

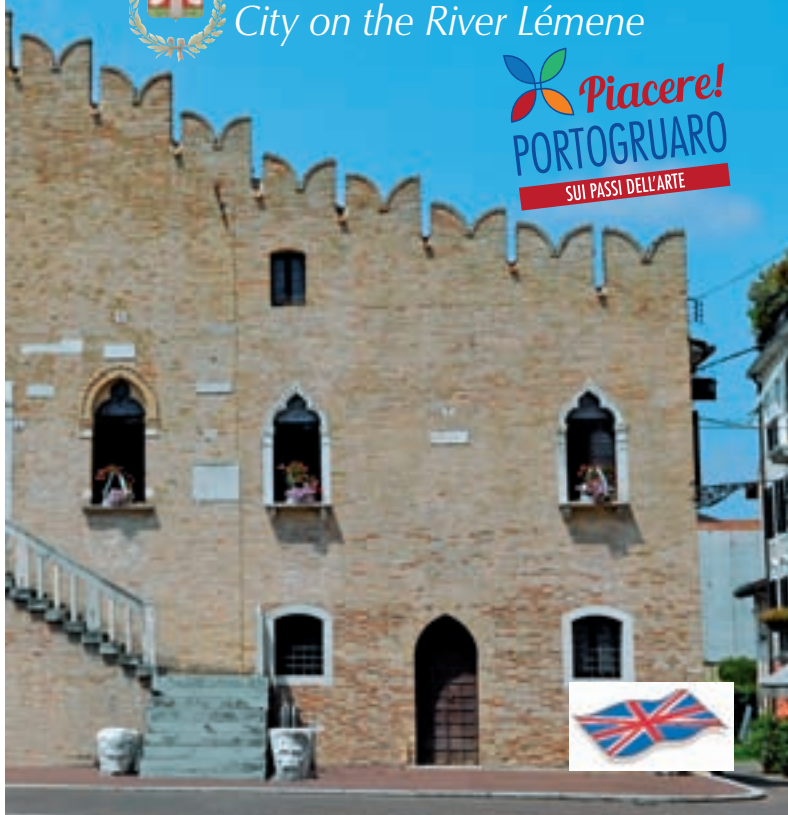


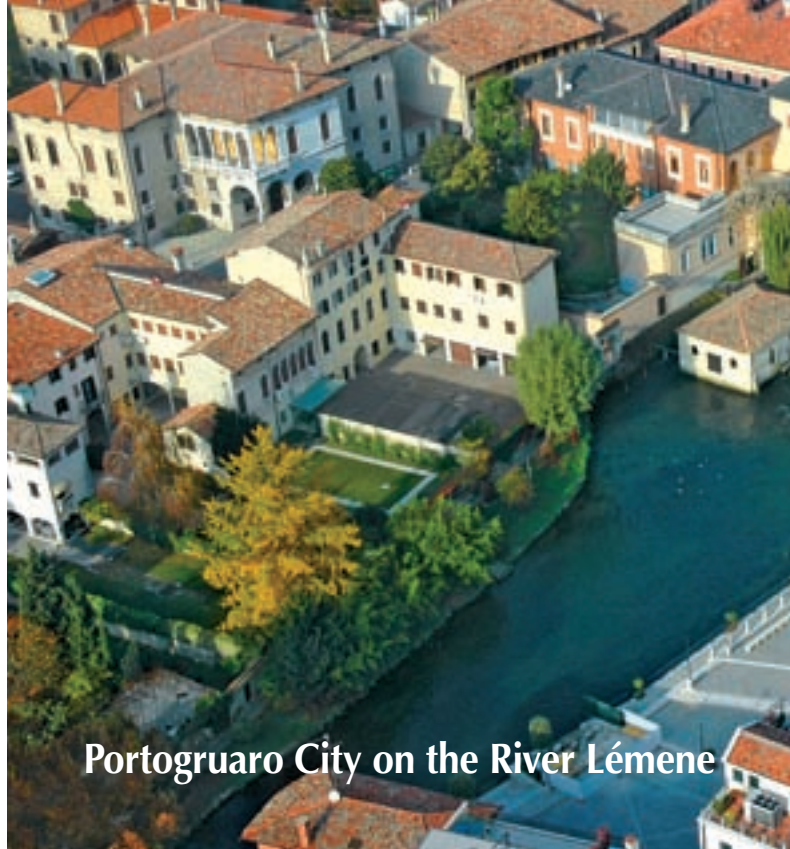


Portogruaro

City on the River Lémene

 **Piacere!**
PORTOGRUARO
SUI PASSI DELL'ARTE





Portogruaro City on the River Lémene

Portogruaro, main city of Eastern Veneto, has more than 25,000 inhabitants. It lies along the river Lémene, about halfway between Venice and Trieste, at about 20 km from Pordenone and 50 from Udine, and is a strategic road and railway communication junction.

City of medieval origin, it is head of a large district (about 100,000 inhabitants) that is mainly agricultural, commercial, and touristic: in fact here there are two of the most beautiful beaches of the Adriatic Sea, Caorle and Bibione, which during the summer season count millions of tourists. Eastern Veneto, where endless

stretches of corn alternate with ordered rows of vines that produce top quality typical wines, was able to preserve very interesting nature sites together with precious artistic works: in fact, Portogruaro and the entire territory are the evidence of interest of past centuries for the beauty. From the Roman and early Christian ruins of nearby Concordia to the Benedictine abbeys of Summaga and Sesto al Reghena, from the small frescoed churches of the nearby towns to the splendid renaissance palaces of Portogruaro, everything narrates an ancient civilisation that can still be felt.

The year the city was founded



is not known, even if the first known document dates back to 10 January 1140, when the bishop of Concordia, Gervino, stipulated a contract with some merchants, granting them a plot of land in order to construct a port and build houses and warehouses.

Until 1420 Portogruaro, equipped with its political and administrative autonomy (council, podestà, statutes) was part of the patriarchy of Aquileia. From 1420, when it became part of the Republic of Venice, Portogruaro lived its greatest splendour. The city was enlarged and embellished: the medieval access gates were renovated, stone

