Unfortunately, today, the opposite is often true.



The album "Yesss!!!" includes the track "Sharabià," which became the opening theme for O'Scià and the TV program "Alle Falde del Kilimanjaro" by Licia Colò. What does "Sharabià"

mean?

"Sharabià" is a universal language, a form of communication open to the world. It blends Sicilian, Arabic, French, and Italian. The importance of "Sharabià" is that it allows us to communicate with the world—it breaks boundaries, extending beyond daily events.

Let's talk about work and future projects. What are you working on?

Recently (in 2011, ed.), I performed three concerts in Sicily, accompanied by my old band, which I reassembled after six years. The great thing about this experience was that we were finally able to put on a full concert—an hour and a half long—structured as a true performance with its own narrative, rather than just a random setlist. I hope we'll be able to bring this show to Lampedusa as well. On the recording side, I'm working on a new album. Three tracks are already finished, and I plan to include them in the O'Scià 2011 lineup by September.

Can you give us a preview?

The musical style remains the same at its core, and the references are still closely connected—directly or indirectly—to Lampedusa. These new songs, in a way, represent everything that has happened. But I should clarify: I simply tell stories—both through the musical style and the lyrics.

Let's talk about Lampedusa. What is life like on the island right now (in 2011, ed.)?

For me, Lampedusa is one of the few places in the world where you can truly breathe. Here, you are far from everything—far from the world. I live in Lampedusa because, here, I can breathe in every sense.

Today, the island has become a symbolic place on a global scale. It has made history due to the phenomenon of migration. But as you can see, if you don't turn on the television, you wouldn't even notice that migrants have arrived. •



Antoine Michel
1957 - ∞

Discover his
philosophy,
the inspiration
behind the
Kamalé Festival

CULTURE

*Pelagie 2030: The **SUBLIME** SDGs Project Supports Resilient and Sustainable Communities at the Gateway to Europe*



Curated by
Margherita Maniscalco



SUBLIME
SDGs

In 2023, the National Strategy for Sustainable Development was approved by the Interministerial Committee for Ecological Transition, marking a significant step forward in accelerating the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. Italy lags behind other European countries in this regard. In recent months, a participatory survey was conducted to build shared knowledge about the opportunities and challenges facing local communities in small towns and islands at Europe's gateway. From Lesbos to Lampedusa, the research involved more than 350 residents of various ages. Despite the lack of widespread awareness of the 2030 Agenda on the islands, local communities are already taking action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the Pelagie archipelago, a remarkable presence of around forty civil society organizations was mapped, with 80% of them being local groups. The main challenges identified from the collected testimonies include difficulties in accessing healthcare services, limited transport connections to and from the islands, and scarce educational and training opportunities. Geographic isolation is a particularly pressing issue for young people in Linosa. Other key intervention priorities highlighted by local stakeholders primarily relate to Goal 11 of the global Agenda: making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

The Three-Year Educational Plan of the L. Pirandello Comprehensive Institute includes multiple educational activities carried out in collaboration with third-sector associations, forming a solid foundation for achieving Target 4.7

of the Agenda: ensuring that all students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development by 2030. Resilience and sustainability initiatives are also being advanced by other local stakeholders. With support from the municipality, private businesses have taken on the management of green spaces and public areas to revitalize them. Cleanup actions are organized by young tourism entrepreneurs dedicated to environmental stewardship. The plastic collection efforts at sea carried out in recent years by the fishermen of Co.Ge.P.A. of Lampedusa and Linosa have been recognized as a best practice in the region. The courage and humanity of Lampedusa's fishermen have been honored by the Gariwo Foundation with the "Garden of the Righteous," established on the terrace adjacent to the Pelagie Archaeological Museum, to commemorate—as stated by the foundation—"those who, anywhere in the world, rescue people in distress, even at the risk of their own lives."

