

Medicinal and aromatic plants in the area around the Ecomuseums of Trentino

**A guide to discovering truths,
traditions and trails**



Programme co-funded by the
EUROPEAN UNION



**SOUTH EAST
EUROPE**
Transnational Cooperation Programme



PROVINCIA AUTONOMA DI TRENTO





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A GUIDE TO DISCOVERING TRUTHS,
TRADITIONS AND TRAILS

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Progetto grafico e impaginazione: Artimedia – Trento

ISBN 978-88-7702-372-8

1ª edizione gennaio 2014

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PRESENTATION

The editorial initiative that I have the pleasure to present is the product of an intensive opera, comprising a multitude of people, such as technicians, experts, farmers, hoteliers, tourist operators and representatives of associations, municipal administrations, forestry commissions, local elders etc. who have all come together, bound by their passion for the multi-coloured world of medicinal plants and herbs of our beautiful territory, Trentino. The publication is a guide, featuring seven booklets, which will assist the reader in discovering the vast world of truths, traditions and trails connected with medicinal plants that are hidden around the areas of the seven Ecomuseums of Trentino, who have participated in this project. The work is a testimony to the willingness in giving a voice as well as a new opportunity to what, in Trentino, is not really considered a pastime, therefore, to create a new tourism based on direct experience involving knowledge of the environment, with the help of the local community, can only be beneficial.

The opportunity to embark on this path was provided for by the involvement of the Agricultural services, the office of Bio-products and the community project **“SY_CULTour – Synergy of culture and tourism: utilization of cultural potentials in less favoured rural regions”**, funded by the programme Interreg South East Europe. Following international guidelines the Province of Trento has fully engaged the network of the Ecomuseums, assigning them a pilot scheme *“From tradition to production: sustainable use of cultivated medicinal plants and spontaneous offers of rural tourism”*. Producers, restaurateurs, health-spa managers, hoteliers, environmentalists, associations and foundations, all cleverly put together by the network of the Ecomuseums, have cooperated with initiative and contributed in reaching a common goal. A consistent and intensive activity of local entertainment and research in the customs and traditions of the countryside, carried out in the last few years, has allowed for an effective and active participation by the Ecomuseums and the numerous associations connected with them.

The SY_CULTour project recognised a potential cultural development, associated with the knowledge of medicinal and aromatic

herbs, around which both agricultural and cultural tourism sectors expressed an interest. The vibrant territory the Ecomuseums possess, greatly appreciated, encourages a balanced development even in areas where there is less tourism. Improvement would strengthen, however, the identity of the population and would preserve their cultural heritage for a future generation.

The project has been integrated into the provincial administration policy aimed at encouraging the cooperation between the agricultural and tourism sectors and transferring this experience to the guidebooks, which show how the cultivation and harvest of medicinal plants provide ample possibilities. Adopting the provincial brand of TRENTINERBE has established a purpose in providing a guaranteed quality and integral production for the consumer.

The booklets offer the reader an interesting compendium of knowledge, not only geographical, but also cultural history and gourmet, relating to the seven areas of the Ecomuseums of Trentino. A ‘curious traveller’ could find specific information about the territory including hospitality, local producers, nature trails, specialities of the area and other things as a first step towards the creation of a true and proper ‘tourist package theme’. The experience acquired has made it possible to understand, through initiatives geared to tourism, that the call for responsibility, sustainability and ecology can create new job opportunities by opening up to tourism in the Spring and Autumn, as well as maintaining the local culture and its territory. Therefore, the Ecomuseums can play an important role in developing projects and initiatives, becoming the guardians of truths, traditions and biodiversity. I would like to thank all the people involved in this publication and hope the readers and visitors to Trentino will allow themselves to participate in the rediscovery of ancient truths bound to medicinal and aromatic herbs, a heritage of our community.

*Michele Dallapiccola,
Provincial minister - Agriculture, forestry,
marketing and tourism, hunting and fishing*



PRESENTATION





INTRODUCTION

SY_CULTour - SYNERGY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM: UTILIZATION OF CULTURAL POTENTIALS IN LESS FAVOURED RURAL REGION

The following publication has been made concerning a community project named **“SY_CULTour – Synergy of culture and tourism: utilization of cultural potentials in less favoured rural regions”** funded by the Interreg SEE programme (south eastern Europe) for three years (March 2011 - February 2014). The project has been coordinated by the Organic Production Office of PAT, which received this proposal thanks to a partnership with the research centre of the Slovenian Academy for Science and Arts and the Geographical Institute Anton Melik (ZRC SAZU), who have been studying wild areas, rural heritages and themes tied to regional development for years. The diversification of economical activities and the improvement of the quality of life in rural areas, which cover up to half of the communities' terrain

and represent almost 20% of the population, is one of the shared objectives of the European Union policies. The SY_CULTour project ties in with this context, where the goal lies in improving the management of these land assets in order to favour a balanced social-economical development in these rural areas, also strengthening cultural identity and preserving the tangible and intangible cultural heritage for future generations.

Six European countries have taken part in the project, including Slovenia, Serbia, Hungary, Greece, Bulgaria and Italy, each of which commissioned one or more “pilot areas” for a total of 11 in all. In Italy, the Autonomous Province of Trento and the Council of Montana Sirentina (in Abruzzo) are both collaborating on the project. The pilot scheme compiled by PAT consists of improving the cultural heritage

connected to the use of medicinal plants and is known as *“From tradition to production: sustainable use of cultivated medicinal plants and spontaneous offers of rural tourism”*. The seven Ecomuseums, that form the Trentino network, have been recognized by the local partners of the project and at the same time involve many operators, associations and current administrations within the territory. The pilot scheme is aimed at encouraging the cooperation between businesses that produce and transform medicinal plants, and tour operators. The people involved have established the realisation of trails and educational excursions regarding the harvest of wild plants and their use in various sectors (food, cosmetics, health etc.), engaging in the rediscovery of traditional cultural heritage of rural communities. The initiative foresees, in fact, the improvement of rural knowledge tied to the use of me-

dicinal herbs and the advancement of agricultural activities for the production and harvest of wild plants in the areas around Trentino. This sector has recently been recognised by the Province of Trento thanks to the creation of the TRENTINERBE brand, which defines productive disciplines and control systems for producers who adhere to it. The pilot scheme has developed much publicity aimed at the local population, involving stakeholders (administrators, cultural associations, tourist operators, restaurateurs...), in order to identify and propose some tourist packages connected to the theme of medicinal plants. The project also foresees the development of actions to advertise medicinal herbs and to define a common marketing strategy, as well as adequate instruments with a view of sustainable and ecological tourism. Integration between agriculture, tourism and craftsmanship represents a

A group of employees from the SY_CULTour project visits the Phytoalimurgic Garden of Legnaro (PD).

strategic element of this project, which can produce a lasting development tied to the improvement of rural culture connected to the use of cultivated and wild medicinal herbs.

THE PILOT SCHEME

The project comprises of seven pilot schemes, established by each one of the Ecomuseums in Trentino and entitled: “*Like the Sun, like the Grass*” (Vanoi Ecomuseum); “*The botanical garden of Tesino: using wild plants in a traditional way*” (Tesino Ecomuseum); “*Rediscovering the use of medicinal plants in a traditional way*” (Lagorai Ecomuseum); “*L’Orto in Villa*” – *The kitchen garden* (Argentario Ecomuseum); “*Herbs to live, herbs of life*” (Giudicaria Ecomuseum); “*Kitchen garden remedies. Experimental and educational cultivation of medicinal plants in Valle del Chiese*” (Valle del Chiese Ecomuseum); “*The Peasant garden in Val di Pejo*” (Val di Peio Ecomuseum). Furthermore, some important themes have been identified, which have combined the Ecomuseums in a common goal:

- a future for our past: activities of collecting and listening to truths handed down by the community;

- the creation of botanical gardens;
- establishing trails and organizing excursions;
- a plan for educational routes;
- the production of plants with the aim to display and promote;
- the small supply chain.

Conforming to the European Commission’s advice, which promotes the use of managerial methods in line with European designs, even the PAT has adopted this type of approach. Thanks to the collaboration of an expert, the project team have made sure that events and meetings would become not only moments to share information, but also interesting opportunities to analyse cultural and social-economical contexts of the community. Exchanging ideas and sharing experiences linked to each pilot scheme have been beneficial to the collaboration even in the case of common promotional initiatives and identifying tourist trails connected with medicinal herbs. In this context we can promote this particular tourist guide, which is based on the trails dedicated to medicinal plants, particular to each of the seven Ecomuseums of Trentino that are involved in the SY_CULTour project.



A wild carrot plant shown to a group of employees from the SY_CULTour project.



TRENTINO AND ITS HERBS

THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF THE ALPS HOSTS AN EXTRAORDINARY RICHNESS IN FLORA, WITH A WIDE VARIETY AND ECOLOGICAL DISTRIBUTION OF SPECIES THAT ARE RARELY FOUND ELSEWHERE

If we speak of rich flora, Trentino is possibly one of the most representative areas, considering the great diversity that distinguishes the geological substratum, the altitude profile and climate change. In such a short distance we pass from the sub-Mediterranean flora of Lake Garda and the Valle dei Laghi to the arctic habitats of the ice caps in Adamello-Preanella and Cevedale. To the east of the Adige Valley the geological substratum varies from the chalky plateaus to the porphyry stones of Lagorai and to the eastern side of the Trentino Dolomites. Over time some locations have become a memorial to the importance of herbs for human health, thanks to studies begun in the 1500s. Mount Baldo, for example, hosts 43% of the entire alpine flora, of which over 1900 species of vascular

plants have been discovered, some of which are endemic and it is a popular destination, particularly during the flowering season, for academics and enthusiasts from around the world. Thanks to this wealth, a revival of cultivating medicinal and aromatic plants has arisen and now important annual festivals like "Spicy Baldo" take place. Many other locations in Trentino are known for their rich flora, like the Alps of Ledro or Mount Lefre in Valsugana, while the area of Viote in Mount Bondone (Trento) offers the opportunity to see the very first alpine botanical garden established in Italy, managed by MUSE (the Science Museum of Trento). The extraordinary variety of herbs and flowers that grow in Trentino have always stimulated a need to study and experiment whether that be for health or for nutritional purposes.

Since prehistoric times, the first hunters of the late Palaeolithic age, who ventured out among the mountains and valleys after the last Ice age (about 13000 years ago), experimented with herbs, berries and mixtures, passing on the knowledge as a result. The elders of that time were shamans or wise men and women, later transformed into the mythology of *Homo* or *Dona Salvadega*, *Gambinei*, *Salvanei*, *Anguane* (wild, savage or primitive people) or even demonized like witches. Folklore, however, has handed down most of this knowledge, which later was supported by academic studies of medicinal plants and the documentation of herbs of historical and natural importance. Monks were also herbalists. They cultivated herbs in their "Peasant gardens" within the walls of their monasteries and they made products to cure many ailments. Among these scholars was Pietro Andrea

Mattioli (1501-1578), a doctor from Siena, who was a guest of Prince-Bishop Bernardo Clesio of Trento, others were Francesco Facchini (1788-1852), Agostino Perini (1802-1878), Carlo Perini (1817-1888), Francesco Ambrosi (1821-1897), Don Pietro Porta of Valvestino, (1832-1923), Adele Boschi of Volano, (1855-1957), Dr. Enrico Gelmi (1855-1901), Angelo Folletto of Ledro, (1872-1966), Dr. Giuseppe Dallafior (1884-1967), Father Atanasio Cristofori da



At the top, medicinal plants: *Halleborus niger* and *Calthapalustris*. Above, saints Cosma and Damiano protector of herbalists (print of Tesino-Mariano Avanzo collection).

Grauno (1885-1961), Luigi Pancheri of Cles, (1888-1962), Alessandro Negri of Tres, (1896-1967), Eugenio Piechenstein of Romeno, (1930-1976). With the advancement of knowledge and progress in technology, many pharmacists have specialised in the preparation of herbs and developed industries assigned to transforming them into noteworthy liqueurs or other traditional preparations, like the typical sweets of Trentino known as “zirele”. Today, thanks to the work of the Ecomuseums, which have contributed to the recovery of truths and traditional methods, as well as the Autonomous Province di Trento, which has provided many professional courses on the subject and has created the TRENTINERBE brand, which assists in regenerating the cultivation of medicinal varieties, such as aromatic and edible, along with the growing interest of customers towards these products. The term “medicinal plants” comes from the Latin “*officina*”, an ancient workshop where herbs were prepared and their active ingredients extracted, the so called “drugs”, under the form of essential oils, tinctures, ointments, mixtures for teas or juices. Nowadays, the term “medicinal” refers to a combination of varieties, herbal, aromatic, wild, in the interest of nutritional purposes. Most notable among these are the early Spring variety, that allow for the addition of healthy greens to our diet. They are, generally, available before the cultivated types (obviously, we must pay attention to the appropriate seasons of these products!). The ancient customs in



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harvesting these wild varieties is regulated by law, which will be explained in the final part of this manual. The cultivation, harvest and commercialisation of medicinal plants are regulated by a decree of the President of the Province n° 41 - 148 dated 24/9/2008 (implemented by the provincial law of 28th March 2003, n° 4). These laws affect the production, the first transformation of the product and the retailing of medicinal plants produced in Trentino, as well as safeguarding local productions through strict control coordinated by the Autonomous Province of Trento. Farmers, in this field of work, must have attended specific training courses in order to qualify, so as to guarantee a standard of production and a quality as well as a salutary aspect of the product.

At the top, the cornflower.



THE CURRENT SITUATION IN TRENTINO

As things go there are 70 farms in the area of which about 10 cultivate and harvest medicinal and wild varieties. These farms sell their products directly to the public. Their products are: herbal teas, aromatic salt, fragrant cushions, preserves of mixed fruit and herbs, dressings and sauces of wild herbs, juices, syrups and cosmetics products. Some farms offer medicinal plants that come directly from animal husbandry cultivation, as in the case of cheese made with herbs or of balsamic herbal honey or even wine making such as distilled and vinegars. Interestingly is the development of using medicinal plants in health spa and wellness

centres together with hay baths, herbal teas and locally produced cosmetics. The medicinal plants sector offers, besides tourism, opportunities for establishing educational, botanical and naturalistic trails connected to the use of edible and medicinal cultivated or wild varieties. Some examples of the synergy between tourism and medicinal herbs are represented by the following initiatives: the ‘*Spicy Baldo*’ programme on the Brentonico plateau, with the participation of the Association of Producers “Baldensis”, the “Festival of Medicinal Herbs” in Roncegno, with the participation of the Local Producers Association “Montagna e Benessere” (Mountains & Wellness), the Festival of Honey and Medicinal Herbs in Comano Health Spa.

