

## Trieste, a peculiar case recalling the "Kakanic" world



When you land, moor or approach Trieste, you must know you arrived in the "Kakanic world", the "kaiserlich und königlich" world. As a matter of fact, Trieste is - at the same time - a piece of Italy and a piece of the Habsburg world.

That world starts in 1717, when Trieste was declared Free Port of Austria. However, the Port burst during the 19th century, thanks to Venice decline. Therefore Trieste begins to trade with the Lombardo-Veneto, with Austria, with the these days Slav countries and, eventually, with the whole world. The title that enriched Trieste, as to be the "Philadelphia of the Mediterranean Sea" is neither wrong nor exaggerated. At that time Trieste was really so fastly and commercially developing as the northern american city.

A good example of the social class that grew up at that time, as the result of a certain kind of development is an individual: Baron Pasquale Revoltella.

His venetian family came to Trieste when Pasquale was four, and settled in its new town. Here Revoltella enjoyed the right environment and developed his natural propensity for business. He became a top-businessman, a true tycoon, making - at the same time - the godsend of Trieste. By the Revoltella Museum people can find the *Marmorino veneziano*, a plaster or stucco decoration used on walls. It's the same decoration used for the Saint Petersburg's Hermitage Museum. In the Baron's halls, next to the princely dining room for 24 and more people, large-scale bohemian crystal candle holders remind to those of the Istanbul's sultans. On the same way people can find some homages to the dead Maximilian. Revoltella inaugurates his home in 1859 and among his guests people can find Ferdinand Lesseps (the man of the Suez Canal) and Maximilian of Habsburg, younger brother of the Emperor. The Garden of the Miramare Castle is a sort of berliner Babelsberg, and reminds even the berliner Orangerie-Charlottenburg. But, also, the outfitting of the Isola Borromeo. There's something lacustrine, something nordic and mediterranean together.

### Style, shapes, meanings of a Triestine square



The Prefettura (the Government Palace) was wanted by the austro-hungarians and is, at the same time, in a neo-Renaissance and neo-Byzantine style. The building is provided with Jugendstil cusps and hungarian-bohemians little-angels à la Michael Powolny. On its walls a cocktail of images through middle-ages and Renaissance.

The City Hall building is a classic example of the 19th century full eclecticism. The three architectural arrays - Doric, Ionic, Corinthian - are mixed with any kind of invention. This building is a merge between the Marciana Library in Venice, the Heidelberg Castle in Germany and the Louvre Museum in Paris.

The Palace which hosts the "Café degli Specchi" is an amazing neoclassical structure and is the "Assicurazioni Generali" (Insurance company) venue. On the palace's top there's a frieze that talks of a town addicted to business, industry and insurance. This town, Trieste, as a meeting point between ancient and modern. In the sculptures placed on the top of the building we can find the symbolic representations of painting, sculpture and architecture. Furthermore, you can see the sculpture of the Athen owl's wisdom, the roman pillar and the temples and, aside, the traveler's baggage, the railway engine, the pincer and the technique.

**Trieste: shaping Vienna on the seafront.**



This is a story you could already heard about. But it is worth to be said again. Trieste, a sea town in the heart of Europe, had its heyday under the Habsburg's Empire. The opening to commercial traffic brought a complete renovation of the town, both in its architecture and its cultural life. It was, indeed, the Empress Maria Theresa who started it all off. It's by her that the new district, developed from the middle of the eighteenth century following the modern criteria of rationalization and formal elegance dictated by the neoclassical taste of the time, was built up. This neighbourhood bears her name: it is called **Borgo Teresiano**.

