The lands of Eastern Venice
Tourism and cultural guide
Index

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The Programme Interreg III A Italy-Slovenia 2000-2006

The Community Initiative Programme Interreg IIIA Italy-Slovenia is a part of the policies of the European commission to reinforce economical and social cohesion of the entire territory of the European Union, specifically by promoting cross-border cooperation and balanced development of border areas.

The Province of Venice is fully entitled to be a part of the area covered by the programme. Along with the entire provinces of Udine, Gorizia and Trieste and the Slovenian regions of Goriska, Obalno-Kraška and Kranjska Gora, it has benefited, during the period 2000-2006, from contributions from the European Fund for Regional Development, to promote projects aimed at stimulating and furthering reciprocal knowledge, and to establish long lasting cooperation between territories and peoples.

The action promoted by the Province of Venice, in collaboration with the Italian Union, the "Albert Borschette" Institute, the Kooperwood Association of Cinema Arts, the self-administrated coastal community of Italian nationality of Koper, the "Kinoatelje Šempas" Institute and the Primorski Muzej "Sergej Masera" in Pirano, is financed by the Community Initiative Programme Interreg IIIA Italy-Slovenia in Measure 2.2 which supports cooperation in the sector of tourism. It is aimed at enhancing, expanding and renewing tourism in the entire area involved in the programme.

Fabio Gava, Attorney-at-Law
Regional Councillor for Economic and Institutional Policies

Preface of the Province of Venice

The Project Ciak Girando

The Province of Venice promotes the project "Ciak Girando", which aims to increase appreciation for the area of Eastern Venice through this guide, and also through the creation of a video documentary which gathers and promotes its various environmental, historical and cultural aspects.

The tour guide and the documentary are intended for foreign visitors, but also for local inhabitants who wish to get back in touch with their culture and rediscover their territory.

Tourism operators in the area will find this manual to be a useful tool in support of their activities of promoting our local areas in a combination of nature and culture, of land and water...

On their voyage of discovery through our area, the tourist will be guided through rural areas, historical and natural locations, aquatic landscapes, monuments and archaeological treasures.

There is no better opportunity for a curious tourist to visit locations that offer the discovery of a common historical and cultural thread, which in each epoch has joined peoples in different but adjoining nations in the same destiny. These places enhance the appreciation of cross-border cultural and environmental resources, and more in general they consolidate relations as good neighbours and mutual promotion of local areas.

President of the Province of Venice
Davide Zoggia

Councillor for Tourism, APT and Pro Loco of the Province of Venice
Danilo Lunardelli
The territory of Eastern Venice

The expression Eastern Venice (or Eastern Veneto) refers to an area that extends from east to west from the mouth of the Tagliamento, which marks the border with the province of Udine, and Punta Sabbioni, at the edge of the Northern Lagoon of Venice. Form north to south it lies between the line of headwaters, at the borders with the provinces of Pordenone and Treviso, and the Adriatic coast. Specifically, the twenty-two municipalities of the province of Venice that lie in this area are, from east to west: San Michele al Tagliamento, Fossalta di Portogruaro, Teglio Veneto, Grugaro, Cinto Caomaggiore, Pramaggiore, Annone Veneto, Portogruaro, Concordia Sagittaria, Caorle, Santo Stino di Livenza, Torre di Mosto, Ceggia, Eraclia, Jesolo, San Donà di Piave, Noventa di Piave, Fossalta di Piave, Muserì di Piave, Meolo, Quarto d’Altino, Cavallino-Treporti. The total population is about 200,000. The two largest towns are San Donà di Piave with around 39,000 residents, and Portogruaro, with about 25,000.

The territory is crossed by the final parts of the rivers Tagliamento, Livenza, Piave and Sile. It is located in the Venetian lowlands, which features a landscape that was largely modelled by land reclamation projects in the early 1900’s. In these areas, just inland from the beach, there are wide lagoons, which may be either natural or remodelled by man (known as “marshes”). These are connected to one another by a dense network of canals, and they have outlets to the sea. The coastline has wide, sandy beaches formed from the deposits of the large rivers that have their mouths there. It is dominated by the seaside resorts of Bibione, Caorle, Eraclia Mare, Jesolo Lido and Cavallino, which become quite busy during the summer. Seaside tourism, which underwent extraordinary growth starting from just after the Second World War, is now a well-established tradition. It has now been joined by more careful attention to nature in the area, and to art, history and archaeology further inland, and to food and wines, with a wide variety of DOC (Name of Controlled Origin) and IGP (Protected Geographic Identification) marks, especially in the area of wine growing, fruits and vegetables, and cheese. During the 1960’s and 1970’s, the economy of Eastern Veneto was largely based on agriculture, with large companies located in the areas further south provided by land reclamation, and small farms located further inland. Later on, there was strong growth in tourism, artisan and
commercial businesses, whereas industry did not grow at the same pace as the regional average.

Historically, the area was inhabited in pre-Roman times by ancient Venetians. Important finds were made in their villages in present-day San Gaetano di Caorle, Concordia Sagittaria, and Altino. Starting from the 2nd century BC, peaceful Roman settlement of the area began with the construction of the Via Annia, in 131 BC. This started from Adria; it then ran through Padua and Altino, finally reaching Concordia, where it joined the Via Postumia (148 BC), continuing on to Aquileia. During the 1st century BC, there arose on the previous Venetian settlements the Roman municipality of Altinum and the colony of Iulia Concordia, connected by the river Lemene to the Portus Reatinum (Porto Falconera di Caorle) on the Adriatic. At that time, the coastal area between Bibione, Caorle, Jesolo (Equilium), and Cavallino, was made up of a number of islands surrounded by a lagoon, most of which today has been reclaimed. In this area, there was intense trade which followed the so-called "inter-lagoon" route. Seaside villas belonging to the Roman aristocracy also sprang up. In the Late Antiquity, the threat of invasion from north-eastern Europe, especially the last great invasion of the Longobards in the 6th century, drove the inhabitants to seek refuge in the islands of the lagoon. Caorle, Eraclea, Jesolo, and the Venetian islands became permanent settlements. During the High Middle Ages, the gradual expansion of the swamplands in the lagoon area created prohibitive environmental conditions. This led to a rapid decay of the coastal settlements, whose vitality was finally compromised by the transfer of most of the population and the seat of the doge first to Malamocco and then to Rialto, in the healthier, safer islands which would give rise to Venetian power. The areas further inland were emptied of their populations by barbarian invasions and further tried between the end of the Ninth and the beginning of the Tenth centuries by the devastation of the Hungarians. Settlements began to reappear after 1000 AD (Portogruaro, Santo Stino di Livenza, San Donà di Piave), often around castles built for defensive purposes by local lords or bishops. This continued in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth century, when the Serenissima, having conquered the inland areas, began reclamation of some areas and the digging of new canals to improve communications and restore navigation. The Venetian nobility, especially in the 1600’s and 1700’s, began purchasing large tracts of land in many areas, where they constructed luxurious villages for leisure and for the management of agricultural estates. In many cases, these structures were destroyed during the wars that were fought during the 1900’s. In other cases, they were heavily modified or disfigured by subsequent work. Elsewhere, they have preserved an appearance which is nearer the original, as can be seen in the residences of Mcelo, Santo Stino di Livenza, and in part in Noventa di Piave. However, the town which shows the strongest Venetian influence still today is Portogruaro, with its palazzos with their porticos that are the perfect size for merchants. The long period of stability provided by the Republic of Venice came to an end in 1797, when it was defeated by Napoleon, who ceded its territories to Austria. In 1805-1806, after the fleeting victory of Napoleon over Austria, the French resumed the government of Veneto, annexing it to the Kingdom of Italy. The province of Venice as far as the Livenza assumed the name of the Department of the Adriatic, whereas the territory from the right bank of the Tagliamento to the Livenza was inserted in the Department of the Tagliamento. Portogruaro and its district, initially assigned to the “Friulian” area as expressly requested by the municipality, in 1810 were combined with the Department of the Adriatic. It was during this time of Napoleonic government that in various towns (San Donà di Piave, Fossalta di Piave, Jesolo, Musile di Piave, Noventa di Piave, Pramaggiore, San Michele al Tagliamento, Teglio Veneto) the municipality was officially established. In 1814, after Napoleon was finally defeated, the area returned to Austrian rule; the divisions imposed under the Napoleonic administration remained unchanged. Finally, with the confirmation of the annexation to the Kingdom of Italy in 1866, the territory was confirmed as belonging to the province of Venice. The First World War was especially devastating for the area of Eastern Veneto near the Piave. This was especially true after the Italian retreat from Caporetto, when Austrian troops invaded the towns. Places like San Donà, Musile, Noventa and Fossalta di Piave were on the front lines and were completely destroyed. Reconstruction after the war, and land reclamation which had been undertaken, were partially compromised a few decades later by the Second World War. At the end of this conflict, the reorganization of the countryside resumed, as did the reconstruction of homes and villages. This led slowly to the start of economic development.
The four itineraries offered in the guide all start from seaside locations. They provide a path in the form of a loop, designed for tourists who are visiting the beaches and wish to find out more about the inland areas. As a curious, attentive tourist is well aware, the itineraries can always be customized, and are intended those who come to Eastern Veneto for reasons other than a seaside holiday, including those who live here. The guide was designed with the automobile in mind, but there are also paths that can be travelled better by bicycle or on foot, as well as waterways and the possibility to make use of public transport. In any case, an effort has been made to guide the tourist onto secondary roads that are free of heavy traffic, which ensure greater enjoyment of the landscape and its resources.

At the end of the volume, there is a section on “Useful Information” divided by itinerary. This includes information on dining and lodging selected based on criteria identified by the Province of Venice, which promoted the creation of the guide. The criteria are the following:

- for hotel and non-hotel lodging, reference is made to the local offices of the various Tourism Promotion Agencies;
- for holiday farms, all those in the concerned area have been included. The symbol identifies holiday farms with dining facilities. The symbol is for holiday farms with lodging. Lack of a symbol indicates establishments where it is only possible to purchase products or take part in sports and recreational activities;
- for dining, businesses have been selected along the proposed itineraries that feature typical dishes and the use of local products.
from the Sile to the Piave
from the Sile to the Piave

The coastline Cavallino-Treporti, with its beach that has largely been left in its natural state, the pine woods, the dunes, and the suggestive lagoon marshes that extend behind it to surround the villages of Treporti, Lio Piccolo, Mesole, is by itself an itinerary of sun, sea, of picturesque hamlets suspended between water and land, and a part of nature where man has maintained a balanced relationship. The mouth of the river Sile (or Piave Vecchia) separates the Cavallino peninsula from the shore of Jesolo, one of Europe’s largest and most lively seaside resorts. Some of its ancient heritage is still preserved in the archaeological remains in the village of Jesolo proper. As you head up the very pleasant riverside panorama of the Sile, you will come to the northern lagoon of Venice, crossing a territory that has been shaped by land reclamation and by waterworks which were started at the time of the Serenissima, as shown still today by the names of the towns of Caposile and Portoerandi. As you head inland, you will come to the extraordinary archaeological heritage of Quarto d’Altino, which for the Romans was Altinum. Its inhabitants, in a search for refuge from the barbaric invasions, made a decisive contribution to the founding of Venice and the settling of the lagoon islands. From the offshoots of the Park of the Sile, which includes the oases of Trepalade and San Michele Vecchio, you will once again return to the banks of the Piave as you pass through Meolo. Its rows of Venetian villages are situated along the course of water that bears the same name as the town. Finally, you will come to Fossalta di Piave and Musile di Piave, villages that have always lived in perfect harmony with the great river.

Length of course: about 83 km
Itinerary: Cavallino Treporti, Jesolo, Quarto d’Altino, Meolo, Fossalta di Piave, Musile di Piave

The starting point for the course is the Cavallino coastline, which extends about 15 km, from Punta Sabbioni to the Lighthouse. The municipality of Cavallino-Treporti was founded in 1999 by a regional law after it was separated from the municipality of Venice. The town seat is located in Ca’ Savio, which is the most populated location with over 12,000 inhabitants. The history of what is today known as the north shore of the Lagoon of Venice is varied and complex, and is tied to the continuous evolution of the hydro-geological makeup, a combination of land and water that has influenced the events of the area. This coastal strip includes a more recent reality, the Cavallino coastline, and one which is much more ancient, the so-called Treportine islands. These shores were surely frequented as far back as Roman times, and they were known to be a barrier far from land that protected the inland waters from the sea and ensured safe navigation along the inter-lagoon waterways. After the fall of the Roman Empire, the islands in this lagoon provided shelter to the inhabitants of Altino, Oderzo and other inland towns when they fled before the invasions of barbarians. From the middle of the 6th century, the area was under the control and jurisdiction of the Eastern Roman Empire, which controlled the coastal area from Ravenna to Grado. The Longobard invasion of the inland between the 6th and 7th century drove the inhabitants further towards the lagoon settlements, which quickly stabilized and became active in commerce. With the other towns of Torcello, Malamocco, Jesolo, Eraclea, Caorle, the islands of the Cavallino coastal area formed a federation, which in 690 came under the rule of a single doge located in Eraclea. Internal strife in the federation, along with the negative consequences of swamp expansion, led to the transfer of the doge’s seat to Malamocco in 742. This favoured development of the safer, healthier islands which would one day become Venice. In 814, Venice was legally recognized as an independent state by the Byzantine and Franco-Germanic empires. This represented the final downfall of the island settlements in the present territory of Cavallino, which in the centuries to come would be plagued by poverty and malaria. The name Cavallino is believed by some to derive from the popularization of the High Middle Age name equilium (the original name of the area), which in turn came from the Latin equus (horse), due to the presence of untamed horses. This explanation is however disputed. Others attribute the same origin to the name of the town of Jesolo. What is certain is that starting from the High Middle Ages the histories of Cavallino and Jesolo blend and blur into one another. An
ways ahead. At the end of the 1600’s, most of the land that made up the Cavallino coastal area became the property of Matteo Alberti. He reclaimed the area, converting part of it into farmland and increasing the number of inhabitants. Cavallino-Treporti has a very high concentration of decommissioned military buildings that is unequalled in Italy or in Europe. This is a system of fortifications composed of batteries, forts, signal towers, arsenals and shelters. They underline the strategic importance of Cavallino-Treporti for the defence of Venice at the time of the Serenissima as well as during the two world wars. The land reclamation of the 1930’s provided a final solution the water system of the land. It
moved the area to high-quality farming, and it became renowned for its vegetable crops raised using techniques with low environmental impact. In more recent history, the coastline’s first campground was opened in 1955. This date would mark the beginning of the town’s orientation towards tourism. This was already foreseen by the Latin poet Strabone, when he praised these shores as similar to the villas of Baja, near Naples, the most renowned seaside resort of ancient Roman times. Cavallino-Treporti has focused strongly on outdoor tourism. It has favoured comfortable campgrounds surrounded by lush vegetation and reserved residential construction. This has led to a balanced relationship with the environment, and the highest possible respect for the natural elements that make up this stretch of coastline.

The Cavallino-Treporti coastal area is best visited by bicycle. You can start from the westernmost end, Punta Sabbioni, where the natural environment features sandy coast, dunes further inland, and pine woods and coastal forests behind them. At the end of the Dante Alighieri seashore road, there is a parking area. Here, you can reach the beach and cross the dam on foot, with the cliffs alongside, at the bottom of which stands the lighthouse which to the northeast marks the entry to the mouth of the port of Lido, which in ancient times was the main entrance to Venice. The coastline between Punta Sabbioni and Ca’ Savio is composed of a number of parallel strips and the water line. Depending on the distance from the sea, and hence the amount of salt water, the accumulation of sand and its coarseness, you can distinguish the water line, the strip of bare sand, the first line of plants, the system of dunes, the depressions behind the dunes (or humid depressions between dunes) and the trees that make up the coastal woods. Originally it was made up of various species of broadleaf trees, but of these only traces remain, since the vegetation has been replaced by maritime pine and stone pine woods, which can be reached from the sea accesses. Travelling back along the Dante Alighieri seashore road, turn right at the end of it onto Via Fausta, the main route that longitudinally crosses all of the territory of Cavallino-Treporti; after about 1.5 km turn right onto Via Amalfi to reach the Amalfi battery, one of the many military buildings that characterize the coastline. The engineering corps of the Italian Royal Navy started building the battery in 1915 and completed it seventeen months later. The main character of modernity of the battery was the insertion of an armoured tower of a naval type, to house the guns, at the top of the main concrete body. Inside the main building, many rooms were included: small ammunition depots, offices, enlisted and officer quarters, baths and latrines. The only use of the battery, built on anti-ship criteria against a hypothetical fleet which might arrive from the sea and threaten Venice, was in fact on the rear side, towards the Piave, firing on bridges when, after the rout of Caporetto in 1917, the Austrians were advancing on the city. Once you return to Via Fausta, cross the road and take Via Forte Vecchio, at the end of which you will find the Forte Vecchio or Forte di Treporti. A symbol of the military fortifications of the Cavallino coast, the fort was built by the Austrians in the period 1845-1851, as part of a long chain of constructions aimed at garrisoning the lagoon territory. The structure covers a surface of over 26,000 m², of which about 3,800 are built up, 10,400 open and 12,400 are the surrounding moat; the main front, on the west side, faces the Venice lagoon and is 230 metres long. During World War I, two range-finding towers were erected, one with a circular base and the other four-sided, in order to sight the enemy and calculate the direction of artillery shots. Once it fell into disuse, a number of families took up residence in the walls of the fort. If you wish to continue along Via Fausta (provincial road 42), you will cross the villages of Ca’ Savio, Ca’ Vio, Ca’ Pasquali, Ca’ Ballarin, Ca’ di Valle, as far as Cavallino; along the way, if you approach the sea on the parallel streets to the right, you will find other military structures such as the Pisani Battery, the San Marco Battery and the Radaelli Battery. From the Forte Vecchio you can exit on the right onto the San Felice seashore road, continuing along Via degli Armeni until you come to the intersection with Via Treportina on the left, which leads to the inhabited area of Treporti; you can stop in the square, where the Santissima Trinità church is located. This location, whose name originates from the three mouths of the port that exist there, include the islands Saccagnana, Chiesa and Portosecco (Treportine islands), formed by debris carried to the mouth first by the Piave and then by the Sile. After the devastations of the Hungarians (10TH century), the Genovese (14TH century) and the army of the League of Cambrai (16TH century), the life of the centre received a new impulse in the 1500’s with the birth of the Del Prà complex, in Saccagnana, where the first church was built just after 1517-18. In 1864 a new religious building was consecrated (where the current one stands) constructed on Chiesa island, thus transferring the vital centre of the village from Saccagnana to the current square. The 17TH century church, accompanied by a small contemporary bell tower with a cupola at the top, contained a main altar and four other altars, partially added during the 1700’s. Important restoration work was carried out around 1889, the year in which a new solemn dedication took place with the addition of Santa Filomena to the
The lands of Eastern Venice, by Valentino Besarel, and the
Casa Zanella in Saccagnana

Forte Vecchio of Treporti

Palazzetto Boldù in Lio Piccolo

ancient title of the Santissima Trinità. But the most radical transforma-
tions took place during the 1900’s. In 1913 the church was rebuilt with a
Latin cross system and a different orientation, and in 1932 a taller bell
tower was built; in the 1950’s and 1960’s two lateral naves were built, the
choir was enlarged, the flooring and marble claddings of columns and
balusters were refurbished, so that the facade of the seventeenth-century
building was inserted in the end of the north transept of the current
building. The current facade is characterized by two buttresses with pin-
nacles at the top that mark the central portions, pentile arches that un-
derline the line of the slopes and the rosette framed by white and pink
marble. The other facade, belonging to the 17th century church, has a
rectangular portal topped by a large stone cross, alongside of which
there are two large arch windows and a rosette in the gable. Unmistakable
in the panorama of the lagoon is the profile of the two bell towers, each
four-sided, the 17th-century one which is lower and has a curious cupo-
la, and the 20th-century one higher with a spire. Inside, the marble main
altar is topped by the ancon of the Holy Trinity by a Venetian painter if
the 19TH century; on the sides two canvases show the Last Supper and
the Holy Convocation painted by Francesco Enzo. Along the right nave,
on the altar of St. Rocco, there is a statue of St. Philomena, traditionally
worshipped as patron of Treporti. The altars of the left nave include the
wood statue of the Virgin with Child, by Valentino Besarel, and the an-
con showing St. Joseph with the Child and Saints Aloysius Gonzaga, Valentine
and Philomena, a work by Pietro Locatello from 1885. From Treporti you can board
vessels for Venice and the islands of Sant’Erasmo, Murano, Burano, and
Torcello; boarding is at the intersection of the three large canals called the canal of
Treporti, San Felice canal and Burano ca-
nal, where historically the customs offices
used to stand. If you instead you continue
on the itinerary, after leaving the square
you will cross the third of the three brid-
ges on Via Treportina and you will turn
right onto Via Saccagnana; continue for
about 1 km and then turn left onto Via
Del Prà, in the direction of Lio Piccolo. It
is worth stopping at the rural complex
of Piazza Del Prà in Saccagnana, the
first of the three Treportine islands in
which a permanent settlement was estab-
lished with a church, at the beginning of
the 16TH century, after the centuries in
the Middle Ages characterized by inva-
sions, disasters and environmental difficulties. The small church in
Saccagnana, originally dedicated to the Holy Trinity, relinquished its ti-
tle to the new church in Treporti in 1648 and became a simple oratory
named Madonna del Carmine. In Piazza Del Prà, beyond the oratory
and a few rustic buildings, stands the Zanella mansion, an example of a
Venetian Renaissance villa from the first half of the 16TH century, which
has been renovated several times over the years. Completely restored
between 1996 and 1998, it has a facade with pink plaster of great linear-
ity, a staircase for entry to the residential floor and a central elevation with three-
sectioned window, a small balcony and a
gable with the noble coat of arms at the
top. As you continue along Via Lio Piccolo, you will come to the hamlet of
the same name. From references con-
tained in some historical sources, one
learns that between the 11TH and 13TH
centuries, in the village of Lio Piccolo,
there was a bustling inhabited centre, the
parish of San Salvatore and a church dedi-
cated to St. Mary. But, starting from the
14TH century, Lio Piccolo began to lose
its population, probably due to worsening
environmental conditions, and to experi-
ence a sharp decline, to such an extent
that the parish was united with that of
Torcello. There is no information for the
entire period between the 15TH and
17TH centuries, when it is presumed that
the island was completely abandoned. In
1791, the Boldù family of Venetian no-
bles, owner of the entire island, built the current church, as comemo-
rated on the stone marker above the door, dedicating it to Santa Maria
della Neve; alongside it is the palace that takes its name from the same
family. In the middle of the 1800’s, the opening of the San Felice salt
works, at the time one of the largest in Italy and which remained active
until the early 1900’s, brought a certain amount of wellbeing to the in-
habitants of the hamlet. The Santa Maria della Neve oratory later be-
came the property of the Armenian fathers of the island of San Lazzaro
of Venice, who expanded it, alongside it were built the parsonage and, in
1911, the bell tower with a height of 22 metres. Inside, an ancon show-
ing Our Lady of the Assumption remained on the altar until 1958, after
which it was taken to the vestry, where it remains today. The nearby
Palazzo Boldù was probably first constructed at the end of the 1600’s;
the Boldù family became its owners in 1777 probably did extensive
The church of Santa Maria del Carmine, probably after the substitution of an ancon from the 1500’s that showed the Madonna del Carmine with the Child and two saints.

The settlements of Saccagnana, Lio Piccolo, Le Mesole, are surrounded by marshes, i.e. bodies of salt water, marked off by fixed boundaries made up of banks or poles, in which fish are raised that are tolerant to wide variations in salinity. The expression “fishery marsh” comes from the Latin vallum, meaning bank or protection; at the time of the Serenissima the banks were mobile and made of cane grates, which were subsequently replaced by fixed banks, closed by mobile partitions, which in turn were supported by masonry works known as “drains”. Very old references to the existence of this practice date it back to the 11TH century, when the marshes were the property of Venetian noble families and Benedictine monasteries, which they leased on an annual basis to the “vallesani”, the operators of the marshes, usually confirmed for decades.

From the hamlet of Le Mesole you will return to Treporti following the same route you took to get there; after crossing the three bridges, at the intersection turn left onto Via Pordelio, flanking the canal of the same name, until you come to Piazza Santa Maria Elisabetta, the centre of Cavallino. The course contains a great number of fortifications, as well as signal towers, commonly referred to as “semafors”, from the French word semaphore used to indicate flag signals that are visible over great distances, invented at the end of the 1700’s for communication between positions. The signal towers were part of an extensive defence system that was supposed to protect Venice from attacks from the sea and were built just before the First World War, starting from 1905. These building have several floors and either a four-sided or circular floor plan. At the top was a ranging device, which, through a system of optical prisms and trigonometric calculations, was used for rapid measurement of the distance to targets. Once abandoned, many of these towers were occupied by entire families who took up residence there. In Cavallino, in the main square, there is a monument to the war dead with a bronze statue of a horse on top, the symbol of the town, in front of which is the Visitazione di Maria a Elisabetta church, commonly called Santa Maria Elisabetta. Built in the 1700’s, this building replaced the two previous ones. The first one existed at the end of the 1500’s. The second was built at the end of the 1600’s by Matteo Alberti, owner of much of the territory of Cavallino. From 1700, the church of Santa Maria became a parish, it was subsequently expanded and provided with a small bell tower by Giacomo Feitema, consul of Holland in Venice, who succeeded Alberti in the ownership of Cavallino. With the continuous growth in population, in 1744 work began on the construction of a new church in a more central location (present-day Piazza Santa Maria Elisabetta) with respect to the village. This led to the present-day building, opened for ceremonies in 1751. The church underwent renovations at the end of the 1800’s and in 1916 it was substantially expanded in the hall and apse, remodelled internally and had cement decorations added to the facade. Between 1985 and 1988 it was completely restored and returned to its original forms, eliminating almost all of the work done in 1916, except for the decorations on the facade. Externally, in fact, the church has a neo-classical-liberty facade, divided into three sections by pilaster strips that rest on a raised foundation, with volute capitals at the top; at the top the facade is completed by a gable with a protruding cornice, at the centre of which there open a rosette. Above the portal there is a relief showing the scene of the Visitazione di Maria a Elisabetta, inserted during the work in 1916. The bell tower, which is 30 metres high and was built in the 1700’s along with the church, was renovated in 1906; the terminal spire was rebuilt in 1980. In the temple, the main altar in marble contains a canvas showing The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth, attributed to Sebastiano Ricci (late 17TH century), whereas on the right there is a painting, attributed to the school of Pietro Vecchia (19TH century), with the scene of the Dream of St. Joseph.
From the square of Cavallino, you can reach the so-called locks of Cavallino following Via Casson all the way to the end, which flanks the canal of the same name and starts alongside the square, or travelling along the main Via Fausta and turning right just before the bridge on the Sile that connects with Jesolo. Here you will find the ancient inn of the hydraulic locks, or the inn at the gates of Cavallino. The building, as seen today after recent restorations, is the result of numerous transformations which occurred after its construction in 1654. Before that, in its place, there was a wood building used as the seat of the custodian of the gates and of the officials assigned to collect duties on wine and grains from when, in 1631-32, the Flemish businessman Daniel Nys, by appointment of the Venetian Senate, oversaw the digging of the Cavallino canal (the present-day Casson canal) and the creation of the locks which allow communication between the lagoon and the Sile. Starting from 1654, the building became the seat of the duties official and of the custodian, but between the 17th and 18th century its use was changed, and the inn, in existence since 1632, was transferred to it from a nearby “casone”. The ancient customs functions is shown by a slab on the facade with the tariffs engraved on it for the boats that passed through the locks.

Once you return to Via Fausta, take Via del Faro, across the main road coming from the locks, and you will come to the mouth of Sile, where you will also find the lighthouse. Although from an administrative standpoint the lighthouse is in the municipality of Jesolo, geographically it belongs to the Cavallino coastline, since it is located on the right bank of the Sile or Piave Vecchia. The lighthouse was built in 1948-51 as a replacement to one built in 1846 and destroyed by the German army in 1944. Along Via Fausta, between the cemetery and the bridge on the Sile, there is the Cavallino nature preserve, a fenced-in area that belongs to the Armenian fathers of the Mechitarist Congregation of Venice. It is characterized by the presence of ancient dune chains (fossil dunes) that host vegetation suited to the unique micro-clime. The area contains especially prized plant life, since along with species typically from hot, dry climates, there are also plants from cooler, mountain climes.

Once you cross the bridge over the Sile at the end of Via Fausta, you will leave the Cavallino shore and you will enter Jesolo Lido, one of Europe’s most renowned seaside resorts, with a sandy beach that stretches about 15 km between the mouths of the Sile and the Piave, making it Italy’s longest beach. During the first decades of the 1900’s, Jesolo Lido initially saw the construction of colonies for children requiring therapies based on exposure to sunlight, the Istituto Marino was built (which today houses the city hospital) and the first seaside resorts and hotels began to appear; in the 1936 the locations named Spiaggia and Marina Bassa took on the name of Lido di Jesolo. After an interruption caused by the Second World War, around 1960 a tourism boom began that made Jesolo a holiday town with hundreds of hotels, villas, apartments, campgrounds and villages. At the two ends of the coastline, the tourist port on the Sile and the wet dock in Cortellazzo support amateur sailing with splendid itineraries up the rivers or among the lagoon marshes. In the central Via Bafile, in the Carducci ex-school complex, there is the City Museum of Natural History. It can be reached by travelling along Provincial Route 42 42 (Via Roma Destra) until the roundabout to en-

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**Gates, locks, dykes**

There are numerous hydraulic engineering works in this area, undertaken by man to adapt the environment to his needs, while taking into account the balances and physical laws that govern it. The words “gates”, “locks” and “sluices” are often used interchangeably. Actually, they have different meanings, although they all refer to works based on the principle of “da Vincian gates”. They are called this because they were designed by Leonardo da Vinci. Gates are a system of closures that are vertically hinged on pilasters. They open merely by the force of the water when the tide goes out and the water flows from above towards the sea. The opening of the gates allows it to run off, thus re-balancing the levels. During high tide, the force of the rising water causes the gates to close, thus preventing seawater from flowing back up the internal canals.

Hydraulic locks allow vessels to pass through canals that are not at the same level along their entire length, allowing navigation within differences of tide levels. Locks consist of two partitions that mark the ends of a container. When one or the other is opened, based on the principle of communicating vessels, they make it possible to change the level of water in the container, allowing ships to overcome differing tide levels which otherwise would cause strong currents.