THE MANAGEMENT OF FARMS FROM A PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW

For the formation of the farming industry, besides some technical knowledge and the willingness to produce, there are several bureaucratic fulfilments to start with: a national insurance number must be obtained, registration to the Chamber of Commerce, documents declaring your business, a registration to APIA (Provincial register for Farming Industry), the enrolment to the Trentinerbe course and registration to the provincial TRENTINERBE brand register as well as notification of biological method standards (Reg.834/07). The next step is to find suitable material for sowing (seeds, shoots), followed by the preparation of the soil, and appropriate techniques and machinery. The main production is established according to precise rules following a course of cultivation and rotation. As soon as you have acquired your materials you can begin to dry, using suitable equipment or in specific dark closets, providing that you can guarantee the norms for hygiene. The dry material is placed in dark rooms, in paper bags or in airtight containers. The next stage is that of transforming the products, by personally handling (with restrictions to the varieties) or by a third party (qualified herbalists) who ensure proper operations are carried out and the types of varieties used. The products can be made up of a mixture as in the case of teas and aromatic salt, or even sold separately. Otherwise, you can prepare cosmetics, essential oils,



dietary supplements provided you have the necessary authorisation. Finally, you can commercialise your products on the farm or in a shop or stall. The provincial administration contributes to the promotional activity and development of medicinal plants, in collaboration with the Mach Foundation together with the CRA unit (Council for research and agricultural testing) in Villazano, that researches monitoring and forestry planning, and with the Civil Museum of Rovereto, and with the Flora, Mountain & Wellness associations, 'Baldensis'. The cultivation, harvest and transformation of the medicinal plants are in a category with good possibilities of development. In particular, when it concerns mountains such as those present in our province;

where the quality of life and the experience of local customs and traditions can be of provide great value to production. Medicinal plants, in their various forms, on the market today are requested more and more by the consumer. These products are used frequently by wellness centres and tourist accommodations like farm holidays, B&B, mountain retreats etc. and in health shops. In the last few years there has been a trend to use wild herbs in seasonal dishes also in the catering business. This



attitude provides a means in revitalising the commerce of the mountains, supplying an income for the local people in isolated areas where tourism, environment and territory can benefit. Through the recent adoption of a series of regulations the Autonomous Province of Trento has adequately created conditions for allowing the development of this sector and promoting new opportunities for producers, certifying local production and offering better guarantees for the consumer.

Saffron cultivated on mount Baldo together with many other herbs.
In the smaller picture, the good king henry and the bellflower.

THE CURRENT PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS (LP 28 MARCH 2003, N.4)

The regulation defines the category of “herbal foodstuffs” as products made from single or mixed medicinal plants, not containing synthetic or semi-synthetic products, destined for the food chain and prepared in a traditional way, whereas they must not be declared for health or therapeutic purposes. The regulation sets out, furthermore, the creation of a provincial register of certified farmers, who harvest and transform initially the medicinal plants for the production of herbal remedies. In order to subscribe to the register a producer must possess the proper requirements of which, suitable buildings situated in the province, a certificate of attendance with pass grades of an appropriate training course organised by the provincial authorities. Having subscribed to the register the above mentioned certificates are recognised by the Autonomous Province of Bolzano and other regional councils providing that the minimal requirements have been met for the course. Those exempted will have to possess a university degree, which specialises in this particular sector or have obtained qualifications in the herbalist profession.

Another regulation to think about: Reg. (CE) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and Council, regarding the hygiene of food products.

The regulation fixes general requirements in the subject of hygiene, which all food producers must respect in every stage of the food chain. It is applied to the primary production stage, with strict rules on the direct supply of small quantities of primary products from the producer to the consumer.

Primary production

Primary production refers to every stage of the process, from breeding or the cultivation of primary products, including harvesting, milking and animal husbandry production previously slaughtered as well as hunting, fishing and foraging for wild herbs. To close down – at a local level – a business of primary products, on condition that such an activity is only marginal compared with the main production, or retail business, or a firm’s canteen, restaurants, etc., exclusion from applying these rules is allowed. Obligations that remain are respect for hygiene regulations and common agricultural practises and an obligation of being able to trace the retailer. The regulation refers to the cultivation and production of plant products of which cereal, fruit, vegetable and herb and includes transport, storage and handling inside the factory (without any change to natural substances) and further transport to industrial facilities.

REG. 852/2004 Working methods

Wild Herbs

The use of wild plants is allowed, but it is essential that who picks them and uses them in food recipes must be able to recognise the varieties. The restaurateur who uses wild herbs in their recipes should take direct responsibility for what they serve to their customers. The following indications are a guideline:

- pick the wild herbs as far away from any polluted area;
- never pick herbs from the roadside or in parkland used by dogs or other animals;
- never pick what you do not recognise;
- do not leave freshly picked herbs in plastic bags and do not keep them all bunched together;
- do not pick plants that are diseased or mouldy.



Juniper berries, an example of wild product in our mountains.

A FEW USEFUL DEFINITIONS

Medicinal plants

Plants that contain aromatic or healing properties are defined as medicinal herbs. Their name comes from the Latin word *officina*, an ancient workshop where, in the past, useful substances were extracted and used in popular medicine. The term refers to varieties with therapeutical properties as well as those used in the preparation of cosmetics, perfumes, liqueurs etc. Here are some of the characteristics of each group along with their respective areas of application.

Aromatic herbs

Are defined as plants or herbs that contain substances, which can emit strong smells or flavours and of which are used in dressing and conserving food, preparing perfumes and drinks. Some plants appear to have their properties uniformly spread out, while others concentrate their properties in different parts like in seeds, petals, leaves or roots. Furthermore, these same odours are mostly present at certain times of the year or in

some cases certain hours of the day: understanding this helps to exploit their maximum potential! Aromatic plants can be sub-divided into two more categories:

Scented plants: equipped with a considerable concentration of perfumed substances, which can be extracted by means of solvents or distillation. These are widely used in the food and cosmetic industry. Here are a few:

- **Angelica:** its aroma comes from pentadecanoic acid. This plant contains tannin by products, aromatic acids, sweet and sour substances, and is widely used in confectionery and preparing liqueurs.
- **Cinnamon:** has a strong aroma and is extremely pleasant on the palate. It is used throughout the world in the confectionery industry and in making liqueurs and cosmetic products.
- **Jasmine:** has a pleasant aroma and is used in perfumes and cosmetics. It is noted for its euphoric action and helps to alleviate fear and tensions connected to sexuality.



HEALING WITH HERBS

In the past, before modern medicine arrived, it was normal to heal people with herbal remedies. With time, modern practices took over from popular ones almost wiping out the old cures. Today, however, there is a come back of natural remedies: medicinal plants and herbs are trendy! The research done concerning the use of healing plants has multiplied: herbalism, alternative medicine, homeopathy, aromatherapy, natural therapy etc... Often they have taken ideas from popular medicine re-elaborating them by reviewing old methods. The recognition of this science by modern medicine varies from case to case. Generally, the tendency to recognise such is helped, in part, by reference to particular ailments, as the efficiency of these remedies can sometimes be used alongside conventional drugs. It is absolutely necessary to avoid a do-it-yourself approach, instead it is better to rely on authorised persons: as such it is possible to obtain real benefits and eliminate eventual risks. Consult your own doctor before starting a therapy with medicinal plants and herbs. You must not fall into the trap of believing that natural remedies are in themselves harmless or without risks: plants contain active ingredients that can be harmful, because they can interact with other medicines, or produce allergies. It is well to notice that not all ailments can be cured with natural remedies: when it concerns serious health conditions the only answer is to use modern medicine.



Crimson bee-balm blooms.

- **Lavender:** a strong scented plant, which is used above all in cosmetics and air fresheners. The glands that produce the essential oil are found in all the green parts of the plant (flower bud, leaf and stalk) even though the highest concentration is in the flower itself.
- **Lime Tree (Tilia):** the flowers are dried and used widely by herbalists for their renowned aromatic properties.
- **Vanilla:** is the only orchid with an edible fruit. The aroma is found in the vanilla pod and is used in the confectionery and cosmetic industry.

Aromatic plants for dressings are most commonly used in cooking to make food tasty. Normally, they are put through a minimal transformation process such as drying and grinding,

which guarantees a longer life and a better way of transporting. These plants are very popular in the kitchen, for example, garlic, bay leaf, basil, celery, parsley, rosemary, marjoram, mint, oregano, sage, thyme, chilli etc. Also, some of these herbs contain medicinal properties often ignored when used in the kitchen.

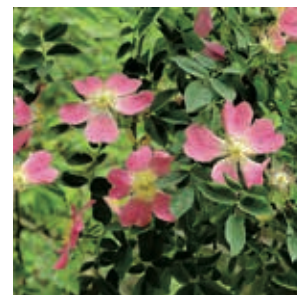
Medicinal plants and herbs

According to the definition of the OMS medicinal plants are "all plant varieties that contain substances that can be used for therapeutic or for prevention purposes or are forerunners of chemosynthesis pharmaceuticals". These plants can be used by the pharmaceutical industry for the packaging of conventional medicines, or else destined for herbal usage. In the latter case they appear in the form of



teas, juices, tinctures and various other preparations. Plants containing therapeutic properties are numerous. Here is a list of the more commonly used:

- **Arnica:** the part that is used is the flower. It has antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties and also acts in healing bruises, sprains and muscular pains.
- **Hawthorn:** the flower tips are renowned for their vasodilative properties and in regulating cardiac frequency and arterial hypertension.
- **Marigold:** its flowers provide an anti-inflammatory action on the mucous and the skin as well as healing wounds it is an immune stimulant, and disinfectant. The plant seems to aid in the healing process of gastric and duodenal ulcers.
- **Artichoke:** the leaves act as a valid diuretic, digestive, laxative and hepa-protective action. They can also be useful in fighting cellulitis.
- **Fennel:** its seeds provide an anti-spasmodic, refreshing and digestive action.
- **Blueberry:** is useful in strengthening the capillaries, veins, helping eye and urinal infections. The dried berries have numerous properties such as anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and help prevent against ulcers.
- **Nettle:** the leaves act as an anti-inflammatory and diuretic action.
- **Dog Rose:** acts as an antioxidant, is diuretic and rich in vitamin C.
- **Valerian:** its roots act as a sedative and help relieve anxiety naturally.



At the top arnica, blueberry, valerian and dog rose. On the opposite page, lavender.

Edible plants

The term “edible” was first used in 1767 by the Florentine doctor and naturalist Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti, who published his work: *“De alimenti urgentia, ossia modo per rendere meno gravi le carestie, proposto per il sollievo dei popoli”* (De alimenti urgentia, a way of combatting famine, proposed as a relief for the population) added as a subtitle *“Alimurgia, intendendo con questa nuova scienza illustrare come sopperire, in caso di carestia, alla carenza di cibo attraverso la raccolta delle erbe selvatiche commestibili”* (Edible, the intention of this new science is to illustrate how to provide, in the case of famine, for the lack of food by gathering wild, edible herbs). The term appears later on and used by Oreste Mattiolo in his book *“Phytoalimurgia Pede-montana”* (1918), and

added the prefix phyto, specifying the plant origin of foodstuffs used in case of a necessity. There was a need to find new food sources in order to liberate the population from their basic concern: famine.

For this reason, the botanist Mattiolo, in his draft document *“classificazioni chimiche, dietetiche o botaniche, perché troppo differenti erano gli usi che si potevano fare di una stessa specie vegetale”* (chemical, dietary or botanical classification, because the usage was too varied for the same plant variety) he did not use a specific scientific language, therefore, making his work practical and easy to consult. In his book, Oreste Mattiolo listed more than 230 varieties of edible plants found in the Piedmont province, dividing them into twelve chapters.



- I. Stalks or stems that have been transformed into stocks of nutritional material (A. root like stems B. roots, root-bulbs and tuberous root like stems C. bulbs).
- II. Roots that have been transformed into stocks of nutritional material.
- III. Culinary, tender, young, juicy shoots that you can eat.
- IV. Plants or early spring variety whose leaves can be used for salads.
- V. Early spring plants that are particularly used in preparing soups.
- VI. Plants which are used to make omelettes and cakes.
- VII. Flowers that are used in cooking.
- VIII. Fruit and seeds that are used in the food industry.
- IX. Plants you can extract oil.
- X. Plants or part of plants used as coffee or tea substitutes.
- XI. Mushrooms, seaweed, lichens.
- XII. A bibliography of edibles.



Shown above, burnet. On the opposite page, nettle, a very useful plant.

The botanist Mattiolo was inspired by the Treatment of food by Galeno (2° century A.D.), maintaining the classification proposed by the Roman author about two thousand years before “of which, from a popular point of view, is a practical example” (Mattiolo, 1918). Of particular interest is the recent publication *Piante alimurgiche del Veneto-Riconoscerle, coltivarle e gustarle* (Edible plants of Veneto-Recognising, cultivating and tasting them) by Maria Clara Zuin, who is a researcher with IBAF-CNR, in cooperation with Veneto Agriculture, who have established three phyto-edible gardens in the Veneto region.



DISCOVERY TRAILS FOR HERBS

Foraging for herbs becomes a pleasant pastime in exploring one's own territory. Whether it be for learning, taking pictures or collecting and preparing homemade remedies or recipes, one enters into a dimension of continuous discovery, which can open our eyes to places that up to now were unknown. All you need is a change of perspective, to be more attentive and particular to detail, uncovering a never-ending unpredictable natural world.

Foraging for herbs gives us an opportunity to understand the biodiversity that surrounds us and is fundamental in increasing our awareness on the importance of wholesomeness in the environment. It is impossible to use herbs from polluted areas or which have been contaminated by pesticides or grown in over fertilized soil. Therefore, an increase in gatherers of wild herbs could reduce the use of toxic products.

Foraging for herbs also means to open a dialogue between our-

selves and the past, in particular what has been handed down by our grandfathers, who have lived a first hand experience of cultivation before the beginnings of mono-cultivation of the vine, apple and hazelnuts. It is not a question of improvising, recognising a species is not easy, often the phase where parts of plants are used can be different from full grown specimens, which are normally illustrated in books and so can be confused with dangerous varieties. It is always better

to start with a few well-known varieties and then step by step try to recognise others comparing them with expert (herbalists, botanists etc.) knowledge before tasting them. Remember, also, to keep in mind the current laws that guarantee the conservation of every singular specimen.

In the manuals a number of items are present, generally modest and easy to read by all, that have been mentioned in guided tours and that present

more detail on the theme of medicinal plants. Ecomuseums frequently organise trips to popular trails in collaboration with experts. The most interesting and exhilarating trails are however, indicated for those who feel fit and able, and love the idea of learning. The official guides of Trentino are available to lead those who wish to discover the secret corners of the province and they can organise specific guided tours inside the areas of the various Ecomuseums.





LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

LAWS FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION CONCERNING THE HARVEST OF WILD PLANTS

First of all, the harvest of wild produce should coincide with the use of common sense, which implies the conservation and safeguard of the varieties harvested, to guarantee propagation in the future without opening up to indiscriminate plundering or altering the environment. Current laws in Trentino focus on this problem applying limits to each variety and on how much can be gathered on a daily basis, all of which is found in the Decree of the President of the Province 26th October 2009, n° 23-25/Law, which contains the rules of implementation Title IV, chapter II (Safeguarding flora, fauna, mushrooms and truffles) a provincial law 23rd May 2007, n° 11 (Provincial law on forests and protection of the environment). The following are some essential points. In chapter I, the law contains references to the protection of flora, with in-

dications to particular varieties to safeguard (Attachment A), and those protected and art. 4 refers to the harvest of varieties used by local people in the past, which is allowed with moderation of limited quantities meaning freshly picked daily per person according to what is indicated in **Attachment B**.



Chapter III Waivers and exclusions

Art. 7 Harvesting for scientific, educational and pharmaceutical and medicinal purposes.

A community concerned about their territory can authorize the harvest of flora providing they respect the limits as stated in articles 3 and 4 for scientific, educational, pharmaceutical and medicinal purposes. The community can also allow the harvest of single specimens as listed in Attachment A, for scientific and educational purposes. The former contains further reference to specific authorization criteria.

