

Navelli

Navelli is situated under the lee of a big and beautiful valley. Its name has two different origins. Someone tells that it comes from "nave", ship, due to the valley conformation similar to a basin. Others tell that it comes from "Novelli", which means nine villages, the number of the villages around. When the local men, backing home after a naval expedition, decided to put the picture of a ship in the flag, they also thought to change the name in Navelli.



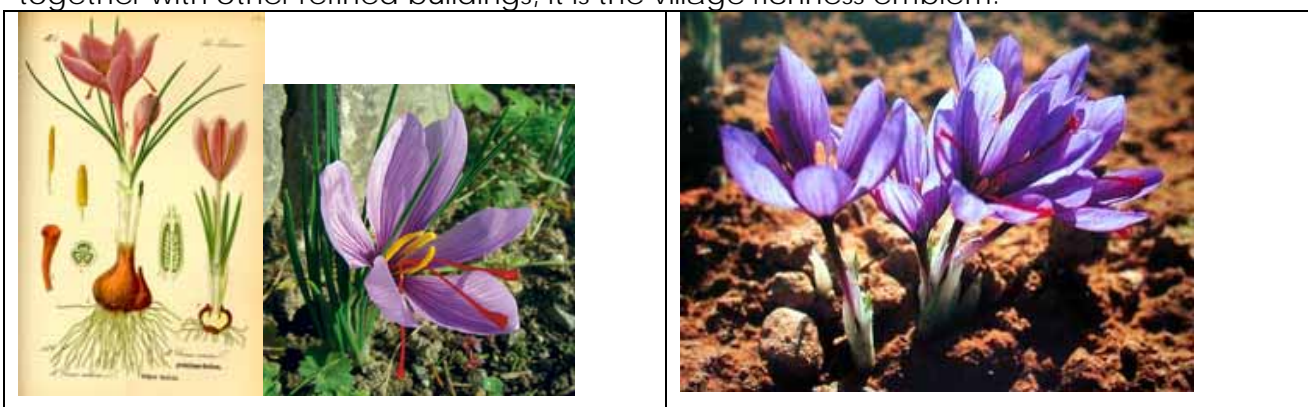
Thanks to the strategic position, Navelli, has been always an important economical and business centre.

The saffron production is very important and it is a symbol of the village welfare.

Since 3500 years the saffron fruit, the pistil of a little flower, is used to prepare medicines and as ingredient for many recipes. Local people show a great reverence to this little but very profitable fruit.



Navelli, also has a pastoral tradition. During years hundreds of shepherds with their flocks, found here a place to rest during the night, sleeping into churches or simple huts. The friars usually gave them messages left from others shepherds, telling about the way as transhumance gone, and fixing a general meeting in the Puglia coast where the journey stopped. Nowadays, tourists can visit these old churches situated along the highway SS 17, that was the old sheep-tracks road. Among the most interesting there are: Santa Maria delle Grazie, sixteenth-century, Santa Maria in Cerulis, built in the XI century on the stones which supported an ancient temple, dedicated to Ercole from Incerulae. There is still an original arcade under where shepherds slept. Navelli has pre Romanic origins and holds the medieval plan with little streets and stone steps, leading people to the enchanting "Palazzo Santucci" (XVII century). The palace dominates the village and the valley and together with other refined buildings, it is the village richness emblem.



Navelli is the "thousand windows" village, one different from the other, overlooking the valley as thousand eyes admiring the old stones that are everywhere : the arcades, the houses, the streets, the medieval ancient walls. The village hosts many churches; church of San Sebastian (XVII) closed to Palazzo Santucci, and the church of "Madonna del Rosario" (XVI-XVII century), with a valuable eighteenth-century organ.

