



## **GENTLY CROWNED BY A RANGE OF MOUNTAINS**

# **CLES: THE QUEEN OF THE VAL DI NON**

**Cles, the chief town of the Val di Non in the province of Trento, stands on a sunny plateau 635 m high, along the left side of Lake Santa Giustina and surrounded by the Brenta Dolomites**

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The origin of the town of Cles dates back to the Neolithic and Bronze Ages but it has become famous thanks to the Tabula Clesiana, a bronze plate discovered in 1869 and dated 46 A.D., bringing to life the engraved edict by the Emperor Claudio that granted the right of Roman citizenship to the Anaunia population. The Italian translation of the edict has been reproduced on a marble tablet and displayed on the facade of the Palazzo Assessorile. Around the year 1000 a steward settled in the town; then it was ruled by the Bishop Princes of Trento. Cles gave the name to one of the most ancient and distinguished families of Trentino, in fact it was the birthplace of Bernardo Cles that

promoted the Council of Trent and the rebuilding of Castle of Cles. For years the inhabitants earned their livelihood from the rural economy: the cultivation of potatoes, barley, rye, grapes, the farming of silkworm and the spinning of the silk. The activity of the Viesi family's spinning mill, specialized in the making of vestments, went on up to the end of 1970s. Cles has also developed its industrial activity and handicraft, such as the art of ceramics and the production of stoves "a ole" and crockery, from which has come the nickname of "scudelari". Today it is known as one of the most productive fruit-growing areas, a production of quality, respectful to the environment, that widely distributes the famous Melinda apples from the Val di Non. The period from 25 April to 10 May is the best time to enjoy the blossoming of all the apple trees. This area is also the ideal place for cycling and horse-riding and a starting point for walks and excursions to the Dolomites.

At Cles everything is aimed at helping you to enjoy nature, find amusement and relax.

## VISITING CLES

### **PALAZZO ASSESSORILE**

The 15th-16th century palace has a facade with small stone-mullioned-windows and frescoes. Rebuilt in 1400 from an ancient 13th-century tower, its southern external side preserves a Guelph battlement, some loop-holes and machicolations and four Gothic mullioned windows. On the second floor you can admire a few mid-16th-Century frescoes and the vestibule rooms decorated with the Cles family's heraldic colours: white and red. Not to be missed is a visit to the Sala del Guidizio, where starting from 1679 the legal functions of the valley took place.

### **CHIESA DI SANTA MARIA ASSUNTA**

A Gothic-Renaissance building dating back to the 16th century, it houses a remarkable baptismal font of 1598.

### **THE CASTLE OF CLES**

The Castle of Cles rises on the slope of an isolated hill surrounded by orchards and overlooking Lake Santa Giustina. The original ancient tower was erected in the 12th century and was enlarged by the Prince Bishop Bernardo Clesio, whose family is the castle's owner. Placed to control the ford of the River Noce, at the beginning of 1500 it underwent an assault during the farmers rebellion and in 1825 a big fire destroyed some decorations of the second floor, forcing the barons of Cles to demolish one of the three towers that surrounded the whole structure. The richness of the interior (some 16th-century frescoes representing heraldic pictures and allegorical scenes attributed to the painter Marcello Fogolino, the central hall embellished with a remarkable caisson ceiling), is reflected in the outer richness: the facade preserves a double frieze with some busts of emperors at the top and fruit and putti at the bottom. In the surroundings a few bronze figurines of Roman ages have been found as well as some Roman and Etruscan tombs.

### **LAKE SANTA GIUSTINA**

Between 1943 and 1951, an impressive 152m-high dam was built to enable the exploitation of the sizeable flow of the River Noce, whose water runs into spectacular canyons and creates picturesque sceneries.

The artificial but stately Lake Santa Giustina has gently settled in the valley bottom, becoming part of the attractive landscapes among the vegetation and the rock faces that lower into the basin, overlooked by the Castle of Cles. The fish fauna is rich and varied: the pike, the trout, the perch, the whitefish, the tench and some more.

## THE SURROUNDINGS

### **PARCO NATURALE ADAMELLO-BRENTA**

This natural park includes the mountain groups of Adamello and Brenta, separated by the Val Rendena and surrounded by the Valli di Non, di Sole and Giudicarie. There are woods, pastures, bushes, grassland, rocky mountains and glaciers such as the Adamello, one of the biggest in Europe.

The altitude varies from 400m a.s.l. up to the 3500m of Cima Presanella; more than 50 lakes can be counted. Here the Valle di Tovel goes from the Valle di Non for 18 km up to the heart of the massive Group of Brenta. You can see the "dolomie" of sedimentary origin engraved for ages by the atmospheric forces, creating the typical architecture of the Dolomites rich in needles, pillars and towers.