Art. 8 Harvesting for food purposes,

A conscientious community can also authorize, in respect of laws and procedures stated in art. 7, the harvest of wild flora for food purposes keeping within limits of quantities as stated in articles 3 and 4, to whom may request or is subscribed to the provincial register of farmers, who culti-

vate, harvest and practice the first transformation of medicinal plants for the production of herbal foodstuffs and their mixtures, stated in art. 4 of the decree of the President of the Province 24th September 2008, n° 41-148/law. The rules of implementation found in art. 43/3 of the provincial law of 28th March 2003, n° 4 state (Sustainability of agricultural economy, biological agricultural discipline and the branding of non-genetically modified products, regarding the cultivation, harvest and trade of medicinal plants cultivated in Trentino).





Attached B (art. 4, comma1)

List of plant species of which usage falls into the old local customs

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	PARTS GATHERED	QUANTITY in kilogrammes picked fresh
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> L.s.l.	Yarrow	inflorescence	1/2
<i>Alchemilla vulgaris</i> L.	Lady's mantle	above ground	1/2
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i> (M.B.) Cavara et Grande	Garlic mustard	above ground	1/2
<i>Arctium lappa</i> L.	Greater burdock	roots	1/2
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i> (L.) Sprengel	Bearberry	leaf	1/2
<i>Artemisia absinthium</i> L.	Wormwood	leaf & flower tip	1/2
<i>Capsella bursa pastoris</i> (L.) Medicus	Shepherd's purse	above ground	1/2
<i>Cetraria islandica</i> (L.) Ach	Icelandic lichen	stem	1/2
<i>Camomilla recutita</i> (L.) Rauschert	Chamomile	flowers	1/2
<i>Chelidonium majus</i> L.	Greater celandine	leaf	1/2
<i>Clematis vitalba</i> L.	Old man's beard	shoots	1/2
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i> Jacq.	Hawthorn	flowers	1/2
<i>Diplotaxis tenuifolia</i> (L.) DC.	Wild rocket	above ground	1/2
<i>Equisetum arvense</i> L.	Horsetail	above ground	1/2
<i>Euphrasia officinalis</i> sp.p.	Eyebright	plant in bloom	1/2
<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> Maxim	Meadowsweet	flower tip	1/2
<i>Fumaria officinalis</i>	Earth smoke	above ground	1/2
<i>Galium odoratum</i> (L.) Scop.	Woodruff	above ground	1/2

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	PARTS GATHERED	QUANTITY in kilogrammes picked fresh
<i>Galium verum</i> L.	Bedstraw	flower tip	1/2
Genere <i>Mentha</i> L. sp.p.	Mint	leaf & flower	1/2
<i>Hieracium pilosella</i> L.	Mouse-ear	above ground	1/2
<i>Humulus lupulus</i> L.	Hop	shoots & cones	1/2
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i> L.	St John's wort	inflorescence	1/2
<i>Lamium album</i> L.	White nettle	flower tip	1/2
<i>Laurus nobilis</i> L.	Bay leaf	leaf	1/2
<i>Malva neglecta</i> Wallr.	Mallow	flower & leaf	1/2
<i>Melilotus officinalis</i> (L.) Pallas	Common melilot	flower tip	1/2
<i>Nasturtium officinale</i> R.Br.	Garden cress	leaf	1/2
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i> L.	Poppy	basal rosette, flowers	1/2
<i>Parietaria</i> L. sp.p.	Lichwort	above ground	1/2
<i>Pinus mugo</i> Turra s.l.	Mountain pine	bud, catkin, male inflorescence & young green cones	1/2
<i>Plantago major</i> L. s.l.	Ribwort	above ground	1/2
<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L.	Purslane	above ground	1/2
<i>Silene alba</i> (Miller) Krause	White campion	above ground	1/2
<i>Silene vulgaris</i> (Moench) Garcke	Bladder campion	above ground	1/2
<i>Solidago virgaurea</i> (L.)	Goldenrod	above ground	1/2
<i>Tamus communis</i> L.	Black bryony	shoots	1/2
<i>Tilia cordata</i> Miller	Small-leaved lime	inflorescence with bract	1/2
<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i> Scopoli	Large-leaved linden	inflorescence with bract	1/2
<i>Tussilago farfara</i> (L.)	Coltsfoot	above ground	1/2
<i>Valeriana officinalis</i> L.sp.p	Valerian	roots	1/2
<i>Valerianella locusta</i> (L.) Laterade	Corn salad	basal rosette	1/2
<i>Aruncus doicus</i> (Walt.) F ernald	Goat's beard	shoots	1
<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i> L.	Red-root amaranth	above ground	2
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	Lamb's quarters	above ground	2
<i>Chenopium bonus henricus</i> L.	Good king henry	above ground	2
<i>Cicerbita alpina</i> L. Wallr.	Alpine sow-thistle	shoots	2
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> L.	Elderberry	inflorescence & fruit	2
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> Weber s.l.	Dandelion	basal rosette	2
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L.	Nettle	above ground	2



ARGENTARIO ECOMUSEUM





ARGENTARIO ECOMUSEUM

ARGENTARIO ECOMUSEUM IS AN ASSOCIATION FORMED FROM A COOPERATION OF FOUR COMMUNITIES

Trento, along with the districts of Argentario, Meano, Civezzano, Fornace and Albiano, lie in the shadow of Mount Calisio (1.093m), which covers an area of about 80 sq. km. They form the border of the Argentario plateau. The Ecomuseum is situated to the north of the Avisio stream and to the east of Lakes Lases, Valle and Rio Silla and south of the Fersina stream while being west of the river

Adige. The Argentario plateau, other than having a flourishing vegetation is also surrounded by hilltop hamlets and not to mention the ancient silver mines, with their thousand year old history (still in process), which has shaped both the bowels and the slopes of the mountain. From the Roman period through the Middle Ages up to the present day generation after generation of miners on Mount Calisio have extracted first silver then baryta

and recently a special red stone, particular to Trento, and porphyry, which has all considerably transformed the mountain's structure. Turning to another page in history the land around the Ecomuseum is dotted with old fortifications dating back to the First World War; in fact it was due to the important strategic position of Mount Calisio and its narrow passage between the

two valleys, Adige and Valsugana, that many such outposts were built with the objective of creating a so called '*Fortezza di Trento*' (Fort of Trento) providing a complex defence system for the largest town of Trentino. The activities that the Ecomuseum carries out in an area rich of flora, wildlife and history is expressed in many projects where initiatives aimed at knowledge,



Exploring the tunnels of the ancient mines of Argentario. On the left, a view of mount Calisio from Ravina village.



discovery, conservation and improvement of the naturalistic, rural, archaeological and mining heritage by which one can explore the territory and at the same time gain information through its educational trails. Furthermore, there are proposals that involve the community, the associations and also the provincial authorities, in order to create a network that will incorporate cooperation between province and Ecomuseums. Themes surrounding such activities: The Great War on Mount Calisio, the natural environment of the Argentario plateau, historical and archaeological sites, monuments, farming and countryside, can be developed. All of which will respect the values of

the Ecomuseums' mission, that is to say: cooperation, sustainability, environmental protection, voluntary work, communication and formation, accessibility with a balanced and guaranteed use of the territory for everyone.

SY_CULTour PROJECT

How can we rediscover the ancient ways of farming? How can we restore the customs and traditions of our ancestors?

This is what the Argentario Ecomuseum proposes through its SY_CULTour project. Yet again, however, we must begin with a historical background in order to understand completely the essence of the initiative. Consid-

Preparing the *L'Orto* in Villa kitchen garden.
On the left: Mughetto waterfall, in an unusual Winter setting and the Busa del Pomar, one of the most famous tunnels.

ering that for years the mining activity was and still is in action on Mount Calisio makes it easier to foresee why agriculture played a secondary role compared to extraction, above all the exploitation of underground resources which has contributed in many ways to the abandoning of land and taking away fields that otherwise would have been for cultivation. Therefore, within the area of the Calisio plateau, over the centuries, small hillside agriculture has shaped the territory starting from the hills overlooking the town of Trento. A cultivation specialised in wine growing and later a production of chestnut trees in the district of Albiano. So, what the Ecomuseum proposes is to recuperate a small part of the history of the territory which otherwise was unknown. Thanks to the joint efforts of the local cultural office cà Comuna and the Salvadori-Zanatta Foundation a study, and yet, productive kitchen garden has been established in the district of Meano named “L’Orto in Villa”, housing aromatic, medicinal, horticultural and wild plants. This garden, other than offering natural products, represents an interesting opportunity of learning, whether that be practical or theoretical. In fact, the Ecomuseum offers

stimulating educational activities aimed principally at the schools, but not only, also visitors are encouraged to take an interest and are given advice on how to manage a garden as well as some facts about cultivation. All the educational activities and the trails are managed by highly qualified staff, other than being very passionate about their work, they are very capable in satisfying any questions or queries that might be asked. The “Orto in Villa” project’s main objective, besides salvaging local horticultural varieties, is to provide public awareness on themes such as biological agriculture and conservation of the environment. In fact, the Ecomuseum targets exactly that, meaning the cultivation of horticultural, aromatic and wild plants with the final stage of a small scale production. With this in mind, the Ecomuseum entrusted the management to the local cultural office cà Comuna, who will engage the local youths in organising activities as well as cultivating the above-mentioned garden. The production and the sale of local products would outline a commercial activity that would have little or no environmental impact on the area, a theme very dear to the Ecomuseum.



At the top, a three-coloured violet, lamb's quarters and purslane, invasive plants, but good to eat.



LOCAL USAGE OF HERBS

A TRADITIONAL WAY OF USING HERBS FROM ARGENTARIO

In the past when mining was prolific and in view of the strong environmental damage, it is certain that herbs were used by the Canopi people for healing, while specialised Germanic and Bohemian workers probably brought this knowledge with them. Even though, centuries old traditions were frequently carried out there remains very little documentation of the miners, who once they had exhausted the silver veins would move on to other alpine areas. Probably, relationships between the Canopi and the farmers who lived within the area of the Ecomuseum were not quite cordial, in any case it is not possible today to determine if there was some form of cultural contamination between the two groups. The traditional use of herbs aimed at healing, and for nutrition, is not well known in this area and has not yet been investigated, however,

new cultivation experiences of medicinal plants, in the district of Civezzano, along with knowledge gained from the "L'Orto in Villa" (kitchen garden) will probably lead to a renewal of these traditions. Nutritional use of the herbs and their oils has recently been re-proposed in the form of sweets called Zirele.



HERBAL ZIRELE

Zirele are a **typical homemade sweet** from Trentino that arose from a very old tradition, even today there is a continual request thanks to the firm Lorandi s.n.c. of Civezzano. The term **Zirela** does not seem to have a special meaning: the pulley cord in Trentino also used this name, but in Primiero sweets were called by this name. This typical aromatic, sugary sweet will manage to win your approv-

al thanks to it melting slowly in the mouth enveloping you in a variety of aromas. Some of the traditional flavours are: **cinnamon-clove** and **rhubarb**, over the years new flavours have been introduced such as: **aniseed**, **strawberry**, **lemon**, **apple**, **mint**, **blueberry**, **blackberry**, **rhubarb** and **vanilla**. A variety of colourful flavours capable of satisfying the most demanding customer. Thanks to the cooperation of local clients, the Lorandi firm has started to produce a range of Zirele mindful of flavour and natural colours. So, now we can find **Zirele made from medicinal plants** like mint, mallow and lemon balm, cultivated on the organic farm of Mario Leonardi in Civezzano.

With the cooperation of the old Boroni distillery in Val Rendena **aromatic Zirele** were produced thanks to the extractions of gentian, juniper and masterwort. With a new interest towards

Zirele, herbs, honey and stone of the Argentario Ecomuseum, a good example of local produce.

typical Trentino products **Zirele with honey and bee's glue** can now be found supplied by the firm Sottobosco Paoli of Civezano.

Further curiosity and experiments have produced **Zirele with ginger** and red radicchio leaves from Treviso acquiring the Veneto market thanks to help from Caffè Centrale of Asolo. The processing is done in a small craftsman's workshop, housing drying equipment and preparing a mix of sugar and syrupy glucose in a copper pan, then finely chopped herbs and

roots are added. Once the mixture is ready it is poured, still hot, onto sheets of greaseproof paper placed over a table made from the red stone of Trento. This stone is extracted from the quarry of Pila at Villamontagna. The mixture is then spread to a thickness of one centimetre and left to cool. Once it has hardened the sheet of herbs and sugar are broken into small cubes by a machine producing the "zirele" which are then placed in a room containing a dehumidifier before being labelled and packaged.



Crimson bee-balm, a new *Zirele* aroma.

Scientific name: *Filipendula vulgaris*

Common name: Spirea

The pastures of the Argentario, at the end of May, host an array of these flowers with its particular characteristic of an inflorescence corymb formed firstly by a tightly closed flower head (its common name is 'dropwort' even though its preferred name is 'queen of the fields') which then opens producing a beautiful 'cloud' which towers over all other herbs. This variety can reach a height of 1 to 2 metres. The smell of its inflorescence is sweet. It is because of its aromatic character that in the past it was used as an air freshener for rooms, a good idea considering it combines aroma with anti-infective properties. The Spiraee or dropwort is very important in the European pharmacopeia. In 1839, for the first time two German chemists, Lowig and Weidemman extracted pure salicylic acid (a prime component in aspirin) known as 'Spiraea acid'. In popular medicine, taken as a tea, the plant is recommended in the treatment of rheumatism, fever, flu, common cold and bladder inflammation.



Scientific name: *Humulus lupulus L.*
Common name: Luppolo



Hops frequently grow along country lanes, on steep hills and on the edge of woodland, in both fertile and humid terrain to a height of about 1200 metres. It is known by various local names as in Liverizio, Lupari, Lupula. It is perennial and belongs to the *Cannabaceae* family and is a dioecious plant (single sex), from being an underground rhizome it develops polygonal shoots in the Spring equipped with tiny spikes that help it climb up surrounding plants for several metres. During the germination period it is possible to pick the buds and eat them, like asparagus and use them in sauces, risotto rice or omelette. “Bruscandolo” is a famous dish. Its leaves are heart-shaped with pointed tips that can be more or less lobed. Hops grip onto other plants intertwining its shoots and leaves and by the end of Summer, the female produces a garland of inflorescence, cone shaped, sticky and resinous that gives out its characteristic aroma, which is used in beer making (the industry cultivates the hops by training them up a lattice frame or espalier; in the past this was a tradition in Valsugana, it has been revived in Trentino because of a request for more homemade beer). It is also dried for the preparation of teas and used in cushions as its calming properties aid sleepiness.



INNOVATIVE USAGE

“L’Orto in Villa” proposes traditional and innovative ways with herbs that you can cultivate, supplying historical information on varieties and their possible usage. Here are a few examples.

BASIL

When buying a bunch of basil it must look crisp and green; it can be sold in a pot, in which case will last to Autumn. Its essential oil is used in the preparation of perfumes and liqueurs; from the distillation of the fresh plant you can obtain an essence containing eucalyptol and eugenol. It is better **to add the basil leaves to a dressing at the last moment**, just before serving at the table, because it easily loses its characteristic flavour. It would be better to tear it with the hands rather than chop it with a knife.



