

THE MArRC

A history that is three thousand years old

Reggio Calabria - Corso Garibaldi

REGGIO CALABRIA

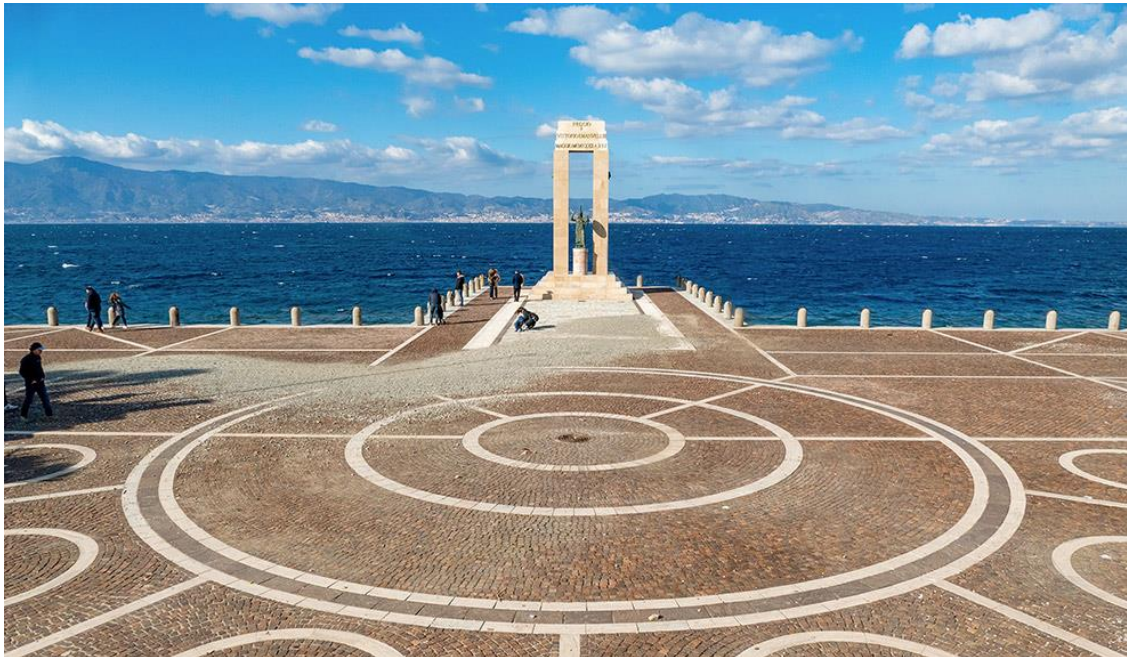
A history that is three thousand years long.

Located right on the tip of the Italian boot, overlooking the Strait of Messina, **Reggio Calabria** has got a very old history: it was indeed **one of the first Greek colonies in southern Italy**.

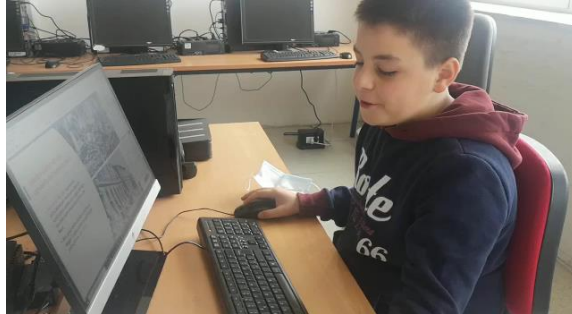




In the city there are several monuments as evidence of its millennial history, like the **Aragonese Castle**, the **Cathedral**, the ancient **Chiesa degli Ottimati** and the **Art Nouveau villas** on the seafront.



Anyway, the top cultural attraction of Reggio Calabria is **the National Archeological Museum**, known as ***The MArRC***, one of the most representative of Magna Graecia in Italy. It houses the famous **Riace Bronzes**, considered among the most important sculpture masterpieces of classical Greek art.



The National Archeological Museum



Its origins date back to 1882 with the foundation of the *Museo Civico* .

After the disastrous earthquake of 1908, which destroyed the cities of Reggio and Messina and damaged the Civic Museum, the archaeologist Paolo Orsi suggested the creation of a National Museum, to exhibit objects collected through over 160 years of excavations in the region.





These items are today displayed in the building named after Marcello Piacentini, a famous architect who created the first purpose-built museum building in Italy.

Piacentini designed the building itself and gave it a modern style, drawing inspiration from the main European museums he had visited.

Located in the heart of the city, the Museum is characterised by its massive volume and monumentality; it consists of a ground floor in black lava stones with high travertine pilasters and large windows.

On its facades there are large illustrations of the ancient coins of the cities of Magna Graecia.



The Museum has four exhibition floors, plus a terrace and an area for temporary exhibitions.

The tour starts on the second floor, level A, with an exhibition of the prehistoric era, from the Stone Age to the Metal Ages. Here you can see men's and women's ornaments and utensils, weapons, amphorae. But, perhaps, the most impressive finds are the animal and human skeletons and an engraving of an ox on a rock.

The tour continues on the first floor, level B, where you can find everything relating to the cities and sanctuaries of Magna Graecia as well as numerous objects of worship, statuettes, jars, engraved stones and fragments from various temples. The highlights of this section are **the Pinakes** (*terracotta tablets*) displaying scenes in relief dedicated to the goddess Persephone.

Then we go down to the mezzanine floor, level C, where visitors can see utensils and everyday objects of Magna Graecia founded in different Necropolises.

You can also admire the region's traditional clothing, decorative mosaics and everything related to the funerary customs of the time, such as the magnificent *amphorae in traditional black and red chrome* and a very important collection of *bronze mirrors*.



The tour ends on the ground floor, level D, where visitors can admire the Bronzes of Riace, the symbol of the city of Reggio Calabria.

The Riace Bronzes, also called the Riace Warriors, are two full-size Greek bronzes of naked, bearded warriors. They most likely date back to the middle of the 5th century B.C. and were found in 1972 at the bottom of the Ionian Sea near the coast of Riace Marina.



Not everyone knows that the MArRC houses the most important collection of Greek bronzes of the classical period (5th century B.C.). In addition to the Bronzes of Riace, there is **The Head of Basilea** and **The Head of the Philosopher**, found in the waters of Porticello (locality *Villa San Giovanni*).



MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO
NAZIONALE
REGGIO CALABRIA

*And now ... a
greeting from the
terrace of our
museum, where it
is possible to
admire the
natural beauty of
the Strait in all
its splendour.*