The management entities of Lampedusa and Linosa's marine and terrestrial reserves contribute to the protection of 30% of the land and sea, a target set for 2030. An increasing number of local organizations are promoting a "Culture of Sustainability," one of the key drivers of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development. Social agriculture initiatives, guided tours exploring the island's natural, historical, and archaeological heritage, and other innovative and creative activities are being proposed by various locally rooted organizations.

There is a widespread awareness of the impact that the lack of a cinema, a theater, and indoor facilities has on the

quality of life and well-being of children and young people. In response, several local associations have addressed this shortage by creating spaces and opportunities for social engagement, including a children's library, an alternative theater, sports areas, a local radio station, outdoor film screenings, and live performances. On the other hand, more than 80% of people interviewed on the islands consider it "easy" or "very easy" to access nature and green spaces. Green areas play a key role in mitigating the effects of climate change. In this context, the municipal administration's commitment to advancing the ecological transition of the Pelagic Islands is a fundamental step toward a more sustainable and resilient future for these extraordinary territories. According to the research conducted within the SUBLIME SDGs project, more than 50% of respondents in the archipelago perceive themselves as personally exposed to environmental and climate-related risks and threats. To address the ecological transition, in 2024, the municipal council approved the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan under the new European Union Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, which brings together thousands of local governments voluntarily committed to implementing EU climate and energy objectives. The plan aims to reduce CO₂ emissions by at least 40% by 2030 through improved energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy sources. The document approved by the municipality outlines adaptation measures to be implemented in response to the impacts of the climate crisis in the Mediterranean, a climate change hotspot. Heatwaves and rising

temperatures, extreme rainfall, water scarcity and quality issues, hydrogeological instability, landslides, coastal erosion, and challenges in engaging local communities on climate change are the main vulnerabilities identified in the municipal plan.

Moving in the same direction, the Lampedusa Tourism Hub organized a climate justice ideas lab in December 2024, aimed at young people aged 15 to 30 in the Pelagic archipelago, who will have the opportunity to participate in a call for proposals inspired by the values promoted by the Kamalé Festival. First held in Lampedusa in September 2024, the Kamalé Festival is another best practice mapped in the region for its networked and holistic approach to sustainability, as well as its promotion of hospitality and multicultural values. The Kamalé grant will be promoted in eleven small frontier communities across various European countries, where young people, thanks to micro-funding provided by the SUBLIME SDGs project (part of the European Commission's DEAR Program), will be able to implement their own initiatives.

The project is coordinated by the Municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa and supports local authorities in achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, offering small municipalities at the borders of the European Union the opportunity to become "ambassadors" of sustainable lifestyles and change. The project will continue until 2028, providing educational experiences and supporting concrete actions for climate justice, gender justice, and the recognition of the value of diversity in the Pelagic Islands.

-

Lampedus'Amore. Ten Years of Emotions



Curated by
Filippo Mulè
Journalist, President of the Occhiblu Association

Page 44 (top): Valentino Picone with Salvo La Rosa and Elvira Terranova
Page 44 (middle): Raphael Gualazzi and Simona Molinari
Page 44 (bottom): Presentation of Zaki's book

Lampedus'Amore-International Journalism Award Cristiana Matarino, the festival dedicated to the Neapolitan journalist who made Sicily her home and passed away at just 45 years old—now resting, by her final wish, on the largest of the Pelagie Islands—has firmly established itself as one of the most important events of the Lampedusan summer. The 2025 edition will mark the tenth anniversary, and to celebrate the occasion, the Occhiblu Association, which has been organizing the event since 2016, plans an even richer and more diverse program. The major new feature is the expansion from three to six days, from July 7 to 12, including an event in nearby Linosa. This ambitious undertaking will test the organizational team while drawing numerous prominent figures to the heart of the Mediterranean.

