



# FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA

Pearls of art



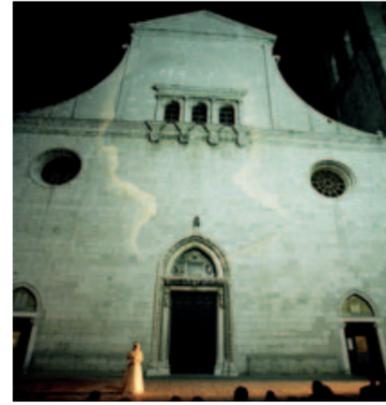


# Aquileia

# Roman magnificence



# Lombard Splendour



## Cividale del Friuli

Forum Iulii, founded by Julius Caesar, is a trove of artistic treasures. One of these, the mysterious Lombard Tempietto, is one of the most beautiful vestiges left by the Germanic people, who chose Cividale as the capital of their first duchy in Italy.

**C**ividale del Friuli, Friuli Venezia Giulia's treasure trove of art, was founded in 53 BC by Julius Caesar, who named it Forum Iulii, hence Friuli. It was a meeting point between various cultures and peoples, from the Celts and the Romans, to the Lombards - who made it the capital of their first duchy in Italy - to the Patriarchate of Aquileia, who contributed to making Cividale a small gem of art. There is a host of artistic sights, in particular, the **Duomo** or the **Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta**, where the striking ritual of the **Messa dello Spadone** is held each Epiphany. Also worth seeing are the Tesoro and the **Museo Cristiano**, which conserves several Lombard masterpieces.

A stroll through the streets of Cividale is not complete without a visit to the **Museo Archeologico Nazionale**, situated in **Palazzo dei Provveditori**, and to the **Tempietto Longobardo**, considered one of the most mysterious early-medieval monuments.

### Highlights

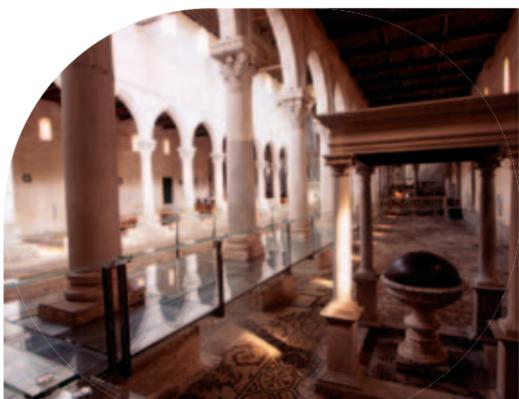
**Ponte del Diavolo**  
One curious place is the famous Ponte del Diavolo (devil's bridge): legend has it that this bridge was built by the devil himself, in just one night, in exchange for the soul of the first citizen of Cividale to cross it. The clever townsfolk, however, pushed a cat over the bridge, leaving the derided devil no other choice but to flee.



**Highlights**  
**Museo Archeologico Nazionale**  
Visit the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, one of the leading archaeological museums in North Italy, displaying countless Roman finds from Aquileia and its immediate surroundings.

**Aquileia was a city of fundamental importance in the Roman Empire. Inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO, most of its ancient features are well-preserved. And in the basilica lies one of the most impressive mosaics in the world.**

**A**quileia is the archaeological site par excellence; it has been inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO and is well worth a visit. It offers you an unparalleled dive back into history as you wander through its fabulous archaeological area, between the impressive colonnade in the **forum**, the commercial, political and juridical heart of the city, and through the ruins of the **Roman river port**, where goods from the Mediterranean converged. Visit the **Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta** which conserves one of the most impressive mosaics in the world. The **Cripta degli Scavi** with its beautiful mosaics is important for understanding the early history of Christian Aquileia. Alongside the Basilica you can admire the **Chiesa dei Pagani** (pagan church) and the **Battistero** (baptistry).



## Codroipo



# Home of the Great

The spectacular Villa Manin in Codroipo was home to the last Doge of Venice; Napoleon Bonaparte stayed there and the Emperors of Austria and Germany had meetings there. This palace-like villa is flanked by a splendid park of rare plants.

