



PROVINCE OF TREVISO

THE WINE ROUTES



Veneto

From Earth to Sky

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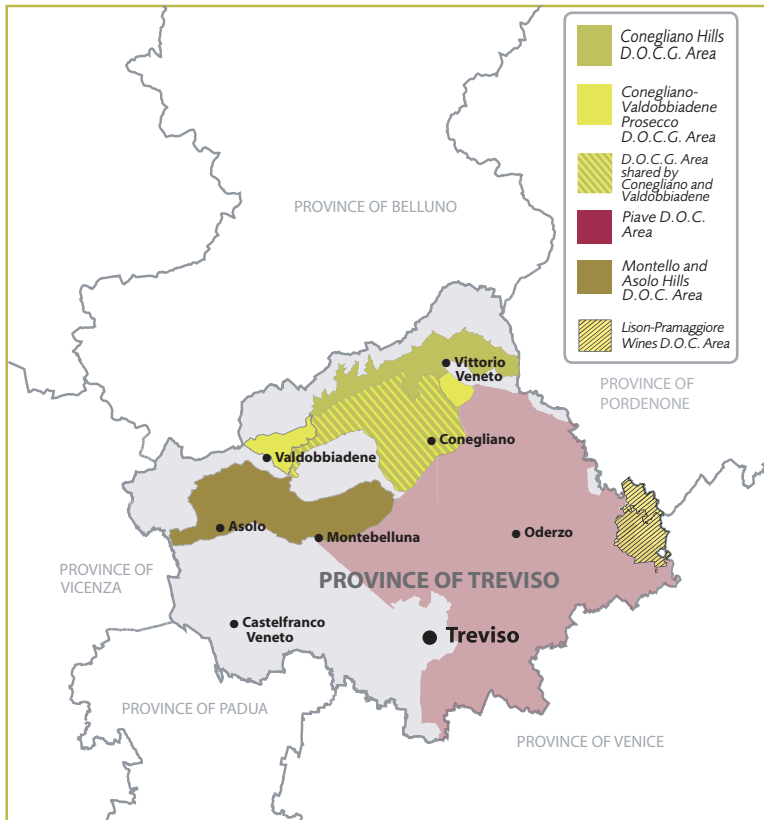


WINE AND ALL THE REST

Exploring the place of origin, meeting the producer, visiting the vineyard and finally having a tasting session in a traditional winery, savouring the delights of the local offerings while an expert explains the various production phases: this is a marvellous experience that more and more people are enjoying. This type of trip has become a special opportunity to fully envelop yourself in the setting and let your senses guide you. In Italy there are no more than 100 of these types of "Wine Routes", and with good reason too. By a curious coincidence, fine wine is only made in historical places of great distinction. This holds true for the Treviso area, with its famous Conegliano-Valdobbiadene Hills Wine and Prosecco Route, Piave Wine Route and Montello & Asolo Hills Wine Route. In this selection of trails, sensorial pleasures are wonderfully combined with cultural learning and beautiful sights, all while respecting the local traditions and environment.



Leonardo Muraro
President of the Province of Treviso



WHERE IS THE PROVINCE OF TREVISO?



Located in the Veneto region, in the North-East of Italy, just a few kilometres from Venice, the Province of Treviso can be easily reached by:

Motorways:

A27 VENICE-BELLUNO

(exit at Vittorio Veneto North and South, Conegliano, Treviso North and South, Mogliano Veneto)

A4 TURIN-TRIESTE

(exit Cessalto)

Airports: A. Canova (Treviso), M. Polo (Venice)

Railway lines:

Venice-Udine, Venice-Belluno, Vicenza-Treviso



THE WINE ROUTES IN THE PROVINCE OF TREVISO



CONEGLIANO - VALDOBBIADENE HILLS WINE AND PROSECCO ROUTE

The Treviso area has undergone incredible development in recent years thanks to the local people and their ongoing interaction with the land and its natural resources. It is in this field that our love for wine-growing is so important.

What had previously been named the "White Wine Route" – one of the oldest trails of its kind in Italy – has now been expertly redesigned and renamed the "Conegliano-Valdobbiadene Hills Wine and Prosecco Route".

Created in 2003, the new route has directly inherited the power of its predecessor, long stretches of which remain. In addition there are now some striking new themed routes that focus on certain parts of the area.

Prosecco & Conegliano and Valdobbiadene Hills Wine Route Association



PIAVE WINE ROUTE

"Civilization", a historian once wrote, "follows the courses of rivers". One of the ten rivers that criss-cross the

area around Venice, the Piave is the key to a cultural system that has seen thousands of years of loving care for the rural landscape in a setting packed with history, legends and symbolic values. The names of some great wines are associated with this river. This is due not only to the favourable composition of the surrounding land, which is ideal for growing magnificent vines, but also to the Venetian Republic's previous presence, which brought ideas, values and knowledge of the land to the area. Around the beautiful villas and barchesse (porticoed farm buildings) that belonged to the nobles of the "Serenissima Repubblica" (Most Serene Republic), hundreds of acres

of vineyards have flourished for centuries. They are now "natural laboratories" where avid wine-growers use studies and research in real vineyards in order to produce fine wines, through compliance with modern revisitations of the ancient laws of nature. Every wine is born with the same amount of dedication behind it and each one also benefits fully from the culture of the Treviso area. This can be clearly seen along the "Piave Wine Route," with its spellbinding historical town centres full of monuments and trades of the Ancient Roman and Mediaeval cultures with its ancient parishes and stately Veneto villas.

Piave Wine Route Promotion Committee



MONTELLO AND ASOLO HILLS WINE ROUTE

This route winds along the rolling green hills topped with vineyards and

woods between Mount Grappa and the Piave River, where the ancient wine-growing tradition recognizes the Prosecco (dry sparkling wine) and red wines of the "Montello & Asolo Hills" as products of great quality. Between visits to wineries and tasting sessions in an area, which is also an international hub of sports shoe production, you can admire the treasures of the marvellous villas that the Venetians built for supervising the work on the land, discover important sites from World War I, explore mediaeval villages or enjoy the traditional cuisine, made with the vast selection of excellent local produce. All of this can be found along an enthralling route offering interaction with the area and nature.

Montello and Asolo Hills Wine Route Association



LISON-PRAMAGGIORE DOC WINE ROUTE

The Lison-Pramaggiore D.O.C. Wine Route was launched in 1986 with the main aim of promoting the image and distribution of the local wines and foods. The route was officially recognized in December 2002 and continues in its mission of promoting the area and its "gourmet resources", through a number of important initiatives such as approval of members, verification of the obligatory requirements and checks on the minimum quality standards. Cooperation with the Regional Authorities, local bodies and all of the interested parties has led to the creation of national and international marketing campaigns for the route.

Lison-Pramaggiore D.O.C. Wine Route Association



FOREWARD

"STRADA DEL PROSECCO E VINI DEI COLLI CONEGLIANO-VALDOBBIADENE" (CONEGLIANO-VALDOBBIADENE HILLS WINE AND PROSECCO ROUTE)

"We move away from the Marca Trevigiana. To be precise, more toward the farther side of the Piave than to this side, toward the river's left bank, which is most generous in terms of wine. We finally reach the lands beyond such boundaries, which have, for a long time, played a large part in our wine and food destinies, in the blending of cuisines and knowledge, between Central Europe and Mediterranean routes."

(U. Bernardi, La festa delle vigne - The vine festival)

Seen as something of a treasure hunt by those enjoying the wine road experience, this itinerary has pleasant surprises in store at every turn. Evocative sights that

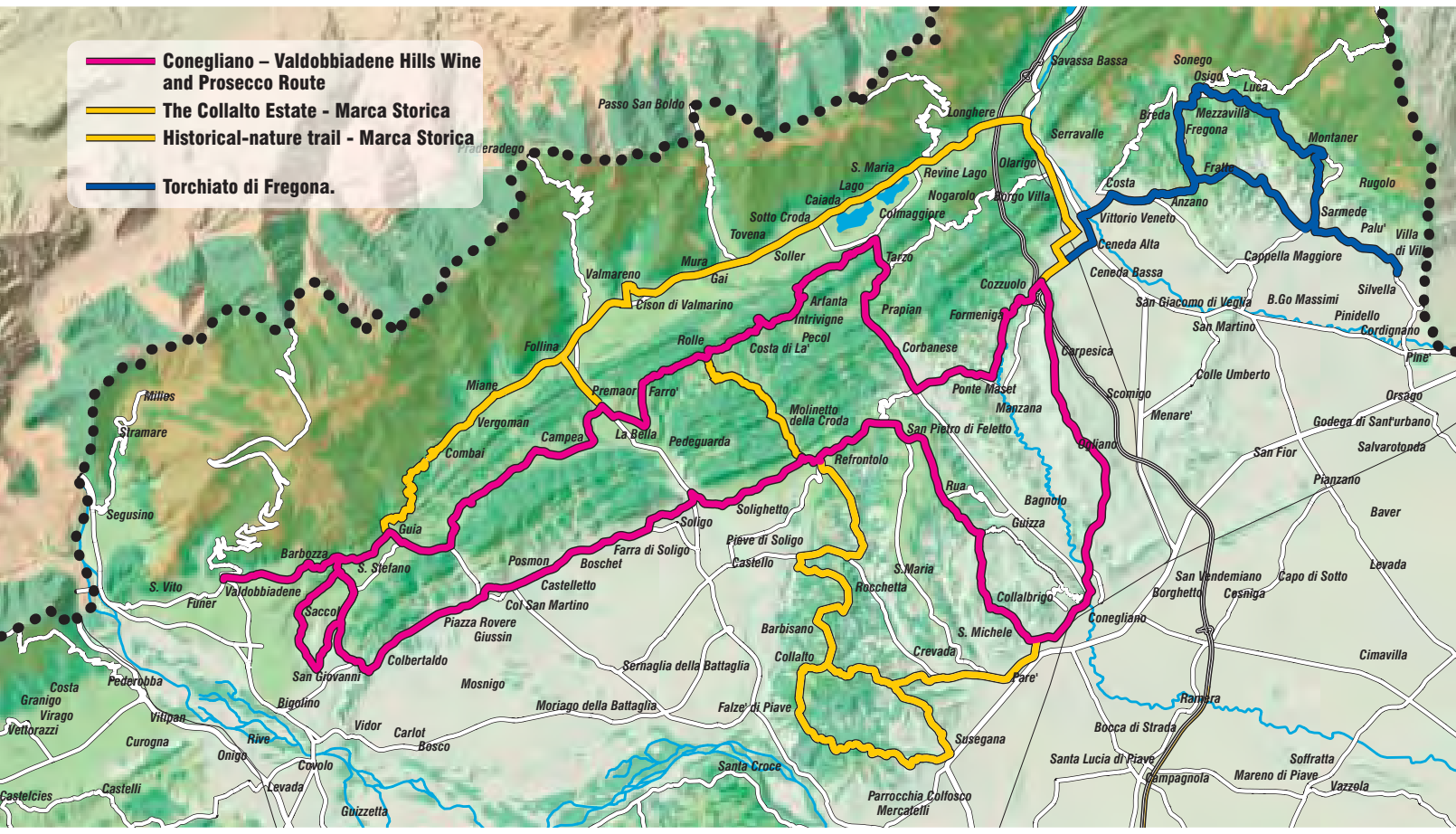
enrapture travellers and introduce them to the wealth of delights offered by the region they are exploring. Our guide features a simple structure and takes you on a two-way route, made easy to follow by clear signage. For the sake of convenience, we have split the route into four main segments:

- A.** from Conegliano to Refrontolo;
- B.** from Refrontolo to Colbertaldo;
- C.** from Valdobbiadene to Campea;
- D.** from Campea to Conegliano.

We have also chosen three additional, one-way routes:

The Collalto Estate - Marca Storica;
Historical-nature trail - Marca Storica;
Torchiato di Fregona.







Each segment of the main path provides an overview of the area as well as a series of facts explaining the particular local features, intended to give you a deeper insight into the area in question. The recommended start and finish point is the Conegliano School of Wine (Scuola Enologica), where scientific research merges with age-old winemaking tradition. The three additional routes that take you off the main track can be visited on separate occasions, or you might be able to fit them all into your holiday if you have more time.

8



Each of the four segments features a detailed description, various schedules and interesting background information. There is also a map to help you find your way around. The fine thread linking the whole wine journey unravels around the theme of the region's evolution and alteration over the centuries. How long it takes to travel the "Prosecco and Conegliano-Valdobbiadene Hills Wine Road" is, of course, up to you, the traveller. Note, however, that true wine and food

tourists with a deep interest in local produce should probably take a whole weekend to fully savour (in the literal sense of the word) the golden nectar that the Marca Trevigiana has elevated to world fame.



IL PROSECCO

What you need to know

Treviso's piedmont region comprises the wide range of hills that gently slope down in a scattered sequence from the rampart formed by Belluno's pre-Alps to the bank of the River Piave. Narrowing our scope a bit, the portion of hills belonging to the Marca Trevigiana region goes from Vittorio Veneto as far southwest as Valdobbiadene, passing through Conegliano on the way: this land no doubt kept Bacchus occupied for a while at some point during his tireless wanderings... The soil's physical and chemical composition, the abundance of water, the location sheltered from cold currents and the mostly south-facing exposure have actually created the ideal habitat required to grow vines. And what vines they are too! In fact, this



is the place where local producers make Prosecco, the most popularly demanded Italian wine in the world today. The area comprises 15 towns and municipalities (comuni in Italian) and includes more than 5,000 hectares (almost 20 square miles) of farmland in the sunniest spots on the hills, at altitudes ranging from 50 to 500 metres above sea level. Prosecco's history has been documented since the last decades of the Republic of Venice, though it is a known fact that the vine, of extremely ancient origin, predates even Roman colonization (2nd cent. BC) and was known during that time as *Pucinum*. It is a rough, vigorous plant with rather large, hazelnut-coloured shoots. The berry's distinguishing feature is its warm, golden yellow hue, which makes the grapes stand out against the bright green vine leaves. Prosecco di Conegliano-Valdobbiadene DOCG (an acronym indicating government control of origin and production) comes in three characteristic versions: still, semi-sparkling and sparkling, labelled *tranquillo*, *frizzante* and *spumante*

respectively. The wine's distinguishing colour is a nice, light straw-yellow, similar to pure topaz, whilst its bouquet is fresh and light, reminiscent of fruit: apple, pear, almond, with a citrus aftertaste that fades into a floral note.

PROSECCO

Wine terms

Harvest. Harvest takes place under the watchful eye of the "Consorzio di Tutela", the association dedicated to the observance of Docg regulations, which, after checking the ripening of the grapes, issues the latest advice to producers and then, during the vine-growers' meeting, gives harvesting operations the go-ahead.

Pressing. This is done with machines that process the berries in a very soft, gentle way to extract only the first press juice: the most highly valued part that comes from the heart of the berry.

Decanting. The cloudy must is allowed to stand at low temperatures (5-10° C) in



steel tanks. After around 10 hours or a little more, the impurities settle at the bottom of the tank. The clear part is transferred into special new containers and the fermentation process begins.

Winemaking. The temperature of the steel tanks must be kept at a constant 18-20°



C for the 15-20 days it takes to make the wine.

Second fermentation (putting in the bubbles). This is where the oenologist and his experience, his taste and his style come into play. This is the person who samples the various lots in the winery to assemble the various blends, grouping the wines according to period, origin and organoleptic properties. Only a few rare lots (*cru*), which feature perfect style and balance to start with, undergo second fermentation to form the bubbles without any blending.

Bottling. Different bottles are used depending on the kind of wine. *Rhenish* or *Bergundian* for Still wine; *Champagne* for

Semi-sparkling; and the classic *Prosecco* For Sparkling wine. They are all dark green in colour, thus protecting the wine from light. The wine is left in the bottle for thirty to forty days before it is ready for sale.

PROSECCO

Types and recommended accompaniments

Still

Colour: a delicate straw-yellow

Bouquet: apple, pear, almond and thousand-flower honey

Structure: soave and persistent; slightly bitterish aftertaste, hence more complex and multifarious. Temperature and recommended accompaniments: serve at 10-12°, with delicate appetizers – seafood and otherwise.. Noodle soups and white meat

Semi-sparkling

Colour: straw-yellow

Bouquet: floral, fruity aromas marked by a dominant unripe apple and lemon note

Structure: (on lees re-fermented in the bottle) essential, dry, digestible and light; (made in



autoclaves) youthful and fresh, fragrant by virtue of the gently tingling carbon dioxide Temperature and recommended accompaniments: serve at 8-10°, enjoyable as an aperitif or with light dishes and appetizers

Sparkling

Types: Brut and Extra Dry

Brut

Colour: straw-yellow

Bouquet: citrus fruit aroma and vegetable-like notes accompanied by an unusual and somewhat agreeable bread crust note

Structure: energetic

The mousse finish assures a persistent flavour and delicate fullness of taste

Temperature and recommended

accompaniments: serve at 6-9° excellent for any occasion, it goes well with meat and fish dishes alike

Extra Dry

Colour: bright straw-yellow

Bouquet: fruit, apple, pear, citrus fruits and flowers

Structure: smooth and, at the same time, dry by virtue of its acidity

Temperature and recommended

accompaniments: serve at 7-9° with seafood, light sauces, fresh cheeses, biscuits and dry sweets

Il Prosecco Superiore di Cartizze*

Colour: bright with golden reflections

Bouquet: ripe fruit: from apple to pear, from apricot to citrus fruits. There is an evident scent of roses and the taster is surprised by an aftertaste of sugared almonds

Structure: smooth and, at the same time, full and convincing with a light mousse finish

Temperature and recommended

accompaniments: serve at 7-8° at the end

of a meal with dessert, especially with short pastry, fruit tarts, homemade cakes and biscuits. Excellent for making toasts and at ceremonies served in appropriate *flutes*.

**Cartizze and its wine country are covered in detail with a wealth of information in the section on Valdobbiadene*

VARIETIES WORTH REMEMBERING

Bianchetta. Mentioned in records since the sixteenth century, it would appear to come from the Treviso area. A smooth, well-balanced body, it has a slight smell of musk and is usually used to refine Prosecco.

Perera. Around since the 19th century, it is used in small percentages when making Prosecco, to increase its fragrance and aroma. Nobody is quite sure where the name came from: whether from the slightly pear shape of the berries or from the sweet aroma of pears (in Italian *pere*).

Verdiso. Grown since 1700, it is used in making Prosecco to boost flavour and acidity, and to balance out the acid component typical in warm vintages.





THE WINES



CONEGLIANO VALDOBBIADENE PROSECCO DOCG

Prosecco Spumante

The best-known sparkling wine, available in two versions (Extra Dry and Brut)

Sparkling Prosecco

A dry and light wine, made for younger wine lovers

Still Prosecco

Made with the most precious parts of the grapes, harvested from more dense vineyards, with fewer racemes

Prosecco di Valdobbiadene Superiore di Cartizze

A high-quality wine, with a dense and agreeable taste from the complete maturation of the grapes

COLLI DI CONEGLIANO DOCG

Colli di Conegliano Docg White and Red Wines

Two elite wine ranges, from the skilful combination of the most prestigious grapes from the Conegliano Hills

Refrontolo Passito DOCG

A very renowned wine, produced only in small quantities from grapes selected during the harvest

Torchiato di Fregona

A wine requiring a careful vinification, obtained by Prosecco, Verdiso and Boschera grapes

VERDISO IGT (Typical Geographical Indication)

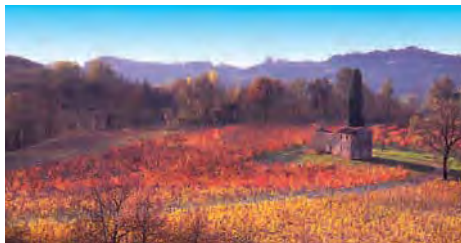
A dry, fresh wine; currently available in the following versions: still, spumante, sparkling and passito



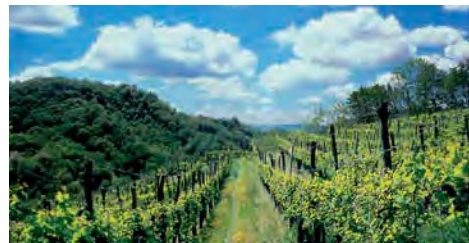
Main itinerary, leg A

FROM CONEGLIANO TO REFRONTOLO

Romans, Lombards, Franks, Venetians, none of the peoples who have spent time on this land have been immune to its charms. What nouns should we use? Sentiment, idyll, sweetness? It's almost too little, too trite. Such is the enchantment of these places, which look like they've been created by a naïf painter's brush. Corners have been chamfered, everything is made to measure, smoothed, each detail stands out on the canvas. A farmhouse, a vineyard clinging to a steep slope, a chapel, the remains of a fort, a flower-filled meadow. The combined charms of this vine-growing, agricultural, wooded, pastoral landscape reawaken slumbering emotions. Our travels along Italy's oldest Wine Road begin in Conegliano. The original ancient road has been altered slightly

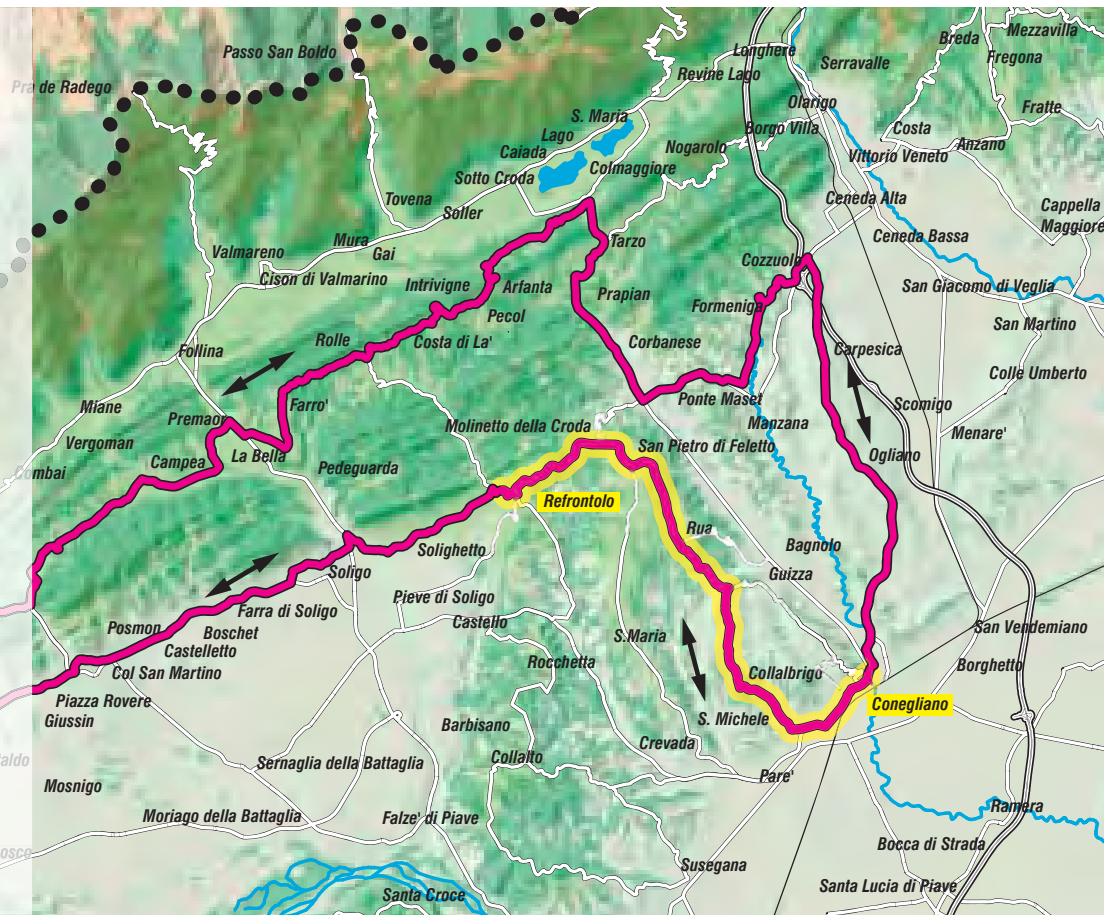


to create the current route. The starting point will be the School of Wine (*Istituto Enologico*) founded in 1876 by Antonio Carpenè. For a few years now, it has also housed the faculty of agriculture, which does the Decree Course in Viticulture and Oenology. Once you've toured its Winery, take the road running past the School, which climbs up to the rural village named Collalbrigo: after travelling just a few



hundred metres from the centre of Conegliano, you'll notice how the scenery immediately flaunts its beauty. The view opens up, revealing the surrounding hills - gently rolling and covered in vines, they are dotted with trees, whilst small wooded patches can be glimpsed in the valleys. In the distance, the bell towers belonging to numerous churches become a point of reference for visitors. As you continue northwards, the

road meets the original route at a place called Guizza. Continuing to the left, you enter the Feletto region. The first town you will meet is Rua di San Pietro di Feletto, immediately followed by San Pietro. The old rural villages of Antiga, Borgo Pol, Borgo Agnese and Borgo Colle are worth a quick visit. Tip: the churchyard of the ancient parish church Pieve di San Pietro is an ideal place to stop off on a clear day and enjoy the magnificent view. The next stretch of road leading to Refrontolo affords a succession of panoramic glimpses, whilst you leave the parish church behind you, nestled amongst the extensive emerald-green vineyards set in a hill-ridge pattern. Refrontolo, which we know was once a popular holiday spot amongst the Venetian Republic's nobles - by virtue of its healthy climate - is also home to Passito DOC, the strong sweet wine celebrated by Mozart in his "Don Giovanni". Once past Refrontolo, following the road as it descends, you can see the sign for Molinetto della Croda: this is without a doubt one of the most evocative stages of the journey.



CONEGLIANO SCHOOL OF WINE

Conegliano, 15 January 1877

«Ladies and Gentlemen! Italy is the land of wine and should also be 'Europe's leading winemaker'». «...the beneficial enlightenment of science applied to the most beautiful and lucrative of the earth's fruits shall radiate from Conegliano like the spokes of a wheel, extending to the Veneto Region and even farther afield». These are some of the words spoken by Antonio Carpenè the day the School was opened. It was founded in 1876, the result of a rewarding joint venture between the chemist A. Carpenè and agronomist and wine expert G.B. Cerletti. With a university-like setup and significant contributions from important names in wine, such as L. Manzoni and G. Dal Masso, it has earned itself a highly prestigious place in Italy, and is still at the forefront when it comes to studies and research into vines and wine. Prestige that is further strengthened today by the fact that it is also home to the faculty of Agriculture. It is here that degree and



doctorate courses are held for the university education of operators and researchers in the field of grape and wine production. Don't miss out on a tour of the Winery, where you will be guided by an expert through the various stages of the winemaking process.