bridges were built, and the commercial middle class flaunted its well-being erecting magnificent palaces in gothic renaissance style, often frescoed with mythological themes.

At the fall of Venice in 1797, and following decline of the Napoleon, the city remained subject to Austria until 1866, when it became part of the Kingdom of Italy.

Today the city, faithful to its illustrious past, is an important school centre, and it is trying to valorise its strengths: culture, the strategic position as gate towards central-eastern Europe, and commercial vocation.



Aerial view of the historical centre.

1 Piazza della Repubblica.

The square is closed west by the city palace, the most significant example of public architecture. In gothic style, with visible bricks, it was built in two phases: the central body in the XIII century, the two sides at the beginning of the XVI century.

The façade is marked by three doors on the ground floor and six single-lancet windows on the main floor, which can be accessed through a stairway with an Istrian stone railing. The upper part is refined by the merlons with swallow-tailed forms, also called Ghibelline merlons, and small bell gable. In the centre of the square there is the World War I War Memorial, work by Gaetano Orsolini, in botticino marble from Brescia, inaugurated in 1928 by Crown prince Umberto di Savoia.



2 Pozzetto delle gru (Cranes Well).

This is one of the symbols of the city, sculpted by Giovanni Antonio Pilacorte, Lombard stonecutter, in 1494. The local sculptor Valentino Turchetto made the bronze cranes in 1928, to replace the ones removed by the Austro-Hungarians in 1918.

3 Pescheria. The small wooden chapel, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, dates back to the first half of the '600s, when the devotion for the image of the



Pescheria, 15 August celebrations.

