
CALABRIA
(SOUTH ITALY)
A Permanent State of Mind
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# CALABRIA - SOUTH ITALY

According to the latest information circulating on the web, this piece of land was once connected to what is now Sardinia, millions of years ago, when Italy had not yet developed its famous boot-shaped form.

Then came tectonic attraction toward Africa, earthquakes, migrations, people, ambitions, faiths, and all the necessary spiritualities. Eventually the separation occurred, and Calabria became the tip of Italy, attached to a boot-shaped peninsula. A pointed boot, one might add: the kind of footwear used when somebody needs a kick in the backside, although many insist on calling it feminine elegance.

But who are these people?

Let us examine them carefully, because what is missing is not a history of Calabria but a concept of the Calabrian population and its origins.

My structural analysis is based exclusively on experience. I hold no academic title, no institutional authority, and no scientific certification for what I am about to say. I am neither a professor nor a researcher.

I simply report facts as I have observed them and knowledge as I have acquired it.

The two things that need neither validation nor reviews.

And only the truth.

Ahahahah.

The three provinces that initially defined Calabria, Cosenza in the north, Catanzaro in the center, and Reggio Calabria in the south, immediately revealed profound differences in character, culture, and social behavior.

In the north, around Cosenza, lies a people of villages and mountains. A people who turned conviction and local loyalty into a blade. A population that developed a remarkable ability to demonstrate, persuade, and project importance.

This is where many of the men who shaped Calabrian politics over the last seventy years emerged.

They collected votes from every corner of Calabria. They knew how to sell themselves even when they had very little to sell.

A bit like I do.

Ahahahah.

In the center lies Catanzaro, a people of hills, trade, and mobility.

Legend says there were originally two settlements, CATA and ZARO, separated by a bridge. Then the children of the two chiefs married, and a city was born.

Whether true or not is irrelevant.

Trade became their natural resource.

Entrepreneurship became instinct.

To this day there remains in their DNA an ability to identify opportunities, negotiate circumstances, and transform situations into economic value.

Opportunity and opportunism are cousins. Both belong to the same economic family.

These are the true entrepreneurs of Calabria.

Then comes the south.

Reggio Calabria.

A people of the sea.

For centuries, every possible civilization landed there. Phoenicians, Italians, Sicilians, traders, armies, dreamers, adventurers, conquerors, and merchants.

Many arrived expecting conquest.

Many discovered that the people already living there had prepared a suitable welcome.

The Reggino developed a unique talent: the ability to combine politics, business, family networks, personal influence, and territorial control into integrated systems of power.

Sometimes this ability generated institutions, enterprises, and commercial success.

Sometimes it generated alternative structures of authority operating according to their own logic and rules.

Love them or hate them, they became part of the region's history.

But this same land is also the land of geniuses.

There was **Raffaele Piria**, one of Calabria's greatest scientific minds, whose contribution to chemistry left a permanent mark on modern science. Yet recognition arrived through mechanisms of legitimacy controlled elsewhere.

There was **Corrado Alvaro**, writer, intellectual, and storyteller, who made entire generations fall in love with his words.

And there were countless others.

Scientists.

Artists.

Managers.

Entrepreneurs.

Professionals.

People who succeeded only after leaving Calabria.

Because that is one of the strangest characteristics of this land.

If you become successful, it is usually because someone outside Calabria first recognized your value.

If you are considered important within Calabria alone, the celebration tends to be brief.

Reality has a habit of intervening.

Very quickly.

Ahahahah.

Perhaps this is Calabria's greatest paradox.

A land rich in talent, but cautious in recognizing it.

A land capable of producing excellence, yet often unwilling to certify it itself.

A land that exports its best people and imports their reputations back home.

And yet, despite everything, people remain attached to it.

They leave.

They criticize.

They complain.

They swear they will never return.

And then they spend the rest of their lives talking about Calabria.

At which point one suspects that Calabria is not a place.

It is a condition.

A permanent state of mind.

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