*Opening hours:
from Monday to Friday from 8am to 2pm
T: +39 0438 453617
cantina@scuolaenologica.it*



INTERESTING NEWS: THE LATEST NEWCOMER, CHAPINE'

CHAPINE', the new wine produced in the experimental Winery run by Conegliano's School of Wine, is a classic-method sparkling wine. Chapiné is the acronym of **CHA**rdonnay and **PI**not **NE**ro: the product has indeed been made from Pinot Nero grapes with a small amount of Chardonnay added. The wine comes from the 2001 vintage. The cuvée was constituted in May 2002, whilst it was disgorged in December 2004. For the entire duration of its making, in strict conformity with production protocol dictated by the classic method, final-year students on the wine courses took it in turns to move the bottles

("remuage"). 950 750ml bottles were produced and twenty 1500ml bottles.

Technical properties

Appearance: bright yellow colour with golden reflections. Abundant, persistent foam with a rich, very fine string of bubbles
Nose: strong, complex and persistent fragrance, dominated by bread crust and yeast. Evident rose floral note and aroma of ripe fruit with scents of dry and candied fruit. These are followed by slight notes of roasting, coffee and chocolate, which grace the product with tone and elegance.
Taste: rich and full on the palate with bubbles creating a creamy sensation. Features acidity which is well harmonized with the salty element. Good, pleasant structure, with dry, persistent finish.



REFRONTOLO PASSITO, I.E. MARZEMINO

Sweet and mellow, this is a very interesting wine that has now been given the DOCG label denoting government control of origin and production and is sold as *Colli di Conegliano Refrontolo Passito*. The vine is rough and is thought to be a native variety. Records date from the 16th century, though it appears that the strong, sweet passito wine came to the area in around 1000 AD. In this area, the Marzemino grapes are left to dry on trellises in dry, well-ventilated places. Marzemino, Torchiato di Fregona and Colli di Conegliano, in their white and red versions, come from the part of the Treviso region to have been most recently given DOCG status, i.e. *DOCG Colli di Conegliano*.

SOME INTERESTING BACKGROUND ON FELETTO

Venetian nobles and the wine harvest

The famous Venetian playwright Carlo Goldoni tells us, in 'incriminating' detail, just how the lords from the city who came to these hills for their holidays spent their time. His plays recount their "short breaks", which inevitably became longer and turned into a "grape cures", which ended after the summer because, after all, there would have been no point going back to the Lagoon with that unbearable heat...

Rua's hermitage sacked by Napoleon

In 1670, the Venetian patrician Alvise Canal donated the Church of Rua to the hermit monks of San Romualdo. The monks built 14 small cells around it, each with a garden, vegetable patch, partitions, oratory, toilet facilities and cloister walls. Alas, the whole complex was destroyed by order of Napoleon in his 1806 and 1810 provisions. Today, it is nice to relive the peace of the hermits. The cells still stand, whilst little



remains of what was once the old place of prayer.

The Parish church

The earliest record of the parish church Pieve di San Pietro dates from 1124, though it would appear the building goes back even farther, to the 8th century. Surprisingly enough, it was most likely built on the ruins of a Roman altar used to celebrate pagan rites. A lovely flight of steps takes the visitor into the airy portico, which affords a 360-degree view of the surroundings.



The exterior is decorated with numerous frescoes, the most noteworthy being without a doubt *Cristo della Domenica* (Sunday Christ) which portrays a monumental full-length Christ surrounded by everyday work tools, a warning to abstain from all forms of labour on the Sabbath. It stands as a valuable direct testimony to daily life and its tools in the second half of the 14th century, a prolific period for this anonymous local fresco-painter, who was inspired the modern style of Tomaso da Modena.

NATURE IN PAINTING: CIMA FROM CONEGLIANO

Naively enough, we sometimes wonder whether painters have copied the Veneto region's landscape or whether someone has taken the time to adapt the scenery to their paintings. In Giovan Battista Cima's works, this truth to nature blends with taste and aesthetic sense.

Truth merges with beauty. The natural data available to the artist are reprocessed by means of intellectual reconsideration. On Cima's canvases, a sweet, subtle atmosphere prevails, a languid nostalgia, whether the



scenery is the focus or appears just as background. The composition is determined by the landscape, which becomes its reason for being and its justification.

Worth seeing: *Madonna col Bambino Santi e Angeli* (Madonna with Child, Saints and Angels), altar-piece in Conegliano Cathedral Duomo di San Leonardo.

MOLINETTO DELLA CRODA A WALK IN THE WOODS WITH THE GNOMES AND FAIRIES

Although it gets very busy in summer, this mill named Molinetto della Croda, literally "rock-face mill", is a truly magical place. The building, partly built into the rock with the rest made of brick, is one of the rare examples of rural 16th-century architecture. The River Lierza waterfall drops 12 metres and, in the pool beneath, a whirling current prevents floating objects from escaping the water's grasp. The pool is only cleared after heavy rains. The Mill was used to grind flour until 1953, and then fell into disuse and was left



abandoned for years. Recently renovated and consolidated with painstaking care, the old mill has been faithfully rebuilt and made to work again. We thoroughly recommend a walk through the woods. Various paths lead from the Mill, some climbing up to the top of the waterfall, whilst others go off into the woods: oaks seem to embrace the wayfarer and small violet cyclamens poke out from between the fallen leaves. Fragrances and silence nourish the spirit. Brief moments of enchantment.



Main itinery, leg B

FROM REFRONTOLO TO COLBERTALDO

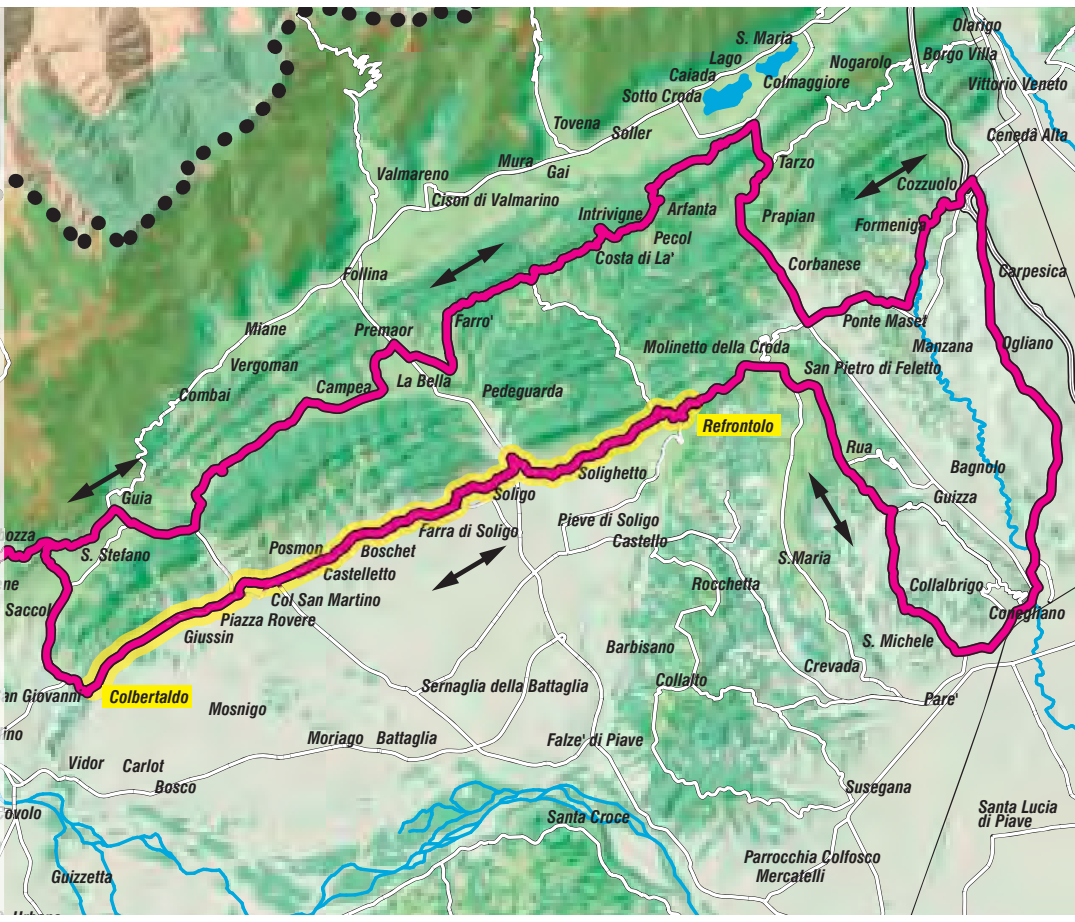
Leaving Molinetto della Croda, you go back towards Refrontolo, but not all the way to the town, though. Head instead for Solighetto. The road runs around the foot of the hills, and if you look to your right, you can admire the contours of Mount Cisa and Mount Villa, whose summits are covered in woods, whilst the lower slopes bear vines. You are now entering an area known as Quartiere del Piave. An area of recent history that also speaks of its ancient past - crossed by the Lombards who settled here - and, today featuring significant urban and industrial development, places marked by significant urban and industrial development. The road runs along the golden coast, that splendid succession of hills wreathed with rows of vines, which make embroidery-like patterns on the sun-kissed slopes. You will come across



Solighetto, the adopted home of Treviso's own opera singer Toti dal Monte, who has a museum dedicated to her. Approaching from the right, you find Villa Brandolini d'Adda, headquarters of the "Consorzio di Tutela del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene" association, which makes sure the local DOCG zone regulations are observed. Continuing along the road, you can barely tell where Solighetto ends

and its neighbour Soligo begins. Once called Soligon, Soligo rests peacefully at the foot of the hills known as Colle di San Gallo and Col de Fer. The hermitage of San Gallo is a must-see - the earliest records of which date back to 1354. If you carry on towards Farra - whose name betrays its Lombard origins - you will see the small town spreading at the foot of the hills on the west side of the River Soligo. Not far away,

you can just make out the Credazzo Towers, which get their name from creda, an old name for clay. These ruins are all that remain of the fortified building built by the da Caminos. The fort, whose earliest records date from 1233, was handed over to the Collaltos before being destroyed in 1413 by the Hungarians who stormed through the region. Once you reach Col San Martino, we suggest you leave the road and walk to the Oratorio di San Vigilio, an oratory in a rustic, frescoed Romanesque style, given a characteristic appearance by its tower bearing a large, white clock. The path off the road is well signposted and, although quite a steep climb, it's worth the effort: you will be rewarded at the top by a view embracing the whole Piave valley, stretching way into the distance well beyond the town's districts. The road from Col San Martino to Colbertaldo boasts some particularly lovely scenery: towns and villages disappear, replaced once again by the hills terraced with row upon row of vines. Small casere - stone barns once used to store hay and tools - stand out here and there against the green backdrop.



CONSORZIO DI TUTELA DEL PROSECCO CONEGLIANO E VALDOBBIADENE DOCG ASSOCIATION

The association was founded on the June 7th 1962 and, after seven years, was designated by the Ministry of Agriculture as the body dedicated to the observance of Docg regulations for the area producing Prosecco di Conegliano-Valdobbiadene. Over the years, the Consorzio has developed various activities, concentrating above all on promoting the quality of Prosecco wine. There are three areas of development: technical and scientific; observance of regulations; and lastly promotion. Numerous exhibitions devoted to Prosecco are organized all over the Treviso region to achieve these goals.



FARRA DI SOLIGO

A NAME FROM A DISTANT PAST

The origin of this name, as is the case with many other towns in the area, is Lombard. The *faras* were the kin groups sharing a common lineage, constituting the social organization of the people. According to the history books, in 569, Alboino chose one of these pleasant places to rest after he and his troops had just made the strenuous hike across the Alps, chose one of these pleasant places to rest before descending onto the plains.

After establishing the *fara*, he continued to march towards Treviso. Lombard settlements were established one after another for two centuries until the Franks came. For years, the Lombards defended the land fiercely, until they converted to Christianity. With the aid of the Cistercian and Benedictine monks from the small local monasteries, they learnt how to till the land and turned from being warriors





Main itinerary, leg C

FROM VALDOBBIADENE TO CAMPEA

Once past Colbertaldo, the road continues northwards and, after a few kilometres, takes you into the Cartizze area.

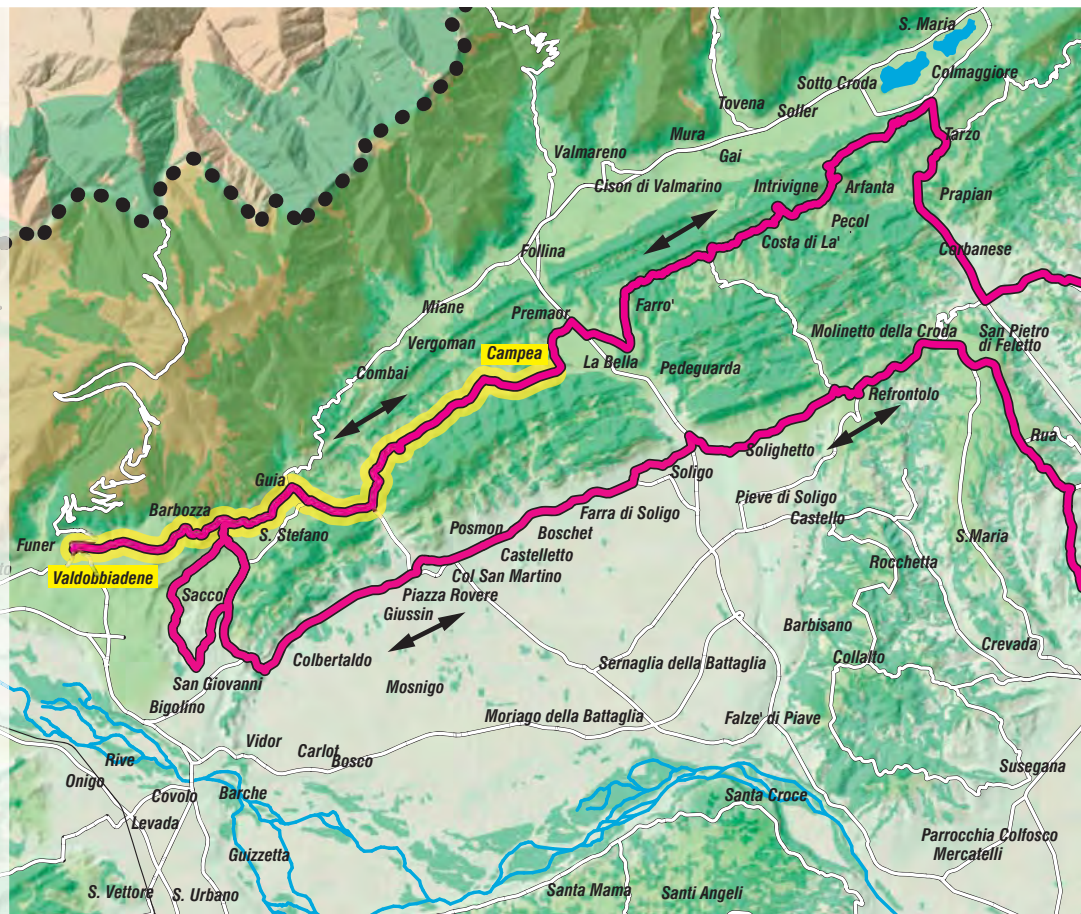
There are those who reckon this wine is fit to be served at the table of the gods, and it's hard to say they're wrong. For the wine tourist, this is a truly meaningful stage of the journey. Here you will see that vines are grown on steeper slopes, advancing right up to the side of the road.

The vineyards' support systems are made of wood. The vines, over a hundred years old, show the weight of their age though they are actually very strong and resilient. These hills boast a rather unique morphology: steep but with vines planted on every inch of the areas getting the most sun, whilst the north-facing slopes are heavily wooded.

elsewhere, giving berries time to dry naturally on the plant. The resulting Prosecco, because of this naturally lengthened exposure to the plant, will possess an even higher concentration of fragrances. This part of the journey is a real joy, in terms of both the scenery and the places of interest offered by the municipalities and districts it takes you through. Santo Stefano with the ancient village of Follo, which gets its name from the fulling (in Italian *follatura*) of woollen cloth, practiced since the 15th century; San Pietro di Barbozza with its characteristic "closed-court" villages, a typical example of spontaneous architecture. Then we have Saccol, the place most renowned for producing Cartizze. It's worth stopping off in Valdobbiadene to visit Villa dei Cedri, an Art Nouveau-style building now home



to the Altamarca association, where the National Sparkling Wine Show (Mostra Nazionale degli Spumanti) is hosted in late September each year. The ancient Roman road Via Augusta-Altinate is supposed to have passed through this small town, which stands at the foot of Mount Barbara and Mount Cesen. The 18th-century church here is worth a look, with its works by Palma il Giovane, F. Beccaruzzi and Paris Bordon, as is the 15th-century church of San Gregorio, with the altar-piece by D. Brusasorzi. Once Valdobbiadene is behind you, continue towards Santo Stefano and the road will soon take you to Guia and Guietta, where you can see some beautiful stone houses. Their names come from the Gothic word *wid*, also the Old English root of "wide". After Guia and Guietta, once you reach the SP 123 regional road, turn left towards Campea. You'll find yourself enveloped again by an untouched rural environment: the valley winds its way between the two slopes. Once more, it is as though everything were part of a perfect painting: meadows, vineyards, the old barns (in Italian *casere*).



CARTIZZE CRU

This area is composed of 106 hectares (just over 1 square km) of vineyards, which on a map, appears like a small, irregular circle in the Valdobbiadene area. Hemmed in and protected between the hills of Santo Stefano and the hills of San Pietro di Barbozza and Saccol, the plants growing here are nothing less than a goldmine. This is what we call *cru*, borrowing a French expression indicating a great wine or vintage. The geological composition makes this area a particularly suitable habitat for vine growing. The soil is rocky deep down and crumbly



on the surface. It is mainly composed of limestone, clay and sandstone, which trap much-needed moisture so that the plant can regularly draw constant nourishment from the earth, even when the sun is at its fiercest and in times of drought. Moreover, this area's mild microclimate allows grapes to ripen slowly and, thus, develop richer, fuller acid-levels.

A FAMOUS FIGURE: VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS

Born sometime around 530 AD in an undetermined location within the Piave region, later identified as Valdobbiadene, Venatius Fortunatus is considered the last poet of Latinity and the first poet of the Middle Ages. Despite very close ties with the episcopal circles of Aquileia, he shied away from a monastic career and went to study in Ravenna. To release himself from a vow made to St Martin, who had miraculously cured him of a serious eye ailment, he decided to make a pilgrimage to Tours. However, the religious vocation was in some way already written.



A critical event in Fortunatus' life came in 565 when he went in to Poitiers to meet with Radegund, the wife of King Clotaire I of the Franks, and her daughter Agnes, abbess of the Sainte-Croix. He became a member of the clergy and was later appointed bishop of Poitiers. His role was important almost exclusively as the singer of hymns dedicated to the Saints (*Vita Sancti Martini*, *Ave Maris Stella...*), whilst some secular compositions are devoted to food, namely the joys of gourmet eating, which is a distinguishing trait of the region's culture to this day.

THE PROSECCO CONFRATERNITY IN SAN PIETRO DI BARBOZZA

Founded in 1946, its members are not just vintners, but also include scholars, locals, and restaurant and bar owners, too.

It is chaired by a Great Master and meets in an evocative underground cellar in San Pietro di Barbozza.

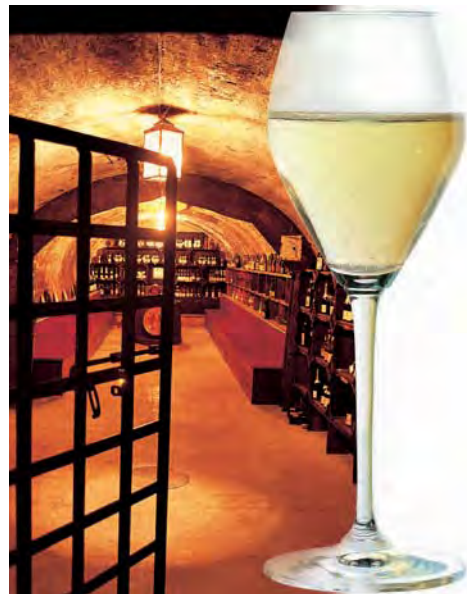
This is where new members are initiated, wine matters discussed, bottles sampled and so on. A selection of the "Best wine of the year" is made among those produced by the Order of the owners of wine-making companies; a limited series of 5000 bottles is produced, representing the highest

levels of quality achieved during a specific year, and exalting the typical features of Prosecco di Valdobbiadene-Conegliano.

LAND OF LEGENDS AND GODS: THE STORY OF ENDYMION

According to legend, Endymion, a simple shepherd from these hills, was a youth of exceptional beauty. Selene, goddess of the moon, fell head over heels in love with him and came down every night to Cartizze to meet with him. Their love lasted so long that Selene bore Endymion 500 children. To preserve the young man's beauty, Jove made him immortal. His immortality did him

little good, however, being plunged into an eternal sleep! Selene, hopelessly in love, had to make do with watching him during the full moon: he had become nothing more than a handsome body that could no longer return her love...





Main itinerary, leg D

FROM CAMPEA TO CONEGLIANO

The journey is coming to a close. After passing through the areas of greatest interest – Felleto, the Piave District, the Valdobbiadene area – after visiting the numerous wineries, the wine estates, sampling the various qualities of Prosecco, the return trip takes you back towards Conegliano. In Campea, it's worth allotting some extra time to enjoy a walk through the old village. This has always been a hunting area, the wild, uncontaminated nature encouraging many animals to make their homes here. In fact, until two centuries ago, bear-hunting parties set off from this spot. The district was also the stage of a feud between the Brandolini nobles (who ruled over the area) and the Savoini family: a rivalry so fierce that Brandolino

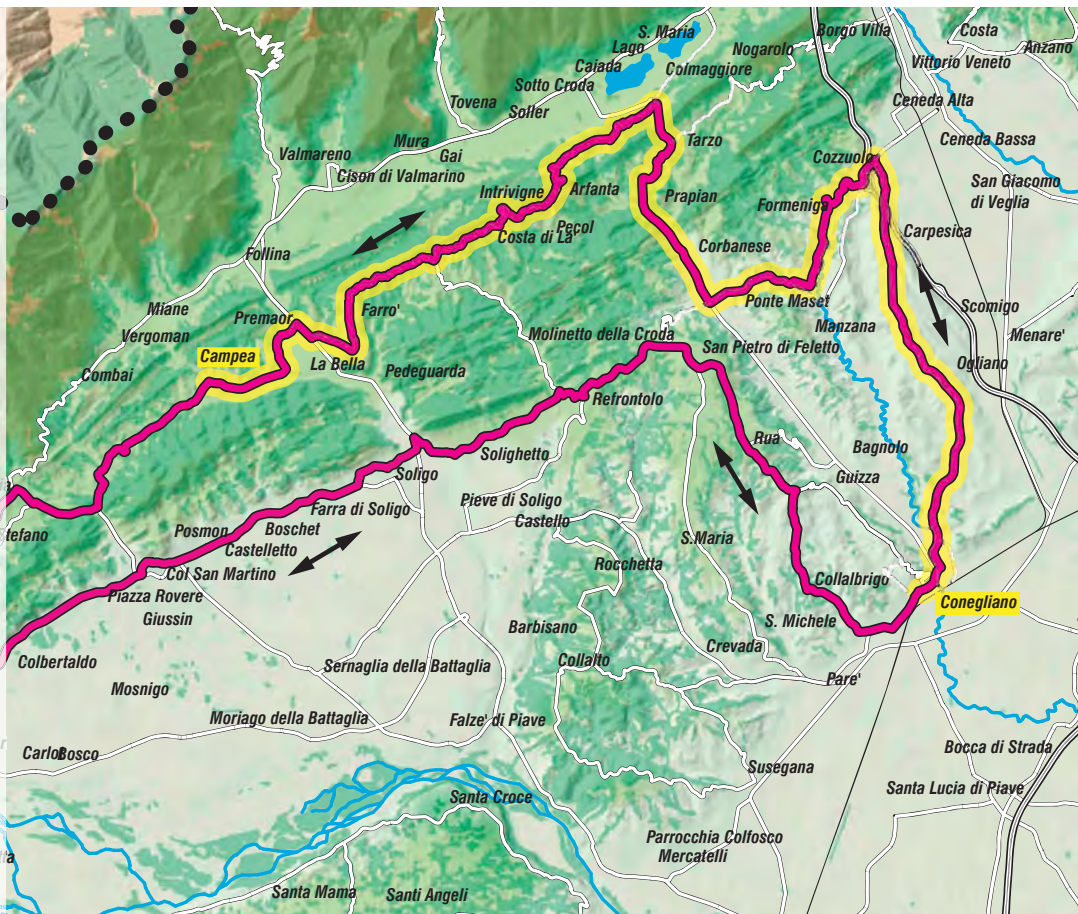


VI was killed after being shot by his rival's rifle during a hunt. Leave Campea, cross the River Soligo and, once you reach the Pedeguarda neighbourhood, continue northeast towards Farrò. You are given an all-embracing view of the valleys below. Though the geological composition does not differ much from the places you have

just left, you will be struck by the notable difference in the layout of the scenery: the vineyards are like islands rising up from the greenness of dense chestnut forests. Further up the road, you will come across Arfanta, followed by Tarzo and, lastly, Corbanese. The chain of mountains swoops steeply towards the plains of



Vittorio Veneto and Conegliano. You now head for Cazzuolo, then turning towards Carpesica, before finally reaching Ogliano, whose name recalls the winter of 1707, when freezing cold destroyed most of the plants growing here, including the olive trees. The intensity of the landscape, now behind you, is replaced by the gentle rolling of the low hills on which vineyards vie for space with other crops. The view once again stretches as far as the eye can see: the bell towers of the parish churches, the villas perched on the tops of the hills, the farms, the towns... the sweet region known as "la Marca Trevigiana".



CHESTNUT WOODS ON THE MOUNTS' SLOPES

In ancient times, the woods - both the chestnut woods and areas forested with other species of trees - together with the pastureland, were all part of a large collective estate. In the 16th century, the Republic of Venice decided to hand these lands over to the community, determining that the members of the villages' indigenous families be entitled to use them as they saw fit.

65% of the local wooded surface area was covered with chestnut trees: the logs were used as firewood and to fuel the kilns, the younger branches were used as stakes for the vines, whilst the older plants were cut to make beams. All this, though, was nothing compared to the importance the crop had. For centuries, the chestnut was a hugely important food: its picking and the way it was then divided out were governed by special rules. Starting in the 18th century and continuing into the



19th century, the collective traditions of these lands began to die out, eventually disappearing altogether when the woods became state property. During the twentieth century, the exodus towards the lower-lying lands and the cities finally put an end to these traditions.

Today, there is renewed interest in growing this crop. Above all, with the

current passion for organic produce, the cultivation techniques employed do not use pesticides, making it a highly prized crop. The chestnut festival "Festa dei Marroni" held in Comai in October is not to be missed.