Madonna del Carmine, which is inside the chapel, started to spread. Here, on August 15th mass is celebrated in the morning and in the evening, there is a feast that is very important for the people of Portogruaro with the arrival of boats from nearby Concordia.



4 I Mulini (The Mills). They are in one of the most fascinating parts of the city. The two mills date back to the XIII century, and were built at behest of the bishops of Concordia; they belonged to them until 1867. After various passages, they were bought by the Town in 1970 and destined as Galleria Comunale d'Arte contemporanea (Town Contemporary Art Gallery). North of the mills, there is the XVI century bridge of S. Andrea, a lion of St. Mark was replaced on its breakwater pillar, to replace the one destroyed by the





*Martiri della Libertà Street.
De Goetzen palace.*



Via Cavour, portico.

French in 1797, by FAI (Fondo Ambiente Italiano) in 2010.

5 Campanile (Bell-tower).

The bell-tower or Municipal tower dates back to the XII-XIII centuries. It is 59 m high and slants more than 1 m towards northeast, with an inclination of a few mm per year, probably because of a subsidence of the foundations. The Universi-



ty of Trento has been monitoring it since 2001 and a project for its safety containment.

6 Duomo di S. Andrea (S. Andrea Cathedral).

It is a building in neoclassical style, started in 1793 and consecrated on 4 August 1833; it stands in place of a previous church, probably of the XII century, which had an opposite orientation with the façade westward. The church has three naves and a semicircular apse, and many canvases of the Trento school, from the XVI to XVIII centuries, are kept in it. Noteworthy is the *Presentazione di Gesù al Tempio* (*Presentation of Jesus in the Temple*) by Giovanni Martini (1512-13) in the apse, the panel with the *Storie di S. Andrea* (*Stories of S. Andrea*) by Pomponio Amalteo (1546-47) in the choirs of the presbytery, and the *Crocifissione* (*Crucifix-*



*S. Andrea Cathedral, Giovanni Martini.
"Presentation of Jesus in the Temple".*



*Martiri della Libertà Street.
Moro palace.*

ion) by Palma il Giovane (late XVI century) above the right lateral door.

7 Via Martiri della Libertà (Martiri della Libertà Street).

Between via Martiri, from the cathedral, to S. Gottardo gate it is possible to admire important examples of gothic renaissance architecture of Portogruaro: Muschietti palace (no. 39), (Moro palace no. 35), Fratto palace (no. 42), Longo palace (no. 36), Muschietti house (no. 30), with classical columns and early Christian capitals (VI century) and rich wooden architrave, De Goetzen palace (no. 23), and Dal Moro palace (no. 1), enriched with panels and bas-reliefs also of Roman period. At the corner with via S. Pellico there is the headquarters of the Fondazione Musicale S. Cecilia (S. Cecilia Music Foundation) (adjacent to the "L. Russolo"



Town Theatre), heir of the Istituto Filarmonico (Philharmonic Institute) established in 1835, and that organises between August and September, the International Music Festival, celebrating its 37th edition in 2019.

8 Porta S. Gottardo (S. Gottardo Gate). One of the three remaining gates, evidence of the medieval city surrounded



S. Gottardo Gate.



S. Agnese Gate.

by walls. It dates back to the XII century, renovated in the mid XVI century. Beyond the gate the bridge dating back to 1523, with the coat of arms of the city.

9 Giardini dell'Abbazia (Abbey Gardens). Realised in 1928-31, dedicated to Ippolito Nievo, whose bust was made by Valentino Turchetto. In correspondence of S. Gottardo gate, there once was the gate of S. Nicolò, which was demolished in 1887.



10 Villa comunale. Surrounded by a large park the villa dates back to the mid XVI century, work by Guglielmo da Alzano called Bergamasco. Bought by the Town in 1973, it hosts the city offices and the rich "M. Gortani" Paleontological Museum. Next to the villa, Oratorio di S. Ignazio (S. Ignazio Oratory), erected in 1682 by Giulio Tasca.

