



Orvieto's history begins almost three thousand years ago, between the 9th and 8th century B.C., when the Etruscans first occupied the rock on top of which the town subsequently developed. With its economy revolving around the production of bronze ware, ceramics and wine (the latter two having remained important activities to this day), the town in time flourished as an important center of the Etruscan kingdom. Its strategic location later placed it in the forefront of resistance to Roman expansion. It was, in fact, razed to the ground by the Romans in the 3rd century B.C. Around 500 A.D., the town was invaded and occupied by the Goths and later by the Longobards, leading towards the 11th century, when it became an independent City State. In the 14th century it was subjugated and absorbed into the Papal State, ultimately as the capital of one of its five provinces, until being incorporated into the Italian kingdom in 1870.

There are still Etruscan ruins and artifacts which may, if one wishes, be viewed in museums and sites located in and around Orvieto. But what is impossible not to observe is that its city center, which sits atop a prominent and imposing sandstone rock, is a well maintained living and vibrant monument to the history, dating from medieval times, of what is today a modern and active Italian regional center.