

A TOWN, A DRESS, A FAITH, AN IDENTITY

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by Umberto D'Eramo, MPSA, EFIAP/s

Scanno is a town of about 1,800 inhabitants approximately an hour and a half from Rome, in Abruzzo. It is located at an altitude of 1,050 meters (3,450 feet). Official recognition as a UNESCO heritage site is underway.

Already inhabited in Italic and Roman times, it still retains traditions dating back to the 1200s, influenced by oriental-Ottoman migrations, especially in regard to womens' clothing. On holidays, it is easy to meet girls and women who dress specifically for tourists (no authorization); you may just ask them to "pose" in the most characteristic corners. This is because they want to keep the memory of these clothes and the jewels they wear so often "alive." All you

need is a good camera with lenses ranging from wide-angle to medium telephoto. With a 24-70mm zoom lens, you get excellent results in Scanno, from portraits to cityscapes. Being a location with narrow streets, there are certainly gray areas, so it is up to the photographer's skill to choose the best place and time. However, in the space of six hours you can certainly do a good "photoshoot."

It is important to know some information about this traditional clothing to best photograph what is offered free-of-charge.

Every day, the women cover their heads with a simple square-shaped woolen cloth of various colors, called maccaturu (from the French mouchoir). On holidays



Ju Cappellitte resembles a turban (in fact, it recalls a Greek "polos" (πόλος) or an Arab turban).

The skirt is ankle-length: it is made up of six to 12 very dark green cloths; each cloth is 60 centimeters wide and sewn vertically until it reaches a length that varies between 11 and 15 meters. Its weight is about 10 Kg.

The skirt is covered by the mantera, over two meters wide, which in daily use was made of woolen cloth. The jacket, called cummudène, was divided from the skirt: black or blue-black, it rested above the waist. The buttoning buttenera consists of 12 silver buttons: in the upper part, there are six buttons arranged vertically and another six in the middle, arranged in two orders on a rectangular piece of cloth called pettijja. The buttons have decorations of religious or magical-apotropaic subjects. In the wedding costume, the buttons are strictly in gold. For the ears, they used more or less

large pendants (cerceglie), and for the fingers, they use rings with very large bezels, real goldsmith masterpieces.

Scanno has been photographed by great artists such as Cartier Bresson, Berengo Gardin, Mario Giacomelli and especially Hilde Lotz-Bauer.





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He has received awards from:
FIAP (Federation Internationale De L'Art Photographique) -EFIAP/s

PSA (Photographic Society of America) -MPSA

GPU (Global Photographic Union) GPUCR4 - GPUVIP4

IUP (International Union Photographers) HIUP

ISF (Image Sans Frontiere) RISF1 -EDISF

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