The presence of the Habsburgs has also had a considerable influence on the local cuisine, which is shaped by a fusion of Austro-Hungarian traditions, which give you a chance to enjoy the imperial tastes of the past. If you stroll through the streets of the town, spiffed up by wonderful historical palaces, it is like stepping back in time, back to when the town was the port of the Habsburgs, and thus finding the atmosphere of the past, which has remained nearly intact, especially in the cafès and in the eclectic buildings of the town centre. We can now tell you what you definitively must see in Trieste. The Castle of Miramare, imperial residence of Maximilian of Habsburg. The place maintains the original furnishing and decorations, which give the halls a romantic touch of sadness, especially if you remind the unhappy love story which accompanied the birth of the Castle. The Castle is surrounded by a beautiful park, with some tropical trees and plants as well as local ones. You must even see the Palazzo della Borsa vecchia - the old stock exchange - a true neoclassical building, erected by the merchant classes at the end of the eighteenth century. You must see Palazzo Carciotti, the first and most original example of neoclassical style in Trieste. You must see Palazzo Gopceovich, which stands out for its decoration with two-tone tiles and for the elegance of its windows. This place is also the proud of triestine serb community. You must see the Caffè San Marco, which was shaped in a liberty style. It was, since its very beginning, the favourite meeting place for intellectuals and university students, who came here for the exquisite Sachertorte. You must see the Pasticceria Pirona, an historical patisserie shaped in a liberty style, where it is possible to eat tasteful cakes of austrian origins like the krapfen, the strudel (strucolo de pomi in local dialect), the pinza triestina, the putizza, the presnitz. It was even the place where James Joyce used to get a morning coffee. You must go to the Pasticceria la Bomboniera, a place where you can eat cakes of hungarian origins like the dobos torte and the rigojanci.

Anyway, don't forget to take the tram of Opicina to go to the karst plateau.

### **Additional tips about what to visit in Trieste.**



As you probably already know, Trieste has a lot of interesting things to see and is a place where you can go to relax as well as to learn something more about history or arts. You are even free to look for the local nightlife, if you like it. If you are shopping oriented, you have many places to go and invest your money, as well as good restaurants to go and eat. But, now, we just want to advice you about some places you can easily reach from the Casa Vacanze. For instance, you can take the funicular "the Tram of Opicina" and arrive at the obelisk in Opicina. From there you can enjoy the stunning panorama just walking along the Napoleonica trail. Anyway, if you want to stay in town, you can discover one of the most special topics of Trieste. Therefore, you can explore the itinerary which touches local churches and temples that belong to those religions which have been co-existing here for centuries. Hence, starting from the Rive - the promenade on the seafront - you will pass the Greek-Orthodox church of San Nicolò; walking along the Ponterosso canal you will admire the buildings in the eclectic and neoclassical styles. This will bring you to the Serb-Orthodox church of San Spiridione, which cheek-by-jowel with the Catholic church of Sant'Antonio. Then, go along San Francesco street and stop at the Synagogue.



Behind the temple you can find the San Marco Cafè, an historical triestine cafè. So, take a coffee over there.

Let's go on. In town centre we can recommend you to visit the ancient Jewish ghetto, in which high quality shops are to be found, alongside busy second hand dealers and typical pubs. Of course, once again, we can recommend you to take your time to visit the Castle of Miramare, the

fascinating and romantic residence of Maximilian of the Habsburg's and his wife, the Princess Carlotta of the Belgians. After having visited the Castle, you can visit the park which surrounds it. And, once again, we can invite you to visit the residence of the baron Revoltella, which has been turned into a museum with the adjacent Modern Art Gallery .

### **Trieste, a place full of history.**



We could say that Trieste is a place where a successful and special type of melting-pot occurred. Effectively, in these areas historically bounding the Latin, Slav and German worlds, which suffered invasions, but also enjoyed trade. So, we can find many traces of the numerous people who have lived here. Trieste is a town which is the symbol of this cosmopolitan mixture, has made the most of its wealth by this topic. Actually, the meetings and exchanges of people of different origins and languages, has become the town's fortune. We can also say that Trieste is pretty different from the other Italian towns. Evidence of this heterogeneous character are the buildings with different architectural styles, from liberty to neoclassic, and churches dedicated to the various faiths, from the Serb-Orthodox to the Jewish Synagogue. Even the cuisine of Trieste is very interesting, having its roots in the fusion of the German, Slav, Hungarian, Viennese, Greek and Italian gastronomical traditions. The result of this food melting-pot of styles and tastes can guarantee a fascinating world that has to be discovered, taking you through the paths of gastronomic delights along the streets of the town centre. Triestine people usually say "*good company and good food*", as a sort of leitmotiv, a philosophy of life which is able to reflect the vast culinary offer for people with different tastes, preferences and budgets.