A sluice consists of a partition which, when the tide is especially intense or there is flooding, prevents the passage of water in both directions between canals, marshes, internal lagoons, coastal lagoons and rivers.
ter Jesolo Lido and taking Via XIII Martiri until you cross Piazza Brescia which intersects Via Bafiè. The Museum has a surface area of about 900 m² and includes about 10,000 scientific and natural specimens that illustrate the most important fauna present in the European area. The museum also includes a section on the geographical composition of the Venetian territory, a botanical section, and a section dedicated to local culture, traditions and marshland crafts.

Coming from Jesolo Lido and following Via Roma Destra (provincial route 42 Jesolana) or, as an alternative, the bike paths on Via Cristo Re or Via La Bassa, which follow the course of the Sile on opposite banks, you will come to the village of Jesolo. In many ways, the origins and the events of this town are very similar to those of nearby Eraclea, with which there was a heated rivalry in the High Middle Ages, and with which it subsequently shared problems of swamp expansion in the surrounding lagoon, decadence and abandon, and attempts at rebirth. The ancient Equilium (or Equilum) stood on a lagoon island on the left Piave (the modern day Sile or Piave Vecchia) and was almost certainly first a settlement of ancient Venetians, and subsequently, as confirmed by numerous archaeological finds in the area also know as the “Antiche Mura”, a vicus during Roman times, i.e. an inhabited nucleus in a strategic position in the communications network by internal waterways (inter-la-

The Sile

Il Sile (from the Latin word silet, which suggests a gentle, quiet flow) is a resurgence river that rises at the edge of a river-formed plain in Casacorba, in the municipality of Vedelago, in the province of Treviso. The sources of the Sile are also known in the local Venetian dialect as fontan-assi. With its clear water that flows at a constant rate, the main bed extends about 85 km across the countryside in ample, harmonious loops. Near Caposile, it joins the old bed of the Piave (the present-day Piave Vecchia) and follows its course until its mouth near the Cavallino Lighthouse. Originally, the Sile flowed directly into the lagoon of Venice, near Torcello. But due to the expansion of swamplands in that area, in the 17TH century the Serenissima deviated its course towards the peninsula of Cavallino, causing it to flow into the last section of the bed of the Piave, the mouth of which in the meantime had been moved towards Eraclea. It still flows into the lagoon, with the Silone and Siloncello canals, at Portegrandi. The course of the Sile is connected to the changing shape of the entire Venetian plane, which was once covered by swampy areas that sloped down to the lagoon, but which today have largely been reclaimed. The sediment carried by this river are the reason for the youth and the substantial width of the Cavallino coastline, which is still advancing and whose beaches are among the widest of the upper Adriatic coast.

The Latin name Equilium (or Equilum) which evolved into Gesolo and Jesolo, would appear to derive from the Venetian word ekoilo, i.e. horse pasture, and from the Latin word for horse, equus; this would confirm the connection between the name of the location and the existence of thoroughbred horse farms. Starting from the 5TH century, as a result of barbarian invasions and the increasing Longobard pressure at the start of the 7TH CENTURY, the inhabitants of Altino, in particular, took shelter in Jesolo, which was already a sizeable village, making it rich and populous, active in trade and part of the federation of lagoon towns that had remained under the control of the Byzantine empire. In the 9TH century, the bishop’s seat was also established there. But during the 8TH AND 9TH centuries, the enduring rivalry and conflict with Eraclea, and the transfer of the doge’s seat from Eraclea to Malamocco, under whose authority came all the lagoon cities of Veneta Maritima, led most of the inhabitants towards Venice, with the buildings in Jesolo that belonged to the doge being destroyed and the materials recycled for construction in Venice. Conflicts, environmental problems connected with the tragic floods of the Piave and the burying of the harbour, as well as the invasion of the Hungarians at the start of the 10TH century, led to the decline of
the teeming port of Jesolo. In spite of this, between the 11th and 12th century, a great cathedral was built, named Santa Maria Maggiore, of which today there remains little more than a pinnacle. The constant expansion of the swamplands led to nearly complete abandonment of Jesolo, so that in 1466 the bishop’s seat was abolished and incorporated into the Patriarchate of Venice. It was the Soranzo Venetian nobles who promoted the rebirth of the town. They began land reclamation, which favoured settling of colonists, and they built the San Giovanni Battista church, which was made a parish in 1495 by the patriarch of Venice. Around it, there reappeared an inhabited nucleus, near the intersection of the Piave and a new canal, which joined the Piave to the Reveolo canal, constructed by the Serenissima to preserve and develop trade traffic on internal waterways towards Friuli. In 1499, the canal was assigned for maintenance to Alvise Zucharin and to his heirs; this surname gave the canal its name (Cava Nuova Zuccarina, today replaced by Cavetta) and, a bit at a time, that of the new village, which was renamed Cavuzccherina, thus forgetting the ancient name of Equilio-Jesolo. Between the 16th and 17th centuries, water engineering work to divert rivers, desired by the Republic of Venice, increased the swamps in that area, and were an obstacle to further development of the village. Cavuzccherina, which remained under the government of Torcello until the end of the 1700’s, became independent only in 1807 under Napoleonic rule. With the major land reclamation projects that took place between the end of the 1800’s and the early 1900’s, the urban centre began to grow, although the severe damage from combat in the First World War and Austrian occupation required complete reconstruction of the town and the land reclamation works. In 1930, the municipality regained its ancient name of Jesolo, and resumed the cultivation of the fertile lands rescued from the swamps, and also started the tourism trade.

From the centre of the town of Jesolo, proceeding along the course of the Sile, after Piazza Matteotti (in front of which there is the Vittoria Bridge), turn right onto Via Antiche Mura and you will reach the archaeological area that is at the end of the street. The remains conserved here, which are truly poor with respect to the original architectonic complex, regard the Roman cathedral of Santa Maria Maggiore, but at a lower level, discoveries have been made of the foundations of two previous basilicas, the first from the 5th century and the second from the 7th. This has demonstrated the overlapping on the same site of three successive constructions, one on top of the other, of which the two oldest ones represent simple basilica structures from before the establishment of the local bishop’s seat, and the third represented by a grandiose building constructed by the bishops and thus earning the title of cathedral. From the second basilica, 17 tiles have been recovered from a floor mosaic, which are now on display in the Jesolo city hall. The third basilica, dedicated to Santa Maria Maggiore, designed and built between the late 11th and early 12th century, preserved its outer walls almost intact until the early 1900’s, when shelling in 1917-1918 destroyed it completely, except for the pinnacle which still remains.

Go back along Via Antiche Mura and cross the Vittoria bridge on the Sile. Turn right onto Via Dragojesolo, in the direction of the marshes of Dragojesolo and Grassabo. Along the way you will encounter on the right the ruins of Torre Caligo, partially overgrown by vegetation; what was once the main entrance from the road is closed off by a metallic fence that makes it possible to recognize in the inner and outer walls, (crosses, a small tabernacle, perhaps the remains of a small altar) that indicate recent religious attention to the building. From the ancient High Middle Age tower that stood near the western end of the Caligo canal and was probably built on a previous structure from the age of the Roman Empire, a rather broken four-sided foundation remains, made of recycled Roman materials such as shards of stone and bricks. The building, which served to provide control and sighting for navigation inland from the coastline, seems to be the surviving member of a pair, since some maps from the 1700’s indicate a second tower by the same name, now completely vanished, at the opposite end of the canal, in Lio Maggiore. This course, which is perfect for bicycles, flanks the Dragojesolo, Grassabo and Lio Maggiore marshes, which are part of the northern lagoon of Venice and are adjacent to the Caligo channel and the Sile river. The landscape wends among the river and the lagoon, and the places are typical of salt-water lagoons, with vegetation that has adapted to the presence of salt, and areas of fresh water. In the marshes, flathead mullets, gilthead bream, bass and eels are cultivated. There is a wide variety of bird life (nesting, wintering and passing), with a numerous species of ducks, cormorants, seagulls, birds of prey, coots, and water fowl. As you continue along the right bank of the Sile, once you have returned to the town of Jesolo and crossed the Vittoria bridge, turn left onto regional route 43 along the left bank of the river. You will come to Caposile (in the municipality of Musile di Piave), after travelling about 7 km in the first case and about 10 in the second. This was the end of the section of the Piave river from Musile to Caposile, which the Republic of Venice closed off at Musile in 1664 in order to divert the water into the so-called “Piave...
Nuova” whose mouth is today in Cortellazzo. Caposile is also the eastern end of the canal Taglio del Sile (length 10 km) which the Venetians constructed, starting from Portegrandi, so that the Sile would flow into the old bed of the Piave, moving its mouth from the lagoon to the sea, at the point where the Jesolo shoreline ends and that of Cavallino begins. Characteristics of Caposile include the pontoon bridge, with manual opening, which allows vessels to proceed along the Taglio del Sile canal as far as Portegrandi, and the drawbridge near the convergence of the old course of the Piave and the Taglio del Sile, built in 1927 and in operation until 1957. In Castaldia di Caposile, in the former elementary school, there is the “La Piave Vecchia” Territorial Laboratory of Environmental Education, where educational nature workshops are held for schools and guided tours of the nature trail “La restëra di Piave Vecchia” and of the lagoon eco-system of the fishing marsh. The centre also has three museum rooms dedicated to the topics “The River of Resurgence” and “The Fishing Marsh”.

As you continue along provincial route 43, which follows the Taglio del Sile canal, you will come to Portegrandi, a hamlet of the municipality of Quarto d’Altino, born at the same time as the aforementioned canal, excavated in the period 1672-1683 and characterized by being higher than the surrounding lands (a “hanging” canal). To allow navigation and traffic towards the lagoon, it became necessary to excavate an off-level lock, which still operates, between the original bed of the Sile, today represented by the Silone which flows into the lagoon, and the new Taglio del Sile. The lock, with the opening of the great doors built between 1682 and 1684, allows rapid filling and rising of the waters, favouring the passage of vessels. This location, originally known as Bocca di Valle, quickly became called “Porte Grandi” in reference to the water works carried out by the Venetians. The river course is very suggestive along the Sile from Jesolo to Caposile, continuing to Portegrandi and then proceeding inland at Quarto d’Altino. The placid waters of the river are flanked by lush vegetation that offers shelter to plenty of wildlife, especially birds. In the surrounding farmlands, obtained via land reclamation in the early 1900’s, there is a succession of rustic houses, now mostly abandoned, that characterize the agrarian landscape created by sharecropping. Just north of Portegrandi runs state route 14, which you will need to cross to reach the actual inhabited centre, consisting of Ca’ Corner, whereas until the 1960’s the real centre of Portegrandi was “Conca”, where a constant flow of vessels enlivened the village. Ca’ Corner is the location of the parish church, the descendant of the one in Trepalade, named after St. Magnus the bishop and built in the early 1900’s. The church has a façade in white marble with a mosaic that shows Saint Magnus sustaining the church of Santa Maria Formosa in Venice; inside is a canvas of the Holy Family attributed to the school of Padovanino (17TH century). From Ca’ Corner take provincial route 41 towards Quarto d’Altino and shortly you will be in the hamlet of Trepalade which gets its name from the three palisade barriers erected around Sile to force boats to dock at the bank, where the customs building was located. Because of the role it played in customs, this location was also known by the term “Scrivania (desk)”. The hamlet, which was founded in the early 16TH century, was built near the point where the Siloncello canal joins the Sile via the locks known as “le portesine”, built in the second half of the 17TH century, and around the “Granza”, a complex of buildings that included the church, named after St. Magnus, the inn, and a storehouse owned by the Benedictine monks of the monastery of Santo Stefano in Altino. The ancient parish chapel of Trepalade is today a private home; a few remains of the material that were part of it were moved into the church in Portegrandi. Of great natural interest is the oasis of Trepalade, a small area near the Sile, owned by the municipality of Quarto d’Altino and managed by the Ornithological Association of the Lower Piave, where many reptiles, amphibious animals, and many species of birds find the vegetation to be the perfect place to reproduce. The oasis is along the main road (provincial route 41) and the entrance is next to the Tecnoglass company, where it is possible to take advantage of a spacious visitors’ parking area. This is the starting point for the nature trail that leads to the discovery of the various environments that characterize the area, each with its own vegetation and wildlife. The oasis includes a spacious facility to welcome visitors, researchers, and enthusiasts. A short distance away in Portegrandi, in front of the church, you can find the “Airone” Environmental Education Centre, which integrates and completes
the visit to the oasis. Also along the Sile, but further north than the Trepalade oasis, mention should also be made of the San Michele Vecchio loop, an area characterized by a wilder natural environment, managed by the Association for Environmental Safeguarding, Protection and Education. This nature area is located just past the centre of Quarto d’Altino, along provincial route 41, along the border with the municipality of Casale sul Sile and the province of Treviso. In Trepalade, it is worth mentioning some of the architecture, such as the Renaissance Palazzo Foscolo, which once belonged to Venetian nobleman Francesco Foscolo and is now the property of Rondinelli, Ca’ delle Anfore, which once belonged to Foscolo and has now been converted into a restaurant near the Trepalade nature oasis, and the rural homestead known as “Le Brustolade”, where a Venetic necropolis has been excavated. All of these buildings are located along the main road (or slightly in from it) that leads to Quarto d’Altino, which today is the municipal seat. The centre developed around the parish church of San Michele Arcangelo, which was started just after the mid-1800’s and completed in 1905. The facade with uncovered bricks has simple neoclassical lines, while inside a painting stands out at the end of the apse showing the victory of St. Michael the archangel over the devil, a gift of Pope Pius X. Above the right side door there is canvas showing the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Dominic, a work attributed to the school of Piazzetta or Nicola Grassi (late 17th-early 18th century). Alongside the church there stands a cylindrical bell tower, completed in 1956. It can be visited inside by going up a spiral staircase that ends in an open gallery from which you can enjoy splendid views, especially towards the lagoon of Venice. At the top of the tower there is a rotating steel statue of the Archangel Michael by the Venetian sculptor Romanelli. The name of the municipality comes from the ancient Roman city of Altino (Altium), which is today a suburb of the municipality, and from the distance from the town, a quarter (“quarto”) of a mile. The village of Altino was completely abandoned in the 7th century. There is no trace of it until the 15th century when, with the expansion of the Serenissima towards the area of Treviso, the patricians founded a village of farmers in the area around the lagoon, near the original site, which was named San Michele del Quarto. It was given its current name of Quarto d’Altino in 1946. Altino is a historical and cultural destination of great importance, with its National Archaeological Museum and the surrounding archaeological areas. The first permanent settlement in the territory dates back to the Bronze Age, between the 15th and 13th centuries BC. In the early 10th century BC, the Venetic centre of Altino was founded. Because of its special geographic position, it quickly took on a leading role among the other outlying centres. Starting from the end of the 6th century BC, Altino became a waypoint for merchant traffic along the lagoons and coast, and moving north from the stores of Adria and Spina. The finds of the excavation, albeit partial, document the evolution of the Venetic centre from the end of the 7th century BC until it was fully taken over by the Romans, starting with the construction of the Via Annia in 131 BC. The first period of urban development of Altino took place between 89 and 48 BC, when the city received full Roman rights, becoming a municipality and turning into one of the major waypoints of the upper Adriatic. Following the construction of new roads (the Via Claudia Augusta and the local roads for Oderzo and Treviso), between the start of the 1st century BC and the end of the 1st century AD, Altino became a bustling centre of traffic between the north, especially the area of the Danube, and the Mediterranean. Among the most vibrant economic activities documented by the ancient historians, there was the production of premium wool, the raising of queen scallops (pectines) and the raising of small cows that were great producers of milk. The city probably covered an area of about 120 hectares, and was enclosed in a ring of rivers and canals that made up a special water system that ensured, even in the middle of swamps, continuous water circulation and a healthy environment. As early as the 2nd century AD, traffic and trade would decrease, leading to an irreversible process of economic and cultural decline. Contributions to this process were also made by environmental conditions, and the impossibility to maintain that special hydraulic system which had so amazed architects and surveyors of the 1st century AD. In the 4th century AD, Altino became the bishop’s seat. In 452 the city was invaded and destroyed by the Huns of Attila. However, it was only in the 7th century AD that it was permanently abandoned by its inhabitants. They moved to Torcello along with the bishop’s seat, and some moved to other lagoon islands, setting the stage for the birth of Venice. What was left of the Roman city would, in coming centuries, be a source of material for construction in Venice and the islands of the lagoon. This was the beginning of a period of environmental transformations for Altino. Due to heavy foresting, the entire area was abandoned and became an unhealthy swamp. The first studies of the ancient city of Altino and first reports of excavations are dated at the end of the 1800’s. During the 1900’s, discoveries were made with increasing frequency; this was in part due to land...
The Sile near Quarto d’Altino

The Archaeological Museum of Altino

reclamation which, among other things, led to the discovery of a straight stretch of the road bed of the Via Annia. In the 1950s, the Superintendent started the construction of the Museum, which was inaugurated in 1960 and faces the town square alongside the parish church. The founding of the Museum marked the start of a continuous series of excavating campaigns that led in particular to the exploration of the necropolises located along the Via Annia, along the road to Oderzo and the road that connected these two thoroughfares. Over 2,000 burial items and a great number of funeral monuments were found, almost all of which were dated to the 1st century AD. There were many more finds than in the other Roman-age necropolises in Veneto and, more in general, in Italy.

More recent research has generally focused on the Venetic settlement. Necropolises have been discovered both for burial and for cremation with many items that date these sites to the 6th and 7th centuries BC. The necropolis excavated in 1977-79 in Brustolade, in particular, has turned up both cremation and burial tombs of warriors with Celtic weapons, along with the burial sites of 27 horses, probably the result of a certain ritual that was in use throughout Veneto between the 2nd and 6th centuries BC. Very recently, a major sacred area has been discovered and studied in Fornace. Born as a small antiquarium, today the Museum has unsuitable and insufficient display spaces. For this reason, it is planned to move it a short distance from its current location, in two large rural buildings located at the southern entrance to Altino, where restoration work has already been completed.

The first room of the National Archaeological Museum contains almost exclusively funeral monuments in Aurisina limestone and grave items from local necropolises. These are mausoleums formed as small temples or large shrines, tombs of noble families, and steles located at the corners of the funerary fences. Typical of Altino are the cylindrical or octagonal altars of Greek origin, used as urns and ossuaries and as covers for box urns. The decorative elements found in the necropolises include the so-called “Sirena”, a winged female figure holding fruit in her lap, and the headless statue of Icarus. The urban area has instead provided Corinthian and Ionian capitals, other architectonic elements, mosaics with black and white tiles, and part of the sundial with hemispheric and slab dial.

The first room also contains two amphora displayers, a great number of which have been found. The four central window cases contain a collection of funeral items composed of ceramic ossuary vases, which in some rare cases are made of glass, and decorations, personal items or tools. Two sets of items stand out among the other for the richness of services in coloured, finely decorated glass. The second room also contains mostly funeral monuments, most of which can be dated in the 1st century AD. In the centre there is a small set of precious sculptures in limestone and marble. Two imposing headless statues of winged tritons, which probably decorated the top of a funeral temple, are displayed on the wall at the end. The portraits located on wall-mounted shelves are excellent examples of Roman provincial art. The two display cases of this room show funeral items of the Venetic necropolises. The tombs of the first display case cover a period from the end of the 7th to the beginning of the 3rd century BC, while the large multiple cremation tomb of the second display case is dated between the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st centuries BC. The external archaeological areas lie to the east and north of the museum. In the area to the east, a section has been uncovered of over 40 meters, paved with trachyte paving stones, a strip of which can be seen in the garden of the museum. The road, which runs east to west, can be identified with one of the decumans of the Roman city. At the sides of the stone pavement, pavements in mosaic and opus signinum have been discovered that form a complex that corresponds to a home (domus) built in the Augustan age (end of 1st century BC - start of 1st century AD) and restructured during the 2nd century AD. Among the floor mosaics is one that shows a two-handled vases (kantharos) and one with a panther that is drinking. In the north area, there remain a few paving stones of a cornerstone of the Roman city, along with foundations in sandstone block that rest on a oak log corduroy of a large city gate, which can be dated between the 1st century BC and the first century DC, with an internal courtyard flanked by two towers with a square plan and round on the inside. In the same area, the foundations of a large building have been found, laid along a course of water that no longer exists, with a dock. The structure has been interpreted as a deposit for goods connected to a river dock dating to the same period as the city gate.

When you leave Altino, you will go back through Trepalade. From provincial route 41, take state route 14 and follow it in the direction of San Donà di Piave for about 9 km until the intersection with provincial route 45, where you will turn left to reach Meolo. In Roman times, this place was crossed by Via Annia, which represented a vehicle for trade and commercial interests connected with the nearby city of Altino, as documented by fine archaeological materials collected in the nearby countryside. Here, in the rustic Roman farm villas, the prized local wool was produced. The remains of a Roman bridge came to light in
The Via Annia

Roman settlers in the Veneto region started with the construction of the **Via Annia**, opened by the praetor Titus Annius Rufus, for whom it is named, in 131 BC, as an extension of the Via Popilia. The Via Annia started from Adria, in the province of Rovigo. It passed through Padua and Altinum on its way to Aquileia. It entered the surrounding countryside of Altinum near the current location of Marghera, running parallel to the lagoon as far as the Piave in the direction of Concordia (**Iulia Concordia**). In Concordia the Via Annia merged into the Via Postumia, built in 148 BC and connection Genoa and Aquileia. The two roads ran together in the segment between Concordia and Aquileia, and the name Via Annia quickly became used to describe this pre-existing section as well. Along with the many books on the places and territories along the ancient consular road, the website www.lavianna.org contains a wealth of useful information and suggested itineraries.

who took part or witnessed it, almost as a local epic. As you head up the Meolo river, you will be able to admire the facades of numerous Venetian villages built by the Venetian patriarchs as country homes for rest and leisure, but also as a place from which to supervise trade and farming activities. From south to north, you will first encounter **Villa De Marchi Nardari**, an eighteenth-century building with asymmetrical wings located in a large park, and **Villa Priuli Boscain**, built in the 1600’s, characterized by ten masks, each different from the others, and flanked by a small oratory dedicated to San Filippo Neri with the coat of arms of the Cappello family. Next, in the centre of the village, is **Villa Folco Dreina “delle colonne”**, now Cagnaro, which gets its name from the paired columns that characterize the portico. A nearby rustic structure also has columns, in a sort of continuity that leads one to believe there may have been a pre-existing monastic cloister with porticos. Opposite, past the square, is **Villa Dreina**, built in the early 1800’s and now the property of the municipality. During the First World War, in the winter of 1917 it housed the supreme headquarters of the Italian Army. On November 9, 1917, the change of command took place there between Luigi Cadorna, who was removed from command after the defeat at Caporetto, and General Armando Diaz, who would lead the Italian army to its victories along the Piave in 1918. In the heart of the village there is also **Palazzo Cappello**, the current-day town hall. It dates back to the 15TH century and recalls typical Venetian palazzos. It is composed of a single three-storey rectangular body with the classic arched central three-light window and stone balcony. On the facade there is a sundial from 1516 and traces of frescoes. Nearby is the **San Giovanni Battista parish church**, whose existence is documented in the middle of the 12TH century. The church, which underwent substantial renovations during the 1500’s, has sober, nearly Romanesque lines. It contains two frescoes by Giandomenico Tiepolo, the son of Giambattista, painted in 1758: the **Baptism of Jesus** on the ceiling of the presbytery, and the **Four Evangelists** in the pendentives. Just after you pass the church, on the banks of the Meolo river there is also **Villa Malipiero**, now called **Villa Priuli Boscain**, built in the 15TH century and surrounded by a lovely park. Finally, north of the village, still along the river, stands the 15TH-century
**Villa Corner,** which replicates the plan and the fresco decoration of Palazzo Cappello and is flanked by the 18th-century oratory dedicated to the Blessed Virgin of Carmel. Also of considerable interest is **Villa Vio,** both for the noteworthy frescoes it contains, and for the external painted tapestry-style decoration. **Fulvio Roiter** was born in Meolo in 1926. He is an artist of visual memory who certainly holds a leading position in the history of Italian photography for his unrivalled photos of the Carnival of Venice and Venice itself, but especially for his valuable collections in black and white that immortalized numerous parts of Italy.

When you leave Meolo, you will reach regional route 89. Cross it and take provincial route 48 until Capo d’Argine, then turn left towards **Fossalta di Piave.** In Roman times this area was eastern end of the local fertile farming area, and was one of the few points in which the lower Piave could be forded. After the decline, environmental degradation and abandon of the high Middle Ages, in 1032 Fossalta di Piave became the property of the patriarchs of Aquileia. Afterwards, in the area between the great “della Silvella” forest and the bed of the Piave, a village began to take shape. The hamlet took the name of Fovea Alta (Fossa-Alta) and was already formed by 1177, so that the patriarch of Aquileia assigned it as a feud of Ezzelino da Romano upon his return from the Holy Lands. In some documents of the late 12th century, mention is also made of the name “Campolongo di Fovea Alta” and is appears to have been administrated by the Benedictine monks of Monastier di Treviso on behalf of the patriarch of Aquileia. Subsequently, the bishop of Treviso took over ownership of the feud, but in 1339 Treviso swore allegiance to Venice. At the end of the 1400’s, the territory appears with the name of Fossalta Plateis, permanently assigned to the Republic of San Marco. To improve communications with its Friulan inlands, Venice employed the most famous hydraulic engineer of the time, Marco Cornaro, to create a new navigable canal. The digging of the Fossetta thus began. It entered operation in 1483, providing links with the Oderzo area. The new waterway gave Fossalta a major economic, commercial, and artistic boost. In this location, numerous patrician villas were constructed; however, not a trace of them remains today as a result of the devastation of World War One. The Venetian hydraulic system suffered a crisis during the 1600’s. In 1721 the Fossetta closed, and Fossalta suffered an economic and civil decline of more than a century. During the First World War, after the Italian defeat at Caporetto in 1917, Fossalta was on the defensive line of the Piave and was the target of enemy military barrages. Its inhabitants were evacuated and transferred as refugees to Prato. The village’s tragedy came to a head between June 15 and June 23, 1918, during the Austrians last desperate offensive. They managed to cross the Piave right at Fossalta. The town was the scene of house-to-house, yard-by-yard fighting, in which it was totally destroyed. The Austro-Hungarians encountered fierce resistance in the Lampol loop, and on June 22, 1918, the Austrian command ordered a retreat, thus liberating Fossalta. Villa Tolotti Silvestri, Villa Canthus (ex Marina) and Villa Rossetto survived the destruction that occurred. In the flood plain of the Piave, an area of about 30,000 m² that belongs to the municipality, a river park has been established and forested with local plants. The area includes a footpath and a bike trail. Nearby is the characteristic pontoon bridge that allows the river to be crossed and connects Fossalta di Piave and Noventa di Piave on provincial route 48. Built in 1951, it is commonly referred to as “passo”, to recall the times when service was provided by a boat or moving bridge. The wide loop of the Piave near the bridge offers an especially suggestive and pleasing landscape. Here, **Ernest Hemingway,** who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954 and was a Red Cross volunteer during World War One, was wounded on July 8, 1918. In his memory, the municipality of Fossalta placed a marker in 1979. Hemingway’s experience with Veneto would continue after the war, and he was often in Caorle, Cortina, San Michele al Tagliamento and Venice. Many of his poems, along with the novels “A Farewell to Arms” e “Across the River and Into the Trees”, were inspired by the events of the Great War. From Fossalta di Piave, follow provincial route 50 as far as the intersection with state route 14. You will soon arrive in Musile di Piave, which along with San Donà, Noventa and Fossalta forms the so-called quadrilateral of the cities of the Piave. The territory of Musile di Piave was once characterized by marshes, shoals and swamps, except for a heavily wooded area at the hamlet of Croce. Today, the southern hamlet of Caposile, on the previous leg of this itinerary, faces directly onto the lagoon swamps. This
The pears of the Venetian area IGP

Pears were introduced between 1920 and 1930 as an initiative of large agricultural holdings, such as those of the counts Frova in the area of Jesolo and the counts Marzotto in Valle Zignago, between Concordia Sagittaria and Caorle. In Venetian tradition, it is not unusual for pears and cheese to be eaten together, as shown by the saying, “Don’t let the farmer know how well cheese goes with pears”. Pears are excellent au gratin with Montasio, accompanied by a glass of Tocai Italico. The areas of production typically includes the municipal lands of Caorle, Ceggia, Cavarzere, Cona, Concordia Sagittaria, Eraclea, Fossalta di Piave, Fossalta di Portogruaro, Jesolo, Marcon, Meolo, Musile di Piave, Noventa di Piave, Portogruaro, Quarto d’Altino, San Donà di Piave, San Michele al Tagliamento, Santo Stino di Livenza, Torre di Mosto, and Cavallino-Treporti.

Consortium for the Protection of the Typical Pear of Venice, via G. Pepe 142/2, 30172 Mestre-Venice, tel. 041 971322, fax 041 971952

The vegetables of Cavallino

The peninsula where Cavallino-Treporti lies is characterized by an especially favourable climate, with mild winters and warm, dry summers which, thanks to the sea breeze, are not excessively hot and humid as in the Venetian inland. The land, which is the result of deposits from the Piave and Sile rivers, is easy to work. All of these conditions make for cultivation of fruits and vegetables with special nutritional characteristics and an unmistakable flavour. In recent years, the cultivation of vegetables has replaced that of orchards and vineyards, and a new landscape has been created. It consists of crops protected in plastic greenhouses and tunnels that allow rapid ripening for some products, and the growing of others during the winter. The most traditionally raised vegetables are lettuce, radicchio, garden valerian, chicory, spinach, beets, peppers, aubergines, tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, green beans, beans, violet artichoke of St. Erasmus, and “Montine” green asparagus. Coastal agriculture makes use of the best traditional techniques along with innovative ones that are respectful of the consumer and the environment, by using targeted and controlled fertilization, using less pesticides, and favouring the use of beneficial organisms such as insects and mites, both for pollination and for parasite control.
ation of Italy with the restoration of the Piave Vecchia section (1873) and the start of land reclamation. On the front lines after the rout of Caporetto (autumn 1917), it became a battlefield in June 1918 and was reduced to rubble. The current town centre was built in the 1920’s. After that, land reclamation was completed to create what today is fertile farmland. Past the city hall, the parish church was also reconstructed in neo-Gothic style in 1919. In the city hall and the middle school, some Roman items discovered in the local area are preserved. In Salsi, you can still see the remains of an ancient customs tower, which some believe is the surviving part of the hermitage of Saint Romuald. In 1992, items were discovered in Millepertiche from the Venetic age. They are almost certainly from a settlement located on a sandy hill, now vanished. Among the items found is a bronze votive disc, complete with a ring for hanging it, with an engraving of a female figure that can be identified as the Venetic deity Reitia, the goddess of plants, animals, and the cycle of life and death. The disc, dated at the 3rd or late 4th century BC, is preserved in the Concordiese National Museum in Portogruaro.
The area between the Piave and the Livenza was heavily influenced by the period of land reclamation, and large-scale hydraulic engineering by the Venetians before that. This brings us to Eraclea Mare, the “green pearl” of the upper Adriatic, a quiet seaside resort that arose after the land reclamation of the first decades of the 1900’s. Still today it has a dense coastal forest and a small yet charming lagoon. Nearby is the mouth of the Piave, which historical manmade diversion projects and natural events have placed at the port of Cortellazzo, a village still dominated today by a tradition of fishing. As you head up the course of the Piave, on its right bank you will come to the town of Eraclea, the descendant of the Byzantine town of Eràclia and homeland to the first doge. You will then continue on to San Donà di Piave, the main point of reference for the territories that the great river runs through. The town’s historical centre was destroyed during World War One, but today it is a thriving commercial and industrial city. The San Donà Land Reclamation Museum conserves and hands down to future generations the memory of the enormous work that involved all the territory that separates it from the sea. In Noventa the Piave still takes centre stage, inviting you to travel its shores and banks and to admire the elegant Venetian villas in the surrounding area, and then to return to path of the ancient Via Ania, documented by the remains of the Roman bridge in Ceggia. As you head back south, you will approach the Livenza, passing through Torre di Mosto and ending up among the most symbolic elements of land reclamation such as canals, cultivated farms, rustic houses and pumping stations, which still today are indispensable for maintaining the fragile balance of these lands extracted from the waters.