Historical notes

The ancient Egyptians and Greeks used basil as an offering to the gods as it was considered to be a good omen for the after-life. Even the Gauls cultivated basil. Whoever picked this sacred plant had to undergo a strict ritual of purification: wash the hand that picked the herb in three different sources of spring water, put on clean clothes, keep away from persons impure (e.g. women in their menstrual cycle) and not to use metal tools to cut the casks. Basil was considered sacred in that it was thought to be able to heal wounds like those of harquebus; it was, therefore, an ingredient along with other 16 herbs, of vulnerary water, at one time was applied to the skin. The heroine of Boccaccio’s Decameron, Elizabeth of Messina, immersed the head of her lover in a jar of basil, watering it with her own tears. In the footnotes of manuscripts from the Middle Ages, basil was the symbol of hate and of Satan. Jewish folklore suggested that it gave strength to those in fasting. An African legend upholds that basil can protect against scorpion bites. The sacred basil (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*) is a plant venerated in many traditions of the Hindu religion.

Recipes

Basil and pineapple smoothie

1 pineapple, a handful of basil leaves, 1 carton of low-fat yoghurt, milk, juice of half a lemon, honey.

Clean the pineapple and chop into small pieces. Put into the blender with all the other ingredients and whisk. Add the milk till you acquire the right consistency.

Pasta with salmon, courgettes and cherry tomatoes with basil

300gr. smoked salmon, 320gr. pasta, 2 courgettes, 1 small shallot onion, 150gr. cherry tomatoes, fresh basil, salt & pepper, extra virgin olive oil, 1 glass of white wine.

Cook the pasta in boiling water. Take the skin off the salmon and cut into pieces and place it in a bowl. Wash and dry the courgettes on a paper towel then cut off the ends. Slice them length ways then remove the pulp then cut the remains into julienne pieces. Peel and chop the shallot finely. Heat a pan and add some olive oil then fry the shallot stirring with a wooden spoon. Add the salmon pieces and fry gently then pour over the white wine stirring always and allow to evaporate. Add the courgettes to the pan and the tomatoes cut into 4 pieces and sprinkle a little salt & pepper. Use 2 tablespoons of boiling water from the pasta and cook on a high light. Drain the pasta then add to the sauce. Toss the pasta in the pan for a few minutes. Take the pan off the heat and place on a heat resistant stand, break some basil leaves and pour over some olive oil. Toss the pasta again and put into a serving dish. Finally, garnish the dish with a sprig of basil leaves.



flavour-enhancer and is a good substitute for those who must check their salt intake. It helps to cleanse the organism and kidneys, but also fights against lack of appetite.

In the kitchen

Tarragon has a sharp, **aromatic taste**, a little sour with hints of mint and celery. When dried it is not particularly useful as it loses most of its flavour, whereas the fresh leaves provide a more intense aroma. A good idea is to chop the leaves and place in an ice cube tray then cover them with water and freeze. This herb is a common feature in French cuisine, while in Italy it is found only in certain recipes from the Tuscany region. Tarragon is perfect for flavouring eggs, meat, fish & seafood, and good with vegetables like potatoes, tomatoes, asparagus and onions. The fresh leaves can be added to salads and sauces such as Bernese sauce, Tartar sauce and Tarragon sauce, which is highly claimed in Siena; the leaves are mixed with garlic and pieces of bread dipped in vinegar and olive oil. It gives an added flavour to butter and vinegar creating a spicy dressing, which gives that special touch to any recipe. Another delicious idea of using this rather delicate peppery spice is to add the leaves to fresh whipped cream or to soft cheese making a creamy spread, which can be used in tuna, ham or egg sandwiches.

Curiosity

On why this plant was called Tarragon, which in Italian translates as “little dragon”. There are several theories: the shape of its roots (similar to a snake weaving about) could be a good explanation, but also the hypothesis that the name refers to an ancient remedy for snakebites. Finally, a legend of Tuscany tells the story of a girl, from Siena, who fell in love with a soldier, dragoon (a knight on horseback), during the Napoleonic occupation. One day, while shaking his boots from a window, he let some seeds fall into a flowerpot that the girl kept on a window ledge. When the soldier departed the seeds began to grow and a beautiful scented plant emerged which the girl named “dragoncello” in remembrance of their love.

TARRAGON

Tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculus*) is a perennial herb of the Asteraceae family originally from central Asia. Its flowers are small greenish-yellow florets, similar to the shape of a corn cob. Its leaves are lanceolate, pointed at both ends and very thin of a brilliant emerald green colour. There are **two varieties**: the Russian or Siberian tarragon, a more hardy plant with a milder flavour and the French tarragon, which has darker leaves and a stronger, more aromatic flavour.



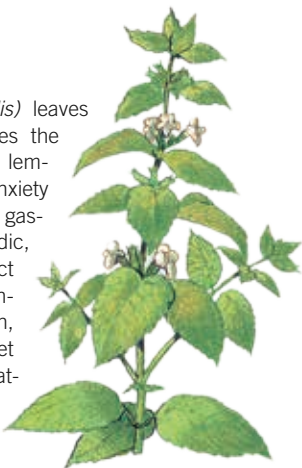
Properties and advantages

Tarragon is a spice with distinct **digestive properties**: taken as a herbal tea after a meal, it can help alleviate a bloated stomach. This plant is also an **antiseptic**, useful against a sore throat and inflammation of the mouth. The ancient Greeks used to chew on tarragon leaves to relieve toothache. Its taste is sharp and aromatic, something half way between salt and pepper for this reason it is considered a natural

LEMON BALM

Properties

The Lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*) leaves are rich in essential oil, which gives the plant a pleasant aroma and taste of lemon: Its leaves are used for cases of anxiety with psychosomatic reaction of the gastro-enteric system. Its antispasmodic, anti-inflammation and soothing effect is recommended in cases of menstrual cramp, neuralgia, indigestion, vomiting, flatulence, stomach upset and colic. This plant is used for treating headaches, which are caused by nervous tension, thanks to the presence of an essential oil (0,5%), which reacts by calming and relaxing the muscles and the nervous system. Its use is particularly recommended, therefore, in the context of general irritability, insomnia caused by excessive tiredness, nervousness, rapid heartbeat and premenstrual syndrome. Lemon balm extract from the fresh leaves possesses antibacterial qualities due to the presence of polyphenol and polysaccharide acid, which can treat Herpes simplex.



Description

The perennial herb behaves like a bush with horizontal rhizomes and a quadrangular, downy stalk (80 cm) with branches at the base. The leaves are oval and downy, attached centrally, peltate, with dentate margins and scores of numerous veins. At first the flowers assume a white-yellowish colour later fading into a pale pink, bell shaped. Its corolla is also tubulous with a lower lip divided into three lobes; a central one is larger in comparison to the other two.

Habitat

The plant is native to southern Europe and the Mediterranean region as well as western Asia. In Italy it grows along the hedgerows in a shaded position and is a popular garden plant.

Historical notes

Its name is probably Greek in origin as Melissa means "honey-bee". The small white flowers, full of nectar, attract bees easily. It was first introduced into medicine as a "morally exhilarant comforter for nerves" remedy. The physicians Galen and Paracelsus recommended its use in the treatment of "mania and emotional disturbance". The consul Serapio wrote that it relieves restlessness and sadness of the mind and above all melancholia. The Arabs had great consideration for the plant: the philosopher Avicenna in the 11th century credited the spice as "marvellous properties of joy and comfort to the heart". The "Melissa Water" was invented by the French Carmelitani

Scalzi fathers in 1611 for its antispasmodic properties and became popular with all the social classes as a remedy for the unpleasant moments in life (such as toothache, fainting and nervousness etc.).

Recipes

Tea

1 level spoonful of Lemon balm leaves, 1 cup of water

Boil the water, pour over the leaves, cover and let it stand for ten minutes. Strain the tea and drink whenever you suffer from stomach cramp, spasms, nervousness and neuralgia. Drink after a meal to help with digestion and before going to bed as it acts as a mild sedative.

MINT

Properties

Mint is a plant that is especially good for the nervous system in that it aids readiness and mental agility, besides helping the digestion in general. Thanks to the presence of menthol and its antispasmodic, toning, stimulant, calming action, but above all it helps the fermentative process, assimilating food and stimulating bile production. Practically, mint is useful wherever there are problems concerning the intestines as it alleviates stomachache, colic, flatulence and wind. It is an excellent antiseptic and eliminates worms as well as being a painkiller and an anti-neuralgic, above all relieving migraine, headaches and toothache. It cleanses the organism and stimulates urination, preventing water retention and bloating. It helps those who want to come off drinking alcohol. It helps in clearing the liver and alleviates nausea and vomiting as well as being a good remedy for coughs thanks to its expectorant properties. Finally, it is recognised for its aphrodisiac actions. Those who suffer from sleep disorder should be careful in that it acts as a stimulant and also produces excessive acid in the stomach, so must be avoided by those who have an ulcer or gastric problems.



Description

The peppermint is a perennial herb, with wide spreading stolens, strongly aromatic and belongs to the Lamiaceae family, a variety of Mentha. It is a hybrid between water mint and spearmint (also called Mentha viridis). The peppermint's growth is bushy and can reach a height of 70cm, with erect stems and rhizome roots that expand in the ground. The flowers are grouped into false whorls or verticillasters and bloom from the ground upwards.

Habitat

The plant thrives in various climate zones even though it is more widespread in climates where the Spring is cool and humid and the Summer hot and dry. Therefore, it will grow either in strong sunlight or in shady positions. The ground must be fertile with rich humus soil well drained and aerated, because it suffers in stagnate water. Try to avoid clay or clumpy soil. It is wise to change the soil every 2-3yrs., as it needs rich organic substances. It grows best in terracotta pots, as they allow the soil to breathe. Its aromatic properties are due to the essential oil found in large quantities in its leaves. It can be harvested all year round, however, its intense mint scented oil is more diffused in August when it is in bloom.

Usage

Because of its intense flavour the Mint herb is used especially in the preparation of sweets, syrups and many liqueurs. It is found in many recipes, but should be used sparingly, especially the peppermint variety, as its strong fragrance can overpower other flavours. It goes well with new potatoes, peas, soup, stew, fruit salad, soft drinks and punch. For medicinal purposes Mint tea is good for the digestion, the common cold and flu. Place the leaves in oil and allow to marinate, then this can be used to massage the temples and face to relieve tension. It can also, be rubbed into the muscles when there are aches and pains as well as gargling with the solution for sore throats.

Historical notes

The plant was known in ancient times: according to Greek mythology a nymph named Mint or Mentha was the lover of Ade, the god of the underworld. However, Ade's wife, Persephone, was jealous and turned the nymph into a herb, but she gave the plant an aroma as a prize for being transformed.

Recipe**Tea**

40 fresh mint leaves, 8 fresh sage leaves, ½ a stalk of Tarragon, 4 teaspoons Acacia honey, 4 teaspoons lemon juice, 1 litre of boiling water

Place all the herbs in a teapot and pour over the boiling water, then leave to stand for 3 minutes. Strain the tea into a cup and add the honey and lemon juice. Furthermore, it is useful against toothache and inflamed gums. It makes a very refreshing drink, served cold to quench your thirst on a hot Summer's day.



MONTEPIANO MEADOWS

Distance: 3km / Slope: 100 metres / Time: 2 hours

The trail begins at a place called Le Acque on the hill of St. Agnese in Civezzano and continues towards Lake St. Colomba. From this location, where there are numerous aqueducts, you can find one of the starting points of the “Sentiero delle Canope” trail heading north along the end of the valley until you arrive at the first dirt road on the right, from there you have an ample climb before reaching the beautiful pastures of Mount Piano dotted with a myriad of flowers at the beginning of Summer. You can encounter many species of plants, in particular wild sage and the Spiraea. The area is also famous for hosting a rare and very beautiful *Iris sibirica* or Siberian Iris, a species characteristic to humid zones. The circular trail crosses over and traces in part the “Sentiero degli Gnomi” where you can visit various areas such as fields and the edge of a forest, taking in the different species present in the area. The grassland and its floral composition will in fact be different according to the ground’s humidity, passing by flora typical to humid, fertile soil on to semi-arid with stub-like herbs exhibiting an array of flowers. The management of these fields is particular, as the grass is cut in June-July then subsequently gives way to pastureland for cattle and horses.

Notes on herbs

Along the trail it is possible to see numerous species of which the yarrow, St. John’s wort, Spiraea, wild sage, broadleaf plantain, dandelion, wild chicory, wild strawberry, lime tree, rampion, blueberry, ferns and artichoke thistle.



Siberian Iris and red lily.

L'ORTO IN VILLA (KITCHEN GARDEN) AND ITS PLEASANT SURROUNDINGS

Distance: 7km / Slope: 400 metres / Time: 4 hours

Public Transport: Bus n° 3 from Trento to Cortesano travelling through Meano, Gazzadina and Vigo Meano.

A circular trail that leads you to a discovery of hidden treasures on the hills around Meano, an area dotted with little hamlets that maintain their own characteristics, barn houses, vineyards, farmland, woods, dry stone walls, ancient chapels with pointed steeples all housed in a beautiful view overlooking the neighbouring mountains. A place which was documented by Aldo Gorfer and Giuseppe Rossi in the 1960s for its beauty and pleasant surroundings, ideal for just idling away a few hours and taking in the small and the large wonders and not least the great variety of wild plants. This territory, home to primitive man thousands of years ago and yet easily accessible today by public transport from Trento. Another interesting alternative route is the climb, on foot, from Lavis, walking through San Lazzaro. At Meano you can find the Villa Salvadori-Zanatta, which houses the "L'Orto in Villa" an interesting project of discovery, disclosure and experiment tied to the cultivation of vegetable and medicinal plants, which has played an important role in the local community attracting interest in edible and herbal species. To visit the area, contact the local council of cà Comuna. The various routes and maps of the countryside are shown on the large notice boards and provide secondary road systems connecting the hamlets around Meano, passing through the ancient chapels of St. Martino and St. Pietro and also the Doss della Luna of Gardolo di Mezzo, which is an archaeological area. Once in Meano head for Gazzadina and climb towards Vigo Meano and then there is a gentle walk passing through Cortesano, turning towards the south you arrive at Maso Saracini. Descend towards Gardolo di Mezzo and return to Meano walking along what remains of the ancient Roman road of Via Claudia Augusta.

Notes of herbs

The trail offers a wide range of ecosystems, with a multitude of ecological niche housing a variety of wild plants in abundance up to Autumn, especially around the dry stone walls. Here you will notice the wild roquette, the corn salad ("nosioi"), the ribwort plantain, the white silene or catchfly, the hop, the dandelion, the nettle, the red deadnettle or false nettle (white or red), the yarrow, the ivy, the ferns, the wild strawberry, the brambles, the hawthorn and many more bushes and berries.



CIVEZZANO, MANIAGO AND THE WOLF TRAIL “SENER DEL LOF”

Distance: 5km / Slope: 200 metres / Time: 2-3 hours

A circular trail that will introduce you to the different assets on offer to the curious visitor of the Civezzano side of the Argentario slope. Leaving from Castel Telvana or from the old hamlet of Pieve walking west beyond the Rio Farinella, where a steep slope leads you across a wood and to the back of Castel Vedro, with its cross indicating a panoramic view point, and towards an interesting rock tunnel shaped like a cross that shows evidence of fortifications from the First World War. With a gentle walk you arrive at the east side of Mount Calisio crossing through fields, dry grassland and trenches and further on into the countryside surrounding the hamlet of Maniago. The climb down is through the shaded valley of the Rio Farinella where you encounter characteristic rocky hills, remnants of the Quaternary glacial period, and further down walking past dry walls in porphyry to reach the hamlet of Orzano and your return to Civezzano. Along the trail you come across two natural geographic features: the calcareous side of Calisio and the porphyry lava on the Civezzano side. These conditions are associated with different environmental exposures and allow for a great number of wild species, hardy types as well as forestry, even those that grow amongst the dry stone walls.