### Highlights

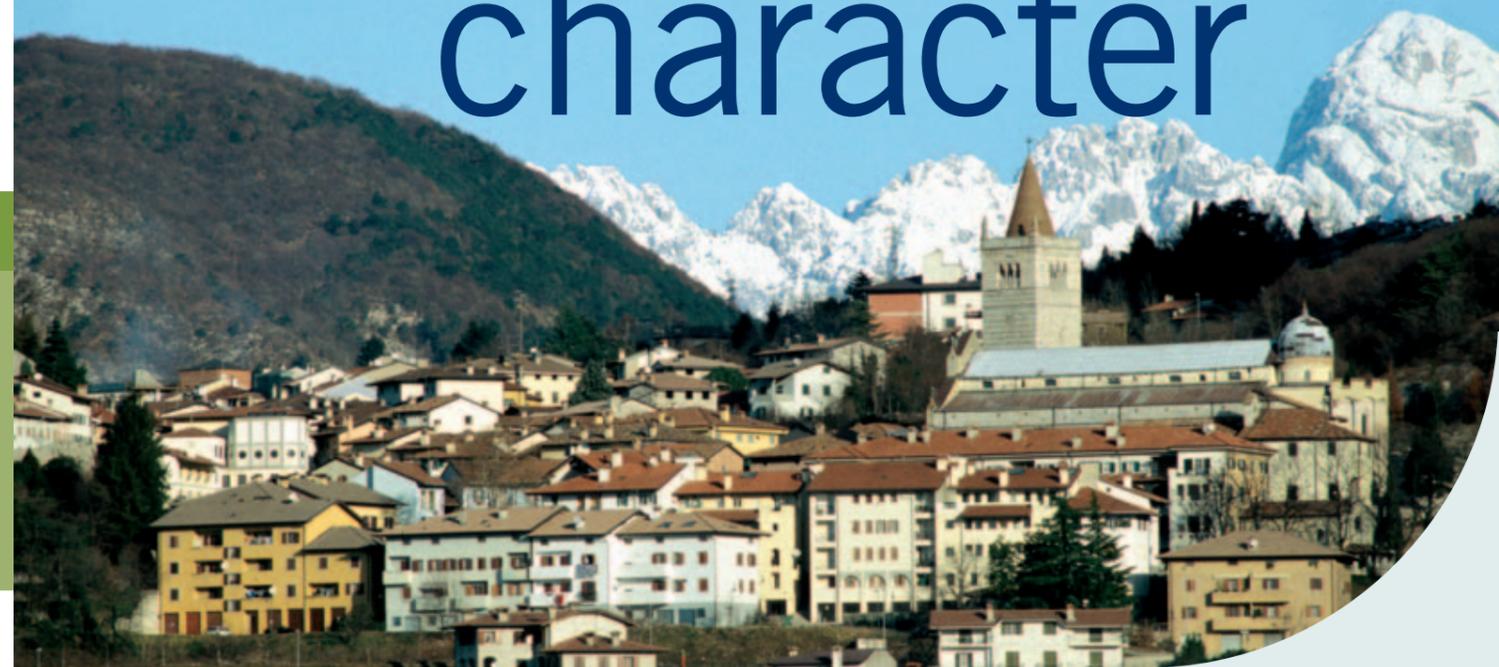
**Centro d'Arte Contemporanea**  
Today the villa hosts events of great interest and houses important international exhibitions, curated by the Centro d'Arte Contemporanea.  
[www.villamanincontemporanea.it](http://www.villamanincontemporanea.it)

The magnificent **Villa Manin** is situated in **Codroipo**. A stately, harmonious complex constructed by the powerful Manin family between the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it is one of the most prestigious mansions in Friuli Venezia Giulia and can undoubtedly be considered the greatest example of Venetian villas in the region. This architectural gem was the residence of the last Doge of Venice and became the general headquarters of **Napoleon Bonaparte**, who stayed there for about two months; during the First World War, it was a meeting place for the Austrian and German Emperors. A splendid **park** annexes the villa, with a wealth of rare botanical species, and some very striking picturesque views of lakes, hills and sculpture groups of mythological figures.



