



ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING CASTLES IN EUROPE IS SET IN THE CARSO

- THE CASTLE OF DUINO

It is an old and elegant mansion still inhabited. A charming spot far from the troubles of the modern life but close to the comforts of Trieste, a big city that has always been a cultural and literary center for Central Europe

THE CASTLE OF DUINO: ITS HISTORY

The Castle of Duino, lying on the last spur of the plateau of Carso, dropping sheer down to the Gulf of Trieste, is certainly among the most interesting castles in Europe, an old mansion and at the same time an inhabited residence. Owned by the Principi della Torre e Tasso, the Castle of Duino is rich in masterpieces and remarkable historic relics. It can be visited and is regularly used for hosting conferences, exhibitions of art, concerts, full-dress dinners, etc. Its park, whose paths are lined with statues and works of art, has terraces overlooking the sea and stretches over different levels with striking splashes of colour from the vegetation of the Mediterranean. The population of Veneto established the first important settlement in the area, that was later occupied by the Romans. They, in 129 A.D., at the final stretch of the River Timavo, built a harbour with docks and customs warehouses as a starting point for Istria. To the South, a commercial harbour called the "Porto del Bivio", especially used by the ships loading the stones for building Aquileia, had already been settled in the 2nd century B.C. Starting from 1600, under the dominion of the Earl Torre-Hofer Valsassina, the Castle has become, little by little, a humanistic and cultural center, open to famous figures of the international culture, arts, literature and science. Among them we should mention Johann Strauss, Franz Liszt, Elizabeth of Austria, Maximilian of Habsburg and the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, Mark

Twain, Paul Valéry, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Eugène Ionesco and Karl Popper. The Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke, right here at Duino wrote his poem the "Elegie". After the establishment of the Centro Internazionale di Fisica Teorica di Miramare, world-wide renowned scientists have also often been hosted here.

The building appears as a composite and massive structure, with a soaring 16th-century tower around which, in 1300, on the ruins of a Roman outpost of the 3rd century A.D., the construction was started, not far from the ancient castle dedicated to the worship of the Sun-God and called "La Dama Bianca" (The White Lady). Overlooking the sea and surrounded by an enormous park, the Castle rises above a little fishermen's village, which has now become just a residential village for tourists. Inside the castle the furniture, the pictures, precious fittings, books and relics, preserved over the course of time, lend it a warm and elegant atmosphere, while its park invites you to relax and enjoy very pleasant walks. A narrow lane leads, through the park, to a private beach below. In the 20th century, the Prince Raimondo della Torre a Tasso encouraged the ideal of cosmopolitanism that has always characterized his family's feeling, in accordance with the international genius of this region. The Prince himself has been the promoter of very important activities: the Centro Internazionale di Fisica Teorica di Miramare, the Istituto per lo Studio dei Trasporti nell'Integrazione Economica Europea and the IFIAS (International Federation of Institutes for Advanced Studies). In 1972 he founded the Institute of Studies about Rainer Maria Rilke and promoted the Collegio del Mondo Unito dell'Adriatico, that is a part of an International Organization of nine Boarding Schools located in different places of the world. Now the Castle has become the residence of his son Carlo Alessandro. The Principi della Torre e Tasso are well-known for the warm hospitality they have always offered: for centuries, debates, conferences and studies have taken place here. The Castello di Duino Society, recently founded, is aimed at promoting cultural, artistic and scientific activities that can develop the cosmopolitan ideal that the Principi della Torre e Tasso have always pursued.

