TOURING TIPS, ITINERARIES AND DESTINATIONS FOR A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY
Friuli Venezia Giulia on two wheels: All the activities to discover the beauty of the region by bike.

Friuli Venezia Giulia to savor: All the region’s fine food and wine tasting tours and activities.

Friuli Venezia Giulia on the go: All the activities for a dynamic vacation filled with sports and adventure.

Friuli Venezia Giulia for the family: All the activities for a family-friendly vacation to discover all that the region has to offer.

Friuli Venezia Giulia with art: All the activities for exploring the region and its historical, artistic and cultural treasures.

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From the mountains of Tarvisio, close to the border with Austria and Slovenia, it takes little over an hour to reach the beaches of Lignano Sabbiadoro and Grado or the region’s chief town, Trieste. The journey crosses a fascinating land full of many different landscapes and exciting new experiences.
Beautiful and cultured, Trieste is Italy’s most cosmopolitan city. There are still echoes of the glorious Habsburg past that made it “the little Vienna on the sea”, and in its characteristic mixture of languages, peoples and religions one easily senses its combined Central European and Mediterranean souls. The heart of the city is the most beautiful and most symbolic of all its squares, Piazza Unità d’Italia. The buildings around it perfectly summarise Trieste’s history. However, the most spectacular side of the square is the one facing the sea, from which a pier, the Molo Audace, extends for over two hundred metres. From here, the view sweeps beyond Piazza Unità and on to the monumental palazzi and the Greek Orthodox Church of San Nicolò on the Canal Grande (Grand Canal), the...
centre of the neighbourhood built at the behest of Maria Theresa of Austria. The churches in this district testify to the harmonious coexistence of different religions. Trieste is also the city of coffee. A free port for coffee imports from the 18th century onwards, the port of Trieste is still the busiest in the Mediterranean. In Trieste, coffee rhymes with literature: the city has numerous beautiful literary cafés, time-honoured coffee houses with a retro charm that were once the haunt of great novelists such as James Joyce, Italo Svevo and Umberto Saba and are still the preferred watering-holes of writers and intellectuals. Taking a break in one of Trieste’s old cafés is an unmissable ritual for which you even have to learn some special jargon: here, an espresso is a “nero”, but what on earth is a “gocciato” or a “capo in b”? It’ll be fun finding that out! If you look away from Molo Audace along the coastline, you will see in the distance the white towers of Miramare Castle, once the residence of Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian of Austria and his wife, Charlotte of Belgium. A tour of the castle allows you to admire the original sumptuous furnishings in the reception rooms and private apartments filled with works of art, furniture and precious objets. The castle has very romantic grounds, which may also be visited. Near the castle is a WWF Marine Reserve, a protected area offering the chance of guided snorkelling and diving trips.

On the beach in Trieste?

So many to choose from: the 15 km of coastline stretching from Duino to the city are an uninterrupted sequence of rocks, inlets, small pebbly beaches and lonely coves. But in Trieste you can also go to the beach in the city, among the serviced areas, the most famous is La Lanterna, which the locals call “Pedocin”. It is the only beach in Europe which still keeps men and women strictly separated by a wall. A wall that, in a city which has always accepted and respected different languages, cultures, and religions, is a symbol of freedom and certainly not of bigotry. “At Pedocin’s you can do what you want without offending anyone,” they say in Trieste.
Duino Castle is set on a karst cliff overlooking the sea. It is a fascinating place, rich in history, with evocative vestiges of its long-time owners, the princes Thurn und Taxis. On the castle grounds is a tourist route which leads into a bunker that the German Kriegsmarine built in 1943 to defend the Sistiana base. The poet Reiner Maria Rilke was a long-time guest in the castle. His name was given to a spectacular panoramic path linking Duino to Sistiana; it is near the Riserva Naturale delle Falesie di Duino (Duino Cliffs Nature Reserve). Lastly, not far from the castle is the Villaggio del Pescatore (Fishing Village), a visitable paleontological site where the biggest, most complete Italian dinosaur was found. Dubbed Antonio, it is now on show in Trieste’s Museum of Natural History.
A few kilometres from Trieste is a typically Venetian fishing village. Muggia has a beautiful old centre, a maze of delightful narrow streets and squares, a magnificent town hall and a Gothic cathedral. Its Venetian past also emerges in the local dialect and traditions. Muggia’s celebrated carnival is held every year; colourful floats and thousands of participants in costume parade through the village streets, turning Muggia into a little Venice on the last stretch of Italy.