## Gemona

# Friulian character



A symbol of the region's rebirth after the 1976 earthquake, Gemona is dominated by a magnificent Gothic-Romanesque Duomo.

**G**emona, one of the most beautiful historic towns in Friuli Venezia Giulia, rises up at the foot of the Julian Pre-alps. The town was rebuilt after the 1976 earthquake and became one of the main symbols of the region's rebirth. The **Duomo di Santa Maria Assunta** is well worth a visit: its magnificent Gothic-Romanesque architecture comes into view as you approach it from **via Bini**, whose palazzos have been restored respecting their original design, featuring splendid frescoes, some of which have been highlighted. The most noteworthy is **Palazzo Elti**, which houses the **Museo Civico**. The **Museo d'arte sacra**, housed in the ancient **Santuario di Sant'Antonio** is also worth a visit.



## Grado

# Isola del Sole



A naval port for Aquileia during the Roman Empire, today it is a magical place for discovering nature, history, beaches and spas.

**G**rado, the *Isola del sole* (sunny island), is situated on a lagoon in a striking natural setting. It is a magical place where you find the beauty of nature, the fascination of history and tradition, the delights of the seaside and the benefits of the spas. Visit the **Campo dei Patriarchi** with the **Basilica di Sant'Eufemia**, an important edifice in Gradense culture, or admire the Roman and early-medieval bas-reliefs in the **Museo Lapidario**, and you will understand that Grado is one of Friuli Venezia Giulia's gems; a **historic centre** of great interest. In Roman times, Grado Island was the naval port for the densely populated city of Aquileia. Its unusual layout and its enviable geographical position make it an ideal resort for walks and trips in the lagoon and to the nearby hinterland; one of the

most famous trips is to the **Island of Barbana**, one of the oldest and most visited Marian sanctuaries in Italy.

### Highlight

**Casoni**  
Grado lagoon. Small islands with *casoni*, typical fishermen's houses, built of reeds, wood and earth: a spectacular example of harmony between man and nature.



## Palmanova



# A perfect star

A fortress-city against the Turks. A nine-pointed star. Palmanova is the masterpiece of Friulian military architecture.



### Highlights

**Historical re-enactment**  
A stunning historical re-enactment is held in the Piazza on the second weekend of July: over two hundred people in seventeenth-century costume commemorate when the flag of the Serenissima Republic of Venice was first hoisted in the centre of the stronghold.



**P**almanova is the masterpiece of Friulian military architecture, a fortress-city designed and built to defend the region's borders from foreign incursions, especially by the Turks. It is a unique model of its kind, built in the shape of a nine-pointed perfectly symmetrical star, with a central square. You reach the historic centre through three **Monumental Gates: Porta Aquileia, Porta Udine** and **Porta Cividale** which all lead to **Piazza Grande**, an ancient military training ground. This hexagonal piazza is overlooked by impressive elegant palazzos, including the **Duomo**, which houses valuable works, and the **Civico Museo Storico**, (Municipal Museum of History) which displays weapons, papers and relics illustrating the history of the fortress-city from its foundation up till the Second World War.





## Highlights

### Sagra dei Osei

Every year in August, the town comes to life with one of the oldest *sagre* held in Italy, the traditional Sagra dei Osei (a village festival dedicated to birds): it combines a market show of birds, exhibitions and song contests for the countless specimens.