11 Palazzo Marzotto. (Marzotto Palace). It is the only building of the city to have maintained its entirely frescoed façade (frescoes dating back to the XVI century with mythological scenes, by Veneto school). It was restored in 2012.

12 Museo Nazionale Concordiese. (Concordiese National Museum). The first of Veneto and one of the most ancient in Italy; it was built on initiative of Dario Bertolini and inaugu-



*S. Gottardo Bridge, the 1523
city coat of arms.*



S. Giovanni Gate.

rated in 1888. It has a basilican layout with three naves. It contains important evidences of roman and early Christian period coming especially from nearby Concordia. There is also a remarkable epigraphic and statues collection, as well as rich collections of coins, small bronzes, and glasses.

13 Palazzo Altan Venanzio.
(Altan Venanzio Palace).
Beautiful building of the XV

century built on a pre-existing one of the XIV century and frescoed (there are still some traces) by Giulio Quaglio in the XVII century. It has been hosting public offices since 1877 and since 2015, the city's cultural center - the Nicolò Bettoni Public Library. On its façade, two plaques commemorate Luigi Russolo (1885-1947), and Girolamo Venanzio (1791-1872).

On the ground floor is Casa





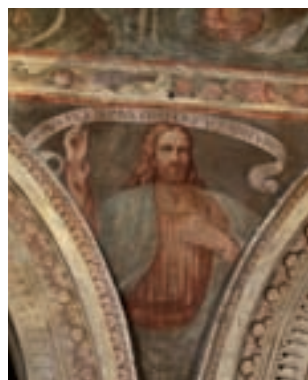
International Music Festival.



Marconi Boarding School, internal courtyard.

Russolo, a permanent exhibition of works by the futurist painter Luigi Russolo, who was born there.

14 Chiesa dei Santi Luigi e Cristoforo. (Church of the Saints Luigi and Cristoforo). It is the most ancient in the city; it was probably built before the XI century. The façade was renovated in the XVIII century. The fresco *“Madonna con Bambino tra i Santi Cristoforo*



e Giacomo” (Madonna with child between the Saints Cristoforo and Giacomo) by Pomponio Amalteo (1532), can be admired in its internal.

15 Collegio Marconi. (Marconi Boarding School). It was built in the early XVIII century as Seminary of the diocese of Concordia on a pre-existing Crociferi's convent and hospital. Its main characteristic is an imposing Neo-Doric colonnade.

16 Via Cavour. (Cavour Street). It is a quiet and elegant street with many Gothic-Renaissance buildings. Noteworthy are: Impallomeni Palace (No. 3); Dal Moro Palace (No. 7); Nadali House (No. 6) with frescoes along the covered walkway; Scarpa Bonazza Palaces (No. 10 - 12); the palace that once belonged



The Palace once belonging to Travaglini Marostica family.

Marzotto Palace, façade frescoes detail.

to the Travaglini Marostica family (No. 16); at the corner with Bovoloni lane, at the end of which there is a pedestrian bridge on the river Lémene, allows reaching the centre of the city; Perrero House (No. 15); and Rubbazzer Palace (No. 23).

17 Porta S. Agnese. (S. Agnese Gate). Dating back to the early XIII century, it was restored in the XVI century. It was bought by the town in 1987, and today it hosts, together with the adjacent building, the Museum of the City.

18 Porta S. Giovanni. (S. Giovanni Gate). Dating back to the XII century, restored in the XVI century as the other two, at the time of Venetian golden age. It was the main entrance of the city for people and goods coming from the nearby warehouse building. On the southern side there are traces

of lion of St. Mark sculpted in 1797.