LENGTH OF COURSE: ABOUT 66 KM
Itinerary: Eraclea, San Donà di Piave, Noventa di Piave, Ceggia, Torre di Mosto

The starting point for the itinerary is Eraclea Mare, a seaside resort town characterized by prized natural locations that flank the beach and the coastal appendix of municipality of Eraclea. An important role in the birth and development of this tourist location was played by the Pasti family, whose origins can be traced to Verona. In 1913 they purchased the Livenzuola Marsh, a swampy area between the Revedoli canal and the sea, where in ancient times the Livenza river flowed out. In short, a part of the swamp was drained to be used as pasture, thanks to the construction of banks and the use of a horse-driven pump on the banks of the Revedoli, where the present day plant of the Livenzuola-Ossi Marsh Basin Consortium is now located. After work was interrupted by the First World War, land reclamation resumed in the following years. In 1925, 750 fertile hectares were obtained, almost all of which were below sea level, some as much as 2 metres. Marco Aurelio Pasti sowed stone pine seeds and set out young plants, thus creating the pinewoods of Eraclea Mare, which covers a surface of about 100 hectares. It was intended to act as a windbreak, to protect the dunes from erosion and the reclaimed land from stormy seas. In December of 1943, to prevent possible landings by the American army, the German army flooded the area again. Here they also constructed a forced labour camp. As soon as the World War Two ended, drainage work got under way and the previous conditions were restored. In the early 1960’s, the Pasti family built the first small tourist resort villages and a campground. The location, which until then had been called “Lido Santa Croce”, took on the name of Eraclea Mare. The name of the Pasti family is also connected with the drying warehouse, which was in operation during the Second World War and which today houses the Environmental Education Centre. It is located just a short walk from the beach. The building is currently owned by the municipality of Eraclea and was renovated in 1992. It is generally referred to as the ex-furnace and it has a tall smokestack. However, it was actually built by the Pasti family in 1942. Food left the warehouse packaged, labelled and ready to go on the market. The plant stayed in operation for a couple of years. Then the building was transformed into a chicken farm, which stayed in business until the 1970’s. At the Environmental Education Centre, which is housed in the former drying warehouse, educational activities take place in collaboration with schools, such as workshops and nature excursions. There are
also projects aimed and increasing knowledge and appreciation of the area aimed at the many tourists who flock to the shore in the summer. The Centre is also home to a display area that illustrates the seashore ecological system and the local culture, a seasonal information point specialized in cultural and natural tourism, a theme-based library with a reading room and an Internet access point, and a bookshop with educational publications and materials.

From the ex-drying warehouse you can reach the Laguna del Mort on foot or by bicycle, along the beach or following the trails that cross the coastal pinewood (about 1.5 km). Or, from the main road that enters Eraclea Mare, you can follow the signs all the way to the end of Via dei Pioppi, at the end of which there is a parking area. Take the trail on the right of the Mariclea marina and you will immediately be in front of the lagoon. The Laguna del Mort (or Lama del Mort) is the most important area from a natural point of view of all of Eraclea’s coastline. It extends from the village of Eraclea Mare to the mouth of the Piave. This sea lagoon was formed recently, fed exclusively by the flows of the tide. In fact, it formed in 1935, when there was heavy flooding of the Piave, whose mouth was then located here. This caused the breakdown of the sea dune; the layout of the mouth was modified and the last stretch of the river bed (about 2 km) was abandoned, quickly transforming the small lagoon basin into the “Mort di Eraclea”. The saltwater lagoon is separated from the sea by a dune covered with the grassy vegetation that is typical of sandy soil (psammophilious). To the west, it borders on a freshwater swamp of permanent pools surrounded by dense canebrake. Back of the lagoon, you will find a mixed forest, which formed on the old river bank and on the buried stretch of the bed of the Piave. The artificial pinewoods, a mix of domestic and maritime pine, stands on fossil dunes and is rich with plant life. Among the most typical plants to be noted are the halophilous types, which are typical of salty soil. Besides the windbreaks, which are made up of tamarisk shrubs on the shallows, shores and shoals, there are dune grasses, shoal grasses, coastal absinthium, common lavender, marine aster and inula sea-fennel. Some highly prized species should be pointed out: the mountain orchid, the swamp orchid, and the Venetian hemp, a plant of the steppe of which Veneto is the furthest west it can be found. The lagoon area is characterized by shallow water with sandy, muddy bottoms, rich in bi-valve molluscs such as mussels, clams, razor clams, oysters) which are actively harvested. The most common fish is the flathead mullet, but there are also flounder and sole. During the spring and summer there is a large population of gulls and cormorants. In the autumn and winter this is the habitat of the mallard, teal, codon, wigeon, pochard and grebe. During the autumn and spring migration, there are also a substantial number of small wading birds and sandpipers.

From the Laguna del Mort, following the right-hand trail that runs along the edge of the pinewoods, you will come to the bank of the lagoon basin. From there you can take a small road that will quickly lead you to the beach. You can now take reach the mouth of the Piave from the beach, or you can head back up the harbour of the lagoon along trails that wind through dunes. You can also reach the convergence of the Revedoli canal and the Piave river, where you will find the so-called “gates of Revedoli”, a work of hydraulic engineering that allows navigation along the Venetian coastline.

Leaving Eraclea Mare by car, cross the Revedoli canal and turn right immediately towards the locality of the same name, bearing right at the intersection with the bank road (Via Revedoli). Proceed along the right bank of the Revedoli until the pontoon bridge, upstream from where the canal flows into the Piave, in the fascinating Ossi March. The marsh gets its name from the Venetian family that used to own it, in spite of a legend that claims that the name comes from the finding, in 1903, during excavation for the foundation of a pumping station, of tens of aligned skeletons (ossi=bones), interpreted as the remains of warriors of ancient Eraclea and Equilium (Jesolo) who fought repeatedly during the 7th century. After you cross the pontoon bridge that leads to the right bank of the Piave, after a short stretch on the bank road you will come to Cortellazzo, a hamlet with a small fishing and tourism port that was created around the gates of the Cavetta canal that connects the Piave to the Sile. In Cortellazzo, the Piave reaches the open sea, after the Serenissima diverted the last part of its course and caused it to flow into the original bed of the Sile (also know as the Vecchia Piave in that section). The origins of the name of the hamlet are not clear. Cortelazzo
in Venetian dialect means “dagger” or “long knife”, whereas in sailors’ jargon it means “dagger” or also “lower studding sail”, a small sail that is added to vessels to increase the thrust of the wind. Along the Cavetta canal, dug between the end of the 16TH century and the beginning of the

The Piave

The Piave is an Alpine river whose headwaters are on the southern slopes of Mt. Peralba in the municipality of Sappada, at an altitude of over 2000 meters. At 220 km, it is the fifth-longest Italian river. It flows into the Adriatic at Cortellazzo, between Jesolo and Eraclea. In its first section, it appears to be an Alpine creek. When it reaches the territory of Treviso, it spreads out into a number of branches with gravel beds. At the end of its course, from Noventa di Piave to the sea, it looks like a typical flatland river, flowing between high levies that have been constantly reinforced over time to contain rushing floodwaters. Since it is an Alpine river, it undergoes seasonal changes. It reaches a low water mark in the summer and during dry winters. It fills during the autumn and winter. Originally, its mouth was at the western end of Jesolo, where the Cavallino shoreline begins. The enormous amount of sediment that was deposited here was a hazard to the Venetian lagoon, as it risked burying the mouth of the main port of the lagoon and cutting off Venice’s access to the sea. For this reason, the Serenissima Republic, starting from the 15TH century, designed and built a series of large-scale hydraulic works to ensure, in case of flooding, the safety of lands on the right bank of the Piave, and to move the mouth of the river as far as possible from Cavallino, towards Porto Santa Margherita. During the 1500’s, a number of artificial canals were dug (Taglio del Re, Cavetta, Nuova Cava Zaccarini). In the 1600’s, the Piave was blocked off (“intastadura”) at Musile, and from there a large canal was dug that diverted the last section of the river. In 1664, when work was complete, the diversion was closed off, and the waters of the Piave were channelled into the Piave Nuova. This created the great Lake of the Piave, which flooded the territory of Eraclea. The work was not yet complete when, in 1683, a major flood of the river (known as “the break of the Landrona”) drove the waters of the Lake of the Piave over the shore dunes, thus creating the mouth at Cortellazzo, in the area of the present-day Laguna del Mort. Another unexpected modification to the layout of the mouth came in 1935, when the last section of the riverbed was isolated. This formed the Laguna del Mort and a short distance away the current mouth at Cortellazzo was formed. In the old bed of the Piave, inactive after the diversion in 1664, the Venetians diverted the waters of the Sile, which flowed into the lagoon and contributed to swamp extension; its mouth was placed in Cavallino. Since then, the old course of the Piave has been called Sile or Piave Vecchia, and the mouth of the Sile is also known as Porto di Piave Vecchia.

17TH century in an attempt to channel the waters of the river away from Venice, trade developed between Venice and the towns of Friuli. The first cabins were built along with an inn, followed by houses and in 1698 a small church named Madonna del Rosario. On the orographic right of the mouth of the Piave are the pinewoods of Cortellazzo, located on old stabilized marine dunes. It contains almost exclusively stone pine (Pinus pinea) which were seeded starting in 1920-1925. For boating enthusiasts, from the port of Cortellazzo the Eraclea section of the navigable route of the Venetian coastline crosses the bed of the Piave, reaches the marshes of the Revedoli canal and continues east towards the Largon canal, which crosses the Altanea Marsh and flows into the Livenza.

From Cortellazzo, if you go back to the pontoon bridge without crossing it, you can continue back up the right bank of the Piave, where you will encounter a riverside landscape with large hand lift fishing nets operated from inside special huts. After about 7 km, at the intersection with provincial route 42, turn right, cross the bridge over the Piave and you will enter the town of Eraclea. The original settlement of Eraclea was formed in one of the islands that emerged from the vast lagoon which in ancient times covered the entire area between present-day San Donà di Piave and the seacoast. The largest island was named Meldissa. It was in front of the mouth of the Piavon river which connected Oderzo to the lagoon, and therefore acted as a port for the Roman city of Opitergium. In the 5TH century, to escape from the barbarian invasions which had penetrated the north-eastern borders of the Roman empire, the inhabitants of the inland towns migrated towards the islands of the lagoon, which had remained under the control of the Byzantine empire. The inhabitants of Oderzo took shelter on the islands of Meldissa and Equilium (Jesolo). Many of them settled there permanently, especially after the Longobard raids between the second half of the 6TH and the first half of the 7TH centuries, which destroyed the city. In 639-640, the bishop of Oderzo, St. Magnus, followed by most of the population, moved to Meldissa, which was renamed Heraclea, in honour of the Byzantine emperor Heraclius. However, a bishop’s seat that was independent from Oderzo was probably not instituted until the 9TH century. Along with the other towns in the lagoon, such as Grado,
Caorle, Jesolo, Torcello, and Malamocco, where the population of the area between the Piave and Livenza rivers had moved, Eraclea formed a sort of federation in which each town was governed by magistrates subservient to Ravenna and Byzantium. But internal rivalry, frequent attacks by Dalmatian pirates and constant armed conflict between Eraclea and Jesolo resulted in power being concentrated in the hands of a doge after a battle won by Eraclea in 690. It was desired that the first doge, Paoluccio Anafesto, elected in 697, should be from Eraclea; his election is commemorated each year in the middle of October with the historical re-enactment, “I dogi a Eraclea”. The ancient Eràclia, rich, heavily populated and bulwark of the defences of Byzantine holdings against the ambitions of the Longobards of the inlands, was chosen in 697 as the seat of the nascent duchy and capital of Venetia maritima. However, hostilities with Jesolo did not end, and the lagoon was beginning to suffer the effects of swamp expansion due mainly to the deposit of river debris. This slowly made the area unhealthy, removed the isolation of the area which ensured security, and buried the ports. As a result of this situation, the doge's seat moved to Malamocco in 742, and most of the population of Eraclea moved to the safer and healthier Venetian islands. For Eraclea, this was the start of a rapid decline and a long period of abandonment. In the 9th and 10th century, the doge Angelo Partecipazio and the Orseolo family descendants, both of whom had roots in Eraclea, attempted to revive the town as a resort area for doges, possibly at that time giving it the name of Cittanova (Civitas Nova). But the rebirth was partial and fleeting. The village was destroyed by the wrath of the Hungarians at the end of the 9th century and again in the 11th. Due to worsening environmental conditions, Cittanova found itself mired in a muddy, malarial quagmire, and by the end of the 1300's it consisted of nothing more than a few farmhouses. Although the bishops by then actually lived in Venice, it continued to be the bishop's seat. For this reason, in 1440 the Pope eliminated the seat, combining it first with the Patriarchate of Grado and later with the Patriarchate of Venice. Between the 16th and 17th century, the Republic of Venice undertook a series of hydraulic engineering projects in an attempt to prevent swamp expansion. The last of these was to block off and divert the last stretch of the Piave. In 1664, when work was complete, the waters of the Piave were channelled into the Piave Nuova. This created the great Lake of the Piave, which flooded over 70% of the territory of Eraclea. Large-scale land reclamation, which got underway only in the second half of the 1800's, continued until the first decades of the 1900's. The Venetian nobleman Almorò Giustiniani Lolin built a church dedicated to Saint Mary on the left bank of the Piave, which was consecrated in 1728. Around this church, there arose the impoverished village of Grisolera, which took its name from the many swamp canes with a greyish-brown tail (in local dialect, grisòle or grisóle). The local inhabitants used these to weave mats, partitions to close off access to the marshes, roofs for farmhouses and finally ceilings for dwellings. Grisolera was devastated by the First World War, and its land was flooded by the Italian army to obstruct enemy movement. Land reclamation resumed at the end of the war and continued until 1940. The name of Eraclea became permanent on November 4, 1950, when the municipality of Grisolera obtained the permission of the President of the Italian Republic to take back the name of the first seat of the doges of Venice. The site where ancient Eraclea stood is about 10 km north of the present-day town. It has been subject to archaeological exploration but is not open for visits. Excavations were carried out in 1953-54 which brought to light, in addition to architectonic elements from the age of the Roman Empire, traces of foundations from the High Middle Ages. In particular, these included the baptistery, which was probably connected to the San Pietro cathedral, built in the 7th century. Some of these remains, found in the Cimitero locality, are conserved in the Archaeological Museum of Oderzo and in the Museum of Land Reclamation in San Donà di Piave. No other traces remain today; the foundations of the ancient buildings were demolished and the materials recycled for other construction projects.

From Eraclea, take provincial route 52 along the left bank of the Piave. After about 9 km you will come to San Donà di Piave, the largest town in Eastern Veneto with a population of just under 40,000. The city has a decidedly modern look to it, since it was completely rebuilt after being damaged by war. In particular, the First World War caused the complete destruction of the city. It was sacked and occupied by
the Austrians in 1917, shelled by artillery barrages and abandoned by its population. However, San Donà dates back to medieval times. Just after the year 1000, with the construction of the banks of the Piave and the slow return of the population to an area that had been nearly completely abandoned during the barbarian invasions, the village of Mussetta was founded. The hamlet was centred around a castle built by the patriarchs of Aquileia, while from a religious standpoint the village was subject to the bishops of Treviso. It was probably in the first half of the 12th century, along the shores of the Piave, just downstream from Mussetta, that a chapel was built dedicated to St. Donatus of Epirus, bishop and martyr, whose body was recovered in 1128 after a crusade in the Holy Lands and was given to the Doge of Venice by the bishop of Torcello. The village which formed around the small church took the name of *Villa Sancti Donati*, which is the origin of the present-day name of San Donà. The second part of the name, “di Piave”, was added after World War One to commemorate the epic Battle of the Piave which concluded with the Italian victory over the Austrian army. In 1250, there was a catastrophic flood of the Piave. On that occasion, the course of the river changed slightly for a short stretch, so that the San Donato chapel changed from the left to the right bank, and therefore was separated from its territory, which came to be known as *San Donato de qua de la Piave* to distinguish it from the adjoining community known as *San Donato oltre la Piave* (present-day Musile di Piave). Until 1389, the area was affected by a number of wars, first between Venice and Treviso (13TH century), and then between Treviso and the Duchies of Austria. This was followed by a long period of stability lasting about two centuries, which saw the rebirth of San Donà under the rule of the Serenissima Republic. Between the 15TH and 16TH century, various Venetian nobles purchased at auction a large number of vast tracts of land. After the sudden fall of the Serenissima, the town assumed a new administrative organization only during the reign of Napoleon, becoming a municipality in 1806. From 1871 until the early 1900’s, major land reclamation projects were undertaken. They were not only interrupted but also severely damaged during World War One. At the end of the war, as a result of the extensive damage and the loss of countless lives, the city was awarded the Bronze Cross for Military Valour. The next twenty years were dedicated to major reconstruction work, the reinforcement of the banks of the Piave, the restoration of roads and railways and the resumption of large-scale land reclamation. The cathedral and bell tower were also built, which are the symbols of the city. Heavy bombing during World War Two led once again to extensive destruction. However, the city reacted heroically and was awarded a second honour, the Silver Medal for Military Value.

Once you reach San Donà, having followed for a stretch the left bank of the Piave and bearing right on the road that descends there, shortly afterwards turn right to follow the sign for the Land Reclamation Museum. Continue past the cemetery, and at the traffic light turn right onto Viale Primavera, following the signs to the Museum. The **Land Reclamation Museum**, open to the public since 1983, contains a collection of images, plastics, specimens and artefacts that illustrate in chronological order the transformation of the lands of San Donà from ancient times to the present. It is composed of five sections: archaeology, ethnographic, land reclamation, wartime and nature. The archaeological section contains a number of pre-historical and protohistoric artefacts, along with a noteworthy amount of materials, many from Eraclea-Cittanova, which document Roman and late-ancient presences in the territory of the lower Piave. The ethnohistorical section reconstructs the peasant style of living and working in the period before major land reclamation projects. The section on land reclamation illustrates the history, the method of operation and the results
achieved by the grandiose defence and drainage projects. The wartime section contains information mainly dealing with the First World War, commemorating the terrible struggles along the Piave and the war of attrition in the muddy trenches, both from the Italian and the Austrian point of view. Finally, the nature section uses dioramas, picture boards and drawings to show what the swamplands looked like before land reclamation, with the characteristic plant and animal life.

From the Museum, go back the way you came until you come to the banks of the Piave. Bear right, and follow the signs for Venice and the A4 motorway. Take the Lungopiave and head up the river. When you come to the obligatory left turn, you can leave your car in the spacious parking area of the Piave Flood Plain Park. This is a green oasis of over 6 hectares which extends along the left bank of the river. It is equipped for athletes and for tourists who enjoy walking through it. The park is composed of woodlots, glades, meadows and clumps of shrubs, the result of natural reforesting of the flood plain and of the natural growth of cultivated plants. There are about twenty species of trees and shrubs, mainly the white poplar, locust, hybrid poplar and white willow. Birdlife consists of that which is common to river areas and woodlands, and includes the red woodpecker, blackbird, long-tailed tit, golden oriole, and ring dove. Starting from the Riverside Park in San Donà, you can go on a rather long walk along a path that goes up the river bed along the left bank all the way to Fossalta di Piave and Noventa di Piave. From the parking area of the Riverside Park you can walk to the centre of San Donà. You can also get back in your car and follow the signs to the centre. There is pay parking behind the Cathedral and near the City Hall. The heart of the town is Piazza Indipendenza, which is faced by the severe, rigorous geometry of the City Hall, the Land Reclamation Consortium of the Lower Piave and the “Leonardo Da Vinci” Cultural Centre, which hosts The City Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, with exhibitions of works by Venetian, Italian and international artists. The Cultural Centre is beautified by an internal courtyard, which is the location of exhibitions and shows. It is covered by a cupola of fine architectonic design. This space also hosts a popular literary café, a place for refreshment and cultural encounters. In front of the city hall there stands a monument dedicated to Giannino Ancillotto, who was born in 1896 in San Donà di Piave and is remembered as one of the aces of the Italian Air Force in World War One. Not far from Piazza Indipendenza is the centrally-located Piazza del Duomo, where the monumental sacred building is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, reconstructed after the First World War in neo-classic style. Alongside it stands a bell tower from the same period. Both squares are bordered by Corso Trentin. To the west, this street leads to the Vittoria bridge on the Piave river, which connects the municipalities of San Donà and Musile di Piave.

Continuing by car, from the car park of the Riverside Park or from the centre of the city, without crossing the bridge take Via Lungopiave Superiore. Bear right onto Via Unità d’Italia (provincial route 83) and turn right onto Via Vittorio Veneto just after the railway underpass. Here you will find the Park of Sculpture in Architecture, which was founded by private initiative in an area that is the property of the municipality. It is a path that is dedicated to modern and contemporary art, and includes sculptures in iron, cement, wood, steel, glass and marble. These works remain outdoors in the green architecture of the tall trees, dense shrubbery and glades. From provincial route 83, which continues on to Noventa di Piave, turn right onto Via Basso after the roundabout. This will place you in front of Villa Ancillotto and its Ornamental Historical Park, one of the few examples in the territory of San Donà of complexes of historical trees created for ornamental purposes, albeit somewhat recently. The park is neglected and cannot be entered since it is on private property. It has largely returned to its natural state, but it preserves interesting specimens of white poplar, pagoda tree, American black walnut, Atlantic cedar and Virginia cypress. Once you are back on provincial route 83 you will quickly reach Noventa di Piave. The etymology of the first part of the town’s name is today lost in obscurity. Scholars have come up with a number of hypotheses, of which the most credible ascertains that Noventa means “new” or “rebuilt”. The second part of the name (“di Piave”) marks its location along the river of the same name, and is required to distinguish it from other towns with similar names, such as Noventa Padovana, Noventa Vicentina, and so on. Some archaeological finds show that the town was inhabited as far back as the 1st century BC. After the invasions and devastation of the High Middle Ages, Noventa was reborn around the 10th century, due mainly to the authorization that the Venetians received from the emperor Otto III, in 996, to build a port and a market on the Piave, at the end of the navigable stretch of the river. The town was reconstituted here, and this is probably the period from which it gets its name. In 1090 the emperor Henry IV assigned the parish church and part of the territory of Noventa as a feud to the Strasso family, while temporal sovereignty belonged to the patriarch of Aquileia. In 1177, the Strasso family assigned Noventa and Mussetta as a feud to Ezzelino da Romano.
upon his return from the Holy Lands. In 1260, after the violent demise of the Da Romano family, the jurisdiction of Noventa was turned over to the municipality of Treviso. In subsequent centuries, the locality was involved in constant wars between Venetian lords for control of the territory. Peace finally came in the 15TH century and continued for nearly 400 years, as the Mark of Treviso came under the dominion of the Republic of Venice. Development was based mainly on activity in the river port and a lucrative trade in prized horses acquired in Eastern Europe (especially Hungary) and sold in major Italian markets. The end of the Serenissima in 1797 also marked the beginning of the slow decline of Noventa. Towards the end of the 19TH century, with the construction of the Venice-Portogruaro railway, the port fell rapidly into decay. From then until the 1960’s, it was only involved in the excavation and shipping of sand and gravel. The First World War brought the most tragic events to Noventa. In the autumn of 1917, after the collapse of the Italian lines at Caporetto, the town was on the firing line, and after a year of fighting was completely destroyed. The inhabitants, left homeless by the dramatic situation, came back at the end of the war and rebuilt the town, even though the destruction was so vast that government authorities advised against attempting reconstruction. In the main square of Noventa stands the San Mauro Martire church, completed in 1923 in neo-Romanesque style, with a bell tower alongside it. It replaced the ancient parish church that dated back to the 11TH century, which was destroyed by warfare in 1917 and originally faced the river. On the inside, the fresco decorations are the work of professor Tiburzio Donadon of Pordenone. On the altar of the left nave there is an image of the Virgin with Child painted on board in the style of the Venetian school of the Bellini (15TH-16TH century) and covered by a sheet of embossed silver. Also worthy of note is the marble statue from the 1700’s of the Virgin, a work by Giovan Battista Marchiori, and the processional cross which can be dated to the 12TH or 13TH century, a masterpiece of Venetian goldsmiths. Excavations made between 1979 and 1981 in the area where the ancient San Mauro church stood have brought to light a Roman archaeological complex, on top of which were built medieval and Renaissance structures. The mosaics found under the floor of the destroyed parish church are dated between the end of the 3RD and the beginning of the 4TH centuries BC. After restoration, they were displayed on the walls of the council room of the City Hall. The centre of Noventa is connected directly to the flood plain of the Piave by the so-called ‘tunnel’, which is the name inhabitants use to refer to the underpass constructed in the mid-1800’s to create direct access, via the bank, to the river port, which is today a park. Starting from the 1500’s, many Venetian patrician families acquired large tracts of property in Noventa. They built luxurious country homes on the banks of the Piave which were irreparably damaged during World War One. The villas that can be seen today were rebuilt in the 1920’s. The same is true of Villa Lucatello in Piazza Vittorio Emanuele and Villa Ca’ Zorzi, at the intersection of Via Guaiana and Via Roma, built in 1926 in the place of the building from the 1700’s-1800’s, as desired by Antonio Ca’ Zorzi, the father of the poet. Villa Ca’ Zorzi is influenced by the

Giacoamo Noventa

Giacoamo Noventa, the pseudonym of Giacomo Ca’ Zorzi, was born in Noventa di Piave in 1898, the last of five children of a well-off noble family of landowners. His first poems, which he wrote in Turin with the pseudonym of Emilio Sarpi just after the war, did not generate much interest. After periods spent in Venice and Rome, and meeting Umberto Saba in Trieste, he returned to Turin, where he began to frequent the leading scholars of the city, such as Carlo Levi and Mario Soldati. But his opposition to Fascism forced him to flee to Paris, where he frequented the philosopher Jacques Maritain. After a lengthy period spent wandering through France, in 1929 he came back to Italy and finally managed to publish, under his own name, a number of poems; he also began writing in dialect. After his marriage in 1933, he settled in Paris, and later in London, where he began using the pseudonym Giacoamo Noventa. When he came back to Italy, he was incarcerated as an anti-fascist, and in November of 1939 he was sentenced to forced residence in Noventa di Piave. He was drafted into the military at the outbreak of World War Two. When he was discharged in 1941, he lived in Turin, Noventa di Piave, Courmayeur and Florence until the armistice, when he was fortuitously able to escape being arrested by the Germans. Around the mid-1950’s, he moved to Milan, where he published a complete collection of his poems and essays. In 1956 he won the Viareggio Prize for poetry with the collection Versi e Poesie. He died of a brain tumour on July 4, 1960. The municipality of Noventa di Piave, along with the municipality of Santo Stino di Livenza, with the sponsorship of the Province of Venice, in 1994 established a bi-annual national literary award, named after Giacoamo Noventa and Romano Pascutto and open only to poets who express themselves in dialect.
styles of the late 1800’s but also has certain Liberty-style traits. It also has a shed and stands in an Italian garden of about two hectares with tall, centuries-old trees. A short way further on, in Via Roma, is Villa Doria De Zuliani. It once belonged to the noble family De Zuliani Porta di Ferro, great landowners and lumber merchants who came to Noventa from Belluno at the end of the 1700’s.

From the square of Noventa, continue on provincial route 83 in the direction of Ponte di Piave until you come to the village of Romanziol. On the right side of the road, near a small oratory, you will encounter the “Il Pendolino” Nature Education Centre, structured as a museum-laboratory and involved in the teaching of natural sciences and the promotion of ecological awareness. The centre contains a room with single-subject displays, an audio-visual room, display rooms on the local eco-system, a laboratory for educational activities, and an educational garden. Outside, there is a nature trail that is about 2 km long; it follows the course of the Piave and provides a chance to see the surrounding farmlands. In the same locality of Romanziol, Villa Da Mula deserves mention. It was originally designed by Sansovino and frescoed by Paolo Veronese. Today it has been renovated. Villa Bortoluzzi also should be mentioned. It is the building of greatest architectonic value in the village of Santa Teresina. Its outlying position far from the front lines along the Piave saved it from destruction during World War One. To reach it, go back to the centre of Noventa and follow the signs to the A4 motorway. At the roundabout, look for the sign for Santa Teresina. Follow the sign for a short way and then turn right onto Via Santa Teresina. The villa was built at the beginning of the 18TH century by the Spanish Fonseca family, which became part of Venetian nobility in 1664. It is currently undergoing renovation, along with the long porticoed building that extends from its right side, and will become the location of service industry businesses. The villa which has made the longest-lasting mark on the place names of the local area is the one built by the nobleman Marcantonio Memo in the early 1600’s in what today is the hamlet of Ca’ Memo. You can reach it by going back to the centre of Noventa. Pass the square as you head towards San Donà and turn right at the roundabout onto Via Ca’ Memo. The Memo (or Memmo) family was one of the oldest in Venice. At the time the villa was built, Marcantonio was the Procurator of San Marco and in 1612 he was elected doge. He held this office for only a few years as he died in 1618. Considering the status of the person, at the end of the 1800’s, when it was decided to give the municipality a coat of arms, along with a horse and the river, the blazon of the Memo family was also included. The villa, which no longer exists, was next to the bank of the Piave. It also included the Redentore public oratory, which was destroyed in war. In its place, the current Redentore church was built, which on its face has an engraving with the year of construction of the villa, 1605.

