



From the MixCache.com library

SAMPLE COPY

A History of San Marino

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1** Legendary Beginnings: The Founding of San Marino
- **Chapter 2** Mount Titano: Prehistoric Origins and Early Settlement
- **Chapter 3** The Life and Legacy of Saint Marinus
- **Chapter 4** Medieval Roots: The Rise of the Castellum Sancta Marini
- **Chapter 5** The Arengo: Governance and Community in the Early Republic
- **Chapter 6** The Captains Regent: Birth of a Unique Political System
- **Chapter 7** Law and Order: The Statutes of the 13th Century
- **Chapter 8** Towers and Fortresses: Defending the Republic
- **Chapter 9** Struggles for Survival: Conflict with Neighboring Lords
- **Chapter 10** Papal Relations and the Expansion of Borders
- **Chapter 11** The Renaissance: A Republic Amidst Changing Times
- **Chapter 12** The Threats of Cesare Borgia and Papal Occupation
- **Chapter 13** Civil Disobedience and the Restoration of Independence
- **Chapter 14** San Marino and the Napoleonic Wars
- **Chapter 15** The Congress of Vienna and Formal Recognition
- **Chapter 16** A Refuge for Revolutionaries: San Marino and the Risorgimento
- **Chapter 17** Enduring Friendship: Treaties with the Kingdom of Italy
- **Chapter 18** Neutrality and Change: San Marino in the Early 20th Century
- **Chapter 19** Fascism, Modernization, and Political Upheaval
- **Chapter 20** The World at War: San Marino in World War II
- **Chapter 21** Refuge and Recovery: Postwar Reconstruction
- **Chapter 22** Democratic Experiments: Communists, Socialists, and Christian Democrats
- **Chapter 23** Social Progress and Global Engagement
- **Chapter 24** San Marino in the Eurozone Era
- **Chapter 25** Continuity and Independence: San Marino in the 21st Century

Introduction

San Marino stands as one of history's most extraordinary anomalies: a sovereign state nestled atop Mount Titano, completely surrounded by Italy, and yet, for more than seventeen centuries, it has persistently asserted its independence. This book, *A History of San Marino*, undertakes the ambitious task of tracing the remarkable journey of this small republic—from its legendary founding in the early fourth century up to the present day. The story of San Marino is not only one of survival, but also of the ingenuity and resilience of a people determined to shape their own destiny amid turbulent times.

Unlike many nation-states whose boundaries were forged in war or expansionist ambition, San Marino's roots lie in the modest aspirations of a Christian stonemason seeking refuge from persecution. Over time, this humble monastic community would evolve into an organized polity, guided by unique traditions of governance reflected in the Arengo and the enduring system of the Captains Regent. The republic's political institutions—remarkably stable and democratic for their era—set San Marino apart from its neighbors, who more often succumbed to despotism, conquest, or absorption into larger powers.

Throughout the medieval and Renaissance centuries, San Marino faced constant challenges from surrounding lords, bishops, and states, all eager to control the defensible heights of Mount Titano. The republic's survival was never assured. It relied on a blend of fortitude, diplomatic savvy, and, at times, sheer good fortune. Its alliances with powerful families and judicious accommodation of papal interests allowed it to expand slightly and, critically, to maintain the autonomy so dear to the Sammarinese people. Episodes such as the occupation by Cesare Borgia, and later by the forces of Cardinal Alberoni, tested San Marino's resolve, but each time, the republic's citizens rallied to restore their self-rule.

The modern era brought new threats and opportunities. Revolution swept the Italian peninsula, and San Marino emerged not as a bystander but as a beacon of sanctuary—most famously to Giuseppe Garibaldi and his followers. Despite its diminutive size, San Marino continued to exert an outsized influence as a symbol of liberty and hospitality. Its neutrality during two world wars, its generous oasis for refugees, and its political evolution in the twentieth century illustrate the adaptability and determination that have defined the republic from its beginnings.

Today, San Marino remains a vivid testament to the enduring power of community, tradition, and democratic ideals. Its ancient streets and towers, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site, attract visitors intrigued by the paradox of a tiny nation

with a history stretching back further than most of Europe's modern states. As this book unfolds the layers of San Marino's past, it invites the reader to consider how even the smallest communities can shape and withstand the currents of history, preserving their independence and character across the centuries.

