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FONDAZIONE
Cassa di Risparmio di Gorizia

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TRAILS OF PEACE ON THE CARSO PLATEAU OF THE GREAT WAR



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100
GRANDE GUERRA
LA REGIONE
GIULIA E VENEZIA
LA FRIULIA
LA CONOSCENZA

THE CARSO OF REDIPUGLIA, THE RIVER ISONZO AND GORIZIA ARE KNOWN, IN ITALY AND ALL OVER THE WORLD, AS THE PLACES WHERE GORY BATTLES WERE FOUGHT BY THE ITALIAN AND AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARMIES BETWEEN 1915 AND 1917. AFTER OVER NINETY YEARS, THE NATIONS AND PEOPLES WHO WERE AT WAR AT THAT TIME ARE NOW COMMITTED TO BUILDING THE COMMON HOUSE OF EUROPE. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, VISITING PLACES THAT ARE SYMBOLS OF THE WORLD WAR I CAN PROVIDE A BETTER INSIGHT INTO THE HISTORY AND TRAGIC DEVELOPMENTS OF AN EPOCH-MAKING EVENT, WHICH MARKED THE BEGINNING OF CONTEMPORARY AGE. NOT TO FORGET THE TIMES OF WAR, IN THE HOPE OF A FUTURE OF PEACE.



The REDIPUGLIA MEMORIAL (*Sacrario di Redipuglia*) (Castiglioni and Greppi, 1938) **A** an imposing white-stone stairway ascending to the Carso, holds the remains of 100,000 soldiers of the Third Army exhumed in the post-war period from the various cemeteries on the Carso front. The burial niches with the names of 40,000 fallen soldiers are situated at the head of each of its twenty-two steps. The remains of 60,000 unknown soldiers are enshrined in two common graves at the top of the stairway, where a chapel and a small museum can also be visited. At the base of the memorial is the crypt of Duke Emanuele Filiberto of Aosta, commander of the Third Army, together with the graves of generals Chinotto, Monti, Paolini, Prelli and Riccieri. Opposite the Redipuglia Memorial lies the Remembrance Park of Colle del Sant'Elia, created in the '60s to replace the previous Cemetery of the Undefeated of the Third Army (1923). About one kilometre away from the Redipuglia Memorial, along the main road to Udine, adjacent to the Civil Cemetery there is the Austro-Hungarian Military Cemetery **B** the burial place of 2,550 known and 12,000 unknown soldiers.

TRAILS

From Redipuglia the itinerary continues with an ascent of Mount Sei Busi **1** a 100-metre-high karst ridge fiercely fought over during the first two years of war, to visit the trenches and remains of the *Dolina dei 500* (or *Dolina dei Bersaglieri*) **2** at the time of the war, a military cemetery and a field hospital, today the setting for an interesting historic recall. Not far from here, visitors will find Doberdò and its lake, the Italian and Austro-Hungarian trenches of Mounts Deboli and Cosich **3** the ancient *castelliere* or hill fort **4** and the Visitors' Centre of Gradina with its panoramic view. **5**



Dolina dei Cinquecento - memorial tablet



Cerje

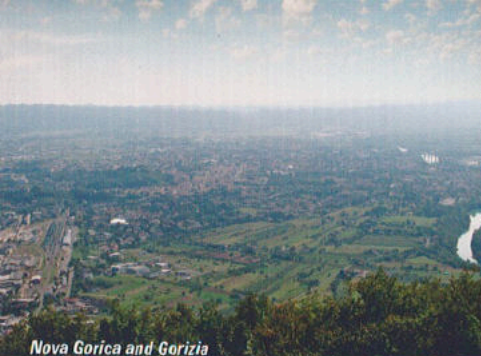
Mount San Michele and the village of San Martino del Carso **6** are closely tied to the history and war memory of Giuseppe Ungaretti, one of the greatest Italian poets of all times, who found his most authentic poetic inspiration in the trench. At the top of the mountain, the "Sacred Zone", fiercely disputed during the war: a small museum, memorial stones, guns, Italian and Austro-Hungarian trenches and caves **7** and a wonderful view of the Julian Alps, the Isonzo valley and the plain of Gorizia/Nova Gorica.

In the proximity to San Martino del Carso, an easy pathway leads to two memorial stones: *Cippo Brigata Sassari* **8** and *Cippo Corridoni* (Ellero, 1933) **9** not far from what remains of the notorious "Trincea delle Frasche" **10** a dreadful field of death for many Italian and Austro-Hungarian soldiers. The "G. Ungaretti" Historic Literary Park has been recently created within the estate of Tenuta Castelvechio. **11**