Notes on herbs

Some of the herbs you will encounter: wild roquette, lichwort (“vedriola”), ribwort plantain, catchfly, hops, dandelions, nettles, red deadnettle, mint, yarrow, ivy, ferns, wild strawberry, raspberry, brambles, hemp-agrimony, wild thyme, wild oregano and many more bushes and berries. There is an organic farm at Orzano that cultivates wild plants and at Civezzano you can buy the Zirele sweets made with the local herbs.



Wild strawberry and white deadnettle.





The red-root amaranth. On the opposite page, top, the S. Colombo lake, below, the countryside of Vigo Meano.



Cinquefoil flowers. Shown above the *L'Orto in Villa*.
On the right, false dittany.





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Zirele caramelle artigianali trentine (Zirele sweets)

Lorandi snc of Casagrande Damiano & C.
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Accompagnatori di Territorio del Trentino

c/o Collegio Guide Alpine del Trentino
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TOURISM TO THE SCENT OF HERBS

Within the territory of the Argentario Ecomuseum there are still no accommodation facilities that have incorporated trails for medicinal plants in their tourist package, even though the APT Tourist Information offices are promoting this activity, so hopefully in a short time the appropriate structures will be ready. For now, the theme of herbs is dealt with during the annual exhibition of “Cucchiaio dell'Argentario” (Culinary of Argentario) and is promoted by the local council of cà Comuna, through its project “L'Orto in Villa”, along with several farms in the area.

L'ORTO IN VILLA

Villa Salvadori-Zanatta Park – Via delle Tre Croci, Meano
information from the local council of cà Comuna
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LAGORAI ECOMUSEUM





LAGORAI ECOMUSEUM

THE “LAGORAI ECOMUSEUM – IN THE ANCIENT JURISDICTION OF CASTELLALTO” COVERS AN AREA OF COMMUNITIES FROM CARZANO, TELVE, TELVE DI SOPRA AND TORCEGNO

The Lagorai Ecomuseum is in the old quarter of Castellalto and incorporates the districts of Carzano, Telve, Telve di Sopra and Torcegno. The idea of uniting the area of the four municipalities in order to bring life to the Ecomuseum was due to a necessity in aiding a sustainable development of the territory by overlapping administrative borders and establishing envi-

ronmental, historical, cultural aspects and the way of life of the area. All this came about, because these districts shared a common past in which they were united, in the Middle Ages, under the jurisdiction of the feudal lord of Castellalto. Despite, a cultural transformation over the last forty years the four districts were able to maintain their distinctive activities through an economy of combination farm-

ing of crops, trees and pasture animals, which allowed for a low impact on the environment, yet promoting strong ties with the Lagorai mountains, which has always been the main goal of the inhabitants of the area. Therefore, the aim of the Ecomuseum is to further an awareness of the roots that have characterised our community; the community of the ancient jurisdiction of

Castellalto. The Lagorai mountain range is probably one of the wildest areas of Trentino and is one of the few places where the environment has remained more or less uncontaminated and where a respectful co-existence between Man and Nature still exists. The lack of human intervention in the area has preserved the natural beauty of the high altitude mountains pro-



Details of the botanical garden of the WWF oasis in Val Trigona.



viding some exceptional 'pearls' as the Sette Selle, the basin of lake Ezze and its neighbouring boundary of the Valtrigona oasis, an important area as it is the only WWF alpine oasis. From the high peaks of Sette Selle to Ezze, from Valtrigona to Valpiana cutting across the Cagnon valley there are many dairy farms situated at more than 1400 metres high and provide more than enough pastureland. There is some reference to the existence of small barns used for the manufacturing of products around the 14th century in the Lagorai mountains; animals that found refuge under rocky ledges or under the branches of huge trees known as 'maresana'. It was not until the 19th century when hygiene laws were introduced that they began to build large cowsheds where the herds could be protected from the harsh weather conditions and a strict fertilisation of pastures was imposed. It is only in the last fifty years that these herdsmen have been able to enjoy any kind of residence compared to the poor makeshift conditions they previously had to endure. As always, the base of high altitude subsistence economy, the tradition of visiting dairy farms has constituted and formed today an important anchor in the sustainable development of the Lagorai territory and its economy. The dairy farms of Lagorai produce excellent products like cheese and above all butter: both foodstuffs are yellowish in colour. This is due

to the high content of carotene present in high altitude pastureland. Their characteristic smell and flavour is determined by the composition of the soil and the microbial flora. The particularity of the product is exceptional to the point where the farmhouse cheese of Lagorai gained recognition from the prestigious board of Slow Food honouring a proud tradition past on from father to son.

The territory of the Lagorai Ecomuseum has always been managed and controlled by the community; regulations have been in place since the 14th century with an aim of maintaining a proper use and exploitation of fields, pastures and dairy farms, waterways and forest. This collection of rules, known as 'carte di regola' (charters) is still executed to this day and form the basis of the municipal laws.

A large part of the Lagorai territory is covered by forest, so its management has always been concerned about safeguarding its sustainable economy. In fact, for centuries the timber trade has been the principle source of sustainment for our community along with agriculture. The entire east side of the Valsugana valley has always been dedicated to agriculture; its exposed slopes to the south are ideal for wine growing, melo wheat, tobacco leaves and wild mulberry used by the silk worm. Families have also made a living out of trading chestnuts, even now this culture remains an interest-



On the opposite page, cheese from Malga Cagnon de Sora, Slow Food award.
At the top, a grey Alpine cow.

ing activity from a qualitative as well as quantitative point of view. Even today the activities tied to breeding and to agriculture, although there has been change and a decline in the practice, represent an important defence in safeguarding our territory. In recent times there has been a widespread cultivation of wild berries such as strawberry, blueberry, red currants, raspberry and blackberry: all of which grow well in acid terrain and suitably cultivated on narrow stripes of land. In the fields, at the bottom of the valley, they grow maize, which is destined for animal food; more recently they reintroduced an old variety of maize called 'Spin' which derives from a particular formation of the grains and produces a very tasty corn flour, all thanks to a European Community programme. In recent years, the Lagorai Ecomuseum has been involved

in recuperating ancient trades such as basket making, manufacturing nets used in bales of hay. At the same time research projects are aimed at the spread of awareness of the history and traditions of the territory, establishing an ethnographic museum in Telve di Sopra, a place where the farmer's life in the old days comes to light through tools scrupulously collected over the years by the passion of a local man, Tarcisio Trentin. Some mountain paths have been discovered in Carzano like the holy trail and the timber trail and the Franco Furlan naturalist trail in Torcegno. There are places and structures that propose the objective of telling a story in synergy with the history and origins of the area around the Ecomuseum, giving the chance for people to get to know and appreciate the sustainable development of the territory itself.



The Ecomuseum's workshop on herbs. Below, an alpine meadow.



LOCAL USAGE OF HERBS

THE TRADITIONAL WAY OF USING HERBS IN LAGORAI

The local inhabitants of the Lagorai Ecomuseum and its adjacent territory have learnt, since ancient times, how to use herbs and other vegetable products as food or as medicine. Herbs were used according to seasons, starting from the harvest of the first herbs, at the bottom of the valley, during late Winter up to the appearance of the alpine grassland varieties in the pastoral season. Gathering dandelion and chicory in the Spring is still very popular today, to prepare tasty salads and cooked vegetables, a simple way to cleanse the organism from the excesses of Winter. Well-known and sought after, in the woods, during springtime there are the so-called “Asparagi di monte” (hillside asparagus), the shoots of Goat’s beard (*Aruncus dio-cus*), just like the “*bruscandoli*” (common hop) shoots, found along the paths and dry stone walls of the countryside. Other

species are only known to the elders or keen observers, who are rediscovering their uses and how to cultivate them. Most important are the incentives being offered by the village of Roncegno, where you can find the headquarters of the “Mountain and Wellness Association” which comprises the main producers of medicinal herbs in Valsugana, including the territory of the Ecomuseum. Ron-

cegno has become a meeting place for tour operators, farmers, restaurateurs, and offers the visitor educational, theme tours and annual appointments at the end of July with the “*Festa delle Erbe Officinali*” Festival hosted in the splendid Hapsburg Park. In Roncegno you can find the Maso Aria farm, a laboratory of the “Mountain and Wellness Association” – open only by appointment – and Maso Albio where you can visit the vegetable garden of the Palace Hotel, also Raphael Health Centre, Angeli Mill, the Scarecrow museum and its little

garden of wild herbs. In the last few years they have been experimenting in cultivating medicinal plants in high quota on the Alps of Roncegno with particular attention to arnica and edible, aromatic varieties used by the local restaurateurs. The experience acquired in Roncegno is a role model for the Ecomuseum, which must continue the development of the theme of herbs and the knowledge connected with this work, must be passed on. There are already some joint efforts in action between people and initiatives.



At the top, the eyebright. On the left, cow parsley, bishop’s weed. Above, veronica.

TRADITIONAL USAGE OF MEDICINAL HERBS AROUND THE TERRITORY OF THE ECOMUSEUM

There are many known herbs: aside from those already mentioned like dandelion, an excellent plant for its leaves, flowers (even in bud) and roots; the *Silene* shoots are good for either salad or cooked or added as an extra ingredient to green gnocchi or omelette; hop shoots are used in risotto rice or omelette; sorrel is used in salad; the Good King Henry is used in green gnocchi and wherever it could substitute for spinach; young nettles are used in, risotto rice and gnocchi. Many families prefer to use the elderberry flowers to make refreshing juices and the berries make good jam. Other species known for their aromatic properties are the wild cumin, used in bread, sauerkraut and herbal teas, and wild thyme, as a dressing for meat or fish, but even to help a cold and ease tension. There are other varieties like yarrow, wormwood, hawthorn, St John's wort, mallow, mint, parietaria, ribwort plantain and ivy. It was a tradition to venture into the woods in springtime and collect the "argà" resinous oil from three different trees, the Silver Fir, the Spruce and the Larch, essential ingredients in preparing the ointment known as "onto santo", a universal remedy with added bees wax, a second layer of elderberry bark, olive oil, butter or lard, and sometimes medicinal herbs. This cream was prepared in tubs, which you can see in the ethnographic museum of Telve di Sopra, put in jars and used for healing cuts,

burns, pain, arthritis and many other conditions. People would collect shoots and young pine cones to make a cough syrup.

In the area around the Lagorai Ecomuseum the following traditions, connected to the world of herbs, have come to light, a testimony to ancient usage.

INTERVIEWS IN TORCEGNO

Herbs used in the kitchen and for animal fodder

- **Silene** (Sgrisole): eaten as a salad, used in preparing gnocchi
- **Good King Henry or Poor Man's Asparagus** (Ravizole): used in preparing gnocchi, but also boiled in a pan and eaten
- **Goosefoot** (Farinele): used in preparing gnocchi
- **Nettles** (Ortighe): used in preparing gnocchi and soup rather than other vegetables; also used for pig-food
- **Purslane** (hogweed): used in pig-food, from which it takes its name
- **Lingonberry** (Grenteni): used to make jams
- **Cumin** (Cargedò): used to flavour sauerkraut, placed on the fire embers to perfume a room
- **Dandelion**: used in salad
- **Fern-common polypody**: chewed in the mouth like liquorice

Herbs used in cures

- **Arnica**: used as an ointment for rheumatic pain, sprains, muscle strain, as well as whooping cough
- **Edelweiss**: used against constipation, but also used as an extract against diarrhoea in new born calves



- **Wormwood**: given to rabbits to keep them healthy
- **Tansy** (tanacetum): an extract given to children against worms
- **St John's wort**: used as an antiseptic and for healing scars also to help with lung infection, bronchitis and asthma
- **Lime Tree**: an extract is made from the flower and used against catarrh and coughs
- **Mountain Pine**: its syrup was used against coughs and catarrh; was also used in spirits like Grappa and other digestive purposes
- **Maize**: the tassel of corn can help cleanse the organism as in eliminating uric acid as well as curing various infections such as gout; its properties are similar to bearberry
- **Bearberry**: stimulates the diuresis
- **Broadleaf Plantain**: was used to heal wounds
- **Silver Fir Tree** (essential oil): its extract has soothing qualities used as an aerosol inhal-

- ant for coughs and catarrh, but is also rubbed on bruises
- **Aloe**: chopped together with pig's fat and used as a mud pack against sprains
- **Cumin**: used to alleviate stomachache in children
- **Dandelion**: used as a syrup for sore throats and coughs
- **Burdock**: useful against gout, rheumatism and snake bites
- **Elderberry**: its syrup helped against coughs and hoarseness
- **Flaxseed**: its extract was used to cleanse the organism of cows after giving birth; also used in mudpacks against an abscess
- **Peach kernel**: given to children with intestinal worms
- **Chamomile**: the tea bags applied to the eyes relieve inflammation
- **Mallow**: used against inflammation
- **Valerian**: used as a soothing agent
- **Manota de Sant'Antoni**: used as a stimulant to help cows in the mating season

RECIPES**Arnica tincture**

25gr. Arnica flowers, 5gr. Cinnamon, 50gr. Aniseed seeds, ½ litre of spirits 90° proof.

Leave to soak in the sun for 8-15 days and then filter.

Edelweiss extract (for constipation)

Boil 20gr. of dried Edelweiss for 12 mins. Sprinkle into a litre of water and drink 2-3 cups a day.

St John's wort tea

Add 15-30gr. of flowers to 1 litre of boiling water. Drink 3-4 cups a day.

MORE INFORMATION FROM THE ECOMUSEUM AREA**Herbs used in the kitchen and for animal fodder**

- **Silene** (Sgrisoletta): used in preparing gnocchi. Frequently found among the vineyards and when the soil was being tilled it was difficult to uproot because their roots are very long

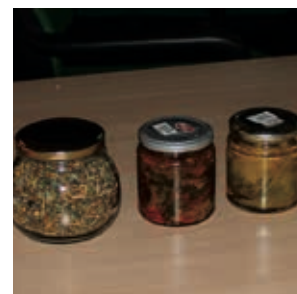
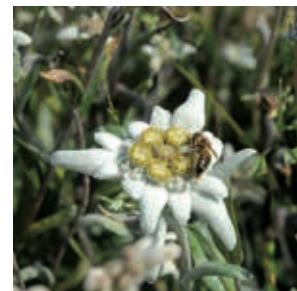
- **Good King Henry or Poor Man's Asparagus** (Ravizole): used in preparing bread gnocchi, but also as cooked vegetables. Often found near dung heaps
- **Goosefoot** (Farinele): used in preparing gnocchi, but also as cooked vegetables. Often found near dung heaps
- **Purslane** (hogweed): used in salad. It is an invasive weed with yellowish flowers
- **Chicory**: the root is dried and grinded and used to make coffee, but does not have a good taste. As a plant it is used in salad
- **Lingonberry** (Grenteni) and blueberry: used for jam making
- **Cumin** (Cargedò): used to flavour sauerkraut, but it also helps the digestion
- **Dandelion**: used in salad
- **Fern-common polypody**: it was sucked in the mouth, because of its strong liquorice taste instead of sweets. It grows near beech and chestnut trees



Flower characteristics of the campion.