First Discovery itinerary

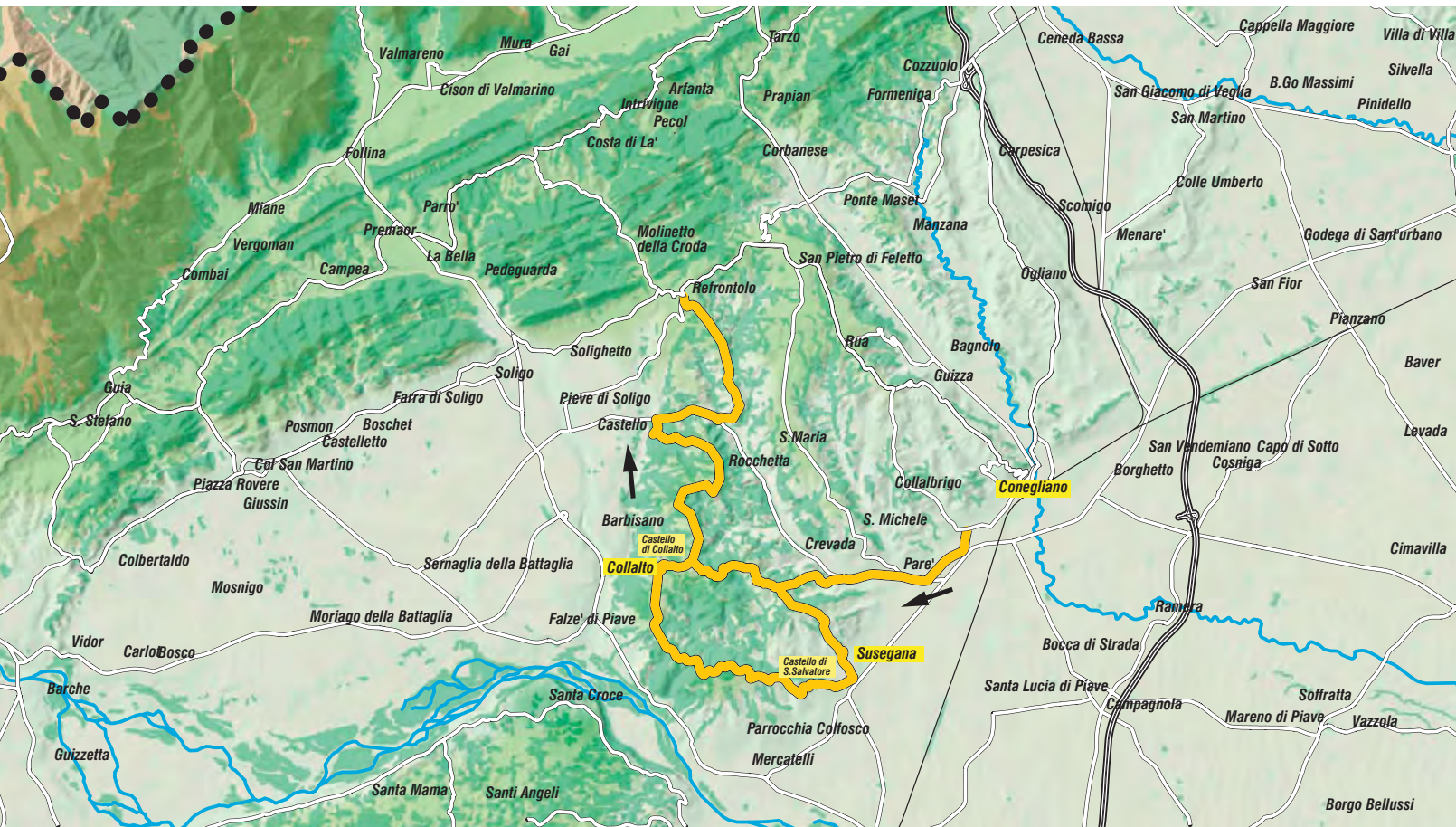
THE COLLALTO ESTATE - MARCA STORICA

The Collalto Estate includes lands that, to the east of Conegliano, fall within the municipality of Susegna and were once the property of the Collaltos, a Lombard family who later became counts of Treviso. Even before 1000 AD, a great deal of land was donated to the Collaltos because of their power as imperial officials. They were first given land east of the River Piave and then were given more towards the northern side of the province of Treviso. Skilled in political relations and shrewd strategists, the Collaltos always managed to secure important positions and consequently played an influential role in local political life. The centre of power was concentrated around Castello di Collalto, a castle built in around 1110 by Ensedisio I, and



subsequently transferred to the fortified castle of San Salvatore, which Rambaldo VIII had erected in around 1300. The provided itinerary includes Castello di San Salvatore – which without a doubt bears the strongest iconographic testimony of this area – before venturing further into the lands of the ancient estate. Here, amongst

the gentle hills, you can catch a glimpse every now and again of the old houses once occupied by the share-croppers, typically painted yellow with two horizontal red stripes. Once you reach Collalto, you can admire the remains of the Castle, which never fail to enchant.



CASTLE HOPPING IN SEARCH OF LEGENDS AND TRUE STORIES

There isn't enough room here to tell the whole story of the house of Collalto, though you can find fine accounts in various textbooks and specialized guides. However, perhaps a "tip" on how to react, should you stumble upon a ghost, might be in order...No noble family worth its salt is without its eccentric, prominent characters, and the Collalto family certainly had its fair share. Two of the most outstanding members were Rambaldo VII – a man of great political influence in the first half of the 14th century, responsible for the by-laws that governed the counties under



the Collalto family's control for many centuries – and Rambaldo XII, the sixteenth count in the family. Commander of the lansquenets, this was the man accused of sacking Mantua in 1629, an event Alessandro Manzoni gives a good description of in his novel "The Betrothed". The character arousing the most interest though is Bianca, known as Bianca di Collalto even though she was just a lady-in-waiting, around whose sad story a legend has been spun. Indeed, legend has it that in the 12th century, Tolberto di Collalto took the lunatic Aica da Camino as his wife. Aica, realizing that there was a fondness between her husband and her lady-in-waiting, didn't miss a single opportunity to play cruel tricks on her. One day the nobleman, on the eve of a journey, whilst saying goodbye to his wife who was having her hair combed by Bianca, met the lady-in-waiting's gaze in the mirror and Aica immediately became aware of the sentimental bond between the two, clearly in love. As soon as her husband left, she shut Bianca in a tower and the poor girl starved to death. The ghost of the unfortunate Bianca is said to have appeared to the Collaltos on various occasions and still drifts around the castle.







Second discovery itinerary

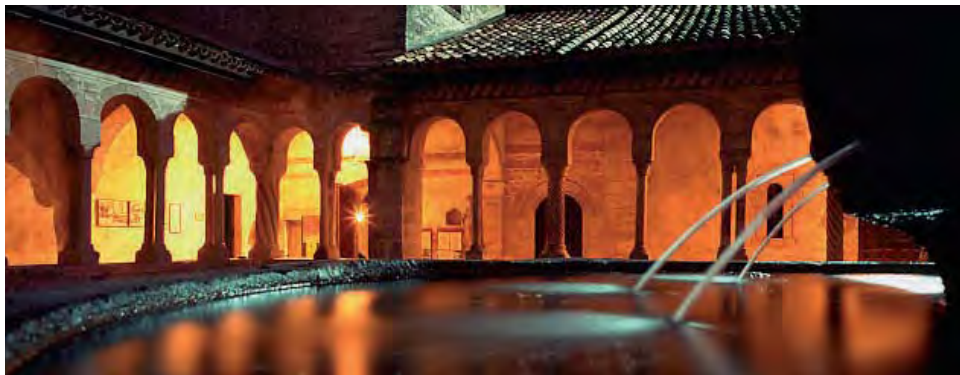
HISTORICAL - NATURE TRAIL

MARCA STORICA

Once you reach Refrontolo, you can continue northwards as far as Rolle. This detour will take you to an area visited briefly in the last segment of the main itinerary, which you instead leave straight away, heading instead for Follina.

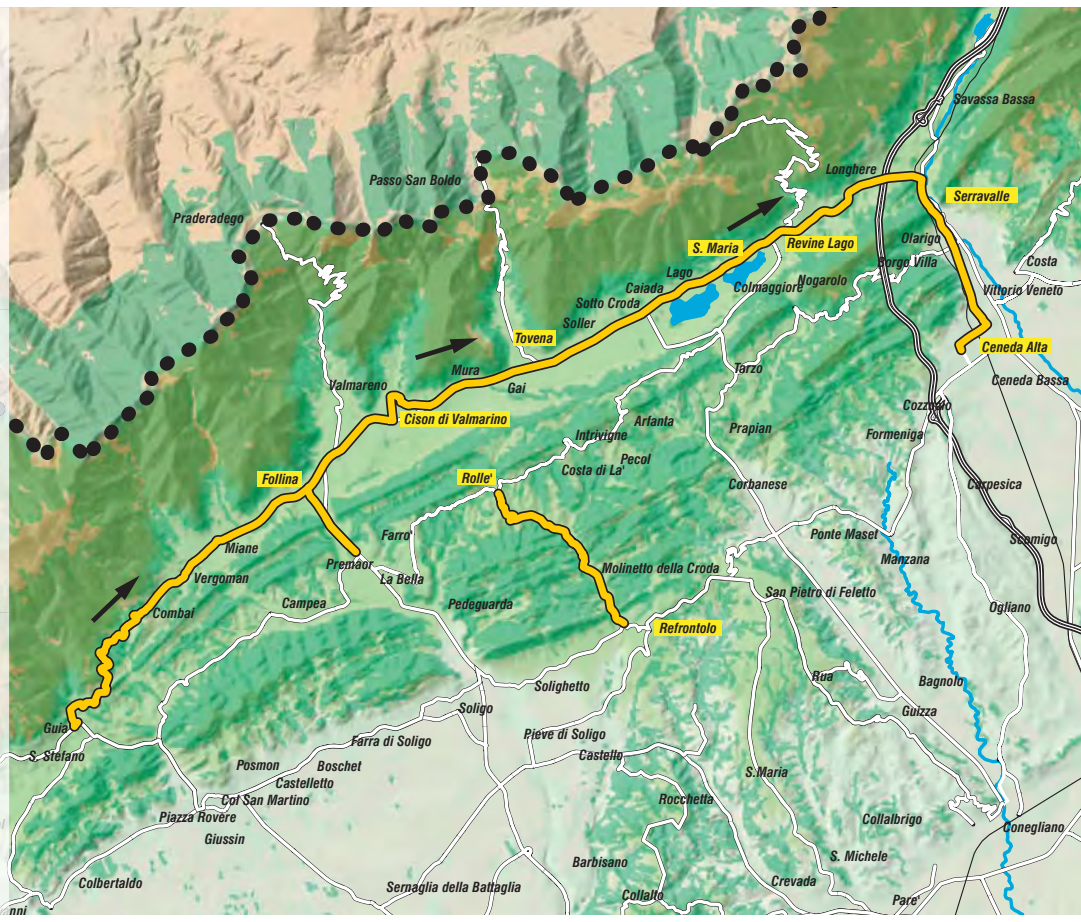
This route, which offers some charming countryside, takes you to areas of great historical, architectural and cultural interest, such as Follina Abbey (Abbazia di Follina) and, in Cison di Valmarino, the Castello Brandolini castle. The latter,

originally dating from the 13th century, was largely rearranged between 1510 and 1525 by Anton Maria Brandolini in a Venetian Renaissance style, and later renovated and extended in the 18th century. Today, it is a famous hotel and conference



centre. Following the itinerary further, you meet other towns that have preserved the flavour of bygone days, like Tovenà, Santa Maria, Revine. The itinerary ends with Serravalle and Ceneda.

The Wine Route for this area is part of the wider Marca Storica Route (for further information, see the Marca Storica brochure).



ORA ET LABORA THE INDUSTRIOUSNESS OF THE MONKS

Follina pokes out from amongst the vineyards at the foot of Belluno's pre-Alps. The stream of the same name running through the town rises from the depths of a valley that is believed to have been filled by a lake in ancient times. Like Follo (in the Cartizze area), Follina also gets its name from *foll*i, the fulling mills for working wool. It would appear that this trade was introduced by the monks in the early Middle Ages and it was not until the 18th century that it really took off and became an economic resource. A great many factories indeed sprung up along the River Soligo during that period, such as the former Andretta wool mill, which harnessed the water's driving force for its industrial production, still exploited by the Busatti-Bonsienbante and Paoletti wool factories. Along the route, you will see the wash-houses, the Bottarel forge and Fiorin mill of the previously flourishing Andretta wood mill. In the nineteenth century, there was a lull in the wool working and dyeing industry,



which instead made a recovery and prospered once again in the last century together with silk working.

FOLLINA ABBEY

Even though it is an important place of prayer and certainly a little off the wine track proper, Follina Abbey (Abbazia di Follina) is still a compulsory stop-off.

Its origins are a grey area, with its initial founding by Benedictine monks linked to a muddle of dates: some records have it as dating from about 1170, others 1145 or 1155. These dates are clearly to be considered with due reserve.

What is certain is that the monastery's period of greatest splendour was in the interval between the 12th and 14th centuries, when



the work of the monks helped elevate the area to great economic and spiritual prosperity. When Follina was annexed by the Republic of Venice in 1388), the Cistercian community was suppressed and the Abbey transferred to the Camaldolensian order in the early part of the 16th century. In the nineteenth century, the delightful place of prayer went through a cruel and sad period of decay. It was only until renovation work was done in 1915 that the Follina Abbey was restored to its former glory. The square-shaped Cloister is enclosed by a series of elegant columns in local stone, and you find yourself wondering whether the architect who designed the Cloisters in New York (Mediaeval Art Collection at the Metropolitan Museum) had the Follina Abbey in mind at the time...

SERRAVALLE AND CENEDA, VITTORIO VENETO

Not everyone knows that the ancient, elegant Serravalle was, in past centuries, a great economic power. Its strategic location made the old town an extremely important centre of trade from the Middle Ages to the fall of Venice.

The great square, where craftsmen and traders did business, is even said to have become the place where goods' global



prices were set. Its importance was attributable above all to the working of iron, copper, lead and precious metals, as well as to wool and cotton working. And when it came to metals and the production of weapons, it seems Serravalle was second only to Toledo. Just think that, even in the sixteenth century, the Borsio firm (in fierce competition with the Marsonis' firm) could produce 12,000 harquebuses a year for the Republic of Venice!

Such was the level of wellbeing and wealth that restrictions were imposed in 1600 to check the unrestrained luxury, forbidding women to dress with furs and brocades and to wear countless precious jewels (only a string of pearls was allowed). Not even the men were allowed jewels in gold and precious stones. Beautiful and rich, yet strong and generous, Serravalle is a strip of Venice on the mainland.





Third discovery itinerary

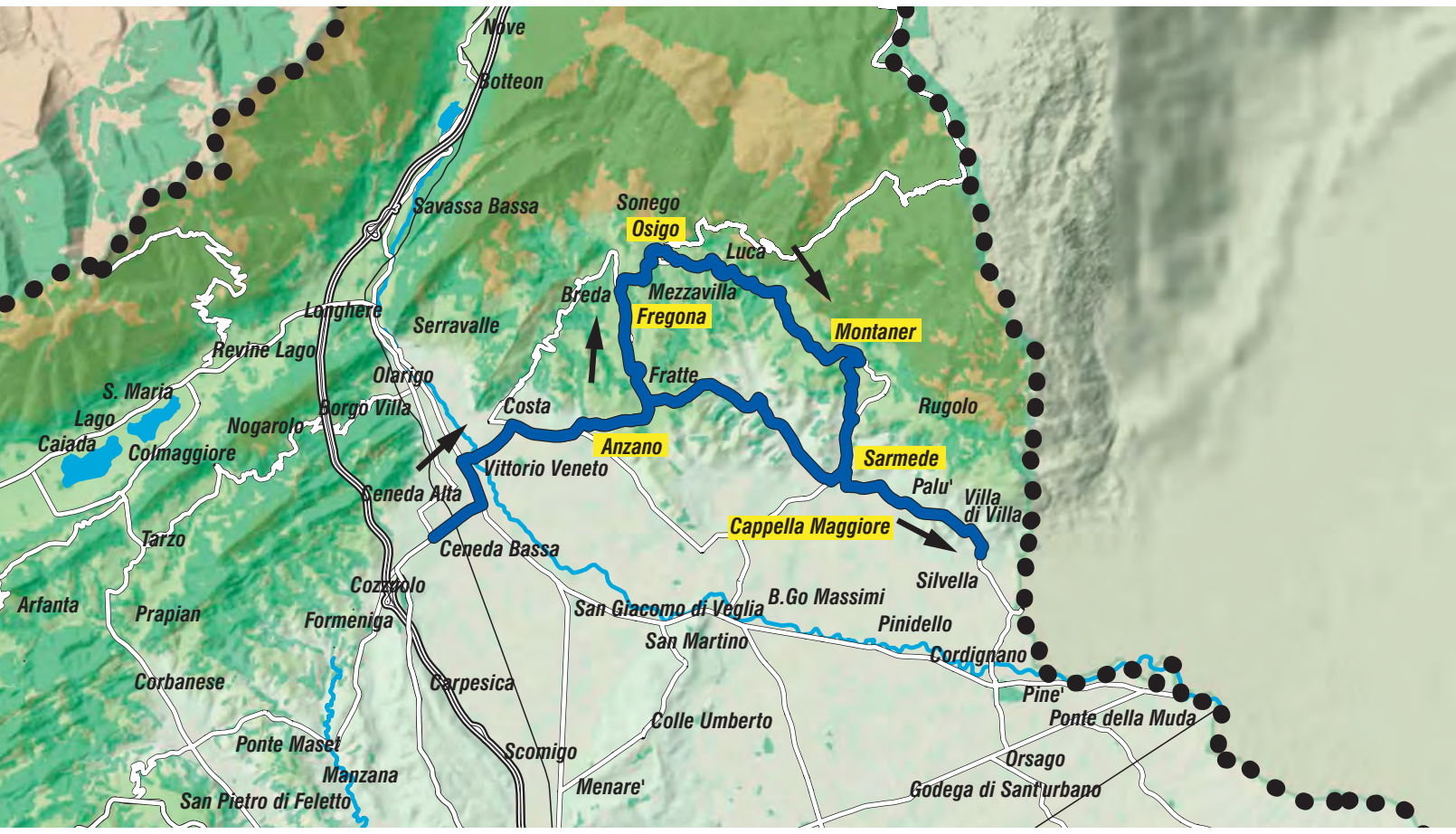
TORCHIATO DI FREGONA

Anzano, Fregona, Osigo, Montaner, Sarmede and Cappella Maggiore, this loop takes in the whole area known for the wine named Torchiato di Fregona. Here the vineyards alternate with dense woods, whilst fruit trees (fig, plum, cherry, apple and pear trees) can be glimpsed between the vines. The meadows once used for pasture are instead located on the higher land. Torchiato di Fregona is a delicious yet still largely unknown wine, which certainly deserves greater renown. It is yielded by Verdiso, Prosecco and Boschera grapes and its vinification requires all the patience demanded by the strong sweet passito wines. Grapes are harvested in October and left to "rest" in baskets. They are then hung over beams and placed on trellises in dry places so that the water in the grapes evaporates. At

Easter time, the berries are selected and sent off to the crusher. They are pressed at least twice (torchiato is Italian for pressed, hence the name), releasing a dense, sugary liquid that is then left to ferment in oak, acacia or chestnut barrels. The wine is not put on the market until after the first of December the year after its vintage. The sweet, precious nectar has just one flaw: so little of it is produced that it's

impossible to satisfy all its admirers. It's worth taking the time to stop off in the village of Sarmede, known for its frescoes by Zavrel, the painter inspiring the international exhibition of children's illustrations (Mostra Internazionale di Illustrazione per l'Infanzia). The exhibition, held each year over January and February, displays works by artists from all over the world.







A few notes on the countryside of the Treviso hills: its history and transformation

We owe our understanding of the lay of the land, and how it has changed over the centuries, mainly to toponymy. Here are a few examples of revealing place names:

Manzana is of Roman origin and comes from *Mancius*, a proper name; **Sbraide** is instead Lombard, from *braida*, an enclosed farm; **Ronchel** has Mediaeval origins, coming from *roncare*, which means to till; whilst **Castagné** comes from *castagno*, Italian for chestnut. Records predating the 16th century contain a legacy of words of rural origin: **Prade**, from *prato*, Italian for meadow; **Carpesica**, perhaps from *carpinus*, a species of tree; **Maren** from *mara*, namely marsh; **Vinera** from the low Latin *vinarius*, vintner.

42 This kind of information helps us understand

how the hills were used for pasture and for producing timber, whilst farming was concentrated in the fortified complexes or towns and villages. Between 1400 and 1500, various pictures show how, in addition to small woods and considerable stretches of pastureland, small plots of land were planted with vines and sown with other crops. They were adjacent to a number of homes built outside the towns. On the higher areas of the hills, the woods and pastures were the uncontested rulers. Very few portions were specialized in growing vines, whilst the vineyards were mainly to be found inside the defensive walls. In the 17th century, houses were once again spread out along the old Roman roads, though a number of rural villages began to take root. By 1700,

the landscape typical of hillside vine growing was a common sight. However, the region was greatly affected by irrational forms of exploitation. Records from the period point to an almost total absence of trees, not just on the hills' lower regions, but even on the more mountainous slopes. Hence we are given a diverse and at the same time controversial picture: sparse intensive growing of vines and other crops, expanses of pastures as far as the eye can see yet hardly any trees. 19th-century iconography again reveals bare hills and only a scattering of trees. Specialized vine growing in the mid-19th century was limited to the Valdobbiadene area alone. It wasn't until the 20th century – until the 60's and 70's no less – that the real vine-growing boom reached the rest of Treviso's hill region.



A feast of poetry and prose



It is hard to choose a favourite piece of Trevigian literature, to decide which author best expresses the sentiment for his land. It's hard because there are a thousand quotes we'd like to include. We'd like to take

quotes from people who've recounted their native town, as well as from people writing about wine and vintages; authors writing of inebriation; authors who are accomplished in elegies; authors recounting the legends; authors of refined verses. Not to mention those who have described the countryside and who have recounted the exploits of commanders; those who have told love stories and who have written autobiographical novels. To mention the classical authors, those from the past, those from the last century and their contemporary counterparts. But it's just not possible. So in the end we've chosen a poem by Andrea Zanzotto (Pieve di Soligo, 1921) and a page of literature by Giovanni Comisso (Treviso, 1895 - 1969). We find that these two choices cover everything.

A PAGE OF POETRY

Ormai

Ormai la primula e il calore
ai piedi e il verde acume del mondo
I tappeti scoperti
le logge vibrare dal vento ed il sole
tranquillo baco di spinosi boschi;
il mio male lontano, la sete distinta
come un'altra vita nel petto
Qui non resta che cingersi intorno il
paesaggio
qui volgere le spalle

*From «Dietro il paesaggio» (1940-1948)
by Andrea Zanzotto, one of the greatest living Italian poets,
who has always been very close to his native land of Treviso*

A PAGE OF LITERATURE

(...) "When Autumn came, the meadows immediately turned a bright, moist green. All of a sudden, a shot would hang in the air, from the rifle of some hunter walking along the hedgerows, where hares escaping the first chills would hide in their burrows. In the fields, where the corn had been harvested, sparrows fluttered, pecking at the fallen kernels. The strong smell of must came from the houses." (....) "As soon as the summer heat begins to wane, the grapes are harvested. That day, the boys, who have inevitably been warned by their fathers not to hang around the vines plucking off berries, can eat the grapes that have fallen onto the ground, and quickly steal the odd bunch from the shoots. Even the old women greedily come to help. It's a slow job that follows the dying of the sun. As murmured words are exchanged between the rows, there is always someone who conveniently falls victim to the practical jokes of all the others. The tub fills as a continuous stream of baskets is emptied into



it, and is then pushed under the porch ready for treading to start. The boy whose body has filled out that year into a more manly shape and whose voice has broken wants to try at all costs: you can see the excitement of the novelty in his eyes. They take off their shoes, pull up their trousers, wash their legs in the fountain and get in to do the treading, immediately attracting the bees with the sweetness. The jet of liquid is dense, reddish and foamy. And like the bees, the women buzz about, breathing in the smell, watching and, finally, with glass in hand, overcome their shyness and fill it 'til their hands are red, gulping down the liquid because,



you know, it's good for you. The people doing the treading also want to try, and in the end all the others do, too. The treaders, though, become slowly inebriated by the smell that rises ever stronger from under the pounding of their legs and the drunkenness tames them into industrious silence. Then, suddenly, the larking starts as they splatter the cheeks of anyone passing near enough with red. The shortening autumn day draws to a close and the vines in the fields are left thinned out and lighter". (...)

Giovanni Comisso, "La mia casa di campagna"
(My country home), Milan 1984, Longanesi & C.



WINE EVENTS

"Primavera del Prosecco" **Prosecco Spring wine festival**

From March to June - The Prosecco DOCG Conegliano Valdobbiadene hills through Wine Shows

Info: Comitato Primavera del Prosecco
Combai (TV)

Tel. +39.0438. 893385 - Fax +39.0438.899768
www.primaveraprosecco.it
info@primaveraprosecco.it

"Vino in Villa" - Wine in Villa

End of May - Castello di San Salvatore – Susegana
Prosecco DOCG vintners meet wine tourists

Info: Consorzio Tutela Conegliano
Valdobbiadene Prosecco DOCG Solighetto
Tel. +39.0438.83028 – Fax +39.0438.842700
www.prosecco.it
info@prosecco.it

"Cantine Aperte" - Di Vino in Vino **Winery open day**

End of May – Wineries in the upper reaches of the Marca Trevigiana region
Producers from the Conegliano and Valdobbiadene hills open the doors of their firms to wine tourists during the national "Cantine Aperte" winery open day
Info: Movimento Turismo del Vino
www.movimentoturismovino.it
info@movimentoturismovino.it

"Festa dell'uva" grape festival

End of September - Conegliano
Tasting in the splendid old town centre of Conegliano of the Veneto region's best wines, selected through the Enoconegliano wine competition
Info: Dama Castellana
Tel. +39.0438.455600 – Fax +39.0438.451961
www.damacastellana.it
dama@damacastellana.it



WINE CELLAR

CISON DI VALMARINO (Rolle)

Vigne Matte

Via Tea, 8 - 31030 Cison di Valmarino (Rolle) (TV)

Tel.0438/975798 - Fax 0438/977336

www.vignematte.it - info@vignematte.it

CONEGLIANO

Az. Vinicola San Giovanni

Via Manzana, 4 - 31015 Conegliano (TV)

Tel.0438/31598 - Fax 0438/35300

www.vinicolasangiovanni.it

vinisangiovanni@libero.it

Cantine Ghetti

Via Marsiglion, 85 - 31015 Conegliano (TV)

Tel.0438/451234 - Fax 0438/61028

www.cantineghetti.it

info@cantineghetti.it

Carmina

Via Mangesa, 10 - 31015 Conegliano (TV)

Tel.0438/23719 - Fax 0438/411974

www.carmina.it - info@carmina.it

Carpene' Malvolti

Via Antonio Carpenè, 1 - 31015 Conegliano (TV)

Tel.0438/364611 - Fax 0438/364690

www.carpene-malvolti.com

info@carpene-malvolti.com

CORDIGNANO

Az. Vinicola Salatin

Via Doge Alvise IV Mocenigo, 53 - 31016 Cordignano (TV)

Tel.0438/995928 - Fax 0438/996727

www.salatinvini.com - info@salatinvini.com

CROCETTA DEL MONTELLO

La Gioiosa

Via Erizzo, 113/a - 31035 Crocetta del Montello (TV)

Tel.0423/8607 - Fax 0423/860924

www.lagioiosa.com - info@lagioiosa.it

FARRA DI SOLIGO (Col San Martino, Soligo)

Az. Agr. Andreola Orsola

Via Cal Longa, 52 - 31010 Col San Martino (TV)

Tel.0438/989379 - Fax 0438/898822

www.andreolaorsola.it - info@andreolaorsola.it

Az. Agr. Bressan Daniele

Via San Rocco, 18 - 31010 Farra di Soligo (TV)

Tel.0438/801515 - Fax 0423/801515

www.proseccobressan.it

danielebressan@libero.it

Az. Agr. Marotta

Via dei Pra', 17 - 31010 Col San Martino (TV)

Tel. e Fax 0438/989267

m.merotto@libero.it

Perlage s.r.l.

