Museo del Fiore Sardo

An elegant house, once the property of the Lai family, is home to the museum. The multi-storey building (*palazzu*) displays the typical production of the local Fiore Sardo PDO cheese.

It was first conceived in the 1990s with the aim to promote a key product of the local sheep herding economy that enjoys wide appreciation beyond regional borders.

The museum tells the story of this extraordinary local economic resource, exploring the cheese making tradition of this area and its interaction with the neighbouring economy, as well as the cultural and technological development that accounts for the latest production and distribution process.

The former horse stables located on the ground floor have now been reconverted and fitted with kitchen equipment to host food sampling events and sensory exhibitions. The rooms have stone walls and low barrel-vaulted ceilings.

The exhibition area is located on the upper floor and extends to several rooms painted black. The walls display an array of cheese making tools, such as ladles and skimmers for stirring milk during the cooking process. There is also a wooden cheese mould made by craftsmen from Desulo that is decorated with a flower pattern engraved on the bottom of the mould, and that lends its name to this cheese.

The walls are lined with several niches. The monitors fitted inside display the photographs taken by Slovenian photographer and artist Ziga Koritnik, who has in-depth knowledge of the village and of Sardinia. The various cheese processing stages are also shown in a number of videos. On the upper floor is a large projection room where visitors can see a documentary by film director Fabio Olmi, which in his own words could be considered a "complex work that entails in-depth cultural and anthropological research into the past and present sheep herding tradition".

Produced by Ipotesi Cinema, the film is an evocative narrative of the sheep herding community and its production activity. Sardinian regional administration and the Municipality of Gavoi also supported this work, as part of a project that is aimed at developing the tourist appeal of small areas and villages, through the promotion and creation of "Villages of Excellence".

The top floor often hosts temporary exhibitions, some of which are held in summer in conjunction with the literary festival "L'Isola delle Storie" ("The Island of Tales"), supported by MAN, the Museum of Art in the province of Nuoro.

Text by Laura Melis