## Discovering the Venezia Giulia area.



In this article we wish to provide you some useful information about the surrounding of Trieste, called Venezia Giulia. It is a sort of itinerary suggestions you can follow when you are visiting this area.

**First day.** Visit Borgo Castello with its thirteenth century small church of Santo Spirito, and the Museum of the Great War of the Oslavia Sanctuary north of the town. Nearby the church visit the sixteenth century building of the Counts of Formentini, which is now the home of the Provincial Museums. Leaving this area going downhill we find the Duomo of Gorizia. Get to Piazza Vittoria and the most important Church of the town, Sant'Ignazio, with a facade characterized by the steeples in the shape of onions, which is typical of Central Europe's churches. If you go back up to the ancient via dei Signori (these days renamed as Via Carducci) you are in Piazza De Amicis Petzenstein, designed and built by Nicolò Pacassi. Strolling along the town centre, Corso Italia and Corso Verdi, will give you the opportunity to admire many villas in an eclectic style, provided with very well maintained private as well as public gardens. They are a reminder of the town's past, which was called "The Austrian Nice". Afterwards you can go to the Collio, one of the most famous vineyards in North-Eastern Italy, and drink some tasteful DOC local wines. You have even to visit the Military Sanctuary of Redipuglia which contains more than 100.000 dead during the first World War. Emanuele Filiberto di Savoia is engraved over there. Then visit the park of Remembrance, a memorial park on the hill of Sant'Elia to the Monte Sei Busi, which is an open-air museum with the typical scenario of a battlefield. Go and visit even the Austro-Hungarian cemetery in Fogliano. On the Monte San Michele there is a museum and you can find some pathways through the trenches. Also interesting is to visit the San Martino del Carso village referred to by the poet Ungaretti in his poems.



**Second day.** Go to Cividale, which was called Forum Julii during the Roman period. It is located on the banks of the Natisone river and has maintained its charm along the centuries. Cross the Ponte del Diavolo (the devil's bridge) and you meet the Oratorio di Santa Maria in Valle, known as Tempietto Longobardo (the small Longobard Temple) which is a masterpiece of fine medieval art. After that you can visit the town centre: don't forget to visit the Duomo. Now you move to Udine, where you have to visit the fifteenth century Castle, Piazza della Libertà, the Loggia del Lionello and the thirteenth century Duomo, all frescoed by the celebrated Gian Battista Tiepolo. Afterwards, go to Palmanova the "star shaped" town which owes its name to its perimeter walls in the shape of a star with nine tips. The access to the town is possible through the three monumental gates, made by the architect Vincenzo Scamozzi. After having visited this town you can go to Passariano and visit Villa Manin, residence of the last Doge of Venice, which is even an amazing example of a Villa Veneta, surrounded by a park embellished by small lakes, hills and statues.



**Third day.** You can go to Lipica, a green oasis on the former border between Italy and Slovenia. It is a famous place, 400 years these days, for its magnificent white horses and for the top-class riding school. Afterwards, go to Postojna, which is famous for its caves, certainly the most famous in Europe and one of the most spectacular, made up of about 8 kilometres of visitable galleries, where many wonderful rock formations can be seen. The caves and the adjoining environment typical of the karst offer the best possible example of the phenomenon of "karst rock formations" in all their variety. Then, a few kilometres away from the Caves of Postojna there's one of the most picturesque buildings of the area: the Castle of Predjama. It is very famous for its location. In fact, the castle hangs from a rock 123 metres high, four levels, in a way it is really simple in its design yet unrelenting and inflexible.



**Fourth day.** Now you can go to Trieste, the capital town of the region. You can start with a delightful panoramic tour of the town, strolling along the Rive, the promenade along the waterfront, then with an historical walk up the San Giusto Hill and visit the Cathedral. It is dedicated to the roman martyr Giusto. This dedication shows the triestine christian community started from the fifth century. The place preserves its astonishing Byzantine mosaics inside. After this, you can go down the Capitolino hill, reaching the Roman Theatre. Then, you can visit the Castle of Miramare, built in the white stone of Istria, which was the official residence of Archduke Maximilian of the Habsburgs and his wife, Carlotta of the Belgians. The castle is built on a promontory facing the sea and is surrounded by a park which is rich in rare plants and ancient trees. In the park you can even visit the marine reserve. After having visited it you can move to Duino and visit the Castle of Duino, residence of the Princes "von Thurn und Taxis" and its park, and walk along the Rilke trail.