PLACES TO BE VISITED IN THE SURROUNDINGS

From the attractive Castle of Duino, you can start a visit to the interesting surroundings which are rich in history: San Giovanni in Tuba, the magnificent early Christian basilica with a mosaic flooring that was destroyed more than once and then rebuilt: today the Mass is no longer celebrated in the church that is used for hosting concerts. The Collegio del Mondo Unito (United World College), open to praiseworthy students who have been awarded a scholarship from all over the world. It is also worth visiting the Grotta del Dio Mitra, a relic of the past in the area of the River Timavo springs, the Mansio Romana, a Roman post stage rich in decorations as well as the flow of the mysterious River Timavo, the underground river that was already well-known in ancient times and is also mentioned by Virgilio in the Eneide poem. Not to be missed is also a visit to the stunning Grotta Gigante, the biggest cave on view all over the world, and then the Roman remains, the ethnographical Museum of the Casa Carsica, the Tempio Mariano, the Rocca di Monrupino, a fortified Medieval Church, the Botanic Garden "Carsiana", the Alpine environment of the Val Rosandra right by the sea, and the famous Tram di Opicina, unique of its kind. Last but not least, we would like to suggest a visit to the Villaggio del Pescatore, at the far end of the Commune of Duino Aurisina, best-known for the recent findings of some pre-historical fossils.

THE PLATEAU OF CARSO

The plateau of Carso is a huge calcareous group of organic origin, that came up from below the surface of the sea about thirty million years ago and is rich in magnificent fossils. A natural phenomenon famous all over the world, the Carso consists of white stone continuously shaped by the effects of the elements and dotted here and there with small and impressive works of Nature: the "campi solcati", big calcareous sculptures such as caves, wells, grottos and doline. The Carso of Trieste is also a subterranean world: in fact the Timavo, the most important river of the area, flows under the full extent of it for 40 kilometres and reappears, with three new sources, at San Giovanni di Duino, nearby the apse of the Church of San Giovanni in Tuba. The Timavo water hollows out the rocks and creates caves and grottos, where stalagmites and stalactites transform the caves into natural museums. The small villages, the secluded hamlets set among the greenness and lively centers of the Carso of Trieste are far from being any stereotype: Duino-Aurisina, San Dorligo della Valle, Sistiana and Basovizza. If you are fond of sunbathing on the beach, besides the splendid bay of Sistiana, you can find hidden beaches, cliffs on which to lie and listen to the sound of the waves breaking on the shore and find small bays sheltered from the wind, enjoyable also in winter time, all created by the Carso falling sheer down to the sea below. You can choose to enjoy yourself with amusements and facilities or simply relax in quiet seclusion.

FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE CARSO

The Carso of Trieste is like a "green lung", an environment of naturalistic interest to be enjoyed by walking along the paths that from Duino Aurisina go through the doline, caves and aromatic fragrances. The fauna is rich in roe-deer, foxes, wild-boars, hedgehogs, badgers, squirrels, dormice, stone-martins, tawny-owls, owls and bears. There are reptiles in the sunny spots (Adriatic lizards, green lizards and horned vipers); among the birds we should mention the nightingale, the white and

yellow wagtail, the crow, the tit and the woodpecker. Some raptors such as the sparrow-hawk and the buzzard nest in the woods. The Carso is a paradise for lovers of the flora too: the variety of plants, flowers and arboreal species is amazing. Along the karst bank you can find the Mediterranean scrub: the ilex and many shrub plants such as sage, thyme, broom and spurge. Higher up there are the hornbeam, the manna-ash, the hazel and, among the flowers, the lily of the valley and the buttercup, the primrose, the snowdrop, the violet, the narcissus, the peony and the cyclamen. Inside the doline, thanks to the special microclimate, the rich Mediterranean flora, the typical alpestrine flora grow together and, then too on the southern side, the Illyrian-Mediterranean flowers and shrubs. If you want to know more on the subject, we would suggest a visit to the Botanic Garden "Carsiana" at Sgonico.

THE RILKE PATH

The 1700m-long Rilke path that, sheer down to the sea, winds its way from Sistiana to the Castle of Duino, is the most significant evidence of the meeting between the soft Mediterranean landscape and the enchanting asperity of the plateau of Carso. Along the path there are four beauty spots, suitable for letting the visitors stop and admire the breathtaking panoramic view.