From Ca’ Memo, go back to the Noventa roundabout. Continue to the next roundabout of San Donà. Here, take the exit towards Grassaga-Motta di Livenza to pick up state route 14 towards Santo Stino di Livenza-Portogruaro. After about 7 km you will come to Ceggia. In Roman times, the territory of Ceggia was on the edges of the lagoon. It was a bustling, productive area, crossed by the busy via Annia, which connected Padua, Altino and Aquileia. This is documented by numerous archaeological finds that were found throughout the municipal area, along with the bridge on the Via Annia in the locality of Riva Zancana. It is very likely that the origins of the name of the town comes from the word cilium (edge, border) or cilia maris, which is what the Romans called the locality because it sat on the edge of the lagoon. The decline of the Roman empire, barbarian invasions and the gradual sinking of the land that let water in led to the abandonment of the countryside, which became an enormous swamp, in favour of the coastal strips. This started a long period of decline of the area, which would last throughout the entire High Middles Ages. In those times, Cegla, as it was called, was reduced to a tiny hamlet located on a strip of land that was higher than the swamps. It was thus contested for at least three centuries by the feudal lords and the monastic settlements. In the 13th century, the municipality of Treviso, to which it was only nominally subject, set up a customs station (palada). In 1317 Ceggia became the property of the Da Camino family. They held it until 1832, when it came under the dominion of the Republic of Venice which, preoccupied with serious hydraulic problems of its own, did nothing about land reclamation but quite to the contrary allowed the swamps to expand so as to serve as an inland defen-
Across the River. Also in the centre of the town, near the footbridge and Into the Trees", mentioned by Ernest Hemingway in his novel "Across the River and Into the Trees. Also in the centre of the town, near the footbridge across the Piavon, on the wall of a house there is a stone marker from 1727 with the toolls of the ancient river customs ("passo de Ceggia") which were in effect the following year. The Bragadino oratory is also worthy of mention. It was reconstructed in 1795 in neo-classical style, and completely frescoed inside by the Venetian artist Giuseppe Bernardino Bison (1762-1844). Originally, the small sacred building was built, alongside the villa of the same name, by the nobleman Marco Antonio Bragadin (1523-1571), the Venetian governor of Cyprus who was killed by the Turks. The oratory is located to the northwest, in the direction of Cessalto. It can easily be reached on foot from the centre of the village. As you follow the pleasant path through the green that winds along the banks of the Piavon canal and flanks the Grassaga canal, you will come to the Olme forest, a Specially Protected Natural Site of Community Importance which straddles the municipalities of Ceggia and Cessalto. This is the remains of a flatland forest typical of the Venetian plains and the Po valley. In the 1970's, it was reduced to just 24 hectares by the construction of the Venice-Trieste motorway. In spite of its small size, ninety wildlife species have been identified in the woods. Now get back on state route 14 in the direction of Santo Stino-Portogruaro. After about 1.5 km, turn right onto Via Ponte Romano, which leads to the archaeological area where, in 1948, the remains of a Roman bridge on the Via Annia were discovered. The bridge is from the 1ST century AD. It crosses the ancient bed of the Piavon river. The foundations in sandstone block and the two heads remain today. Back on state route 14, heading towards Santo Stino, after about 1 km turn right on provincial route 57. You will quickly arrive in the hamlet of Pra' di Levada, where you will find Villa Franchin, which dates back to the second half of the 17TH century. It was originally the property of Augustinian monastery of the nuns of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Murano. After the closure of the monastery in 1810, the land and buildings were purchased by private individuals. Near the villa there is also the oratory of Pra' Levada, with a gable and small bell tower. It is also known as Santa Maria degli Angeli or Dell'Annunziata. It was built in 1668 and reconstructed in 1853.

As you proceed along provincial route 57, you will soon come to Torre di Mosto, a village on the banks of the Livenza river. It is traditionally a farming community but has shown constant development in the fields of construction, artisanship and industrial agricultural. The territory of Torre di Mosto, during pre-Roman and Roman times, was included in the system of lagoons that connected the lagoon of Venice with that of Caorle. The Via Annia passed along the edge of the lagoon at the northern border of the territory. Around the 5TH century, the Romans built a guard tower at a loop in the Livenza. Its purpose was to guard against the invasions of barbarians from the north. Towards the end of the 7TH century, the territory gradually turned swampland due to constant flooding of the Piave and Livenza rivers. It was inhabited by peasants who built a village where there already existed a chapel dedicated to St. Martin and a stout tower built by the doges in 721 to defend nearby Eraclea. It was this tower that would give the village its name. In 1411, the village of Torre was destroyed and the tower razed to the ground.
Piave DOC wines

The grapes from which these wines are required to be grown in the area of the basin of the Piave river. In the province of Venice, this includes all of the territory of the municipalities of Fossalta di Piave, Meolo, Noventa di Piave, Quarto d’Altino, San Donà di Piave and a part of the territory of the municipalities of Venice, Ceggia, Eraclea, Jesolo, Musile di Piave, Torre di Mosto.

The wines have the following names:

Red wines: Raboso, Cabernet, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Nero.

White wines: Tocai Italico, Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, Verduzzo, Chardonnay.

The local Raboso wine is mentioned as early as Roman times in the Naturalis Historia by Pliny the Elder (1st century AD). The grapes were called “rabosa” because of their strong nature. At the time of the Serenissima, Raboso reached Venice on rafts that carried goods and passengers. It goes well with very old cheese, such as seasoned Montasio.

Consortium for the Protection of “Piave” DOC Wines, c/o CCIAA (Chamber of Commerce), via Toniolo 12, Treviso, Italy tel. 0422 591277, fax 0422 412625, consorzio.piave@tv.camcom.it
from the Livenza to the Lemene
from the Livenza to the Lemene

The itinerary starts in Caorle, a port of Roman origins, a typical fishermen’s village and a renowned seaside resort. As you head up the Livenza river along its right bank until Santo Stino, you will cross a rural countryside that is the result of land reclamation in the first decades of the 1900’s, as can be seen by the pumping facilities and canals. From here, you will enter the heart of the area where the “Lison Pramaggiore” DOC wines are produced. It is characterized by small villages which often have well developed artisanship and industry alongside the agriculture. As you cross the countryside, you will be surprised by the appearance, among the rows of the vineyards and factories, of the lordly villas of Santo Stino, the San Marco church in Corbolone, the restored mill in Belfiore di Pramaggiore, the lakes of Cinto Caomaggiore, and the medieval abbey in Summaga, in the municipality of Portogruaro. As you move back south, the Roman and Late Antiquity vestiges of Iulia Concordia bear witness to a glorious past as a rich colony due to the strategic position at the intersection of two important thoroughfares (the Via Anina and the Via Postumia), connected to the port of Caorle by the Lemene river, and a defensive bulwark against the dangers from the north-eastern borders of the empire. The lagoon landscape, which in ancient times stretched almost all the way to Concordia, has partially survived land reclamation in the Valle Vecchia reserve. This area contains a wide variety of plant and animal life, a lush coastal pinewoods, and the so-called “della Brussa” beach, one of the rare examples of undeveloped coastline on the upper Adriatic, exactly halfway between Caorle and Bibione.

Length of Course: About 80 KM
Itinerary: Caorle, Santo Stino di Livenza, Anone Veneto, Pramaggiore, Cinto Caomaggiore, Concordia Sagittaria

The itinerary starts out from the town of Caorle. Along with its beach, this welcoming seaside resort boasts a historical town centre of medieval influence, founded as a fishermen’s hamlet, and a lagoon area of great natural value. Evidence has been found in the Caorle area of settle-ments in the protohistoric age, as shown by the results of archaeological excavations in the San Gaetano locality, where the remains of a village were found that had developed between the 8th and 13th century BC. During Roman times, Caorle was known as Portus Reatinum, and was mentioned by Pliny the Elder. It was an outlet port to the sea of the colony of Iulia Concordia, thanks to the connection of the two towns by the Lemene river (Reatinum flumen). The name Caprulae (which would become Caorle) subsequently came into use. According to traditional theories, it comes from the pagan goddess Capris, or from the presence of goats on what was in ancient times a lagoon island. Another traditional hypothesis is that the original name of Caorle was Petronia, perhaps after the Latin writer Petronius Arbiter (1st century AD), considered by some as the first tourist of these shores. The presence of an active Roman commercial port is confirmed by numerous archaeological finds, especially stone markers and ceramics, and by the discovery in 1992 of a shipwreck from the 1st century BC. The ship was loaded with wine amphoras, and sunk off the coast of Caorle. Part of the cargo was recovered, and the wreck was covered with anti-intrusion nets. This find moved the municipal administration and the Archaeological Superintendence of Veneto to plan a National Marine Archaeology Museum. This will be located in the near future in the buildings of the ex-agricultural Chiggiato, at the entrance to the cities. The refurbished building already houses the Tourism Promotion Agency, the City Police and the Centre for the Promotion of Agricultural Products. During the periods of barbarian invasions (5th-6th century), the populations that fled from the inlands, especially from Concordia, sought shelter in the islands of the lagoon. This was the beginning of the permanent settling of Caorle. Starting from early centuries of the Middle Ages, the lagoons that separated Caorle from the mainland became swampy. This created an unhealthy, inaccessible environment. The situation was faced in a radical manner only in the early decades of the 1900’s, with major land reclamation projects that permanently welded Caorle to the mainland. After the Longobard invasion of 568-569, a sort of fracture was created between the territory of the inland, which became part of the Longobard kingdom, and the coastline from Ravenna to Grado, including Caorle, which remained
under the control of the Eastern Roman Empire with its capital at Byzantium. With the rise and consolidation of Venetian power, Caorle entered Venice’s political, economic and cultural sphere of influence. It benefited from the advantages of this privileged relationship, but it also had to suffer the revenge of Venice’s enemies. The 11th century seemed to be the start of a period of major renewal and construction, since that is when the present-day cathedral and bell-tower were built. The cathedral would be officially recognized until 1807, when the small diocese of Caorle was cancelled and combined with that of Venice. Caorle was heavily damaged during World War One. Austrian occupation led to the mass exodus of refugees towards southern Italy. After the depression that followed the Second World War, around 1960 the tourism industry began to develop. Many inhabitants dedicated themselves to this sector. In doing so, they abandoned fishing, which was once the only resource and is still today one of the town’s main activities.

At the roundabout that enters Caorle, turn left. There is a spacious parking area in Viale Aldo Moro, where the weekly market is held on Saturdays and which is also the location of the stadium, the sports arena, the amusement park, the Expomar and the bus station. From here, by walking back to Strada Nuova (the main entry street), you will flank the canal where fishing boats dock. Following the dock and continuing on to the Fishery, you can start your visit of the historical centre from the fishing port. In front of this, you will find the retail fish market, under the portico of a neo-Gothic building, and the wholesale seafood market, in the location of the ex-Fishing Consortium, instituted in 1854.

Cross the street and on the left take the characteristic Calle delle Liburniche. You will come out in Rio Terrà delle Botteghe, the heart of the historical centre of Caorle. Here the main businesses are located, housed in typical fishing village buildings. They are small, somewhat colourful, and often have protruding chimneys. Rio Terrà is today a pedestrian street, closed to vehicular traffic. Its name recalls its original identity, a canal (rio) that led to the sea and which would later be buried (terra). The same happened to many others that crossed the city and converged on the main thoroughfare of Calle Lunga, which has maintained its original appearance and runs parallel to Rio Terrà. The burial of the city’s canals started in 1822 and ended in the second half of the 1800’s. The reason for doing so, besides creating more available space, was mostly to reduce malaria, carried mainly by the mosquitoes that bred in the stagnant waters. At the end of Rio Terrà, turn right in front of Calle delle Liburniche. You will now be in Piazza Vescovado where there are two buildings that are symbols of Caorle: the cathedral dedicated to Saint Stephen, and the bell tower. The church is thought to have been built in 1038. Although there is no specific documented evidence, there is no doubt that it replaced a pre-existing building. This is shown by fragments of stone markers, most of which can be dated to the 9th century, that were re-used in the temple. The architecture is clearly Romanesque with Byzantine influences. On the sides of the main portal, there are two marble reliefs. They are Byzantine works of the 11th or 12th centuries that show St. William of Toulouse on the right and St. Agatho on the left. The nearby bell tower has a characteristic cylindrical shape and leans slightly. It is from the 11th century, probably a few decades after the church. It is also made of visible bricks that rest on a base of stone shards. A series of openings that alternate windows with one or two lights, and a gallery with columns and capitals that lighten the tower and make it quite attractive. Inside the church, the space is divided up into three naves by two rows of pilasters alternating with columns that
The lands of Eastern Venice were made in the early 1900’s by a. According to tradition, the statue of the Virgin was seated when it was found among the waves. At the end of the presbytery area is the marble main altar. It suffered from the ruinous effects of the sea, which seriously damaged it, so much so that it was completely reconstructed in 1476 and reduced to a single hall in 1751. On the outside, at the top of the façade, there are statues of Saint Michael flanked on either side by two Angels. The internal walls of the church were clad in marble after restoration work in 1948-49. The lunette vault surface is frescoed with the Four Evangelists at the rounded corners and, in the centre, the scene of the Finding of the Statue of the Madonna in the Sea, painted by Gino Filippi of Portogruaro in 1948. The chapel on the right holds the stone throne upon which, according to tradition, the statue of the Virgin was seated when it was found among the waves. At the end of the presbytery area is the marble main altar. It holds a wooden sculpture of the Madonna, made in the early 1900’s by a sculptor from Val Gardena, after the older statue was destroyed by fire in 1923. Above the crowning part of the altar, there is a valuable marble slab.
from 1595. It was recovered from the pre-existing church, and it shows a relief work of St. Michael the Archangel by Andrea Dell’Aquila.

At the end of the Trieste seaside road on the eastern beach, at the eastern end of the shore where the Nicesolo flows out, is the zone of Porto Falconera. It takes its name from the custom of Venetian nobility of hunting with falcons. At the end of the coastal road, turn left and immediately take Viale dei Cacciatori on the right. This will take you across the campgrounds, and you can look out onto the lagoon area and the mouth of the Nicesolo, where you will notice the first wood and cane constructions, the casoni. From here, there is a trail that is about 1.5 km in length. You can travel it by bike or on foot. It leads to the fishermen’s village of Bocca Volta, on the so-called “Isola dei casoni”. The settlement is characterized by the typical structures made of swamp cane, which were originally built and used by fishermen during the fishing season in the lagoon marshes. The village can be reached on foot, by bike or by boat from Porto Falconera. You can also get there by car from the parking area in Viale Aldo Moro. To do so, go just past the stadium. On the right, take the lane that flanks the Saetta canal. Leave your car in the small turnout just before the narrow trail that enters the island.

The casoni

Ancient and extraordinary examples of symbiosis between man and an environment of salt and fresh waters, of land in and out of the water, the fishermen’s casoni of Caorle mostly have an elliptical plan, with an east-west orientation, and roofs with steeply sloped roofs that sometimes nearly touch the ground, other times connected to the vertical walls. The load-bearing structure of the roofs and walls, which generally have a perimeter that is about 8 metres long and 6 wide, is made of a frame of wood poles between which strips of swamp cane are inserted after they have been shaped and tied, placed with the flowering part up for the walls and facing down, to favour water run-off, on the roof. The entrance, generally located on the short western side, opens onto a single room, with a central fireplace for heating and cooking, with no chimney, with one or two small windows on the long sides (on the north and south) and no openings on the east side to protect against strong north-eastern gales. Mats for sleeping could be placed on wooden platforms that could be reached with short ladders. Around the casone, there was almost always other structures that were once essential to fishing and to the life of the fishermen and their families: a small boat dock covered with a cane roof (cavana), holes closed with nets to keep the catches alive, a place to hang and dry nets and laundry, sometimes a smaller casone used as a tool shed, a vegetable garden and some barnyard animals.

The area west of Caorle is dominated by recently-built tourist facilities. At the end of the dam opposite the Madonna dell’Angelo, the Venezia coastal road begins and runs along the western beach. At the end of the end of the western shore, the mouth of the Livenza river separates Caorle from the hamlet of Porto Santa Margherita. To reach it, you can take the ferry. If you are travelling by car or bus, you will need to leave Caorle on the main road and turn left just after the overpass that crosses the Saetta canal. Where the Altanea Marsh was once located, today there is the modern, well-equipped tourist resorts of Porto Santa Margherita and Duna Verde. Beyond them, the territory of the municipality of Eraclea begins. For boating enthusiasts, Porto Santa Margherita can provide docking for over 800 boats. Each June, it hosts the 500 x 2 regatta, which runs 500 miles on the route Porto Santa Margherita/Caorle-Sansego (Croatia)- Tremiti Islands and back. Porto Santa Margherita is connected to an episode that occurred in the 10TH century. Dalmatian pirates kidnapped the Venetian brides and stole their dowries at the beginning of the group wedding that was celebrated on the first day of February in the San Pietro cathedral in Castello (at the time known as Olivolo), in Venice. The Venetian fleet caught the marauders on the beach of Porto Santa Margherita. With the help of their faithful allies from Caorle, they defeated the pirates and took them prisoner. From that time, that beach has been known as “Riva delle Donzelle”. Venice commemorates the episode with the “Festa delle Marie”. In Caorle, this page in history is recalled during the event “Caorlevivistoria”, which is normally held in September but is currently being re-organized.

A few kilometres north of Caorle, turn right off the main road that leaves the town (provincial route 59) and you will come to the small rural hamlet of San Gaetano, which today is inhabited by just a few families. It is clustered around the villa of the Franchetti family who, starting in 1860, undertook the land reclamation of the entire surrounding area. The small rotating bridge on the Lemene river has recently been renovated. It replaces the original, which was built in 1892. A short distance further on, the Lemene flows into the Nicesolo canal and then into the lagoon. Alongside the main palazzo, there is the oratory dedicated to St. Cajetan, the patron saint of the village. In Villa Franchetti and in the
hunters’ house named after the same lagoon marsh, the American writer Ernest Hemingway was often a guest. They would go hunting together in the lagoon. Hemingway’s famous novel “Across the River and Into the Trees” contains many references to the lagoon landscape, its charms and the people the writer met in the area. Archaeological surveys started in 1993 have identified in San Gaetano, in the locality Casa Zucca, the remains of a protohistoric settlement (not visible) that developed between the 8th and 13th centuries BC. It can be attributed to Venetic culture. It had the characteristics of a lagoon edge village, made of huts very similar to the “casoni”. Among the finds that were made, the most important is undoubtedly a comb made of deer antler. It is engraved with a dice pattern, and has been dated to the 11th century BC. It is kept in the Concordiese National Museum in Portogruaro.

After leaving San Gaetano, get back on provincial route 59 in the direction of Caorle. Turn right just before the entry overpass in the direction of Porto Santa Margherita. At the traffic light, turn right onto provincial route 62, which runs along the bank of the Livenza river. It crosses the river at the Ponte delle Bilance bridge, which can be opened with a lift mechanism. Shortly thereafter you will come to the hamlet of Ca’ Corniani. This rural location is surrounded by over 1,700 hectares of land of a lagoon origin. It lies between the right bank of the Livenza river and the Livenza Morta-Brian canal branch. It was founded around the 18th century, when major land reclamation of the marshes was being undertaken by the Venetian Corniani family. Until the early 1800’s, it was a vast malarial swamp. In 1851, the area was purchased by the Assicurazioni Generali company. In just a few years, by building canals and a pumping system, they completely reclaimed the territory. It was transformed into 60,000 m² of farmland centred on the village. Ca’ Corniani is the first example of total land reclamation of the Venetian swamps based on private initiative. The agricultural holding which was founded there in 1880 when reclamation was complete is still in business. The village includes the wineries of the holding, the two squares surrounded by rural buildings (Campo Procurative e Campo Rimembranze) and the single-hall San Giovanni Battista church, built in 1920. The most imposing building houses the offices of the holding. It has a large yard in front of it which was once used for collecting and threshing wheat after harvesting. The nearby hamlet of Ca’ Cottoni shares a very similar structure and history. It was founded at the beginning of the 1700’s.

As you follow provincial route 62, you will come to La Salute di Livenza. Turn right and cross the bridge over the Livenza. Continue along provincial route 42 for about 1.5 km. At the four-way intersection, turn left onto provincial route 59 in the direction of Santo Stino di Livenza, which you will reach after about 12 km.

After crossing state route 14 at the roundabout, you will enter Santo Stino di Livenza from Viale Trieste. The first traces of settlements in the area go back to Roman times and are connected with the passage of the Via Annia. As it ran from Adria along the Adriatic coast, it came to (the roman city of Julia Concordia). Its path is followed in large part today by state highway 14 between Venice and Trieste. Around the 10th century, the inland began to be re-populated after the barbarian invasions. Near an ancient Roman settlement, the Prata family built a castle. Only a few traces of the original mansion remain today in the completely renovated building. Around it, the village of Santo Stino would be built, which takes its name from a shortened form of “Stefano”. In 1387, during one of the many wars between the patriarchate of Aquileia and the Republic of Venice, the castle of Santo Stino was assigned by the patriarch to the archdeacon of Gorizia, Simone de’ Gavardi. He launched a number of raids into Venetian territory and went so far as to sack and burn Caorle. Venice’s revenge was just as violent. It ended in 1388 when the castle was attacked and burned. In 1420, the territories of the Patriarchate of Aquileia were annexed by the Republic of Venezia (1420). Santo Stino was no longer on the border. It lost its strategic importance, and the castle became the elegant residence of the Zeno family of Venetian nobility. As if wars and epidemics were not enough, the lives of the residents of San Stino were also marked by disastrous flooding of the Livenza. Things got so bad that by 1766, the population was down to 1,731. After the unification of Italy, work began along the Livenza to protect the territory from catastrophic flooding. Between the two world wars, the village was involved in major land reclamation projects, which recovered more than 3,000 hectares of land from the muddy waters. One of the largest reclaimed areas goes by the name of “Bonifica delle Sette Sorelle”. The efforts of the labourers who played the most important part in this epic

**The Livenza**

The Livenza river, with a length of about 115 km, has its headwaters in the municipality of Polcenigo (Pn), at the foot of the Cansiglio highlands, with two Carso sources known as the Santissima and the Gorgazzo. Just downstream from the sources, it becomes a typical flatland river with a winding course. It flows through Sacile (Pn) and enters Veneto just before Portobuffolè (Tv), receiving just further south, on the border with the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, the waters of the Meduna in the locality known as Tremeacque. The name of the river can be found in the names of any number of towns and villages along its banks: Meduna di Livenza, Motta di Livenza, Santo Stino di Livenza, La Salute di Livenza, San Giorgio di Livenza. In the past a major commercial waterway, the Livenza, with its frequent flooding, has conditioned the lives of many communities over the centuries, so much so that at the town of Santo Stino the river was diverted, closing off one of its loops in the 1920’s.
work is masterfully told by the Santo Stino poet Romano Pascutto.

In Santo Stino, the City Hall is located in Piazza Aldo Moro. From there, on the left, take Via Fratelli Martina. This will lead you past the castle on your left. Over the years, it was transformed into a noble palazzo. It is now a private residence and cannot be visited. Surrounded by a park with dense vegetation, it appears as a villa set on three floors. Continue until you come to the banks of the Livenza. You will now be able to see the bell tower and the Santo Stefano parish church. These were built to replace the previous one in the second half of the 19th century. It has a simple facade with protuberances of visible brick. Villa Rubin is located near the church. It was built in the early 1700’s by the Papadopoli family. Their coat of arms can still be seen above the middle window of the noble floor, facing the river. This Venetian-style dwelling has a square plan and is on three storeys. It is characterized by the absolute proportion of volumes and by the pattern of the serliana (a three-light window with an arched centre window and two side windows with architraves and then walled), located at the central room of the noble floor. Villa Rubin is one of a number of elegant, well-preserved residences of Venetian origin or inspiration that can be found in the territory of the municipality.

Now go back along Via Fratelli Martina and straight ahead on Via Marconi. You will leave the centre and cross the arch-span bridge on the Malgher canal. Turn left in the direction of Corbolone. The small church named Beata Vergine del Rosario stands immediately on the left side of the street. It was designed by the architect Max Ongaro and built in 1904. The previous oratory had stood there since 1578. At the end of the 1500’s, a small convent was added for two Dominican friars from San Pietro Martire in Murano. It was destroyed by flooding of the Livenza in 1677. It was rebuilt for a first time, but was demolished at the beginning of the beginning of the 1900’s during works to improve the banks of the river. It was then rebuilt in 1904. At that time, the church stood on a loop of the Livenza. This loop was closed off in 1929 by land reclamation works, and that part of the bed of the river was used for the new Malgher canal.

Follow Riviera Trentin to the roundabout. Take the exit to the hamlet of Corbolone. After about 2 km you will come to the 16th-century church of San Marco Evangelista. The church was built based on a design by Giorgio and Bernardino da Crema in 1514. It incorporated the small chapel built in 1459 by the Dell’Annunciata Fraternity. This chapel opens halfway down the left-hand wall of the hall. On the outside it is marked by a succession of double solid arches that run along the brick walls of the entire building. In the single hall, moving from the entrance towards the presbytery, the right-hand wall contains the fresco St. Rocco and Donor, an excellent work by Il Pordenone from between 1528 and 1529. At the end of the nave, the presbytery opens. It is crossed on its lower register by a strip of wood stalls built around 1650. Above this, there are four canvases by Gaspare Diziani (1689-1767). From right to left, they show the Death of St. Joseph, the Birth of Mary, the Madonna Enthroned between Saints Francis and Cajetan and the Adoration of the Magi. On the main altar at the centre of the presbytery, there is an ancon of St. Mark Enthroned between St. Rocco and St. Sebastian. It is attributed to the Veronese Bonifacio de’ Pitati, also known as Bonifacio Veronese, and is from 1515. The left nave leads to the oldest part of the building, the Dell’Annunziata chapel. Its bowl-shaped vault is frescoed with the scene of the Coronation of Mary, painted either by Il Pordenone or another artist influenced strongly by him, in 1528 and 1529. In the central register with full-span arches, there are the saints Agatha, Lucy, Margaret, Ursula, Barbara, Apollonia and Catherine of Alexandria. These have been attributed to Pomponio Amalteo and Giovanni Battista

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**Romano Pascutto**

Romano Pascutto was born in Santo Stino di Livenza in 1909 to a numerous family of artisans. Due to economic hardships, the family moved to Pordenone, where Romano attended the Istituto Tecnico, met new companions of literature and discussions, and developed the anti-fascist views for which he would be incarcerated. He joined his brother Sante in Libya, and stayed there for 12 years. His experience in Libya would be the basic inspiration for the poem *Storia de Name*, whose main character, like the author, was forced to emigrate to Africa to search for land, after having reclaimed land in Santo Stino for the owners of the Sette Sorelle swamp. One he came back to Santo Stino, from autumn 1943 he took an active part in the Committee of National Liberation, involved in the coordination of partisan units. Concerning the period 1943-45, Pascutto wrote *Uno dei mille paesi durante la lotta clandestina*, a wealth of precious information on the fight for liberation on the Lower Livenza. The secretary for 35 years of the Santo Stino branch of the Italian Communist Party and a town councilman, he was the mayor of Santo Stino from 1975 to 1980. He won numerous literary prizes for his poems and plays. In 1982, he published *L’acqua, la piera, la terra*, an anthology with an introduction by Andrea Zanzotto. His entire works were published posthumously in three volumes.
Zaffoni, known as Il Calderai. Finally, on the left-hand wall, there is the monumental figure of the Prophet Balaam, by Il Pordenone or by an artist close to him.

From Corbolone, go back to the roundabout. Take provincial route 60 in the direction of Loncon. After about 3 km you will come to the woods of Bandiziol and Prassacon. These can be accessed, respectively, from the entrance on the left side of the road and from the entrance almost directly opposite on the right side of the road. This is an area that in ancient times was covered by forests. It was controlled directly by the Republic of Venice as state property (“boschi di San Marco”) through specially appointed magistrates, and was considered an essential strategic resource for naval construction. During the first half of the 1900’s, the area was completely cleared and used as farmland. In 1996, the municipality, which owns the area, with the help of local volunteers, began reforesting it. They planted saplings of oak, hornbeam, ash, maple, elm, black poplar, black alder and willow over a total area of 110 hectares. In the heart of the Bandiziol woods, at the end of a large meadow (“Prà del roccolo”), a “roccolo” has been reconstructed. This is an ancient sort of bird snare, consisting of nets strung between rows of trees and bushes. They were expertly placed in a circular or elliptical pattern, and the decoys were placed in them. In the eastern part of this woods, the dominant characteristic of the territory of Santo Stino prior to land reclamation is commemorated. A wetland of about 10,000 square metres has been created (the “Palù del Bandiziol”). It is the perfect habitat for little egrets, herons, ducks and grebes. A masonry bird watching shelter has been built here, which can be reached on the old Muninure road. Its shape recalls the old country “casoni”, the humble peasant dwellings that could still be seen after the Second World War.

As you continue on provincial route 60, turn left at the Loncon intersection. Cross the railway, and after a couple of kilometres you will be in Belfiore, a hamlet of the municipality of Pramaggiore which in ancient times was known as Stainbek or Stagnimbecco. Follow the signs for the mill and the Ethnographic Museum. Turn left just before the bridge on the Loncon river. You will come to a complex consisting of the old hydraulic plant and Villa Dalla Pasqua. The Belfiore mill is also known as the Dalla Pasqua mill. This name comes from the nearby late 19th-century villa that was owned by the family of the same name. The plant was sold to the municipality of Pramaggiore in the 1960’s, along with the villa and surrounding park. It underwent painstaking renovation and today is an ethnographic museum that was officially inaugurated in 2003. At the same time, work started to restore the country lane along the right bank of the Loncon that connects Belfiore to Blessaglia. Villa Dalla Pasqua was inherited by the Venier family, who subsequently sold it to the municipality. Today it is owned by the Territorial Company for Residential Construction of Venice, which has created a number of small lodgings inside it. The mill plant of Belfiore was surely in operation in 1479, as were others along the Loncon. However, it may very well have been built a couple of centuries before that. Basically, it is composed of two buildings joined in an “L” shape. The part that runs lengthwise parallel to the right bank of the river contains the grinding rooms on a single floor. The other part of the building has three storeys. The first, where the current entrance is located, was used to house livestock and vehicles. The second and third floors housed the millers and their families. On the ground floor, two grinding wheels have been relocated that were originally made of stone. The gears that drove them have been reconstructed. These gears were driven by paddlewheels outside, one of which has been completely rebuilt. Today, it is connected to an electrical generator that powers the entire mill. The first floor house the ethnographic collection. It includes old farm tools, furniture and household items that were typical of a country home. The second floor is for theme-based period exhibitions, and educational workshops organized with schools. Cross the foot bridge over the Loncon river and leave the park. This will bring you to the Santa Susanna church. This 16th-century brick building is marked on the outside by solid double arches.