**Fifth day.** You can visit Muggia by the ferryboat. There you have to visit the Cathedral, the roman Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta and the picturesque "calli" (narrow streets) of the venetian period. Muggia's history has a history completely different from that of Trieste, thanks to a vote of alliance with Venice, made in the XIII century. As a matter of facts, the old part of Muggia shows its venetian heritage. Then, go to former italian/slovenian border and visit Koper/Capodistria. This is the main town of the slovenian Istria. Very beautiful venetian loggia in front of the Cathedral, the Baptistery, the "calli" and the port. Then go to Piran, the birthplace of Giuseppe Tartini the great violinist. After that visit Portoroz/Portorose, a prestigious bathing and nautical resort, famous for its casinos, the salts and the thermal spas, and for Hrastovlje, a small church on a rock decorated with the extremely beautiful frescoes of the "Danse macabre".

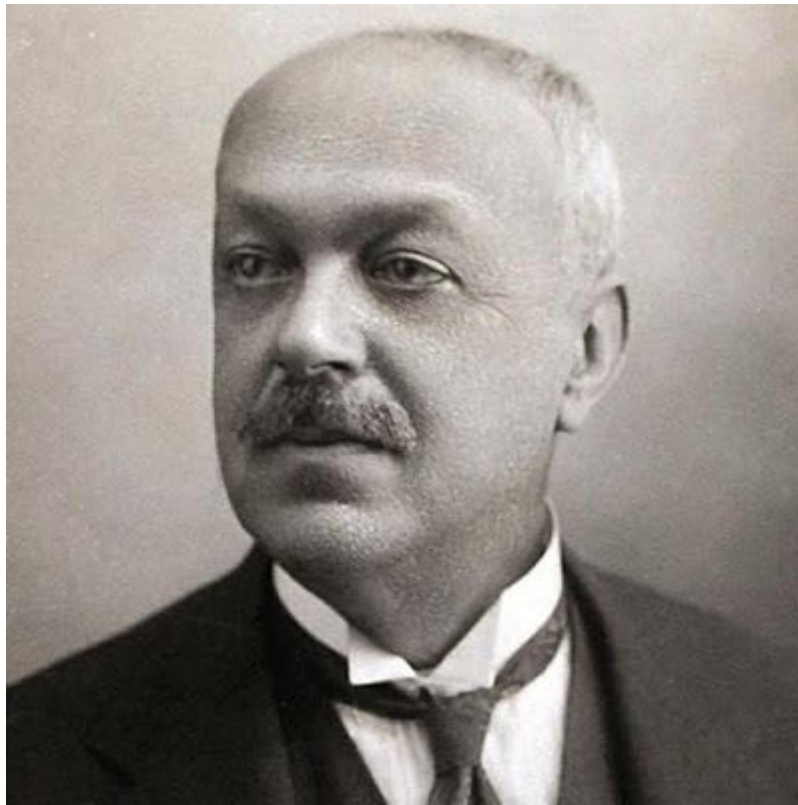
### **Trieste between science and nature.**