Via Cal del Muner, 16 - 31020 Farra di Soligo (Soligo) (TV)

Tel.0438/900203 - Fax 0438/900195

www.perlagewines.com

info@perlagewines.com

FOLLINA

Az. Agr. Al Col

Loc. Col, 10 - 31051 Follina (TV)

Tel.0438/970658 - Fax 0438/970658

www.alcol.tv - info@alcol.tv

MIANE (Premaor, Combai)

Az. Vin. Gregoletto Luigi

Via San Martino, 81 - 31050 Miane (Premaor) (TV)

Tel.0438/970463 - Fax 0438/974308

www.gregoletto.it - info@gregoletto.com

Spumanti Serre

Via Casale Vacca, 8 - 31030 Miane (Combai) (TV)
Tel.+39 0438/893502 - Fax +39 0438/899649
www.proseccoserre.com
info@proseccoserre.com

PIEVE DI SOLIGO (Solighetto)**Soc. Agr. Ballancin Lino**

Via Drio Cisa, 11 - 31050 Pieve di Soligo
(Solighetto) (TV)
Tel. +39 0438/842749 - Fax +39 0438/981648
www.viniballancin.com
viniballancin@viniballancin.com

REFRONTOLO**Astoria Vini**

Via Crevada - 31020 Refrontolo (TV)
Tel.+39 0423/6699 - Fax +39 0423/665077
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THE PIAVE WINE ROAD

*"...when in winter you tap the wine,
make sure that in your heart there is a
song for every goblet; and make sure
that in the song there is a memory of
the autumn days, of the vine and of
the press..."*

Gibran Kahlil Gibran



After you have explored the zones that stretch from Conegliano to Valdobbiadene, along the traditional White Wine Road, the discovery of wine produced in the Marca Trevigiana will lead you to the environs of the Piave river. Although the vineyards of the Piave also produce excellent whites,

the most conspicuous production is that of red wine. Ancient cultures, the agricultural world with its strong values and the peculiarity of the landscape remain the cornerstones of this road. Freeing themselves of any shadow of doubt, red wine lovers should arm themselves with a

road map, a guide and the desire to taste, because this itinerary, branching out for about 150 km, is full of surprises and has plenty of discoveries up its sleeve. The route includes sites full of significance and great evocative value, many of which are little known by the general public.





The area of the Piave DOC covers a vast plain that is confined to the south by the sea, to the north-west by the hills of Conegliano and Montello, its length crossed by the Piave river, whilst to the north-east it borders on the region of Friuli. There are three areas to head for with the aim of better understanding the various settlement periods and different traditions, and there are also plenty of opportunities to take a breather.

The first **(A)** has as its protagonists the vineyards that once belonged to the Serenissima Republic of Venice.

The route snakes along both the left and right banks of the Piave and is historically important for its Roman past, which had its heart in the city of Oderzo, the starting point of our oenological journey. This first stretch finishes at Roncade. The second itinerary **(B)**, which goes from Roncade to Cimadolmo, is again scattered with beautiful homes once owned by the Venetian patrician families that are now



home to renowned wine businesses. Defined as the 'Doges' vineyards' zone, it encompasses the southern and central parts of the province of Treviso to the right of the Piave. Finally, the third part **(C)** travels from Cimadolmo, taking you back to Oderzo and covers the Raboso area.



This area also has its share of Veneto villas, but what really touches the heart of the traveller is the atmosphere on the Piave left bank, with its ancient traditions, views that take in the river, isolated little churches that house precious frescoes, and other gems such as the town of Portobuffolè. The road is unidirectional and is in the



form of a large loop, with a deviation that connects San Polo di Piave to Ponte di Piave. A preliminary description providing information about the direction to take will be annotated with detailed information about the sites of major interest, including details, interesting facts and anecdotes.





THE PIAVE DOC CONSORTIUM and its role in promoting wines from the Piave area

The Piave DOC Consortium was established in August 1959, thanks to the fortunate intuition of a group of wine producers who set themselves the following arduous task: 'Protecting wine-growing in the "Piave Wines" production zone, encouraging the diffusion of suitable vines and achieving improvement in oenological and wine-growing practices, spreading knowledge and commercial development of these wines.' This was, and is, a group of producers who have always believed in quality, uniting under a joint label within the DOC area.

They have developed a system of autonomous control that guarantees respect for wine production and provides structures of technical assistance. The outcome of this policy is their



constant presence on today's market and the firm radicalisation in the socio-economic fabric that has determined a close and synergic link between the wine and its area of origin. Today the Piave Consortium supervises all three

phases of the productive process (production, transformation and commercialisation) and it makes up two thirds of both the wine-growing area, and of the wine produced and distributed.



THE PLAINS

Let's take a look at this area, which enters the province of Treviso from the Venice lagoon, before reaching the foothills of the Pre-Alps. This plain is the bed of a river: the Piave. In Italian the gender given to this river is still uncertain.

For decades the masculine has been used, but originally it was feminine. This is true not only for the Piave, but also for the Sile, the Livenza and many other tracts of water. Returning to the landscape, the plain has a soil composed of sand, gravel and clay and is sprinkled with veins of deep water. It is this unusual conformation of the land that gives the vines their characteristics. Despite the powerful process of industrialisation



that took place between the 1980s and 1990s, the plain, still fertile in parts, offers the visitor panoramic views. The villages situated along the river have maintained the feel of times gone by and the inhabitants' passion for nature has



transformed the adjacent zones into a vast garden. The Piave bed is an environment perfectly suited to agriculture. In the old days in this area, man specialised in breeding livestock, breeding silkworms and



growing vines. In fact you can still come across the ancient isolated farmhouses in amongst the vineyards, with their beautiful arched porticos and caneva (cellar), which occupied the most important place alongside the kitchen and its foghér

(hearth). This rural image of the Marca Gioiosa marries splendidly with the remnants of Venetian domination, with the Veneto villas representing a heritage of great architectural and cultural significance. It is from here that the 'wine-villa' liaison



is born, and in this area 'visiting villas' signifies 'visiting wines': today most of the aristocratic homes have created their own wine labels of a high standard.



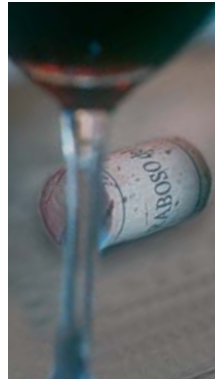
PIAVE WINES

From Merlot to Raboso

The following vines come under the controlled denomination of origin (DOC) 'Piave Wines' or more simply 'Piave': Cabernet, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot (Nero, Bianco and Grigio), Raboso, Tocai and Verduzzo. The production zone covers a vast part of the eastern area of the province of Treviso. Here, as in other zones in the Veneto, the tradition of planting different vines alternating on the same row was widespread. However, in order to optimise and rationalise production, in more recent times wine growers have modified their vineyards, profoundly changing the productive profile of this zone. In the last 25 years, the introduction



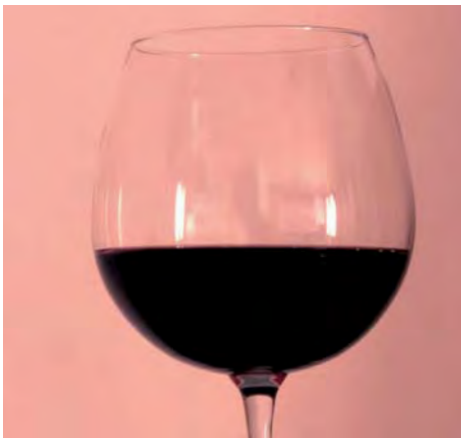
of the monoculture vineyard has taken precedence. For example, many areas have been set aside for Merlot, which by far enjoys the most significant production in this area.



For the most part, these wines are dry and best accompany meat, roasts, fowl, game; in other words typical dishes from the Veneto cuisine. Raboso del Piave is an excellent example,



an authentic standard bearer of the wine production and oenology of this land. Its long history includes legends about the origins of its name. There are those who believe that its name derives from the eponymous tributary of the Piave. A more imaginative hypothesis is that, considering the powerful astringency and acidity of the grapes, the wine's name originates from the adjective rabioso (angry), used in Veneto dialect to indicate a particularly acerbic fruit. Whatever the origin, it is a native vine whose first traces of cultivation go back to the beginning of the 17th century. The plant is exceptionally strong, considering that it managed to survive virtually unscathed during the years of the vine pest epidemic that struck Italian vineyards in the first half of the 20th century. Its flavour is robust and, if young, goes well with typical Italian hors d'oeuvres. When it has aged, it is the perfect accompaniment to game.



WINE: A QUICK WORD ABOUT HOW HABITS CHANGE

Until the 1950s, wine was considered on the one hand a luxury item and on the other a simple drink.

The latter was considered to be of low quality and had the task of accompanying food or engendering drunkenness. There was also a 'black period' for wine producers between

the end of the 19th and middle of the 20th century when the vine pest epidemics reached their peak and destroyed great swathes of vines.

Added to the problems of vine pest were war and economic crisis.

Fortunately, today it is possible to guarantee safe harvests and efficient protective measures, at least since 1945.

We have now entered a completely different era. Wine makes culture.

It makes cinema. It makes fashion.

A cornucopia of publications helps the general public to navigate a universe that until recently was considered the exclusive domain of experts. Evidence of this can be seen at the Vinitaly show in Verona, where wine is no longer the major protagonist, but is one part of the specialist world that surrounds it. This includes wine guides, competitions, sommelier and wine-tasting schools, and challenges between restaurants with prestigious wine lists. Basically, those who have more, give more. Not to mention

packaging and design: corkscrews, decanters and thermometers, really special glasses and goblets. The connoisseur is not easily satisfied: they want the best.

'Cantine Aperte', which was created inconspicuously in the 1990s, is now an eagerly awaited event.

For a whole day, the last Sunday in May, wine lovers from all over the world come together to enjoy exemplary wines from local cellars.

IS RED WINE REALLY GOOD FOR THE BLOOD?

A glass of red wine a day keeps the doctor away and is good for your blood!

The health properties of this 'nectar of the gods', extolled by poets and writers since antiquity, are at the centre of numerous studies by research institutes that have tried to define its clear benefits.

So, what are the properties of red wine?

Rule number one, drink in moderation: under 30g of alcohol for men and 20g for

women a day, which is two glasses of good red wine.

Daily consumption, in these quantities, determines a growth of HDLs, in other words good cholesterol, to the detriment of LDLs, or bad cholesterol. Furthermore, alcohol limits the aggregation of platelets, thus keeping the blood more fluid. The protective action of red wine against the rise of cardiovascular diseases is linked to the presence of polyphenolic compounds. Their content depends on the variety of grape, the position and type of terrain of the vine and the processes of wine making. Certain acids are included amongst the polyphenolic compounds, such as caffeinic acid, anthocyanins (which give colour to the wine), flavonoids, catechins, procyanides, tannins and resveratrol. These compounds have significant antioxidant properties, meaning that they counter the free radicals responsible for aging, and the resveratrol even performs an anti-tumour action.

Thus we can say that constant and moderate red wine consumption is a real panacea: it contributes to more elastic arteries, dilated coronary arteries and blood with lower cholesterol.





Route A

FROM ODERZO TO RONCADE.

THE DOGES' VINEYARDS

"...those who live on the flood bed are well aware that every now and then the river presents the bill: it is the price you pay for the privilege of living along the banks and the flow of water, on a terrain that is as treacherous as it is seductive, with its attacks and enchantments. The flood bed, stony here, sandy there, is full of woody areas alongside cultivated fields, lush vineyards, sloping green glades. In autumn the vines turn red, the beeches and poplars turn yellow and, starting from the highest branches, the rust-coloured foliage of the hornbeams begins to curl and here and there the faded hedges show the redness of their berries..."

*("L'ira del fiume" in La carrozza del nonno
by Tommaso Tommaseo Ponzetta)*



And here is the beautiful Opitergium (from the Veneto dialect "terg", meaning Square) that, standing on the borders of East Veneto, is the nerve centre of this highly agricultural land. With a series of stratifications that are all clearly visible, Oderzo displays all of the epochs with nothing

looking out of place. The centre of the Roman area, with its wonderful mosaics that date back as far as the 1st century BC, was recently renovated by the architect Toni Follina. An unusual and stable balance exists between ancient and modern Oderzo. The original settlement was founded between VI and



V BC by the Veneto people. Following the construction of the Postumia consular road (148 BC), connecting Liguria and Aquileia, the land ended up under Roman political-military influence and was involved in the battle between Pompeo and Caesar. The latter bestowed *Opitergium* with Roman citizenship (48 BC) and declared it a *municipium*. It was under the reign of Augustus during the 1st century AD that the city enjoyed its moment of greatest splendour, both economical and cultural. Oderzo was pillaged and rebuilt on many occasions: first by the Quadi and Marcomanni (167 AD), then by Attila's Huns (452 AD) and then by Teodorico's Longobards (461 AD). Following these terrible devastations, the inhabitants headed towards the coast with the aid of the bishop Magno and founded the city of Eraclea, in honour of the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, immediately followed by the city of *Equilium* (which today is Jesolo). During medieval times, Oderzo



got its breath back, constructing defensive walls and new housing. It should be noted that the city was able to get back on its feet thanks to the tenacious spirit of its people. After being fought over for many years by the Ezzelini, Caminesi and Carraresi, it came under the domain of the Serenissima Republic in 1389. It was during these centuries that it took on its present countenance with the beautiful palaces built within the city walls. The square, behind which runs the river Monticano, was recently restored with new paving in material typically used in the Veneto (trachyte, Istrian stone and cobblestones). Within the vast urban space, the tranquil rhythms of the citizens are enlivened by the famous Wednesday market. On one side of the square is the Cathedral with its renowned paintings by Pomponio Amalteo, Bellunello, Palma il Giovane and others; on the other side is the long façade of Palazzo Saccomani;

on the opposite side is a row of traditional old houses.

Interesting places to visit are the Civic Museum and Palazzo Foscolo, where the Alberto Martini picture gallery is housed. The journey continues through the countryside to the south of Motta di Livenza. In Borgo Cavalier, take a moment to visit the small and charming Roman church that has some frescoes inside. There is a wood nearby surrounded by vineyards, while to the north there are two further villas of architectural interest. Villa Foscari Cornaro, built around the middle of the 16th century, is a remarkable example of Renaissance architecture with a beautiful Italian garden. Villa Revedin, set in a delightful centuries-old park, was built by the noble Venetian Morosini family and is testimony to the splendour of the glorious Serenissima Republic.

Towards the end of the 18th century it was home to personalities from all over Europe. Now we come to Motta di Livenza, whose



name probably derives from "motta" or "muttera", meaning a steep slope. Of strategic importance during the Middle Ages, the small town had the function of acting as a buffer between the Patriarch of Aquileia, the Doge of Venice, Treviso Council and the bishopric sea of Ceneda. The traveller can also find other important



Venetian villas, Villa Morosini and Villa Rietti Rota, the latter incorporating various outbuildings, annexes, outhouses, barchesse and a small church dedicated to Saint Anna with an altarpiece attributed to the School of Tiepolo. The vineyards are always an integral part of the landscape and, together with the

woods, mingle with other cultivations. We have included a detour towards Cessalto, so that you can take a look at Villa Zeno, also known as 'Donegal', one of three villas designed by Palladio in the province of Treviso. The other two are Villa di Maser and Villa Emo in Fanzolo. From Cessalto you go on to Chiarano, where there is another villa belonging to the Zeno family, before continuing towards Campo di Pietra and Salgareda, crossing an area densely cultivated with vineyards. In Salgareda, its name deriving from willows (called *salghèri* or *salgàri* in Veneto dialect), you've got to taste the biscuits made for dunking in wine. They are called 'ossi da morto' (dead man's bones), perhaps because of their shape. On reaching Ponte di Piave, you can find the small villa that was home to the writer Goffredo Parise (1929-1986) and now houses the 'Centro Cultura G. Parise'; you then move on to the state road for Treviso, deviating shortly afterwards



towards Zenson di Piave, the stage of the great battle of Solstizio in June 1918. You then head in the direction of Monastier, whose name derives from the remains of a Benedictine monastery. In the early Middle Ages the friars here provided a valid contribution to the upgrading of the area. Arriving at San Pietro di Novello, you leave



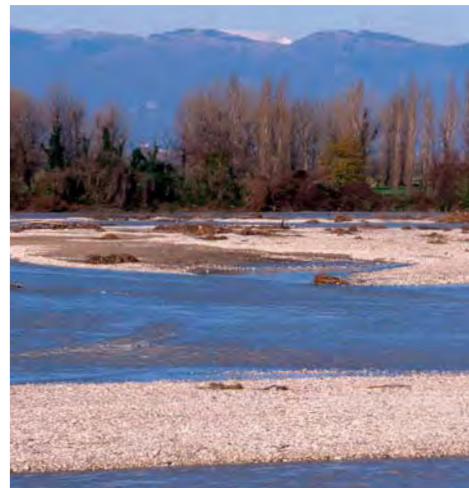
the main road once more to visit the Abbey of Santa Maria del Pero. This Benedictine monastery was founded in the 10th century and was probably abandoned in Napoleon's era. Today it is the site of an important agricultural business. The Veneto villas continue to remain as a backdrop to the final stretch of road before reaching Roncade.

THE MADONA DEI MIRACOLI SANCTUARY AT MOTTA DI LIVENZA

The "Medjugorje del Piave". It was the 9th of March 1510 when, in the middle of a wheat field, a beautiful maid dressed in white appeared before Giovanni Cigana. The old man immediately realised that it was the Madonna speaking to him and that she was giving him an important task. He ran through the field to pass on the instructions he had received to his fellow inhabitants. They had to build a church on the site of the apparition. It was a particularly gifted member of the clergy, not to mention a figure of great humanistic prominence, who would monitor the entire event. Father Francesco Zorzi, Provincial Superior of the Frati Minori Osservanti at the San Francesco della Vigna Friary in Venice was famous not only for being the favourite advisor to Pope Clement VII, but also for his close relationship with Sansovino. It was



mainly for the latter reason that his presence during the planning and construction of the church and convent was of such importance. The church, finished in record time in 1513, is built along sober lines with a traditional feel. Over five centuries later, it remains one of the main centres of popular religion in the Veneto.



AN IDEA ABOUT THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE RURAL LANDSCAPE

The first transformations of the landscape date back to the Roman age with the creation of important communication routes, particularly the Postumia road linking Genoa and Aquileia.



To guarantee safety along the main arteries, numerous settlements were established with a radical penetration all over the territory thanks to the Roman custom of assigning land to veterans.

After the fall of the Roman Empire these lands were gradually abandoned and the wood, that had become less dense, began to grow again- and this was not all. Some of the land was newly covered in marshland and swamps.

In the communal age and with the increase of the population, the need to cultivate vast areas returned and the land was once more deforested and reclaimed. Obviously, the first centres of agricultural renewal were situated close to monasteries and the main communal dominions. Thus, the period preceding Venetian domination can be considered a time of reclamation and cultivation, as well as an era in which important works of water clearance with deviations and reorganisations of the land took place. Prints, drawings and

engravings from the time bear witness to the importance attributed to irrigation, with a drawing by Cristoforo Sorte from 1556 in which the irrigation ditches drawing from the Piave are clearly visible.

The development of a more efficient agricultural system created a more precise landscape, such as the organisation of an enclosure system. It is also interesting to observe how the whole right bank of the Piave was cultivated much more intensively than the left, where marshy and unfarmed zones were still widespread.

In fact, according to 16th-century accounts, on the right-hand side of the river there was a series of rural towns while on the other side the diffusion of settlements was less significant. From the second half of the 15th century there was a sizable increase in the acquisition of land by Venetian patrician families, a trend that continued sporadically until the mid 18th century. Many communities along the Terraglio and the lower part of the Marca were involved

in the construction of splendid villas. These villas were not only a place of relaxation and holidays (though that is what they became in the 18th century), but had a significant role in the change of the topography of the countryside.

Enormous vineyards, placed at right angles to the villa, unravelled across the countryside.

Despite essential deforestation, performed to make room for the new constructions and agricultural zones, the Republic of Venice adopted legislative actions to halt a continual and progressive erosion of forest land.

At the end of the 16th century, the three-field system arrived: wheat, maize and wheat, intercropped with mulberries. The agricultural centres grew fruit trees while along the ditches trees for wood were planted and a small orchard was always present.

During the 19th century the Treviso plains formed a landscape depicted as follows:





vast marshland along the entire Sile river, many areas covered by fields, numerous woods, and a clear presence of villas along the roads penetrating the countryside. Finally, from the mid 20th century there was an expansion of areas for seeding with the loss of woodland and productive untilled land, while the diffusion of wine production gradually developed into a specialised culture.

INTERPENETRATION BETWEEN THE VENETO VILLAS AND AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES

At the end of the Middle Ages the old castles gave way to a new type of residence.

The turrets and defensive walls were knocked down, the moats were transformed into fish ponds adorned with splendid sculptures and, more importantly, new airy buildings were constructed.

The aristocrat felt the need to relax in an oasis of peace and at the same time felt the need to create an active economic centre based on agriculture consisting of barns, wine cellars, stalls and oil presses.

The villas constituted, at least between the 15th and 18th centuries, an inexhaustible patrimony that turned holiday making into an art.

The villa architecture is still a unique phenomenon in the world today.





RADIOS AND TRANSISTORS TO SUIT ALL TASTES

There is a huge collection of over 800 radio appliances that cover a period going from 1925 to 1960, picked up, searched for, unearthed and collected with care over the years. Coming from Italy, France, Germany and Eastern Europe, you can see them on display at the 'Bella Radio' museum.

This unusual collection, one of its kind in the

region, is on show in the splendid setting of Villa Navagero-Erizzo in Rovarè (San Biagio di Callalta). The museum, which for aficionados is a real find, is open to the public on the second and fourth Saturday of the month (closed August).

*For information:
Tel. 0422/895107*



LISON-PRAMAGGIORE

In the area of Motta di Livenza, the Piave Wine Road touches, albeit in a minimal way, the Lison-Pramaggiore DOC area, which is situated in the province of Treviso as well as those of Venice and Pordenone. This region takes its name from the small towns of Lison and Pramaggiore, both of them areas (together with Belfiore) of local wine production.

The DOC title has been attributed to 14 vineyards and 4 other wines produced in the area that the Consorzio Vini DOC Lison-Pramaggiore promotes and protects, guaranteeing respect for standards in the business.

In the area numerous oenological events take place (such as wine shows) and there are vineyards in all directions.

In many cases, during the visit to the wine cellars you can learn about the techniques

and specificities of the wines produced in the company of an oenologist or the owner.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Strada dei Vini DOC Lison-Pramaggiore

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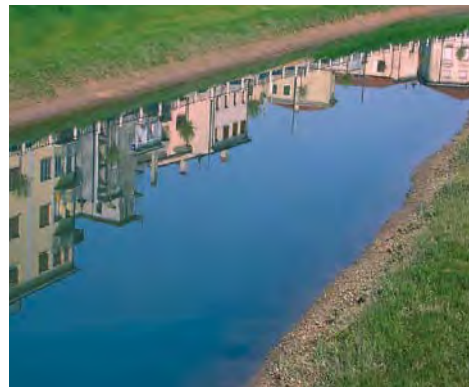
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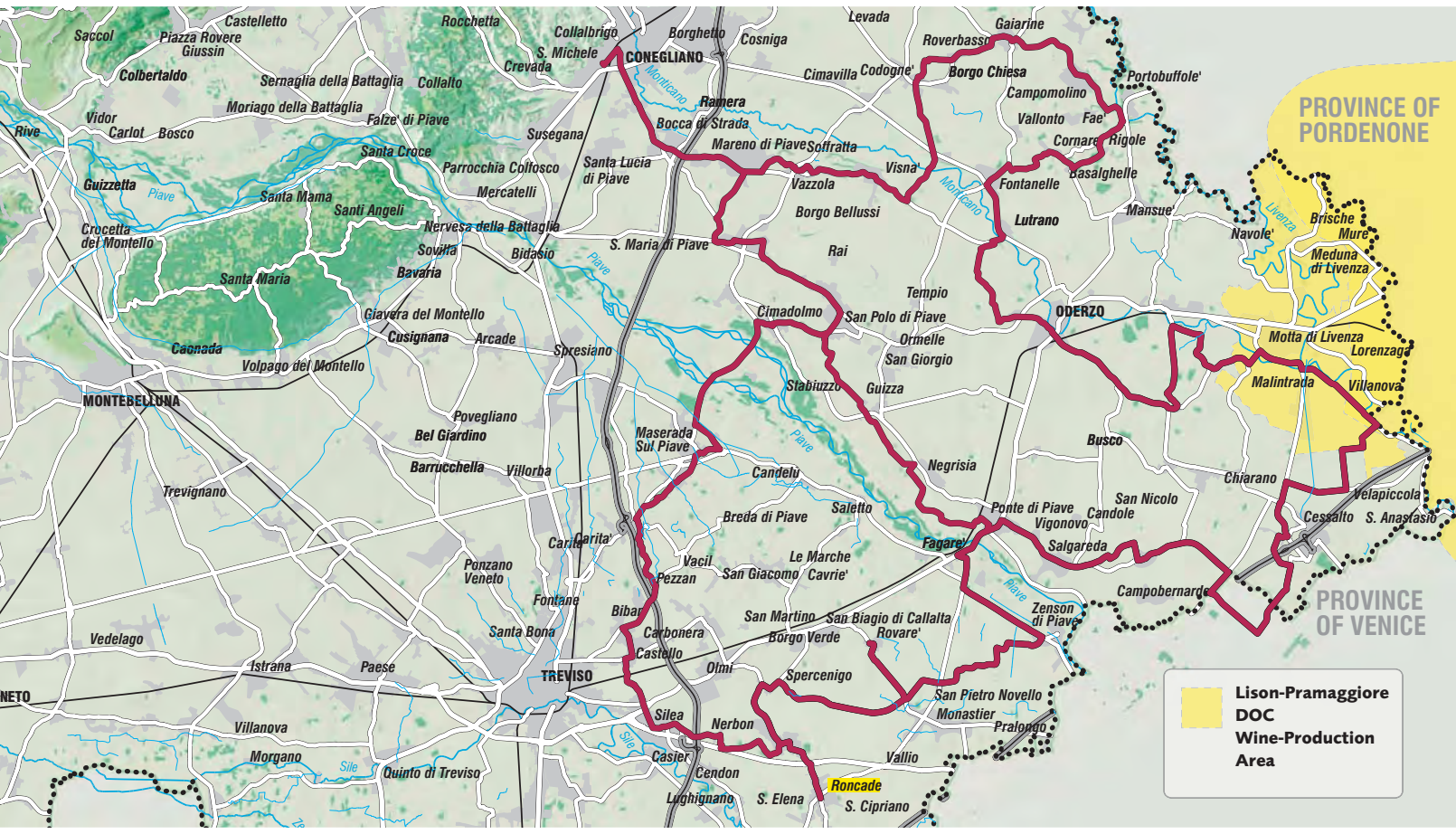
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PROVINCE OF
PORDENONE

PROVINCE OF
VENICE

 **Lison-Pramaggiore
DOC
Wine-Production
Area**



Route B

FROM RONCADE TO CIMADOLMO. VENETIAN VILLAS.