Beyond Trieste and the sea, an amazing landscape opens out: rocks, trails, fortified villages (castellieri), caves and dolines. This is the Karst, a rural area dotted with small, characteristic villages. The Karst is rugged but also gentle and welcoming. It offers spectacular walking or biking excursions on marked trails. You must not miss a ride on the famous Opicina tramway, which departs from Trieste and winds up to the heights of the Karst.

A small village on the Karst Plateau in the municipality of Sgonico provides access to the spectacular Grotta Gigante. This enormous cave has lighted paths and can be visited at any time of year. The Rosandra, the only surface watercourse of the Italian Karst, lends its name to a valley, Val Rosandra, a nature reserve of great botanical and faunal interest. It is a favourite destination for walkers, potholers have much to explore in the area’s many caves, and, for those with a head for heights, it is also a climbing area.
GRADO, THE ISLAND OF THE SUN

The Venetian charm of the old centre of Grado, an elegant seaside town, is seen in its narrow streets and little squares bordered by picturesque fishermen’s houses. Campo dei Patriarchi, a central square, is dominated by the Basilica di Santa Eufemia and the contiguous Basilica di Santa Maria delle Grazie, Grado’s oldest church. Grado is known as the island of the sun because its south-facing three kilometres of beaches are never in the shade, and thanks to the area’s microclimate it is always sunny. Grado was once part of the Austro-Hungarian empire and it was a favourite destination for the Habsburg aristocracy who visited the island from the 19th century onwards to partake in sea bathing and to enjoy the island’s excellent Sea Spa. Indeed, the spa is still known for its blend of health and beauty. It is the ideal place for regenerating and rejuvenating the mind and body.
Today, Grado is a well-organised seaside resort: excellent beaches offer a full range of leisure and play facilities for adults and children. The shallow water makes the Grado coast particularly family-friendly. An efficient cycle path network offers pleasant rides around the environs.

**LIGNANO SABBIA DORO, FROM HEMINGWAY TO NIGHTLIFE**

A long strip of golden beach (as much as 8 km) is the jewel in the crown of Lignano Sabbiadoro, one of Italy’s most renowned seaside resorts. It is well known for its varied entertainment and its summer-long nightlife. Lignano actually encompasses three spirits: Sabbiadoro, perfect for shopping and nightlife; Pineta, for a quiet holiday surrounded by greenery; and Riviera, a relaxing area with a luxuriant maritime-pine wood. Lignano looks out over the Marano lagoon, an unspoilt area of sandbanks, canals and little islands with the characteristic fisherman’s huts that even Ernest Hemingway fell in love with sixty years ago.

Lignano’s traditional, lively nightlife and its wide range of shops and fashionable boutiques make it a favourite destination for young people and shopaholics. Similarly, its hospitality facilities geared to families, well-organised beach entertainment and its calm sea with shallow waters also make Lignano the perfect family-holiday resort. Children and grown-ups will have lots of fun in the many theme parks with attractions for all tastes.
Numerous tourist boats depart from Grado, Lignano Sabbiadoro or Marano Lagunare for a close-up view of these areas' unspoilt environments. Cycling fans may choose the bike&boat formula for exploring the area on sea and land.

THE LAGOON AND NATURE RESERVES

The lagoon is a vast ecosystem between the plain and the sea, a world of tiny islands and canals to explore on a boat tour. Hire a boat or a kayak for a quiet exploration of this precious microcosm guarded by the casoni, the fishermen’s huts with their characteristic thatched roofs. This natural habitat has a very delicate balance and is protected by several nature reserves, each of which focuses on a specific aspect. Starting from the west, the first is the Riserva delle Foci dello Stella (Stella River Mouth Nature Reserve) which covers the entire delta of the Stella river; it can only be visited by boat but there is an efficient service of tourist motor vessels. Continuing on, there is the Riserva della Valle Canal Novo (Valle Canal Novo Nature Reserve), a very complex system composed of wetland and lagoon environments with varying salinity levels. The reserve adjoins Marano Lagunare, a small, picturesque fishing village where there is also the Reserve’s visitor centre. In the easternmost part of the Grado lagoon, the Riserva naturale della Valle Cavanata (Valle Cavanata Nature Reserve) can be reached from the village by scenic cycle paths. There are specific itineraries for watching different species of waterfowl in their natural habitat. On one of the Grado lagoon’s many little islands is the famous Marian Shrine of Barbana, popular with pilgrims and tourists alike. A regular ferry service to the island runs all year round.