19 Chiesa di S. Giovanni. (S. Giovanni Church). The church dates back to 1338 and it was once annexed to a convent held first by Dominican Friars and then by the Servite ones. The internal part, with a sole nave, is decorated along the entire upper band, by frescoes of the XVI century, renovated and integrated in the XX century. Noteworthy is the altarpiece by Leandro da Ponte (1557 – 1622) and a *Madonna con Bambino* (*Madonna with child*) (around 1430) in Istrian stone, by an unknown sculptor from Veneto, worshipped as “*Madonna del latte*” (*Madonna of milk*). In the homonymous hamlet, at the beginning of October, the Madonna del Rosario (*Madonna of the Rosary*) is celebrated.



S. Agnese Church, "Grief over the dead Christ".

20 Chiesa di S. Agnese. (S. Agnese Church). It dates back to the XIII – XIV centuries. It contains some paintings by Veneto school, 15 tomb slabs (2 in the church, 13 towards the sacristy), and the most interesting work the "*Compianto su Cristo morto*" (*Grief over the dead Christ*), a polychrome terracotta by an anonymous sculptor from Padua area (late XV century – early XVI century).

Anyone has the opportunity to visit other fantastic places of the gorgeous Portogruaro.

21 The first of these places is the **Abbazia di Summaga (Summaga Abbey).**

It was founded by the bishops of Concordia, probably in the X-XI centuries, who gave it their protection and privileges. The abbey was given by canon law to a regular and resident

abbot until 1431, when it passed to Antonio Panciera cardinal of Portogruaro. The most famous commendatory abbot was the Venetian Carlo Rezzonico, who in 1758 became pope with the name of Clemente XIII. Carlo Rezzonico, in 1740, deeply changed the church with the new neo-classical style façade and the demolition of some pillars. Important works of restoration were carried out on the complex in 1927 and 1928, uncovering the frescoes of the central apse. In the period between 1960 and 1970, the frescoes dating back to XV – XVI centuries were brought to light; the pillars were reconstructed, the arches demolished, the ancient windows reopened, etc. Important works were also carried out between 1983 and 1993, to give the original colours back to the central apse. The me-



Summaga, abbey.

dieval “*sacellum*” (small shrine), added to the church in the XII century with the construction of the bell tower, has at the base a draped design with monochrome figures, probably inspired by medieval bestiaries, considered one of the most complete and significant expressions of Romanesque wall painting (frescoes). The central apse decoration can be dated back to the early XIII century. The apse is divided into three sections. In the semi-dome there

is the “*Vergine con Bambino*” (Virgin with child) within “*mandorla*” (almond-shaped halo) supported by four angels; on the sides there are the symbolic representation of the four Evangelists. In the middle section, there are Christ and the twelve Apostles, represented frontally within false intercolumns. In the lower register, the parable of the “*Vergini sagge e delle vergini stolte*” (*Wise and Foolish Virgins*) is represented. Other frescoes (pillars) date back to the XIV





Concordia Sagittaria, cathedral.



Concordia Sagittaria, trichora martyrion.

