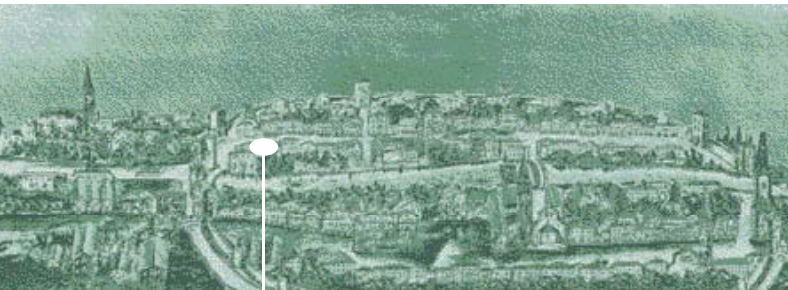


orientale Veneto

orientale Veneto



PROVINCIA
DI VENEZIA



apt AZIENDA DI PROMOZIONE
TURISTICA DELLA
PROVINCIA DI VENEZIA



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Piazza Brescia, 13 - tel 0421 370601 - fax 0421 370608 email info@aptjesoloeraclea.it

30020 **Eraclea**

Via Marinella, 56 - tel 0421 66134 r.a. - fax 0421 66 500 - email infoeraclea@aptjesoloeraclea.it

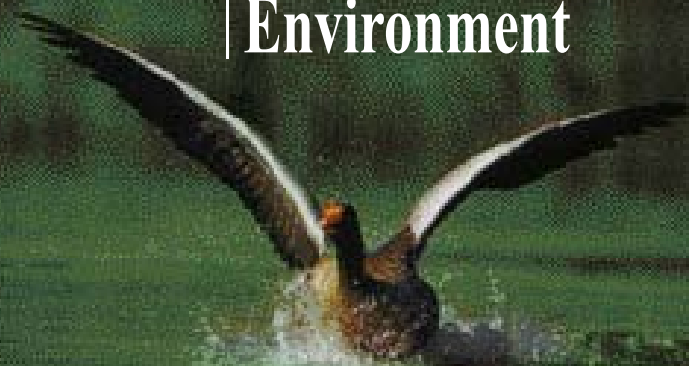
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Itineraries in Eastern Veneto

Environment





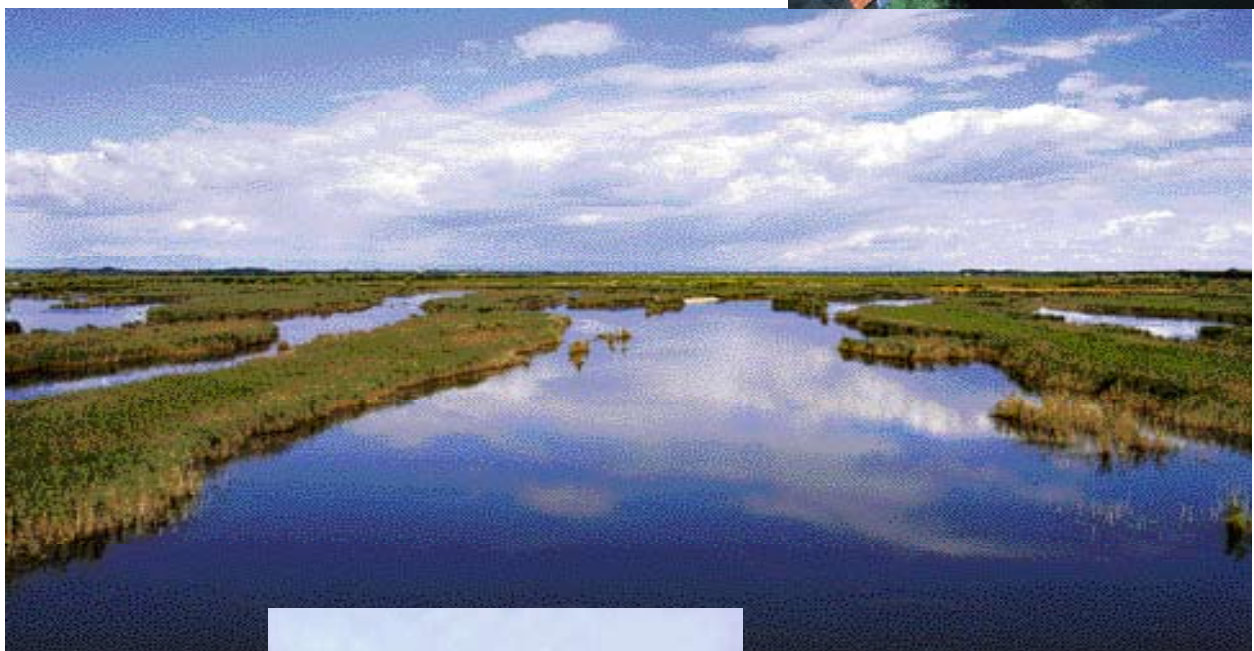
At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Eastern Veneto area underwent radical changes. Banks were built to curb water courses, lagoons and malaria-filled swamplands were reclaimed and woods covering vast areas were destroyed to make way for farmland. It is said that a large part of the woods in the Eastern Veneto are the remains of the Selva Lupanica and Gallicae Paludes mentioned by ancient authors.