Lastly, the Riserva Naturale Foce dell’Isonzo - Isola della Cona (Isonzo River Mouth/Cona Island Nature Reserve) is beyond the actual lagoon area. It provides the ideal habitat for many animal species and especially for migratory and non-migratory birds. The area’s integrity is guaranteed by continuous environmental work and by the animals themselves, like the Camargue horses that roam wild throughout the Reserve and help to contain the growth of the grasslands.
CITIES FOUND IN THE BASSA FRIULANA

Aquileia, roman forum
Cathedral of Aquileia
Aquileia, an ancient metropolis of the Roman Empire, still has an exceptionally important archaeological area, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. One can tour the remains of the Roman forum, the necropolis, private houses with mosaic floors and the imposing buildings of the ancient river port. The Basilica Santa Maria Assunta is unmissable; it has the largest mosaic floor of the Western Christian world, marking a fundamental phase in the history of European art. The basilican complex includes the octagonal baptistery and the Aula Sud, the southern hall, with another vast mosaic floor.

The Museo Archeologico Nazionale (National Archaeological Museum) has the richest collection of Roman archaeological finds in northern Italy. It conserves the precious treasures which Aquileia revealed to the world: engraved gems, skilfully-worked amber, richly-coloured glass, finely-chased gold, refined and imposing sculpture, mosaics. The incredibly magnificent legacy of a city that was one of the richest capitals of the Roman Empire.
PALMANOVA, A PERFECT STAR

Palmanova, is a fortified town which the Republic of Venice designed and built to defend its regional borders from foreign invasions. It is a masterpiece of military architecture and a model of the ideal Renaissance town. This unique town’s urban layout forms a nine-pointed star and has a central square where the three access roads (defended by monumental gateways) converge. Palmanova has been nominated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

TORVISCOSA, A COMPANY TOWN

A 20th-century town characterised by the fascist-style architecture of 1930s Italy, Torviscosa is also a company town because its founding was linked to a major Italian company, SNIA Viscosa. It still displays its original urban layout divided into functional zones: the work districts, the civic and public areas, the workers’ village, houses for the management and those for employees, and leisure facilities.

The last Doge’s Villa

Villa Manin in Passariano di Codroipo is a magnificent Venetian villa that was once the residence of the powerful family that gave it its name. Today it is an impressive exhibition centre for international events. It is also well-known because Napoleon Bonaparte stayed here for several months and here held the negotiations with Austria which concluded with the signing of the Treaty of Campoformio in 1797.

At the time Ludovico Manin, the last doge of Venice, was living in the villa. Connected to the villa and always open for visits, the old stables house a collection of period coaches. Villa Manin is surrounded by a great park (visits allowed) in the English landscape garden style. A few kilometres away, in Rivolta, is the base of the Frecce Tricolori (Tricolour Arrows), Italy’s legendary Air Force Aerobatic Patrol, which does daily training flights across the skies of FVG.
Pordenone and its surroundings

The painted city: this is how Pordenone is called because of the many frescoed buildings lining the main road through the town’s old centre. But the past is only in its look. Today, Pordenone is a welcoming town ready to face present and future challenges. Dynamism and creativity emerge in the town’s music, art and literature, and its many international events such as the **Pordenone legge** and **Dedica Festival** literature festivals, the **Giornate del Cinema Muto** (silent-film festival) and a journalistic award "Le Voci dell’Inchiesta", all of which contribute to a rich and original cultural reality. The heart of the city is full of cafés, cake shops and elegant boutiques, ideal for a stroll to take in some shopping with an art-driven aspect. In fact Pordenone was the birthplace of the great Renaissance painter Giovanni Antonio de Sacchis, better known as "Il Pordenone". His masterpieces may be admired in the Duomo di San Marco and in the lovely Civic Art Museum in Palazzo Ricchieri, not far from the spectacular Gothic loggia, which today houses the town hall. For nature lovers, a short
walk from the town centre leads to the Noncello river, an oasis of peace and quiet.