Herbs used in cures

- **Arnica**: was added to oil or spirits like Grappa. The oil was used to massage bruises
- **Bay Leaf**: the tea was good for the digestion
- **Garlic**: a necklace of garlic was placed round a child's neck when they had mumps
- **Shepherd's Purse** (Capsella): placed in spirits it was used for many ailments. Very widespread in the fields before ploughing
- **Senna**: the leaves were bought in the chemist as a laxative and used for making tea
- **Wormwood** (assenzio): I remember my father coming back from the vineyards would always suck on a stem of wormwood
- **Mint**: the tea is good for the digestion. It was possible to make a liqueur 90° proof
- **Mountain Pine**: its honeydew was used for coughs and colds
- **Ribwort plantain**: when my father would cut himself with the scythe he would place the leaves on the wound to stop the blood, but also as a disinfectant
- **Lemon Balm**: dried it made a very soothing tea, even for children. It is an invasive weed with a strong lemon scent
- **St John's wort**: as a spirit it was a good pain killer
- **Dandelion**: makes a syrup by boiling the flowers and filtering them (half the amount of flowers and half the amount of sugar)
- **Elderberry**: its dried flowers were made into a tea to counteract fever and flu. The jam



At the top, edelweiss, dandelion shoots, herb products, the rosehips (*stropacui*).



Lingonberry.

was good for catarrh and for the digestion

- **Flaxseed:** was used for people and animals that had lost their appetite
- **Chamomile:** the tea was given to cows when they were poorly

ANOTHER INTERVIEW

Many herbs were gathered in the past, also because there was barely any medicine. We would use a lot of radicchio salad, when the leaves were big we would roast them and prepare gnocchi with them. We would make plenty of jam with plums and apples, only a little with pears, because the jam would be too runny.

Herbs used in the kitchen

- **Silene** (Sgrisole): they were cooked to make gnocchi or just boiled. They grow around the fields
- **Good King Henry or Poor Man's Asparagus** (Ravizole):

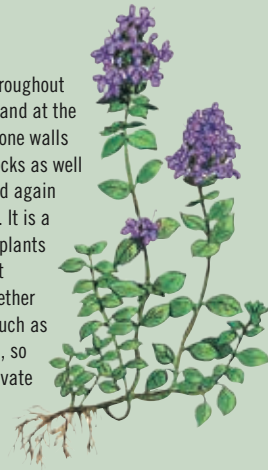
they were cooked and mixed with flour or potatoes and used to make gnocchi. You could find them anywhere in the mountains, especially near Casapinello farm house. We would pick them once they were about 10cm long

- **Goosefoot** (Farinele): we would cook or roast them. They would grow by the edge of fields or vegetable patches; only the head was picked once it reached 5-6cm long
- **Nettles** (Ortighe): we would use them in soups or else fried with spicy lard (minced lard with spices added). We would pick them fresh before the thorns grew
- **Elderberry:** we would make jam to spread on our bread. We would pick the ripe flower heads, boil them and filter them through a dishcloth then prepare our jam with lots of sugar
- **Dandelion:** they were eaten as a salad. If they were left for a few days we would cook them and eat as a vegetable

Scientific name: *Thymus serpyllum*
Common name: Thyme

Wild thyme, and its other subspecies, is widespread throughout the area of the Ecomuseum especially at high altitude and at the bottom of the valley. On low ground on the top of dry stone walls and in dry grassland and in high altitude among the rocks as well as on the sun-drenched ramps of the forestry paths and again around huge boulders where we will also find this herb. It is a low, usually prostrate subshrub, which forms mat-like plants with woody stems and a taproot. Depending on where it grows and which type of subspecies can determine whether it has a strong aromatic scent or not, with variations such as a citric smell. It is well to remember where you found it, so that you pick the right kind, otherwise it is best to cultivate it in the same way you would plant a common thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*), which looks like a little shrub with woody stems. It is used mostly to flavour dishes and in herbal teas and oils and tinctures, with its flowers

and its leaves. It can be harvested from Spring to Autumn choosing the right moment when its smell is strongest (for essential oils the best period is at the beginning of the flowering season). It is best taken after a meal as it helps the digestion and induces a calming action, however, it is more famous for its healing properties in aiding respiratory problems and used as an anti-inflammatory.



Scientific name: *Arnica montana*
Common name: Arnica

A well-known perennial herbaceous plant that grows in pastureland of acidic, siliceous or calcareous soil, that looks similar to a roadside daisy with an orange-yellowish colour. It often thrives in fields or alpine slopes along with nigritellae (*gymnadenia rhellicani*) and gentian. Occasionally, you can find them at about 1000 metres in cooler climates. If conditions are right, the position, the altitude and climate, it is possible to cultivate this plant. You can use the arnica flower heads, usually soaked in spirits like Grappa and left to stand, to treat haematoma, bruises, pain to the muscle or bone and rheumatism. It is possible to make an oily solution by soaking arnica in extra virgin olive oil then diluting (1-5) it for mudpacks to spread over the skin. Arnica works well only if it is used immediately. Remember that it is a protected species and therefore, you need permission from the local authorities or certified organisations to pick it.



Herbs used in cures

- **Mountain Pine:** it was used as a syrup for coughs. We would go as far as Sette Selle mountains to gather them!
- **Arnica:** another cough medicine was a tea made from arnica and chamomile
- **Aloe:** it was made into a tea for coughs
- **Wormwood** (assenzio): we would make a tea or a cream to heal wounds
- **Tansy** (tanacetum): we would make tea with this plant and give it to children who suffered from intestinal worms
- **Ribwort plantain:** the tea was used for catarrh, while the leaves were rubbed on a wound to help it heal
- **Elderberry:** the jam was used for coughs
- **Flaxseed:** an extract was used against constipation
- **Shepherd's Purse** (Capsella): it grows on steep mountain slopes
- **Maize:** the tassel of the cob was used to make a tea, but could also be used on a wound

RECIPES

Ribwort tea

Put a spoonful of ribwort into a ¼ litre of water. Bring to the boil and leave to cool.

Maize tea

Put a spoonful of tassel into a ¼ litre of water. Bring to the boil and leave to cool.

The following recipes were taken from the book "*La memoria degli antichi utilizzi*" (Remembering ancient usages), published 2011 in Roncegno Terme by the Associazione Montagna e Benessere (Association for Mountains and Wellness), based on a project conducted by the Primary school of Roncegno together with the Anziani Primavera club (Springtime Elders Club).

L'onto santo (ointment)

It is good for any illness: for cuts, burns, sprains, arthritis, acne, sores, insect bites and for extracting thorns or splinters.

Ingredients: *equal amount of 3 types of resinous oil (Silver Fir, Spruce, Larch), bee wax, second layer of Elderberry bark**,



extra virgin olive oil, butter (or lard or chicken fat).

Place all the ingredients in a double saucepan and cook till the pieces of bark have dried. Filter and pour into small jars.

* often the ointment is composed of only resinous oil.

L'onto di calendula (ointment)

Its good for swollen legs, chapped hands and feet, and good for the circulation.

Ingredients: *marigold flowers and lard.*

Heat the lard and add the flowers and cook like an omelette (on a low light). Leave to stand overnight. Re-heat in the morning, filter and put into jars.

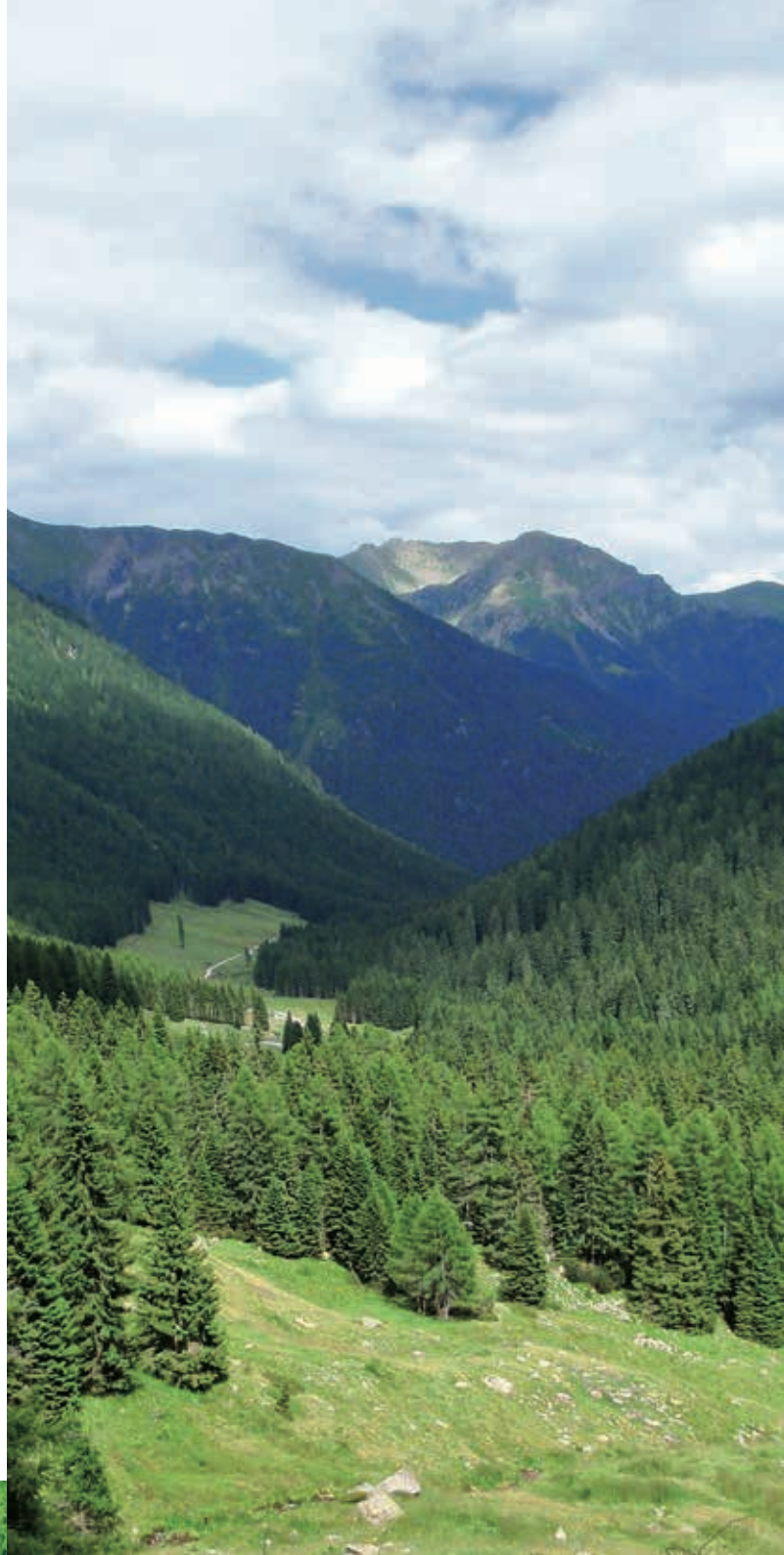
NATURAL COSMETICS

All the organic farms of Torcegno and Roncegno involved in medicinal herbs, which are members of "*Gruppo Erbe Officinali Valsugana*" (the Valsugana group of medicinal herbs), produce and sell several herbal cosmetics. The addresses of these farms can be found in chapter 6. Hotel Raphael of Roncegno also uses cultivated medicinal herbs from the area around Maso Albio.



To take note in the Lagorai Ecomuseum territory, whoever is interested in learning more about wild, medicinal and cultivated herbs, even other places and routes, of which, as follows:

- the Nature trail of the WWF oasis in Val Trigona, starting from Malga Valtrighetta, in Val Calamento. At Malga Valtrigona Visitors Centre and the small Alpine botanical garden;
- the pastures of Cagnon at the beginning of Val Calamento;
- the trail from Suerta at Malga Sette Selle;
- visits to local producers in Roncegno (by car, from Roncegno to Alpe Pozzo to Malga Trencia) a walk along the circular trail around mount Colo, with particular historical reference to the First World War.



G.C. FRANCO FURLAN NATURALIST TRAIL

Distance: 2 km / Slope: 100 metres / Time: 2 hours

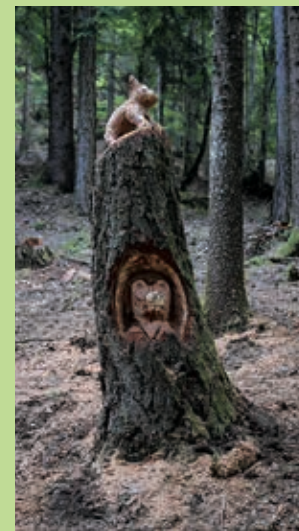
The G.C. Franco Furlan naturalist trail is an educational walk dedicated to the rediscovery of animals, trees and woodland. It is accessible from the hamlet of Betulle a Torcegno and it allows you to understand the animal and plant species present in our territory. It is suitable for both families and children alike. It was an idea of the Trentino Hunter's Association "Torcegno Reserve", along with the Forestry Commission of the district of Torcegno. It was established in 2010-2011 by the Conservationist and Environmentalist Office of the Autonomous Region of Trento. The trail is dedicated to the Forestry commissioner Franco Furlan, who tragically went missing, with his faithful dog Lajon, while attempting to rescue an injured mountain goat. It is an easy trail for everyone, about 2 km in length, with an average slope of 5%. From the parking spot of "Praelo" you climb towards the old road of "San Antonio", observing the great work done by the Forestry Commission; an eco-island, a barnyard bunker, the flora, the fauna and the streams along the way. You descend towards the educational facilities, where you can admire the nursery plants, a window mirroring the beauty of the countryside. There are interesting wooden sculptures that represent the local fauna, produced from the stumps of fir trees, making your walk more enjoyable.

Notes on herbs

In the woods you can find blueberries, woodruff, sorrel and fern, in addition to numerous types of conifers that provide the resinous oils used to make a miraculous ointment, known as "onti santi", destined to cure almost any illness. Above all it is in the clearings that you find interesting varieties of medicinal plants, from the overgrown herbs like willow herb, butterbur, nettles, clumps of raspberries and other typical herbs found in grassland, such as dandelion, silene and yarrow. Along the streams it is possible to find even mint.



In the large picture, a sorrel plant.
Wooden sculpture along the trail.



THE PASTURE HERBS TRAIL

Distance: 3 km / Slope: 200 metres / Time: 2 hours

A circular route, that begins at the B&B Agritur Malga Cere farm (200 metres high) in Val Calamento valley, where you can observe several medicinal species at high altitude, along the trail that leads to Val Maddalena valley and on towards Mount Valpiana, which hosts some important war relics (Herta Muller Haus, military hospital), then later returning to Malga Valpiana farmhouse (1843 metres high) and taste the dairy products containing the colourful flowers that are scattered over the hill pastures. The route follows the paths of the shepherds, who lead their stock to pasture along a beautiful picture postcard valley known as Val Maddalena, where ancient tracks guide you into the valleys of Val Montalon and Val Ziolera. From the pastureland of Cere you will come across a patch of woodland, where conifer trees (Spruce and Larch) cover a ledge, which opens out onto a splendid view, dotted with characteristic farmhouses, of the green pastures of the Maddalene range. From the plateau turn right, and along a crisscross path, which will lead you back into the woods, reaching the pastures of Malga Valpiana farm and finally descending along a dirt road will bring you back to your starting point.

Notes on herbs

Along the way you will encounter a wide variety of species, an eye-catching view more or less depending on the season. Of course, you will see yarrow, eyebright, arnica, heather, lingonberry and blueberry, Lady's mantle, low growing shrubby juniper, wild thyme, artichoke thistle, and garden cress growing along the streams, as well as wormwood and many more varieties. In the cattle fields near the farmhouses, the flora that dominates the area feeds on nitrogen substances, with a preference to nettles and dock herbs. At the edge of the woods and in the glades you may encounter among the bushes and fast growing herbs, medicinal varieties like willowherb, butterbur, raspberry, wild strawberry and blueberry.



