Italian town's drinking fountain dispenses red wine - and it's free

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The wine fountain is free to drink from CREDIT: DORA SARCHESE

By **Hugh Morris**

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A fountain to quench the thirst of walkers on the popular pilgrimage route, the Cammino di San Tommaso, has opened in Abruzzo in central Italy.

But this little gem provides hikers not with water - but revitalising wine.

What's more, the fontana del vino in Caldari di Ortona is both free and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



The wine fountain was opened at the weekend CREDIT: DORA SARACHESE

Created by the local Dora Sarchese vineyard, the fountain will pour red wine for the thousands of tourists and pilgrims who make the journey from Rome to Ortona to visit the city's cathedral where the remains of Thomas, one of Jesus' disciples, are kept.

The fountain, a joint project between Dora Sarchese and the organisation in charge of maintaining and promoting the Cammino di San Tommaso, is believed to be the first in Italy to be open all the time. Similar attractions have previously been used instead as one-off set ups to celebrate events and festivals.

A post on the vineyard's Facebook said the "Fountain of Wine is a welcome, the Fountain of Wine is poetry" before adding that it was not for the use of "drunkards" or "louts".



“The Fountain of Wine is a gift for the Cammino di San Tommaso in which we believe so much and that in this way we want to help to grow,” it said, slightly confusingly.

“The Fountain of Wine is not the Trevi Fountain, not spilling wine all the time.”

Perhaps Italy’s most famous wine fountain is that in the centre of Marino, from which wine flows during the annual Grape Festival. In 2008, however, a plumbing error meant that instead of wine coming forth from the fountain, it was re-routed to residents.





Ortona, on the Adriatic coast, is the destination for walkers setting off from Rome CREDIT: FOTOLIA/AP

Mayor Adriano Palozzi said at the time: "Due to a technical error, instead of connecting wine to the fountains, we accidentally channelled it into some local homes.

"Apparently the people living around the square who got the wine coming out of their taps were very surprised, they thought that it might be some kind of present from the local council. It only lasted three minutes, we corrected it straight away."



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