At the core of the project—celebrating the beauty and generosity of the Pelagie Islands—are once again the themes of solidarity, social commitment, accurate journalism, and the defense of human rights. Linosa will open the festival, followed by Lampedusa hosting cultural discussions, debates, conferences, photography exhibitions, musical and theatrical performances, and storytelling that transcends languages and borders. Past editions have featured renowned musicians (Lello Analfino, Claudio Baglioni, Jerusa Barros, Edoardo Bennato, Brunori Sas, Anna Castiglia, Dimartino, Raphael Gualazzi, Mario Incudine, Eral Meta, Simona Molinari, Ksenia Milas, Roy Paci, Marina Rei, Oleksandr Semchuk, Davide Shorty, Daniele Silvestri, Mario Venuti), celebrated actors, comedians, and directors (Andrea Bosca, Paolo Briguglia,

Giuseppe Cederna, Maddalena Crippa, Nadia Kibout, Gianfranco Jannuzzo, Roberto Lipari, Ester Pantano, Graziano Piazza, Valentino Picone, Sasà Salvaggio, I Sansoni, I Soldi Spicci), Presidents of the Senate and the Sicilian Region, politicians including current Minister of Sports Andrea Abo-di, as well as writers and athletes.

This year, a documentary film will premiere, recounting the festival's ten-year history, its purpose, origins, and evolution into an internationally significant event. The film will provide a historical perspective with contributions from key figures, founders, authorities, and island personalities. Another new highlight is a music hall performance paying tribute to Domenico Modugno—the legendary singer-songwriter who won

four Sanremo Festivals and passed away in Lampedusa in 1994—through theatrical texts and music.

The call for entries for the journalism award (www.occhibluonlus.com) has already been launched, with applications open until April 30. The honor

roll is prestigious, and submissions frequently come from abroad. The awards ceremony—supported by the Order of Journalists and the National Federation of the Press—will be the festival's centerpiece, with additional support from the European Parliament, the Sicilian Region (Department of Tourism, Sport, and Entertainment), the Sicilian Regional Assembly (ARS), the Municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa, Kore University of Enna, and Corecom Sicilia. ●



Meat Cous cous

A dish with ancient origins, tracing back to the Berber regions of North Africa. Originally a communal dish, it was prepared with steamed durum wheat semolina accompanied by local meats and vegetables. Spread through cultural exchanges and migrations, it has adapted to the culinary traditions of the Mediterranean.

*It was served during the 2024 edition of the **Kamalé Festival**.*



Curated by
Vincenzo Di Palma

INGREDIENTS FOR 4 PEOPLE

For the Cous cous:

300 g Couscous
50 g Olive Oil
1 teaspoon Mixed Spices (cumin, coriander, ground cardamom, sweet paprika, cinnamon)
Saffron to taste
Salt and Pepper to taste
50 g Onion
1 Garlic clove

For the Vegetables:

50 g Zucchini
50 g Yellow Pumpkin
50 g Carrots
1 Onion
50 g Celery
50 g Green Bell Pepper
50 g Tomato
50 g Potatoes
50 g Dried Chickpeas
Salt and Pepper to taste

For the Meat Sauce:

200 g Lamb Leg
200 g Mutton (or beef)
1 Onion
2 Garlic cloves
100 g Tomato Paste
5 Basil Leaves
1 Bay Leaf
Chili Pepper to taste
30 g Harissa
Salt and Pepper to taste
50 g Olive Oil
5 liters Water

For the Meat Broth:

Lamb Bones
50 g Tomato Paste
50 g Fresh Tomato
100 g Onion
100 g Carrot
20 g Garlic
Salt and Whole Peppercorns to taste

METHOD

To prepare the couscous, start by making the broth: after deboning the lamb leg, place the bone in a tall pot along with the whole peppercorns, salt, fresh tomato, and double-concentrated tomato paste. Add the peeled and chopped carrot and onion, then pour in the cold water. Bring to a boil and let it cook for 40 minutes, skimming off impurities as needed using a skimmer.

Once the broth is ready, strain it through a fine sieve and keep it warm in a separate pot.