The many castles and small towns around Pordenone are true gems of art and beauty, an irresistible invitation to a journey through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Though art and history may be the main elements of the journey, there are also artisan traditions of great value and an exceptional natural environment such as the Magredi area at the convergence of the Cellina and Meduna rivers.

Sacile is a perfect combination of land and water, of narrow streets, bridges and aristocratic palazzi. The old centre is built on the two islands formed by the Livenza river, which divides and branches at this point. A stroll around this area reveals the elegant Venetian-style Renaissance architecture which led Sacile to be called the Garden of the Venetian Republic.

A pretty, elegant medieval village boasting a richly frescoed castle, San Vito al Tagliamento still has its medieval moat and three entrance towers. Other noteworthy sights include its elegant palazzi and the cathedral, which is a veritable art gallery of paintings and frescoes: the church of Santa Maria dei Battuti, a Friuli Renaissance jewel with splendid frescoes by Pomponio Amalteo; and the church of the Annunciata with a cycle of frescoes executed in the second half of the 14th century. Last but not least, do not miss the town’s delightful little Italian-style theatre, named after Giangiacomo Arrigoni, which reveals influences of the eighteenth-century Venetian art.

Not far from one another, as many as three localities appear on the list of Italy’s Loveliest Villages. Sesto al Reghena has a Benedictine abbey founded by the Longobards, Santa Maria in Sylvis, one of the most important monastic centres in the region. It was particularly powerful in the Early Middle Ages and the abbey developed ultimately to become a castle defended by towers and moats. Note the 13th-century frescoes.
**Pier Paolo Pasolini and Casarsa**

Pier Paolo Pasolini was one of the most eminent intellectuals of the 20th century. He lived for a long time in Casarsa della Delizia, his mother’s birthplace. Today, his mother’s home houses the Centro Studi PPP (PPP Studies Centre); it is the departure point for a journey to discover Pasolini and this land that was so dear to him. The precious Church of Santa Croce, where you will find the 1529 gravestone that inspired Pasolini to write the "I Turcs tal Friul", a drama in Friulian dialect. The nearby village of Versuta includes the lovely church of Sant’Antonio Abate with frescoes which Pasolini helped to save, and the little village of San Giovanni, featured in his drama, is where he made his first forays into politics. Lastly, a visit should be made to a place that attracts intellectuals, scholars and the poet’s admirers: Casarsa cemetery, where Pier Paolo Pasolini is buried along with other family members.

**Cordovado** and **Valvasone Arzene** are evocative mediaeval fortified complexes. Cordovado has many 12th- and 14th-century buildings, one of which stands in ancient grounds. In addition to noble residences, Valvasone also has a small 18th-century theatre and, in the parish church, the only organ of sixteenth-century Venetian art in Italy.

**Spilimbergo** is internationally known as the “town of mosaics”. It is the capital of the mosaic art in Friuli Venezia Giulia and its school is the only standard setter and experimentation centre of its kind in the world. The Mosaicists’ School of Friuli is a renowned institution and a pioneer as regards techniques and materials. However, Spilimbergo is also a treasure trove of art with its beautiful painted buildings and the magnificent cathedral “with seven eyes”, which houses authentic masterpieces such as a 16th-century organ with doors painted by Antonio De Sacchis, called "Il Pordone", and a powerful cycle of 14th-century frescoes.

The last locality on this journey is **Maniago**, which is known for...
its world-renowned knife-making industry, an artisan art of exceptional skill and mastery. The Museo dell’Arte Fabbrile e delle Coltellerie (Museum of the Blacksmithing Art and Knife-Making) offers an elegant display of the centuries-long history of the village’s artisan spirit. Over the last century its fame has even reached Hollywood: the swords wielded in Braveheart, Robin Hood and Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade were forged in Maniago!

