

Santa Barbara 2025: a celebration of tradition, faith, and maritime spirit throughout Italy

Published on 05/12/2025

The feast of **Santa Barbara**, Patroness of the Navy, was celebrated again this year throughout Italy with a rich program of religious, sporting, and ceremonial events. From the **Brigata Marina San Marco** to **Rome**, from **Maricentadd** to **Naples**, the festivity brought together military communities, institutions, and citizens in a common tribute to the values of **discipline, sacrifice, and service** that the Saint embodies.

The Brigata Marina San Marco: sport, cohesion, and tradition

The **Brigata Marina San Marco** dedicated the entire month to the celebration of the Patroness with a detailed calendar of sporting activities organized by the Brigade's Sports Section. Sport, an integral part of military training, was once again a ground for competition and growth, recalling indispensable values such as **team spirit, endurance, sacrifice, and discipline**.

The program included the **2x50 freestyle swimming relay**, tournaments of **padel, tennis, and basketball**, and **cross-country and mountain bike** competitions held in the fields adjacent to the barracks, among mud, paths, and dry stone walls that made the trials even more challenging.

There was also great participation in padel, which has become a reference point for many military personnel, with increasingly competitive matches hosted at city sports facilities. The relationship with the Brindisi community, as always, was central: municipal structures, sports centers, and swimming pools enthusiastically collaborated in the success of the activities.

The prestigious **Santa Barbara 2025 Challenger Trophy** was awarded to the **1st Assault Battalion Grado**, which, by winning it for the third time, permanently adds it to their trophy case.



The Sports Section of the Brigata Marina organized sporting events on the occasion of the Navy's Patroness - Copyright Marina Militare

Rome: the solemn Mass in the Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano

The institutional heart of the celebration took place in **Rome**, in the Basilica of **San Giovanni in Laterano**, where the traditional **solemn mass** was officiated by **H.E. Mons. Gian Franco Saba**, Military Ordinary for Italy.

The ceremony was attended by the **Undersecretary of Defense Matteo Perego Cremnago**, the **Secretary General of Defense Fabio Mattei**, the **Chief of Staff of the Navy Adm.**

Giuseppe Berutti Bergotto, and numerous civil, military, and religious authorities.

In his homily, Mons. Saba recalled the figure of Santa Barbara as a symbol of «**protection, solidarity, and faith in times of danger**», emphasizing the deep connection between the Saint and those who operate among the sea, fire, and explosives.

At the end of the **Sailor's Prayer**, Admiral Berutti Bergotto delivered a heartfelt message to the Navy personnel: a thank you for the professionalism, resilience, and courage demonstrated in daily operations, often away from the public eye, and a special thought to the families, «**our first line of support**».



The celebration at the Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano in Rome - Copyright Marina Militare

Maricentadd: sport, tradition, and esprit de corps

Maricentadd also celebrated Santa Barbara with a series of **tournaments and competitions** involving military personnel and the local community. In addition to the classic competitions – table football, volleyball, tennis, and cross-country running – the 2025 edition stood out for its focus on **maritime disciplines**.

The **sailing regattas** tested the crews' teamwork and technical skills on dynamic courses made challenging by variable weather conditions. Great success was also seen in the **rowing boat**, a historical exercise of naval tradition that recalls the deep connection between the Navy and the sea.

The closing ceremony awarded the winners and highlighted the fair play, spirit of sacrifice, and enthusiasm of the participants. Once again, the Santa Barbara tournaments represented a

moment of identity and cohesion, where **modern sports and ancient traditions** met in a climate of strong belonging.



Sport, tradition, and maritime spirit at the Santa Barbara Tournaments in Maricentadd - Copyright Marina Militare

Naples: Navy and Firefighters together in the name of the Patroness

In **Naples**, the celebration of Santa Barbara brought together the **Navy** and **Firefighters** in the setting of the **Church of Gesù Nuovo**, after the laying of a wreath at the Naval Base in memory of military and civilian casualties.

The mass, officiated by **Cardinal Domenico Battaglia**, was accompanied by the liturgical service of the students of the **Nunziatella Military School** and the choir of the **Polo delle Arti Caselli Palizzi**, with the support of the Fanfare of the Southern Maritime Interregional Command.

In his message, Admiral Vincenzo Montanaro, Logistic Commander of the Navy, invited reflection on the value of sacrifice and perseverance, reminding that «**a ship, no matter how technological, without its crew is just a piece of iron**».

The day was enriched by a spectacular demonstration by the SAF Unit of the Firefighters, who unfurled the Tricolor from the facade of the Liceo Genovesi, offering the public a moment of strong emotional impact.

In the square, a static display of the operational vehicles of the Navy and the National Firefighters Corps was also set up, alongside the Mobile Information Center of the Navy and

stands dedicated to illustrating more closely the activities, skills, and professionalism of the Armed Forces and the Firefighters.



The religious celebration in the Church of Gesù Nuovo in Naples - Copyright Marina Militare

The figure of Santa Barbara: between history, faith, and military tradition

Santa Barbara, who lived between the 3rd and 4th centuries, was martyred by her father Dioscuro because of her Christian faith. Tradition tells that a lightning bolt struck him immediately after the execution: hence the connection with protection against explosions and sudden dangers.

Sailors recognize her as their Patroness. With the advent of gunpowder, the **Santabarbare**, the ammunition depots of ships, were symbolically entrusted to her protection, a custom that still survives on Italian naval units today.

The celebrations of Santa Barbara 2025 confirm a legacy that unites **faith, military traditions, and community spirit**. From religious ceremonies to sporting competitions, each event highlighted the strength of the values that daily guide the men and women of the Navy: **courage, discipline, brotherhood, and dedication to the service of the country**.

Sources and Photo Copyright Italian Navy:

https://www.marina.difesa.it/media-cultura/Notiziario-online/Pagine/20251205-NAPOLI-CELEBRA-SANTA-BARBARA.aspx

http://www.marina.difesa.it/media-cultura/Notiziario-online/Pagine/20251205_Conclusione-dei-Tornei-di-Santa-Barbara-a-Maricentadd.aspx

http://www.marina.difesa.it/media-cultura/Notiziario-online/Pagine/20251205_messasolenne_santabarbara.aspx

http://www.marina.difesa.it/media-cultura/Notiziario-online/Pagine/041225_La-Brigata-Marina-San-Marco-celebra-Santa-Barbara-con-varie-gare-e-tornei-sportivi.aspx