Trieste is a town composed by thousand of facets and colours, where you can find art, culture, nature and science. You will be surprised with the delightful countryside of the karst, by its multicultural traditions and about the scientific development which marks it out. From 1753, when the Astronomic Observatory was established, the town has been a symbol of technologic and scientific research, and it hosts several prestigious institutions internationally famous. Nevertheless, the area of the karst presents a unique landscape, full of charm and mystery. We can suggest you to visit the Museum of Natural History, which hosts several exhibits found on the triestine Carso. Visit also the Grotta Gigante - the giant cave - open to the public; the Carsiana botanical garden, the Planetarium and the Immaginario Scientifico - an interactive science centre, a museum which combines interactive activities as well as multimedia shows to encourage discovery and learning. The giant cave (Grotta Gigante) is the biggest tourist cave in the world, able to contain the whole Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome. At the Carsiana you can find hundreds of botanical species which are typically local, from the flora of the Illyrian-Mediterranean origin that can be found on the sea front, to the sub-alpine examples of the internal areas. For people who deeply love nature we suggest to visit the Val Rosandra Natural Reserve. What else? We can even recommend you to follow the itinerary of the "Strada del Vino terrano" - the terrano wine route, going up the Strada del Friuli - from where you can enjoy an amazing view all over the Trieste's Gulf. After arriving at the village of Prosecco, you can go on to Sales village, a fraction-village of Sgonico, from where, going upon a short path you can visit the ruins of Sales, consisting in a proto-historic fortification, before the Roman period. It is made by thick dry-stone walls which are to be found in several areas of the karst plateau. This was the *castellieri* culture. After that, you can go to the picturesque village of Samatorza, Ternova Piccola, San Pelagio and Prepotto. We suggest you to stop in a typical place to drink and eat, called *osmiza*, a seasonal farm restaurant serving the local food and wine products.

### **Walking around Trieste.**



This is a post, following others, that wants to suggest you what you can visit in our wonderful town, Trieste. Right in the morning you can reach and visit the Museo Sveviano, where the personal books, editions, critical texts and translations concerning this writer and novelist of Trieste, Italo Svevo, can be found. Afterwards, you can go to the Revoltella Museum, a very important art gallery founded in 1872 by Revoltella Baron who, in his will, left the building and his art collection to the town, together with a considerable fortune which allowed the collection to grow fast. Whether you are concerned about Trieste's museums and cultural heritage, you can visit the Morpurgo Museum. This is a wonderful example of a bourgeois mansion furnished with sumptuous splendor where the interiors, all original, represent different historical styles following the taste of the second half of the nineteenth century. Afterwards, you can drink a coffee and eat a tasty cake in a bar downtown, for example at the Illy bar, in Einaudi Street, beside Piazza della Borsa. After lunch you can visit the San Giusto Hill, which is an historical and archaeological landmark of great interest for the Roman ruins which are still visible in front of the ancient church dedicated to the Saint.

The following day you can visit the Castle of Duino, It is built on a cliff overlooking the Gulf of Trieste. This place is a stone's throw from the very famous trail named after the poet Rilke who, between 1911 and 1912, stayed at the Castle as a guest of the Princes of Thurn und Taxis. It was, indeed, while walking along this path that Rilke found the inspiration to write the verses of his "Elegie Duinesi".

The Castle is presented to the public as a noble, cheerful mansion, still inhabited by the current princes of Thurn und Taxis, who decided to open to the public both their park and large sections of the historic building. If you stroll along the seaside you can enjoy the enchanting landscape and have a dinner at a restaurant of your choice.

We want to say something more about James Joyce in order to celebrate his figure and character. James Joyce spent in Trieste nearly 16 years of a very creative and busy life. It has been here he wrote most of *Ulysses* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. On arrival, he left his young wife Nora Barnacle on a park bench opposite the station while he hunted for a place to stay. He instead got arrested along with some rowdy English sailors and had to be rescued from jail by a reluctant consul.

He carried on behaving just as unreliably for the next decade, unable to support his family without the help of his steady brother Stanislaus who settled in Trieste.

His family happiest period was spent living on the third floor at number 4 Via Bramante, near some elegant steps leading to the Basevi Gardens. Their young son and daughter attended the local school, where they picked up the harsh Triestine dialect. These days pedestrianised Via San Nicolò was where the Joyces lived at number 32 above the Berlitz School which employed Joyce. Next door is the Umberto Saba Antiquarian bookshop, little changed from the time that it was owned by Joyce's friend, the celebrated Triestine poet Umberto Saba.