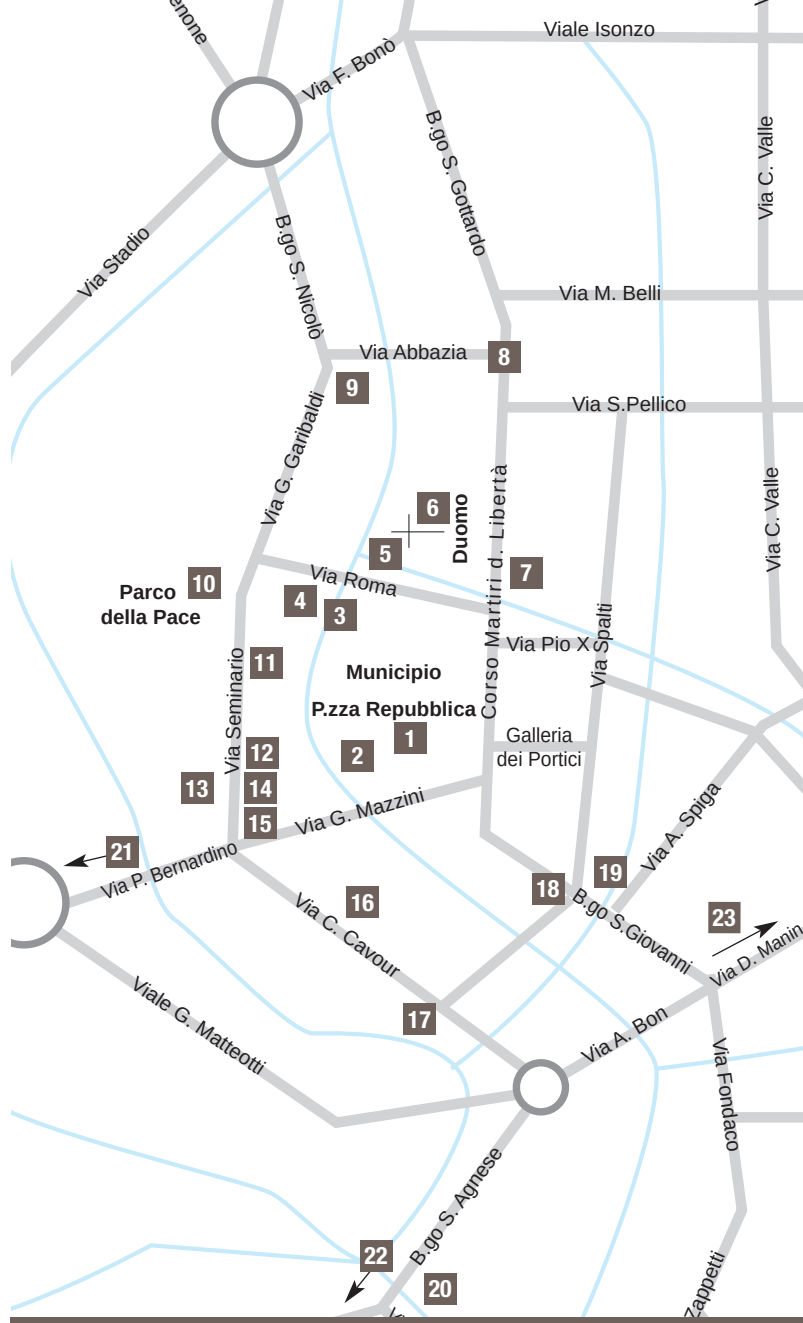
century, while those on the left wall with some saints (Isidoro, Floriano, Lucia, Benedetto, and Urbano) belong to the XV and XVI centuries. A very recent restoration (2011) has valorised the small left apse of the XIII century dedicated to S. Giovanni.

22 The second place is **Concordia Sagittaria**, connected to Portogruaro apart from the ordinary road system, also by a cycle lane along the river Lémene. It was once called *Iulia Concordia*, probably founded in 42 B.C., even if settlements dating back to the Neolithic period (6th millennium B.C.) were found within its territory.

It is located at the crossroads between the Postumia and Annia consular roads. The city developed and became one of the centres of diffusion of

Christianity with the consecration of the *Basilica Apostolorum* in 389 by Cromazio, bishop of Aquileia. Noteworthy are also the cathedral (X century, renovated in the XVI century), the excavations beside and under the cathedral, the magnificent Romanesque Baptistery with central layout and three apses, entirely frescoed with stories from the Bible and Saints, built at behest of bishop Regimpoto at the end of the XI century.

23 Anyone wishing to follow, at least in part, in Carlino's footsteps in the third chapter of *Le confessioni d'un Italiano* (*The Confessions of an Italian*), can do so by going as far as SPACE Mazzini di Lugugnana (Via Fausta 85): exhibition of art works owned by the city and the Pro Loco Association of Portogruaro



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