From Belfiore, you will now continue to Annone Veneto. To do so, travel back along provincial route 60 and turn right onto Via Carline, just before the railway crossing. This road continues as Via Loncon for a total of 5 km. “Veneto” was added to the name of Annone after the unification of Italy to distinguish it from other municipalities of the same name. Its name tells the story of its origin: ad nonum lapidem, at the ninth milestone on the Via Postumia, the Roman consular road built in 148 BC to connect Genoa with Aquileia across the Po river plains and Venetian flatlands. Annone was, in fact, built nine Roman miles from Oderzo (the Roman town of Opitergium), one of the large ancient towns along the Via Postumia. In medieval and modern time, through its connection with the parish church of (today in the municipality of Motta di Livenza), was subject to the Benedictine abbey in Sesto al Reghena. However, there was a long-lasting conflict with the church of Lorenzaga. The village built its own church, and in 1622 the struggle for religious independence ended with the recognition of the parish of San Vitale Martire. During the Venetian period, the economy of the village was based on agriculture.
The locals farmed lands which they had received permission to clear of forest, which Venice deemed an essential resource and governed stringently. Farming was the main means of support up until the first decades of the 1900's. From that time, heavy emigration began towards other European countries and the Americas. Land reclamation work changed the face of the territory of the municipality. Grape cultivation and winemaking began; today, about 800 hectares are used for this purpose. Today, Annone Veneto has been awarded the title “Città del vino” and is in the heart of the “LISON PRAMAGGIORE” DOC zone. To see the old parish church of San Vitale, leave the square of the town hall. At the intersection, cross state route 53 Postumia, which runs through the middle of town. Opposite, take Via Sant'Antonio. At the end of it, you will enter Via Cao de Sora, where the church is located. The church has origins dating back to the 1400's. However, it was rebuilt in the 18th century and renovated in 1946. The bell tower is from the 1500's, and was probably built on a previously existing defensive tower, with an octagonal spire added in 1763. It contains a monumental main altar with an elegant pallium by the stone sculptor Rinaldo da Portogruaro (first half of the 16th century). The small vestry at the base of the bell tower, to the right of the presbytery, contains an excellent fresco showing Christ on the Cross, dated 1537. Also worthy of mention, in the portico of Casa Gianotto in Via Oltrefossa, is a fresco showing the Madonna with Child on a Throne between St. Rocco and another Saint, from the late 15th century. It is commonly referred to as Madonna della pera, since it shows Mary holding a pear in Her left hand. This work has recently been restored, and it has been confirmed that it is by Gianfrancesco da Tolmezzo, the most important Friulan Renaissance artist between the 1400's and the 1500's.

From Annone Veneto, continue along regional route 53 Postumia in the direction of Portogruaro for about 3 km. Turn left at the village of Blessaglia, a hamlet of the municipality of Pramaggiore. Immediately on the left you will find the Santa Maria Assunta church, built in the early 16th century. In all likelihood it replaced an earlier building. Originally, it belonged to the parish of Lorenzaga. It became a parish in its own right in 1538. It conserves a sober, Romanesque style and is characterized by the solid arches of the external walls, which are very similar in make to the nearby parish church of Pramaggiore and the small Santa Susanna church in Belfiore. Its interior is highlighted by 16th century frescoes that are framed by architectonic structures. They show The Procession of the Fraternity of the Downtrodden and History of the Virgin. On the right-hand wall, an ancon inserted in the baroque altar was removed in 1989. This revealed a fresco divided into two sections which shows the Holy Trinity and a Sainted Bishop, both mutilated. In the upper section a Christ on the Cross is still visible. The lower panel shows a figure which might be St. Augustine. The frescoes on both walls show features of the school of Amalteo from the second half of the 1500's. The Twelve Apostles painted in the false niches along the walls of the hall, slightly further back, would appear to be of more popular origins.

From the church of Blessaglia, continue on Via Callalta for about 1.5 km until you come to the centre of Pramaggiore, a “Città del Vino” (along with Annone Veneto, Portogruaro and Santo Stino di Livenza). It is also a winemaking location of national importance due to its production under the DOC mark of “Lison Pramaggiore”. The name Pramaggiore comes from the Latin pratus maus). It is mentioned for the first time in a document dated 1215 in which the patriarch of Aquileia provided his vicar with a piece of land located in the area. This provides evidence of a villa that was probably used mostly for agricultural purposes, since the name itself means a meadow that is larger than the surrounding land. Although the first written records date back to the middle ages, stonework and ceramic finds have provided evidence of human presence in the area between 1300 and 1600 BC. During Roman times, the area was part of the garrisoned area of Italia Concordia. Archaeological finds bear witness to it being frequented. Pramaggiore once covered a very small area, less than the present-day municipality. This was because the villas of Salvarolo and Blessaglia were older than the town and had several jurisdictions. In 1806, they were combined with the town into a single municipality. Just before you come to the focal point of the town, where the town hall and the parish church face one another, turn left onto Via Leopardi, followed by an immediate right onto Via Vittorio Veneto. This will bring you to the National Wine Exhibition and Regional Winery of the Wines of Veneto, which you can visit. It includes over 300 wines produced in the region, along with choice grappa and cuisine specialties. Once you come to the centre of Pramaggiore, on the left you will see the San Marco Evangelista parish church. Built in the 14th century, it conserves its Romanesque influence in spite of a number of renovations that have taken place over the centuries, especially the addition of the area behind the choir and the northern nave in 1927. On the outside, it has a sober facade. Its original appearance is best preserved on the southern wall, which is marked by a series of solid double arches. On the southern side of the church, near the arch at the entrance to the
presbytery, there is a fresco that shows the Madonna with Child between St. Sebastian and St. Rocco (late 15TH - early 16TH century). It was discovered in 1925 during the removal of an altar. Some have attributed it to Antonio da Firenze, others to the school of Bellunello or Cima da Conegliano. The presbytery has a transept vault decorated with round paintings of St. Mark, St. Francis and St. Clare (late 18TH century).

Now continue straight along the main road through town (provincial route 64). Just outside of town, you will notice the severe Villa Altan, which today is a private home. It was built in the second half of the 15TH century by the family of the same name. It has very linear shapes, few decorations and a family chapel that faces directly onto the road. The coat of arms on the facade was later placed by the Cappello family when they owned it. The long rustic outbuildings that used to stand alongside the villa are today only partially preserved.

Continue on provincial route 64 for about 3.5 km and turn right at the intersection with state route 251. This will bring you to Cinto Caomaggiore. Its name seems to come from Quintum (ad quinatum lapedem), with reference to a sort of station or rest stop located five Roman miles from Concordia. Another possibility is that the name comes from cinctum, a fortified or fenced-in area, in defence of an agricultural settlement. The second word in the name comes from the Caomaggiore river, which flows through the territory of the municipality. The Roman origins are documented by numerous archaeological finds. The most important of these, a store of about 4,000 republican coins, is conserved in the Concordiese national museum in Portogruaro. During ancient times, the territory of the municipality of Cinto was covered by densely forested plains that extended from the Tagliamento to the Livenza. Of those extensive woodlands, the only trace that remains is in the names of places (via Boschetta, via Bosco, Bosco della Persiana, Bosco del Bando, Bosco della Bandida). During the first half of the 16TH century, the religious reform movement of the anabaptists found fertile ground here. To escape the Catholic Inquisition, in 1558 they organized an exodus to the region of Moravia. The episode is commemorated in the historical re-enactment, “The Exodus of the Anabaptists of Cinto.”

The parish church of San Biagio stands in front of the city hall. It is documented as the parish church at the end of the 12TH century. In 1211, it was temporarily combined with the abbey of Summaga, so that its monies could be used to contribute to the restoration of the monastery and the abbey church. The current parish church was most likely built in the middle of the 15TH century. It underwent numerous alterations over time, including a complete reconstruction of the facade in 1937 after the sudden crumbling of the previous one. Inside, in the left-hand nave, there is the baptism fountain which dates back to the first half of the 16TH century, made in the style of Pilacorte. One of the altars of the right-hand nave contains an excellent canvas showing the Crucifixion, a work by Gregorio Lazzarini (1655-1730), who was the first teacher of Tiepolo.

The hamlet of Settimo is also worthy of mention. Historically, it existed independently from the municipal capital. Its name is closely related to those of Quintum (Cinto) and Sextum (Sesto al Reghena) to indicate its distance in Roman miles from Concordia. Settimo is reached by travelling a short stretch of state route 251 towards Pordenone, and then turning right as soon as you are out of Cinto. In this small hamlet, it is worth visiting the church of San Giovanni Battista. It was built in 1458 and was originally a part of the parish of Cinto. It contains some excellent art work. On the left and right of the apse there are frescoes that show the Adoration of the Magi and the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian. On the right-hand wall of the presbytery there is a Bishop Saint and a St. Anthony the Abbot. All of these works are by Gianfrancesco da Tolmezzo (ca.1450-1510). On the left-hand wall of the presbytery is a Madonna of the Milk attributed to Calderari (1500-1563), a student of Il Pordenone. On the walls of the apse, placed over a previous decoration from the 1400’s, on the left there is the History of the Baptist, probably by Gianfrancesco da Tolmezzo. On the right there are scenes of Abacuc and Daniel in the Lions’ Den, painted in 1587 by Cristoforo Diana, a painter influenced by Amalteo. Especially noticeable on the main altar is the ancon of the Virgin with the Child and St. John the Baptist and St. Mark, a work by Alessandro Varotari, known as Il Padovanino (1588-1648). In the vestry, a marble basin is conserved that is from the 1500’s by Pilacorte.

Now get back on state route 251 in the direction of Portogruaro. Go past the main square of Cinto. You can make another short detour by turning left towards Sesto al Reghena and the A28 motorway. Shortly thereafter, on the right, you will come to the area of the lakes of Cinto (or “laghi ex cave di Cinto”), which are inside an agricultural holding. This is a vast freshwater wetland area that formed as nature gradually reclaimed a former gravel pit. It is dominated by a body of water of over 40 hectares. The lush banks are the perfect habitat for many animals.

When you get back to state route 251, go towards Portogruaro for about 1 km. Turn right at the locality of San Biagio. After about 2 km, turn left, and after about 35 km you will come to Summaga, a hamlet
of the municipality of Portogruaro. Cross regional route 53 Postumia and enter the locality. It gets its name from summa aqua, since it originally stood on a rise near the waters of the Reghena river. Here, you should visit the **abbey church of Santa Maria Maggiore**, the sole survivor of a monastery complex that may have been built by the bishops of Concordia in the 10TH century and entrusted to the Benedictines. The current church was rebuilt in the first decades of the 13TH century atop a previous building. The facade is the result of work carried out in the 1700’s. Inside, the frescoes of the central apse were discovered under a layer of plaster in 1927-28. They date back to when the church was rebuilt at the start of the 13TH century. At the top, they show the **Virgin with Child** in an oval surrounded by angels and by the symbols of the evangelists. In the centre strip, there is **Christ among the Apostles**. The bottom strip represents the evangelical parable of the **Wise Virgins** and the **Foolish Virgins**. At the end of the right-hand nave, there is a small pre-existing sacellum, possible from the High Middle Ages, that has been incorporated into the construction. Its floor is considerably lower. Its apse is on the east side, where there is a small block altar. It is covered by an elliptical cupola, which was broken through to access the bell tower that stands atop it and was reconstructed in 1953. The sacellum contains a cycle of frescoes from the 11TH-12TH century that are defined as the “Plan of Redemption”. Starting from the open arch towards the presbytery of the church, one can recognize **Eve** and the **Sacrifice of Abraham**. On wall in front there is **Christ on the Cross**, on the wall opposite the small apse the **Sacrifices of Abel and Melchisedec** and in the apse **Christ Enthroned**. On the cupola, now faded and nearly invisible, are the **Twenty-Four Elders of the Apocalypse**. The four pendentives below contain portraits of the **Evangelists**. The monochrome curtain that covers the lower part of the walls of the sacellum is interesting. It shows scenes of **Struggles between Men and Beasts** and **Cavalry Battles**, the personification of **Virtues Triumphant** over **Vices**, and moments of everyday life, such as the image of a peasant leaving the henhouse with an apron full of eggs. The influence of the school of Tolmezzo, of Bellunello and of the first Pordenone can be seen in the surviving figures along the wall of the left nave. These include **St. Florian, St. Isidore, St. Lucy** and the **Holy Conversation**, all works of the 1500’s.

A short distance from Summaga, there are the villages of **Pradipozzo** and **Lison**. They are both part of the municipality of Portogruaro. The **San Martino Vescovo** church in Pradipozzo has two large frescoes. The one on the right is **St. Christopher**; on the left is **St. Francis of Paola**. Above the rosette is the **Crucifixion**. On the sides of the rosette, the **Annunciation** conserves only the **Angel** in the left frame. The scene painted above the door shows only the remains of an incomplete figure of **St. Martin**. The frescoes have recently been restored and consolidated. They date back to the 16TH century and are attributed to the school of Amalteo. In Lison, the **church called Natività di Maria** has a fresco on its northern wall showing the **Baptism of Christ** attributed to the school of Amalteo (mid-16TH century). On the wall at the end are two canvasses attributed to the school of Bassano (second half of the 16TH century. One shows the **Madonna with Child, St. John the Baptist, and St. Jerome**. The other shows the **Crucifixion**. The three works are each framed by two stone pilaster strips topped by a marble arch with fine relief decorations and a Greek inscription. These are recycled materials from the Orient, which may have been part of a canopy from a church in Asia Minor in the 4TH OR 5TH century and brought here by the Venetian fabric merchant Gaspare Dolzoni. He owned a great deal of land in Lison and had the church built in 1565. The **Lison woods** should also be recalled, which are known locally as the “Bosco del Merlo”. They are the remains of a flatlands woods of about 10 hectares, consisting mainly of oaks and hornbeam, and undergrowth rich in vegetation that includes anemones and orchids.

After you leave the Summaga abbey, turn left out of Via Richerio and cross the centre of the locality. At the intersection, turn left onto Via Montecassino, then right onto Via Noiare. Continue straight for about 2 km until the intersection with state route 14 in the locality of San Giusto. Cross the state road and enter Via San Pietro. At the curve, bear left and follow the straight stretch all the way to the end. This will take you into the centre of **Concordia Sagittaria**, in front of the cathedral. If you like, you can park just before this, in the parking area on Via San Pietro in front of the cemetery.

The site that would give rise to the Roman colony of **Iulia Concordia** in protohistoric times was composed of one or more rises at the edge of a lagoon. The most ancient traces of settlement would appear to be a village from the Bronze Age (12TH-13TH century BC). The pre-Roman village can be attributed to the Ancient Venetics. It reached its acme during the Iron Age (8TH-9TH century BC) thanks to its strategic position along trade routes. Some of the finds from archaeological surveys of this period of the town are displayed in the Concordiense National Museum in Portogruaro. During the 2ND century BC, Romanization of the territory took place. This culminated in the official founding of the Roman colony, in 40 or 42 BC, at the crossroads between the consular roads of Via Annia and Via Postumia. The city was especially prosperous during the first two centuries of the Empire. It was located on the traditional network of roads that intersect at right angles. It had walls, gates, a forum, a theatre, public and private thermal baths, canals and bridges, and commercial stores. Prior to the foundation of the colony, the fertile land that had been assigned to it, lying between the Livenza river to the west and the Tagliamento to the east, was marked off into lots and assigned to settlers. Most of them were army veterans who were invited to populate the newly founded city. The number of inhabitants was probably somewhere between 15,000 and 20,000, composed of local Veneto
people and settlers from central Italy, who integrated rapidly. During Late Antiquity (3rd-4th century), it became an arrow factory, in Latin *sagitta*. This accounts for the second part of its name, which was added in the 19th century. With Aquileia, it became a bulwark in the defence of the Eastern border, threatened by barbarians. As a result, many military units were based in Concordia, ready for rapid deployment. At the end of the 4th century, Concordia became the bishop's seat, and the first Christian basilica was constructed. The invasions of the 5th century, especially that of the Longobards in 568-569, led to the city centre. Although it shrank drastically, it still held the bishop's seat. The severe flooding during the second half of the 6th century left the ancient city buried in a thick layer of slimy mud. On top of this muck, between the 8th and 9th century, work began to reconstruct the settlement, starting from the basilica, which arose atop the remains of the previous one. Probably as a result of the political power assigned to bishops during the time of Charlemagne, the diocese was given jurisdiction over territory that coincided with the ancient Roman farmland. The difficult environmental conditions were worsened by a lack of hydro-geological attention to the area, and the nearby lagoon gradually turned to swamp. As a result, during the Middle Ages, the bishops maintained their official seat in Concordia, but moved their residence to Portogruaro. This move was made official only at the end of the 16th century. In 1974, there was yet another move, of both the seat and the residence, this time to Pordenone. Today, Pordenone and Concordia share the title of diocesan seat. The town then became a rural centre. The rest of its history involved the inhabitants' struggle against swamp growth and the major land reclamation projects of the 19th and 20th centuries that involved rich landowners and a multitude of labourers and sharecroppers. The epic of that period is symbolized by the *Monument to the Land Reclamation Worker*, a work from the early 1900's by the parish priest and artist Celso Costantini. A copy of it stands in front of the City Hall.

The first regular excavations that brought to light the remains of the Roman city were carried out at the end of the 1800's. The relics discovered at that time, as well as some found more recently, are on display in the Concordiese National Museum in Portogruaro.

A trail has recently been made, which is best travelled on foot or by bike. It connects the main *archaeological areas* of the city and makes it possible to visit the most important remains from the Roman age and Late Antiquity. The square in front of the cathedral includes a section of paving stones of the ancient Via Annia and the complex of paleo-Christian basilicas. From here you can reach the site of the Roman thermal baths with the remains of the city walls, the excavation areas of the *domus* and wells, the site of the theatre and the remains of the three-span Roman bridge. The archaeological tour ends, or can begin, at the fascinating exhibition of relics that has recently been set up. It can be visited in the *rooms of the 16th-century town hall* in Via Roma. It is possible to admire the fragments of frescoes from the thermal baths, ash urns, fragments of columns, various types of amphoras, and lead pipes that were part of the city aqueduct. In Piazza Cardinal Costantini, you can get a good view from above of the Euganean trachyte *paving stones* of the *Via Annia*. Here, the road crossed the city centre from east to west, where it was the main decuman (corresponding to present-day Via San Pietro). It then passed through the great gate that opened along the city walls, on its way to Aquileia. Beside the road, under the pavement of the square, are the *storehouses* (*horrea*) of the city. They were active until
the 2nd century AD and excavated in 1984-85. From Piazza Costantini, turn right onto Via Claudia, which is flanked by a bike and pedestrian path. A few metres further on, turn right onto Via delle Terme or the next cross street. From here, the path that connects the archaeological sites continues, and reconnects with Via delle Terme. Here, you can still see the northeast section of the Roman city walls, the foundations of a lesser city gate and the area where the city’s public thermal baths once stood. Leave Via delle Terme (or Via Mazzini). Cross Via Claudia, and immediately turn left onto Viale VIII Marzo. Continue along the bike and pedestrian path until you enter Via Pozzi Romani. You are now in the area where the north-western quarter of the Roman city once stood. Here you can still see some mosaic flooring that belonged to noble homes (domus) and two wells that originally stood in the courtyards of two domus that have now disappeared. The best-preserved dwelling, on the corner between Viale VIII Marzo and Via dei Pozzi Romani, is the so-called domus ‘dei signini’. It has three pavements corresponding to the oldest period of the house (1st century BC) made of white opus signinum with a black and white mosaic emblem in a geometric pattern. As you continue along the path of your visit, you will cross the site of the theatre, whose shape is suggested by the hedges that follow the lines of its foundation. In spite of the scarce amount of building materials that have been found, it is possible to reconstruct the floor plan of the building, which could hold an audience of about 5,000. Exit the theatre area onto Via San Pietro. Continue for a few metres on the right and then cross the street. You will now be standing in front of the remains of the three-span Roman bridge. The eastern arch still remains intact, along with two pylons of the others. It was built in the 1st century BC in blocks of trachyte that were set on foundation piles in the soft ground. It crossed a course of water that has now disappeared, or perhaps an ancient path of the Reghena river. In the middle of the 1st century AD, the two shoulders in Aurisina stone were added. These have been reconstructed alongside the excavated area. There are inscriptions on both sides that commemorate the financier of the restoration or construction of the shoulders. The Via Ania ran across the bridge. Coming from Altino, here it entered the city via the western gate located just past the river crossing. As you travel back along Via San Pietro towards the centre of Concordia, you will come back to Piazza Costantini and you will descend onto the archaeological area to visit the complex of paleo-Christian basilicas. These were built starting from the 4th century in the area of an extra-urban section of the Via Annia, which at that time had been transformed into a sort of canal alongside the abandoned area where the ancient storehouses of the city had been. The complex was excavated between 1950 and 1970. It covers 5,000 m² and includes various buildings. The oldest is the trichora. This is a three-apse structure built in the 4th century. According to tradition, supported by some sources, it was to commemorate 72 martyrs who were beheaded on the banks of the Lemene, during the times of the last persecution of Christians by the emperor Diocletian. The episode led to cult worship of the remains of the martyrs, which persisted into modern times, and according to which water seeped out of the remains when unusual events were imminent. Today, they are conserved in a chapel in the cathedral. In the early 5th century, the trichora became the apse of a small basilica obtained through expansion of the original structure with the addition of a rectangular projection divided into three naves. In the main apse, under the altar which today has vanished, a locule was excavated in the form of a cross to hold the remains. This transformation of the trichora into a small basilica may have coincided with the completion and finishing of the main basilica, which was built alongside at the end of the 4th century. The smaller basilica may have acted as a temporary substitute for the main one. On the southern side of the square in front of the lesser basilica, there is a burial area. It contains a number of buried tombs covered with stone slabs and various sarcophaguses grouped into small nucleiuses marked off by low walls. The Apostolorum (of the Apostles) basilica, or main basilica, hurriedly built at the end of the 4th century to hold the remains of a number of Apostles which had arrived from the Orient, was consecrated by the Bishop of Aquileia, Cromatium, in 389-390. It quickly became the seat of the bishop. The basilica is preceded by a four-door entrance. In front of this entrance, there is a well and the remains of rooms that were probably meant to host pilgrims and to house the bishop. It was first built with a single hall, with a floor of earth or opus signinum (mortar and fragments of terracotta). In the early 5th century, the hall was divided into three naves with columns of Greek marble and Corinthian capitals obtained from the ruins of Roman monuments. The floor was covered with a mosaic of black and white tiles with stylized geometric and plant patterns. Below the floor level of the basilica, remains have been found of flooring, partially in mosaic. They belonged to a Roman domus that stood in this area prior to the construction of the church. Small portions of this structure can be seen through the two trapdoors that have been left open, one in the central nave and the other on the west side of the presbytery. At the end of the central nave, a sort of aisle (sòlea) provided access to the pres-
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In the 5th century it was raised, expanded and paved with a multi-colour mosaic of which just a few strips remain. The apse part of the mosaic is preserved better. At the centre of the presbytery is the altar. All that remains of it today is the base, obtained from a block floor from Roman times, with a floral pattern. It was installed in the 6th century. It was covered by a canopy, and the holes remain where the four support columns were inserted. At the same time, three steps were made that were to lead to the chair of the bishop, which has been lost. The masonry structure around it was reserved for the clergy. At the end of the left-hand nave, there is a part that has not been excavated. It does however allow the reconstruction through stratigraphy of the events that affected the paleo-Christian basilica. The basilica was destroyed by a fire in the middle of the 6th century, perhaps during the Longobard invasion of 568-569. Then, like the rest of the ancient city, it was buried by about two metres of sandy debris during a series of floods that took place at the end of the 6th century. Above the sandy bank, the foundation can be seen of the left-side apse of the new three-apse church, which was built between the 8th and 9th century. Its central apse rests on that of the previous basilica. The right side apse was demolished to make way for the bell tower, which was built in the 12th century. The High Middle Ages basilica was undoubtedly more modest that the paleo-Christian one. It was not however without excellent decorative elements, as shown by the ambo with the symbols of the four evangelists and the pluteus in the Santo Stefano cathedral above.

Therefore, in Piazza Costantini make sure your visit does not miss the cathedral of Santo Stefano Protomartire. It was built on the same site of the previous basilicas, albeit centuries later. The first part of the current building was probably constructed in the 11th century. However, it was only the works of the 14th and 15th century that gave the church its present-day appearance. At the end of the 1800s, work was carried out on the presbytery and apse. The dilapidated cupola over the presbytery was demolished and replaced with a sloped covering. The apse was rebuilt in an octagon shape in neo-Gothic style. The vestry, which originally stood on the south side of the presbytery, was demolished to isolate the nearby baptistery, to which it was connected, and was reconstructed on the opposite side. In 1904, on the 1,600th anniversary of the sacrifice of the Martyrs of Concordia, the expansion and renovation of the Martiri chapel were completed. It was lengthened outwards considerably, and it was closed in a polygon-shaped apse. The three-section façade was demolished shortly thereafter, so that the body of church could be extended by span. It was immediately rebuilt in its original form, which is much the same as similar Venetian Renaissance structures. Immediately noticeable to the left of the main entrance is the holy water stoup. It was made by recycling a Roman-age marble fountain engraved with aquatic animals. Along the walls of the side naves, there is a fresco that is probably from the 14th century. It was discovered during restoration work in the 1980s. The only scene that is still clearly visible is the Last Supper on the right. On the right wall of the presbytery, there is a detached fresco that was originally in the vestry, which was demolished. It shows the Crucifixion and is attributed to Pellegrino da San Daniele (1467-1547). On the side there are two canvases from the 1700s: the Martyrdom of St. Stephen (on the right) and the Martyrdom of St. Concordia (on the left). Above the bishop’s chair, along the left wall of the presbytery, there is a painting of the Annunciation from the 1700s by Gregorio Lazzarini.

The ambo and the altar are both contemporary. They contain, respectively, a pluteus and the ambo from the High Middle Ages church, one of the few surviving items from that building. At the end of the apse, above the main altar, there is the canvas The Martyrdom of St. Stephen, painted between the 16th and 17th century and attributed to Domenico Tintoretto. The deep Martiri chapel opens along the left-hand nave. The remains of the martyrs are conserved in a silver case in a marble sarcophagus from Roman times located under the floor. Above the altar, created in the early 1900s as a decorative painting of the cupola, is a canvas by Padovanno (1588-1648) that shows the Distribution of the Miraculous Waters of the Martyrs of Concordia.

South of the cathedral stands the baptistery, built between the end of the 11th and the beginning of the 12th century on the orders of the bishop, whose tomb is set against the right-hand wall of the small entry atrium. The building, in Romanesque-Byzantine style, is composed of a four-sided body completed by two exedras on the north and south sides and a central apse to the east. Inside there is an excellent cycle of frescoes, painted just after the building was constructed. On the main dome is Christ Enthroned Offering Benediction enclosed in an oval, the dove that symbolizes the holy spirit, and the figures of the Archangel and of the Seraphim. On the arches of the drum, alternating with the windows, there appear the figures of the Prophets turned to face the Lamb, located on the arch in front of the entrance. The four lateral pendentives contain the figures of the Evangelists and the relative symbols. The central apse contains the scene of the Baptism of Christ on the semi-cupola, the figures of St. Peter and St. Paul in the two central niches, of St. Hermagoras and
The lands of Eastern Venice are from a later period (10th-14th century) and follow the signs to Brussa, travelling provincial route 70 for about 12.5 km. After you pass the tiny villages of Marina, Castello, and Brussa, the road, which has a bike path along side it, becomes a dirt road that leads directly to the rest area of Valle Vecchia. Valle Vecchia is an island of about 900 hectares, reclaimed in the 1960’s and still partially farmed today, but also a Zone of Special Protection and Site of Community Importance of great ecological interest. It is managed by Veneto Agricoltura (a regional company for the agricultural, forestry and food crop sectors), which handles its environmental re-qualification through the restoration of wetlands, hedgerows and about 170 hectares of forest. It is also the seat of the Demonstrative Pilot Agricultural Holding, which practices environmentally friendly agriculture, and the Nature Education Centre, which can be visited on request and can be reached by taking the dirt road on the left just before the entrance to the rest area, which is the starting point for guided nature tours and where educational workshops are held for schools. The long beach of Vallevecchia (over 4 km) does not contain any tourist facilities and it is enriched by a dense pinewood on a complex system of dunes. Other biotopes that ensure a high degree of biodiversity are the saltwater swamp, the freshwater swamp, and the wetlands woods, all included in a context of farmed areas that often conserve the long embankments to defend the crops imposed by the balances of land reclamation. On the stabilized dunes, there is a scattering of the rare feathered flax, a perennial grass with a long white feathery flower that dances lightly in the wind. The pinewood is the result of reforesting that took place between the 1950’s and the 1970’s and mostly consists of stone pine and maritime pine. Recently, the pines have been thinned out to make room for trees and shrubs that are more characteristic of the flatland and coastal woods, such as German oak, elm, pubescent oak, and hawthorn. The wetlands are home to many species of birds: the small reed warbler, great white and ash-grey heron, egret, bittern, coot, mallard and swamp falcon. In Valle Vecchia there are also some interesting examples of swamp cane “casoni”, originally used by fishermen. Valle Vecchia can be visited on foot, by bike or on horseback. By car, you can only go as far as the rest area at the access to the beach. By following the marked trails, you can travel along the beach in either direction from the beach, or take the headlands and farm lanes starting from the rest area.
complete compliance with national and community legislation. In the production area, the “Lison Pramaggiore” DOC Strada dei Vini has also been established, which is also known as Strada dei Vini dei Dogi. Along its route, signs indicate the producers that are members of the Consortium where purchases can be made, as well as the “Botteghe del Vino” (restaurants, trattorias, bars, inns) where it is possible to enjoy DOC wines.