### **PARCO DEL DOSS DI PEZ**

The park of the Doss di Pez is a wide green area, an amusing and relaxing place. This area has been recently developed by protecting the flora (some schedules with the list of the plants and the rocks point out suitable things to see) and the fauna (information about the birds living in the park in every season of the year), realizing a playground and restoring two fountains and a parking area. A stage to perform plays, facing towards Lake Santa Giustina, has also been built.

### **CHIESA DI SAN VIGILIO A PEZ (5th-7th centuries)**

The Church of San Vigilio, the first church erected at Cles, preserves evidences of the ancient structure in the apse, in the frontal of the arcade and in the cubic-shaped altar built in simple stone. The interior also houses a cycle of frescoes dating back to the 12th-16th centuries.

### **SANTUARIO DI SAN ROMEDIO A SANZENO**

It consists of a structure with six chapels dating between the 12th and the 18th centuries, each one connected to the other by staircases. First you can see the Cappella dei SS. Romedio e Giorgio (1487), then the Cappella dell'Addolorata turned into a display of the ex-voto of the First World War, the late Gothic Chiesa di San Michele (1514), the Cappella della Deposizione (1536), the Cappella dedicated to San Nicolò and the Cappella dedicated to San Romedio that houses the mortal remains of the Saint and some evidences of the original Romanesque frescoes.

### **LAKE TOVEL**

A hollow surrounded by conifer trees and overlooked by the Brenta Dolomites, Lake Tovel is a part of the catchment basin of the River Noce, one of the biggest tributaries of the River Adige.

It lies in an area of 360,000 sq.m, is 39 m deep and has an irregular shape since it is a landslide barrier on the glacial basin. It has become famous because of the Glenodinium Sanguineum alga, that turned the colour of the lake water into deep reddish, a phenomenon no longer visible probably.

## **RESOURCES OF THE TERRITORY**

Cles and the Val di Non, an area of Trentino famous for its most typical product: the apple. To certify the origin and the production of the apples, the trademark Melinda was created in 1989. Today the production of the Consorzio Melinda, spread over 6,700 hectares of cultivated land, almost 95% of the total fruit-growing area of the Val di Non and Sole, is about 244 ton of apples, of which just a little more than one tenth is set aside for industry. Melinda is more than an apple: it is the result of the meeting between the nature of the Val di Non, rich in water and sun, and the passion of the 5200 families that have joined the Consorzio and, after years of work, have made their splendid apples become famous everywhere: the classic Golden, the exclusive Renetta and the red Delicious, and more varieties, but of such a unique quality as to be the most appreciated of all by many people. The deliciousness has been rewarded and the apple of the Val di Non has achieved the recognition of the D.O.P. (denominazione di origine protetta) label from the European Union.

## **WINTER SPORTS**

Everything you can do with the snow and on the snow, you can do in Trentino: downhill-ski, cross-country ski, snowboard, Alpine-ski, nordic walking with the "ciaspole" (snow shoes). There are more than 300 ski-lifts that serve 800 km of ski-slopes from April to November, always in very good condition thanks to both the snow, covering the 90% of the slopes, and the very efficient school of expert people.

### **Winter sports around the Brenta Dolomites**

In the territory around the Brenta Dolomites, in winter-time, the excursions are restricted to the lowest altitude. There are various opportunities to enter the beautiful Dolomitic scenery with the snow shoes (ciaspole), Alpine-ski, cross-country ski, dog-sledges, horse riding tracks. On the western side there are wonderful opportunities for skiers at Madonna di Campiglio, Folgarida and Pinzolo. At the south there are sports facilities at Altopiano di Pradel (Molveno) and Paganella (Andalo and Fai).

Of course the excursions along the Dolomitic routes covered with snow need good training and a suitable equipment, as well as precise information about the conditions of the snow and the danger of avalanches.

It is advisable to apply to the various Alpine schools that can supply any useful and updated information and also organize guided excursions with ski and snow shoes.

Associazione Maestri  
di Sci Olimpica Ski Center  
Via Perli, 2 - 38010  
Andalo (TN)  
Tel. 0461/585655, Fax 0461/585655

Scuola Italiana di Sci Fai della Paganella  
Via Villa, 5 - 38010  
Fai della Paganella (TN)  
Tel. 0461/583288-0335/8058498.

## CUISINE

### **Risotto al Teroldego**

Fry a red minced onion in butter or oil and add some rice. Then add little by little the wine warmed up before as we are used to doing with broth and, stirring often, cook the risotto. At the end, to soften the taste of the wine, add some vegetable broth and Parmesan cheese.

### **Teroldego Rotaliano**

One of the top wines of Trentino, the Teroldego, is a dry ruby red and fruity wine, ideal to accompany roasted beef and game.

## GETTING THERE

**By car:** Take the SS43 (Valle di Non - Passo Mendola) or SS42 (Tonale - Mendola)

**By train:** Trento Station (Monaco-Roma line, Valsugana-Trento-Venezia line) then local Trento-Malè line

**By air:** Nearest Airports: Verona-Catullo, Venezia-Marco Polo, Milano-Linate and Bolzano.