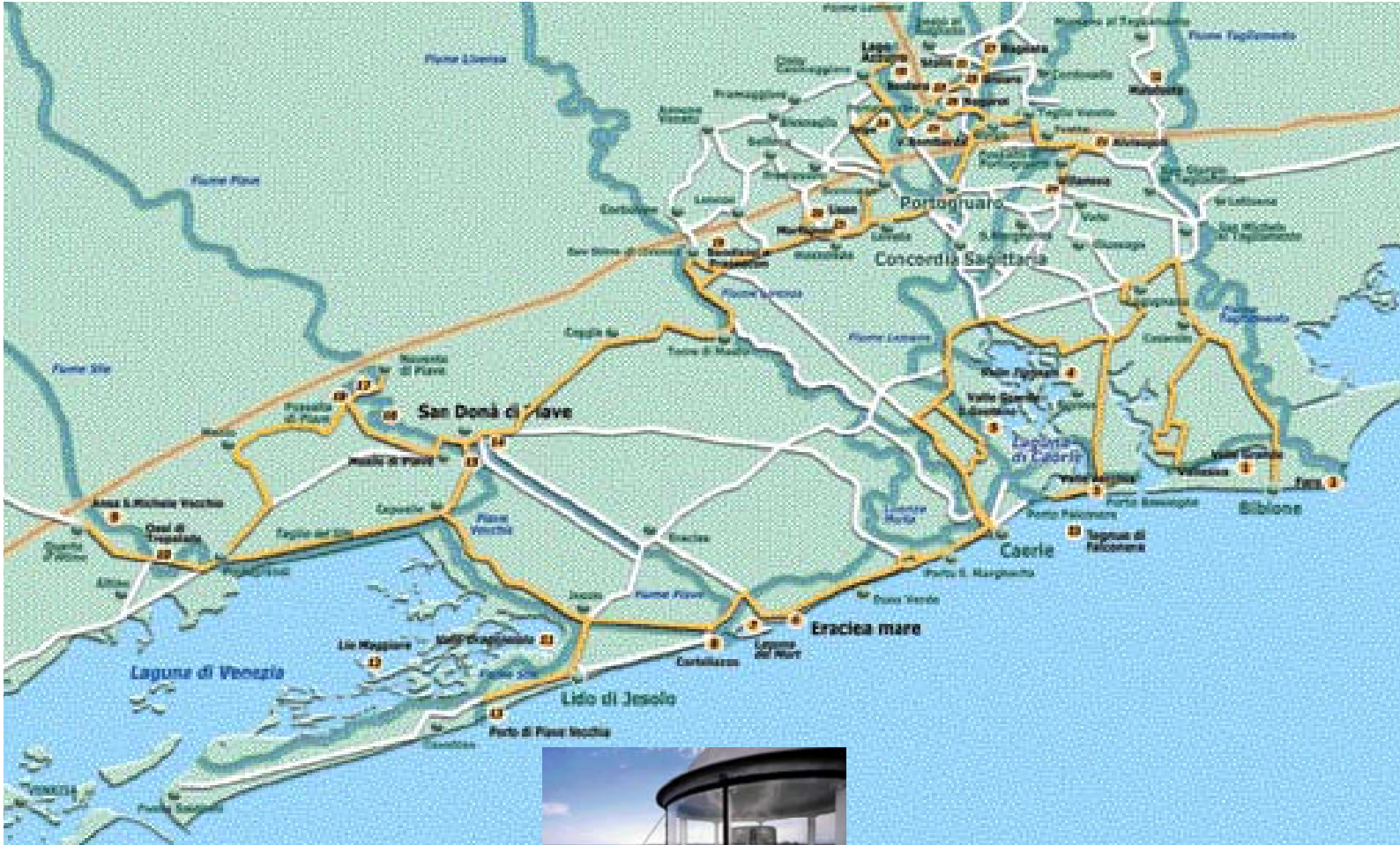
The rivers, canals, marshes and woods became a strategic resource for the Serenissima Republic of Venice over the centuries.