Meanwhile, cut the meat into chunks, peel and finely chop the onion. Heat the olive oil in a saucepan, add the onion and garlic cloves, and let them stew, deglazing occasionally with a ladle of broth to prevent sticking. Add the meat, season with salt, and cover with hot broth, then stir in the tomato paste, bay leaf, and basil.

Let it cook over low heat for about an hour and a half, adding meat broth as needed. Once the meat is tender, adjust the salt.

Cook the washed and coarsely chopped vegetables (zucchini, yellow pumpkin, carrots, onion, celery, bell pepper, potatoes) in the meat broth, then add the pre-cooked chickpeas.

Start preparing the semolina in a large ceramic bowl. Work the semolina with your hands, moistening it with a little water and adding olive oil, finely chopped onion, garlic, spices, and a pinch of salt—this will help it soften and swell. Mix everything and let it rest for 60 minutes.

It is essential to use a special pot, the couscoussier, as the semolina must steam and not be boiled directly in hot water. If you do not have a couscoussier, you can use a steamer pot or a steaming basket lined with a fine-mesh gauze. Alternatively, a terracotta bowl can be used. Bring 1/2 liter of meat soup to a boil, adjusting its density with broth, then pour the liquid over the semolina. Cover the bowl with a cloth and let it rest for 90 minutes, occasionally checking if more broth is needed.

Do not stir the semolina; instead, fluff it with your hands rather than using a fork or whisk. To make the process easier, add a drizzle of olive oil or grease your hands so the grains slide smoothly between your fingers.

SERVING

Put the remaining broth back on low heat to further reduce it. Take two ladles of the meat sauce and mix in the harissa.

To serve, place the semolina in a large traditional terracotta bowl, garnish with the meat sauce and vegetables. Serve the thickened broth and the spicy sauce separately. •

*Enjoy this and other recipes
during the next edition of
the Kamalé Festival
in Lampedusa!*

CULTURE IN THE KITCHEN

Timballo del Gattopardo

The Timballo del Gattopardo, an iconic dish of Sicilian tradition, takes inspiration from Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's novel. A symbol of the declining nobility, it represents the culinary opulence of the era. It is said to have been prepared for grand occasions, featuring layers of pasta, meat, eggs, and peas enclosed in a golden crust. An emblem of luxury and tradition, it celebrates the splendor of 19th-century Sicily.

*It was served during the 2024 edition of the **Kamalé Festival**.*



Curated by
Rosaria Di Maggio



INGREDIENTS FOR 6 PEOPLE

½ liter tomato purée
200 g tomato paste
400 g chicken breast/thighs
100 g chiodini mushrooms
100 g chicken livers
100 g cooked ham
300 g sausage
150 g green peas
White wine
500 g short macaroni pasta
100 g Sicilian pecorino cheese
6 quail eggs
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
Black truffle (optional)
2 sheets of shortcrust pastry
½ liter béchamel sauce with cinnamon
1 egg
80 g butter
Breadcrumbs to taste
1 garlic clove
Parsley

METHOD

Prepare small meatballs with minced boiled chicken, mixing in 1 egg, 3 tablespoons of Sicilian pecorino cheese, a pinch of salt, 1 minced garlic clove, parsley to taste, and breadcrumbs as needed. Fry them in oil and set them aside on absorbent paper.

Sauté the butter with the chicken livers, crumbled sausage, and chiodini mushrooms, deglaze with white wine, and cook for a few minutes. Add the tomato paste, mix well with the meat, then add the tomato purée. Season with salt, pepper, and a teaspoon of sugar. Halfway through cooking, add the peas and let it simmer for about 30 minutes over medium heat.

Meanwhile, cook the macaroni until very al dente, drain, and mix with the sauce, Sicilian pecorino, meatballs, and half of the béchamel sauce, combining everything well.