Pasture in bloom.
On the left, *Carlina acaulis*, carline thistle like stars in the fields, an ancient and healthy food source used by mountaineers in the past.



THE LARCHES OF CASAPINELLO TRAIL

Distance: 3 km / Slope: 100 metres / Time: 2 hours

You can reach the Malga Casapinello farm (1706 metres high), from Torcegno, in this area you can find an enchanting lake surrounded by larch trees and a parking area. From here a pleasant path leads you through the woods of larches and thanks to the wooden boardwalks, disabled visitors, accompanied by their helpers, have access. The path joins a forestry access road, which leads to the Malga Prima Busa farm (1776 metres high), an area of great interest due to its wide-open spaces, full of medicinal and edible herbs. From the farmhouse go back along the road as far as the panoramic point, upstream from the lake and so back to your starting point or rather the Malga Casapinello farm. It is possible to extend your route by climbing as far as the Malga Prima Busa farm at the basin of the 7 Laghi (lakes) following the trail SAT323B in order to return to Casapinello along the trail SAT323.

Notes on herbs

The route gives you the opportunity to observe the typical varieties of the pasturelands and alpine heathlands, like yarrow, Lady's mantle, eyebright, lingonberry, low growing shrubby juniper, heather and wild thyme, which thrive near the farmhouses, especially the types that are enriched by the manure, such as Good King Henry, nettles, Bishop's weed or cow parsley, dandelion and in some areas also mint. Also interesting is the presence of wild chamomile close to the Malga Casapinello farmhouse. Among the Larch trees you can find wild strawberry, willowherb and ferns.



Water mint, the only species you will find at high altitude.
"Grenteni", lingonberry.

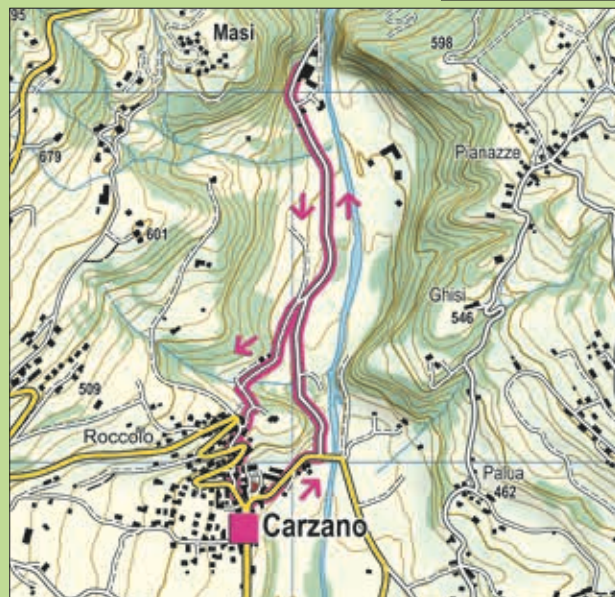
HERBS THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Distance: 3 km / Slope: within 100 metres / Time: 1 hour 30 mins.

The start of the trail is located in the parking area in the lower part of the village, near to the Madonna della Neve church (453 metres high), the parish holds remembrance to those fallen during a tragic event of the First World War known as “Sogno di Carzano” (Carzano dreams), which led to the almost entire destruction of the 72^o battalion Italian infantry and the death of about 300 Austrian-Hungarian soldiers. The path touches a large part of the war zone. From the church you can reach the Maso bridge (420 metres high), and towards the mountain along the tree-lined road of chestnuts and apples, it leads you on a pleasant walk to the hydroelectric power plant of Carzano (462 metres high). You go back along the same path until you reach the crossroads (437 metres high) of “Mas del Prete”, which climbs, taking you past some splendid chestnut trees towards the high part of the village, arriving at the old fountain (473 metres high). Turn left towards the old part of the village, which traces the old Roman road of the Via Claudia Augusta Altinate, where, finally, you reach the Villa Buffa and arrive back to the start of your journey. A pleasant diversion along the route is the Ristorante Le Rose restaurant, where you can taste some wonderful dishes made with herbs. Down in the valley you can find an interesting, well equipped, park by the river, that will round up your tour ideally, and where you can find even more examples of medicinal and edible herbs.

Notes on herbs

The route takes you through fields, grassland, orchards, chestnut trees, patches of shrubs and blankets of vegetation, boundary walls and steep slopes and lets you see numerous herbs both medicinal and edible types. Along the journey, take notice of the myriad of herbs like wild thyme, oregano, different types of chicory, dandelion, corn salad, shepherd's purse, ribwort plantain, burnet, yarrow, sorrel, Aaron's rod (*Verbascum Thapsus*), nettles, wild strawberry, false acacia (*Robinia*), elderberry, willows, violets, primrose and ivy.



From the top, clockwise: remembrance plaque to the fallen of Sogno di Carzano; corn salad and sow thistle. On the left, the Villa Buffa.





TOURISM TO THE SCENT OF HERBS

MASO ARIA

At the old family farmhouse in Roncegno, Ciola, Walter and Nunzia have created a trail of flavours where you can find local agricultural products, visit the herb gardens and taste them.

Opening times: from May to October every Wednesday from 9.30am

Prices: 5 euros per person, including tasting

Booking: every Wednesday from 9.30am – 5.30pm

Guides are only in Italian language

Tel. +39 0333 3916799

masoaria@alice.it

Maso Aria Farm – via Monte di Mezzo, 112 – 38050 Roncegno Terme

BED & BREAKFAST MONTE TESOBO

Situated 2 km from the town centre, at 800 metres high in the woods surrounding Roncegno Terme, it is a splendid view of the valley and has been very popular since 1857, the year in which the thermal waters were discovered. Today, special offers at the Spa include cultural trails such as Art in Sella. There are plenty of sport activities: Tennis courts, Orienteering paths, Golf course, Ski and Snowboard in the Lagorai area of Brocon Pass, water sports on the lakes of Levico and Caldonazzo, as well as Mountain bike trails of various degrees. For those who like Horse riding, there are several bridle paths on the nearby Lagorai mountains. The B&B has three rooms (one with a terrace, the other with a balcony), equipped with private bathrooms and are decorated in Country style furniture made by the local craftsmen, who use non-toxic paint. The owner, Stefania Dal Fior, who cultivates wild herbs, has given typical names to each room: Melissa (lemon balm), Lavanda (lavender), Malva (mallow). For breakfast the tendency is to serve organic, bio-products in the wooden panelled dining room (Stube) perfumed with the scent of burning logs and heated by a large, old ceramic tiled stove. In the Summer, breakfast is served on the terrace with its beautiful view. On the ground floor there is a bedsit with kitchen. Stefania cultivates medicinal as well as aromatic herbs and is more than happy to show you around her collection. For guests she prepares herbal teas, which are served

in a corner of the Stube. Stefania and her husband, Bruno, are members of the “Mountain and Wellness Association”, besides its dedication to wild herbs it also incorporates homemade products, farm produce and manufacturers of organic fruit juices.

Loc. Tesobbo - Monte di Mezzo, 11 – 38050 Roncegno (TN) - Italy

Tel. +39 0461 773185 – Mobile tel. +39 349 3567916

info@montetesobo.it – www.montetesobo.it

WILD HERBS

The passion and enthusiasm towards these plants and herbs has brought about the creation of the “Gruppo Erbe Officinali Valsugana” (Valsugana Wild Herbs Club), established for cultivating the ground, but above all to retail specialised products aimed at bringing balance and wellness to people. The Club manages a laboratory for drying plants, which offers guided tours along with tasting herbal teas at 5 euros a ticket. For bookings call +39 0461 764355. In July there is a traditional event in Roncegno Terme called “Festa delle Erbe Officinali” Festival, which brings to light the world of Nature and Wellness. It is possible to participate in activities like the one mentioned in the following paragraph:

FORAGING FOR HERBS...

The herbalist expert, Carlo Signorini, will guide you through the discovery of wild herbs that are found in the surrounding countryside. There is also a tour of the laboratory where you will experience the process of drying and transforming the herbs harvested in Maso Aria Farm, Roncegno, as well as being able to enjoy a breakfast. Afterwards, there will be a walk that takes you to the farmhouses of Roncegno arriving at St. Brigida, where you can visit the “Casa della Musica” museum. The final stage of your journey will be the wonderful park of the Roncegno Spa, where you will be able to enjoy a delicious lunch of Polenta conzada with Farmhouse cheese and herbs, Tosella cheese with herbs and a very special dessert.

AGRITUR MALGA CERE

The farmhouse has just been restored and is situated at an altitude of 1720 metres. Guests are welcome to stay in the 3 dormitory rooms that sleep 12 people, with toilet and shower. The kitchen offers a wide-range of local cuisine dressed with wild and medicinal herbs of the area. There are stables, which can house up to 10 horses. The farmhouse has won a prestigious award for respecting the environment the "Eco-ristorazione Trentino" trademark. Through this brand the Malga Cere proves its dedication to safeguarding the environment, reducing its carbon footprint, using a good recycling system, saving on energy, guaranteeing the use of organic products above all in their menus as well as inviting a correct and friendly behaviour from their customers.

Val Calamento (1.719 m) Località Cere - Telve (TN)
Cell. +39 333 4953398 – www.malgacere.it

AZIENDA AGRICOLA PANGEA - Maria Grazia Bonella

The Pangea farm is a small example of the mountain industry in Trentino. It is situated at an altitude of 750 metres in Torcegno in the Lagorai range. For some time now our little family business has been involved in the retailing of Fair Trade (GAS) and voluntary work, helping to preserve local traditions, restoring abandoned fields and cultivating medicinal and aromatic herbs as well as producing organic fruit and vegetables choosing resistant and primitive varieties, selling directly to customers and the food industry, maintaining a good balance between quality and price. Products include: syrups and teas, aromatic table salt made from our own herbs as well as natural salt, homemade cosmetics, scented products made from the local mountain herbs and seasonal fruit and vegetables as well as hazelnuts.

Contact us at: pangea.madreterra@yahoo.it

AZIENDA AGRICOLA CLAUDIA PEDRIN

This organic mountain farm specialises in seasonal fruit and vegetables and the production of plant shoots for the vegetable garden.

Via Molini, 5/A – 38050 Torcegno (TN)
Tel. +39 333 2635595

B&B LE ROSE - Carzano

The B&B Le Rose and restaurant is situated on the hillside in Carzano and has a splendid view of the Valsugana valley. It is a great starting place for excursions in the surrounding mountains. The B&B Le Rose comprises 3 bedrooms, a dining room with an adjoining terrace. The restaurant opened in 1984 and has a variety of menus for all occasions. It is well known for its fish dishes. They also offer a medicinal herb theme menu using wild plants and flowers.

Via 18 settembre – 38050 Carzano (TN)
Tel. +39 0461 766177 – Mobile tel. +39 339 5476035
beb@le-rose.it – ristorante@le-rose.it – www.lerose.it

HOTEL RISTORANTE NEGRITELLA - Torcegno

The hotel can be found at an altitude of 800 metres in a very peaceful area in wide-open grassland overshadowed by towering mountains of 2000 metres high and a forest of ancient chestnut trees and offering a wonderful view of the Cima 12 mountain range. Its traditional food is very famous and incorporates the medicinal herbs found around the territory of the Lagorai Ecomuseum.

Tel. +39 0461 766341 / +39 0461 766341
info@hotelnegritellatrentino.it – www.hotelnegritellatrentino.it

LE POZZE RESTAURANT - Luigi Montibeller

It can be found in the mountains of Roncegno Terme. The restaurant offers the possibility of tasting typical Trentino dishes with a special attention to wild and medicinal herbs that grow in the surrounding area.

Località Pozze (1.430 m)
Tel. +39 0461 764606 / +39 338 4260485 (ask for Luigi)



CONTACT US ON ARRIVAL AT THE FOLLOWING
ECOMUSEUM OFFICES



Ecomuseo del Lagorai

Telve – Tel. +39 348 6769967

info@ecomuseolagorai.eu – www.ecomuseolagorai.eu

i Azienda per il Turismo Valsugana-Lagorai

Office of Borgo Valsugana

Tel. +39 0461 752393

info@valsugana.info – www.valsugana.info

Associazione Accompagnatori di Territorio Trentino

Vicolo Galasso, 19 – 38122 Trento

info@accompagnatoriditerritorio.it – www.accompagnatoriditerritorio.it

Associazione Montagna e Benessere

Piazza A. De Giovanni, 1 – 38050 Roncegno Terme (TN)

www.montagnaebenessere.it

Riserva locale Oasi WWF di Valtrigona

WWF Trentino Alto Adige

Tel. +39 0461 231842

valtrigona@wwf.it – www.wwf.it/trentinoaltoadige

Libera Associazione Pastori e Malghesi del Lagorai

c/o Latteria Sociale, fraz. Tomaselli di Strigno

Tel. +39 349 5363542

info@associazionemalghesilagorai.it – im.zanetti@libero.it

www.associazione-malghesilagorai.it







JUDICARIA ECOMUSEUM

JUDICARIA ECOMUSEUM: “FROM THE DOLOMITES TO LAKE GARDA”

The area of the Judicaria Ecomuseum “From the Dolomites to Lake Garda” comprises of six districts of the Exterior Giudicarie and that of Tenno and it boasts of having an exceptional geographical position extremely varied. In only 30km as the crow flies you pass through Mediterranean style villages overlooking Lake Garda, to the 3173 metre Cima Tosa the highest peak in the Brenta Dolomites. The Ecomuseum plays guardian to an immense natural heritage so important that it is a candidate for the award “Biosphere Reserve” of UNESCO, in which agriculture still plays a fundamental role. For example the cultivation of typical products like olives, potatoes and nuts as well as maize for fodder and fruit trees (grapes, apples, cherries and berries). At one time agriculture was very different and included the cultivation of wild raspberry,

tobacco, crops and cereal. There were plenty of herbs and root vegetables and tree resin (like those of larch, pine and spruce, considered extraordinary) which was very useful. In higher ground gentiana, edelweiss and arnica grew. Whereas along the three plateaus – Lomaso, Bleggio and Banale – yarrow, nettle, common horsetail, dandelion, but even silene, St John’s wort, oregano, mint and wild chamomile thrived. While in the areas close to Lake Garda, with its mild climate, you can find more typical Mediterranean varieties. Everywhere you can gather the berries of cornelian cherry (cornus mas), rich in vitamin C, used mainly as a syrup similar to the preparation of elderberry and its flowers.

A field of crops in Lomaso (Azienda Agricola Castel Campo), rediscovery of ancient cultivation. On the right, olives in Tenno, a Mediterranean flavour for the Ecomuseum.