They were means of communication and trade and supplied timber for building and for the naval fleet. They were considered State property and were directly managed by experts from the Arsenale (naval dockyards).

This situation is widely documented in maps of the Imperial Royal Austrian State, which took possession of the territory after the ultimate fall of the Venetian Republic. With the damage done to woodland during the two World Wars, the need to make the land more productive and the arrival of increasingly powerful machines, the land developed into large, level areas that were drained to eliminate ditches and sluices and so lost the trees alongside the waterways. The coastal terrain between the inland area and the sea is in continual evolution, with gradual burial and progressive erosion taking place. If we take the coastland to the east as our starting point, we come to two areas of great environmental

importance behind the town of Bibione, which make up a significant valley area of 615 hectares including Val Grande and Vallesina (1). Unlike the nearby lagoon valleys, they are both carved out of the swamp delta at the mouth of the Tagliamento. In the eastern-most part of Bibione, we can visit an area characterised by a pine forest behind the strip of dunes, created





largely by re-forestation that began in the '30s and ended after the war. Its aim was to protect the reclaimed farmland from strong winds. The area that best illustrates this is the Lido dei Pini, in the lighthouse area (2) at the mouth of the Tagliamento, where we find the most important 'relict' of the territory.

Moving further south, we come to Valle Vecchia (3), an island of around 700 hectares situated between Caorle and Bibione. It was reclaimed in the '60s and is a Specially Protected Area and Important Community Site of great ecological interest.

For several years, a renaturalisation project has been going on that has up to now re-developed 20 km of country hedgerows, 170 hectares of woodland and 60 hectares of wetlands which, together with beaches untouched by tourism structures and enriched by a pine forest with a complex system of dunes, represents an important habitat for many plant and animal species.

The Caorle Lagoon extends to Valle Zignago (4) and touches the town of San Gaetano on the edge of the Valle Grande (5), famous for the period spent there by Ernest

Hemingway, who drew inspiration for many unforgettable pages of "Over the River and Into the Trees" from the area.

Travelling down the coast towards the southwest and leaving the eastern-most part of the Veneto, we come to the luxuriant Eraclea Mare pine forest (6), ideal for walks or bike rides along its many paths through the greenery to the Laguna del Mort (7).

This is an area of sea separated by free waters due to the deviation of the Piave that occurred on 5th