Consorzio Volontario Tutela Vini DOC “Lison-Pramaggiore”, via Cavalieri di Vittorio Veneto 13/b, 30020 Pramaggiore, tel. 0421 799256 fax 0421 200066

Strada dei Vini DOC “Lison-Pramaggiore”, via Cavalieri di Vittorio Veneto 13/b, 30020 Pramaggiore, tel. and fax 0421 200731, www.stradadeivinilisonpramaggiore.it, info@stradavini.it

Montasio DOP

Probably introduced to these lands by the Benedictine monks who settled in Summaga at the end of the first millennium, today Montasio is worked in the same way as handed down through generations of cheesemakers: a slow fire, rennet, salt and human skill. It is a cooked paste, semi-hard or compact cheese with three degrees of aging. When fresh has a soft delicate flavour. When middle-aged it is more decisive and full. Aged fully, it is especially aromatic and slightly spicy.

It is perfect with any part of the meal. The extra-aged version is used grated still today. Ippolito Nievo, in his novel Le confessioni di un italiano, tells of the kitchens in the castle of Fratta, where the servant spent a great deal of the day grating cheese. The composer Richard Wagner also enjoyed it.

The area of production, which covers the entire area of the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia and the province of Belluno and Treviso, in Eastern Veneto is limited to the dairies of Annone Veneto, Summaga di Portogruaro and Porto Santa Margherita di Caorle.

Consorzio di Tutela del Formaggio Montasio DOP, vicolo Resia 1/2, Rivolta di Codroipo (Ud), tel. 0432 905317, fax 0432 912052, www.formaggiomontasio.net, info@formaggiomontasio.net
Fish

Caorle has a long tradition of fishing in the sea and in the lagoon and offers, both in the market and in dishes offered in restaurants and trattorias, a good variety of fish featuring white polyps, cuttlefish, shrimp, calamari, clams, sardines, sole, flounder, bass, gilthead bream, flathead mullets and eels from the lagoon marshes. Especially enjoyable are grilled fish, fried fish and soups, along with the indispensable polenta hot from the pan or browned on the grille. Typical and famous are the sardine in saor, which are sardines fried and ground in oil, fried onions, salt and vinegar, whereas a traditional dish is the broeto caorloto, a dish that was once the basic food of fishermen during the long periods in the casoni. It consisted of a kind of soup prepared with lower quality, small fish that would not be sold.

Linguàl

A typical product of the territory on the border between Veneto and Friuli is linguàl, a sausage made from pork tongue whose tradition began at the times of the Serenissima Republic and was handed down to our times from peasant culture. It is a seasonal sausage closely linked to home or artisan butchering of hogs, and is traditionally consumed for the feast of the Ascension.

In 2005, a protective consortium was founded: Consorzio di Tutela del Lingual, via Roma 96, Cinto Caomaggiore (Ve), consorzio.lingual@libero.it
Frati, whose name suggests the presence of a rise in the ground, composed of an ancient alluvional hill, facing out onto the internal lagoon marshes, where a monastic settlement would later arise in an unspecified age. The villa, which stood a few hundred metres from the ancient coastline and was inhabited from the 1st to 5th century AD, is located in Valle Grande in a privately owned area that cannot normally be visited. Not far away, in the locality of Quarto Bacino, numerous ceramic artefacts have been found, such as bowls, cups and glasses, that have made it possible to identify an ancient thermal spring that was certainly frequented from the 1st to the 5th or 6th century AD, just a few metres from the extraction wells currently used by the Bibione Thermal Baths. This site, which was abandoned towards the end of the 6th century, was subsequently occupied by the Venetian customs station of Baseleghe, at the westernmost end of the Bibione coastline, operational as of the 12th century and fully active between the 13th and 14th century. The place name, which comes from the Greek word basilikè, which in turn is the origin of the Latin basilicae, would seem to indicate the presence, in a period dating to before the establishment of the customs station, of buildings for public or private use, for purposes of worship, gathering, or entertainment. The name of the place, in fact, is first mentioned in the form duas basilicas in a document from the 8th century. Today, Porto Baseleghe, where the mouth of the Lovi canal is located, is the main source of water circulation in the lagoon marshes and in the system of internal canals, and is equipped with a marina. Bibione and the surrounding territory, which was first under Venetian control, during the Late Middle Ages passed to the bishops of Concordia, of which it had become a feud. In 1420, the Serenissima re-conquered it, and assigned it to the Vendramin nobles of Latisana. Thereafter, especially starting from the early 1900’s, it was divided first among families of large landowners and then among groups of entrepreneurs who, after the Second World War, began investing in tourism. Bibione was the first beach in Europe to obtain the EMAS environmental certification, which is awarded to tourism areas that successfully pass tests on the quality of seaside water, services offered, and differentiated waste collection, pursuing a balanced policy of urbanization that is careful to safeguard natural resources, to create bike paths.

Bibione is known as one of the largest, best-equipped beaches in Europe, whose tourism boom, which started in the mid-1950’s, has grown to such an extent that it is now the third largest Italian seaside resort. Evidence of ancient presences in this coastal area are provided by the remains of a maritime villa from Roman times (1st century AD) excavated between 1991 and 1994 in the area known as Mutteron dei
and liveable areas. Inland from Bibione, **Valle Grande** and **Vallesina**, declared regional protected landscapes, are all that is left of the ancient lagoon system that once separated the coastal islands from the mainland. The environmental complex, which includes canals, ponds, cane-brakes, woodlands and small farmed areas, covers about 475 hectares, 320 of which are covered by water. These bodies of salt water, which were excluded from land reclamation, were traditionally dedicated to marsh cultivation and fishing. Along the western edge of the lagoon area are the characteristic **casoni**, examples of spontaneous architecture made of wood and swamp cane, once used by fishermen as seasonal dwellings for hunting and fishing. The typical vegetation of the low-lying islands (shoals) that are submerged during high tides is that which is suited to salt water (salicornia, sea lavender, sea aster), whereas along the banks there is a **pinewoods** where the German oak grows, a characteristic Mediterranean plant. The German oak woods of Valle Grande, in fact, which covers a surface of ancient dunes, is one of the northernmost in Italy. Before it was massively settled by humans, historical sources and chronicles recall the presence in Bibione in the most remote of times of numerous herds of semi-free horses that found abundant grazing in the meadowlands, the undergrowth of the pinewoods and the shoals, and who may have come here with the ancient pre-Roman Venetic peoples, even if this area contains few traces of their presence.

In the central zone of Bibione, near the thermal baths, there is the **“Lino delle fate” botanical gardens**, which gets its name from a rare perennial grassy plant, the grassy flax (**Stipa veneta**) which lives here. This is a spontaneous fragment of pinewoods of about 7 hectares which has escaped intense urbanization and is bordered to the north by Via Orsa Maggiore and to the south by Colonie. In this valuable natural environment, pinewoods abound with Austrian black pine, along with arid meadows, wet meadows in the marshes, and first-growth plants. Wildlife consists mostly of birds, some permanent and some only nest- ing, and others which only pass through while migrating.

At the eastern end of the Bibione coast, near the **lighthouse** constructed in the early 1900’s and the **mouth of the Tagliamento**, the landscape is characterized by the presence of dunes and the coastal pinewoods which, because of the cold water from the river, are home to the black pine of Austria, typical of the Alps, and heather. Along with these, there are trees that are typical of Mediterranean climes, such as German oak, hornbeam, pubescent oak, and honeysuckle, as well as various species of orchids, creating a biodiversity that has few rivals. The tour of the
Bibione coastline, which extends over 8 km from Porto Baseleghe to Punta Tagliamento, and its lagoon marshes, is best made by bicycle, using the more than 30 km of bike paths that cross the centre, the pinewoods and the seaside.

From Bibione, provincial route 74 runs inland and crosses the locality of Bevazzana, where the Cava Nuova canal ends, which is part of the navigable path of the Venetian coastline, on which there are the locks that allow entry into the Tagliamento. Also in Bevazzana, a branch in the road leads to the newly-built bridge on the Tagliamento, which allows rapid connection for those wishing to reach Lignano Sabbiadoro and the Friulan coastal area. Continuing with the itinerary, once you pass the village of Cesarolo, you will reach San Michele al Tagliamento, whose vast municipal territory is made up a series of ancient villages located north of the mouth of the Tagliamento (San Giorgio, Villanova, Malafesta, Cesarolo, San Mauro, San Mauretto, Biasini, San Filippo) and by relatively recent settlements in the southern part (Prati Nuovi, Marinella, Terzo Bacino, Quarto Bacino, Bibione), which developed after the land reclamation of the early 1900’s. As an alternative, especially if you are travelling by bicycle, from Bibione to San Michele you can take the bike tour path (marked by signs) that includes the first part of provincial route 74 as far as the bridge in Bevazzana, just after which you will turn left towards Terzo Bacino and Prati Nuovi. In Prati Nuovi turn left and get back on provincial route 74 just beyond the village of Cesarolo. This will take you across vast areas of reclaimed land with rural settlements, scattered farmhouses that are often abandoned, small isolated oratories, canals and levies.

San Michele al Tagliamento was completely rebuilt after the destruction and bombing of the two World Wars, which razed the historical centre to the ground. An Austrian war cemetery, with nearly 500 graves of Hapsburg soldiers who were killed during World War One, is located in the hamlet that was once known as San Michele Vecchio. It can be reached by taking state route 14 towards Portogruaro and turning right onto Via Cipressi or, from the centre of San Michele, travelling the entire length of the main street (Corso del Popolo), which continues in Via dell’Unione, passing under state route 14 and the railway and turning left onto Via Agnolina and going over the railroad crossing. Next to the cemetery is the Santa Elisabetta dell’Agnolina church. In spite of reconstruction made necessary by bombing during the Second World War, it conserves on its interior side walls, near the altar, two frescoes from the 16th century showing the Blessed Virgin of Grace and the Annunciation with the Trinity. From the cemetery, go back along Via Agnolina and via Veneto. Turn left at the end of Via Veneto, and you will come directly to provincial route 73, which runs through the village of San Giorgio al Tagliamento. As you travel the road that runs along the right bank of the Tagliamento, before you reach the centre of the village of San Giorgio, you will see on your left the remains of Villa Biaggini-Ivancich, which was built between the 16th and 17th century by the Mocenigo family of Venice. It originally consisted of the main villa, two outbuildings, one of which with a family chapel, and a large farmouse added at the end of the 1800’s by the new owners, first the Baggini family, followed by the Ivancich family, shipbuilders of Dalmatian origin who had moved to Venice. Today, what is left of the villa, which was destroyed by bombing during World War Two, includes four stone statues from the 1700’s representing the Seasons and four others that represent the Virtues, as well as two outbuildings for agricultural use, separated by a wide green area, in extremely precarious condition. These are two grandiose buildings of the utmost artistic and architectonic value, certainly attributable to an architect of the school of Baldassare Longhena and probably designed in the first half of the 17th century for the purpose of framing the villa. While the daughters of Vincenzo Biaggini were close friends of men of culture and letters such as Gabriele D’Annunzio and Antonio Fogazzaro, there was also a strong bond of friendship between Gianfranco Ivancich, the current owner of the villa, his sister Adriana and the American writer Ernest Hemingway. They were so close that the writer asked Gianfranco Ivancich to read the first draft of the novel “Across the River and Into the Trees”, so as to get suggestions and opinions from him in order to set the story in a realistic, believable Veneto. The complex of the Biaggini-Ivancich villa can normally only be visited from outside. During the summer, events and shows are held in the park of the villa, which can be entered on those occasions.

As you follow provincial route 73, you will come to the village of San Giorgio al Tagliamento, considered an ancient rest and refreshment stop (mutatio) for soldiers and travellers headed for Aquileia along the Via Annia. According to some sources, the name of the locality was originally Apicilia (from the contraction of mutatio ad Paciliani), but this hypothesis is not supported by sufficient scientific evidence. Others consider Apicilia to be the Roman source of present-day Latisana, which stands almost exactly opposite San Giorgio on the other bank of the Tagliamento. The name of the village probably dates back to around the 11th century, when the veneration spread of St. George the Martyr of
The Tagliamento

The Tagliamento, which is over 170 km long, is the longest river in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region and in its final section, it marks the border with the Veneto region. Its source is at an altitude of 1,195 metres in Passo della Mauria, in the province of Udine, at the feet of Monte Miron, with a few small springs and the appearance of a creek. It is characterized by a mountain section, which ends near Ampezzo at the junction with the Fella, by a middle high plains section as far as Codroipo, in the province of Udine, where it lies in a highly permeable gravel bed that absorbs almost all of its water, and a lower section, which starts in Codroipo and Casarsa, in the province of Udine, and is fed by most of the water dispersed by the river itself into the water tables further upstream which appear again here in the form of sources. In the final section, the bed narrows, and since the slope decreases, it is quite winding, until it reaches the mouth that separates Bibione (province of Venice) and Lignano Sabbiadoro (province of Udine). The Tagliamento has always been a joining element for the peoples that live on its two banks, and has preserved much of its natural characteristics, mostly because it is impossible to control its flooding.

Cappadocia, to whom was also dedicated the parish church which originally extended its jurisdiction over the entire area that today makes up the municipality of San Michele al Tagliamento. As you enter on the right, almost under the embankment of the Tagliamento, you will find the old San Giorgio Martire parish church, replaced in 1972 by the new parish church, Maria Santissima Madre della Chiesa, located not far away. The church appears to have been reconstructed in the 18th century in neo-classical style and nothing remains of the medieval building. The facade is marked by pilaster strips that support a simple protruding cornice upon which the triangular structure of the gable rests. The interior is highlighted by a baptism font attributed to Pilacorte, a stone sculptor who was very active in Veneto and Friuli, the sculpture group that crowns the main altar showing St. George and the Dragon, a work by Battista and Francesco Groppelli and, on the opposite wall, a valuable organ made in 1737 by a renowned constructor, the abbot Pietro Nacchini.

With a short detour off the itinerary, at the end of village of San Giorgio, by turning right onto Via San Mauretto you will come to the hamlet of San Mauretto with its characteristic rural constructions built into two nucleuses in which you can observe the houses resting on one another along longitudinal axes, to form barriers or rows that are often parallel to the course of the river. In this area, towards the end of the 1500’s, Venetian patrician families settled (the Mocenigo, Vendramin, and Morosini families) in elegant residences that have now largely disappeared, around which these tiny villages were founded, inhabited almost exclusively by peasant and labourers. In their typical layout, alongside the small Venetian labourer’s house with the square plan and portico, structured one and a half floors, there is the larger, prevalently Friulan farmhouse, with a rectangular plan, on two or three floors, with the stall alongside, often set in a courtyard closed in by rustic buildings. Especially noteworthy is the survival in this hamlet of a number of religious frescoes, including an excellent Madonna of the Milk between St. Valentine and St. Joseph dated 1544, the only one of the remaining works that was conserved and cared for in the Massarutto farmhouse. Alongside, at the entrance to the village, is the Santi Bellino e Mauro oratory, located not far from the Tagliamento and reconstructed in 1800 after catastrophic flooding destroyed it in 1678. As you go back along Via San Mauretto, turn right onto provincial route 75 through the villages of San Mauro and Malafesta until you come to Villanova della Cartera. The name of the locality recalls the presence of an ancient paper mill constructed along the Molino canal in 1629 along with a pre-existing grain mill. The remains of the water works are visible on the right as you enter the village. After 1727, the paper mill probably stopped operation. However, the grain mill continued working, and in the second half of the 1800’s it became the property of Vittorio Biaggini, the businessman from Padua who had also purchased the previously mentioned Villa Mocenigo (later Villa Biaggini-Ivancich). In 1899, he went into the business of supplying electricity to the municipalities of San Michele al Tagliamento, Latisana and San Vito al Tagliamento, installing a turbine in the mill. The production of electrical energy continued until the Second World War, outlasting the milling business. Today, this example of industrial archaeology is crumbling into disuse, but a plan already exists to recover the entire complex. Further ahead, turn left onto Via Santa Lucia. You will find yourself in front of the San Tommaso Apostolo parish church, with its simple neo-classical lines. It contains excellent 18th-century sculptures, including the central relief of the pallium of the main altar, attributable to the school of Giuseppe Torretti Sr. which shows the Death of St. Joseph. Also of artistic interest, on the sides of the presbytery, are the 16th-century ancons that show the Trinity with Saints Carlo Borromeo, Barbara, Blaise, Lucy and Apollonia and the Madonna of Sorrows with Saints Maurice, Anthony the Abbot and Valentine, works attributed to Cristoforo Diana, a student of Amalteo.

As you head back towards San Giorgio, turn right onto provincial route 73 and you will come to Alvisopoli, in the municipality of Fossalta di Portogruaro. The village gets its name and its unique urban layout from Alvise Mocenigo (1760-1815), the Venetian nobleman who had it built on land he acquired from his family, where there had already been a small rural settlement known as “Il Molinat”. Alvisopoli might be defined as the realization of an illuminist dream, and still today
it conserves in part the imprint given it by its founder between the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Mocenigo imagined a small yet self-sufficient city. In the vast areas of land reclaimed through the construction of a dense network of canals, new and more rational methods of farming were introduced. In the village, a logical layout was given to the main villa, the administration building, the row houses for the labourers, the church, the pharmacy. A printing shop was founded in 1810 and assigned to Nicolò Bettoni of Portogruaro, who managed it until 1812. Today, in the small village, which lies completely along the provincial road, you can still see the 18th-century main villa of the Mocenigo family (private residence), in front of which is there is an open courtyard with two porticoed outbuildings on each side, in one of which the "Luigi Diamante" Municipal Picture Gallery has just opened. The display space, named after the Friulan contemporary artist who died in 1971 during one of his stays in the country in Fossalta di Portogruaro, contains a part of his works and periodically hosts exhibitions by other artists. The widening that corresponds to the centre of the village is enclosed on the western side by the Mocenigo administration building (18th century) crowned by a clock, while on the opposite side stands a building of considerable height that contained the rice mill, which was driven by a paddlewheel located on a small artificial canal. The charming park behind Villa Mocenigo, which measures about 3.5 hectares, is the remains of a flatland woods transformed by Alvise Mocenigo to a garden which at the time was fashionable, with the insertion of exotic plants (horse chestnut, ailanthus, box elder, Judas tree), the excavation of canals and the creation of paths edges by boxwood hedges. The state of complete abandon in which it was left for several decades has allowed wild species (elm, white hornbeam, maple, English oak, ash, black poplar, wild linden, white willow, plane-tree, poplar) to take hold again, creating an environment that is not very different from the typical wetland forests of the Po valley. Wildlife consist mainly of birds, whose presence varies depending on the season. There is a significant population of Lataste frogs, an endangered species that lives in the remaining forests of the Venetian plains and Po valley. The park is a WWF oasis and can be visited on request. Entrance is from Via Ai Molini. Along this side street, flanked by a row of characteristic peasant houses, you will also find the San Luigi Gonzaga church, which dates back to the early 1700's. It was renovated first by Alvise Mocenigo and later by his wife Lucia Memmo. The inside is a treasure trove of artwork. There is an excellent cycle of the Via Crucis (engravings of a Roman school dated 1782) and the elegant holy water stoup in sculpted alabaster. The entrance to the presbytery is underscored by two excellent Angels which can be attributed to Giusto Le Court and are dated 1679; they were moved there from the San Pietro oratory in Ca’ Memmo in Cendon di Treviso. On the sides of the main altar, two cherub candleholders seem to take flight. They can also be attributed to the Flemish maestro. Alongside the triumphal arch, to the right the upper register, there is a canvas of the Madonna of Milk, dating from the 17th century. The central nave has on its right a splendid marble sculpture of the Crucifixion (presumably from the 18th century). The floor contains the grave markers of some members of the Mocenigo family. The centre of the nave is reserved as a memorial to Alvise.

From the centre of Avisopoli, turn left onto provincial route 72 and you will soon be in Fossalta di Portogruaro, which gets its name from "fossa alta (deep ditch)" and is clearly connected to the existence of an ancient riverbed, now vanished, that crossed the area and corresponded to the main branch of the Tagliamento river, mentioned by the Latin historian Pliny as the Tiliaventum Maius. The Fossalta parish church is mentioned for the first time in a document dated 1186. The castle, ordered by the bishops of Concordia and which probably stood near the present-day city centre, was destroyed in the 13th century, when it belonged to the feud of the Pers noble family of Friuli. The town has a completely modern look. After the tornado of 1973, it has been enriched by recent construction and new urban areas. The heart of town life is Piazza Risorgimento, which includes the city hall and the San Zenone parish church, built in 1896 after the demolition of the previous medieval church, the foundation of which dates back to 1034. The interior, divided into three naves with a high crossed ceiling, contains many works of art. In the right-hand chapel of the transept the Madonna with Child, St. Zeno and Mary Magdalene painted by Antonio Carneo (17th century XVII), two ancons by his son, Giacomo Carneo, the Last Supper and the Adoration of the Magi by Osvaldo Gortanutti located, respectively, on the wall of the left-hand nave and of the right-hand nave just before the chapels of the transept. In the right-hand transept, in the 17th-century marble altar, there is a wooden statue of the Virgin Mary by the local artist Giuseppe Scalamber (1886-1966). At the beginning of the left-hand nave there is a baptism font in engraved wood from 1682 by the Venturini maestros of Motta di Livenza. Special mention deserves to be made of the splendid vestry in carved and inlaid wood by the German carpenter Pietro Squadro, who worked in Venice in the
second half of the 17th century. The bell tower alongside the parish church was built in 1796, and was built from material from the demolition of the San Biagio church in Alvisopoli. Piazzetta Bornacin, behind the town hall, is bordered on one of its long sides by the building that houses the municipal library. From here, turn left onto Via Roma and follow it to the 18th century Villa Sidran, a typical example of the architecture of the country residences of Venetian nobility. A short distance from the centre, in the direction of Portogruaro, is the Ethnographic Museum, inaugurated in 1990, which offers a complete reconstruction of the typical settings of old country homes in the early 1900’s: the portico with the farm machinery, the courtyard, the stall, the lavatory, the hen coop, the wine cellar and the rooms of the home.

For a short detour, leave Viale Venezia and take state route 14 towards Latisana. Then turn right at the traffic light, and follow the signs to the village of Villanova Sant’Antonio where you can see an impressive centuries-old oak with a hollow trunk that has been declared a natural monument of national interest. Along with the nearby Sant’Antonio church, the oak represents the location where, in ancient times, the assembly of heads of families (vicinía) of the rural community of Villanova would meet. As you proceed you will come to Villanova Santa Margherita, the location of Industrie Zignago, an industrial city founded by Gaetano Marzotto in the first half of the 1900’s. The centre of the town is dominated by the Santa Margherita church (1912) which contains excellent contemporary works by artists such as Culos, Fumagalli, Dinetto, Casarini and others. A quick visit to the small Madonna della Neve church (16th century) in Stiago will give you a chance to admire the baroque stucco altar attributed to the Barellios.

Now return to Fossalta and pass through the centre. You will again get on provincial route 73 and follow it to the locality of Fratta, which is closely related to the figure of Ippolito Nievo, who made the castle that once existed here the focal point of the novel “Le confessioni di un italiano”. The manor is at least from as early as the second half of the 12th century when it was documented as being the property of the bishops of Concordia who assigned it as a feud to noble families. The last holders of the feud, the Valvason family, kept it until 1798, when, for unknown reasons and in spite of the protests of the bishop, they demolished the fortification which had fallen into ruin and sold the materials to Alvise Mocenigo, who at the time was constructing his ideal city, Alvisopoli. The site of the castle, acquired by the municipality of Fossalta, has been the object of archaeological surveys and has been involved in environmental restoration that has led to the creation of a park (Giardino di M Arte e Flora), an open-air theatre and a cross-country trail (the San Carlo lane) that leads to Fossalta. These excavations have made it possible to reconstruct the layout of the nucleus of the complex, the path of the outer walls, beyond which lay the moat, which can still be seen, and the location of two wells. Some explanatory markers have been placed along the path. The rural 15th century home, which was once part of the castle grounds, is today known as Cortino di Fratta. It has been renovated and transformed into a cultural centre that contains artefacts found during the archaeological research in the area of the fort, and the “Ippolito Nievo” museum. Inaugurated in 1984 and initially located in the Municipal Library, this museum contains most of the writer’s memoirs and has about a thousand items, including all of the editions of the novel “Le confessioni di un italiano”, with the translations into major foreign languages. Also worthy of note in Fratta are the San Bernardino church, which has existed since at least the 15th century, and, just a short distance away on provincial route 73, the Santa Sabida sacellum. The saint it is named after has never been officially recognized but is connected with the Jewish observance of Saturday as a holy day.

As you follow provincial route 73 you will come to the village of Gorgo, which probably gets its name (which refers to a spring or source of water) from the passage of the ancient branch of the Tagliamento, since vanished. The buildings of the village have characteristics that date them to medieval times, when the village was a feud of the bishops of Concordia. In spite of modifications, some of which recent, one can distinguish along Via Pellico the plan of a tower, the path of the walls that surrounded the village, the porticoes that allowed access to the internal courtyards, the large-bishop’s mansion which is now privately owned, below the roof of which there are frescoes with a coat of arms and the Bernardian monogram dated 1482, which perhaps may be the result of St. Bernard having passed through the area. The Santa Cristina church, located at the end of an alley that opens up on the right of the provincial road between Fratta and Gorgo, has recently been restored and conserves under the floor the traces, visible today, of the original medieval construction (12th-13th century). The current building is from the 15th century. In the single hall there are numerous fragments of frescoes, the most visible of which show St. Valentine and St. Sebastian, from the 16th century, and a painted false niche that frames a wooden Crucifix from the 1400’s.

From Gorgo you will reach Teglio Veneto by going back to Fratta and turning left on provincial route 91, or you can also reach route
91 from Via Pellico which continues in Via De Amicis, at the end of which you will turn right. The name Teglio comes from the Latin tilia, the linden tree, perhaps influenced by the large tree of the vicinía, which since the Middle Ages hosted beneath its branches the meetings of family heads and in this case was probably indeed a linden tree. Villam de Tileo and Plebem de Tileo are the first mentions of the locality that can be found in the papal document of 1186, showing that it was subservient to the bishop of Concordia. The ancient village church, probably built in the High Middle Ages, until its reconstruction at the end of the 1800’s stood quite a distance from the village, perhaps due to a different lay of the land at the time caused by the passage of the now vanished branch of the Tagliamento. Also, in 1434, the bishop granted the inhabitants of Teglio the right to deviate the course of the Lugagnana canal, which resulted in the centre of the village being moved to along the canal, where one can find the oldest buildings with the typical characteristics of the rural hamlets of the area. At the entrance to the village, coming from Via Portogruaro, a marker commemorates the birthplace of a special individual who lived in the 1800’s: Giuseppe Vendrame, known as Barba Zep; defined as a “little Leonardo of the farm people”, Barba Zep was a healer and herbalist, but also a lawyer of the community of Teglio in lawsuits brought to defend the rights of the people, which were often disregarded. A biennial poetry contest is named after him. The San Giorgio Martire parish church, completed in 1896, is in neoclassical style. The inside, with a single hall, contains a baptism font with an excellent wood covering from the 1700’s, an expressive wooden Crucifix from the 17TH century above the left side door and, in the chapel on the right, the ancon of the Madonna of the Rosary (late 17TH century) commissioned by the fraternity of the same name from Osvaldo Gortanutti. The 17TH-century marble altar, which, like many other works of art, was moved here from the previously demolished church, is marked on both sides by the large figures of St. James and St. George. Near the parish church stands the oratory of St. Anthony, which existed in the 13TH century and was subsequently expanded to include a Renaissance atrium and renovated. According to tradition, heads of families met here to discuss the problems of the community. Nearby, opposite the town hall, is Villa Rais, an example of a rustic noble home from the 17TH century, with its walls still showing a fresco decoration of red and white diamond shapes. Beside the oratory of St. Anthony, Via Parz leads into the countryside and leads to the Prati delle Pars, a natural area that conserves stable meadowlands that are now rare among the heavily farmed lands. Along Via Parz, which after 1.5 km is unpaved, you can see a large number of rural buildings, some of which have been abandoned. Not far away, in the middle of the fields, a former gravel pit has become a wetland and attracts, especially in the winter, birds such as the great white heron, the ash-grey heron, and the egret.

From the centre of Teglio Veneto, take Via Gobbo all the way to the end and turn left on Via Cintello. This will take you to the intersection with provincial route 463. Cross it and continue on Via Viola until you come to the village of Cintello, a rural cluster of buildings that was founded along the ancient communications route that connect the Roman city of Iulia Concordia with the regions of Noricum (Austria, Germany). It preserved its substantial strategic importance for the entire Venetian age due to trade between Venice and Germany. Cintello is the location of the San Giovanni Battista church, composed in part of a primitive building dated around the 11TH-12TH century and characterized by a location on a rise alongside the Lemene river, with the original presence around it of a fortified wall of a rural character, also known as a centa which, according to the most credible theories, is the origin of the name Cintello. The main reason for interest in the church is the existence inside it of a number of fragments of Romanesque frescoes discovered in 1968 and dated between the end of the 12TH and the beginning of the 13TH century. The painted surface strip is located on the left wall of the hall and shows an image of St. Christopher, the scene of the Kiss of Judas, and, partially, the subject of the Bosom of Abraham, traditionally represented by a delegation of patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) who protect the souls of the righteous in some folds of cloth.

From Cintello, continue for a short distance on provincial route 463, in the direction of Cordovado, in the province of Pordenone. It is suggested to add to the itinerary a visit to this charming fortified medieval village. If instead you wish to continue with the itinerary, from Cintello take provincial route 463 in the direction of Cordovado. Turn left to-
wards Bagnara and Gruaro, and follow the signs to the mills of Stalis. Once you reach the village of Bagnara, in the municipality of Gruaro, at the parish church turn right onto Via Bagnarola and continue following the signs to the mills of Stalis. Shortly thereafter, you will come to two ancient mills on the Lemene river, one of which stands in the middle of a small island river and is mentioned in documents from the first half of the 1400’s. The other was built at the end of the 1800’s. The locality where this mill complex stands, and which continued to operate until the 1970’s, is named after the presence of stalls (stabulis) for livestock. The municipality of Gruaro has acquired and renovated the mills, and made improvements to the surrounding natural environment. In the older mill, there is the reconstruction of the grinding wheel driven by an external paddlewheel, while in the other mill, which during World War Two was used as a sawmill by the German army, the ground floor contains a rolling mill from the 1920’s and an unusual barley mill. On the second floor, an educational space has been created and a permanent exhibition has been set up, with display boards and reproductions of ancient maps and documents. The locality of Satis, surrounded by green and rich with waters, on the border with the Friulian municipalities of Sesto al Reghena and Cordovado, was the source of literary inspiration for some of the events narrated by Ippolito Nievo in the novel “Le confessioni di un italiano” and is therefore a part of his literary collection. The country road that runs alongside the mills leads to Cordovado and, just before it gets there, flanks the fountain of Venchieredo, a spring that Nievo recalls in his novel as a meeting place in holiday evenings among the youth of surrounding villages and at times the birthplace of the flame of romance.