## Sacile

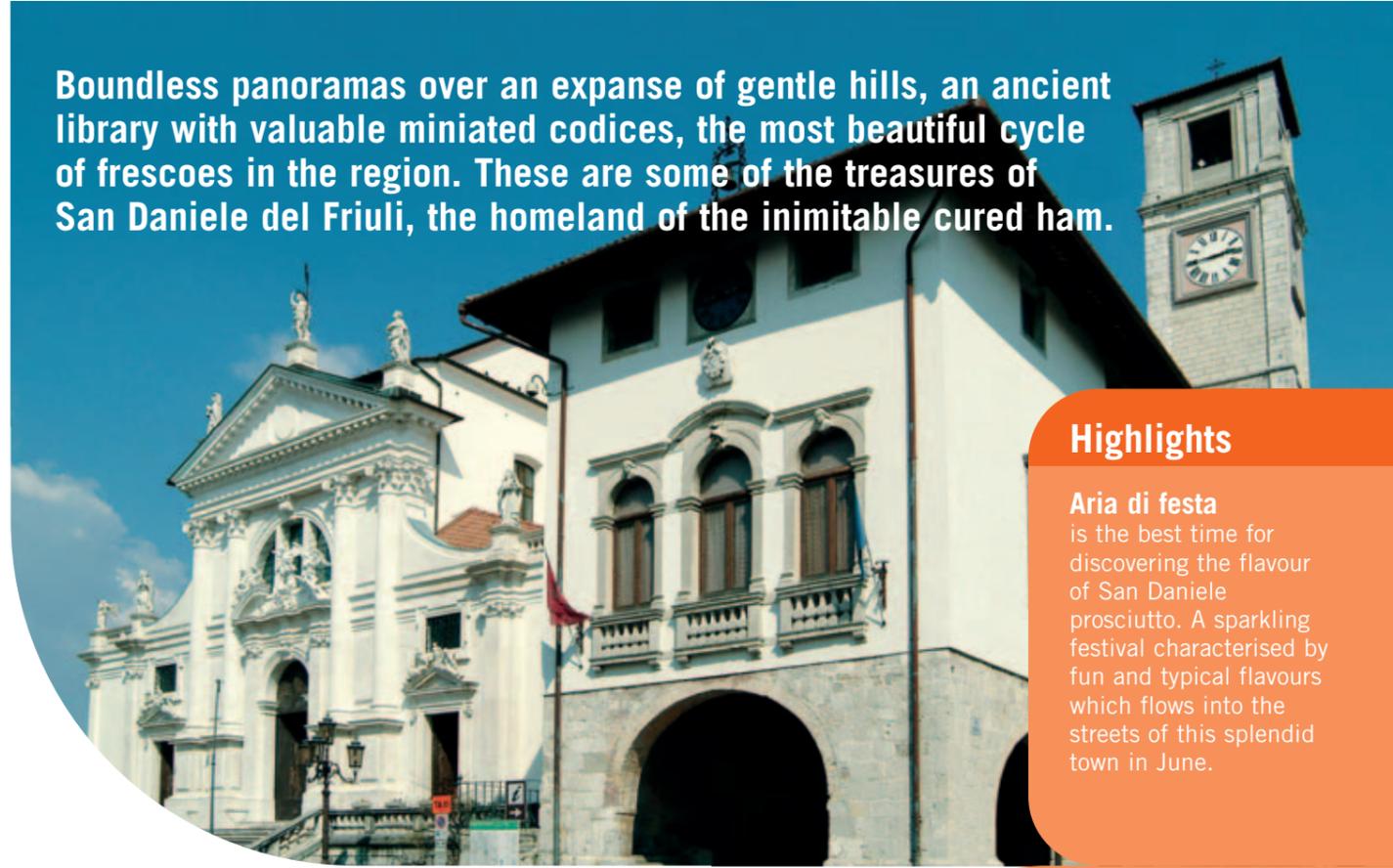
Breathe in the Venetian atmosphere and admire the sixteenth-century architecture. Wandering through the side streets of Sacile is a moving experience.