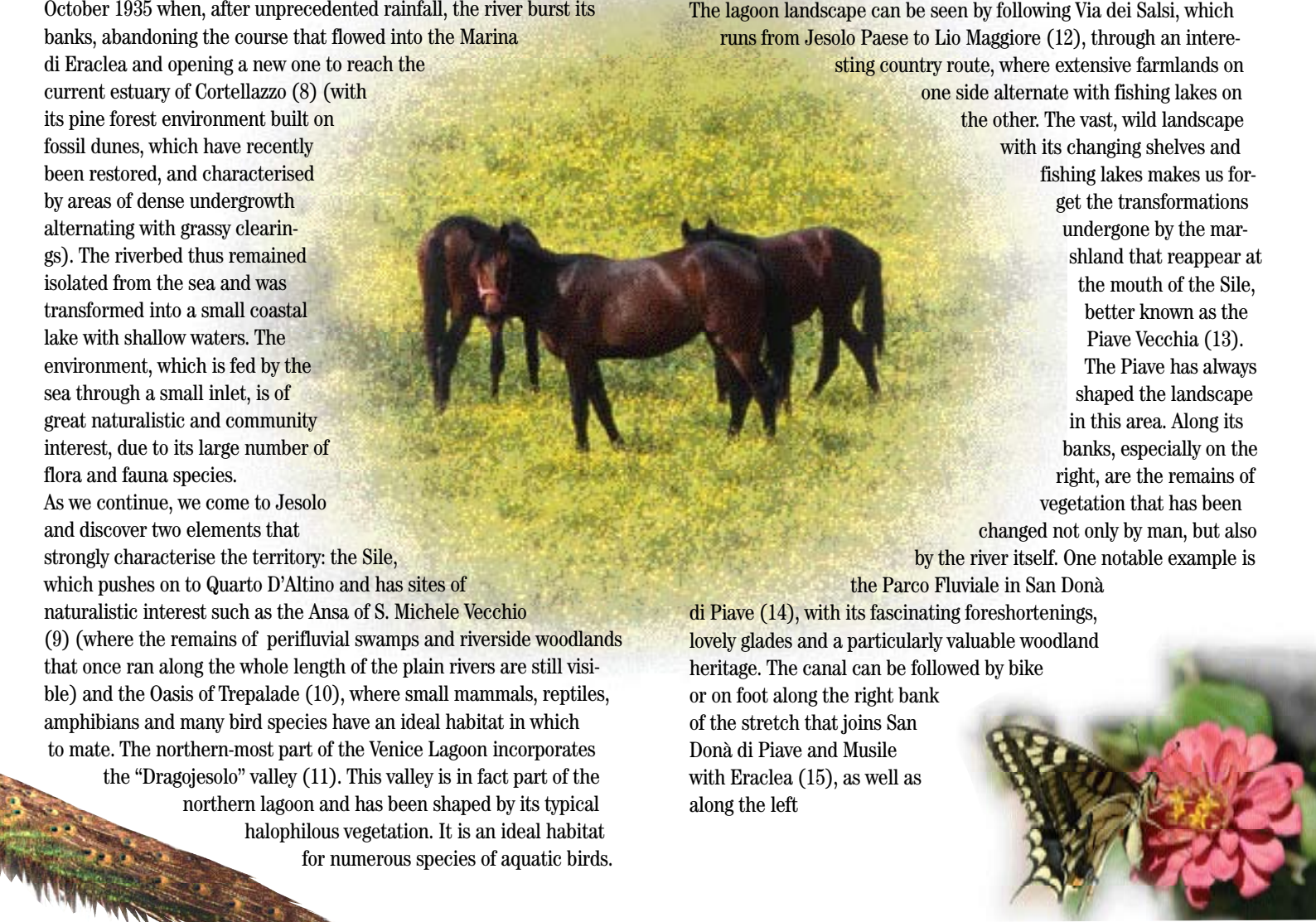


October 1935 when, after unprecedented rainfall, the river burst its banks, abandoning the course that flowed into the Marina di Eraclea and opening a new one to reach the current estuary of Cortellazzo (8) (with its pine forest environment built on fossil dunes, which have recently been restored, and characterised by areas of dense undergrowth alternating with grassy clearings). The riverbed thus remained isolated from the sea and was transformed into a small coastal lake with shallow waters. The environment, which is fed by the sea through a small inlet, is of great naturalistic and community interest, due to its large number of flora and fauna species.

As we continue, we come to Jesolo and discover two elements that strongly characterise the territory: the Sile, which pushes on to Quarto D'Altino and has sites of naturalistic interest such as the Ansa of S. Michele Vecchio (9) (where the remains of perfluvial swamps and riverside woodlands that once ran along the whole length of the plain rivers are still visible) and the Oasis of Trepalade (10), where small mammals, reptiles, amphibians and many bird species have an ideal habitat in which to mate. The northern-most part of the Venice Lagoon incorporates the "Dragojesolo" valley (11). This valley is in fact part of the northern lagoon and has been shaped by its typical halophilous vegetation. It is an ideal habitat for numerous species of aquatic birds.

The lagoon landscape can be seen by following Via dei Salsi, which runs from Jesolo Paese to Lio Maggiore (12), through an interesting country route, where extensive farmlands on one side alternate with fishing lakes on the other. The vast, wild landscape with its changing shelves and fishing lakes makes us forget the transformations undergone by the marshland that reappear at the mouth of the Sile, better known as the Piave Vecchia (13).