The World War I Theme Park of Monfalcone **12** lets visitors discover, with no difficulties, the trenches and the elevated positions east to the "City of Shipyards": the *Rocca, Quota Toti, Quota 121* of *Pietrarossa* with the Italian rear trenches of the "Joffre Line", in honour of the French general who visited them in February 1917. The narrow valley of Gorizia, which at the time of the war was a huge trench characterised by caves, shelters, hospitals and cemeteries of both armies, today is a road scattered with historical features and places of devotion, such as the Hungarian Chapel **13** and the remains of the Italian and Austro-Hungarian cemeteries. **14** Through the Devetachi border crossing point, without customs formalities or inspections, it is possible to reach Slovenia and visit the Kras plateau. Here, bloodshedding battles were fought in the summer of 1917, yielding no results but causing hundreds of thousands of casualties between the two armies. To commemorate those times, from Lokvica (Loquizza) to Mount Fajti an easy equipped path **15** which can be partially followed by car, leads to the Italian and Austro-Hungarian positions of the 10th and 11th Offensive on the Isonzo. Between monuments and trench remains, there is what is known

as the "Borojevič's Throne" **16** a stone seat where the commander of the Austrian troops on the Kras allegedly sat. In a scenic position, with a view spanning from the Adriatic sea to the Julian Alps and with the Merna Sanctuary and Gorizia/Nova Gorica immediately below, there stands the Moorish tower of the Slovenian People's Museum **17** now under completion.

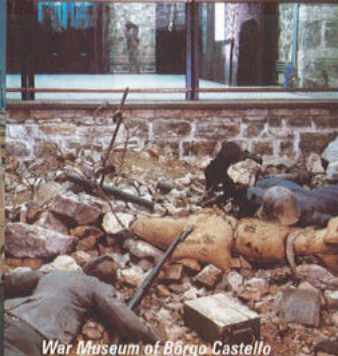
Dolina dei Cinquecento.



Nova Gorica and Gorizia



Transalpina Railway Station
of Nova Gorica



War Museum of Borgo Castello



Tower of Gorizia Castle

GORIZIA

Before the war, Gorizia was a multiethnic city of the Habsburg empire and had about 30,000 inhabitants. Italian, Friulian, Slovene, Croatian and German were the languages spoken here. As from the summer of 1914 young Gorizians left to fight in the war wanted by emperor Franz Joseph in Serbia, Galicia and the Balkans; other staunch Italian patriots deserted and fled to Italy to join the royal army. On 24th May 1915, with the outbreak of the Italian-Austrian conflict and the opening of the Isonzo front, Gorizia found itself on the front line with the armies fighting in the nearby Collio area and on the Carso plateau. After the offensives of the summer and autumn-winter of 1915, which ended up in fruitless bloodshed, in the first days of August 1916, during the 6th Offensive of the Isonzo, the Austro-Hungarians had to give in on Mounts Sabotino, Podgora and San Michele, the front collapsed and Gorizia was occupied by the Italian troops. Conquering the city was a great military victory for Italy, although it cost about 150,000 casualties (between dead, wounded, missing, captured and ill soldiers). The Austro-Hungarian losses approximately amounted to 100,000. The war, however, continued a few kilometres to the east and the Austrian bombs fell on Gorizia, which had become an advanced position of the Italian army behind the front. As a result of the Italian retreat to the river Piave and mount Grappa after the defeat at Caporetto, in November 1917 the Austro-Hungarians recovered possession of the city, which became Italian only after the end of the war. The conflict ended on 4th November 1918 with the Italian occupation of Trento and Trieste and the dissolution of the Habsburg empire.



Pietro Badoglio

A view of the Carso ridge from Gorizia Castle

Mount S. Michele

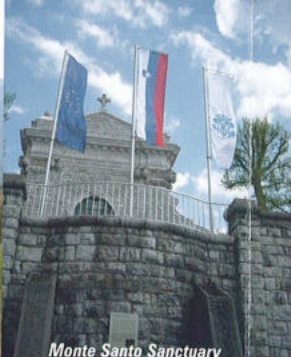
Armando Diaz



Ossuary of Oslavia



on Monte Santo



Monte Santo Sanctuary



on Sabotino



TRAILS

Disputed by two armies in World War I and divided by an unjust border at the end of World War II, Gorizia with its Italian and Slovenian surroundings is one vast "open-air museum" where yesterday's and today's history provides an opportunity for mutual knowledge and fruitful cross-border cooperation. In Piazza Transalpina, where the last "wall" in Europe stood until not long ago, there is a mosaic depicting the dissolution of the border. ¹ Innumerable landmarks of the city's war past can still be visited, such as an interesting Museum of the Great War in the ancient Borgo Castello ² hosting the Diaz Collection.

From Gorizia a road leads up to the Oslavia Memorial (*Sacrario di Oslavia*) (Venturi, 1938) ³ where a white stone tower contains the known and unknown remains of 57,000 Italian and about 600 Austro-Hungarian fallen soldiers. Nearby are the obelisks of Quota 172 (military cemetery) and Mount Calvario-Podgora (de Grada, 1920) ⁴ with the grave of war volunteer and Triestine writer Scipio Slataper in its proximity. ⁵

Opposite Oslavia, there stands Mount Sabotino ⁶ (Sabotin, 609 m), in Slovenia. It can be reached from Nova Gorica across the village of Solkan (Salcano) or, from the Italian side, on foot from San Mauro not far from Oslavia. High up above the Isonzo valley, in a very scenic position, a high-altitude trail leads to the remains of the tunnels and positions held by the Austro-Hungarian army and later by the Italian one, before and after the conquest of Gorizia. On the background is the Sanctuary of Monte Santo ⁷ first destroyed and then conquered by the Italian troops in the summer of 1917, at the cost of thousands of young lives.



Mount Fortin