SAMPLE COPY

CHAPTER ONE: Legendary Beginnings: The Founding of San Marino

In the late third century AD, the vast Roman Empire, which had for centuries offered a semblance of stability and unity across the Mediterranean world, was entering a period of profound upheaval. Emperors rose and fell with dizzying speed, borders were threatened by barbarian incursions, and internal strife gnawed at the empire's foundations. Amidst this turmoil, a new force was steadily gaining ground: Christianity. Despite sporadic, often brutal, persecutions, the followers of Christ were growing in number and influence, challenging the traditional Roman pantheon and the imperial cult. It was into this world, specifically the turbulent years under Emperor Diocletian, that the legend of San Marino's founding is set.

Diocletian, who came to power in 284 AD, was a reformer determined to restore the empire's former glory. While he initially showed some tolerance towards Christians, his reign culminated in the "Great Persecution," beginning in 303 AD. This was the most severe and systematic attempt by the Roman state to eradicate Christianity, involving the destruction of churches, the burning of scriptures, and demands that Christians participate in pagan sacrifices or face imprisonment, torture, or execution. Across the empire, Christians were forced to choose between their faith and their lives, leading many to seek refuge in remote or inaccessible areas.

Our story begins on the island of Rab, in what is now modern-day Croatia. From this Dalmatian island hailed a man named Marinus, a humble stonemason by trade. The details of his early life are shrouded in the mists of legend, but tradition holds that he was a devout Christian from a young age. As the pressures of Diocletian's persecution intensified, particularly after the edicts of 303 AD, Marinus, like many of his coreligionists, found himself in peril. Seeking both work and a measure of safety, he decided to cross the Adriatic Sea to the Italian peninsula.

He landed near the city of Rimini, a significant Roman center on the Adriatic coast. Rimini, known in Roman times as Ariminum, was a strategic port and a key junction of important Roman roads, including the Via Flaminia and the Via Aemilia. The city had a long history, founded as a Roman colony in 268 BC, and boasted impressive Roman architecture, including the Arch of Augustus and the Bridge of Tiberius. Marinus arrived in Rimini around 297 AD, drawn perhaps by the demand for skilled stonemasons to work on rebuilding the city walls, which some accounts suggest had been damaged by pirates.

While in Rimini, Marinus continued to live his Christian faith, possibly working among

other Christians who had been sentenced to hard labor in quarries as punishment for their beliefs. It is said that his piety and good works drew the attention of Gaudentius, the Bishop of Rimini, who recognized Marinus's spiritual depth and ordained him as a deacon. This placed Marinus in a more prominent, and therefore more vulnerable, position within the Christian community.

The legend takes a curious turn at this point, introducing a personal complication that seems to have precipitated Marinus's next move. According to the traditional account, an insane woman from Rimini appeared and falsely claimed Marinus was her estranged husband. This accusation, whether born of madness or malice, posed a significant threat. In the climate of persecution, any form of public disturbance or accusation could easily draw the unwanted attention of Roman authorities, potentially leading to investigation and the discovery of Marinus's Christian identity.

Facing this sudden and dangerous predicament, Marinus realized he could no longer safely remain in Rimini. He needed a more secure refuge, a place where he could live his faith freely, away from the prying eyes and harsh decrees of the Roman Empire. His gaze, or perhaps local knowledge, fell upon a distinctive landmark rising sharply from the surrounding hills: Monte Titano.

Monte Titano was a formidable, isolated peak, its slopes steep and rugged, offering natural protection. While archaeological evidence indicates earlier human presence on the mountain, the legend of San Marino focuses on the arrival of Marinus as the pivotal moment of permanent settlement and the foundation of a distinct community. Marinus ascended the challenging slopes, seeking the solitude and peace necessary for a life of asceticism and devotion.

Upon reaching a suitable spot on the mountain, Marinus established a simple hermitage, a small dwelling perhaps carved into the rock or built from readily available materials. Here, he dedicated himself to a life of prayer, contemplation, and manual labor, presumably continuing his stonemasonry skills in some capacity. The precise location is traditionally associated with the area where the Church of Saint Peter now stands, near the Basilica of San Marino. Inside the crypt of the Church of Saint Peter, two beds carved into the rock are traditionally believed to have been the resting places of Saint Marinus and his friend Saint Leo, though Leo is associated with a different nearby hill.

News of the devout hermit on Monte Titano began to spread. In an age where spiritual figures held significant sway and the harsh realities of life under Roman rule and persecution made many seek solace and guidance, Marinus's reputation for holiness grew. People were drawn to the mountain, seeking his wisdom, his blessings, or simply the opportunity to live in peace and practice their faith without fear.

