



La Damigiana



Folksingers from Monte San Vito

The non profit folk association ***La Damigiana*** was founded officially in 1999. They don't intend to make any profit and aim only to celebrate and promote the music and folk-songs of Marche's countryside. Many of its members have been singing and playing since childhood and there is a copious oral heritage of songs, melodies and jingles that have been handed down to them by the elders of the association. Particularly by Mario Amici and Nardino Beldomenico; true veterans! They are the real pillars of the association, entertaining people with songs and stornelli.

The association produces a variety of CDs, postcards and other items, and has taken part in numerous events: parties, feasts, weddings-divorces, dinner parties, conventions, festivals, banquets. The annual average is around 120-140 events.

La Damigiana also organize accordion and tambourine lessons and workshops to promulgate folk music and that of the Marche in particular.

It is nice to say something of their character: they personally construct at home all the musical instruments that they play, which are: tambourine, triangle, segone, carcavella, raganella, castanets, bullhorns, porknails. The only exception being the typical accordion, made in Castelfidardo by talented local craftsmen. The whole folk instrument range is displayed at the International Museum of Castelfidardo's accordions. www.accordions.com/museum

The very colourful and simple costumes worn refer to the Italian countrymen's dresses of about 10 years ago. It is the same dress that can still be seen worn by some rural people today. In particular we wear: black trousers, plaid shirt, straw hat with a plume, neckcloth and waist band.

La Damigiana association is in friendship with a Bavarian folk group from Peissenberg (high Bavaria, about 70km to Munich). The name of the group is 'Trachterverein-Markt', which translates as 'Traditional costume Market'. The association is a large one with around 250 members and they play their band instruments including accordions. Their very curious costume consists of leather short pants, socks and the classic braces!

The repertoire of ***La Damigiana*** is individual and various, composed of saltarello, stornelli ('starlings' – with short answering verses), stornelli a braccio (extemporized verses, sometimes gently satirizing those present), canti di questua (begging songs), canti a ballo (songs for dance), but all them are similar for the animated tone and the pleasantness that is brought out. Wine songs can't be forgotten, of course! As wine is an ancient symbol of friendship it is no accident that the name of the association is closely connected to the flask where wine is kept.

[Damigiana = demijohn]