

## Twista "Shows Over"

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In Ragusa, provincial capital, the municipality has 68.011 inhabitants, its surface measures 69.389 hectares and its population density counts 98 inhabitants per square kilometre. It rises on a hilly area, 502 metres above the sea-level.

The main economical activities are agriculture, cattle breeding, handicraft, tourism and the new chemical industry linked to oil and asphalt extraction. The main cultivations are: vegetables, cereals, almonds, walnuts, grapes, olives, fruit and hothouse plants.

There are also cow, sheep, pig and horse farms.

According to some sources, the name Ragusa etymologically comes from the Greek-byzantine word Rogos. Ragusa is divided in two: Ragusa Inferiore (lower Ragusa) also called Ibla and Ragusa Superiore (higher Ragusa). Ibla original name was Hibla Heraia, a town founded by the Siculians in the inland area of the Hyblaeen plateau. Later, it was conquered by the Carthaginians and by the Romans. In the 4th century AD, under the Byzantine domination, the settlement became bigger, and in 848 it was occupied by the Arabs. In 1091 it was entitled county town by the Norman King Roger II, and in 1282, after the battle of the Sicilian Vespers, it was included to the county of Modica by Manfredi Chiaramonte.

Half levelled by the earthquakes in 1542 and 1693, it was reconstructed giving birth to two settlements. The contrasts between the two towns intensified during the 19th century when two autonomous municipalities were established. They were reunified only in 1926 and the following year Ragusa was made provincial capital.

The main monuments are: the church of S. Maria delle Scale, the church of Purgatory, famous for its Baroque portal, the wonderful cathedral of S. John the Baptist and Palace Donnafugata containing many paintings by Ribera (1588-1652) and Messina (18th century)

(Grazie a Enrico per questo testo)

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