A little further north are the Friulian Dolomites (a group of the Carnic Prealps) but, before that, do not miss the chance of seeing a rare example of European steppe. The magredi ("poor soils") are stony, gravelly areas which have the look of the steppe on the surface but are actually surprisingly rich in underground waters. This is therefore a unique natural environment with flora and fauna not found elsewhere. However, it also produces excellent Friuli Grave DOC wines.
UDINE AND THE HILLS OF FRIULI

Udine, road up to the castle
Udine, Piazza Libertà
Margherita Hack’s legacy: the Hummingbird Centre

The centre for the protection of hummingbirds was founded by Margherita Hack and opened in 2013. It is the only scientific institution of its kind in Europe. Its objective is to draw up a protocol for reintroducing the hummingbird to the environment. Hummingbirds pollinate 85% of the plants and trees on the American continent. Without them, plants could not reproduce and the forests of the Amazon rainforest and the Andean and Atlantic forests would cease to exist, causing apocalyptic effects on our planet. In addition to its major scientific role, the centre is also open to the public: a 900-square-metre area of tropical forest for a close-up view not only of hummingbirds but also of a pair of sloths, parrots and butterflies. www.centrocolibri.com
The area to the north of Udine is an ideal destination for the leisurely tourist. Beautiful scenery on the morainic hills, some of the loveliest villages of Italy, castles and fortified villas: from Rive d’Arcano to Brazzacco, Artegna to Colloredo di Montalbano, the land offers an enchanting sequence of ancient towers and splendid vistas over stretches of rolling hills. You can alternate trips by bicycle or on horseback, golf, fishing or birdwatching with cultural visits to museums of the region and local history, to frescoed churches and historical villas. The main town in this hilly area, San Daniele del Friuli is internationally renowned for its uniquely delicious ham, the fruit of a tradition spanning the millennia and a unique microclimate. The town is also a treasure trove of art and culture. Here is the Biblioteca Guarneriana, Friuli Venezia Giulia’s oldest library, with a collection of precious illuminated manuscripts including a 14th-century copy of the Divine Comedy and incunabula. In the church of Sant’Antonio Abate is the finest cycle of Renaissance frescoes in Friuli, the work of Pellegrino da San Daniele.

Not far from San Daniele, Ragogna Castle houses the Scriptorium Foroiuliense, one of the very few calligraphy schools in Italy, where you can learn the ancient art of elegant penmanship and how to write a parchment. The castle also commands one of the most breathtaking views in the area, a spectacular vista over the terminal moraine of the River Tagliamento.

**Storks, butterflies and griffons**

*From Udine it is only a short trip to Fagagna, one of Italy’s loveliest villages and well known because of the storks that nest in the Oasi dei Quadris nature reserve. The Casa delle farfalle is in Bordano. Housed in enormous glasshouses, this butterfly house has more than 400 species of butterflies from around the world.*

*Further north, in the municipalities of Forgaria and Trasaghis, is the Riserva Naturale Lago di Cornino: the Lake Cornino nature reserve is the home of magnificent griffons which can be seen nesting in the wild.*
In the heart of the region are two of its most important mediæval villages, Gemona del Friuli and Venzone. Both were destroyed by the tragic earthquake that struck the Friuli region on 6 May 1976, but today they are a symbol of a successful reconstruction campaign known worldwide as the “Friuli model”. In all the 137 municipalities affected by the earthquake there was exceptional popular participation and exemplary synergy generated among public agencies, local authorities and technical-scientific organisations.

Venzone, on the list of Italy’s loveliest villages, was reborn thanks to an unprecedented technical/cultural operation, which recreated its architectural identity through a stone-by-stone reconstruction of its buildings and imposing mediæval town walls.

In Gemona del Friuli, in addition to the reconstruction of the mediæval town centre, the Renaissance town hall and the Romanesque-Gothic cathedral, a new residential zone introduced innovative architectural languages.
Full of Early-Mediaeval works of art, Cividale del Friuli is a truly unmissable place to visit in Friuli Venezia Giulia. It conserves precious traces of its Longobard history and is the starting point on the UNESCO itinerary devoted to the heritage that this mysterious people left in Italy. A visit to the town must include at least the National Archaeological Museum, the Christian Museum, the extraordinary Tempietto Longobardo and the mysterious Celtic Hypogeeum. Yet even without these treasures Cividale would still be well worth a visit to see its most recent display: CIPS is a centre devoted to marionettes by the Cividale-born Vittorio Podrecca, the greatest Italian artist of marionette theatre. In this exhibition space, the only one of its kind in Europe, his creations are joined by puppets made by Maria Signorelli.

The Natisone Valleys open out not far from Cividale. This is a mysterious area hidden among the Julian Prealps: four narrow valleys still with a wild look, where rivers precipitously plunge through gorges with waterfalls and spectacular caves. One of these is the evocative Grotta di San Giovanni d’Antro. Its fortified entrance leads into a space with a chapel and a fine 18th-century wooden altar of the Slovenian school. Several hundred metres of the cave may be visited.