"...Crossing the threshold of a gate and walking down a mossy path between high pines, I found myself standing before an 18th-century villa shrouded in disturbing secrecy. The complex house and old barchessa displayed old and incongruous restorations but conserved intact its aristocratic aspect, made more seductive by the intricate stain of evergreens that seemed to want to hide it from those who happened to find themselves passing in those parts ..."

("La Villa settecentesca" in La carrozza del nonno by Tommaso Tommaseo Ponzetta)



The Piave right bank. The landscape in which the traveller finds him/herself is the prototype of the real Veneto countryside. The backbone of the Pre-Alps acts as the

backdrop to the panorama facing north, while on the right the Piave flows between its pebbly shores; next come the villages and cultivated fields that border urban areas, round a bend stands a villa of rare beauty, the vineyards stand alongside fields of other crops. The end of spring is definitely the best time to take the trip you are about to embark on.

The Piave garden displays itself in all its glory. The rhythms are more gentle and a walk through the vineyards, which flank fresh irrigation ditches where pathways appear, becomes an unusual experience satisfying the senses that have been slightly dulled during the winter. This second stretch sets





off from Villa Giustiniani in Roncade, a small town not far from Treviso, to the borders of the province of Venice. It continues northwestward for a few kilometres, where the marvellous rose-beds along the garden walls of the villas feast the eyes, before coming to Silea on the banks of the river Sile. In the town of Lanzago the road, which

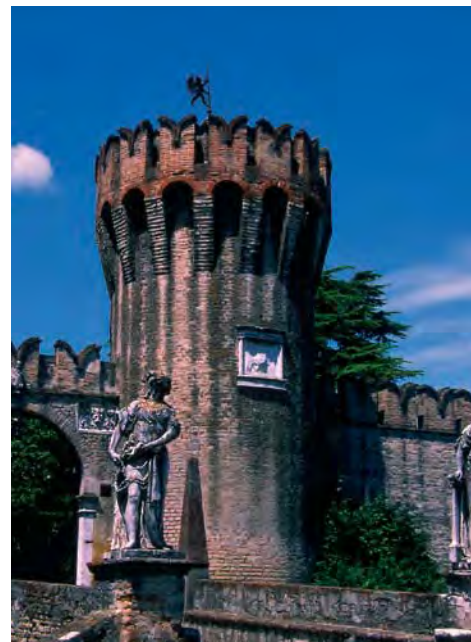
avenue leading to Villa Tiepolo Passi. After a short break, the route continues northward where other Veneto villas greet the visitor: Villa Perocco, whose vineyards are clearly visible opposite the building; Villa Gitta Caccianiga; Villa Valier Loredan; and the barchesse of Villa Pastega Manera. You then continue past Vascon to reach the village of Maserada sul Piave. The visitor will have the clear sensation of having entered a strange territory.

This is the zone of the Grave di Papadopoli where, above the gravelly land, numerous vineyards have been planted.

And here you see the Piave. From Ponte di Maserada, the river can be admired in all its beauty: here it broadens into a wide bed branching out in various tracts of water that flow between the pebbles and gravel. A rest and a walk along the irrigation ditch are in order before arriving at Cimadolmo and starting the third part of the itinerary.

A VILLA OR A CASTLE?

Various vicissitudes surround the story of Roncade Castle. Given to the Collalto family by Ottone II, it was then destroyed



by Cangrande della Scala to then be reconstructed by the Giustiniani family. The villa was built in the second decade of the 16th century by the Venetian nobleman Gerolamo Giustiniani and was situated at the centre of a large square enclosed by a high crenellated and turreted wall that in its turn was surrounded by a moat. The return to feudal architecture is not by chance and emphasises the power and greatness of one of the first and largest estates owned by Venetian nobility on the mainland. Crossing the austere protective threshold what appears, in all its beauty, is something that can be defined as one of the most innovative buildings in the Treviso countryside: a prime example of a Veneto villa in pure classical Templar style. This style would go on to be adapted by Andrea Palladio in masterly fashion. Flanking the villa, two barchesse house the wine cellars.



VENETIAN NOBLES DISCOVER THE COUNTRYSIDE

It was a fertile plain that extended along the Piave banks, and the Venetians loved it for its excellent game.

Slowly going up the Sile, they discovered that they could reproduce the same elegant and luxurious lifestyle that they were used to in the palaces along the Grand Canal.

Furthermore, the countryside relaxed the mind and activities in the open air were a form of relaxation for the nobility who squabbled over who got to invite Carlo Goldoni rather than Antonio Vivaldi to their country residences.

Unlike the 'allotments' underway on the banks of the Brenta, the properties of the Marca Trevigiana were enormously elegant whilst being more inhabitable and pleasant - and perhaps less pretentious - than their cousins on the Brenta.



Exemplary in this sense is Villa Tiepolo Passi in Carbonera, built at the beginning of the 1600s: surrounded by a leafy park, it has an Italian style garden separated from the road by a pool of water, the classic fishpond.

Also extremely beautiful are Villa Gitta Caccianiga, built around 1700 on the ruins of a monastery, and Villa Valier Loredan, which in the central salon still preserves a cycle of frescoes attributed to Niccolò Bambini (1657-1736).

A curious fact: the barchesse of Villa Pastega Manera have been converted into a school, Fabrica, thanks to a project by the architect Tadao Ando.

Here new communication and contemporary graphic art ideas are created. It is a research centre with numerous workshops and courses held by the most prestigious names in international graphic art and illustration.

THE SILE AND THE MUSESTRE

The waters of the Musestre, one of the most substantial tributaries of the Sile, are fresh, fast and clear and flow through the countryside amidst vineyards and fields where once the washing was hung out to dry. The main activity of the inhabitants of Roncade was that of washing, transporting the laundry on boats to the larger urban centres. In Treviso culture, the Sile, today a protected natural park, was a river of great importance. Navigable right up to the region's capital, it permitted trade between the lagoon and the hinterland and signs of this intense life of bygone times are still visible. Towpaths are pathways where the animals could pull the boats upstream. Traces of the old mills and works (boatyards and brickyards) can still be seen, as can the traces left by the old gravel and sand quarries standing among the centuries-old willows, alders and oaks.



A TREASURE YET TO BE FOUND

It is said that in a place not far from Biancade (a small town near Roncade) the Altinati buried their treasure when they had to run away from Attila's Huns. The treasure has yet to be found. In the 19th century a nobleman demolished his villa in the hope of finding it, but the escapade did not produce the desired results! However, this is just a legend ...



Route C

FROM CIMADOLMO TO ODERZO.

THE PIAVE LEFT BANK, THE LAND OF RABOSO.

"...When I am far away, I miss the light of dawn on the meadow, the red of the sunset beyond the acacias, I miss the coarse chirping of the magpies in the hornbeams and the garrulous one of the jays under the oaks, I miss the tapping of the woodpecker on the poplar trunk, I miss the owl that - when darkness falls - rests on the peak of the pine, ungainly and immobile ..."

("Amore per la casa di campagna" in La carrozza del nonno by Tommaso Tommaseo Ponzetta)

Going past Maserada and the Piave, it is interesting to know that you have entered the zone of the 'sparesere', where the vineyards stand alongside



fields of asparagus. In similar Bassano style, the asparagus of Cimadolmo is served, following customary tradition, accompanied by boiled eggs or sprinkled with chopped herbs. After you've had a break and a taste of



asparagus in Cimadolmo you move on to San Polo di Piave. Before entering the town it is possible to return towards the Ponte di Piave across a stretch of road. A section of the road follows the riverbank where magnificent views open up among



the vegetation.

San Polo di Piave boasts record numbers of freshwater shrimp.

They have even been immortalised in the fresco in the Church of San Giorgio (dating back to the 8th century) that depicts the last supper! Before leaving San Polo you have to visit Villa Papadopoli-Giol. In the vicinity, the Torre del Castello di Rai deserves a visit and don't forget to stop off at Ormelle, from where you can visit the Church of the Templars, built by the Knights of the Order of the Temple of Jerusalem at the end of the 12th century. But above all don't forget that this is the heart of the Raboso Piave wine-growing district.

Back on the main route, heading north towards Tezze, make sure you take a short stop at Borgo Malanotte, a charming example of rural architecture.

The combination is an example of the two cultural roots of the Marca: the patrician one and the popular one.



Here in the old dwellings and in the 'cortivi' of the 17th-century town, traditional professions are brought back to life thanks to craft and agricultural exhibitions and historical re-enactments. The road winds through the vineyards that frequently catch your eye.

This is where the most famous Piave wines from vines grown using the classic Bellussi

method come from.

We now move on towards Mareno and then Vazzola, crossing an area that has kept the feel of earlier times intact.

The integral landscapes and the country villages, such as Visnà or Fontanelle, maintain their original characteristics. One of the most famous wine-making companies with its cellar open for wine tasting is Villa Marcello, situated just before Codognè, home to the beautiful Villa Toderini with its charming and spectacular fishponds.

Then comes Gaiarine with its splendid villas including Villa Altan. This was a pleasant holiday home for the counts who bought the villa in 1426, and which today is home to the Council Library.

It is here that you can see the remains of a wood and many others situated further south. Nearby, in Francenigo, the forge is definitely worth a visit.

This is an important example of industrial architecture that is still in use today.



You have now reached the northernmost point of the wine road. You just have time to visit the wonderful gem that is the town of Portobuffolè on the banks of the Livenza river. Along the route, in Campomolino, you can glimpse the "mutera", or "motta", also called the castellir, a circular geological form of artificial origin about 7 metres high. Similar structures generally reveal the



presence of paleo-Veneto burials. Heading off back towards Oderzo, you will find yourselves once again immersed in a landscape of particular beauty. It is in summer that this corner of the Veneto countryside is at its best. Meadows, woods, hedges and trees, and then the Prà dei Gai and the charming town of Basalghelle, with a wood of oaks, limes and



sycamores in the background that looks like something from a painting by Guglielmo Ciardi. All of this is accompanied by fields of vines grown according to the classic Bellussi method until you get to Colfrancui and then Oderzo, from where our itinerary began.



THE 'PIAVE BREED' HORSE: SOME FACTS AND SOME LEGENDS

*"O Artemis, who watchest o'er sea-beat
Limna and the race-course thundering to
the horse's hoofs, would I were upon thy
plains curbing Venetian steeds!"*

(Euripides, Hippolytus, 228-231).

The great Athenian tragedian was not the only Greek writer to mention Veneto horses. The first was Homer. He wrote of

the impetus and courage of those steeds with a white mane that the Veneto people of Paflagonia (a region of Asia Minor) rode in the vain attempt of bringing succour to the city of Troy that had been under siege for years.

This breed's fame also reached Rome where, during the imperial circus games, one of the teams in competition was given the name 'veneta factio'.

Not to mention the battles against the Galls in which the horses and horsemen were distinguished for their valour.

The horse went on to be an important item together with amber and wool in the export lists at Porto Equilium. Strabo offers us yet another fascinating legend that sees the friendship between a splendid white wolf, which escaped death at the hands of poachers, and a herd of white horses.

However, apart from the legends, the real Piave breed is documented with certainty from the beginning of the 9th century and derives from interbreeding with

Arab stallions. There were two types, one smaller breed more suitable for racing, the second a draughthorse.

We also know that the term 'Piave breed' transferred from the animal kingdom to the human world as a popular emblem during the Great War.

The misfortunes experienced in those years by the people from the banks of the Piave did nothing other than reinforce their proud spirit already hardened by floods and famine.

*"There was no more than one river in Italy,
the Piave: the master vein of our life".*

Gabriele D'Annunzio

THE PAPADOPOLIS: A CANDIA FAMILY MAKES ITS FORTUNE AT SAN POLO DI PIAVE

When they moved to Venice in the 1700s, they were a well-off Cretan family. Then they gradually managed to obtain

Venetian citizenship and finally a noble title. Thanks to his successful financial initiatives, Angelo Papadopoli, the head of the family, was able to acquire many estates along the Piave left bank. In particular, he organised an estate in a modern way and turned it into a flourishing agricultural business, with wine cellars, stables and even a spinning mill. Spiridione, the last of the Papadopoli family and a character with bizarre tastes, had a villa built on his properties in Romantic 19th-century style on the site of an ancient castle belonging to the Da Tolentino family. The first version of the villa-castle was greatly extended in the Tudor style and you can still admire its pinnacles, buttresses and bow windows today from the thick of a garden full of rare and beautiful species of trees that is one of the most successful examples of 19th-century landscape gardening in Italy.



THE PIAVE CARIOTI

The carter employed to transport stones, gravel or sand and who appeared in this area in the first decades of the 19th century bore the name of 'carioto'. At the beginning of the 20th century when the Piave underwent significant exploitation to excavate building material, the removal of



which required lots of muscle power, the 'carioti' were put to use again.

This character became a regular presence in the panorama of those regions, economically linked to construction development at the end of the First World War. Indeed, it was possible to see him walking undaunted with a cigar in his mouth and wearing a heavy cloak along the dusty roads that led to the river.

RABOSO IN TIMES OF YORE

Raboso was a wine more commonly found on the left bank of the Piave. There the raboso grapes were generally mated with sycamores, elms and occasionally even mulberries. The grape was late to mature and harvesting could continue well into November. It is said that the drinkers of this wine ended up, with the passing of time, having a purplish-brownish skin tone, the famous 'siera da Raboso' (Raboso colouring). Its flavour was astringent, the colour so strong that it dyed the lips.

JESUS'S SHRIMPS

You throw them into boiling water flavoured with large quantities of garlic cloves. A splash of white wine and a touch of paprika and the freshwater shrimp is ready to be served. It is not known whether Giovanni di Francia knew about culinary arts when he painted the beautiful fresco of *'The*



Last Supper' in the church of San Giorgio at San Polo di Piave (1466), but it is a fact that the long table is disseminated with the red river crustaceans that stand out in the painting with their long claws. It is not only the fresco, interesting as it is, that catches our attention, but also the little church of San Giorgio itself, which is a real jewel. Although its origin is uncertain, it is definitely old, as witnessed by the archaeological finds from nearby: a small Roman sarcophagus from the 2nd century AD that today stands at the main altar. The building stands within the cemetery. The transformations over the centuries are clearly visible, from the Roman times to the apse rebuilt in the 17th century.

THE RAI CASTLE TOWER AND THE CHURCH OF THE TEMPLARS

From San Polo going north towards Vazzola, stands the tower of what was the Castle of Rai.

The chipped brick tower stands on a small hill and is protected by dense vegetation. In reality it is all that remains of an imposing castle belonging first to the Patriarch of Aquileia, before being passed on to the Ezzelini, and finally the Counts of Collalto. It recalls the fall in 1411 at the hands of Pippo Spano's Hungarian commanders. However, in Ormelle, again making a small detour on the right, is the Church of the Templars which today is one of the few traces of this order, suppressed by Clement V in 1312. The simple Roman building, dating back to the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 13th, still preserves traces of the characteristic red crosses of the knights of the Temple, which are painted in some of the arches that crown the side. A few metres from the apse, amidst the cypresses runs the river Lia that gives the place a feeling of timeless serenity.



ART AND CULTURE OF CONEGLIANO

Comprising the watershed between the plain and the foothills, an area long competed after by Treviso, Ceneda and Belluno, Conegliano distinguishes itself from the other Veneto cities for a variety of reasons. First of all, its geographical location with a beautiful urbanistic structure surrounded by a gorgeous countryside has earned Conegliano the title of the "Pearl of the Veneto". An important centre for the traditional productions of wine and grappa, Conegliano relies about all on these productions/markets for its consistent fame. Another source of fame for Conegliano is, naturally, the painter Cima da Conegliano, who painted the area's enchanting countryside, letting it serve as both a central point of his art as well as his inspiration.



Along the central road of the Medieval city, then called the Contrada Granda and today Via XX Settembre, the homes for the nobles and rich merchants were built between the 15th and 17th centuries. These palaces were built on the locations of the modest houses that had once been there. Among the most beautiful buildings that one can find walking through the city, the Duomo (Cathedral) sticks out completely, noted above all for its superb fresco "Sacra Conversation" by Cima. The Sala dei Battuti ("Hall of the Fallen"), from the 15th century, above the portico, there is a considerable cycle of frescoes that depict the scenes of the Old and New Testaments. Meanwhile, the Renaissance palace of the Sarcinelli family, a cultural centre, boasts a prestigious showing of strongly remembered art.

A SHORT STOP AT PORTO-BUFFOLÉ TO UNDERSTAND WHO GAIA DA CAMINO WAS

Gaia, the wife of Tolberto dei Caminesi di Sotto and daughter of 'good Gherardo' magistrate of Treviso, immortalised by Dante in canto XVI of Purgatory, lived in a dwelling in the centre of Portobuffolè where she appears to have died in 1311. Gaia's fame was the subject of a dispute among academics, offering opposing moral evaluations.

Dante's oldest commentator, Jacopo della Lana and all of his followers, defined her as a 'woman of such power concerning amorous delights, whose name was notorious throughout Italy'.

Others described her as a pious woman though, and their number certainly equalled those of their opponents.

In any case, Portobuffolè deserves a lengthy stay.



Standing on the banks of the Livenza, as the name suggests this small jewel of Renaissance architecture enjoyed a past as an important river stop, predominantly for the transport and trade of salt.

The public buildings constructed under Venetian domination are concentrated in Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II: first the Dogana (customs house), from the end of the 14th century, then the Monte di Pietà (pawnshop), from the 15th century and



the Loggia Comunale converted in the 1500s from a warehouse built two centuries earlier. Standing above all the buildings is the Roman Communal Tower, 28 metres high, the last survivor of the seven towers that formed the defensive of the castle. Saint Mark's lion stands at every corner to demonstrate that the symbol was dear to the inhabitants even after the fall of the Serenissima Republic in 1797.

LA MARCA IN 19TH-CENTURY PAINTING

19th-century Veneto painting has immortalised the rivers thanks to the mastery of Guglielmo Ciardi. On the top floor of a Veneto villa immersed in the countryside was the artist's huge studio. It is here that Guglielmo's masterpieces were created, as were those of his children Beppe and Emma.

The views of the Treviso countryside, intact corners of landscape in which the Sile ripples in the breeze of autumnal winds, or reflects the light of a spring sky, the work of the peasants, the views with the mills, the liveliness of market days, are part of a world that, from Ciardi on, has been depicted with great lyricism.

A natural light is diffused on the canvas concealing a productive knowledge, recalling a higher Veneto landscape painting tradition.



THE PIAVE AND THE ZATÈRI

The waters of the Piave are treacherous. On the surface it all looks idyllic, but the undertow is perilous. And the story of the rafts is also the story of small heroes who found themselves battling against the river's whirlpools. 'L'Arte de la Zataria e de Mercantia di legnami' was a company of those who worked in that particular job from 1492. From the Alps until the lagoon they went downriver with the rafts that sometimes reached the length of 25 metres and on which you could find produce of all kinds (from sacks of coal, copper or sulphur from the mines, to nails) as well as lots of passengers. The raftmen wore a black cap with a wide brim, rough wool knee-length trousers and clogs with nailed soles to protect them from slipping. However, their distinctive badge was a red sash tied to their waist; during the journeys they chewed on dried meat



and juniper berries. Who knew the river better than these men? Today, nobody would be capable

of taking on such an endeavour.



WINE CELLARS



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INTRODUCTION

MONTELO AND ASOLO HILLS WINE ROUTE

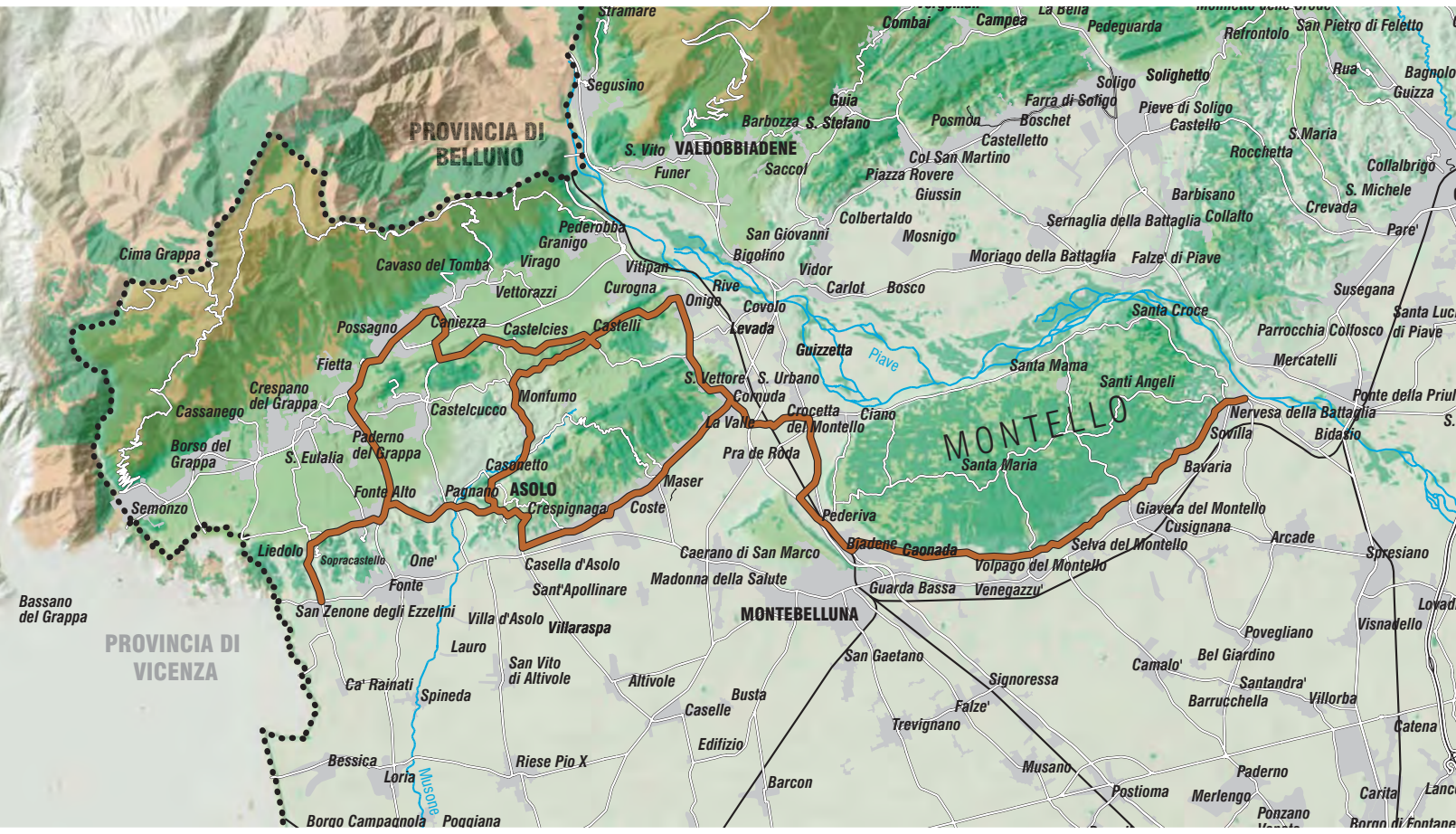
"Plant but one tree: the vine"

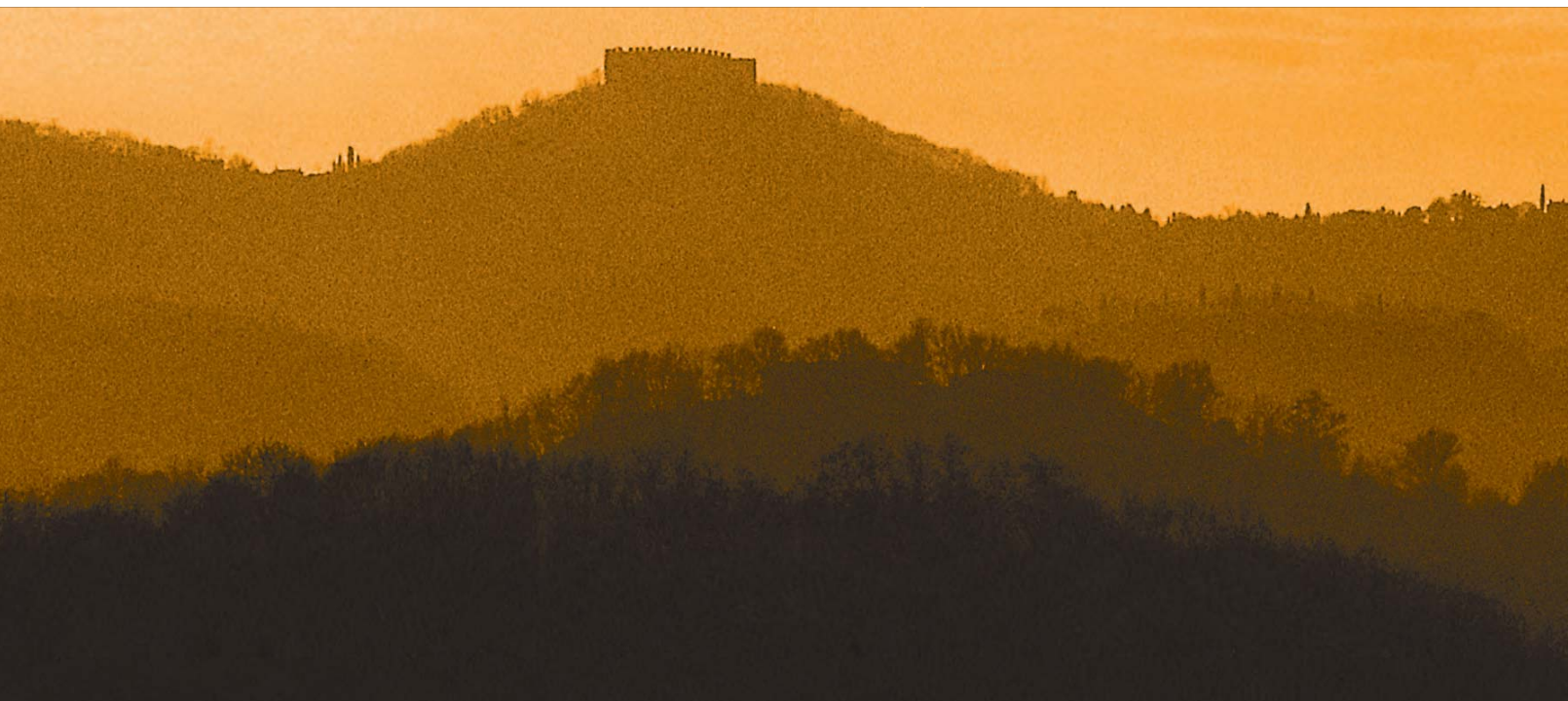
Alcaeus of Mytilene

Winding through a landscape that is idyllic to say the least, the "Montello and Asolo Hills Wine Route" is the third trail for the wines produced in the fertile Treviso area. As with the others, the aim is to place emphasis on the history of the land and its singular characteristics, seeking an approach that highlights the architectural and historical assets, but also the changes that have taken place in the natural environment following the recent establishment of urban settlements. However, the zone in question has preserved almost all of the magic that is being lost in

98 other places.