# Garden of the Serenissima

**S**acile is one of the most beautiful towns in the region and, thanks to the Venetian atmosphere found in many corners of the town, it is often called the “*Giardino della Serenissima*” (Garden of the Serenissima). Its history, culture and even its name are linked to a river, the **Livenza**. Here, architectural styles live harmoniously side by side: the elegant palazzos, often lagoon style, overlook the river and are reflected in its blue waters. Visit the **Duomo dedicated to San Nicolò**, patron saint of the town and of river navigation, and the **Chiesetta della Madonna della Pietà** and **Piazza del Popolo**, overlooked by beautiful porticoed edifices. Sacile is a renaissance town par excellence, thanks to its host of 16<sup>th</sup>-century palazzos, including the **Loggia Comunale** and in particular **Palazzo Ragazzoni Flangini Billia**. Many houses feature Renaissance and Baroque ornamental motives. Sacile is a delightful town to wander round, crossing little bridges and walking along narrow lanes to discover wonderful corners to photograph.



Boundless panoramas over an expanse of gentle hills, an ancient library with valuable miniated codices, the most beautiful cycle of frescoes in the region. These are some of the treasures of San Daniele del Friuli, the homeland of the inimitable cured ham.



## Highlights

### Aria di festa

is the best time for discovering the flavour of San Daniele prosciutto. A sparkling festival characterised by fun and typical flavours which flows into the streets of this splendid town in June.

## San Daniele del Friuli

# A flavour of Friuli



**N**estled on a hill, **San Daniele del Friuli** is a town of stunning beauty: from here you enjoy views right across the surrounding morainic hills. The town is deemed one of the most important gems in Friuli Venezia Giulia, known worldwide for its production of unique-tasting prosciutto, the result of a millenary tradition and a unique micro-climate.

San Daniele also boasts one of the most valuable libraries in Italy, the oldest in Friuli Venezia Giulia: la **Biblioteca Guarneriana**; which houses valuable miniated codices. A visit to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century **Duomo** and the **Chiesa di Sant'Antonio Abate**, displaying the most beautiful cycle of renaissance frescoes in the region, is a must.





Spilimbergo



## Venzone

# Medieval fascination



# Mosaic art

Impressive city walls, unusual mummies, a historic centre rebuilt stone by stone. After the 1976 earthquake, Venzone has regained its striking ancient appearance.

**S**pilimbergo is one of the cities of art and history which are undoubtedly worth a visit in Friuli Venezia Giulia. The town grew up around an ancient castle, originally called "girone" meaning round, due to its circular shape. There is a series of buildings built in a ring around the internal courtyard: the most striking is the 15<sup>th</sup>-century **palazzo dipinto** (painted palazzo) featuring frescoes and stone balconies. You can visit the **Duomo di Santa Maria Maggiore**, one of the most important Gothic edifices in Friuli. Inside there is a 14<sup>th</sup> century fresco cycle with stories of the Old and New Testament and a very valuable 16<sup>th</sup> century organ. Spilimbergo is also known as the "**city of mosaics**": it is the capital of mosaic art in Friuli Venezia Giulia, and its school is a key figure and a centre of experimentation, the only one of its kind in the world.

**An ancient mosaic tradition gives life to works adorning various localities worldwide. They are made in the Scuola Mosaicisti, a mosaic school where you can watch masters and students at work. Spilimbergo is also home to a picturesque historic centre and a circular-shaped castle.**

**V**enzone, the ancient town destroyed by the 1976 earthquake, has been rebuilt exactly as it was in medieval times, when it was at the height of its splendour, thanks to the persistence and hard work of the Friuli people. Declared a national monument, it is one of the finest examples of artistic renovation. The impressive **medieval city walls** and the **Duomo di Sant'Andrea** have also been reconstructed. Opposite the cathedral, you can visit the mysterious **Cappella di San Michele**, the chapel housing the famous mummies. They date back to 1647, when the mummy of the "hunchback" came to light, the first of about forty to be extracted from the Duomo tombs.