The Piave has always shaped the landscape in this area. Along its banks, especially on the right, are the remains of vegetation that has been changed not only by man, but also by the river itself. One notable example is the Parco Fluviale in San Donà di Piave (14), with its fascinating foreshortenings, lovely glades and a particularly valuable woodland heritage. The canal can be followed by bike or on foot along the right bank of the stretch that joins San Donà di Piave and Musile with Eraclea (15), as well as along the left

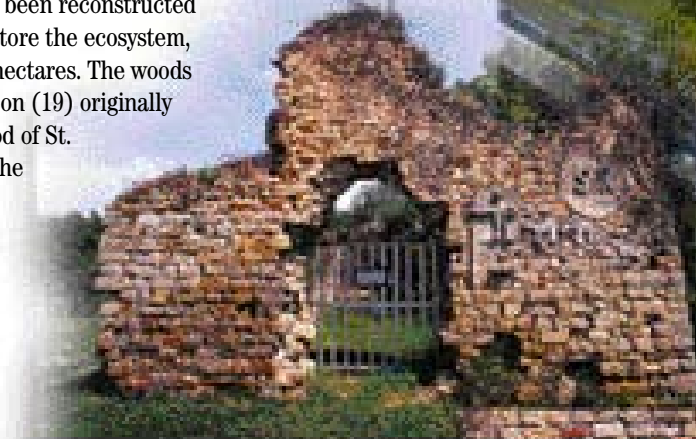


bank on the stretch between San Donà and Noventa (16). The latter has also developed a space destined for a river park inside the canal. Another beautiful walk



is that along the bank between Noventa and Fossalta, connected by a characteristic boat bridge (17). Near the bridge is a plaque (18) dedicated to Ernest Hemingway, who was injured here during the First World War. He returned to this area often after the war and was fascinated by the beauty of the landscape.

Continuing east, we come to important environmental areas in the San Stino di Livenza locality, where there are two woods with ancient origins that have been reconstructed as part of a project to restore the ecosystem, involving an area of 110 hectares. The woods of Bandiziol and Prassacon (19) originally descended from the “wood of St. Mark” and the “wood of the Grive, known as Comun”, which the Venetian Republic owned in this area. Inside the wood of Bandiziol is a small, wet area that reminds us what the landscape and territory once were, while at its centre is the Pra’ del



Roccolo - a testimony of the ancient technique of fowling used by the Greeks and Romans and handed down to us today.

If we continue our journey towards Portogruaro, we come to the wood of Lison (20) and the small Zacchi wood in the Martignon area (21), both of which are the relics of an ancient plain forest. At Portogruaro there is an extremely interesting landscape created by the Lemene and Reghena Rivers. It is a territory that is rich in waters, woodland and grassy areas, but also in mills that



mills of Sega (24), Gruaro (25), Nogarol (26) and Bagnara (27).

produced wealth and prosperity. Some water works have been restored, while others have disappeared; some can be visited, whilst others are abandoned: the most important are the Stalis mills (22), the Boldara mills (23) and the

Another suggestive element is the reconversion of gravel pits into lakes that suit the environmental context perfectly. The best example of this



can be seen in the hamlet of Giai with the Lago Azzurro (28).

The little wood of Villa Bombarda (29) is also perfectly placed in this piece of land that embraces Portogruaro, Cinto Caomaggiore and Gruaro.

Continuing towards Fossalta di Portogruaro, a visit to the monumental oak tree in the area of Villanova (30) is a must. From here we continue until we arrive at Villa Mocenigo in Alvisopoli (31), where there is a splendid park to visit inside the villa. It is the remains of a plain wood that was transformed by the Venetian nobleman Alvise Mocenigo into a fashionable garden, with exotic plants, canals, and paths bounded by

wooded hedgerows. The villa had been completely abandoned for several decades, which allowed several types of trees to flourish spontaneously and now the plant life is not much different from that of the typical wet woodlands of the Padana Plain.

Our itinerary ends on the border with the Friuli Venezia Giulia region, further north than the starting point of our journey, along the banks of the Tagliamento. Here too, as in the Piave region, the trees grow along the banks of the river in the canal area, starting at the marsh spring of Grava di Malafesta (32) (a marsh that is the only biotope in the



Province of Venice, where the reproductive area of wading birds and songbirds is visited both for food and for rest by migrating birds) and continuing on through San Giorgio, San Michele, San Filippo and Cesarolo to Bevazzana. The landscape here is fairly uniform, while towards the sea it takes on the features of the lagoon valley area.



(33). The *tegnùe* are solid, natural sub-strata of different origins that characterise the upper Adriatic and are particularly numerous and spread around the sea area in front of our coastline.

These structures are very different in size and shape, and they can rise from a few centimetres off the seabed to 2 - 3 metres. They are extremely important islands of fauna, due to the presence of algae, coral,

fish and crustaceans that shelter in these formations, which are recognised as Biologically Protected Areas.

After this excursion through woods, lagoons and inland water, there is also the opportunity for scuba diving enthusiasts to visit “la *tegnùe*” in Falconera