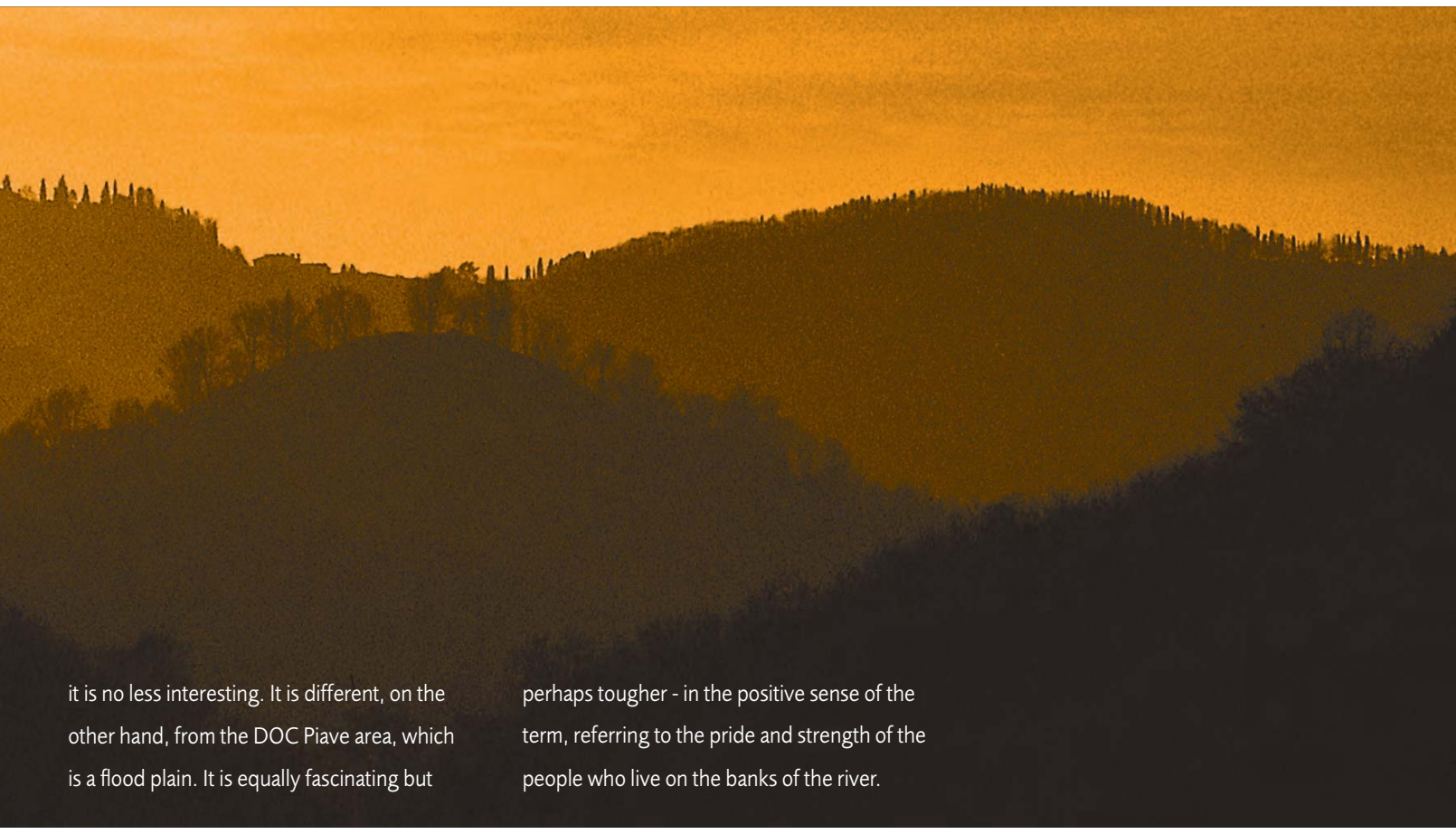






The swathe of hills that opens out to the west from the Montello road and joins the Asolo Hills, with the boundary to the south marked

by the Treviso plain, is just as distinguished as the Conegliano and Valdobbiadene wine growing area. It might be more compact, but



it is no less interesting. It is different, on the other hand, from the DOC Piave area, which is a flood plain. It is equally fascinating but

perhaps tougher - in the positive sense of the term, referring to the pride and strength of the people who live on the banks of the river.



The itinerary

"From the Alpine foothills to the sea, there are no gaps in the Marca Trevigiana (March of Treviso), and the towns hide their magnificent parks not out of modesty but out of refinement, so that this archetypal element does not dominate the softness of the colours and the beauty of the castles and the strongholds in harmony with the peaceful plain of hard work, balance and rural wisdom. The ambiguities, the tenderness, the innocence, a certain bragging, the feminine kindness, and the rivers caressing the banks so soft with grass and dotted with marble have left a mine of feelings in me which is almost intact because it is inexhaustible."

*(from Marca Nobilissima.
Presentation by Giorgio Saviane)*



The Montello and Asolo Hills Wine Route follows a simple, linear path. It goes past sites of great historical significance where visitors will find all sorts of interesting elements, but there are also times for relaxation and pleasure: the classical stops

at vineyards to taste DOC products will follow the tradition of wine tourism and become magical moments of profound harmony between people and the products of nature. The itinerary has been divided into two sections. The **first** goes

from Nervesa della Battaglia along the Montello slopes to Cornuda (a two-way stretch). The **second** is a circular route that goes from Cornuda to Asolo and then back again (a one-way stretch to be followed clockwise). Midway through the



second section is the town of Asolo. It goes past some points with such beautiful landscapes that one might wonder if a painter had a hand - or rather a pencil and brush - in creating them.

There are many country roads in the Asolo hills area. It is worth heading down some of them to have a look. As there is not enough time to see everything, we have picked out two easy detours that allow you to take in views of the rolling hills and some historical sites. The first involves heading from Asolo towards Casonetto, going through Monfumo and ending up in Castelli. With the second, after visitors have reached Fonte Alto, they head towards San Zenone degli Ezzelini. Both of the routes are marked with signs in either direction. We would also like to point out to travellers that from Paderno del Grappa to Crespignaga and from Asolo

to Fonte Alto there are double sets of





signposts, since the "Marca Storica" and wine routes overlap. We advise anyone who wants to find out more about that tour to consult the specific guide, which will give them a complete overview of the area in question. Our guide aims to avoid repeating the classical information which is already presented in an exemplary, exhaustive manner in other publications. Nonetheless, we considered it useful to focus on various topics (literature, history, art) that highlight the points of greatest interest.



The area

HILLS, HILLS AND MORE HILLS...

"When he climbed back up the path - which was very wide at first but was overgrown with hedges and shrubs in parts - he was exhausted. He was looking forward to sitting on the edge of the clear pool at the source of the Giavera stream and drinking some cool water. He knew that the magical creatures and the woodland animals had already prepared some delicacies for him: wild strawberries and ripe cherries, sweet nettle flowers to suck greedily and bunches of honey mushrooms in crispy fritters. He almost felt as if he could smell the aroma and his mouth was watering.



As soon as he had gone past the broad log that bridged the two sides of the stream, he finally felt at home."

("Il ritorno la notte di San Lorenzo" in Fiabe e leggende del Montello by Laura Simeoni)

MONTELLO: NATURE, HISTORY AND CHOICE DELIGHTS

Montello is shaped like a plant pot stretched horizontally. In the piedmont area it separates from the rest of the

chain and takes on the appearance of an independent element. It is not only a continual flow of panoramas, little valleys and clearings, it is also part of some of the most important chapters in the history of the Veneto region. Montello can teach us a surprising amount about history and it is worth spending some time visiting its sites, which saw great suffering during the First World War. For nature lovers, Montello is a real wonderland. Let us describe it in greater detail. The name comes from the Latin word *monticellum* (meaning "hillock"), but the local people prefer to simply refer to it as "the Wood". Indeed, until a few centuries ago, the 6,000 hectares of this great hill - which is 20 kilometres in length and never more than 368 metres above sea level - were entirely covered with a dark green expanse of sessile oak trees. It has been inhabited by humans since Palaeolithic times, but it only became of significant importance under the Republic of Venice. The Serenissima



relied a great deal on the oak woods, so much so that they catalogued them and distinguished between the plants that could be used for building their galleys, those to employ in the lagoon or rivers, and those that could be used for seeding purposes. A key role was played at the time by people known as "Spacazocs" who cut down the trees for the Republic of Venice. Their work is still recalled today in village fairs, especially the one in Selva del Montello every October. It is worth mentioning what happened in the late 19th century. Following the approval of the Bertolini Law by the parliament of the unified Kingdom of Italy in 1892, as part of a project to repopulate and exploit the land, 1,700 oak trees were chopped down and 132 kilometres of roads - known as "prese" - were built. However, the lands provided for farming were so barren that not long afterwards the agricultural pursuits were abandoned and the plots became covered with



black locust trees, with the exception of the foothill areas, which had historically been used for growing vines. Of course nowadays a scheme of this kind would not be allowed: environmental protesters would chain themselves to the oak trees to protect them. At the time though, Italy had other problems to worry about and that forest, which had been the subject of scrupulous conservation and record keeping by the Serenissima for hundreds of years, was seen as nothing more than

a barrier to agriculture. Only 2,500 of the 6,000 marvellous hectares were left standing. The black locusts have now invaded the undergrowth, but it is still pleasant to go for a stroll on Montello. The dense vegetation around the shady paths provides shelter for numerous species of birds and small animals, while various sorts of mushrooms that are used in traditional Veneto cuisine grow in the damp conditions. The mushrooms are mentioned by scientists and humanists in



a number of works of prose and poetry. The first was in 1591, with *Istoria di Trivigi* by Giovanni Bonifaccio, who describes the different kinds of mushrooms. Subsequently, in 1683 the poet Nicolò Zotti praised the qualities of around 50 species. Finally, in 1824 Camillo Nalin, another poet, wrote that the mushrooms are prepared in 100 ways. Nowadays honey mushrooms from Montello are the most popular choice for the delicious local dishes. Montello also has plenty of other



delicacies to offer gourmets, including pasta, risotto and herb omelettes (*fortajé co le erbe*). In the warmer seasons, many wild plants are used, such as *creson* (cress), *galin é le* (lamb's lettuce), *otiga* (nettles), *rosoline* (poppies), *s-ciopeti* (bladder campion), *bruscandoi* (hop tips) and *sparasine* (thin shoots of wild asparagus). One of the undisputed stars of the table is the potato. Brought into the area by Napoleonic troops in the early 19th century, it only came into widespread

use in the five municipalities of Montello (Crocetta, Giavera, Nervesa, Volpago and Montebelluna) in the 1890s. As select new varieties were introduced in the 20th century, the potatoes of Montello became more and more delicious. Indeed, people come all the way up here from Venice to savour dishes made with them. This success should probably be attributed to the nature of the soil, which is clayey and thus holds moisture, making it ideal for the development of tubers. On the second Sunday in September, do not miss the Potato Fair on Montello's Presa 18. You can finish off the round-up of traditional dishes with pan cooked rabbit and roast potatoes. The Piave basin area is the home of modern rabbit farming, with its cutting-edge facilities. An extremely high number of rabbit farms can be found in Volpago and Trevignano. Montello is also known for its great cheese-making tradition: we recommend trying the soft casatella.

A FEW GEOLOGICAL POINTERS

The main characteristic of Montello is the red earth that buries chunks of limestone, porphyry and granite covered in clay. Besides this, the sinkholes, caverns and widespread karstification make the area ideal for environmental research. There are various theories about the geological formation of Montello. According to Saccardo, the vast Montello area was a single cone of sediment from the Piave basin, to which the Brenta and Soligo rivers could also have contributed. This fan was probably submerged by the sea, which reached as far as the foot of the Alps back then. The action of the salt and carbon dioxide rich water dissolved the detritus, which subsequently underwent densification. When the sea level dropped, the large amount of limestone present led to the formation of cracks, in which the water started to erode and dissolve the rock. In the North, even before the ice ages, the



current of the Piave caused karstification to begin. Indeed, on that side the valleys are very small and short because the water seeped into the subsoil due to the karst topography. In the South, meanwhile, the water only managed to penetrate the subsoil after first digging deeply into the land.

THE ASOLO HILLS

Carducci called Asolo "the town with a hundred horizons". This definition should really be applied to the entire area because whichever way you turn, the horizon changes. The reason behind this is quite simple: with the exception of one flat strip, the area is amphitheatre-



shaped and contains numerous hills, thus giving frequently changing views. The hill zone covers approximately 88 square kilometres and stretches out from the foot of Mount Grappa. It encompasses a quarter of this mountainous area, while the rest of the region features a range of hills that are in some cases fan-shaped and in others form closed circles. Sections with steep slopes give way to gentle, rolling

formations. It seems that the Asolo hills still have their original appearance. Human intervention has not altered their shape and surroundings: there is no ploughing or planting on the slopes, which are used for grazing and making hay. The woods that were chopped down in the past have made way for thriving fruit trees and vines. It is strange to see the variety of shapes in the outlines. There are small, round hills,

others that stand alone and others still that sit on top of each other. One group might have rugged ravines and the next will have gentle slopes. A stone's throw from a precipice or a cliff there will be a gentle valley. Furthermore, some are barren and others are very fertile, so the agriculture also follows in line with this harmonious disorder. The vines are trained up support plants and between the rows there are fruit trees: cherries, peaches, apples, plums, apricots, figs, hazelnuts, quinces and jujubes. A huge variety of branches and green hues interweaves and embraces all. Elsewhere there is one kind of use for each hill, so one will be covered with vineyards, the next will be given over to pasture and the one after that will be woodland. It all flows in timeless harmony.



First part.

FROM NERVESA DELLA BATTAGLIA TO CORNUDA

*"EXPLICIT VINO CONTRACTAE
SERIA FRONTIS"*

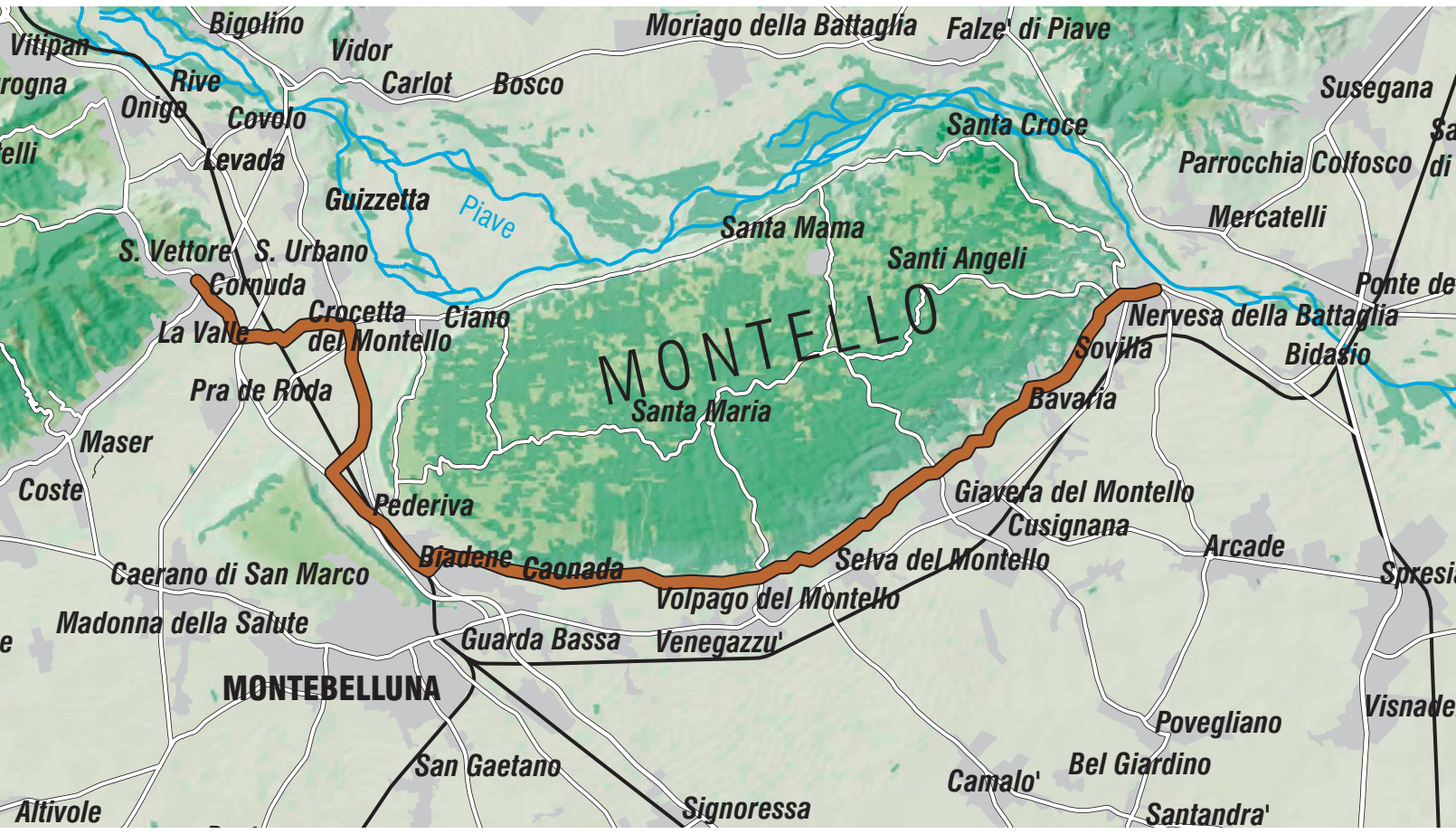
(Horace, Satires, II, 3)*

The town of Nervesa della Battaglia is the starting point for the Montello and Asolo Hills Wine Route. After going past the main square and starting the climb towards Montello, you will see the Piave War Memorial standing tall in front of you. This square, white mass reminds travellers of the importance of lasting peace. It is dedicated to the 9,325 dead, only 6,999 of whom were identified.

Amongst the greenery a little further on, as you enter Via dei Mercanti e dei Frati, you will see the ruins of Sant'ÀfEustachio

Monastery, which was destroyed in the First World War. It was the abode of Monsignor Giovanni della Casa, who is famous for writing a book on etiquette known as Il Galateo. The monastery is also of interest for wine historians because it is mentioned in a document from 985 in which the vine growing methods used by the Benedictine monks are described. The route continues with a succession of panoramic views of the Montello slopes, taking in meadows, vineyards and sown land. From Giavera del Montello onwards, the road is flanked by the Brentella canal. Along with the dotted woodland to the left and right, there are uninterrupted







rows of vines in the peaceful countryside. Between the well tended land and a number of pleasant eating places, there are often enchanting sights and views that tempt visitors into taking detours on foot, along paths leading towards the shade of chestnut groves. In Venegazzù make sure you visit Villa Spineda Gasparini Loredan. It was designed by the famous architect Francesco Maria Preti, who was part of the Enlightenment-oriented set

of the Riccati of Castelfranco Veneto. He entrusted Giovanni Miazzi (1699-1797) with its construction and it was completed in 1770. The Villa is based on the architectural models of Andrea Palladio. They are expertly reworked in an attempt to perfect the geometric rules, which aim to achieve harmonious mathematical and musical ratios. Since the second half of the 20th century, this area has been producing Venegazzù, a masterfully

blended wine reminiscent of traditional French offerings, especially Bordeaux. One of them is the "Capo di Stato" ("Head of State"), which is named after De Gaulle. When you reach the centre of Biadene, you can admire Villa Correr Pisani, which was built in the early decades of the 1700s around a 17th century building that the Correr family inherited from Doge Alvise Pisani. The latter was also responsible for the construction of a church which still contains a fresco by Tiepolo. The area is dotted with other prestigious villas that it is worthwhile taking the time to see, such as Villa Pola with its pre-Palladian barchessa. It is said that in July 1509, after the creation of the League of Cambrai, Monsieur de la Palisse's troops who were marching to attack Treviso and Venice were awestruck by the beauty of this aristocratic residence. Another example is Villa Zuccareda-Binetti, which is now home to the Footwear Museum (the local area is famous for producing sports shoes and

boots). A further must-see is Villa Guillon Mangilli. The original construction dates back to the 15th century, while the latest alterations were made in the 19th century. On the way to Crocetta del Montello lies Pagnossin's Villa Sandi, which is notable for having a central pronaos that is much taller than the villa itself. Statues by the sculptor Orazio Marinali enhance the villa and its gardens. An interesting fact about this building is that a maze of tunnels has been discovered underneath it. They are on a number of levels and were dug during the First World War. Nowadays they are used for the famous spumante, which is made with the traditional method by the renowned Sandi winery based in the villa. The last villa on the first stretch of our itinerary is Villa Bolzanello, which is built on top of the ruins of an ancient castle.

** This motto and others can be seen in a frieze in the Cerletti school hall in Conegliano.*



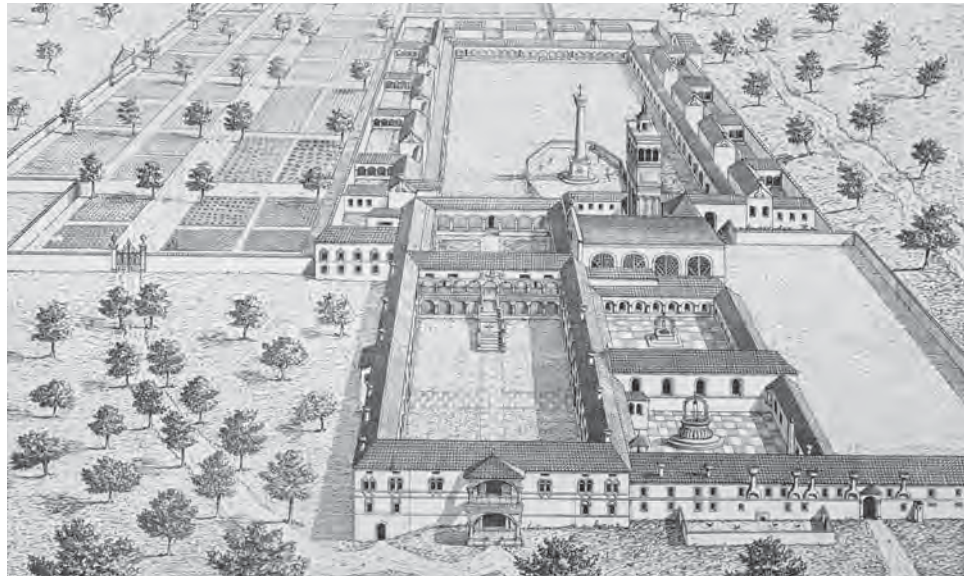
CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA & SAN GEROLAMO

We can only attempt to reconstruct the history of the Carthusian monastery of Santa Maria & San Gerolamo because, We can only attempt to reconstruct the history of the Carthusian monastery of Santa Maria & San Gerolamo because, unfortunately, there is now nothing left of

it. It seems that a man named Giovanni, who was from Santa Giuliana di Fassa but had moved to Venice for his work, first had the idea of building a place of worship in a pleasant valley of which he had dreamt a number of times. Soon after going to bed one night, Giovanni dreamt that the Virgin Mary was urging him to go to "that valley where you have found yourself in your sleep a number of

times", and to stay there. This is how the account of the Montello Charterhouse starts. It was written between 1398 and 1419 by Antonio de Macis da Chiarenza, a monk at the monastery who would go on to become the abbot of Santa Maria in Parma. Moving forward through the centuries, during which the monastery experienced both magnificence and dark decline due to famine, wars and invasions, we get to 1556. There are several documents and plans that confirm the great size and importance of the entire complex, which seems to have been two or even three times as big as the area occupied by the nearby Monastery of Nervesa. The downfall of the charterhouse was brought about by the obtuse anti-clerical policy started by the Provisional Napoleonic Government in 1796. Once again, note how many monasteries and abbeys were destroyed by Napoleon's army! The First World

116 War then finished off the charterhouse.



The stones, marble and precious ancient bricks were used for new buildings in the woods. Nothing remains of this grand construction except for a few relics that were saved by the odd praiseworthy priest and stored in his parish church.