As you continue on the road towards Bagnara, on the right you will see the sign for Sesto al Reghena, in the province of Pordenone. A detour here is suggested to visit the splendid abbey of Santa Maria in Sylvis, founded by the Longobards, and its outstanding frescoes.

Once you return to Bagnara, the name of which comes from the Latin balnearia – hence a swampy area in the past rich with many more courses of water than in the present – it is worth visiting the 15th-century San Tommaso Apostolo church. On the facade of the church, above the door framed by a stone architrave, there is a lunette that shows the Madonna with the Child on the Throne, attributed to Andrea Bellunello (circa 1430-1494). There are also very faded traces of decorations, among which one can barely recognize a huge St. Christopher alongside one entrance and the Holy Trinity above the lunette. Inside, a great number of frescoes cover the walls of the hall and apse, dating to the 15TH and 16TH century and attributable to painters in the circle of Bellunello. On the left wall one can see St. Valentine, Madonna with Child, the Holy Trinity with Two Saints, St. Catherine of Alexandria and another Saint, in the habit of a priest. On the right wall, one can recognize, starting from the entrance, a Saint which can be identified as Lucy or Agatha and the three scenes of the Miracles of St. James, the story of a young pilgrim on his way to Santiago de Compostela with his parents who, during a stop, was unjustly accused of theft and hung. Continuing, one finds the Virgin on the Throne with the Child followed by what is probably St. Anthony the Abbot, A delegation of Saints decorates the area below the arch at the entrance to the presbytery, whose left wall is occupied at the top by a large Crucifixion, while at the bottom is the Coronation of the Virgin and on the right-hand wall the sequence of the Apostles which continues until it occupies part of the apse. The four canvases that cover the apse show the Doctors of the Church and Evangelists on the Throne; on the gables, between a canvas and the others, are the Musician Angels.

From Bagnara, just past the church, turn right onto provincial route 76, continuing on to Gruaro. There are four different explanations given as to the origins of Gruaro. The first, most closely related to popular tradition, attributes the name to the high numbers in the local area of cranes, or similar wading birds. The second theory attributes the name to the word grava, of Celtic origin and later transformed by Latin, to indicate soil with a gravel bed or alluvional terrain. A third hypothesis of the name is from the Frankish name, later Latinized, of gruarius, meaning “guardian of the woods”. The fourth theory refers to the Late Antiquity
or medieval Latin word *grot or grota*, meaning “swampland”, which is probably what the territory was in late antiquity. The main square of the village is overlooked by the town hall, constructed in the early 1900’s in forms that recall the vanished castle built in the 10th century by the Benedictine abbey of Sesto al Reghena which controlled the area. A short distance ahead, you will come to the San Giusto parish church, whose origins date back to the 12th century but whose current appearance reveals 15th-century construction which may have taken place on the site of the previously mentioned castle. The sloping facade preserves traces of painted decorations which, although fragmentary, reveal in the left-hand compartment of the lower registry, an image of the patron saint, Justin, alongside a turreted city that alludes to the battlement tower of the now vanished castle. On the right, in an opposite position, is a monumental figure of St. Christopher. The lunette of the portal contains the fresco *Christ Supported by the Angels on the Sepulchre*, dated 1513, as shown by the engraving on the stone frame. Inside, on the right-hand wall of the nave, alongside a large window, there are two religious frescoes from the early 1500’s: the *Nativity* (1519) and *St. Lucy* (1514). The facing wall is marked by the kaleidoscope of colours of the stained glass of the rosette which, created in 1990 by Angelo Gonnella, is dedicated to the celebration of the *Eucharistic Miracle of Gruaro-Valvasone*, which occurred in 1294 when a fragment of consecrated host that was accidentally caught in the folds of an altar cloth was given to a washerwoman and suddenly began dripping blood. The relic is today kept in the cathedral of Valvasone, in the province of Pordenone, where it was taken by the counts of that locality who had that time had jurisdiction over the church of Gruaro.

From Gruaro, take Via Marconi, opposite the city hall. Bear right at the intersection at the Sant’Angelo oratory. After about 1.5 km, turn left and follow the sign to Boldara and its mill, turning immediately to the right. This will bring you to the mill on the left bank of the Lemene, the first mention of which is made in 1433. The mill ceased operations in the 1960’s and is located in an especially fine natural surroundings, characterized by two courses of water, the Lemene river and the Battiferro canal, whose banks have recently been returned to nature by planting new trees to replace the ancient elms, willows, oaks and ash which were cut down, and replenishing the water with algae and aquatic plants. Today, you can enjoy the rediscovered natural beauty of the area and observe the animals that live there, travelling along the path that enters the woods alongside the mill or, from the other side of the road, taking the walkway among the trees along the banks of the river that leads to Cintello. Running in the same direction, there is also a bicycle path constructed by the municipality of Gruaro on the opposite shore of the Lemene. If you take the road you come from and turn left in the direction of Portogruaro, you will immediately come to the ancient Santa Elisabetta oratory. The chapel is actually dedicated to the Visitation of the Madonna to St. Elizabeth. The current structure, which dates back to the 16th century, contains a cycle of frescoes painted in 1646 by Cataldo Ferrari, an artist from Portogruaro who here reached his highest levels of inspiration and technique.

As you continue, you will soon come to the locality of Portovecchio, a village of the municipality of Portogruaro. Turn left and cross the bridge over the Lemene river. You will immediately find yourself in front of the Santa Maria della Purificazione parish church, one of the oldest in the areas, mentioned as far back as the 12th century. Although very little information is available, it is believed that Portovecchio may have been destroyed or heavily damaged just before the middle of the 13th century by the troops of Ezzelino III da Romano, lord of Treviso, in his attempts to expand his territory. The consequences of this event, added perhaps to a decline due to pestilence and other difficulties, led to the union of the parish of Portovecchio with the nearby parish of Teglio Veneto. It was not until 1583 that a new autonomous parish was established after the church was completely rebuilt. The church stands on a rise in the land, surrounded by a low wall, that constitutes its churchyard. On the outside it presents the essentiality of Romanesque style, characterized by the double-profile solid arches that adorn its walls. Inside, recent renovation has highlighted the high artistic quality of frescoes in the apse, which date to the first half of the 16th century and are attributed to the school of Amalteo. The wall on the right contains the episodes of the *Stories of the Virgin*: The *Annunciation of the Birth of Mary to St. Joachim and St. Anne*, the *Birth of the Virgin*, the *Wedding of the Virgin*, the *Presentation at the Temple* and the *Circumcision of Jesus*; on the wall on the left are the *Adoration of the Magi* and the *Flight into Egypt*. The scene of the *Annunciation*, an integral part of the cycle described above, is located on the sides of the marble main altar which contains the 18th-century ancon of the *Presentation at the Temple of Jesus and which appears to have been inserted after the creation of the frescoes, to the extent that it hides some portions of them. On the canvases of the apse cross vault there are the figures of the Evangelists, each of which accompanied by one of the *Fathers of the Church*. Also, in the lower portions of the canvases, the *Prophets* are also shown. Along the wall on the right side of the hall, on the altar dedicated to the Madonna, there is an ancon that shows *Mary with the Child between St. Peter and St. John the Baptist*, an 18th-century work by Agostino Pantaleoni. On the left side of the hall, there is a fresco of *St. Francis of Paula* from the second half of the 1500’s, which gives the altar its name. There are also an excellent baptism font and holy water stoup located alongside the main entrance and the holy water stoup on the wall near the side entrance, all from the 1500’s. Not far from the church, if you turn left at the end of Via Santa Maria, you will find, in Via Gervino, the entrance to the park that surrounds Villa Bombarda-Furlanis, guarded by a pair of San Marco
lions in bronze laminate. The villa, which was the 17th-century country dwelling of the Venetian Giustinian family, followed by the Michiel and Bombarda families afterwards, is today the property of the Furlanis heirs of Portogruaro. It is surrounded by a lovely natural environment composed of the remains of a flatlands wet forest, crossed by a branch of the Lemene, transformed into a park of about 5 hectares with the introduction of exotic trees alongside the dominant native ones, such as English oak and ash. The complex consists of a villa with a family chapel on the left side, rustic buildings and two mills, which probably existed in medieval times, and which took advantage of a natural difference in levels in the Lemene river.

Portovecchio was, in medieval times, the port along the Lemene river closely associated with the city of Portogruaro, even though there are various interpretations of the history that connects the two towns, as will be seen shortly.

After you leave the church of Portovecchio and go back across the bridge over the Lemene near the church, turn left onto Via Bassa di Portovecchio, which runs alongside the river and gives you a chance to see its wildlife (including swans, ducks, geese, water fowl and egrets) and the vegetation along the shores until you come to Portogruaro. At the end of Via Bassa, at the intersection with Via San Martino, turn right and shortly thereafter you will notice, slightly set back on the right, the old parish church of San Nicolo Extra Muros. Expanded and restructured to its current form between 1600 and 1620, but dating back to the 14th century, it has a fine portal with columns, architrave and gable, and inside, an ancon with St. Nicholas, St. Lawrence and St. Stephen painted by Portogruaro resident Giuseppe Moretto in 1610. The church was replaced in 1930 by the new parish church in Viale Pordenone, designed in neo-Romanesque style by the Venetian architect Max Ongaro. At the end of Via San Martino, turn left onto Viale Pordenone. After the railroad overpass, you will soon come the roundabout at the entrance to Portogruaro. It is advisable to visit the town on foot. You can leave your car in Piazza Castello or in the parking area opposite, both of which can easily be reached from the roundabout by immediately turning right onto Via Stadio, or you can enter the historical centre from Borgo San Nicolo, using pay parking.

Portogruaro preserves in its historic centre the original medieval urban layout, which is truly enjoyable in its elegant homogeneity, the characteristic Venetian influence of its palazzos, and the charming views of the Lemene river as it flows through the city, with two main thoroughfares on either bank of the river. The first part of the compound name of Portogruaro is easily explainable, as it refers to the ancient trade port on the Lemene river. The second part is more difficult to decipher, as is true of the nearby town of Gruaro. The hypotheses are the same as those presented for Gruaro. Since there is no certain answer, in popular tradition the name continues to be linked to cranes, which appear on the coat of arms of the city on the sides of the bell tower.

The most ancient origins of the settlement go back to the 10th century, when there was probably already a fortified castle on the right bank of the river (at the location of the Santi Cristoforo e Luigi church along present-day Via Seminario) which the bishops of Concordia constructed as their residence, probably wishing to escape an unhealthy environment and identifying the new location as a more favourable place from which to control the territory. This first nucleus would continue to grow around the commercial activities that made use of the Lemene waterway as a main thoroughfare. Traditionally, though incorrectly,
the document dated January 10, 1140, with which the bishop Gervino granted to a group of merchants ("portolani") a vast area on the left shore of the Lemene for the construction of a port and corresponding commercial structures in exchange for annual tribute and men of arms if needed, is considered the act of foundation of the town. Actually, that territory was already inhabited, and lengthy historical research has identified Portovecchio as the original commercial port which sprang up and existed prior to the contract stipulated between the bishop and the merchants, after which the merchant village of Portogruaro would grow rapidly on the left bank of the river, opposite from where the bishop’s castle stood. This is where civil and economic institutions were located, and the settlement soon included the right bank of the Lemene within its walls. According to a recent interpretation, however, the act of 1140 was the official birth of Portovecchio as the commercial port of Portogruaro, abandoned a few decades later in favour of a new port in the present-day historical centre. The expression Portum de Gruario is found for the first time in a papal document dated 1186 in which the Pope recognizes the jurisdiction of the bishop of Concordia over the town, with its parish church, mills and all its properties. Therefore, the city was originally subject to the bishops of Concordia and, as a result, to the patriarchs of Aquileia, to which the former were tributaries. Even though the city had been granted autonomy in the management of public monies, law enforcement, and in the institution of civil courts, in reality the church authorities maintained forms of control and interference in the political life of the city to the extent that sharp contrasts arose with the community, especially between the late 13th and 14th centuries, so that direct intervention by the patriarch of Aquileia was required to restore order. The merchant class, which had promoted the development of the city, in order to escape the oppressive influence of the church and to be more politically independent, began to become more and more a part of the Venetian dominion, establishing ever closer relationships with the Serenissima, in tune with the increase in the volume of trade. In 1281 the Maggior Consiglio established the port of Caorle to allow free passage of goods and merchants on their way to Portogruaro, and that same year the Serenissima decreed that salt could be traded only through the ports of Aquileia, Latisana e Portogruaro. The privileges granted by Venice and the role which the town on the Lemene now played attracted merchants and bankers from Lombardy, Tuscany, and Germany, so that it was not long before the first interest banks were founded, most likely by Jewish residents of Venice. It should be recalled that in 1361, Bonaccorso and Giovanni de’ Bardi, members of the powerful Florentine family of entrepreneurs, attempted to take over the town in a coup, transporting armed men instead of salt on three vessels. The attempt failed, but a fire destroyed the town hall and its archive. In 1420, Venice managed to take back the patriarchal State, which included Portogruaro. From that time on, the town would follow the fates of the Veneta Republic until its downfall in 1797, obtaining other important trade privileges and experiencing, during the 15th and 16th centuries, its period of greatest urban development and its highest levels of art and culture. The role and the strategic position of the city were decisive in trade between the lagoon of Venice and the Germanic countries as a point of passage of goods from waterways to land transport. In 1429, the Venetian Senate established that all iron, whether crude or processed, coming from Germany and headed for Venice, could be loaded and transported only via Portogruaro and in 1447, due to the volume of traffic of all sorts of goods and their strategic importance, the municipality built, on the left bank of the Lemene, outside the city walls, a large depot for goods with warehouses, docks, a loading and unloading levy, customs and a guardhouse. In the 1600’s, the economic decline of the city began. In 1797, with the Treaty of Campoformido, Napoleon, victorious over the Serenissima, ceded to Austria the territory of the ex-Venetian Republic, including Portogruaro. After the political events in the 1800’s related to the brief reign of Napoleon, Austrian domination and the passage to the Kingdom of Italy in 1866, when World War One broke out Portogruaro was the headquarters of the Italian 3rd Army. It was repeatedly bombed by Austrian planes and in 1917, after the defeat at Caporetto, was invaded by Austrian-Hungarian troops who were garrisoned there for more than a year (November 1917–November 1918). During the Second World War, in 1944, three young resistance fighters, Ampelio Iberati, Antonio Pellegrini and Bernardino Viodri, were
captured and hung in the main square. The main street of the historical centre was named in their honour, Corso Martiri della Libertà, the ancient “mercantile way”. Today, the population of the town is just over 25,000.

The visit to the town along the two parallel thoroughfares that follow the banks of the Lemene can start anywhere along a looped path. Whether you arrive by public transport (train or bus) or by car, a good starting point is Piazza Castello (bus station and car park), crossing through the city park (recently renamed “Parco della Pace”) to get directly to the heart of the historical centre. The municipal villa is a 16th century palazzo attributed to the architect Guglielmo il Bergamasco. It is a fine example of Renaissance architecture and has belonged to a number of local noble families, such as the Frattina, Grimani, Tasca, Papafava, Persico, Stucky families and, lastly, the Marzotto family. In 1973, it was acquired by the municipality to house part of the town offices and the library. The facade that faces the road shows a portico with three arches in front of the main entrance. On the noble floor there is an elegant gallery in Istria stone, with full-arch balconies and columns, behind which one can note the walls frescoed to imitate marble coverings and architectures. At the rear, facing the park, at right angles to the body of the villa, on one side there is a porticoed outbuilding which now houses town offices, and on the other side the long guest building which today houses a number of associations and a branch office of the Venice Chamber of Commerce. On the second floor of the municipal villa is the “Michele Gortani” Paleontological Museum, which contains over two thousand animal and plant fossils that document 500,000 years of evolution before man appeared on the earth. As you exit the main gate of the villa, you will be facing out onto Via Seminario. Just to the right you will notice the Sant’Ignazio oratory, originally a family chapel, built in 1682 by Giulio Tasca, a member of the family that owned the villa at the time. Today, the oratory is dedicated to those who have fallen in all wars. Opposite, there is Palazzo Marzotto, named after the owners who were also the last owners of the municipal villa. The palazzo, which is from the 16th century, is the only specimen in Portogruaro of a frescoed facade, showing mythological and pastoral scenes (Prometheus stealing fire, Parnassus, the Muses and Apollo, pastors who are playing music and practising the arts), festoons and cornices at the string-courses, medallions with feminine portraits between the arches of the porticoes.

Turn right onto Via Seminario, and you will come to the former bishop’s palace, which was heavily remodelled in the 1600’s and was the residence of the bishops of Concordia, who officially moved to Portogruaro in 1586, even if they had actually lived there for centuries. After 1974, when the bishop’s seat and residence were moved to Pordenone, the palazzo was renovated and would house the Advanced Institute of Religious Studies. A more ancient version of the bishop’s residence, an evolution of the castle built in the 10th century and which had already fallen into ruin by the 14th century, can be seen just a bit further ahead, near the Santi Cristoforo e Luigi church.

Opposite the former bishop’s palazzo stands the Concordiese National Museum, built in 1885 on the initiative of the lawyer and archaeologist Dario Bertolini, who was its first director, to store the archaeological finds from nearby Concordia Sagittaria and the surrounding territory. On the ground floor, in the large salon modelled after the hall of a basilica with three naves, in the centre of which there is a beautiful headless statue of a woman, there is a display of stone artefacts, many of which come from the necropilises of Concordia. In fact, along with monument bases, parts of buildings, and examples of floor mosaics, there are numerous funeral urns and steles of various types, and sarcophaguses with their inscriptions. These inscriptions, which date back to the last centuries of the Roman empire and are partially written in Greek, occupy the entire right-hand nave of the room and come from the so-called “sepulchres of the militia”, excavated in Concordia by Bertolini around 1873. This vast area, which includes over 250 sarcophaguses at a depth of about two metres, was constantly being flooded, and so it was impossible to drain it and leave it uncovered. Therefore, Bertolini, with the support of the greatest archaeologist of the time, the German Theodor Mommsen, decided to cut the inscriptions out of the sarcophaguses so as to conserve them properly and to bury the entire complex of sepulchres, which has not been touched since. In the room next to the entrance, there is a display containing silver, bronze and gold coins, often found collected in treasure chests, from the 3rd century BC to the 4th century AD. Along the walls are both female and male bust portraits, a virel bust and a number of slabs with Gorgon heads. On the first floor the items are contained in glass cases distributed through three rooms, with a more recent layout as compared to that on the ground floor. The first room is dedicated to bronze objects (tools, ornaments, household items, religious statues including an excellent Diana the hunter from the 3rd century AD), from both Roman and pre-Roman times. The second room contains ceramics, bricks, and a small collection of gems.
and amber objects. The third room contains various items from various epochs which were discovered during excavations after 1980, including a bronze of a pastor-sower (1ST century AD) from the rustic villa found in the locality of Marina di Lugugnana, the fragments of a fresco from the Roman thermal baths of Concordia, and ceramics and materials in bone and horn (8TH-10TH century BC) from the Venetic era.

As you leave the museum, a pleasant footpath runs along its right side, along which a number of stone items are displayed. It will take you to the banks of the Lemene, the fishery, and the main square on the other side of the river, which will be dealt with in more detail later. Continuing along Via Seminario, you will notice on the right the elegant and austere facade of Palazzo Altan Venanzio, which currently houses the branch section of the Court of Venice. The building was almost certainly built in the 1400’s, but its current appearance, which was fully restored by renovation carried out in 1983-85, is the result of work carried out between the end of the 17TH and the beginning of the 18TH century by the owners at that time, the Altan family, who had purchased it in the first half of the 1500’s, and the Venanzio family, who took possession of it in 1783. At the times of the last renovations it was connected to the nearby prison which, after restructuring and modernization, was never used as a result of large-scale prison reform. A stone inscription on the facade marks this as the birthplace of the composer and painter Luigi Russolo (1885-1947), one of the most representative members of the futurist movement of Marinetti. On the other side of the building is the small Anunniziata church, built in the early 1600’s. Opposite are the Santi Cristoforo e Luigi church and the imposing Doric columns of the ex-bishop’s seminary, today known as Collegio Marconi. The Santi Cristoforo e Luigi church, which presents itself in its 18th-century version, especially on the facade, is actually the oldest church in the city, built as a chapel annex of the bishop’s castle in the 10TH century. The bell tower beside was originally a tower of the castrum. In fact, it was here that the bishop of Concordia, moving from the ancient Roman city, had set up his first residence, which was subsequently replaced by the previously mentioned bishop’s palazzo which stood almost opposite on the other side of the street. Inside the church, restoration work carried out in 1981-84 has highlighted, to the extent possible, the medieval floor plan, the foundations of the original apse, and the fragments of frescoes in the area of the presbytery. Especially noteworthy, above the altar at right, is the fresco that shows St. Christopher and the Holy Family, a work by Pomponio Amalteo from 1532. The church was first named after St. Christopher and the earliest document that refers to it is from 1243, when it was assigned by the bishop, along with the adjacent hospice, to the order of cross-bearing friars of Venice so they could reside there and offer spiritual comfort. The friars remained there until 1658. After that, the convent was sold, but not the church, which, in the early 1700’s, with the founding of the bishop’s seminary, became its chapel, adding to its name that of St. Luigi Gonzaga, the patron of seminarians. Just after the First World War, the seminary was transferred to Pordenone, and it was replaced by the Guglielmo Marconi Lyceum (known as Collegio Marconi because it was originally a boarding school). This school is legally recognized, and today one wing of the structure is also home to university courses for the Universities of Venice, Padua and Trieste. To visit the Santi Cristoforo e Luigi church, since the main entrance on Via Seminario is not normally open, it is normally necessary to enter thought the internal courtyard of the Collegio Marconi.

As you continue straight, as soon as the columns of the ex-seminary come to an end, Via Cavour begins, flanked on both sides by porticoes with almost no continuity that belong to the elegant Gothic-Renaissance palazzos of clearly Venetian influence. On the facades or under the porticoes of some of them, if you look carefully, you will notice the insertion of circles of sculpted stone, the “pàtere”, which mostly show animals. These are decorative elements that came into use in the 12TH-13TH century in Venice and in areas culturally influenced by it. The walls and the vaults below some of the porticoes contain portions of religious and secular frescoes. About halfway down Via Cavour, on the left, you will come to the characteristic Calle Bovoloni and Calle dei Pescatori, which at their ends face out directly onto the Lemene. Calle Bovoloni has recently been connected to the other shore of the river by a bicycle-pedestrian bridge. The street ends at the Sant’Agnese tower-gate, constructed in the 12TH century, along with a wall that has now vanished, renovated in the mid-1200’s and again in the mid-1500’s, upon orders from the Venetian podestà Gerolamo Zorzi, who also had paved in Istria stone the road that is present-day Via Cavour and Via Seminario, as commemorated by the inscription on the outer wall of the chimney. Ownerd by the municipality of Portogruaro since 1987, after renovation the tower became the location of the City Museum, which collects items showing town history from the Middle Ages until the 1900’s (sculptures, epigraphs, coats of arms, ceramics, and handwritten and printed texts), along with educational and reconstructive panels. If you enter a short ways into the alley on the right, you will be able to see a tower that has been converted into a dwelling and a small section of the ancient wall surfaces. This is all that remains of the medieval wall that once enclosed the historical centre, demolished in 1911 after two of the five city gates had already been demolished. Just past the gate, outside the walls, once you pass the intersection with state route 14, near the junction of the Lemene and Reghena rivers, you will come to the St. Agnese church, which is also called Santa Lucia. Dating back to the first half of the 1300’s with Benedictine monks living in the attached monastery, it was rebuilt along with the pavilion and bell tower in 1480, when the Franciscan order of friars minor settled there and officiated
over it until the order was suppressed by the Venetian Senate in 1769. This period provided the fresco *Madonna with Child between St. Peter and St. Francis* (late 15th-early 16th century) in the lunette above the portal and, inside, the strip under the roof beams with half-bust figures of Franciscan saints, which was discovered during restoration work in 1986. The ancon of the first altar on the right, which shows *St. Nicholas in Glory amongst the Sailing Ships*, was commissioned from Biagio Cestari in 1748 by the Fraternity of St. Nicholas of the Seafarers, made up of boaters who were involved with river transport along the Lemene. At the feet of the altar there is a gravestone showing a sailboat and an epigraph dated 1563 that commemorates the burial of a number of members of the fraternity. This is followed by an excellent *Weeping over the Dead Christ*, a sculptured group in multi-colour terracotta from the late 15th and early 16th century, generally attributed to the school of Guido Mazzoni. The Sant’Agnese church became a parish in 1770, inheriting the function of the Santi Cristoforo e Luigi church, which was then reserved to the seminary. Alongside stands the San Giuseppe oratory, probably from the same period but restored in 1711 by Demetrio Maderò who built the family mausoleum there. Before being donated to the church, it was the property of the Martinelli family, who lived in the 18th-century villa of the same name located alongside and just back from the parish church, where the monastery and pavilion were probably once located.

As you come back in through Porta Sant’Agnese, you can turn immediately onto Via Rastrello and cross over to the left bank of the Lemene, crossing the Rastrello Bridge. The street and the bridge get their name because at night a grate (”rastrrello”) or a chain was lowered under the arch to prevent boats from entering the town with smuggled goods, or from entering without paying duties at customs, which was located in the present-day Palazzo Dal Moro (referred to in the local dialect as *palazzò*, because of its function), with the main side facing out onto the river to the left. At the end of Via Rastrello you will find, on the right, the San Giovanni gate tower, which is the starting point of the ancient mercantile street. Before you take it, you should go past the gate to observe the outer face, which reveals the Renaissance restoration ordered by the podestà Gerolamo Zorzi (the same as Porta Sant’Agnese). At the top, above the arch, during the Napoleonic invasion the Lion of St. Mark was removed from the place where the stone frame is. In ancient times the gate was called “del bando” (from the word meaning to banish or to exile from the city), or San Lazzaro, from the hospice of the same name for lepers and those with contagious illnesses, which had been located nearby since the early 1200’s. The name comes from the nearby San Giovanni Evangelista church, built in 1338, as can be seen by the inscription above the side door, thanks to the inheritance left by a certain Giovanni, known as Gaddiol. The appearance of the church today is the result of work carried out between the mid-15th and mid-18th centuries, and the radical modifications that took place in 1926-27 that eliminated all of the chapels along the right side and brought back to light the frescoes of the hall from the 16th and 17th centuries and distributed in four strips. In the first strip, between solid arches, there are the figures of the Prophets, in the second plants, animals, fruit and symbolic scenes, in the third the Evangelists on the right and the Doctors of the Church on the left, and in the fourth, below the crossbeams, the *Instruments of the Passion of Christ* alternating with *Eucharistic symbols*. The ceiling of the presbytery was frescoed in the middle of the 1700’s by Andrea Urbani with the *Triumph of the Eucharist*. On the main altar, an ancon from the late 1500’s by Leandro Da Ponte shows St. John the Evangelist with Saints John the Baptist, Stephen, Lawrence, Dominic, and Thomas Aquinas. On the left side of the hall, there opens the Addolorata chapel, built in 1742. At the centre of the ceiling, the fresco by Andrea Urbani represents the *Ascension to Heaven of the Virgin Mary among the Angels*, whereas on the altar the wood statue of the *Madonna of Sorrows* is accompanied, on the back, by the *Dead Christ*, both from the 1700’s. In a niche along the right wall of the hall, there is the *Madonna with Child* in stone, commonly referred to as the “Madonna of the Milk”.

Originally, alongside the church, there was a convent, first used by Dominican friars and subsequently by the servants, until it was given to the Fraternity of St. Thomas of the Downtrodden, who made it the location of the hospital, which has been replaced by a modern structure not far away. Remaining outside the gate, on the opposite side of the church with respect to the gate, you will see Palazzo Pari, a building from the 15th century in Renaissance style that was used as a salt warehouse by the Serenissima. In fact, on the side facing the moat in front of Porta San Giovanni, you can see the arches, which were once open and have now been walled in, through which goods were once loaded and unloaded. Few visible signs remain of the external fresco decoration.

As you come back in through the gate, you will start up Via Martiri della Libertà, the ancient trade street which was travelled by goods offloaded at the port and loaded onto wagons headed for Germany, and vice versa. Also here, you will find the characteristic sequence of porti-
coes on both sides, and the opening of narrow calli on the left side (Calle Marinaressa, Calle Beccherie, Via Mazzini known as “la Stretta”) which open onto the river. When you come to Piazza della Repubblica, you will find the elegant Gothic facade of the municipal palazzo, which closes it off at the end. The central part was built between 1372 and 1379, and was expanded in 1512 as an initiative of the podestà Giovanni Baffo, with the addition of the two side wings in same style as the main body. Completely brick-surfaced, the building is characterized by the dovetail battlements, the small bell tower with the sail at the top to call public gatherings and the windows with acute three-section arches. Inside, the salon of the ground floor has provided, during restoration carried out during the 1960’s, fragments of frescoes dated to the 16TH century, including a Crucifixion and festoons of leaves and fruit with medallions in the centre that frame profiled faces. The decorations have been detached and displayed in the council room, where, on the left wall, a sketch has been discovered that shows a lion being stabbed by a man armed with a spear. The town hall also contains a number of paintings (oil on canvas) by the futurist artist Luigi Russolo, realized in the first half of the 1900’s. Alongside the palazzo, in the small opening to the left, there is the Well of the Cranes, consisting of an actual well made by Pilacorte in 1494, and crowned by two bronze cranes sculptured by Portogruaro native Valantino Turchetto in 1928. Behind the town hall, on the banks of the Lemene, where the fish market was once held, stands the Pescheria oratory, dedicated to the Madonna and built entirely of wood by the fishermen of Carole who had a trading post here. Slightly further ahead are the two mills on the Lemene, which are surely among the oldest buildings in the town, considering that they are mentioned in the papal document of 1186 which specifically refers to Portum de Gruario cum molendinis. Over the course of the centuries they have been renovated several times by the bishops who owned them and who made excellent profits by renting them out to millers. Between the 13TH and 14TH century, it had ten wheels in operation. The wooden paddlewheels, which have disappeared and been replaced for demonstration purposes by two metal ones, drove the stone grinding wheels inside, of which a few pieces remain in the space in front of the entrance. Since 1970, the mills have been the property of the municipality and, after restoration, they became the City Gallery of Contemporary Art. The nearby two-span bridge was originally made of wood and was rebuilt in stone by the Venetian podestà Giulio Valier in 1554, as can be read in the stone marker placed on the curb, complete with the coat of arms of the city (the bell tower with the two cranes alongside) flanked by the coat of arms of the Valier family. From here you can easily see the apse of the cathedral and the bell tower, which may date back to the 13TH century and which leans sharply towards the church. As you come back up Via Molini, you will pass on the left a building once used as a baptistery, distinguished by a High Middle Age stone cross on the outer wall, and you will come to the cathedral. The main city church, dedicated to St. Andrew, was completed in 1833 after the complete demolition in 1793 of the previous medieval church which had its facade towards the mills, in the place of the current apse. The imposing building, whose facade has never been completed, contains a number of works of art, many of which were originally located in the demolished parish church. These include, in the second chapel on the left, the ancona of the Madonna with Child and Saints Rocco and Sebastian from the school of Palma il Giovane (first half of the 17TH century), with a view of the city in the lower part of the painting, and, in the chapel at the end of the right-hand nave, the Resurrection of Christ (late 15TH century) from the same school. In the presbytery, the panels of the choir are the work of Pomponio Amalteo and show, in five episodes, the Stories of St. Andrew (second half of the 16TH century). A sixth panel with the Last Supper is by an unknown author and is from the 19TH century. Amalteo also painted the canvas of the Virgin with Child and Saints James and Anthony located to the left of the main altar, which contains the Presentation at the Temple of Jesus by Giovanni Martini, a work from 1515. The ancona by Cima da Conegliano, which shows the Doubt of St. Thomas, painted in 1504, was sold in 1870 to the National Gallery of London, where it remains today. In its place, in the first altar on the right, there is a copy of the work from 1871 by the Portogruaro painter Eugenio Bonò.