Among those who were touched by Marinus's presence and the growing community on

Monte Titano was a wealthy woman from Rimini named Felicissima. According to the legend, she was the owner of the land on which Marinus had settled. Recognizing the virtue and peaceful intentions of the burgeoning Christian community, and perhaps influenced by Marinus's own spiritual authority, Felicissima made a remarkable decision.

Before her death, Felicissima is said to have bequeathed Monte Titano to Marinus and his followers. Her dying words, as recounted by tradition, were a charge to the community: "Leave you free from both of the men." This phrase has been interpreted in various ways throughout history, but the most enduring understanding is that she granted them freedom from the authority of both the Roman Emperor and the Bishop of Rimini. This bequest, whether a formal legal transfer or a powerful symbolic act, is seen as the foundational grant of the community's independence.

The date traditionally associated with this pivotal event, and thus the founding of the community that would grow into the Republic of San Marino, is September 3, 301 AD. While the precise year and day are part of the legendary narrative and subject to historical debate, this date is deeply ingrained in the identity of San Marino and is celebrated annually as the Republic's national day. It marks the moment, in the eyes of tradition, when a small group of individuals, seeking refuge and freedom of conscience, laid the groundwork for a distinct and self-governing entity on the slopes of Monte Titano.

The community initially gathered around the chapel and monastery established by Marinus. It was a simple settlement, focused on religious life, mutual support, and self-sufficiency. The isolated location provided a degree of protection from the wider world, particularly the ongoing Roman persecutions, which, despite their intensity, varied in application across the vast empire. Monte Titano, with its natural defenses, offered a sanctuary.

The figure of Marinus himself became central to the identity of this fledgling community. He was not merely their spiritual guide but also, by virtue of his initiative and the bequest of Felicissima, their de facto leader. His life and teachings embodied the values of faith, resilience, and the pursuit of freedom that would come to define the Sammarinese people. Upon his death, he was venerated as a saint, Saint Marinus, the patron saint and founder of the republic that bears his name.

The legend of Saint Marinus and the founding of San Marino is, undeniably, a blend of historical possibility and hagiographical embellishment. As with many origin stories passed down through centuries, it is difficult to separate empirical fact from the layers of tradition and faith that have accumulated around it. Yet, the enduring power of this narrative lies not just in its historical accuracy but in its symbolic significance. It provides San Marino with a foundational myth rooted in the quest for freedom from oppression and the establishment of a community based on shared faith and mutual

support.

This legendary beginning, set against the backdrop of a declining Roman Empire and the struggle for religious freedom, offers a compelling explanation for the seemingly improbable existence of an independent microstate on the Italian peninsula. It posits that San Marino was not a creation of political maneuvering or military conquest but grew organically from the aspirations of a small group of people seeking refuge and the right to live according to their beliefs. This narrative of a peaceful, faith-driven origin would continue to shape San Marino's identity and its approach to its place in the world for centuries to come.

While later chapters will explore the archaeological findings that shed light on earlier habitation of Monte Titano and the historical documents that confirm the existence of an organized community in the early Middle Ages, the legend of Saint Marinus remains the spiritual and traditional cornerstone of San Marino's history. It is the story that has been told and retold for generations, connecting the modern republic to its deep past and imbuing its very existence with a sense of purpose and divine protection.

The traditional account also includes charming, perhaps less historically anchored, anecdotes that further illustrate the character of Saint Marinus. One popular legend recounts how Marinus's faithful donkey was eaten by a bear. Instead of despairing, Marinus calmly confronted the bear and, through his spiritual authority, commanded it to take the donkey's place, forcing the wild animal into reluctant servitude to help with his tasks on the mountain. This tale, while clearly symbolic, speaks to the popular image of the saint as a figure of courage and divine favor, capable of taming even the wild forces of nature.

Such stories, whether strictly factual or not, contribute to the rich tapestry of San Marino's legendary beginnings. They highlight the virtues attributed to its founder – faith, resilience, humility, and a connection to the rugged landscape of Monte Titano. These are the qualities that the Sammarinese people have historically seen reflected in themselves and their long struggle to maintain their independence.

Thus, the legend of Saint Marinus serves as more than just an origin story; it is a founding principle. The idea of a community established by those fleeing persecution, dedicated to peace and freedom, on land freely given, has resonated throughout San Marino's history. It is a narrative that has been invoked in times of threat and celebrated in times of peace, a reminder of the core values that are believed to underpin the world's oldest republic. The seemingly simple act of a stonemason seeking refuge on a mountain became, according to legend, the seed from which a unique and enduring sovereign state would grow.

This is a sample preview. Purchase the book to read the full content.

Visit [MixCache.com](https://mixcache.com) to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY