

artistic historical

itineraries

of the *B*rescia

territory



PROVINCIA DI BRESCIA
turismo

Brescia

AND THE Surrounding area

(Trompia Valley and the plain)



Brescia Province

In Brescia province there are 1,109,000 inhabitants in an area of 4,783 square kilometres. Brescia, the chief town, has 190,000 inhabitants and is located on the edge of a plain next to the mountains.

In the northern part three rivers flow through three valleys: Camonica Valley along the Oglio River; Trompia Valley along the Mella River; Sabbia Valley along the Chiese River.

Lake Garda (370 sq km, 65 mt above sea level) and Lake Iseo (61 sq km, 185 mt asl) have climates suitable for growing olives. Lake Idro is at a higher elevation at 368 mt asl with 11 sq km.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

The "Historical Artistic Itineraries of the Brescia Territory" give a description the most famous and easiest to reach monuments in the province. They are highlighted among the numerous "less" destined structures which encircle and are thus justified in presence.









The tourist will at times have to book a visit by telephoning and asking - precise directions will be given - you can borrow the keys to the small medieval church to see the frescoes. Encounter courtesy, an unjealous pride of a community in custody of many small but great treasures; and with the joy of discovery and a magical environment, appreciate the beauty and detail far off the beaten path.

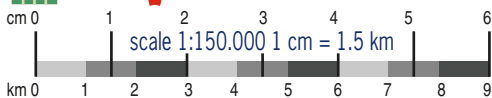
Maps for the itinerary are - except for explicit references - in the scale 1:150,000 (1 centimetre = 1.5 km). In the text, only the places indicated in the itinerary are

marked **in colour**. A dotted line precisely connects the text to pictures and vice-versa; for a reading that starts indistinctly from one or from the other.

Important monuments are described in separate boxes. Curiosities and short historical notes are contained in small white sections.

THE MAP LEGENDS

	church		museum		roads and
	castle		view		highways
	building		itinerary		



From the Lombard kingdom to the Venetian domination

Originally, the territory of Brescia was inhabited by ancient Rhaetian tribes from the Alpine and Ligurian Valleys, on the plain and the Pre-Alps. The **Celtics**, and in particular the Cenomani tribe, settled here during the V cent. BC. They conserved their political identity through the end of the II cent. BC thanks to their good relationship with **Rome**. Under the Emperor Octavian Augustus the inhabitants of the ancient "Brixia" became Roman citizens. In 16 BC, Rome with its armies subjugated the Alpine population, who for millenia enscribed their everyday life, wars and religion into the rocks of the Camonica Valley.

After the end of the Roman Empire (476 AD) and the beginning the barbarian invasions, King Alboin descended to Italy (568) and founded the Lombard kingdom. Brescia became the chief town of a dukedom.

Rotari, Duke of Brescia, was elected King of the Lombards in 636 and seven years later enacted an order that codified the laws of his



people. A noble woman from Brescia, Ansa, wife of the last king of Lombard, **Desiderius**, founded the monastery of San Salvatore, where their daughter Desideria (better known as **Ermengarda**) retired after being disowned in 771 by her husband Charlemagne, King of the Franks.

During the Carolingian period, the inhabitants of Brescia built numerous castles for

defence against Hungarian incursions.

During the fight between the Italian communes and Emperor Frederick I of Swabia (known as Redbeard), the Augustinian monk **Arnaldo da Brescia** stepped in and roared against the corruption of the clergy and in 1154 he stirred the Roman senate against the Pope Adriano IV. Redbeard captured the friar in the next year, handed him over to the pontiff and sent him to the stake.



The battle between the Guelphs, who defended the independence of the free communes, and the Ghibellines supporting the emperor, ended in 1298 when the rule of Brescia was entrusted to the Bishop **Berardo Maggi**, who reconciled the opposing factions.

A period of stability, but also oppression, began in 1337 with the rule of the **Visconti family**. They reconstructed Brescia Castle and, except during the short period of Sir **Pandolfo Malatesta** from Rimini (1404-21), stayed in power until the advent of the Republic of Venice (1426).

The **Venetian dominion**, opened a great market for productions in which Brescia excelled (arms, paper, yarn, fabric). The Trompia Valley transported cannons to the Venetian arsenal and the paper mills in Toscolano were well known as far as the Ottoman Empire.

In 1508 France, the Pope, the Empire, Spain, and the Italian seigniories of the Este family, the Gonzagas and the Savoias decided to put an end to the expansion of Venice. There followed a long war in which Brescia suffered the ferocious **Pillage of 1512**, a French plan at the centre of which were Commanders Gaston di Foix and Bayard, the "the pure and fearless knight" who was left wounded. In 1516 Brescia returned to the possession of Venice and remained so until 1796 when **Napoleon** imposed on Europe the new order of the French Revolution.

With the Restoration (1815), the Emperor Frank I of Austria founded the **Lombard-Venetian Kingdom**. The Risorgimento views the Brescia people as protagonists in the famous **Ten Days** (March 23 - April 1, 1849),



in which they erected barricades and ended Austrian control of the city.

In June 1859, the battle of **San Martino and Solferino** took place in the hills by Lake Garda. Vittorio Emanuele II of Savoia with the French ally Napoleon III liberated Lombardy and Venice from the Austrian dominion.

On October 10, 1943, Benito Mussolini established himself at Lake Garda in Gargnano, founding the Italian Social Republic, better known as the **Republic of Salò**.

Brescia

On a clear day, from the hills of the castle, you can see as far as the Apennine Mountains: its location dominating the plain, at the opening of the valleys echoing of forges, has

made Brescia strategically significant since ancient times.

The evidence of past civilizations, stratified below the detritus of the hills, and the archeological efforts initiated since the early 1800s, are rendering a rich and fascinating story, left hidden for millennia under the buildings and squares of the medieval and Venetian city.

The creation of the Museo della Città in the monastery of Santa Giulia, of Lombard origin, is a sign of a city that has rediscovered its own history and wants to share it.





A BRIEF HISTORY

Prehistoric findings going back to the end of the Bronze Age (1200) have been discovered on the castle hill. At the beginning of the II cent. BC, the Celtic state of the Cenomans federated with Rome, obtaining Roman citizenship under Caesar (49 BC).

From the VI cent. Brescia was a Lombard dukedom: the Lombard king, Desiderio, founded (VIII cent.) the monastery of San Salvatore-Santa Giulia. The Commune of Brescia came into existence after the year 1000 and was protagonist in the leagues between the cities against the emperors who, since Redbeard, descended into Italy threatening the autonomy of the communes. In 1237-49 the surrounding wall assumed dimensions which remained unchanged for centuries. After the domination by the Viscontis from Milan (1337-1426), interrupted in 1404-21 by Sir Pandolfo Malatesta from Rimini, Brescia gave itself to Venice. In that century the construction of the monumental Loggia Square was started. During the warfare of the league of Cambrai, Brescia suffered a ferocious plunder. There then followed (1516) the "flattening" knocking down every structure to clear the land outside the wall. In 1823 excavations were undertaken which brought to light the Capitoline (of Jupiter) Temple. From March 23 to April 1, 1849 Brescia was the protagonist in the Ten Day Rising, for which it merited the name the "Lioness of Italy".

TOURIST INFORMATION

www.provincia.brescia.it/turismo

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From the Roman Empire to the Lombard Kingdom

On the slopes of the Cidneo hill, dominated by the Castello, the bright Roman city with the Tempio di Vespasiano and the theatre with 15 thousand seats - In the monastero di Santa Giulia, founded by Desiderius, there grows the Museo della Città

ITINERARY 1



The decuman (main street) of ancient Brixia ran 4 and a half meters under the existing via Musei and thus the **Tempio Capitolino** (73 AD), built upon the preceding republican temple (1st cent. BC) which keeps an important cell rich in frescoes and mosaics, appeared even more towering to passers by of two thousand years ago. Discovered in 1823, it was remodelled from 1939-43 integrating its terracotta brick structure with the whiteness of Botticino marble. The pro-

naos, with six Corinthian columns, introduces the cells dedicated to Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. A fourth cell was destroyed perhaps during an enlargement of the **teatro** (1st cent. AD), where the cavea hosted 15 thousand spectators. This area, together with the nearby Palazzo Gambara will become an archeologic Roman Park, unique in Europe.

On the corner of via Musei and piazza del Foro,

THE MANY JOBS OF THE EMPEROR

From the dedication on the pediment of Tempio Capitolino we immediately recognize the name *Vespasianus*, preceded by *Caesar* and followed by *Augustus*; the emperors inherited the names of the two initiators of the empire. The abbreviations indicate the ancient republic offices that the Emperor (*imp.*) held: Pontifex Maximus (*pont.max.*), tribunes of the people (*tr.polest.*, tribunical power), consul (*cos.*) and censor (*ensor*). *P.P.* stands for father of the homeland (*pater patriae*). The numbers indicate the number of years he held each office and allow for precise dating: 73 AD.

Palazzo Martinengo

Cesaresco Novarino (XVI-XVII cent., branch of the Provincial Office of Tourism and art exhibits) is easily recognized by the Martinengo family's eagles sculpted on the portal by the Carras (1678).



Along via Musei we come to the **Monastero di Santa Giulia**, in which the history of Brescia is stratified in the Roman, Lombard and Renaissance eras and which is the seat of the **Museo della Città**.

Exit the museum into Piazza Tebaldo Bursato and see the Renaissance façade of **Palazzo Cigola** (telamons on the south portal). Here, the





foto qui ai lati: •



Here died Ermengarda disowned by Charlemagne

The **Monastero di Santa Giulia** was founded in 753 by the last Lombard King Desiderius. Here, his daughter, Desiderata (Manzoni called her Ermengarda.) who was disowned by the King of the Franks, Charlemagne, suffered great sadness.

The visit includes the basilica of **San Salvatore** (VIII cent., enlarged in the XII cent.), three naves enclosed by semicircular apses, with columns partly coming from ancient Roman buildings (Ravenna styled capitals, VI cent. on the first two on the left). Fragments of *frescoes from the Carolingian period* are visible. There are frescoes by Paolo da Cailina Junior (XVI cent.) and, at the base of the bell tower, the *Life of St. Obizio* by Romanino



(1525). The crypt was constructed on the pre-existing level of a Roman "domus" in the VIII cent. to collect the relics of Santa Giulia.

In the XV cent., the **Coro delle monache (nuns)** was added, sacrificing the façade of the basilica. It was frescoed by Floriano Ferramola and later connected to the church of **Santa Giulia** (end of the XVI cent.).

The sacellum of **Santa Maria in Solario** (XII cent.), with its octagonal lantern tower with small columns, probably contained the treasure of the nuns. On the ground floor a Roman altar serves as the central pillar. In the room above, there are three semicircular apsidioles frescoed by Ferramola (1513-24).

Around the Renaissance cloister northeast of the monastery, the **Museo della Città** has taken shape. Different sections tell the history of the town and of its territory. Opening time: 9.30-17.30 wintertime, 10-18 summertime. Closed Monday.



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From the Roman Empire...



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ITINERARY 1

Burgundian knight Bayard, wounded in the pillage of Brescia in 1512, was cured. In Piazzale Arnaldo da Brescia is the monument for the Augustinian friar who was burned at the stake in 1155. The **Mercato dei grani** (grain), 1823, porticos were at the level of the flatbedded carts.

From Santa Giulia, by way of via Piamarta, go up the castle hill to **San Pietro in Oliveto**, which contains paintings by Paolo da Cailina and Andrea Celesti. In the east cloister (XVI cent.) there is a well with two buckets, one which comes up while the other goes down, commonly cited by Brescians when talking about two people in irremediable conflict.



The **Castello**, dominated



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by the cylindrical Mirabella Tower (XIII cent. on a square late-Roman base), owes its present shape to the intervention by the Viscontis (XIV cent.: the stronghold next to Mirabella and the Prisoner Tower) and to the Venetians (XVI cent.).



The stronghold hosts the **Museo delle armi antiche** (ancient arms), among the most significant displays in Europe, which exhibits 580 of the 1,090 pieces collected from 1920-on by the manufacturer of Palazzolo Luigi Marzoli. The rich collection gives a description of the evolution of arms and armour from 1400 to 1500, up to the luxurious tournament armour. The two reinforcement squads formed by foot soldiers and knights are noteworthy; note also the parade-round shield, 1563, embossed with gold painted parts, which represents the *Triumph of Bacchus*. One section is dedicated to firearms. Open from June to Sept 10-13 and 14:00-18, from Oct to May 9:30-13:00 and 14:30-17:00, closed Monday.

In the main room of the Grande Miglio (corn storage, XVI cent.) is the **Museo del Risorgimento**, which runs through the events from the French Revolution to the seizing



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of Rome (end of the XVIII-1870) as seen in documents, antiques and paintings. Among the last of these, the four by Faustino Joli dedicated to the Ten Days of Brescia in 1849 are remarkable. Open from June to Sept 10-13 and 14-18, from Oct to May 9:30-13:00 and 14:30-17:00, closed Monday.



Going down into the city through the Sant'Urbano district, we arrive at the **Broletto** complex, which since the XII century has seen the history of the city pass by. The **Torre del Pègol**, 53.7 m high, is from 1187; the rest of the



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structure was built in the first half of the XIII century.

The four-lights window, left on the south side of the courtyard shows **symbols of the months** on its lateral capitals, from the antelamic school. At the beginning of the XV cent., Pandolfo Malatesta had the beautiful **gothic loggia** built in the north courtyard and called upon Gentile da Fabriano to fresco a chapel which has disappeared: a fragment of the work of the painter was discovered in 1985. Of the church of Sant'Agostino there remains only the façade in late-Gothic terracotta bricks (XV cent.).

At the beginning of the XVII cent., the ashlar-hewn arcade, with a looming loggia was erected north of the courtyard; the ancient chief magistrate's room was partitioned and covered with a false ceiling. Between this and the towering roof with trusses (accessible



with authorization: for information contact the Ufficio turistico in Piazza Loggia) there are a hundred frescoed (XIII cent.) *Knight Prisoners*, chained and exposed to the mocking public, with cowbells, in one of the many episodes of the battles between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines; in the same section is a 1300s fresco with *Berardo Maggi's Peace* and a *Crucifixion* by the Giotto school.

Facing the "Broletto" in the square, we note the elegant Venetian three-lights window on the **Casa dei Camerlenghi**, who had to host also the Treasurer of the

Papal Court Benedetto Marcello (1686-1739), a Venetian musician, buried in the church of **San Giuseppe** (XVI cent.) with several altars dedicated to the arts and traders. The annexed convent is the seat of the **Museo diocesano-Museo del tessuto liturgico**. Not far, under the Porta Bruciata (Burnt Gate), is the small church of **San Faustino in Riposo** (XII cent.), which has a characteristic roof made with denticulated terracotta bricks.



The Loggia at the centre of a city of bell towers

The two cathedrals boast of record dimensions - The popular quarters of Carmine, the medieval *torre della Pallata*, the ancient church of San Francesco - A treasure chest of paintings collected in the Pinacoteca

ITINERARY 2



The **Loggia**, symbol of the city, was under construction from 1492 by the architectural plans of Formentone from Vicenza. In 1575 a fire destroyed the lead dome (reconstructed only in 1914). The building, in marble siding - richly decorated in relief - from the caves in Brescia, has a body (1503-08) on its north side once containing the stairs leading to the living room, the function of which has since the end of 1800 been assumed by an internal staircase.



On the south side of the square is the elegantly distinguished small loggia of **Monte di Pietà** (pawnshop from the end of the XV cent.). East of that which was added at the end of the XVI century




is the new Monte di Pietà. In 1480 the commune ordered that the façades of these buildings be decorated with Roman memorial plaques, which transformed Monte di Pietà into the first *outdoor lapidary museum* in Italy.

Arcades with the **Torre dell'Orologio** (1546) constitute the east side of Piazza Loggia. They are decorated with two wooden figures covered with metal (1581) which strike the bell on the hour.




Passing under the clock tower, we arrive in Piazza Paolo VI. The cupola of **Duomo Nuovo** (XVII-XIX cent.), erected by Vantini, with its interior height of 80 meters, is number three in Italy after San Pietro in Rome and Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence. Noteworthy in the interior are the *Tomb of St. Apollonius*, richly sculpted (1510), two *organ wings* by Romanino and a *Sacrifice of Isaac* by Moretto.




 The **Duomo Vecchio**, also called *Rotonda*, is the most significant circular Romanesque temple in existence. It was constructed with “medolo”, a local stone, by the Comacine masters around 1100. In the entry there is the *sepulchral monument of Berardo Maggi* (beginning of the XIV cent.), in red marble. Under the presbytery (added with a transept at the end of the XV cent.) is the *Crypt of St. Filastrio*, which comes from the primitive basilica (VIII cent.). Above the main altar, there is the *Assumption* by Moretto, also the artist of the paintings in the chapel on the right. The chapel on the left jealously preserves the **treasury of the Crosses**, including the *Cross of the Field* (XII cent.: it was hoisted on the *Carroccio* (triumphal wagon), which is exhibited only on particular occasions in the Duomo Nuovo.

 In via Mazzini, behind the apse of Duomo Nuovo, the **Biblioteca Queriniana** (XVIII cent., crowned with marble statues) preserves treasures among which is the *Purple Evangeliarium* (Wulfila’s Bible) made in Ravenna style in the VI century. Open 8:30-12:00 and 14-18:00, Sat 8:30-12:30, Sun and Mon closed.


There are some churches to visit in the working-class neighbourhood of Carmine, along via San Faustino once crossed by the Garza stream.

 **San Faustino Maggiore** (circa 1700, XII cent. bell tower), dedicated to the patrons of the city, Faustino and Giovita, in custody of the *Processional Standard* from Romanino’s Holy Sacrament School.


 **Santa Maria del Carmine** (XV cent.) with a beautiful Renaissance portal, is decorated with frescoes by Foppa (third chapel on the right) and Ferramola in the chapel accessible through the courtyard behind the apse which is on vicolo Manzone where you can ask about a visit.

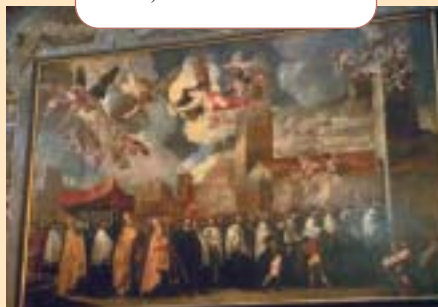
 **Santa Maria delle Grazie** (XVI cent., with a

1490 portal): the interior decorated in the XVIII cent. in baroque style; a work of Paolo da Cailina Junior (first altar on the left) and of Moretto (at the rear in the right nave). A side door on the left leads to the cloister and from here you can reach the sanctuary.

 **San Giovanni Evangelista** (XV cent.) displays eleven paintings by

THE CHURCHES THAT DISAPPEARED

 In the right arm of the transept of the Duomo Vecchio there is a big canvass painting by Francesco Maffei (1656) which represents the removal in 1581 of some Brescian bishops’ relics, from the vanished church of Santo Stefano in Arce (which was in the Castello) and the vanished Cathedral of San Pietro de Dom. The procession, in which San Carlo Borromeo participates, is entering the Rotonda through the portal under the bell tower (collapsed in 1708).



The Loggia at the centre...

Romanino and another eleven by Moretto, which are symmetrically arranged in the chapel of the Holy Sacrament. Other works by them can be found in the church.



Along corso Mameli, we find the **Pallata**, a 1200s tower, 31 m high (the battlements are from the XV cent.). The **Fontana dei Fiumi** (1596) is at the base, built by Antonio Carra and designed by Bagnadore.

At the church of **Santa Maria della Pace** (XVIII cent.), we advise visiting the cloister (number 10, via Pace), which belonged to the 1400s **Palazzo Colleoni** of the famous leader Bartolomeo. His coat of arms is recognizable on the capitals and on the precious, painted wood boards on the portico ceiling.



At the end of via Pace is the church of **San Francesco d'Assisi** (XIII cent.), brought to its present form in the XV

cent. by the architect Zurlengo). On the wall on the right are 1300s frescoes (the *Pietà*, reminds us of Giotto, and above this, the *School of Theology*. Higher up are series of *Angels and Saints*). The second chapel on the left is in custody of the precious Lombard wood panel, the *Crucifixion* (XIV cent.). Here there are also paintings by Moretto and Romanino, who is also the artist for the main altar-piece. The *choir* was inlaid by Filippo Morari da Soresina (1493). Through a side door on the right we arrive in the beautiful Gothic-Lombard *cloister* (1393), in terracotta by the Comacine master Guglielmo Frizzoni da Campione.



The church of the **Santi Nazaro e Celso** (XVIII cent.) displays the *Averoldi polyptych* on the main altar, a work by the young Titian (1522) and preserves various works by Moretto. In **Santa Maria dei Miracoli**, on corso Martiri della Libertà, we find a magnificent marble façade, finely sculpted by Giangasparo





Pedoni (end of the XV cent.).

Across Piazza del Mercato (recently renovated), which has the fontana dei Donegani (1822) at its centre and the **Palazzo Martinengo Palatini** (XVII cent.) at the rear, we come to **Piazza Vittoria**, designed by the architect Marcello Piacentini (1932). An entire district of alleys and small squares was demolished.

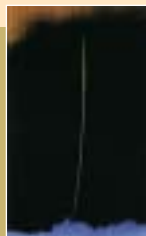


We return to the east section of the historical centre: in the small streets south of piazza del Foro we find the church of **San Clemente**, remodelled in 1840 by Vantani. It preserves several works by Moretto, who resi-

Art and spirituality

The Collection of Modern & Contemporary Art (Association of Art and Spirituality, via Monti 9): there are more than 400 works by major contemporary artists from Italy and abroad collected to commemorate Pope Paul VI. There are works by Chagall, Dalí, Matisse, De Chirico, Picasso (*Hans Hartung: T.1966 acrylic on canvas*).

Visits must be booked in advance - Tel. 030 3753002



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ded in a house not far away.



The **Pinacoteca Tosio Martinengo** was reopened to the public in 1994 after much restoration work on the Palazzo Martinengo da Barco (XVI cent.) which hosts the gallery.

Not far is the church of **Sant'Angela Merici**, built on the site where the first Christian martyrs were buried. It was destroyed by bombing and rebuilt. It contains paintings by Paolo da Cailina Junior, Civerchio and

Jacopo Tintoretto.

Next to the Courthouse, in the church of **Sant'Alessandro** (XVIII cent.), as well as the *Deposition* by Civerchio, is the remarkable *Annunciation* by Jacopo Bellini (XV cent.), in a refined gold-painted Gothic frame.



Brescian paintings in 25 rooms

The Tosio Martinengo collection includes two paintings by Raphael, a polyptych by Paolo Veneziano (XIV cent.) and a rich representation of painters who produced in the Brescia territory

during various eras. In the Renaissance period are Foppa, Civerchio, Paolo da Cailina Junior, Romanino and his son-in-law Gambara, Moretto, Ferramola and Savoldo. For the 1600s there are Bagnadore, Palma Junior and Celesti. For the 1700s are the painters of the poor people: il Pitocchetto and Cifrondi. Open from

June to Sept 10-13 and 14:30-18, from Oct to May 9:30-13:00 and 14:30-17:00, closed Monday.



Trompia Valley

North of Brescia, there is no interruption between suburbs alternating with industrial areas, which occupy the banks of the Mella River. Only beyond Marcheno, where the valley narrows, pastures open up on the mountain slopes, conifer woods thicken, in the background snow covered summits dominate.

On the mountain sides, smaller valleys develop along rivers and lakes that were once motors for the activity in the furnaces and forges that produced riches guarded by towers, witnessed by the works of art in the churches.

In the summer the herds climb Maniva, where the three valleys converge, from where, with a clear sky, you can embrace a good part of the entire alpine arc and distinguish the blue of Lake Garda.



TOURIST INFORMATION

Ufficio IAT

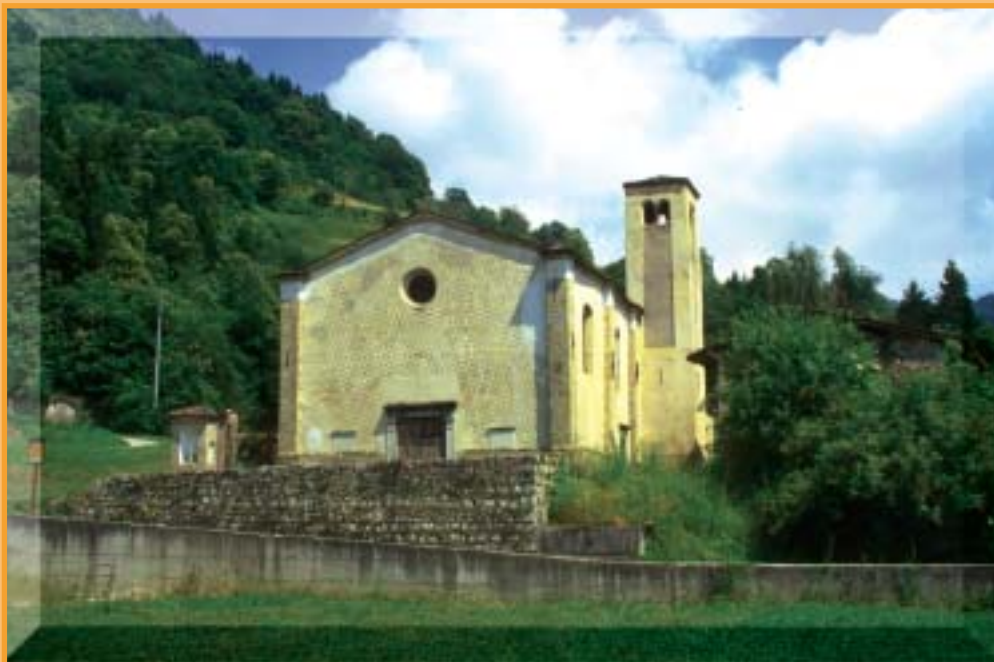
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A BRIEF HISTORY

Remains of prehistoric inhabitants have been found in the mountains in the area between the Maniva and Nave Valley.

The iron ore mines in Collio were exploited since the Roman era; probably with the use of slaves. The Valeriana road went along the valley and, after crossing over Mt. Guglielmo, passed through the Camonica Valley. In the middle of the XVI cent., another road connected the Trompia Valley with the Sabbia Valley to transport metal to the furnace in Anfo. Venice commissioned weapons and cannons for its arsenal. Such an important activity stirred interest in Gardone and there grew bellicose factions amongst arms craftsmen; with disorder and episodes of banditry that lasted from the end of the 1500s to 1700. But there were also periods of crises. At the beginning of 1600, Venice discouraged emigration of craftsmen towards Germany with a band that threatened those who left with the permanent loss of their right to stay. Other important productions began in the XV cent. in the Garza Valley (in Nave and in Caino), where numerous paper mills were built.

The birthplace of Pope Paul VI



Giovanni Battista Montini was born in Concesio on September 26, 1897 in his paternal grandmother's house where his family was usually on holiday - The churches of his childhood: St. Rocco, the Pieve, the Stella

ITINERARY 3



In Concesio a bronze sculpture embedded in a wall along the street reads, "**The house where Pope Paul VI was born**". This building is rich in history: it was brought as a dowry in 1517 from Aldina to her husband Paride, Counts of Lodrone. It was acquired by the Montini family in the mid-18th cent.

It has Gothic window frames on the ground floor. The interior is not visitable; one part is of the 1400s with cross vaults and painted wood

den ceiling boards; another of the 1600's with a wrought iron balcony on the façade. Giovanni Battista Montini was elected Pope with the name Paolo VI on June 21, 1963. He died in Castelgandolfo on August 6, 1978.

The nearby church of **St. Rocco** was constructed in 1928 on the site of the small church of the Lodrones. The Montini family - the name of Giovanni Battista appears on the dedication - offered a fresco of the *Via Crucis* by Vittorio Trainini. On the counterfaçade there are two frescoes which come from the ancient small church; that of the *Madonna on the Throne* was dear to Giovanni Battista Montini, who wanted a copy in his office when he was archbi-



shop of Milan.

The parish of Concesio, reconstructed in the XVII cent. over the ancient church, - it is still called "pieve" - is dedicated to **St. Antonino**.


In the first chapel on the left is the baptistery where the would be pontiff received the first sacrament and to which John Paul II paid homage on



CERTIFICATE OF BAPTISM

In the register of those baptised by the Parish of Concesio, on September 30, 1897, it reads: "Giovanni Battista Enrico Antonio Maria Montini of Mr. Giorgio and Giuditta Alghisi, born on the 26th at 22:00, today baptised by me, Giovanni Fiorini, arch-priest". The family resided normally in Verolavecchia, on the plain where the mother Giuditta was from. That September, Mr. Giorgio (catholic journalist and then deputy) had decided to prolong their holidays at the house of his mother Francesca in Concesio so that his wife wouldn't be too tired at the end of her pregnancy. Giovanni Battista had two brothers: Lodovico, one year older, and Francesco, three years younger.

his visit on September 26, 1982.

 The Sanctuary of the **Madonna della Stella** looms over the road from the hamlet San Vigilio to Franciacorta. Tradition has it that on May 31, 1536, the St. Mary appeared before a deafmute shepherd who regained his speech. On the ground there miraculously appeared the plan of the church to be built; at the centre was a lily with a shining star. Two years later, the St. Mary was painted by Romanino, in the main altarpiece. Open: 8-11 and 14-17.

Another church of ancient history can be found in **NAVE**, at the beginning of the road to the Sabbia Valley. The **Pieve della Mitria** takes its popular name from the discovery (1951) of a Roman high-relief which brought to



mind the possibility of an ancient temple dedicated to the oriental divinity Mithras. It was built between the VIII-IX centuries, rebuilt in 1200 and renovated at the end of the 1400s; it contains frescoes from the XIII-XVI centuries. Of particular interest in the second altar on the right is a *Deposition* (1512), attributed to Vincenzo Civerchio. The marble base of the pillar which borders the left of the

altar bears a bas-relief of *Hercules* (IV cent. AD). For a visit and information: Mr. Giampaolo Magri, tel. 0302531346 - 3384718636.



The art of Floriano Ferramola in the churches of the upper valley

A sense for detail of landscape in the Brescian painter is recognizable in the frescoes with sacred subjects - Two paintings by Moretto in Marmentino - The Council of Valtrompia met in the sacristy of San Filastrio

ITINERARY 4



cent.), enclosed in a 1700s monumental frame. In the nave there are frescoes by the Ferramola school.

A turn off to the hamlet **MONDARO** allows us to admire the **medieval tower** (XII-XIII cent.), erected perhaps on a Roman base. Constructed in dark stone and covered with a roof, it has few and small windows and a modest entry.

Isolated but centrally located within the hamlets of the commune, the church of **Sant'Apollonio** displays externally and internally frescoes from the 1500s (*Scenes of the life of St. Apollonius*).

Just past Lavone, we turn off from the state road to **MAGNO**, a hamlet of **BOVEGNO**, where water seepage has seriously damaged frescoes in the last decades - attributed to Floriano Ferramola (1521) - in the church of **San Lorenzo** (first half of the XVI cent.); with a

From Brescia to beyond Gardone Valtrompia, for appr. 15 km along the river Mella valley, brescian activity evidences follow one another. Then the valley narrows and the mountain slopes appear to have been deforested to make space for green pastures.

In **PEZZAZE**, on the state road in the hamlet of **LAVONE**, in the parish of **Santa Maria Maddalena** (1510, enlarged in the XIX cent.) we find a polyptych by Paolo da Cailina Junior (XVI



FROM HERE THEY ENTERED THE CAMONICA VALLEY

To go from Brescia to the Camonica Valley, no one today would take the Trompia Valley road. However, in old times, the route - which also became a Roman road - was this one. It was called the Valeriana road and we recognize some stretches with the same name in villages of the Trompia and Camonica Valleys. The crossing that connected the two valleys was in Pezzaze, from Mondaro up to the San Zeno hills, then it descended towards Zone at Lake Iseo, or towards Artogne in the Camonica Valley.

Renaissance interior and Gothic style buttresses on the outside. For a visit, contact the parish of Lavone or ask at the house opposite the church of Magno.



Continuing in the direction of Irma, we pass a village and arrive at **MARMENTINO** to discover, in the parish of the **Saints Cosma and Damiano**, two paintings by Moretto: the main altar-piece (*Eucharist for Christ between Saints Cosma and Damian*, 1530), of which the recent restoration and perfect illumination make hues of red vivid; and the *Abbot St. Anthony*. The early 1900s' renovation saved the external lateral portico of the 1400s church. Under this there is a worn fresco by the Ferramola school. It's worth noting the small arches that have survived on the stone walls of the bell tower (XII cent.). For a visit, go to the annexed parochial house.



The art of Floriano Ferramola



We return on the state road to **TAVERNOLE** to stop and visit the church of **San Filastro**, in the cemetery.



The last commune of the valley is **COLLIO**. As many churches from the same period of the same name, **San Rocco**, on the road to the hamlet Memmo, was probably built as a votive offering for promises made by the population after the plague of 1478. The church, which is in

need of restoration, preserves the apse from the original building, while the nave and the lateral apsidioles were made during an enlargement at the end of the XVI cent. The frescoes are from the Foppa and Ferramola schools. On the big arch of the presbytery is *St. Rock with the Plague-stricken*, which merits attention for the effect achieved in its perspective. For a visit, contact the parish priest, tel. 030927235.

ST. ROCK AGAINST THE PLAGUE

The plague of 1478 - reports a Brescian journalist of that era - attacked the head. Of 200,000 inhabitants in Brescia province, 25-30 thousand died. The community of Brescia decided to build a church dedicated to St. Rock (Rocco) outside the city gate to Milan. According to the legend, St. Rock lived at the beginning of the 1300s. He was a Provençal noble who, after giving away all his belongings, went on a pilgrimage in Italy and stopped to help the plague-stricken in Acquapendente, acquiring his fame as a thaumaturge (miracle-worker). In the thirty years between 1480-1510, every parish or village in the Brescia territory dedicated a church or at least an altar to St. Rock; for the plague there was no medicine other than faith. In frescoes, the Saint is represented with sores on his leg.





perhaps it came from the Middle East during the period of the war of Cyprus. The small image is mounted on the base of the altar-piece that supports the piece, *Assumption* by Giuseppe Nuvoloni (1677). Frescoes from the XV-XVI cent. emerged from the walls of the nave.



In the hamlet of TIZIO, the Sanctuary of **Santa Maria Assunta** (XV cent.), with a rose window and small hanging arches on the façade, preserves a venerated Byzantine icon (XVI cent.) which represents the *Madonna with Baby Jesus*;

SLAVES IN THE MINES

The Romans exploited, probably using slaves, iron ore mines in the Trompia Vally and from Collio in particular. Some medieval towers, like the one in Mondaro di Pezzaze, are probably of Roman origin. The one at the centre of Bovegno, built between the XII-XIII cent., is called by tradition "Roman tower". The possibility cannot be ruled out that there were fortified structures to watch the prisons for slaves. In 1557, the inhabitants of Collio were authorized to sell iron to the Lodrone family, who had installed, in Anfo on Lake Idro, a melting furnace. A road was built for this reason.



The communes met in council in the sacristy

San **Filastrio** in Tavernole was erected to its present form in the XV cent. The fresco on the façade (*The Crucifixion*) was mutilated in the 1600s to make a window. On the counter-façade inside, note two votive frescoes; the nave and presbytery were decorated by the inspiration of the Foppa or Ferramola schools (XV-XVI cent.).

The portico on the south side contains San Rocco Chapel, with frescoes by the Ferramola school (1530), characterized by its sense of detail for landscapes.

The general Council of the Communes of the Trompia Vally met for centuries in the sacristy (on the north side of the church). Here are frescoes from the XIV-XV cent., including *Scenes from the life of St. Dominic*. Information: parish priest, tel. 030920127.

The church is open from Tuesday to Sunday from 9 to 18.



The plain

The Brescia "Bassa", made fertile by rivers and the springs, has been intensely cultivated since the Middle Ages, when the monks started reclamations everywhere.

The land has contributed to the fortune of powerful feudal families that constructed residences and castles. The squares or the main streets of the towns are lined by arcades that once contained the fruit and vegetable markets. In the country, big dairy farms stand out, long since the ancient inhabitants were forced out by agricultural mechanization.

In some parts of the countryside, rows of mulberry trees still remind us of a not so distant past, when every family bred silkworms to round out the scale on the home balance.



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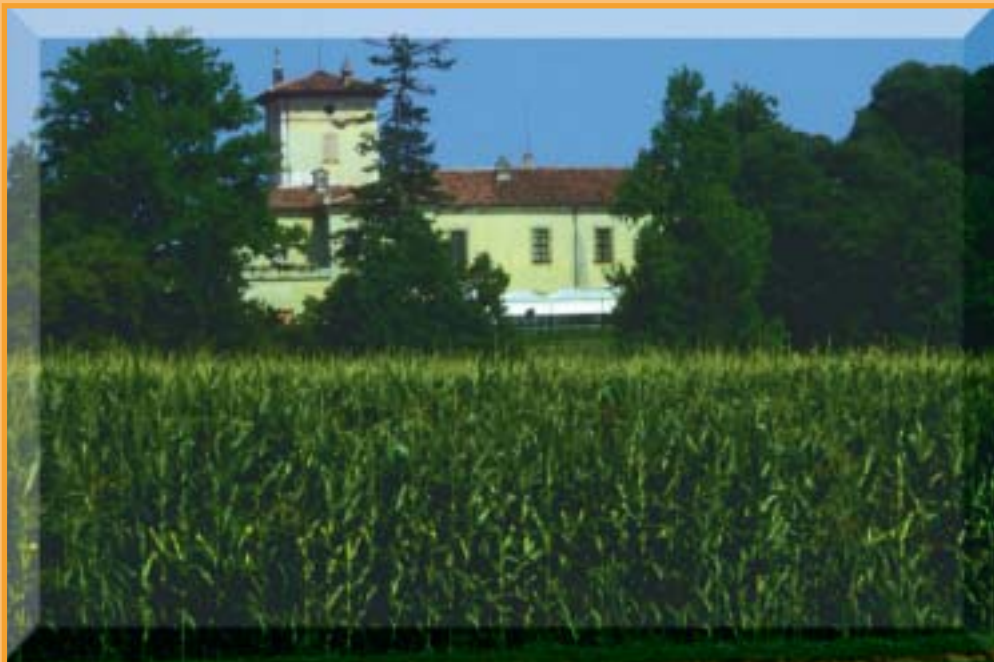
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A BRIEF HISTORY

Prehistoric villages were found a bit everywhere. The most famous are those in Remedello (Aeneolithic, 2300-1800 BC) and in Gottolengo, where in the Bronze Age (1500 BC) there was a fortification. A good part of Bassa was "centurionised"; the Romans allocated farming land to veteran soldiers. The Abbey in Leno provided great impetus for reclamations; it had been founded by the Lombard King Desiderio in 758. Between 1300 and 1400, in the plain exploits by famous leaders such as Giovanni Acuto, Gattamelata, Bartolmeo Colleoni and Carmagnola took place. The economy of Bassa is traditionally based on agriculture and livestock, supported since the Middle Ages by the construction of important irrigation canals. In the XVIII cent. silkworm breeding and silk weaving developed.

In 1909 in the skies of Montichiari, the most famous pilots in the world (aviation started six years before) gave an "air show" in which, in the role of journalist, appeared the young Franz Kafka.

To the marble quarries and ancient churches



For millennia the pure-white stone of Botticino has been quarried - The Romanesque churches in Nuvolento and Pontenove - The Egyptian columns of Villa Mazzucchelli in Ciliverghe - The paintings by Vincenzo Civerchio in the churches in Travagliato

M From the Roman Temple to the Duomo Nuovo, the marble of many Brescian monuments and even the altare della Patria in Rome come from **BOTTICINO**. In **BOTTICINO MATTINA** the **Museo del marmo** has been opened. It describes - with photos of the era, equipment, plastic models - the extraction, work process, transport and use of marble from Botticino; starting from the Roman era when it was extracted using wooden wedges, which after being water soaked, expanded and split the stone. The museum organises guided tours for small groups in the plants. Reservations to tel 0302691024.

M Upon entering the territory of **REZZATO**, we see signs which take us to the pure white façade of the **Santuario di Valverde**. It englobes an ancient small church which preserves frescoes from the XV-XVI centuries. In the new sanctuary, completed in the XVII cent., the altar of the Madonna by Giuseppe Cantoni (1718) is of marble from Carrara with *Angels* by Antonio Calegari.

M Continuing on toward the centre of Rezzato we go along the backside of the impressive **Villa Fenaroli** (XVIII cent.). Passing between here and the **collina di Bacco** (Bacchus' hill), dominated by a small neoclassical temple. A marble staircase which takes you to the temple

THE LEGEND OF THREE PIECES OF BREAD

Legend links the founding of the santuario di Valverde to an apparition which occurred in 1399: a farmer who was involved in ploughing saw his oxen kneel before a man (Jesus) who ordered him to throw three pieces of bread into a small lake. Here the Virgin Mary told the farmer to return to Jesus to be exonerated from obeying. The man kept the bread, a symbol of hunger, the plague and war. After a new apparition of the Madonna before two boys (1711), the lake chapel was embellished with marble. At the festival of Sant' Anna, in July, the apparition is celebrated with a procession in costumes.

completes the stage design effect of the villa to be admired from the ex-ss 11.

M The **Town Hall** of Rezzato has its office in the building (1839) erected by the Brescian architect Rodolfo Vantini in order to host the School of Design for Stonecutting. The façade was





inspired by the Capitoline Temple in Brescia, which had been brought to light a few years before.

The Parish church of **San Giovanni Battista** (XVII cent.) facing the same square, is decorated with marble altar artworks by stone sculptors from Rezzato. The most beautiful is the polychrome over black marble created in the 1700s by Vincenzo Baroncini.

From Rezzato taking the ex-ss 45 "bis" in the direction of Salò, you pass through



Nuvolera and **NUVOLENTO**, where a road goes up to Serle. The territory of these three towns constitutes another major marble basin. In Nuvolento near the cemetery, there is the **Pieve** in Romanesque style, reconstructed in the XV century leaving both the semicircular apse and the bell tower whole, which go back to circa 1200.

We continue southward on the road from the Pieve to the s.p. 4 crossroad in the proximity of the Chiese River in the territory of **BEDIZZOLE** to reach the hamlet of **PONTE-NOVE**, along the ancient via Emilia where there was a Roman relay station nine miles from Brescia. The **Pieve** goes back to the XV-XVI cent.: Romanesque in style with semicircular apses, three





naves in the interior, with arches resting on rough pillars. There are votive frescoes from the XV-XVI cent. on the walls (for a visit, go to the house opposite the Pieve). Recent excavations in front of the church have exposed the foundation of an octagonal baptistry, perhaps from the IX century. The neighbour

Bridge on the river Chiese (1743) has a small chapel with St. Giovanni Nepomeceno, the patron saint of the bridges.



Let's go to MAZZANO and at the hamlet of Molinetto, turn left to cross the ex-ss 11 and

Six granite columns from Egypt which come from the Roman Brixia

The design of Villa Mazzucchelli is attributed to the Venetian architect Giorgio Massari. Constructed in 1735-55, it was decorated with frescoes and statues by the most noted Brescian artists of the era: Scalvini, Savani, Calegari. The left side of the residence goes back to 1580.

