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Palace of Baldu

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■ The Basilica of Our Lady of Luogosanto

In the centre of the town is the Basilica di Nostra Signora di Luogosanto (fig. 1), dedicated to Mary the child.



Fig. 1 - Basilica of Our Lady of Luogosanto (from <http://www.lamiasardegna.it/files/luogosanto.htm>).

Its construction is tied up with the legend recorded in a letter from the Bishop of Ampurias and Civita in 1519: this narrated the discovery of the relics of the hermit Saints Nicola and Trano in the site where the place of worship dedicated to them was then built by two Franciscan friars in 1227. The two monks were inspired by the Virgin Mary and appointed by her to build three churches: the one built on the grotto-burial place was dedicated to S. Trano while the once in Località Lu Rotareddu was dedicated to San Nicola. The last one, named after the Virgin Mary, is said to have been the home of the hermitage's relics,

housed under the large altar. The latter was elevated to the dignity of Basilica by Pope Honorius III, who equipped it with the Holy Door which is opened on September 8 (the Nativity of Mary) for a whole year every seven years. A wooden statue of the Virgin was also found on the beach of Cannigione in Arzachena and taken to the church dedicated to her (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 - Basilica of Our Lady of Luogosanto: statue of the Virgin Mary (photo by F. Collu).

In the 1970s, the sculptor Luchetti created a bronze door with three framed squares that tell the story of how the simulacrum was found: in the first frames, there is the box that

protected the statue in its trip across the seas; in the central one the transportation to the building of worship and in the upper part, the Virgin Mary venerated by the saints Trano and Nicola (fig. 3).



Fig. 3 - The holy door sculpted by L. Luchetti during the seventies (Photo by C. Cocco).

The original layout of the 13th century church was cancelled by more recent restoration work: in the 18th century it was entirely rebuilt with three apses with a separate portico, in granite ashlars and in 1912 the room was extended, incorporating the open space.

Inside the Basilica there is a cycle of paintings representing scenes from the life of the Virgin (fig. 4) and Jesus and Saint Nicola and Trano.

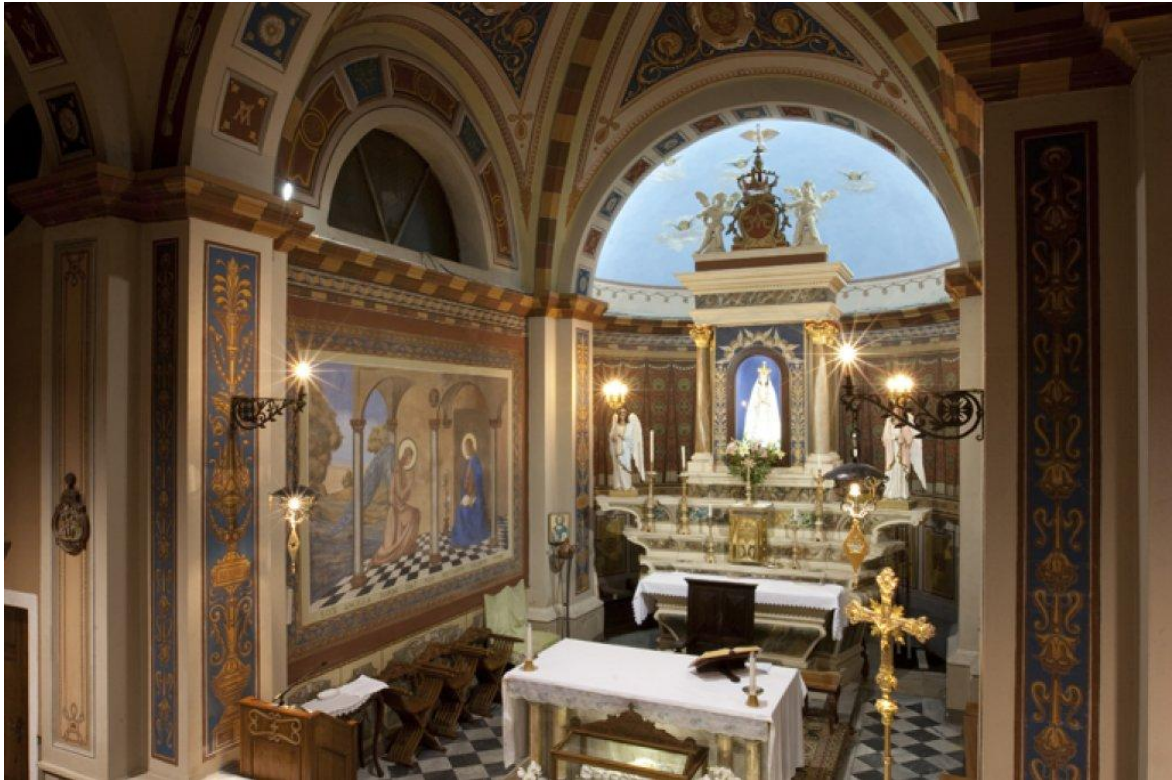


Fig. 4 - Basilica of Our Lady of Luogosanto, interior (from <http://www.insidegallura.it/cosa-fare-a-luogo-santo-e-dintorni-1/archeologia-e-musei/13-basilica-di-nostra-signora.html>).

■ Credits

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