As you continue along Corso Martiri della Libertà, on both sides you can admire the facades of some of the city’s finest buildings in Gothic-Renaissance style, where careful restoration has revived rather large sections of elegantly frescoed plaster. At the end of the road, you will find the third surviving gate tower, known as San Gottardo, with the same name as the church and hamlet just outside of it. The gate was reconstructed in the 1500’s as a bridge over the moat just beyond, where two stone markers recall its construction by the podestà Matteo Soranzo in 1523. Previously, the gate was named San Francesco after the nearby church of the same name and corresponding monastery. The Franciscan complex, built at the end of the 1200’s in the area next to the gate which is today occupied by schools, was demolished around 1830.
The asparagus of Bibione

The asparagus has very ancient traditions, starting from the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans who offered it to deities during banquets, considering it an aphrodisiac and a symbol of fertility.

The asparagus is mentioned in the History of Plants by Theophrastus, and cultivation techniques were collected by Pliny in his Naturalis Historia.

In Bibione, asparagus probably arrived with the Romans. It found favourable terrain sheltered from light, so that its spears are very white and the tips are well closed. The sandy soil with a high content of mineral salts, along with the coastal marine climate, provides a vegetable an intense, special flavour.

Traditionally, asparagus is eaten boiled, dressed with oil, vinegar, salt and pepper, also with hard boiled eggs. But in the kitchen, it can be used in preparing soups, risotto and omelettes.
useful information on itinerary 1

From the Sile to the Piave

Information and Tourist Offices (IAT)

Cavallino-Treporti
Tourism Promotion Agency of the Province of Venice - Venice Tourism Area, IAT office of Cavallino, via delle Saline 23, tel. and fax 041 5370379, www.turismocavallino.it
IAT office of Punta Sabbioni, Piazzale Punta Sabbioni, tel. 041 5298711, fax 041 5230399, www.turismovenze.it, info@turismovenze.it

Jesolo
Tourism Promotion Agency of the Province of Venice - Jesolo and Eraclea Tourism Area, Piazza Brescia 13, Lido di Jesolo, tel. 0421 370601, fax 0421 370608, www.turismojesoloeraclea.it, info@aptjesoloeraclea.it
Seasonal information point of Lido di Jesolo, Piazza Torino, tel. and fax 0421 363607 (open from May to September), torino.iat@adtjesoloeraclea.it
Consortium for the Promotion and Development of Tourism of Jesolo-Eraclea, Piazza Brescia 13, Lido di Jesolo, tel. 0421 92288, fax 0421 387742, www.jesolo.it, info@fourseasons.it

Museums and cultural institutions

Jesolo
“Antiche Mura” archaeological area, via Antiche Mura, always open (only from outside)
City Museum of Natural History, via Bafile 172, Jesolo Lido, tel. and fax 0421 382248, arca113ecologico@libero.it; summer hours: from June 1 to September 15 every day 9.30-13.00 and 15.00-23.00; winter hours: Tuesday to Saturday 8.30-13.00 and 14.30-19.00; closed for holidays January 15 to 31 and October 15 to 31
“Silvio Trentin” Studies Centre, c/o Municipal Library, piazzetta Jesolo 1, tel. 0421 359145, fax 0421 350990, centro.trentin@jesolo.it; hours: Monday to Saturday 8.30-13.30

Meolo
“Giuseppe Pavanello” Centre for Historical Ethnographic Documentation of Eastern Veneto, locality Marteggia, www.centro-pavanello.it

Quarto d’Altino
National Archaeological Museum and Archaeological Areas, via S. Eliodoro 37, Altino, tel. and fax 0422 829008; hours: every day 9.00-20.00 (closed January 1, May 1, December 25)

Nature areas and parks

Cavallino-Treporti
- Mouth of the Sile - Piave Vecchia, always open
- Coastal forest of Punta Sabbioni, always open
- Marshes of Lio Piccolo, Mesole and Saccagana, always open

Fossalta di Piave
- Piave Flood Plain Riverside park, always open

Jesolo
- Marsh of Lio Maggiore, always open
- Marshes of Dragojesolo, Grassabò and Dogà, private property which can be visited only with the permission of the marsh warden

Museo di Piave
- “La Piave Vecchia” Territorial Laboratory of Environmental Education, locality Castaldia di Caposile; hours: Sat. 9.30-12.30, for school trips and groups reservations by calling the “Il Pendolino” Nature Education Centre in Noventa di Piave, tel. 0421 65060

Quarto d’Altino
- Nature Oasis of Trepalade, open year round by reservation, tel. 0422 789041, 339 5942089, fax 0422 829009, www.oasitrepalade.com, verdone@oasitrepalade.com; entry free of charge second Sunday of each month, hours 9.30-12.00 and 14.00-17.00. The oasis includes the “Airone” Environmental Education Centre, piazza Papa Giovanni XXIII, Portegrandi, open year round by reservation, entry free of charge third Sunday of each month, hours 15.00-18.00
- Nature oasis of the loop of San Michele Vecchio, always open

Restaurants and trattorias

Cavallino-Treporti
- Ristorante Al Ponte, via Fausta 484, tel. 041 968025
- Trattoria Belvedere, Lungomare San Felice 24, Punta Sabbioni, tel. 041 966200
- Ristorante Al Campiello, via Fausta 369, tel. 041 5370555
- Trattoria Laguna, via Pordelio 444, tel. 041 968058
- Locanda Zanella, piazza Ss. Trinità 5/6, Treporti, tel. 041 5301773
- Ristorante Al Bacaro, Lungomare Dante Alighieri 27, Punta Sabbioni, tel. 041 966182
- Ristorante Da Achille, piazza S. Maria Elisabetta 16, tel. 041 968005
- Ristorante da Guido, via Roma Sinistra 25, Jesolo Paese, tel. 0421 350380

Jesolo
- Locanda alle Porte 1632, via Cristo Re 43/44, Jesolo Lido, tel. 0421 371760
- Ristorante Cozze e Gamberi, via Bafile 113, Jesolo Lido, tel. 0421 386063
- Ristorante Tortuga, piazza Tommaso 15, Jesolo Lido, tel. 0421 93319
- Ristorante Da Omar, via Dante Alighieri 21, Jesolo Lido, tel. 0421 93685
- Ristorante La Caneva, via Antiche Mura 13, Jesolo Paese, tel. 0421 952350
- Ristorante Antica Jesolo, piazza I Maggio 3, Jesolo Paese, tel. 0421 951145
- Ristorante Al Ponte de Fero, via Colombo 1, Jesolo Paese, tel. 0421 350785
Fossalta di Piave

Antica Trattoria Fossetta, via Fossetta 31, tel. 0421 330296

Quarto d’Altino

Ristorante Cosmori, viale Kennedy 15, tel. 0422 825326
Locanda Portegrandi, via Trieste 65/66, Portegrandi, tel. 0422 789020

Holiday Farms

Cavallino-Treporti
Le Manciane, locality Lio Piccolo, tel. 041 658977
Tiepolo, via Ca’ Tiepolo, locality Ca’ Vio, tel. 041 5300828

Fossalta di Piave

Biancoletto Claudio, via della Speranza 69, tel. 0421 67169
Fattoria I Canarini, via della Favorita 5, tel. 0421 67582, e-mail: fattoriaicanarini@iol.it

Jesolo

Ca’ Tron, via Ca’ Colombo 80, locality Cortellazzo, tel. 0421/980207
Cavetta, via Cavetta Marina 53/B, tel. 0421 378082, e-mail: agriturismocavetta@libero.it
Da Sergio, via Correr 100, tel. 0421 362434
La Barena, via Lio Maggiore 13, locality Lio Maggiore, tel. 348 3681314
Taglio Del Re, via Posteselle 15, tel. 0421 359740

Mccolo

At Laghetti, via Marteggia 11, locality Marteggia, tel. 0421 618548
Ancillotto, via S. Filippo 41, tel. 0421 345494, e-mail: info@ancillotto.it
Colmel dei Medoli, via Roma 154, tel. 0421 61151

Musile di Piave

Agriturismo Lunardelli, via Triestina 59, tel. 0421 50475
Tonus F.lli, via Intestadura 60, tel. 0421 50560
Zucca d’Oro, via Salsi 35, tel. 0421 230086

Hotel and non-hotel structures: please contact the tourism offices listed above

Events, fairs, village fests and markets

Cavallino-Treporti

Weekly market: Thursday in Treporti; Tuesday in Cavallino
Palio remiero delle Contrade (first half of June)
Parade of Carnival floats in Punta Sabbioni, Cavallino, Ca’ Savio (from mid-July to mid-August)
Regatta de Mar of the contrada Faro Piave Vecchia (second half of August)
Del Tempeston village Festival in Cavallino (end of August)
Regatta and closing Festival of Palio Remiero delle Contrade in Cavallino-Treporti (first half of September)
Doe zizoea (jujube) Festival in Lio Piccolo (second half of September)

Jesolo

‘M.O. Bottecchia” bicycle race (mid-July)
Village Festival dedicated to Hermagoras and St. Fortunatus (first week of August)

Jesolo Jazz (June-September)
Antique Market (Thursday evening, June-September)
Wandering travelling trades. Street artists (June-September)
Festival of Swedish bands in Jesolo Lido (first half of July)
Summer Carnival in Jesolo Lido (July-August)
International festival of sand sculptures (second half of June - July)
Seaside fests in Cortellazzo (second half of July - first half of August)
Seaside Walkway of the Stars (August)
Show by the “Frecce Tricolori” Italian Air Force precision flying team (August)
Grape festival (first half of September)
“Giorgio Lago” National Journalism Prize (mid-September)
Theatrical review (October-March)

Musile di Piave

Festival of the patron St. Valentine (first half of February)
Palio di San Donato between hamlets (June)
Patto Solenne d’Amistà (or Gaudium Sancti Donati) or San Donà di Piave and traditional race of musi (first week in August)

Quarto d’Altino

Panevin on the Sile (Epiphany bonfire, January 5)
Village Festival (second half of July)
R…Estate in Quarto (July-September)

Specialized bookshops and newsstands (where local publications can be found)

Cavallino-Treporti
Edicola Dalla Mora, via Equilia, 7, tel. 041 968001

Jesolo
Libreria Gianese, via Bafile 87, Lido di Jesolo, tel. 0421 380287
useful information on itinerary 2

From the Piave to the Livenza

Information and Tourist Offices (IAT)

Eraclea
Tourism Promotion Agency of the Province of Venice - Jesolo-Eraclea Tourism Area.
IAT office Eraclea Mare, via Marinella 56, tel. 0421 66134 - 66135, fax 0421 66500, www.turismojesoloeraclea.it, infoeraclea@aptjesoloeraclea.it
IAT branch office Eraclea Mare at Environmental Education Centre, via degli Abeti 2, tel. 0421 66024, open from September to May the first weekend of the month 9.00-17.00, from June to August every day except Tuesday, 9.00-17.00

Museums and cultural institutions

Ceggia
Archaeological area of the Roman bridge
San Donà di Piave
City Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art - “Leonardo Da Vinci” Cultural Centre, piazza Indipendenza, tel. 0421 590223; hours (only during periodic exhibitions): Tue.-Sat. 16.00-19.00, Sun. 10.00-12.00 and 16.00-19.00
Land Reclamation Museum, viale Primavera 43, tel. 0421 42047, fax 0421 41334, www.museobonificasandonadipiave.net, museobonifica@sandonadipiave.net; hours: Tue.-Sat. 15.00-18.00 (16.00-19.00 in July and August), Sun. and holidays 9.00-12.00 (closed Christmas, New Year’s, Easter, May 1, and August 1 to 15); guided night tours in the summer
Torre di Mosto
Museum of Peasant Civilization, via Boccafossa 15, locality Boccafossa, visits by reservation by calling the Committee for the Museum of Boccafossa, Contact Mr Isidoro Caminotto, tel. 338 4708387, fax 0421 705678
Landscape Museum, locality Boccafossa, can be visited during periodic exhibitions by calling the Town Secretary of Torre di Mosto, tel. 0421 324191, fax 0421 324397, www.comune.torredimosto.ve.it

Nature areas and parks

Ceggia
Nature trail along the Piavon and Grassaga canals, always open

Restaurants and trattorias

Ceggia
Ristorante Al Trovatore, via Noghera 27, tel. 0421 329910
Eraclea
Trattoria Terrazza Grill, via Marinella 48, Eraclea Mare, tel. 0421 66056
Ristorante Gianni 33, via dei Pini 1, Eraclea Mare, tel. 0421 66032
Ristorante La Tavernetta, via Cittanova 48, tel. 0421 316091
Ristorante Al Gambero, piazza del Granatiere 32, Cortellazzo, tel. 0421 980375
Ristorante Ongaro, piazza del Granatiere 1, Cortellazzo, tel. 0421 980263
Trattoria Alla Darsena, via Oriente 166, Cortellazzo, tel. 0421 980081
Ristorante Al Traghetto, via Massaua 33, Cortellazzo, tel. 0421 378020

San Donà di Piave
Ristorante Luna Nuova, piazza IV Novembre 4, tel. 0421 52810
Antica Trattoria da Nicola, via Sauro 44, tel. 0421 54624
Ristorante Forte del ’48, via Vizzotto 1, tel. 0421 44018
Trattoria Tonetto, via Code 1, tel. 0421 40696
Locanda al Piave, corso Trentin 6, tel. 0421 52103
Locanda al Corso, corso Trentin 33, tel. 0421 54379

Torre di Mosto
Trattoria da Saro, via Roma 28, tel. 0421 325252
Trattoria Emiliana, via Brian 11, locality Brian, tel. 0421 210894

Holiday Farms

Ceggia
Maliso, via Venezia 70, tel. 0421 322206
Pra d’Arca, via Caltorta 18, tel. 0421 329755, e-mail: pradarca@iol.it
Relais Ca’ Levada, via Triestina 8, tel. 0421 480059, e-mail: lff58@libero.it
Eraclia
Agriturismo Al Doge, via Coda di Gatto 51, tel. 0421 239116
De Munari Attilio, via Tre Cai 15, tel. 0421 237494
Tre Case, via Ancilotto 94, tel. 0421 62334

dì là dal fiume, via Strada Briana Mare 182, tel. 0421 299713

San Donà di Piave
Calle dell’Orso, via Calle dell’Orso 6, tel. 0421 235945
Quadrifoglio rel-a-x, via Giustinian 7/2, tel. 0421 320711

Torre di Mosto
Ca’ degli Aironi, via Fiumicino 6, tel. 049 655179
Casa Vecia, via Rotta 24, tel. 0421 325462
La Via Antiga, via S. Martino 13, tel. 0421 62378

Hotel and non-hotel structures: please contact the tourism offices listed above

Events, fairs, village fests and markets

Ceggia
Weekly market Tuesday
Carnival of Ceggia (February)
Period painting exhibition (February)

Eraclia
Weekly market Tuesday
from May to mid-September
Fish Festival in Valcasoni (April)
Festival of the Virgin Mary in Eraclia (first half of August)
“I dogi a Eraclia” historical re-enactment (first half of October)

San Donà di Piave
Weekly market Monday
Antique market (last Saturday of each month; in September it is postponed until the first weekend in October, and in December it is brought forward to Saturday before Christmas)
Spring Festival (April 25 and May 1)
“Estiamo a San Donà”, review of theatre, music, culture, sport, opera and dance (June-September)
Opera (first half of July)
First World War re-enactment “Ricordando la Grande Guerra” (last Saturday of July)
Patto Solenne d’Amistà (August 7 with Musile di Piave)
Gaudium Sancti Donati (August 8)
Fair of the Rosary (first week of October)

Noventa di Piave
Weekly market Thursday
“Giacomo Noventa - Romano Pascutto” national literary prize (bi-annual; November-December)
Kite festival (early April)
Antique Market (May 1)
Country Festival (first half of July)
September celebrations (second-third week of September)

Torre di Mosto
Weekly market Friday
Mayday Festival in Staffolo (first Sunday in May)
Fair of Bisât (of eel, second half of May)
Festival of St. Anthony or of Cherries (first half of June)
Festival of the patron Saint Martin of Tours (first half of November)

Specialized bookshops and newsstands (where local publications can be found)

San Donà di Piave
Libreria “Manzoni”, corso S. Trentin 106, tel. 0421 53398
Cartolibreria “Airone”, via N. Sauro 42, tel. 0421 330268
Libreria “Moderna”, via xiii Martiri 7, tel. 0421 54409
Libreria Coop. Centro commerciale Piave, via Galleria Piave 20, tel. 0421 222880
useful information on itinerary 3
From the Livenza to the Lemene

Information and Tourist Offices (IAT)

Caorle
Tourism Promotion Agency of the Province of Venice - Bibione - Caorle Tourism Area,
Caorle administration office, via Strada Nuova 80/b, tel. 0421 81860, fax 0421 84251, www.caorleturismo.it, info@caorleturismo.it
IAT Central Office, Calle delle Liburniche 16, tel. 0421 81085, fax 0421 218623
IAT Office of Porto Santa Margherita, corso Genova 21, tel. 0421 260230, fax 0421 218623 (open from May 1 to September 30)
IAT office of Duna Verde, piazza Spalato 2, tel. 0421 299255, fax 0421 218623 (open from May 1 to September 15)

Museums and cultural institutions

Caorle
Cathedral Museum, piazza Vescovado 6, tel. 0421 81243 (entry from parsonage garden), hours: from mid-September to mid-June, Sat. 15.00-17.00, Sun. 10.00-12.00 and 15.00-17.00; from mid-June to mid-September daily 21.00-23.00, Sat. also 15.00-17.00, Sun. also 10.00-12.00 and 15.00-17.00; school trips and groups it is possible to make reservations for any day or time by calling the parish of Santo Stefano Protomartire in Caorle: 0421 81028
Concordia Sagittaria
Archaeological area, piazza Cardinal Costantini, tel. 0421 275677; hours: daily 9.00-19.30 (closed: January 1, May 1, December 25)
Museum layout in rooms of the Town Hall, via Roma 55, tel. 0421 270360, fax 0421 270216; hours: Tue.-Sun. 10.00-12.00, 15.00-17.30
Ethnographic collection, via Giovane Italia 1, visits by appointment for school trips and groups by calling the association “Gruppo Folkloristico Concordia”, signor Gelsomino Molent, tel. 0421 270732

Pramaggiore
Ethnographic Museum of the Mill of Belfiore, locality Belfiore, tel. 0421 200317; hours: from May to August, Tue. 9.00-12.00, Sat. 15.00-18.30, first and third Sun. of each month 15.00-18.30; from September to April, Tue. 9.00-12.00, Sat. 14.30-17.30, first and third Sun. of each month 14.30-18.30
National Wine Exhibit, via Cavaleri di Vittorio Veneto 13, tel. 0421 799036, visits by reservation, both for groups and individuals, from March 1 until October 31

Santo Stino di Livenza
Ornithological Exhibit, c/o Town Hall, piazza A. Moro 1; for school trips and groups visits by appointment by calling 0421 473911

Nature areas and parks

Caorle
Fishermen’s Island (also known as Island of the Casoni or Fishermen’s Village), locality of Falconera, always open
Valle Vecchia, locality of Brussa, always open; the Nature Education Centre can be visited from Mon. to Fri. by reservation by calling Veneto Agricoltura (operating agency) tel. 049 8293760, Nature Education Office, tel. 049 8293889; for school trips and groups it is possible to reserve guided nature excursions and educational workshops: www.vallevecchia.it, www.venetoagricoltura.org, educazione@venetoagricoltura.org
Cinto Caomaggiore
Artificial lakes “ex cave di Cinto”, via Grandis 4, entry on request at the holiday farm Ca’ del Lago, tel. 0421 209796, 348 0947187, fax 0421 224497; for school trips and groups it is possible to reserve guided nature tours
Zacchi Forest, via Bandida, private property

Lison di Portogruaro
Merlo Forest, always open

Santo Stino di Livenza
Forests of Bandiziol and Prassaccon, Via Bosco di Bandiziol and Via Bosco di Prassaccon (side streets of Via Loncon), locality Corbolone, always open

Restaurants and trattorias

Caorle
Ristorante Al Fogher, via Madonna dell’Angelo 3, tel. 0421 81868
Ristorante Duilio, via Strada Nuova 19, tel. 0421 81087
Ristorante Sporting, via Venier 1/3, tel. 0421 210156
Ristorante da Nappa, piazza Pio X 8, tel. 0421 81854
Ristorante Taverna Caorlina, via Francesconi 19, tel. 0421 81115
Ristorante Ai Bragozzi, Riva dei Bragozzi 7, tel. 0421 212455
Ristorante Al Porto, Fondamenta Pescheria 6, tel. 0421 81640
Ristorante Antico Petronia, via Roma 1, tel. 0421 212133
Ristorante Il Carro, via Selva Rosata, Duna Verde, tel. 0421 299478
Trattoria da Nico, via San Gaetano 13, locality San Gaetano, tel. 0421 88089
Trattoria Mazarack, via Strada Brussa 51, locality Brussa, tel. 0421 84119
Ristorante Al Cacciatore, corso Risorgimento 35, locality San Giorgio di Livenza, tel. 0421 80331

Concordia Sagittaria
Hostaria da Fanio, via I Maggio 56, tel. 0421 270462
Ristorante Alla Torre, via Claudia 1, tel. 0421 273477
Ristorante Al Confin, via Claudia 453, tel. 0421 270474
Trattoria Al Cacciatore, via Cavanella 457, locality Cavanella, tel. 0421 703809
Flavours of autumn and Palio delle botti (late September, early October)

**Caorle**
- Weekly market *Saturday* (8.00-13.00)
- *Tuesday* (19.00-23.00) in Porto Santa Margherita from May 15 to September 16
- *Wednesday* (8.00-13.00) in Duna Verde from May 15 to September 16
- Scogliera viva: international cliff sculpting competition (June or July)
- Regatta 500 x 2 starting from Porto Santa Margherita (June)
- Madonna dell’Angelo Festival (second Sunday in July); every 5 years the Festival is celebrated with procession of boats from the sanctuary to the fishermen’s port (September)
- International festival of street theatre (late August - early September)
- Fish festival (first half of September)

**Cinto Caomaggiore**
- Exodus of Anabaptists from Cinto (historical re-enactment, September)

**Concordia Sagittaria**
- Weekly market *Monday* (7.00-13.00)
- Bonfire on Lemene river (evening of January 5)
- Festa della Renga (Herring Festival, February, first day of Lent)
- Palio dei Teatranti - Amateur theatre review (April-May)
- Musical July (July)
- Fair of St. Stephen (late July - early August)
- Gara de batèe (Venetian rowing competition on typical boats - last Sunday in September)
- Antique market (third Sunday of each month)

**Pramaggiore**
- Festival of St. Mark (April 24 - early May)
- National Exhibition of Wine Samples (late April - early May)
- Frog Festival in Comugne (second half of May)
- Sopressa Festival in Belfiore (second half of July)
- Poenta e osei (polenta and birds) festival in Blessaglia (September)
- Festival of grapes and DOC wines (October)

**Santo Stino di Livenza**
- Weekly market (8.00-13.00)
- Village festival (first and second Sunday in September)
- Fair of Colours and Flavours of Autumn (third Sunday in October)
- “Giacomo Noventa - Romano Pascutto” national literary prize for poetry in the local dialect (bi-annual, November-December)

**Hotel and non-hotel structures:** please contact the tourism offices listed above

**Events, fairs, village fests and markets**

### **Annone Veneto**
- Fiera dei Osei (Bird Fair, last Sunday in August)
- Loncon wine exhibition (first decade in August)

**Concordia Sagittaria**
- Cartolibreria "La Concordiese", via 1 Maggio 32, tel. 0421 270637

**Santo Stino di Livenza**
- Cartolibreria Benedet, via Roma 12, tel. 0421 310129
useful information on itinerary 4
From the Tagliamento to the Lemene

Information and Tourist Offices (IAT)

Bibione
Tourism Promotion Agency of the Province of Venice - Bibione and Caorle Tourism Area, Bibione office, via Maja 57, tel. 0431 442111, fax 0431 439997, www.bibioneturismo.it, info@bibioneturismo.it
IAT Central Office, viale Aurora 111, tel. 0431 442111, fax 0431 439995 (open from May 1 to 31 October)
IAT office of Bibione Pineda, via dei Ginipri 222, tel. 0431 442111 (open from 1 May to 15 September)

Portogruaro
IAT office, via Martiri della Libertà 19/21, tel. 0421 73558, fax 0421 72235, www.portogruaroturismo.it, info@portogruaroturismo.it

Museums and cultural institutions

Fossalta di Portogruaro
Cortino del Castello di Fratta and Castle Museum, via Castello 1, Fratta, tel. 0421 248248 - 248253, visits by appointment by calling the City Library: 0421 249538, fax 249578, www.cortinoturismo.it
Museo Etnografico, viale Venezia 21, tel. 0421 789390, 349 0924900; hours: from November to March (closed in January and February) Sun. 10.00-12.00 and 14.30-17.30, from April to October Sun. 10.00-12.00 and 16.00-19.00, for school trips and groups visits by reservation also at other times
Luigi Diamante Municipal Picture Gallery, Villa Mocenigo, via Mocenigo 45, Alvisopoli; hours: from October to May Wed. 10.00-12.00, Sun. 10.00-12.00 and 15.00-17.00, from June to September Sun. 10.00-12.00 e 17.00-19.00; secretarial office at Municipal Library, tel. 0421 249538

Gruaro
Mills of Stalis, locality Stalis, open Sundays 15.30-18.30 from May to September; open by appointment for school trips and groups by calling the Municipality of Gruaro: 0421 206370

Portogruaro
Concordiese National Museum, via Seminario 26, tel. and fax 0421 72674; hours: every day 9.00-20.00 (closed January 1, May 1, and December 25)
City Museum, via Cavour c/o Torre Sant'Agnese, tel. 0421 72553; hours: Tue. and Sat. 15.00-18.00 (from October 1 to May 31) 16.00-19.00 (from June 1 to September 30), Thu. 10.00-12.00, Sun. 9.00-12.00 (closed January 1, May 1, December 25, Easter)

Nature areas and parks

Bibione
“Lino delle fate” Botanical Garden, via delle Colonie at intersection with via Ariete (near thermal baths), entry must be authorized by the Municipality of San Michele al Tagliamento - Environmental Department, tel. 0431 516232, fax 0431 516312

Fossalta di Portogruaro
WWF refuge in Alvisopoli Forest - Environmental Education Centre, via Ai Molini 20/c, Alvisopoli, tel. 0421 248097, fax 0421 789067, cea.alvisopoli@libero.it; hours: Wed. 10.00-12.00, for school trips and groups it is possible to reserve visits at other times

Gruaro
Nature trail of the mill of Boldara, locality Boldara, always open
Bike and foot path along Lemene river, locality Boldara, always open
Lago Azzurro, locality Giai, always open

Portogruaro
“Della Pace” City Park, via Seminario 5; hours: from May to August every day 7.00-22.00, from September to April every day 7.00-19.00
Garden of Via Resistenza, always open
Park of Villa Bombarda, via Gervino, village of Portovecchio, open to the public Sun. 10.00-12.00 and 14.00-18.00

Restaurants and trattorias

Bibione
Ristorante Ostricaio, via della Bilancia 29, tel. 0431 43137
Osteria del Porto, via della Laguna 6, tel. 0431 437293
Ristorante Al Gambero, corso del Sole, tel. 0431 43609
Ristorante Ai Cavalli, via Falcomer 20, locality Bevazzana, tel. 0431 578057
Ristorante Al Fogo, via Don Minzoni 8, locality Bevazzana, tel. 0431 43681

Gruaro
Trattoria Alla Bionda, piazza Aldo Moro 11, locality Bagnara, tel. 0421 706188
Osteria La Mondina, via Kennedy 4, tel. 0421 706298

Portogruaro
Ristorante Alla Botte, viale Pordenone 46, tel. 0421 760128
Trattoria Venezia, viale Venezia 10/12, tel. 0421 275940
Portogruaro

Weekly market Thursday (7:00-13:00)
Antique market (second Sunday of each month)
Festival of the Lands of the Doges (initiatives to promote typical products, mid-May)
Theatre in the Villa (July-August)
Festival of the Madonna of the Fishery (August 15)
Estate Musicale (International Festival of Chamber Music, mid-August to early September)
Festival of the Madonna of the Rosary in Borgo San Giovanni (early October)
Orchestrizzazione (contemporary art exposition, late October)
Fair of St. Andrew, also known as the Ancient Fair of Geese and Boots (late November)

Teglio Veneto

Eticamente (first week in June)
Sagra del bisât (Festival of Eel; late June - early July)
Festival of linguál (first half of August)
Palio dei mussi (donkey race; third Sunday in September)
Teglio, village of poetry, artistic events (second half of September)
‘Barba Zep’ poetry contest (awards given in September, bi-annually)

Specialized bookshops and newsstands (where local publications can be found)

Bibione

Libreria “Punto e virgola”, corso del Sole 167, tel. 0431 437484

Portogruaro

Libreria “Al Segno”, calle Beccherie 8, tel. 0421 760833