### **Trieste and its theatres.**



A very interesting topic of Trieste is that on theatres. Trieste has one of the highest percentage of theatres to inhabitants in Italy. This town confirms its old and deeply rooted tradition theatre-going and, in particular, for opera and symphonic events. The Giuseppe Verdi theatre was built in 1801 and is a mixture, in its architectural style, between the Fenice theatre in Venice and the Scala of Milano. It is spectacular in its location and its magical mitteleuropean atmosphere of Piazza Unità d'Italia, just opposite the Grand Hotel Duchi d'Aosta, historically connected with the vibrant life of the Giuseppe Verdi theatre in the past two hundred years. By the same atmosphere, you can have a delicious "reinforced aperitif" at the Duchi place, as an "Avant-theatre" on the evening of your preferred show. You can even have a dinner at the Harry's Grill, on the Duchi's ground floor. Anyway, you cannot lack to visit the Schmidl Museum of music. It is a civic museum which documents the history of the theatre and music in town since 1700s. This museum contains a rich and vast collection of programmes, posters, musical instruments and signed manuscripts.

However, don't forget to visit the Politeama Rossetti theatre, which is one of the most important in Italy - both artistically and economically - and the most important Foundation in the town. The place was projected by Nicolò Bruno and is shaped in an eclectic style, which is very widespread in town. The British Council, the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities, use to perform its cultural events in this amazing theatre.

### **Trieste as a movie set.**



Trieste has a great geographical location. Because of that and the diversity of its natural backdrops it is perfect for films, TV dramas, documentaries and advertisements. It could be considered one of the "city of the cinema" by big production companies, both national and international. You can click on this [link](#) to see a movie listing that took on Trieste. Anyway, if you come to Trieste by car, you take the coastline road. Remember it has been the setting for many car advertisements, including those by Mercedes E Class and Vaneo, Toyota Avensis, and so on. Nearly ending the coastline road, you can stop at the Miramare Castle, we already wrote about. Its park was the location for the main scenes of the film "Soraya". Nevertheless, we can suggest you some itineraries that touch on all the religious sites of those townfolk who have been part of the religions which have lived together here for centuries. Starting from the Rive - the promenade along the waterfront - you will be in the same places where many films took place: fiction, documentaries like "Hannover" by Ferdinando Vicentini Orgnani, you will pass the Greek-Orthodox Church of San Nicolò. Walking along the Ponterosso Canal you will admire the buildings in eclectic and neoclassical styles. Then, you see the Serb-Orthodox Church of San Spiridione which sits cheek-by-jowel with the Catholic church of Sant'Antonio. Go on along via San Francesco, the Synagogue will be presenting you its wonderful facade. Here too one can find the backdrops of many films, such as "Amanti e Segreti" (lovers and secrets) by Gianni Lepre, "Un caso di coscienza 2" ( a case of consciousness 2 ) by Luigi Perelli, the videoclip "Eri bellissima" ( you were very beautiful ) by Ligabue, and the videoclip "Broken" by the singer Elisa. Last but not least, go to the Rilke trail being conscious that there was filmed the videoclip "Luce" of the singer Elisa.

### **Playing golf in Trieste.**



For people who love playing golf, in our town they have a very interesting chance. The Trieste Golf Club was the first of its kind in Friuli Venezia Giulia region. It was founded in 1954 on the same holes settled by the British and American Military Allied Administration immediately after the end of the Second World War, the course opened the year after. Today, the holes course offers a complete

experience. An experience that is perfect for players of every level. In fact, the Club pays great attention to young and very young players, organizing a rich and full range of training activities to practice golf.

### **Some additional tips to understand Trieste and its culture.**



We can start this brief cultural route around Trieste, quoting one of our best poets and intellectuals: Umberto Saba. From his poem "Trieste":

I traversed the entire town. Then I climbed a steep slope, crowded at first, deserted further up,  
closed by a low wall:

a nook where I sit alone; and it seems to me that where it ends  
the town ends too.

Trieste has a surly grace. If one likes it, it is like a rascal, harsh and voracious,  
with blue eyes and hands too big to offer a flower;  
like a love with jealousy. Up from this slope every church, any street  
I discover, whether it takes to the huddled beach,  
or to the hill where, onto the rocky top, a house, the last one, clings.  
All around circles all things a strange air, a tormented air,  
the native air.

My town that is in every of its part alive,  
has a nook made just for me and my life,  
pensive and reserved.

In these lines the poet is trying to capture the charm of the town where he's living. A charm that changes every season, turning Trieste into a destination which is always different, depending on when you come. Trieste has a charisma which has fascinated many writers and men of letters, since a long time ago.