THE CARSO ALSO REPRESENTS INNOVATION

Nature, folklore, history. But the Carso also signifies science, innovation, new technologies: it is an observation point for the stars thanks to its Observatory. Just with Science the Carso is the evidence of the possibilities that it can still offer, a boundless universe to be discovered.

The Observatory Geofisico Sperimentale di Sgonico

The Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale (OGS) promotes, coordinates and carries out important research in the area of geophysical and environmental sciences, in Marine Science and in the field of Seismology.

The Osservatorio Astronomico di Basovizza

This Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics Research is a part of the Istituto Nazionale di Astrofisica. It develops various research programs in co-operation with international associations and organizations.

The Laboratorio di Biologia Marina di Aurisina

The Laboratorio di Biologia Marina di Aurisina, that can be visited, is a recent Institution but preserves the heritage of an ancient scientific tradition. Located in a natural and magnificent background, it is aimed at protecting one of the most precious gifts of Nature: the Sea. Today the research activity of the Laboratory refers most of all to the biological oceanography.

The Science Park Area di Padriciano

The Science Park Area is one of the most important European scientific parks: here more than 1200 people work in 55 research centers and companies involved in various subjects such as biotechnologies, physics, and new materials, electronics and telecommunication, environment, computer science and qualified services. The Consorzio per l'Area di Ricerca, which runs the scientific park, is a separate world in the middle of the Carso of Trieste and has decided to create a strong link between the research area and the entrepreneurs to obtain the maximum possible development.

FAMOUS LITERARY PEOPLE OF THE CARSO

The Carso inspired poets and literary men most of all because of its ruggedness, for its contrasts and its memories of war and death. From Rainer Maria Rilke to the impetuous energy of Slapater ("Il mio Carso") and Gianni Stuparich ("Guerra del '15"). Among the Slovenian authors: Srečko Kosovel and Igo Gruden, the poet from Aurisina. Their subjects are those of life as a daily sacrifice, the sense of loneliness, the alienation and the premonition of death. Also to be mentioned are the memories of Giuseppe Ungaretti, soldier of 19th Foot on the Carso. Then the painful life of Walter, the main character of "Anima Mundi" by Susanna Tamaro, an author who was born and still lives on the Carso, at Opicina.

THE RESOURCES OF THE TERRITORY

The Marble

Marble has been a driving force in the local economy since the Roman Ages. The location of the quarries near the arterial roads, together with the quality of the product, have helped to spread the trade in the marble of Carso world-

wide since ancient times. There are various kinds of marble, such as Aurisina Chiara, Aurisina Fiorita, Aurisina Granitello, Roman Stone, Fior di Mare, Repen Classico, Breccia Carsica, Stalattite. Widely used for their characteristic sturdiness, they are generally used for floor and inner or outer facades, stairs, furnishing and design material. It also means art as well thanks to the heritage of craftsmanship handed down from father to son. Local craftsmen and sculptors preserve the culture of the town by working a splendid, white and pure stone and transforming the features of The Carso into common objects, sculptures, and furnishing ornaments.

The Wine

Pliny the Elder, was already emphasizing its qualities two thousand years ago, its taste and its striking savour. Not very much has changed since then. Little exploited for agriculture, the Carso is a territory where the vineyards are carefully cultivated in small plots of land. The quality of the wines is granted by the "Consorzio per la Tutela della Denominazione di Origine Controllata dei Vini del Carso" with 32 local producers as its members. The most famous wine is the Terrano, ruby red verging on violet, full-bodied, lightly acidic taste. Among the white wines the Malvasia excels, alcoholic on average, fruity, dry and pale yellow, to be tasted with fish and with the "jota", the typical dish of Trieste. Also typical of Carso is the Vitovska, a lightly flavoured wine from an ancient, local and rural vineyard.