In the pronaos, the six columns of Egyptian granite are particularly exceptional. They originally belonged to some Roman Brescia monuments and were re-employed in the Brescia cathedral of San Pietro de Dom which was demolished at the beginning of the XVI cent. to make space for the Duomo Nuovo.

The Fashion and Custom Museum, the Wine and Corkscrew Museum, the Gianmaria Mazzucchelli House Museum and the Giuseppe Alessandra Gallery are open from Tuesday to Friday from 9 to 18; Saturday and Sunday from 10 to 18. (tel. 0302120975).



visit, in CILIVERGHE, the splendid **Villa Mazzucchelli-Giacomini** (XVIII cent.), which hosts in the west wing the Mazzucchelli Museum.



From Ciliverghe, either taking the South Tangenziale (peripheral road) of Brescia or

from the East Brescia toll-booth taking the A4, we come to **OSPITALETTO** to follow the west side of this itinerary around Brescia. In the hamlet of LOVERNATO we find the church of **Santa Maria**, from the XV cent. but of more ancient origin: here passed





the Consul Road to Bergamo. The walls are covered with votive frescoes from the XV-XVI centuries. For a visit, go to no. 110 on via Martiri della Libertà.

We enter **TRAVAGLIATO** noticing the **Hospital** (1838, today a library), designed by Rodolfo Vantini, which might bring to mind the Town Hall of Rezzato.

 On the west edge of the town, there is the Sanctuary of **Santa Maria dei Campi** (XV cent.; for a visit, go to the

annexed custodian's house), where Vincenzo Civerchio from Crema frescoed the *Pietà* on the façade, the *Assumption* (1517) in the presbytery - in the umbrella vault - and the *Crucifixion* (art school) on the holy arch. The walls in the nave are covered with votive frescoes.


 In the centre of the town let's visit the parish church of **Santi Pietro e Paolo** in the sacristy to admire an indispu-

table masterpiece by Civerchio, consisting of the canvass painting of the *Climb to the Calvary* with the rising lunette of the *Deposition*, dated 1490 but probably from a bit later.



In **RONCADELLE** we see the impressive **Castello Guaineri**, erected in the 1400s by the Porcellagas.

The eastern façade actually has 60 windows (square at the base and under the eaves) and two sections of strongholds on each side. In the parish church of **San Bernardino** (XVI cent., enlarged several times) we can admire, in the last altar on the right, a *Nativity* by Romanino.



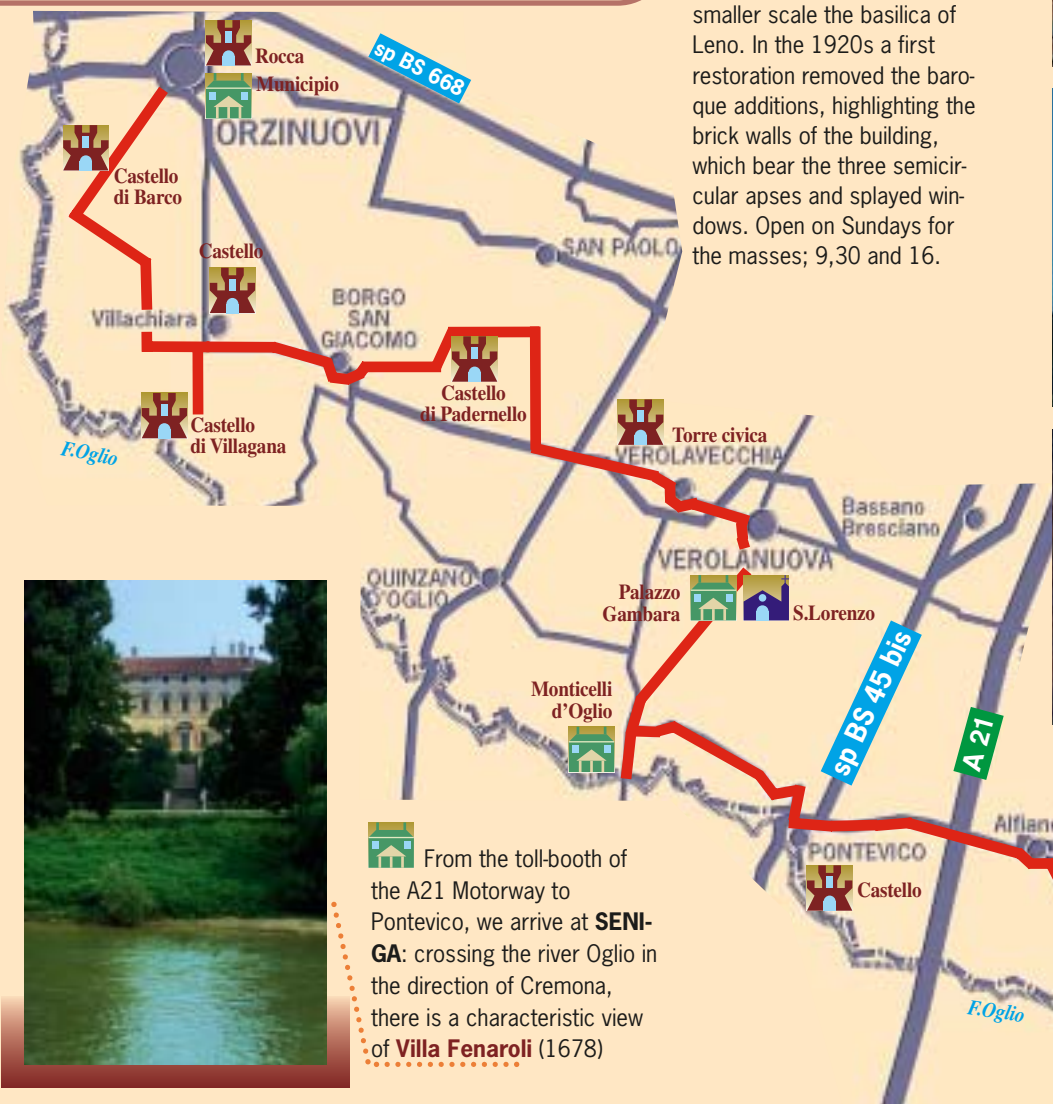
Feudal landowners' castles along the Oglio River

The powerful Gambara and Martinengo families have characterized, not only with their warrior tradition but also with their patronage and reclamations, the visual image of the plain towards the natural river border

which has been made impressive by the fact that it was located on an ancient castle site. From the façade of the building, designed by Gasparo Turbini, a terraced garden slopes toward the river between age-old plants and trees.

The Pieve di **Santa Maria di Comella**, in the open country, was constructed circa 1200 copying in smaller scale the basilica of Leno. In the 1920s a first restoration removed the baroque additions, highlighting the brick walls of the building, which bear the three semicircular apses and splayed windows. Open on Sundays for the masses; 9,30 and 16.