Butter a 30 cm diameter baking dish, line the bottom and sides with a sheet of shortcrust pastry, and pour in half of the macaroni mixture. Add the boiled quail eggs, grated cheese, black truffle slices, and julienned cooked ham. Cover with the remaining macaroni, pour over the remaining béchamel sauce with a light sprinkle of cinnamon, then seal the timballo with the second sheet of shortcrust pastry, carefully sealing the edges. Brush the surface with beaten egg and prick it with a fork.

Bake in a static oven at 200°C (392°F) for about 40 minutes.

SERVING

Serve with a rich brown sauce (beef broth reduction). •

*Enjoy this and other recipes
during the next edition of
the Kamalé Festival
in Lampedusa!*

Antonino Meli: Lampedusa on Canvas

Background: The first canvas on which Antonino Meli painted his famous seagulls
Inset: Antonino Meli, Self-Portrait
Back Cover: Detail of one of Meli's seagull paintings



Antonino (Nini) Meli, a native of Lampedusa, was one of the artists who best captured the beauty and essence of the island. Born and raised in this Mediterranean haven, Meli transformed the light, colors, and landscape of his homeland into art, making it the absolute protagonist of his works. After spending his childhood in Lampedusa, he moved to Rome to attend the Academy of Fine Arts (1967-1971), where he refined his talent under the guidance of master Silvio Bicchi.

Meli's painting, deeply rooted in Impressionism, draws inspiration from great masters such as Manet, Renoir, and Fattori, yet stands out for its unique connection to Lampedusa's reality. Dubbed the "painter of absolute reality," Meli masterfully captured the sea,

the horizon, and island life with vibrant brushstrokes and warm tones, infusing his works with a lyricism that transcends the visible to embrace emotions and states of mind.

Lampedusa, with its history and cultural blend influenced by Arab and Norman civilizations, is a constant theme in his paintings. Meli's works, exhibited in Italy and abroad, not only celebrate the island's beauty but also address universal themes such as hospitality and dialogue.

In this edition, we pay tribute to Antonino Meli with one of his masterpieces featured on the back cover, a homage to an artist who brought Lampedusa to the world, celebrating its beauty and identity. An invitation to discover, through his colors, the deep soul of this unique land. •

Our advice.

Our selection ★ Your holidays.