The Honey

This is a wild virgin honey, put in jars after picking from the honeycombs without any kind of manipulation. You can buy wax, royal jelly and propolis. A thousand keen operators, running a thousand of beehives, have joined the "Consorzio degli Apicoltori della Provincia di Trieste".

The Olive Oil

Also the cultivation of olive trees is particularly valuable to the local agriculture. Spread over an area of about 70 hectares, the olive groves cover the hills that from the sea go up to foot of the plateau of Carso. Generally the olive trees are cultivated by very small family run companies. Olives are hand-picked and cold pressed. The olive oil has excellent qualities: very low in acidity, rich taste and a characteristic genuine herbaceous flavour.

CUISINE

To be tasted

In this border land the Italian, Slovenian and Austrian cuisine mix together to create original and special dishes to be tasted in the trattorie and restaurants of the Carso. We recommend the chifeleti, special fried potatoes eaten as side dish of roasted meat; the gnocchi de pan, as big as tennis balls; the Jota, savoured soup with beans and bacon, sauerkraut and sausage; the strucolo de spinazi, served quite hot with tomato sauce or melted butter; the palacincche, stuffed with nutty cream and served folded in the shape of a triangular and the strucolo de pomi, a strudel stuffed with apples in rum.

THE "OSMIZZE" OF THE CARSO OF TRIESTE

The Carso of Trieste must be discovered by following signs from the bushes, the sudden green bunches of grass which appear in strategic positions to indicate the presence of the "osmizze". The name "osmizza" is a derivation from "osem" that means eight in the Slovenian language, and comes from the habit of selling the agricultural and farming produce traditionally for eight days (now they last one month).

The "osmizze", friendly and entertaining places, are spread over the whole Province of Trieste; the best period to enjoy them is Autumn and Spring time. The "osmizze" offer delicious genuine food and wine: local salami and cheese, slices of roasted meat, eggs and home-made bread. Each "osmizza" offers different produce; you can sit on benches, outside or in the cellar, in front of big rough-wooden tables and enjoy your meal.

GETTING THERE

Duino, the enchanting seaside town, is located a few kilometres from Trieste, and in common with it, it has the characteristics of the border towns, but at the same time it is at the strategic center of an area including the main European cities, the Balkans and a part of the Middle East. You can easily reach the castle driving along the A4 Motorway, connecting Trieste to the Italian and foreign roads; it is about 600 m from the motorway exit.

Castello di Duino - 34013 Duino Aurisina (TS) - Tel. 040 208120 - Fax 040 208022 - E-mail: castellodiduino@libero.it

Comune di Duino Aurisina - Aurisina Cave, 25 - 34013 Duino Aurisina (TS)
Tel. 040 2017111 - fax 040 200245 - E-mail: protocollo@comune.duino-aurisina.ts.it

United World College of the Adriatic - via Trieste 29 - 34013 Duino (Trieste) - ITALY
Tel. +39 040 3739111 - E-mail: uwcad@uwcad.it - Internet: www.uwc.org

Azienda di Promozione Turistica di Trieste - Tel. 040 6796111

Ufficio Informazioni dell'APT di Trieste - Tel. 040 3478312 - Fax 040 3478320

Sportello Comunale IAT di **Sistiana** (stagionale da aprile ad ottobre) - Tel. e fax 040 299166 - iatsistiana@marecarso.it

Sportello Comunale IAT di Trieste - Tel. 040 3478312 - Fax 040 3478320

Ufficio Relazioni con il Pubblico - Aurisina centro - Casa di Pietra - 040 200824 - 800002291 - urp@comune.duino-aurisina.ts.it

Comune di Duino Aurisina - Ufficio Turismo e Cultura - Aurisina, 102 - 31011 Duino Aurisina (TS)
Tel. 040 2017372 - fax 040 201307 - scuola.cultura.sport@com-duino-aurisina.regione.fvg.it