ITINERARY 6



From the toll-booth of the A21 Motorway to Pontevico, we arrive at **SENI-GA**: crossing the river Oglio in the direction of Cremona, there is a characteristic view of **Villa Fenaroli** (1678)



VERONICA E LE ALTRE

La famiglia Gambara si stabilì a Pralboino intorno al 1200: stirpe di condottieri che troviamo al servizio ora dell'Impero, ora dei Visconti, ora di Venezia. Se gli uomini roteano le spade, le donne hanno altre occupazioni: Alda nel 1506 si fa mandare dall'umanista veneto Gian Giorgio Trissino i gelsi da piantare per allevare i bachi da seta; Emilia nel 1541 devia le acque del Mella a scopo d'irrigazione; Veronica (1485-1550) si dedica alla poesia, sposa il marchese Gilberto X di Correggio e dà vita a un cenacolo di poeti e artisti.



In **MILZANO** there is also a "copied" church. In fact the parish church of **San Biagio Vescovo** was erected from 1606 imitating Tortona Cathedral (Piemonte), which was consecrated in 1583 when the bishop of the city was a Caesar of the powerful Gambara family. On the right wall are a *Last Supper* by Paolo da Cailina Junior and a *Madonna and Saints* by Andrea Celesti.

A legend says that in 568 the first Lombard King Alboin claimed **PRALBOINO**, but the name "Alboinus" had already been cited in 514 by Cassiodorus.



Palazzo Gambara rises on the site of the 1300s castle which in 1516 hosted Emperor Maximilian of

Hapsburg. Rebuilt in the XVII cent., it was renovated at the end of the 1700s by the architect Gasparo Turbini.

In the parish church of **Sant'Andrea** (XVIII cent.) there is a portrait of *Cardinal Umberto Gambara* by Moretto.



Let's go back in the direction of **PONTEVICO**, where the impressive **Castello** of medieval origin is rich in history. It slowly decli-



Feudal landowners' castles



ITINERARY 6

ned until 1803 when it became a foundry. In 1843 an Austrian noble had it rebuilt in neo-Gothic style, knocking down the five towers and the main walls.

Going parallel with the Oglio River, we reach the territory of **VEROLAVECCHIA**, the characteristic **rural court of Monticelli d'Oglio**, made up of a single 1600s complex



where all the buildings face the square, surrounded on three sides by arcades. On the north side the arcades are interrupted allowing a view of the plain. On the south side, there are the owner's house, the church and warehouses.

Also in **VEROLANUOVA** the Gambara family was powerful. **Palazzo Gambara**, now the Town Hall, was built in the 1500s by the architect Dionisio Baldo di Pralboino. Its sumptuousness is announced by the marble balustrade on the bridge that crosses the Gambara irrigation ditch and arrives at the gate. It is decorated with the baroque statues *Minerva* and *Mars*. Inside there are four rooms with vaulted ceilings decorated in trompe l'oeil by Malosso (XVIII cent.). In front of the palace, there is the vast **piazza della Libertà**, reached by arched passages through the surrounding houses.

The parochial, **basilica di San Lorenzo**, reconstructed in the 1600s, was enriched by works of art from the Gambara family's Renaissance patronage.

The church boasts two enormous canvass paintings (66 sq m. each: *Falling Manna* and *Sacrifice of Melchizedek*) executed between 1740-41



by Giambattista Tiepolo. Not far is the **Chiesa della Disciplina** (XIV-XVI cent.), where lies the tomb of Nicolò Gambara, who died in 1592 and was a leader serving the Emperor Charles V.

In **VEROLAVECCHIA** the **torre civica** (civic tower), with Gothic windows, was part of a small castle of which there are distinguishable traces.

We proceed onward to **BORGO SAN GIACOMO** and, after crossing the "Quinzanese" road, turn right to **PADERNELLO** where there is the first of the **four castles of the Martinengos** (see box). From here we go to Borgo San Giacomo and then **VILLA-CHIARA** (second castle), from which we head south to the





hamlet of **VILLAGANA** (third). Turning back towards Villachiana, we go to **ORZINUOVI** along the road closest to the Oglio River, coming to the hamlet of **BARCO** (fourth).



Orzinuovi has a date of birth: in 1193 Brescians decided to erect a fortress in this strategic location near the Oglio River. In 1520, Venice

entrusted the architect Sammicheli with the task of making the citadel impregnable; it took the form of a five-pointed star with seven ramparts. Of that powerful complex, today there remains only the **Rocca** (1477), a work of the military architect Giovanni

Borella; now in restoration.



In the big square there is the **Municipio**, in Gothic style. It was an office of the Venetian Superintendent and bears on its south wall the Lion of San Marco. Next to it is the parish church of **Santa Maria Assunta**, with a Renaissance façade and a neo-Gothic interior.



The battlemented residences of the noble Martinengos

The castle of **Padernello** (second half of the XV cent.) is today in a deplorable state of abandonment. In 1700, Antonio Marchetti accentuated the character of the noble residence, enlarging, opening windows, creating a great internal staircase. There also occurred a mysterious crime in the castle (1521). Victim: Antonio Martinengo's wife; Antonio was the prime suspect. Motive: jealousy.

The Martinengos owns the feudal estate of **Villachiana** since the XIII century. At the end of the 1300s, in the centre of the village, they built their castle, which in the 1500s was transformed into an elegant

residence. On the side facing the square, there is a low wall with a cylindrical tower at each end. The exterior frescoes (traces) are attributed to the Campis from Cremona.

In the hamlet of **Villagana**, the medieval castle was radically remodelled at the beginning of the 1900s from the drawing by the Milanese painter, Comolli. There remain the Renaissance arcade in the courtyard, the square stronghold and the south side with a small balcony.

The castle of **Barco** (XV cent.), constructed over a pre-existing fortalice, never had a moat or draw bridge, but in the 1500s it was famous for its beautiful Italian garden.



Artistic historical itineraries: Brescia and the Surrounding area (Trompia Valley and the plain)

ITINERARY

2 BRESCIA (2)

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The cloister of the XIV cent. in the church of San Francesco d'Assisi



ITINERARY

3 CONCESIO

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The birthplace of Giovanni Battista Montini, Pope Paul VI



ITINERARY

4 TAVERNOLE

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The church of San Filastro in Tavernole

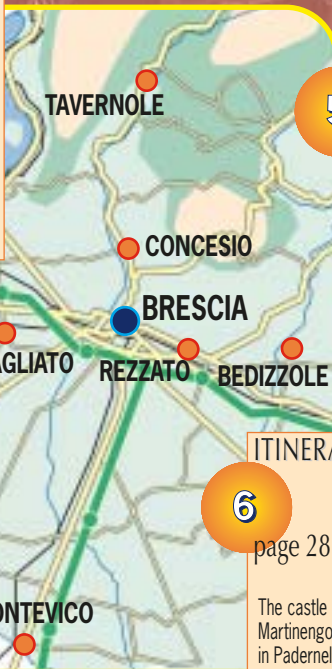


ITINERARY

1 BRESCIA (1)

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The Winged Victory in the Museo della Città in chiesa di Santa Giulia



ITINERARY

5 REZZATO

page 24

The Romanesque parish on the Chiese River in Pontenove di Bedizzole



ITINERARY

6 PONTEVICO

page 28

The castle Martinengo in Padernello di Borgo San Giacomo



The series of the **ARTISTIC HISTORICAL ITINERARIES OF THE BRESCIA TERRITORY** is composed of **1 Brescia and the surrounding area (Trompia Valley and the plain):** itineraries 1 to 6 **2 Lake Garda and the Sabbia Valley:** itineraries 7 to 12 **3 Lake Iseo and Franciacorta:** itineraries 13 to 19 **4 The Canonica Valley:** itineraries 20 to 26