Not far away is Castelmon te with an ancient pilgrimage shrine, the Santuario della Beata Vergine. Nestled among the vineyards of Colli Orientali del Friuli zone, the Abba zia di Rosazzo, too, spans the millennia. The abbey church with a cloister surrounded by a panoramic terrace is the only remains of the mediaeval monastery. Around the perimeter of its walls are numerous rose gardens mainly planted with old roses, which flourish in this favourable habitat.

**The languages of Friuli Venezia Giulia**

**Friulano is the ancient language of the Patria del Friuli;** it has remained virtually unaltered through the centuries and since the 17th century is also a literary language (among modern writers, its most famous exponent was Pier Paolo Pasolini). Many people still speak it and the Council of Europe protects it as a minority language. In Friuli Venezia Giulia: there are as many as three minority languages. In addition to Friulano, Slovenian and German are also spoken, occasionally in distinctive local versions such as in Sauris or Resia. The presence of languages belonging to the three main European language families (Latin, Germanic and Slave) is the only occurrence of its kind in Europe, making this a special region even in terms of language and culture.
Gorizia is a small, pretty town whose Habsburg past is clear to see in its buildings and gardens, especially the splendid Viatori park. The town is also a symbol of 20th-century Europe’s troubled history. It belonged to the Austro-Hungarian empire before World War One and was then annexed to Italy in 1918. Gorizia was directly affected by the dramatic events that played out on Italy’s eastern border during the Fascist era and World War Two. At the end of the war the municipality lost part of its outlying districts to the-then Yugoslavia and it was divided by the so-called “Gorizia Wall”, built across Piazza Transalpina, which became one of the symbols of the political and ideological separation between western and eastern Europe in the Cold War. The border crossing was removed when Slovenia joined the European Union in 2004 and indeed today is a unifying element.

The town’s history may also be learnt in its museums, which are mainly in the castle and its surrounding district. Other places worthy of a visit are the aristocratic residence Palazzo Coronini Cronberg, Piazza Vittoria with the Neptune fountain, and the beautiful church of Sant’Ignazio.
Gorizia castle commands a sweeping panorama of the gentle hills of the Collio, a world-famous winemaking zone whose heart is Cormòns, a pretty little town with a Habsburg atmosphere. Small, characteristic villages such as Dolegna del Collio, San Floriano and Savogna d’Isonzo surround this uniquely beautiful area which may also be explored by scooter, a Vespa in an unmistakeable shade of yellow.

The Great War

Contemporaries called it the Great War, to emphasise the extension of the front line, the number of people involved, the variety of weapons used. The First World War was fought across all of northern Italy, but especially in Friuli Venezia Giulia. The region was at the time divided between Italy and the Austro-Hungarian empire. Long, fierce battles were fought on its soil and left many traces: trenches and fortifications on the land, weapons and items of everyday use now in numerous museums. The land still bears many visible traces of the war, making the Karst and various areas of Carnia and the Julian Alps veritable open-air history parks where one can learn more about World War I events and life in the trenches.
PRISTINE MOUTAINS

Tarvisio, Monte Lussari
They're all mountains, but they're all different. The alpine landscape of Friuli Venezia Giulia is a continuously changing variety of colours, languages and customs, but it maintains important common factors: a respect for the land, the genuine spirit of the people who live on it, a sustainable use of its resources. Through the winter, modern facilities and safe, never-crowded slopes are the jewels in the crowns of the regional ski areas: Piancavallo Dolomiti Friulane, Forni di Sopra and Sauris, Ra-vascletto Zoncolan, Tarvisio and Sella Nevea. In the summer the slopes become perfect trails for walking or mountain-biking.

**Nature parks**

Two nature parks and a number of reserves safeguard the unspoilt environment of Friuli Venezia Giulia’s mountains. The flora and fauna of the Dolomiti Friulane are protected by the Park of the same name, which covers an area of some 37,000 hectares (approx. 91,350 acres) with no human settlements and no hard-surfaced roads. Visitor centres and guest lodges provide an enjoyable visitor experience. Vice versa, the Parco delle Prealpi Giulie (Julian Prealps Park) includes the little villages of the Val Resia, an enclave where an ancient Slavic language is spoken. It is precisely this delicate balance of people and nature, created over the centuries, that gives the park one of its main special characteristics.

