

The west quayside – the Ponente Quay

Cesenatico is my town of choice, and I love it.

I love its colourful old houses, the lively restaurants, bars, and cafes, which are always hospitable and friendly, and almost always open, I love the lights that dance their reflections on the water of the port, the distinctive smell of the port carried lightly in the wind, the seagulls flying their strange, almost choreographed, paths and the fishing huts with their raised nets.

Each area of Cesenatico has a unique style, but it is the port where the town really comes together. A relatively short strip of sea that flows through the port, splitting the town in two. To the west, Ponente, the fishermen's houses, the old taverns, the dock, and the trade fish market. To the east, Levante, the beautiful residential districts, offices, and banks, and also the main tourist areas. At the end of the port the water streams under the railway bridge and into the immediate countryside where it ends very shortly thereafter.

I never tire of Cesenatico, and I love the fact that, after all these years, I still feel excited to be here and I can always find places that bring me both pleasure and peace. Above all my place of choice in the morning is here, facing the sea, on top of what was once referred to as “the palate” and was the last part of the port designed by the great Leonardo Da Vinci and desired by Cesare Borgia, the powerful Duke Valentino.

I arrive before daybreak at the top of the Palate. Darkness dominates my surroundings, with only the bright lighthouse standing out, almost as if it defies the darkness. Everything has yet to be awakened and the night overshadows the time of day. Then, slowly, the opaque colours fall apart, a glow attracts my gaze towards a distant and indefinite point on the horizon out at sea. The miracle of the new dawn is over in just a few seconds and the lighter sky is controlled by a light that rises. This is the most precious moment of the day, when I can free my mind, get rid of all uncertainties, and stop clenching my fists inside the pocket of my jacket.

When the sun seemingly peeps out of the sea, it gives light to a whole host of different scenarios depending on the mood of the day and the season: the golds of summer, with the clouds chasing each other; the grey of winter days, when

the wind pushes the waves hard beyond the rocks; and green for those days of hope.

When the winds subside and the waves calm, the colours are reflected in the water like a mirror. It is then that I embrace this place, trying to hold back all my emotions, because this is my happy moment, when everything is still possible, and everything is ok.

Other people begin to arrive on the quayside; perhaps they too, come to seek that energy they need to start their day.

Soon the town will awaken, Cesenatico the industrious and Cesenatico the tourist town, with sunbeds to be arranged, gazebos to be cleaned, fish to be fried. The wind will carry the voices of the community, the words of the old fishermen, the cries of the children, the memory of the people and their stories.

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