### Highlights

#### Scuola Mosaicisti del Friuli

The locality is home to the Scuola Mosaicisti del Friuli, a prestigious mosaic school of international fame, employing advanced working techniques and avant-garde materials. The school is a training centre for an ancient artistic tradition, originating in Aquileia, Byzantium and Venice. Indeed, way back in the late 17<sup>th</sup>-century, stonemasons and terracers from the Spilimbergo area, worked in the Venice building yards. A visit to the school is an unforgettable experience: you can watch the masters and students at work, as they create important masterpieces.



### Highlights

#### Festa della Zucca

In the second half of October, the town comes to life during the famed Festa della Zucca (pumpkin festival), when it feels like you are living in a fairy-tale

from the middle ages. The whole of the historic centre is awash with musicians, jugglers, knights and dames, armigers, beggars and many other figures related to the medieval world. The main star, however, is the pumpkin, in all its shapes, sizes and recipes.





... among the  
**most beautiful  
 villages in Italy**



**Clauiano, made of stones and pebbles. Cordovado, and its ancient castle. Fagagna, the stork village. Gradisca d'Isonzo, a MittelEuropean salon. Poffabro, with wooden balconies and stone houses. The hidden charms of Italy.**



**T** here are **five villages** in Friuli Venezia Giulia listed in the prestigious classification of the **Borghi più belli d'Italia** (the most beautiful villages in Italy), places magically conserving the hidden charms of this country. **Clauiano**, in the municipality of Trivignano Udinese, is an enchanting village maintaining a very precise identity: the gateways and the buildings of rural life are all made of stones and pebbles, **pièris e claps**. The fortified area of **Cordovado**, in the province of Pordenone, is best known for its castle, some of which is still standing, including its two impressive **towers**. **Fagagna**, in the province of Udine, is the village of storks; watched over by the **castle** atop the hill, it houses an interesting **Museo della vita Contadina**, a museum portraying a farmer's life. Not to mention the splendid

MittelEuropean salon of **Gradisca d'Isonzo**, a village enclosed by **mighty walls** in the province of Gorizia. Finally, with its wooden balconies and exposed hewn stone houses, **Poffabro**, also in the province of Pordenone, is a unique example of spontaneous architecture in our Pre-Alps.





# Authentic villages

Houses made of stone and wood, ancient carnival rituals, its cooking imbued with long-lost flavours, and above all the people of Forni di Sopra, Raveo, Sauris and Sutrio will help you rediscover the slow rhythms of the past.



Spend a holiday in one of the “authentic villages” in Friuli Venezia Giulia, in Forni di Sopra, Raveo, Sauris or Sutrio, and you will be hosted by a **rare quality of people**, people who love welcoming others into their community and helping them rediscover the slow rhythms of times gone by. Places, people, flavours and traditions all speak of a magically preserved authenticity.

**Forni di Sopra**, dominated by the majestic peaks of the Dolomites, welcomes you into spacious courtyards and narrow lanes featuring rural houses in stone and wood, with wide upstairs landings where the hay was once dried.

**Raveo**, nestled in a sunny dell at the foot of the Col Gentile, fully exudes the charm of an authentic village. Here, the **Sapori di Carnia** event celebrates the flavours of a cuisine imbued with the culture and history of these places.

In **Sauris**, a marvellous village of German origin, you stay in mountain-style houses in stone and wood. The influence of the German culture is very evident in the village’s countless traditions and festivals,

## Highlights

### Albergo diffuso

Staying in the *albergo diffuso* hotels is a unique experience: this hospitality system involves entire villages, giving you the chance to get to know the local people and all the typical activities of rural life.



including the **Carnival**, one of the oldest across the Alps.

Finally in **Sutrio**, one of the most beautiful mountain villages, a stroll through the courtyards and the village lanes will take you to the countless **workshops of skilled artisans** who, during the **Magia del Legno** festival each September, demonstrate their great creativity and skill in the courtyards of the houses: the same courtyards where the nativity scenes made by the *marangons*, the local wood sculptors, are displayed every year at Christmas.





## Easy to reach, hard to forget

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