For their high number of wilderness areas, the Dolomites of Friuli are considered the most unspoilt group of the whole Dolomite chain. In the foothills, the piedmont environment is just waiting to be explored: rivers carve out deep valleys between spectacular rock faces where there are caves and emerald-green lakes such as Lake Barcis. Characteristic communities, like Poffabro or Frisanco, among Italy’s loveliest villages, offer food specialities worthy of PDO status and Slow Food Presidia, then you can have fun climbing the trees in Tree Village. Children and anyone else who doesn’t want to miss the spectacle of the Cellina gorge without getting too tired can board the little train that chugs its way through the greater part of the valley.

Inhabited through the millennia by a proud people, Carnia safeguards a unique cultural and religious heritage amongst its mountains. A heritage made up of legends and ancient rituals and represented by the Ancient Roman remains of Zuglio, and by tiny parish churches and mountain villages, each with unique characteristics of rural architecture. Many of the trades that for centuries provided a livelihood for the locals are still practised here: Sutrio is known for carpentry products, while Pesariis is a timepiece-manufacturing town and has a diffuse clock museum. Sauris is a linguistic island where an ancient German dialect is spoken; the village is famous for its smoked ham and craft beers. They marked for centuries the natural boundaries among the Latin, Germanic and Slavic worlds. Today, the Julian Alps still speak the languages of all these peoples; they are a land of friendship where people meet. Mount Lussari is a symbol of this; its shrine can quite rightly be defined European since it is a place of pilgrimage of the three populations. It can be reached on foot or by cableway and in both cases the climb offers spectacular views. The Tarvisio area is a nature paradise of massive peaks, wide valleys and pretty lakes such as those of Fusine. Not forgetting a millenary forest which still supplies the fine Norway spruce tonewood used to make famous violins. For centuries, the inhabitants of these valleys worked in the Cave del Pedril mine, which can now be toured by foot or on board a little electric train.
Albergo diffuso

Albergo diffuso is an original tourist hospitality model in the mountains, a locality-management system which offers visitors the opportunity to enjoy a relaxing holiday in characteristic villages. Guest accommodation is made up of independent lodgings in characteristic local houses that were renovated in accordance with traditional local construction methods. The various lodgings are coordinated through a single reception area.

The Vajont dam

Standing amidst the spectacular scenery of the Dolomiti Friulane, the Vajont dam testifies to Man’s technical brilliance and to his arrogance towards nature. The dam was built to exploit the Vajont river to supply electric power to the surrounding valleys. On the 9th October 1963 the water in the artificial lake caused a gigantic landslide that crashed down from Mount Toc into the reservoir.

The massive displacement wave destroyed the little towns of Erto, Casso and Longarone and caused thousands of deaths. The dam stayed intact.

Today, a visit to this towering, 261.60-metre concrete wall offers a stunning, terrifying scene that takes visitors’ breath away. Full of empty houses, the nearby village of Erto testifies to the enormity of the disaster.
Local roots and cuisine are inseparably tied in Friuli Venezia Giulia. The region’s extraordinary biodiversity derives from its exceptional geomorphological and naturalistic variedness. The same variety is seen in its cultural elements, from languages to traditions and food and wine. Indeed, perhaps the cuisine gives the most easily perceived idea of the heritage resulting from a centuries-long mingling of different peoples and cultures. In Friuli Venezia Giulia, Mediterranean products and flavours mix with those from the Balkans and Central Europe, not forgetting the simple, authentic dishes of folk cuisine. Products such as San Daniele cured ham or Montasio cheese, characteristic cakes like the gubana, Slow Food presidia, fine wines and spirits, and delicious dishes and culinary rituals speak of the region as nothing else can do. Your journey through taste may follow diverse itineraries, but your Taste Experience will always be unforgettable.
HOW TO GET

**BY CAR**
- Highway
  - A4 Torino - Trieste
  - A23 Palmanova - Udine - Tarvisio
  - A28 Portogruaro - Conegliano

**BY PLANE**
- Trieste Regional Airport
  - 40 km from Trieste and Udine
  - 15 km from Gorizia
  - 80 km from Pordenone
  - www.aeroporto.fvg.it

**BY TRAIN**
- www.trenitalia.it
  - Call Center 89.20.21
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