Sole Hotel

+39 0922971910

info@hotelsolelampedusa.it

Via del Mediterraneo, Lampedusa

Karilia Aparthotel

+39 3387352509

lagariga@yahoo.it

www.viaggiincantiere.it/en

Cavalluccio Marino Hotel

+39 3382755249

info@hotelcavallucciomarino.com

Contrada Cala Croce, Lampedusa

El Mosaico del Sol Hotel

+39 0922973074 / +39 3393851246

info@elmosaicodelsol.it

Via Francesco Riso, Lampedusa

Cala Creta Homes

+39 0922970879 / +39 3277544207

villetedicalacreta@lampedusa.to

Contrada Cala Creta, Lampedusa

Guitgia Tommasino Hotel

+39 0922970879 / +39 3277544207

hotelguitgiatommasino@lampedusa.to

Via Lido Azzurro 21, Lampedusa

Cupola Bianca Resort

+39 0922971274 / +39 3382258225

booking@cupolabiancaresort.it

Via Madonna, Lampedusa



Jerimar Homes

+39 0922971471 / +39 0922971262 / +39 3394913014 / +39 3387892067

info@jerimarlampedusa.it
Cala Madonna, Lampedusa



Jerimar Dammusi

+39 0922971471 / +39 0922971262 / +39 3394913014 / +39 3387892067

info@jerimarlampedusa.it
Mare Morto, Lampedusa



Zu Caluzzu Homes

+39 0922971471 / +39 0922971262 / +39 3394913014 / +39 3387892067

info@jerimarlampedusa.it
Cala Pisana, Lampedusa



Casa Zita

+39 3386495433

info@casazitalampedusa.com
Contrada Ponente, Lampedusa



Nautic Hotel

+39 0922971531

info@nautichotel.it

Via delle Grotte, Lampedusa



Licciardi Residence

+39 0922970678 / +39 3669241927

licciardigroup@gmail.com

Via Siracusa 18, Lampedusa



L'Isola che c'è Apartments

+39 3397741676 / +39 3339315136

vania@lampedusalisolachece.it

rossella@lampedusalisolachece.it



Arcobaleno Rental

+39 3663354601

info@noleggioarcobalenolampedusa.it

Porto Nuovo, Lampedusa



Cavalluccio Marino Restaurant

+39 09221757713

ristorante@hotelcavallucciomarino.com

Contrada Cala Croce, Lampedusa



Da Tommasino Restaurant

+39 0922970879 / +39 3277544207

info@lampedusa.to

Guitgia Beach, Lampedusa



Le Mille e Una Notte Restaurant

+39 0922970678 / +39 3669241927

licciardigroup@gmail.com

Lungomare Luigi Rizzo, Lampedusa



Cala Croce Club Restaurant

Restaurant reservations: +39 3924359193

Beach service reservations: +39 3392121929

Cala Croce Beach, Lampedusa



Book a boat tour!
With lunch, cocktail bar, music, fun and entertainment.

Adriana Galleon

+39 3343508623 / +39 3334029608

www.galeoneadriana.it
Porto Nuovo, Lampedusa



Travel light!
We'll take the weight off your luggage.

Lampedusa Shipping

+39 3339648096

spedizionilampedusa@gmail.com

Via Mazzini 37, Lampedusa





Cala Palme Apartments

+39 3926676275 — info@calapalmelampedusa.it



Incanto Luxury Rooms

+39 3316353367 — info@incantoluxuryrooms.it



Villalba Residence

+39 0922970664 — info@lampedusa-villalba.it



Moschella Hotel

+39 3392276303 — info@moschellalampedusa.it



Calamadonna Club

+39 3701126275 — info@calamadonnaclub.it



Le Cale Bed & Breakfast

+39 3339469272 — info@lecalelampedusa.it

Puesta de Sol Residence

+39 3331585526 — info@puestadesol.it

La Casa di Giò B&B

+39 0922971043 — info@lacasadigiolampedusa.it

Venustas B&B

+39 3341428769 — info@venustaslampedusa.com

Il Faro della Guitgia Hotel

+39 0922970962 — info@ilfarodellaguitgia.it

Cala Madonna Homes

+39 0922971932 — info@levillette.com

Nagitour Travel Agency

+39 3926869249 — nagitourlampedusa@gmail.com





Summerland Rental

+39 3349245188 — info@lampedusaauto.it



Rally Rental

+39 3341267579 — autonoleggioryally@gmail.com



L'ISOLABELLA

L'informazione turistica di Lampedusa, Linosa e Lampedione
Mazzaroni, Tortolici, Lombradori

L'isolaBella Periodico
YEAR XVI - Winter 2025

On the cover:

Towards Rabbit Island by Tommaso Sparma

Editor-in-Chief:

Maria Veronica Policardi

Graphic Design and Layout:

Luca Siragusa

Editorial Team:

Luca Siragusa, Andrea Pavia, Orazio Giammona,
Serena Zanna, Tommaso Sparma

Contributors:

Laura Casano, Carlo Massimo Zaccarini, Biagio Picarella, Elena Prazzi, Simone D'ippolito, Cristina Errera, Maria Concetta Parello, Serena Zanna, Calogero Maria Sparma, Margherita Maniscalco, Filippo Mulè, Vincenzo Di Palma, Rosaria Di Maggio

Publisher:

Hub Turistico Lampedusa S.r.l.s.
IT 02855610842 — Via Adua 15 - 92031 Lampedusa
lampedusa@hubturistico.org / www.hubturistico.it

All contents of this publication and any attachments are the property of the publisher. Reproduction is strictly prohibited.

Registered under number 306 in the Press Register of the Court of Agrigento on 26/07/2011.

Art means freeing oneself,
entering orbit, finding
new dimensions, and
yet communicating with
simplicity.

o. luis.