PISNENTI AND MASSARIOTTI

The Montello wood has always given a great deal to the people in the surrounding area, but at the same time it has seen a lot of troubled times. With this in mind, we would like to tell the story of an



event that is important for visitors. 1817 is remembered as "the year of hunger". That winter was the worst of a number of particularly harsh seasons. The local people had difficulties obtaining the food reserves that would allow them to survive. At the time, the Montello population was

divided into Massariotti and Pisenenti. The former were tenants and had a little land and a few animals, while the latter were woodcutters and had no possessions. To cope during the crisis, the Massariotti tried to extend their agriculture. However, they did this without employing the

Pisenenti - as they did in times of greater prosperity - because they simply could not take on any more mouths to feed. The Pisenenti had no option but to turn to the woods, though they were aware of the serious punishments this involved (it was better to face a month in prison than the grim famine back then - at least in jail you were guaranteed a meal!). The Austrian government had placed guards at 19 checkpoints around the woods, making it impossible to even get near them. In a report sent to the Prefect of Treviso, the magistrate of Montebelluna states that the Pisenenti had no other option than to "break up the hedges and destroy the vines of the Massariotti". There were a number of attempts to negotiate, but the Austrians were only interested in their own rights. The Pisenenti became increasingly convinced that they were the ones whose rights were being usurped and they reached a decision that might make us smile nowadays, but it was

serious at the time: they declared a private war against Austria! In early 1824, the Pisnenti of Cornuda and Volpago created a confederation of woodcutters and started to exploit the woods in their own way, no longer fearing intervention by the guards. Indeed, on one occasion a guard went to arrest some of them and ended up helping them carry the wood down to the valley! A Robin Hood-style conflict developed. Somehow, in one incursion the Austrians were even defeated. After various raids in Pisnenti homes, the Austrians finally managed to seize 110,000 "bundles" and more than 200 oak logs. It is not clear what purpose this served, but it was the only way the Austrians could find of showing their superiority.



The Great War

Unfortunately, Montello is also famous for the events of the First World War. After the defeat at Caporetto, the Italian army took up positions on Montello and the Piave River as the last defence against invasion by the Austrians, who were aiming to reach the Po Valley. Montello, or more precisely Ciano del Montello, was the starting point for the counteroffensive that led to the conclusive victory in 1918. On Montello, the Ossuary of the Fallen Soldiers and the Monument to Francesco Baracca

remind Italians of that famous period. In June 1918, this area was the setting of the Battle of the Piave River. Austria launched a big offensive in the Montello zone, with the aim of annihilating the Italian army. The bloody combat dragged out from 15 to 23 June, with huge losses on both sides. The offensive did not achieve its objectives and ended without any significant results. The collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would soon follow.

Il Museo Civico di Storia e Scienze

SACCARDO AND HIS HERBARIUM

The "Bellona" Civic History and Natural Science Museum is housed by the 18th century Villa Mocenigo in Montebelluna. It has two zones: an archaeological and prehistoric one and a natural sciences one, with astronomy, mineralogy and zoology sections. The original collections that belonged to the Bellona nature group have been supplemented with an ornithological collection from the Po Delta and the Saccardo and Mugna herbaria. Saccardo was born in 1845 and spent most of his life in Selva del Montello. After gaining a degree in philosophy and another in natural sciences, he immediately devoted himself to studying nature, in particular botany and fungi, while working at the Padua Botanical Gardens. He was one of the first scientists to create a herbarium with all of the necessary technical and scientific



properties. His works and his mycological classification project are still excellent sources of reference for scholars all over the world.

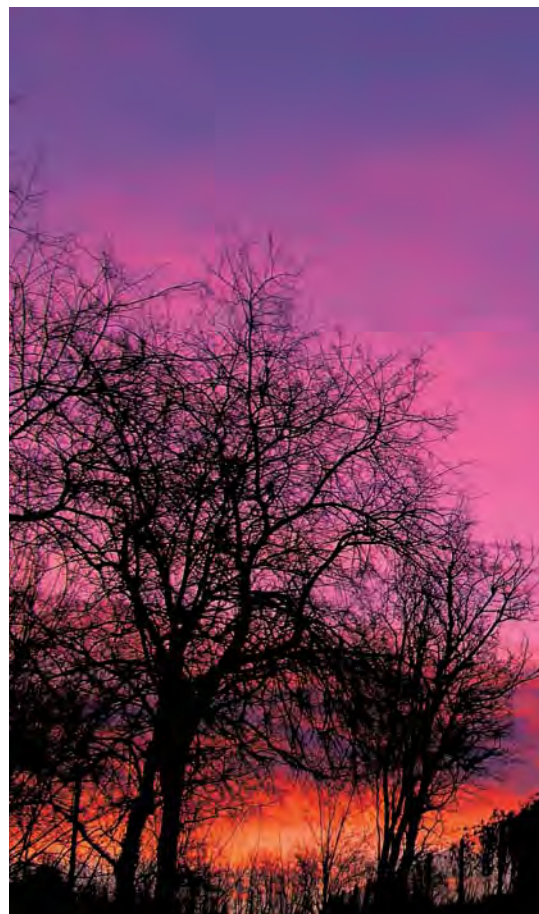
CLEAR, COOL AND SWEET WATERS....

The land in the plain at the foot of Mount Grappa was the bottom of a vast fossil sea that started moving after millennia of silent rest. The underground stirrings created a series of swellings and some conical forms with rounded tops emerged; nowadays they are covered with meadows and trees. The Maser, Asolo and Cornuda hills, along with all those that rise up from the plain, are fed by the water of the Brentella canal, which is channelled from the Piave and led off its course. In this way it serves the gravelly land in which water would otherwise only be found deep down. The Montello area actually features some interesting examples of karstification. Water flowing on limestone causes erosion both on the surface and underground, hence the presence of sinkholes and fossils. So, the Brentella canal nourishes the heart of Montello and

its cool emerald green water runs rapidly between the banks, which are reinforced by white masses of the typical local stone (granite, porphyry and quartz). It is a real treat for the senses to follow a stretch of it, by bicycle, on foot or even travelling slowly in the car with the windows open so you can breathe in the smell of water in the air. The water in countryside canals has a singular fresh aroma that is pleasantly reminiscent of flowers, grass and cut hay. Then there is the sound, which is not the loud roar of a river but the slow, continual song of the "anguane": maidens from local legends who have hair of algae and are distant relatives of mermaids. Vines and fruit trees are scattered all the way along the banks of the canal.

A FEW DETAILS ABOUT THE BRENTELLA CANAL

In 1436, the Veneto Senate approved a vast irrigation project that would be completed in 15 years and paid for by the communities and private individuals involved. This huge artificial scheme had a great impact on the arid environment in the area and made it suitable for agriculture, including vine growing. It was a praiseworthy, balanced work of hydraulic engineering and land reclamation and was described by Prati in the 18th century in his "Dissegno generale della Brentella". In Pederobba an outlet from the Piave was opened to supply a canal that took on various names, including Brentella, Piavesella and Piavesella Grande. Down from Crocetta del Montello, the watercourse divides into 2 branches: one goes through Caerano and Montebelluna, the other - which is on the left and carries a fifth of the water available - is known as Canal del Bosco and flows past the foot of Montello.



The background of the left page is a photograph showing the dark silhouette of a stone structure, possibly a church or monastery wall, against a vibrant sunset sky with shades of orange, pink, and purple. The structure has several arched openings and a jagged, uneven top edge.

Monsignor della Casa

The Sant'Eustachio Monastery was founded midway through the 11th century by Rambaldo III of Collalto and his mother Gisle, who donated it to the Benedictine monks. It soon became a refined cultural centre and housed many illustrious guests. These included Giovanni della Casa, who stayed there from 1550 to 1555. In the gentle, exalted atmosphere, cocooned in the calm of the monastery and enchanted by the courtesy of the inhabitants, he found the inspiration to write *Il Galateo*, before being poisoned by the Holy See. *Il Galateo* is not a simple guide to good manners; it is more a humanistic treatise on virtue at the table and in life. Perhaps today there is more cause than ever for it to be interpreted correctly.

CAVES AND CAVERNS

The place names in the language of the Veneto region include a number that refer to caves, tunnels and hollows connected to the local history. There are a wealth of these names on Montello. For example, during the Great War one would hear mention of *Busa dei Todeschi* (Hole of the Germans), *Bus de le Bombe* (Hole of the Bombs) and *Grotta dell'Alpino* (Cave of the Alpine troops). There are also some names regarding the place or the owner of the land, such as *Busa de Castelvior* (Hole of Castelfiore) and *Bus de Frare dito Trache* (Hole of Frare [a common local surname], also known as Trache). Then there are caves with animal names, like *Bus del Volpe* (Fox Hole) and *Bus del Gat* (Cat Hole). Meanwhile, *Bus de la Pecora* (Sheep Hole) and *Bus de l'Agneo* (Lamb Hole) are connected to the work of shepherds, who would take refuge in these cavities with their animals during storms. There is also a name created by



the imagination of the people: Bus de la Regina (Hole of the Queen) or Grotta della Regina (Cave of the Queen). This naturally refers to Caterina Cornaro. Legend has it that she loved to move around underground. She would enter a gorge in Biadene, only to resurface in Asolo as if it were the most natural thing

in the world. The hollows in Montello, an environment that can be said to be made up of "empty" sections and "full" ones, have often provided shelter for people and animals. Over the centuries, they have also been used during conflicts, for example during the invasions of the Magyars, at the time of the Ezzelini, during the War of the League of Cambrai and finally in the Napoleonic campaigns. Speleologists will be interested to find out about Busa del Castel Sotterra (Hole of the Underground Castle), a beautiful cave that stretches out 7 km horizontally and approximately 125 m vertically, taking it to 140 m above sea level at the bottom. It is the fourth biggest charted cave in the world in a karst system like that which makes Montello notable.

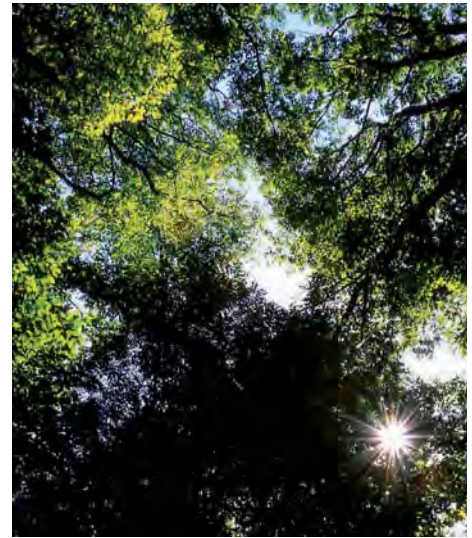
VOLPAGO DEL MONTELLO: THE TOWN OF FOXES

There is a legend that says foxes once ruled over all of the inhabitants of





Montello. The good, wise creatures were able to settle any disputes. The community was led by an old vixen and lived on the slopes of the hill in a town that took its name from word volpe (fox in Italian): Volpago. They were not carnivorous and fed on leaves. They lived in close harmony with humans and helped them in a number of ways. For example, they looked after children while their parents were working in the fields, and they even managed to carry buckets in their mouths for watering the plants. They had become particularly popular many years before, when a fox had saved an old man and a child who were being attacked by a wolf. However, with the arrival of modern times, things changed. People decided that they could afford to treat the foxes badly, so they left Volpago for a hidden ravine they found in the mountain. The wise older foxes calmed the angry younger ones, who felt like refugees. They convinced them that patience would



have its rewards and that one day things would change and they would be able to return to their homes in their beloved Volpago.

From "Fiabe e leggende del Montello"
by Laura Simeoni

Everything you wanted to know about wine and never dared to study...

Bottling

As is the case with all racking procedures, wine must be bottled carefully and in an optimal manner. Every error leads to a reduction of quality. Therefore, bottling well paves the way for the preservation of the quality of the wine, laying the ideal cornerstones for ageing and exalting the aromas. The preparation of wine for the bottle starts in the vineyard. There are six steps that must be taken to achieve optimum results in this delicate, complex procedure. First, the wine must be

prepared and checked. This involves analysis of the acidity _ to avoid any oxidation _ as well as the fermentation, clarity, salt stability, with checks of the temperature in the cellar, and analyses of the alcohol, the total acidity, the volatile acidity and the free and total sulphur dioxide. Last but not least is diligent, reflective tasting. Experts know that smooth wines cannot be aged for long periods, while those which are more tart _ with tannic, non-oxidized bodies _ can be left in the cellar for a number of years. The next stage is the preparation of the containers and tops. The bottles must be perfectly clean: new ones from the glassworks are already sterilized, while used ones must be washed carefully. There are many kinds of bottle tops on

the market. Crown caps offer excellent sealing and cost very little. They have always been used for everyday wine, not because they do not work well but because there is little suggestive appeal to them: bottles with crown caps are not thought of highly by connoisseurs. Screw caps are used for dessert and fortified wines. A less common option is the ring pull cap made of a thin layer of aluminium. In recent years, there have been attempts to replace traditional corks with plastic ones, but without great success. Natural cork is undoubtedly more attractive and evocative. Corks have existed ever since bottles first came into use. The material comes from the *Quercus suber* (Cork Oak), which is grown throughout the Mediterranean basin. It is important to

point out that cork for sealing bottles can only be taken from the trees thirty years after they are planted. Their bark is removed up to the height of the thickest branches, then it is stacked up for approximately six months, boiled and dried. The next step is cutting it into strips, then preparing the little cubes whose corners are smoothed off to make them into cylinders. They are washed again, bleached and sterilized before going on sale. The main problem with corks is that they can produce Ågcork taintÅh in wine. After preparation, there may still be mould inside them. This emerges and contaminates the wine. The third stage is choosing the best moment for bottling. Some wineries have filtration systems that allow sterile bottling, but in other, less



well equipped places it is necessary to avoid bottling during the biological phase of the wine, i.e. in Spring, when it gets warm. Wine must be bottled on clear days with no wind and never when it is rainy, wet or windy. When filling the bottles, it is important to maintain the utmost cleanliness, as well as complying with

other rules. Bottling is an art. The wine must fill the bottle slowly, without gurgling or creating bubbles. The level of the wine must be as high as possible in order to minimize the amount of air between it and the cork. The penultimate stage is obviously corking. A good machine should be chosen and we recommend selecting one in which the piston that pushes the cork descends vertically rather than with a lever system. The sixth and final stage is storing the bottles, which must be positioned horizontally. If the wine has been prepared properly, there will be no sediment in it. The cellar must be cool and at a constant temperature. Light alters the properties of the wine. It is for this reason that green, brown or yellow glass is always used instead of clear bottles.

How to uncork wine

If it is a wine that should be served cold, like most whites, all you need to do is put it in an ice bucket or the least cool part of the refrigerator and let it reach the right temperature. Aged, full-bodied red wines should be opened a few hours before the tasting, with the cork left to rest on the mouth of the bottle. Another sound approach is to open it a little while before the tasting session and pour it into a decanter. The wine will then slowly release the abundance of aromas that have long been sealed in the closed bottle. Finally, it is important to note that there are certain customs to respect when opening wine and that it should be done in the presence of the guests. First cut



the capsule, then take a good corkscrew and insert the "spiral" three-quarters of its length into the cork, to prevent it from crumbling in the bottle. After cleaning the mouth of the bottle, sniff the cork and pour a drop of wine into a glass to taste it. It should be poured gently and slowly, and subsequently the glass should never be filled more than halfway.

The temperature

Every wine is best enjoyed at a certain ideal temperature. In actual fact, what is considered the ideal temperature for the combination of food and wine is almost completely dependent on the individual.

The glasses

Everyone knows that wine is not just any old drink. It represents history, civilization, toil, love and passion. The glass must therefore be worthy of the exquisite nectar. The fundamental concept is easy to explain: it must not conceal any element of the wine for any reason. Whether it is tall and slender or large and broad, with a refined tapered shape or a thin stem, every glass has its charms.

Tasting

Tasting is essentially sensorial analysis; a very personal moment of sublimity. The first sense involved is sight. Wine lovers observe the wine as it is poured, admiring its colour, shades and clarity. Next comes the sense of smell. This is an important process in which qualities and faults are recognized. It is said that the analysis of the aromas is more important than that in the mouth, if nothing else due to the close relationship between this sense and the most profound side of our emotions. The fragrance of the wine is breathed in twice, giving the sense of smell a break between the two. It brings to mind flowers, fruit, herbs, leaves, cut hay, undergrowth and more besides. Candour, fineness,



intensity and harmony are the qualities that are taken into consideration, in that order. Finally comes the sense of taste: a magical, triumphant moment after long preparation. A small sip and the world of sensations has free rein. It is not worth adding anything else, it simply needs to be experienced.



Second part.

A CIRCULAR ROUTE STARTING AND FINISH IN CORNUDA.

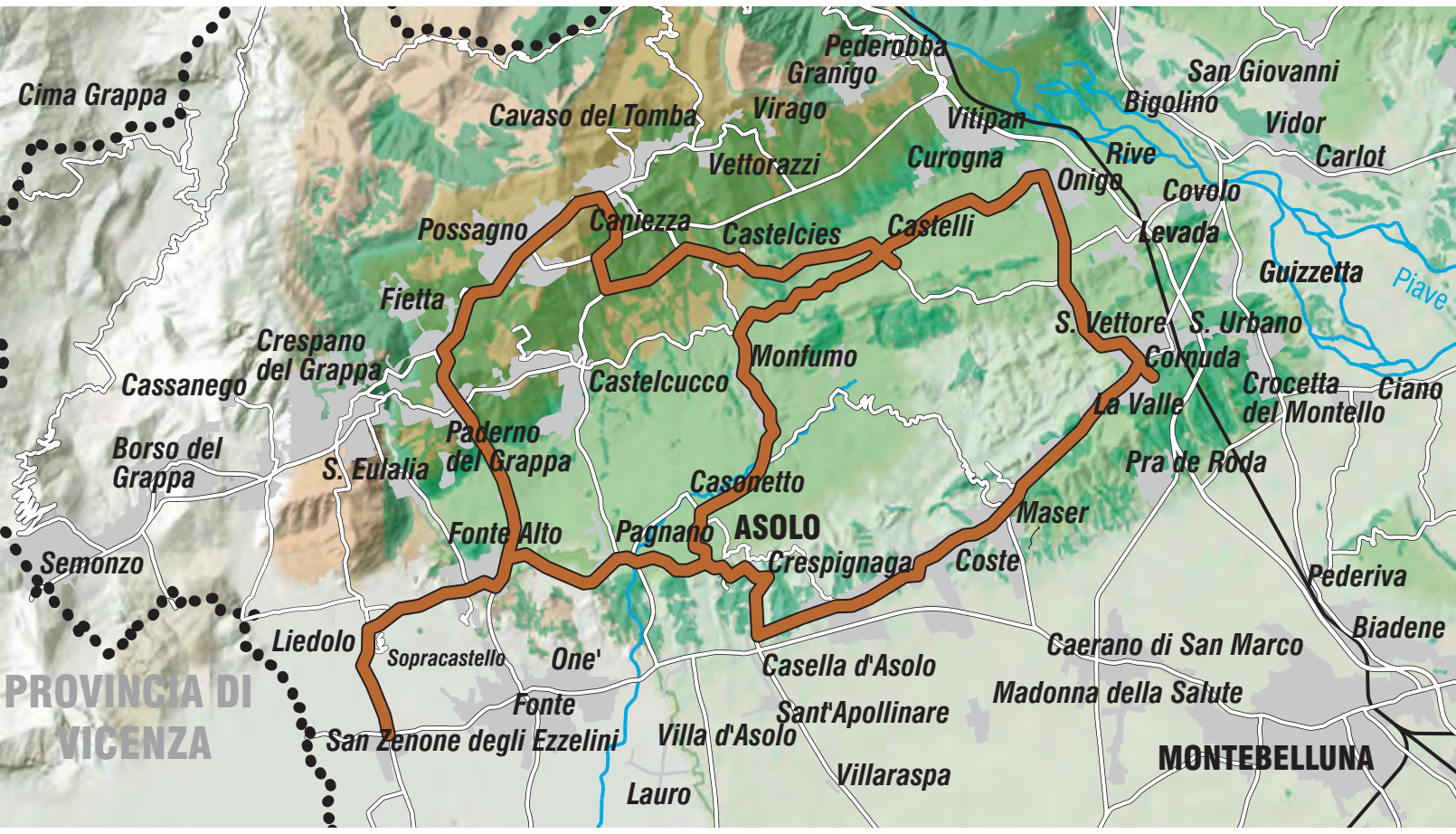
"I want my dearest sister Mad.a Marietta da Canal to be given two casks of wine a year for as long as she may live, as has always occurred until now..."

[From the will of Marcantonio Barbaro (1518-1595), who entrusted Palladio with the construction of Villa Barbaro, on the topic of the wines from the estate]

Once you have arrived in Cornuda and left Montello behind you, the landscape changes slightly. You are entering the area of the Asolo hills. From this point on, you should understand that you have gained access to a little paradise. There are never enough ways of expressing how this place has been blessed by the gods: from the

changing light to the mild microclimate, not to mention the inherent natural beauty. Then there is the "snow of the Springtime": a thousand cherry trees blossom and turn all of the hills white. Gusts of wind blow their petals everywhere, making them seem like delicate, fragrant snow. Along the road to Asolo there are many more villas, the most notable of which - due to its magnificence and deserved fame - is Andrea Palladio's masterpiece, Villa Barbaro. It is now the headquarters of the Association for the Protection of Montello & Colli Asolani Wines. As you continue towards Asolo, there are various other villas of great historical and stylistic interest that

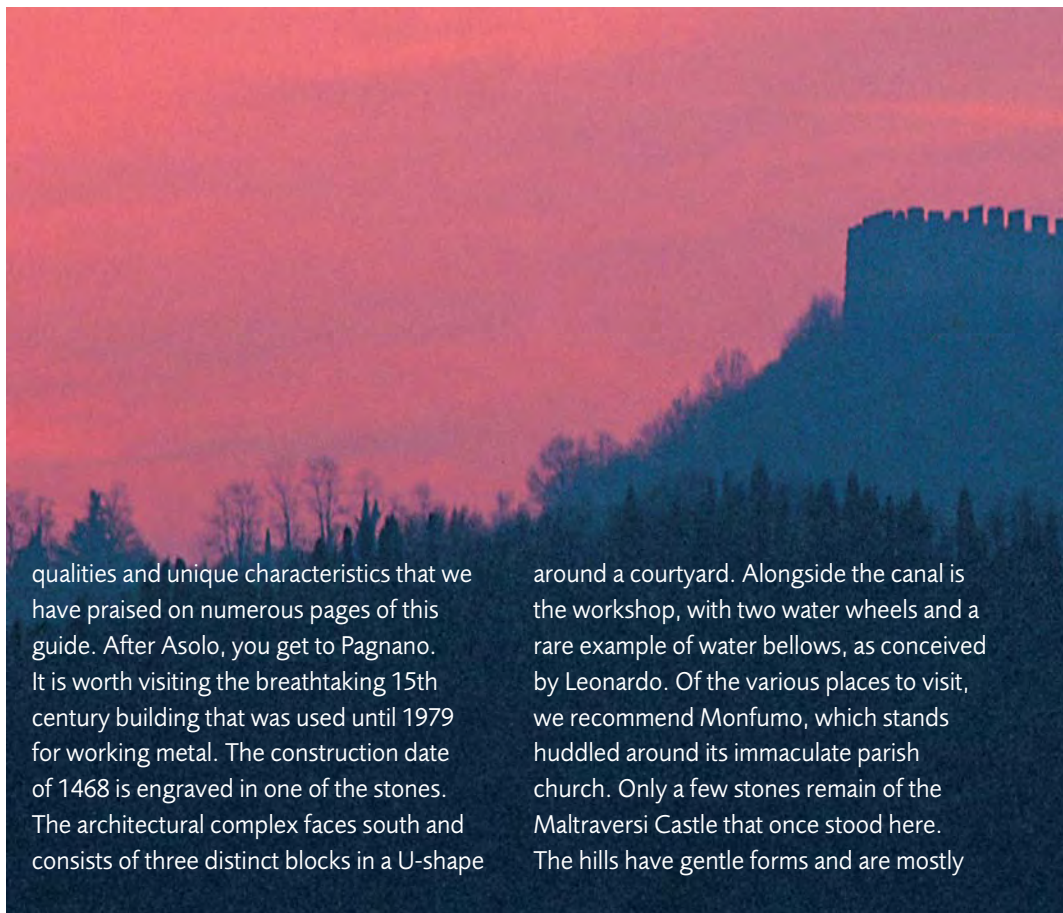


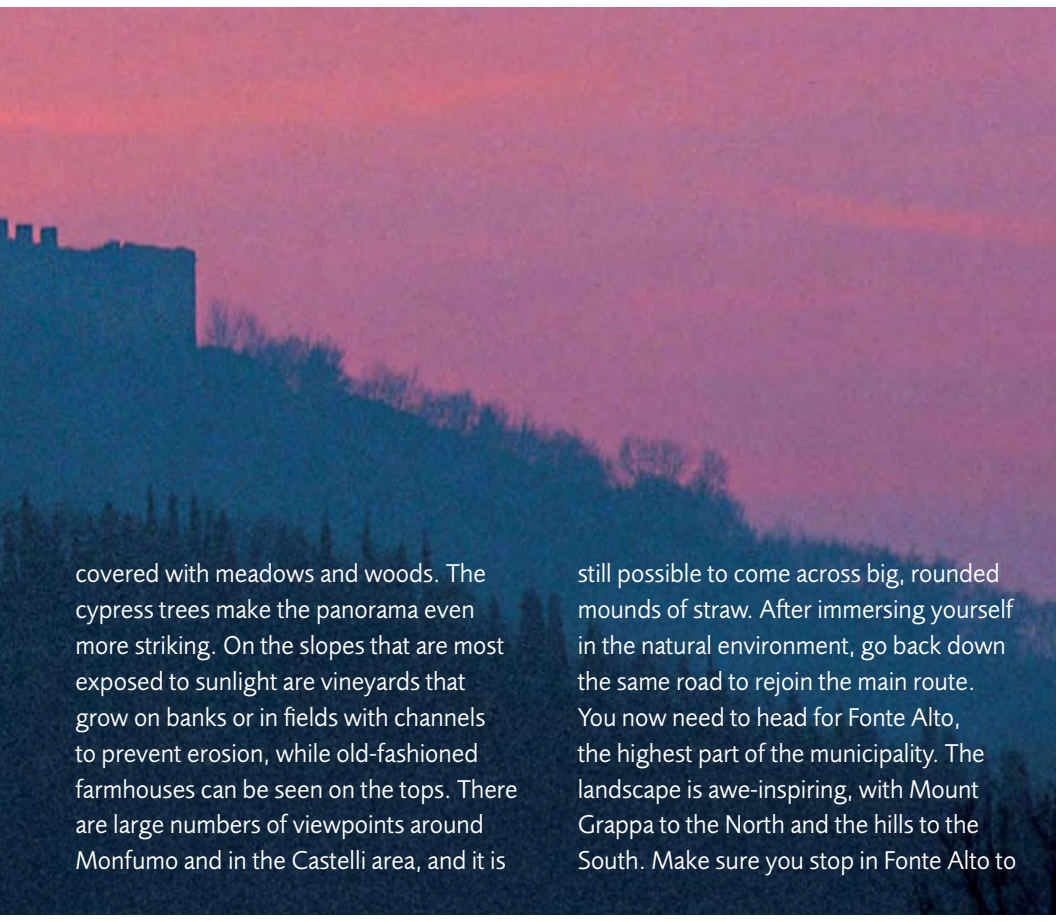


not even the nearby Villa Barbaro can put in the shade. Villa Rinaldi is a delightful 17th century building in the heart of a vast estate that takes in the hills and the plain. Flights of steps and balustrades lead to a beautiful terrace. In 1663 Francesco Rinaldi, a keen art lover, decided to make it into one of the most beautiful villas in the Veneto region and started ambitious extension work, while also commissioning a number of frescos by the painters of the Veneto school. Andrea Celesti painted the hall and the central rooms with mythological scenes. The road climbs up from the plain towards Asolo. Turn at the fork in Casella and you will go along a "foresto" (this is the name given to the roads up to Asolo) bordered by cypress groves and woods. It passes a series of views and panoramas that will leave you lost for words. After visiting the town of Asolo, it is an excellent idea to take the road for Castelli. We really recommend taking this detour. The hilly area behind Asolo is not particularly large but it embodies all of the

qualities and unique characteristics that we have praised on numerous pages of this guide. After Asolo, you get to Pagnano. It is worth visiting the breathtaking 15th century building that was used until 1979 for working metal. The construction date of 1468 is engraved in one of the stones. The architectural complex faces south and consists of three distinct blocks in a U-shape

around a courtyard. Alongside the canal is the workshop, with two water wheels and a rare example of water bellows, as conceived by Leonardo. Of the various places to visit, we recommend Monfumo, which stands huddled around its immaculate parish church. Only a few stones remain of the Maltraversi Castle that once stood here. The hills have gentle forms and are mostly





covered with meadows and woods. The cypress trees make the panorama even more striking. On the slopes that are most exposed to sunlight are vineyards that grow on banks or in fields with channels to prevent erosion, while old-fashioned farmhouses can be seen on the tops. There are large numbers of viewpoints around Monfumo and in the Castelli area, and it is

still possible to come across big, rounded mounds of straw. After immersing yourself in the natural environment, go back down the same road to rejoin the main route. You now need to head for Fonte Alto, the highest part of the municipality. The landscape is awe-inspiring, with Mount Grappa to the North and the hills to the South. Make sure you stop in Fonte Alto to

visit the church and the "Casa dei Mestieri" (House of Trades). After Fonte comes the San Zenone degli Ezzelini area. Up here the Madonna Rossa Sanctuary stands on a 220 m hill, where the Castle of the Ezzelini once was. There is an unrestricted view towards Mount Grappa and down as far as Bassano. The 360° panorama has unquestionably inspired many artists from the Veneto region, such as Noé Bordignon and Wolf Ferrari. As the gaze continues to wander, one cannot help but think of the dark times in the Middle Ages when endless cruel battles took place between feudatories. They became pitiless warriors and spilled rivers of blood just to get their hands on little bits of land. It is impossible to forget the history of this region, which is dotted with castles, ruins, destroyed towers and fortified sites that stretch all the way to the banks of the Piave! From the 10th century AD, endless castles and defensive works sprang up in Christian Europe and a new structure for the land developed around

them. The success of this population organization system throughout northern Italy and what is now the Veneto region was largely down to two reasons: first the widespread need for safety, due in part to the raids by the Magyars, and second the political instability, which meant those in power were keen to attract citizens to the area around the castle. On the hills of Treviso there are numerous traces of these settlements, which are now ruins. The most important architectural remnants are undoubtedly those in San Zenone, Fonte, Rovèr, Asolo, Castelvucco, Castelvici, Cavaso, Onigo, Maser, Monfumo, Cornuda, Pederobba, Crespignaga and Castelli. It should also be pointed out that the mid 13th century fortress of the Ezzelini in San Zenone is the most daring example of this architectural system. The innovative techniques employed thanks to the contact between Ezzelino III's workers from the Veneto and the architects from the South of

the residence of the Ezzelini family stand out, although we can only imagine how magnificent it was from looking at the few remains that can be seen today. The road now heads towards Paderno del Grappa, briefly goes through Possagno, from there descends to the right towards Castelli, Onigo and San Vettore and leads back into Cornuda. Here you should visit the Madonna della Rocca Sanctuary, a building dating back to the 16th - 17th century, and the Oratory of San Rocco, which is on the wine route leading to Maser. Possagno is in the centre of the Val Cavasia: a vast expanse of meadows between the buttresses of Mount Grappa to the North and a range of hills to the south that stretch as far as the Western bank of the Piave. Say "Possagno" to any Italian and they will immediately think of the master sculptor Canova. His birthplace is there, in the heart of the town. He also returned there to live out the last years of his life in peace. Do not miss out on a trip to the museum, where sketches, casts





and original plaster models are on display, and the beautiful temple designed by the artist himself, which is near the house in which he was born.

VILLA BARBARO. THE THREE NAMES BEHIND A MASTERPIECE: PALLADIO, VERONESE AND VITTORIA

The architectural expertise of Andrea Palladio, the illusionistic virtuosity of Paolo Veronese and the sculptural art of Alessandro Vittoria make Villa Barbaro one of the artistic pinnacles of all time. It was built in 1560 for the humanist Barbaro brothers Daniele, the patriarch of Aquileia, and Marcantonio, the ambassador of the Republic of Venice. It was supposed to recall the model of the classical villa. It was not only a country residence; above all it was the place where the brothers, far from Venetian life, could pursue their great interest in humanism. The building is near

the Asolo Hills and is slightly raised so it stands out in the middle of the greenery of the large grounds surrounding it. To go back to the three masters who helped to make it what it is, we would like to quote the great art historian Federico Zeri, who would often say "in my opinion, there is nothing more classical than the union between the sculpture of Vittoria, the architecture of Palladio and the painting of Paolo Veronese". Regarding Palladio, it can certainly be said that he fully applied his famous principle: "Beauty will result from the form and the correspondence of the whole, with respect to the several parts, of the parts with regard to each other, and of these again to the whole". The architectural composition is based around the central body of the building, which contains the living quarters and is inspired by the front of a Greek temple. To the sides are the two barchesse, which are further back and lower than the central section and feature porticos with eight arches. Finally,



at the ends are two large volutes that conceal the columbaries. The sculptures by Alessandro Vittoria embellish the garden, which was once full of flowerbeds but is now simple and linear. The work of Vittoria also includes two semicircular exedrae. The larger one on the other side of the road features the magnificent fountain of Neptune, while the smaller one behind the villa has a wonderful nymphaeum full of sculptures and decorations. This secret

garden of sorts encompasses all of Vittoria's art. He took particular care over it, perhaps partly to please Marcantonio Barbaro, who was a dilettante sculptor himself. Topping it all off is the frescoed decoration of the central section by the genius Paolo Veronese. The artist took the 16th century's decorative models to their highest form of expression. With his masterly fresco technique, he devised continual illusions of perspective, producing views and panoramas. He pushed back ceilings, opened windows and created balconies. The place is populated with Olympian Gods and allegorical figures which blend, thanks to the skilful *trompe l'oeil* technique, with depictions of the owners of the house, animals and objects. What else is there to add? Nothing - it is better to look at it all in silence.

ASOLO. ASOLANDO. A POET: ROBERT BROWNING

*"How many a year, my Asolo, Since
– one step just from sea to land –
I found you, loved yet feared you so, for
natural objects seemed to stand palpably
fire-clothed! No"...*

Robert Browning

It is possible to walk around Asolo in half a day, but you will want to spend a lifetime there, as you fall for the same charms that have bewitched more than a few famous people. One of them was the English poet Robert Browning, who was the first to use the word *asolando* (it plays on the name of the town and the Italian gerund form). It is actually the title of his last volume, which was published in Venice in 1889. This master of dramatic monologues and psychological introspection was a precursor of some of

the themes of 20th century poetry. Asolo is a precious jewel set amongst enchanted places. On the hill is the Rocca, an irregularly shaped fort with a single entrance and stone walls that are fifteen metres high and four metres thick. It dates back to the 11th century and is built around the area where the old settlement is thought to have been. Immediately below the fortress, on the back and sides of a raised section, is what is known as "the town with a hundred horizons". It is a banal thing to say but people continue to repeat it: it is more romantic than almost any other town in the world, with its refinement and elegance. It is a place where art, history and nature merge in a harmonious vision. In a letter, Browning wrote "... This place fills me with admiration ... The great charm of the surrounding countryside is indescribable and I have never seen anything that compares with it". Here he spent wonderful days with the poet Elizabeth Barrett, who later became his wife. *Asolando* here and there, we recommend

a visit to the Duomo, which contains some marvellous paintings, in particular an *Assumption* by Lorenzo Lotto and a second *Assumption* by Jacopo da Ponte, also known as Jacopo Bassano. An interesting sight that must be seen is the Casa Longobarda (Longobard House), which gets its name from an inscription stating that the owner and creator was from Lombardy. The extravagant home is the work of the sculptor and artist Francesco Graziolo. It is made of tuff and abounds with symbolic, mysterious and disturbing patterns.

**CATERINA CORNARO,
ELEONORA DUSE AND
FREYA STARK: THREE DAME
CHE AMARONO ASOLO**

Caterina Cornaro was born in Venice in 1454. She was the child of Marco Cornaro, a great grandson of the Doge, and Fiorenza Crispo, Duchess of the Archipelago. At the age of fourteen she was married to James II,

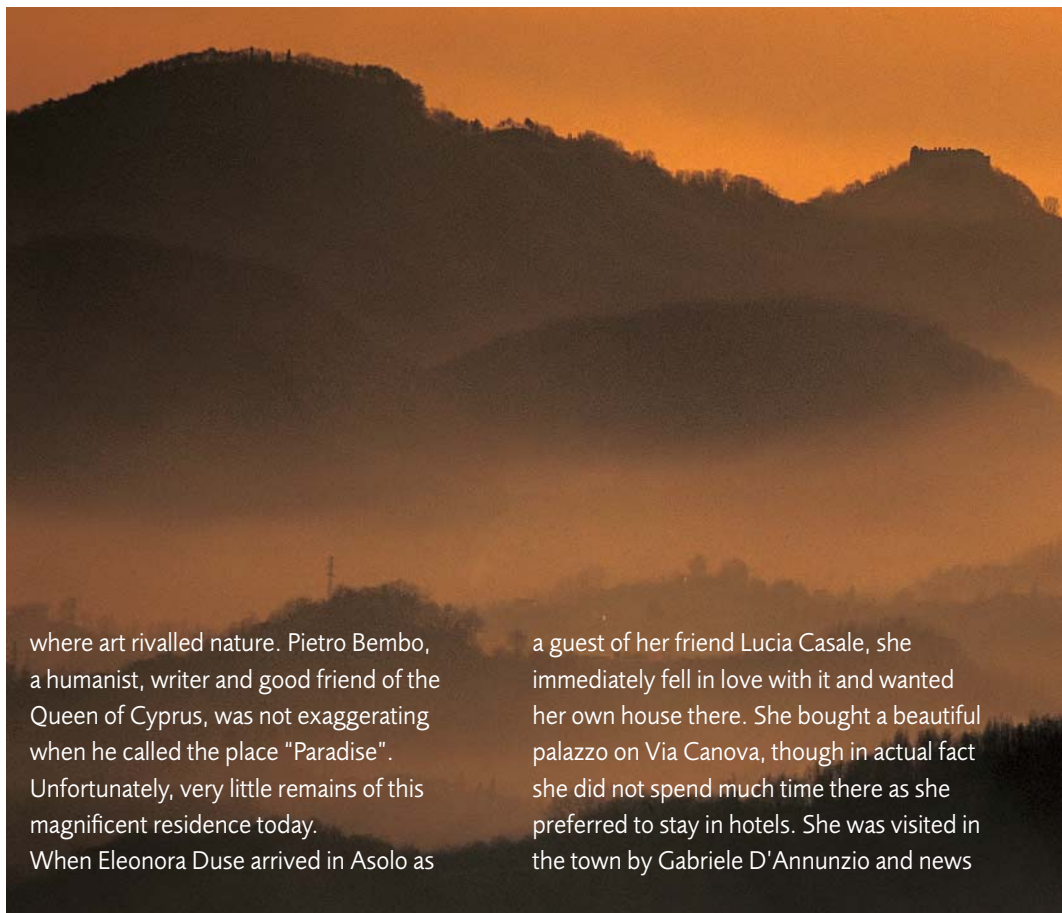


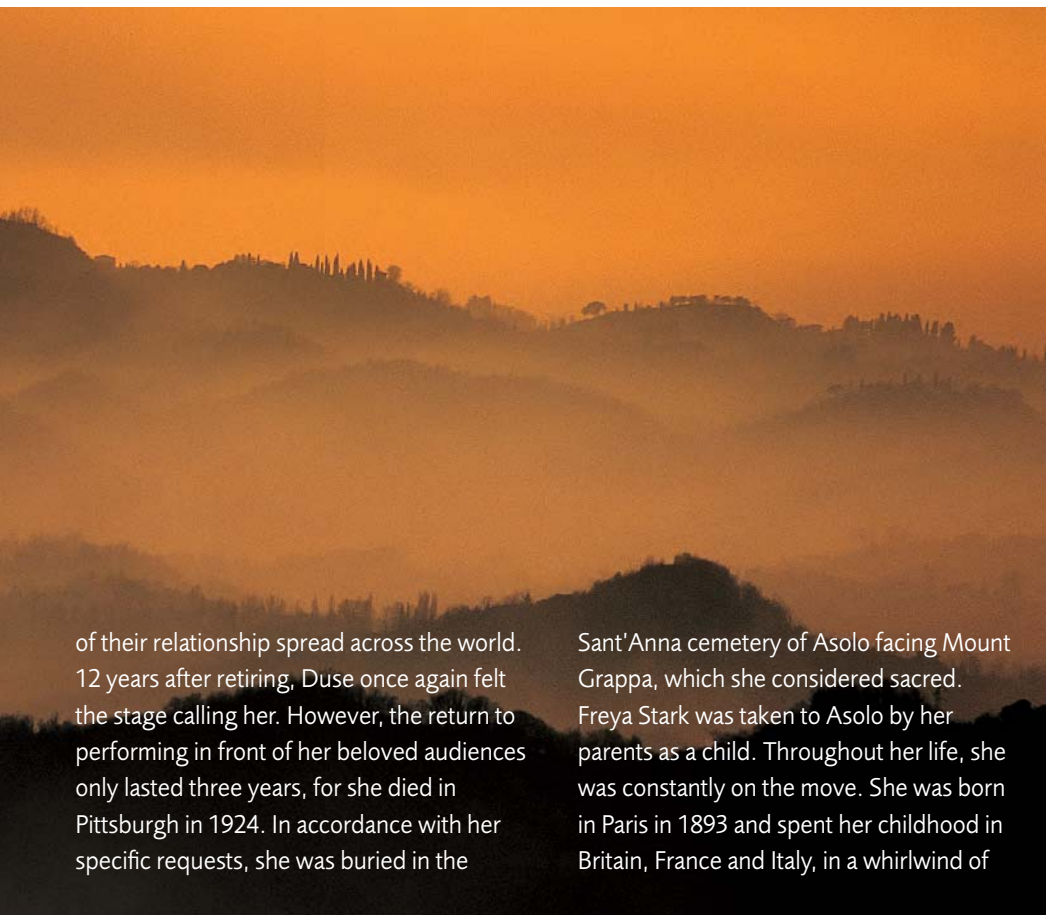
the King of Cyprus, who had usurped the legitimate heir Charlotte de Lusignan. After Caterina was married by proxy, she was accompanied to the Lido in the Bucentaur and from there she boarded the galleys of the Serenissima and set off for Cyprus. This point marks the beginning of one of the most mysterious chapters in the history of the Venetian Republic. James II died in circumstances that were never explained, thus allowing the Venetian Senate to annex

the Kingdom of Cyprus on 21 February 1478. The Senate also later sent Caterina into "luxurious" exile in Asolo, having ordered her brother Giorgio Cornaro to see the Captain General in Cyprus and use all of his influence to convince his sister to abdicate in favour of the Serenissima. On 26 February in Famagusta, after a solemn "Te Deum", the de Lusignan flag was lowered and the gonfalon of Saint Mark was raised. The ceremony was repeated in the presence of the Queen in all of the Cypriot towns, including Nicosia. Caterina handed over the crown of Cyprus to the Doge and returned to Venice deprived of her power. Dressed in black, on 18 March 1489 the Queen left the island of Cyprus for good. Venice gave her a magnificent welcome, but on 20 June the same year she set off for Asolo. Although her sovereignty was very limited, she established her court in Palazzo Pretorio, a sumptuous castle of mediaeval origin. She then had a villa built in Altivole. Known as the Barco, it was surrounded by gardens and was a place

where art rivalled nature. Pietro Bembo, a humanist, writer and good friend of the Queen of Cyprus, was not exaggerating when he called the place "Paradise". Unfortunately, very little remains of this magnificent residence today. When Eleonora Duse arrived in Asolo as

a guest of her friend Lucia Casale, she immediately fell in love with it and wanted her own house there. She bought a beautiful palazzo on Via Canova, though in actual fact she did not spend much time there as she preferred to stay in hotels. She was visited in the town by Gabriele D'Annunzio and news





of their relationship spread across the world. 12 years after retiring, Duse once again felt the stage calling her. However, the return to performing in front of her beloved audiences only lasted three years, for she died in Pittsburgh in 1924. In accordance with her specific requests, she was buried in the

Sant'Anna cemetery of Asolo facing Mount Grappa, which she considered sacred. Freya Stark was taken to Asolo by her parents as a child. Throughout her life, she was constantly on the move. She was born in Paris in 1893 and spent her childhood in Britain, France and Italy, in a whirlwind of

journeys, new languages and developments in the family. This tireless traveller with a thirst for knowledge devoted much of her energy and money to learning Arabic and other languages, which would become the tools of her trade. She ventured to Turkey, the Middle East and Greece and she was a nurse in the Kras area during the First World War. In 1927 she set off for the East, organizing expeditions in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Persia and elsewhere in the Arab world until 1937. When the Second World War broke out, she worked in Yemen and Egypt, promoting an underground propaganda network called "the Brotherhood of Freedom". After the war, she started travelling again. She carried on until the age of 88, when she followed in the footsteps of Alexander the Great on an expedition in Nepal. Her life was tied to the figures of her time, including Churchill, the Queen Mother and Lawrence of Arabia. The Foreign Office also entrusted her with important missions. Asolo was always her "buen retiro" the



place to which she loved to return. She died there at the age of 100 and now lies in the Sant'Anna cemetery, just a short distance from Eleonora Duse.

THE EZZELINI IN SAN ZENONE

Standing out on its own, perched atop a hill near San Zenone, there is a tower. In contrast with the beauty of the landscape, this place witnessed some grim, bloody episodes that it is worth recalling here. The little tower is all that remains of one of the powerful Ezzelini family's castles. It was in this very place that the story of Ezzelino III and his brother Alberico came to a close. The Ezzelini were of Germanic descent and had followed the Holy Roman Emperor Conrad II into Italy in the 11th century. The most famous among them is Ezzelino III, who was as brave and bold as he was ruthless. He had aspirations for absolute power and in the mid 13th century he decided to make Northern Italy into one big united kingdom of Communes

and Seignories. He soon gained control of Treviso, Padua, Vicenza and Verona, laid siege to Mantua and occupied Brescia. He then prepared to launch a big attack on Milan. This is the "great assault" mentioned by Dante in Canto 9 of Paradise. In the end, he was stopped and defeated by the Guelphs in Cassano d'Adda. He was taken prisoner and, according to the tales that have been passed down through the ages, he died after tearing off the bandages covering his wounds in a fit of rage. In the legends about his story, he is given a number of names, including "Firebrand of Hell", "the Black Devil" and "the Cruel". Hatred had shaped more than one destiny by this point and another member of the family came to an unhappy end. Ezzelino III's brother Alberico was betrayed and besieged in the Castle of San Zenone. After seeing the torturous death of his wife and children, he was quartered, taken to Treviso and burnt in Piazza Maggiore. His sister Cunizza, meanwhile, married three times and took

several lovers. She was obsessed with poetry and eloped with the troubadour Sordello da Goito, but he later chose another woman over her. Nonetheless, Cunizza had the honour of being placed in the third sphere of Paradise by Dante, among the loving spirits. This is perhaps partly due to the many acts of penance she performed towards the end of her life, thus helping to redeem the blood-stained reputation of an entire family.

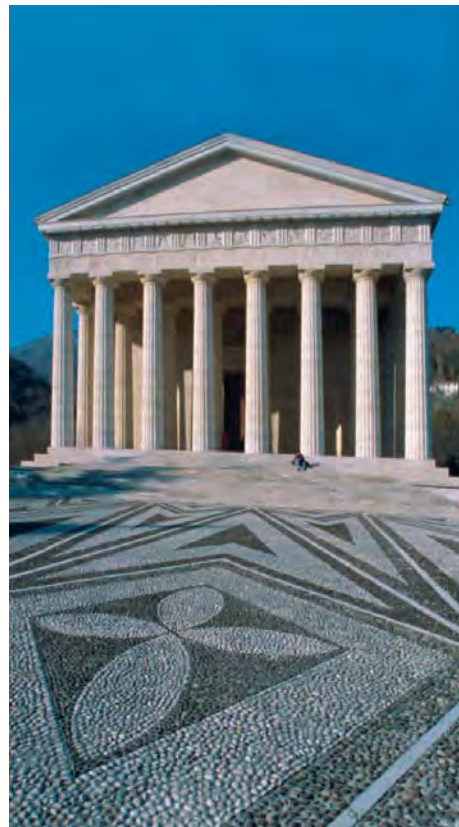
CANOVA AND POSSAGNO

One place where you should definitely stop is Possagno, the hometown of the illustrious sculptor Antonio Canova. It is possible to visit his birthplace and the adjoining museum, which contains a collection of material from his studio in Rome. The sight that is perhaps most surprising to visitors is the Temple: it is truly strange to find yourself facing a classical building which, instead of Magna Graecia or elsewhere in the South of the Mediterranean, stands in the huge

space of a large Northern Italian valley. The building combines the two archetypes of classical Greek and Roman architecture: the Doric pronaos of the Parthenon and the circular domed body of the Pantheon. It was designed by Antonio Canova himself in 1819 as a new church for the town. He covered all of the expenses, while the inhabitants - in line with an old Veneto tradition - provided free labour on public holidays and supplied the materials. The Temple was completed in 1830, after the death of the sculptor, who was unable to finish the great decorative interior sculptural work that he had intended to carry out.

A PERFECT CLIMATE FOR FLOWERS

The climate in the Asolo area is mild and very healthy: the air is of an Alpine nature, but without the harshness of the mountains; here it is simply rarefied and clean. By February, the winter is already over and the almond trees start to blossom. The slopes of Mount Grappa and Montello





have always been extolled by botanists for the great variety and rarity of certain species of flower. Saccardo said that in the zone there were "over 150 plants, almost all of them alpine". His treatise (*Flora del Trivigiano - Flora del Montello*) mentions the *Paeonia peregrine*, the *Myrrhis odorata*, the *Leontopodium alpinum* (Edelweiss), the *Nigritella*, the *Rhododendron* and more besides. The Asolo Hills reflect the flora of

Mount Grappa: the sun-kissed slopes and wet valleys are the ideal habitat for a huge variety of flower species. In the Spring, the first to sprout are the *Viola odorata*, *Hellebores* and *Gentians*. A few days later come the *Anemone* and the *Leucoium vernum*, a pure white bell flower with an intense, slightly bitter smell. Among the rocks and the still dry grass, little flowers of various hues peep through. In March,

the blooming reaches a peak. Daisies appear in the areas with most sunlight, the narcissuses are in bud and the almond trees and hawthorns start to become covered with blossom.

"MONTELLO & COLLI ASOLANI" DOC AREA

The "Montello & Colli Asolani" DOC production zone lies to the North of the town of Treviso, in the first band of piedmont hills. The section around Montello starts in Nervesa della Battaglia and stretches as far as San Zenone degli Ezzelini. In the Asolo area to the North, it takes in the hills and the plains between them, from the slopes of Mount Grappa to the town of Asolo. Lying on the northern boundary of the Po Valley between Piave and Mount Grappa, these hills seem to chase and overlap each other in the slow, winding movement of a green wave. The climate is temperate and mild, without excessive changes of temperature from one season to the next. This makes it an excellent area for vine growing. The wine producing tradition of the zone has



its roots in the era of the Serenissima Republic of Venice, which was very familiar with and favoured the wines from the March of Treviso. At that time, the famous Veneto villas were appearing on the great landed estates and the vineyards were of fundamental importance for the landowners. As early as the 15th century there were structures built for winemaking in the "barchesse". This area is well suited to growing Prosecco grapes, though they are not exactly the same as those from Conegliano and Valdobbiadene. This is due to the different geological formation of the land, which gives a slight but unmistakable almond aftertaste. The denomination "Montello & Colli Asolani" is solely for wines made with grapes from vineyards in which at least 85% of the varieties are Prosecco, Chardonnay, Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, Merlot, Cabernet Franc or Cabernet

Sauvignon. A few years ago, two native species were added: Bianchetta and Carmenere. Quality reds are made in the area, such as the Cabernet. This fine wine improves even further with ageing, which gives it an intense taste, while it is slightly grassy when young. It should be served at 18° C and it is suitable for pairing with reasonably flavoursome dishes. The Merlot is a good early drinker with intense, distinctive characteristics and becomes a great wine if aged. Two versions of the Prosecco are marketed: still and sparkling. It has a fruity aroma and is suitable for any occasion. The latest additions to the range are the excellent Pinot and Chardonnay, which are particularly impressive in the still version.

The Association: God News and Plans

In 1994, the Association set itself the task of opening up to the local producers,

taking an active part in dialogue and becoming a focal point for various initiatives aimed at underlining the distinctiveness of the wines, protecting the "Denominazione di origine controllata" ("Denomination of controlled origin") label and promoting their image. The significant number of producers who have become members highlights the ever greater attention and awareness regarding the protection, promotion and advancement of wine growing. The association's member companies - large and small, including both direct and industrial producers - now account for 50% of the total DOC production. In recent years the Montello and Asolo Hills area has seen progressive development of viticulture, which is going through a successful period of constant growth. In the three years from 2000 to 2003, the registered surface area of the land devoted to vine growing





increased from 272 hectares to 473 hectares.

General De Gaulle's red

In 1967, General De Gaulle was at a dinner and was not at all impressed with the wine. At one point a new red was brought to the table and it is claimed that the General said: "Now this is one of ours". Actually, the wine was not French. It was a Bordeaux blend, but it was made with grapes from the Veneto region. It was given the name "Capo di Stato" ("Head of State") in honour of the event. The producer was Count Loredan Gasparini, a descendent of Doge Leonardo Loredan who owned a villa on the slopes of Montello. The "Colli Trevigiani Capo di Stato" comes from an old vineyard known as "Le 100 piante" (The 100 plants) in which there are rows of vines that have been growing for half a century. The

Cabernet Sauvignon (65%), Cabernet Franc (20%), Merlot (10%) and Malbec (5%) grapes ferment for around twenty days before being aged for at least 24 months in French oak barrels and then in the bottle for a year. The wine is notable for its ruby red colour, herbaceous and spicy aromas and the balance between the acidity and the tannin content. On the palate it is soft yet full-bodied.



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