ECOMUSEUM AND SY_CULTOUR PROJECT

The Judicaria Ecomuseum “From the Dolomites to Lake Garda” is involved, along with the other seven Ecomuseums of Trentino, in a European project entitled “From tradition to production: sustainable usage of cultivated wild and medicinal herbs in the context of promoting local tourism” under the supervision of Organic Production Office. This initiative aims at exploiting the rural community trying to create a synergy between farmers and tourism, spreading

the knowledge of medicinal plant cultivation that in the past was widespread, but now almost forgotten. In order to do this the Ecomuseum has engaged the three main organic farms in the area, that operate in the sector of cultivating medicinal plants, encouraging a cooperation between experts and restaurateurs in a cohesive programme of initiative. The theme of medicinal plants and herbs widens the area of awareness and exploits the local heritage, promoted by

the Ecomuseum in its mission to strengthen existing ties between the territory, its assets, its customs and the community. The project was effective in a two-year period of 2012/2013. An important research into the territory was conducted during the first year to uncover the farms already active in this sector and who were interested in becoming partners in this European project. They were asked to cooperate in the programme and to work in publicising the usefulness of medicinal herbs. In the first part of the project some experimental proposals for local reconstruction were initiated. Throughout 2013 the project was explicit in different ways and involved a variety of people. In the first few months of the year, when the flora was still inactive, great importance was given to instructing the people by means of evening classes. The participants were all residents of the districts around the Ecomuseum. The three meetings, organised by the councils of San Lorenzo in Banale, Ponte Arche and Teno, were held to discuss and to

analyse various themes on the growth of medicinal herbs in the territory and their culinary and healing possibilities. From the beginning the importance of involving the local community was evident in that it was necessary to align the project with the reality of the area. During these months the farms were engaged in provincial initiatives such as the “*Festival of Ethnography*” as in other locations “*Mother’s Day Festival*” as well as concerts where they could display their produce. There were some original attempts for example tasting ice cream made with rosemary, chamomile, rose, crimson bee-balm, or during a traditional supper of Cavrasto, where flower petals together with nuts gave a touch of excellence to the menu. Again, there was a sauce prepared with fresh local yoghurt and a ginger mint used as a dressing for salad while the elderberry was accompanied by a walnut cake. At the recently reconstructed farmhouse, Maso Pacomio, situated in the hamlet of Curè, a meeting took place, in Springtime, on the theme of wild herbs. The participants walking



around this area of grassland and woods were able to admire the numerous varieties of plants. A few herb samples were collected and catalogued once the people had re-entered the farmhouse, which presented a valid excuse for engaging in this type of initiative. The cooperation with the Comano Terme Spa has allowed us to establish a flowerbed at the entrance to the park dedicated to medicinal herbs that has become a tourist attraction. Another successful event for residents and tourists alike was the *"Wild Herbs & Honey Festival"*. Thanks to the good weather, there were two days of displaying a rich array of products as well as tasting and meetings on various themes as: flowers, honey and insects; dough made with honey then cooked to make bread with herbs; health remedies with medicinal herbs. The latter, in particular, drew a lot of interest and public attention. In Autumn, "A

Day for the Countryside" Festival produced an opportunity to take a walk in the mountains passing by the high altitude cultivation of edelweiss, arnica and gentiana, continuing on to Malga di Vigo farm, where everyone could taste delicious pancakes filled with herb jam and drink hot herbal teas. As you can see there is no lack of ideas for the tourists with guided tours like these mentioned and the Autumn event conducted at the Comano Terme Spa, who can help you with the various remedies such as the clay mudpacks used as a beauty treatment. At the time of the Christmas Markets of Rango and Canale di Tenno, visitors were given a little bag of Christmas teas; an initiative aimed at communicating the importance of natural local produce and to understand that from simple gestures and tastes we can respect the environment and maintain sustainability.





LOCAL USAGE OF HERBS

THE TRADITIONAL WAY OF USING HERBS IN THE JUDICARIA ECOMUSEUM

To repossess the old traditions also means to dedicate oneself to the methods of cataloguing and studying the medicinal plants and herbs. In preparing a herbal manual it is perhaps one of the best ways to remind oneself of the importance of recognising varieties and is certainly a useful element for the experts in those moments when they have a doubt.

A HERBARIUM MANUAL

Here are some of the things required when compiling a herbarium manual:

1. Gathering herbs

While you are walking pick some plants or part of plants and put them in a newspaper in a rigid folder; it is a good idea to know beforehand the rarer species, because if they are rare it is best

not to pick them, it would be better to just photograph them (only for scientific purposes is it allowed to gather rare herbs).

2. Pressing herbs

Once you have brought the plants home, take them out of the rigid folder and press them, this will take the liquid out of the plants, (the press can be professional or not), the sheets of newspaper used to absorb the liquid should be changed at regular intervals (every 2-3 days), because they get wet fairly quickly. If the process is done properly the plants can last for centuries, keeping their original colour.

3. Assembling herbs

After about 3 weeks, the plants are removed from the press and spread out over sheets of white cardboard and are then fixed in place with clips or tape (the sheets are generally 30-33cm x 46-50cm.).



Above shows two pages of a Herbarium.
On the left, arnica flowers.





A view of Casa della Flora.

4. Labelling herbs

Each sample put on cardboard must be labelled with all its particularities like scientific name, genus, place and altitude where it is picked, name of the person who found the plant as well as who classified it.

5. Storing herbs

All the cardboards are placed on a bookcase and sealed, then once a year must be put in the freezer at -20° to kill off any insect eggs. Every manual is a scientific collection of high standards, indispensable for museums, collectors, botanists and university students alike.

HOUSE OF FLOWERS – NATURE RESERVE OF RIO BIANCO-ADAMELLO BRENTA PARK

The nature reserve trail of Stenico, next to the karstic resurgence of the Rio Bianco is an area of the Ecomuseum where you can learn a lot about the world of medicinal herbs. The tour begins with a visit to the medicinal flowerbeds that you encounter in the Adamello-Brenta Park and its neighbouring areas. Afterwards, you can walk through the thermophile woods, from here you continue on to the humid ravine where you will reach the vertical, sun-drenched Dolomitic crags. In each of these areas you will find interesting flowers and plants. All of this can be seen through a display of posters and photographs on show at the

Nome scientifico: *Calamintha nèpeta* L.
Nome popolare: Lesser calamint

The Lesser calamint grows among the olives of Tenno, where it can be found in thermophile niche and along the dry stone walls as far as the northern borders of the Ecomuseum, at the foot of the Brenta Dolomites. It is considered as a key factor of this territory. It is a strong, aromatic plant, which gives off a distinct scent of mint when trampled on as happens when walking through the vineyards and olive groves. The Lesser calamint is a perennial shrub with creeping rhizomes and has small characteristic leaves slightly heart shaped, long stems more than half a metre in length, but normally shorter, tubular flowers lavender pink in colour are sometimes bluish, with a lengthy flowering season up to the Autumn. With this species the flower buds and the leaves are dried and used as a singular herb or grouped with other dried herbs. Its known therapeutic properties are stimulant, tonic, strengthening, antispasmodic, aromatising, soothing and good for the digestion. Therefore, an interesting species to learn about and use, a must for kitchen gardens.



Nome scientifico: *Silene vulgaris*
 Nome popolare: Bladder campion

A widespread species, about half a metre long, well known as an adult plant thanks to its puffy flower heads that if still closed they are picked by children who love to flip them open on the back of their hands. The shape of the flower seems to have given its name to the plant in honour of the Greek god Silenus, a companion of Dionysus, often shown with a fat belly. It can be found on the plains at the bottom of the mountains, almost in all fields except those that are over fertilized, but even along the dry stone walls of embankments and at the side of the road. The campion, together with the dandelion, is a wild herb very popular in salads. In the last few years it is even cultivated. In the Springtime it is better to pick the young silvery lanceolate shoots that are easily recognised. If it is pruned it is possible to obtain a second harvest even later on in the season until Autumn. Its flavour is distinct similar to that of spinach, usually cooked in a risotto rice or soup or boiled for a side dish. Of the same genus is White campion, not as well known, but has similar culinary properties, locally known as "Hare's ears", often associated with *Silene vulgaris*, whose downy leaves do not look very appetising. Once boiled their furry aspect is no longer a problem and they can be very versatile in the kitchen.



Casa Parco museum (ex Bergaglio). On the first floor there are posters describing the uses of cultivated medicinal and wild herbs in the nature reserve, accompanied by a display of tubs containing samples of sections of plants and their fruit, in this way you can experience their scent. There are also samples of wood from the thermophile forest as well as other areas visited along the educational trail, with informative posters that indicate the traditional usage of the various timbers. The top floor hosts a photographic exhibition of the many plants and herbs found in the Adamello-Brenta Park. Leaving behind the museum the next step is to follow the trail, climbing upwards to where there are numerous cultivated species, (especially fruit trees). Some of them are ancient and out of production. This is a very special world of vegetation, with great relevance and with particular medicinal properties, for example the willow, which is normally found on the plains, as well as low growing shrubs at altitudes as high as 3000 metres.

ALPINE WILLOWS

- *Salix herbacea* (dwarf willow) (it is the smallest woody plant in the world)
- *Salix reticulata* (net-leaf willow) (it is a minute plant with white leaves (the under side densely hairy) that have a network of veins)
- *Salix retusa* (a plant with creeping stems like the others and is of great importance beyond the limits of the forest, in fact its long stems guard against soil erosion)

MEDICINAL HERBS AND SALICYLIC ACID

Filipendula ulmaria (meadow-sweet) (a plant that grows in damp meadows: near streams, swamps and damp meadows) and *Filipendula vulgaris* (dropwort) (a plant found in dry pastures and sun-drenched slopes) its oil contains rich traces of salicylic acid (this is a prime ingredient of aspirin). Both varieties are very common in grasslands that are not over fertilized. The species that belong to the *Salix* genus contain a high quantity of salicylic acid. This acid is very toxic if taken in large quantities, it is extracted from the bark of the *Salix alba* (white willow) and the *Salix purpurea* (purple willow). These willows are very common along rivers and streams, for example along the banks of the river Sarca. Willows are rich in tannin used in disinfectants and in healing wounds. The area around the Ecomuseum hosts 17 different species of *Salix*, in the province there are about 29, in various sizes from a few small centimetres to over 20 metres in height. The branches of willows are often used to make baskets. In some jobs performed by environmental engineers, willow cuttings are used because of their excellent quality in strengthening embankments and riverbanks.



GIUSEPPE BONI AND OTHER "HERB COLLECTORS"

There have been many botanists who have collected herbs in the Giudicarie Esteriori area in the period around '800 and during the 1900s, working tirelessly to gather the different species cataloguing them and publishing their works. Among these we remember Francesco Facchini, Francesco Ambrosi, John Ball the "discoverer" of the Bocca di Brenta Dolomites and Ludwig Sarnthein, author of the renowned work *Flora of Tirol, Vorarlberg and Liedyfrastein*. Two people in particular stand out for their great efforts in this area, Giuseppe Loss and Giuseppe Boni. Mr. Loss was born in Fiera di Primiero in 1831 and died in 1880, he was a policeman in Stenico and he collected a lot of plants in Stenico and in the Brenta Dolomites, which are on show in the Ferdinandeum museum of Innsbruck. On the 20th July 1865, Loss, along with 4 other companions, reached the top of the highest peak in the Brenta Dolomites, Cima Tosa. Giuseppe Boni, born in 1813 in Tione and died at the young age of 33 years in 1846 due to a fall during an excursion in Campiglio while looking for plants, he graduated in pharmacy and started to collect species from the Rendena valley, widening his search in many places of the Val di Sole valley as well as around Riva del Garda on the lake and the area of Giudicarie Esteriori. Even the famous herb collector Giuseppe Boni can be found in the Ferdinandeum museum. In recent times, the Giudicarie valley had been repeatedly visited by Vittorio Marchesoni (1912- 1963), a

native of Malé and professor at the University of Camerino and Padua and is also the author of a manual entitled "*Dal leccio al cembro*", which contains numerous references to flora and vegetation found in the Giudicarie valley and also Giuseppe Dalla Fior (1884-1967) the first person in Italy to introduce the pollen analysis, whose work is entitled "*La nostra flora*" a valid piece of work even today. Dalla Fior also completed a research on the disposition of plant pollen around the area of Palude di Fivavè. It was here that environmental archaeologists conducted paleobotany studies. Thanks to this research it was possible to reconstruct the evolution of the ground vegetation, after the last Ice Age (around 10,000 BC) up to the present day. Botanic studies are still in process, with researchers from the Civic Museum of Rovereto and the Science Museum of Trento (MUSE) as well as experts from the SAT association and other keen collectors, who have established a map of the flora that has been recently catalogued, often discovering new species identified in the southwest corners of the Ecomuseum's territory, the mountainous section of Ballino Pass, Bleggio and the Concei valley, one of the most diverse floral areas of the entire alpine region. Another season of discovery following in the footsteps of the "herb collectors" of the past, which comprises studying and interpreting the old ways of using plants for food and health.

On the left a thyme-leaved willow
and nigritellae.

NATURAL COSMETICS

The farms that cultivate medicinal herbs around the Ecomuseum territory also prepare cosmetics using local ingredients and herbs, innovative research that mixes fruit properties with walnuts from Bleggio or jenny milk with therapeutic substances found in herbs and other plants. For the moment only a few farms produce such cosmetics, but we foresee an increase in production and requests in the next few years.

COSMETICS OF THE ERIKA CALDERA FARM INDUSTRY

Walnut moisturising cream

Walnut is a refreshing plant and anti-ageing, there was a widespread cultivation in Bleggio up to a few years ago. The oil is obtained from the fruit and is one of the best moisturisers to penetrate into the skin as well as having antioxidant properties.

Nettle and Walnut Shampoo

Nettle is a revitalizing and cleansing plant. It is governed by the planet Mars and like all "Martian" plants it stimulates the immune system and cleanses the blood pumping vital energy. Moreover the hairy plant reminds us of its invigorating action on the scalp and skin.

Lavender and walnut body oil

Lavender is governed by Mercury and the Moon. The planet Mercury controls communication, presides over the function of the nervous system and therefore, language. The mer-

curial plants arouse intelligence and cure headaches. The Moon however, confers soothing properties and helps us to sleep.

St John's wort ointment

It is an ancient remedy made up of beeswax, St John's wort, walnuts, sunflower oil and vitamin E. The plant extracts are prepared by using plants that need time to form balsamic substances, meaning each plant presents the maximum concentration of effective active principles.

Balsamic ointment

It is an ancient remedy made up of beeswax, honey, thyme, walnut, lavender and essential oils of thyme, mint, lavender and lemongrass. All the preparation is done with the maximum respect for the balsamic process of each singular plant. It is not to be used on damaged or irritable skin.

Lip balm

Lip balm is made up of natural beeswax, marigold, chamomile and walnut, and supplies the lips with important nutritive, moisturising and softening substances. It also contains organic sunflower oil and vitamin E to provide soft, healthy lips.

On the right, crimson bee-balm and marigold.





A COSMETIC RANGE FROM AZIENDA AGRICOLA AGRILIFE

In the two cosmetic ranges of **Fior di Latte** and **Fior di Montagna**, Nature's properties encounter a guarantee that provides the use of the most modern techniques of extraction and preparation in offering a perfectly natural beauty treatment. The cosmetics that **Agrilife** propose are achieved with the cooperation of a laboratory, which specialises in transforming cosmetic farmhouse products into high quality goods and operates in partnership with research companies for a number of years. The jenny's milk used in the cosmetic range **Fior di Latte** is subjected to a short, light burst of thermal recovery treatment: this guarantees the maintenance of all the precious natural components of the product. The cosmetics are enriched by an evening primrose extract (*Oenothera biennis*) an excellent source of gamma-linolenic acid with elasticated and derma-restoring properties, which exalt the peculiarities of the jenny's milk. The plant extracts used in the cosmetic range of **Fior di Montagna** come from fresh plants cultivated by **Agrilife** who use biological methods; these extracts are rich in active principles and offer natural mixtures that are, for their structure and characteristics, mainly derma-compatible. The benefits of a unique milk along with the active principles of mountain plants and the attention given to every single moment of the supply chain production, gives rise to rich moisturisers and cleansers: a very natural well-being for your skin and for those who are close to you.

The **Fior di Latte** cosmetic range includes:

Face cream with jenny milk (20%) and evening primrose extract (*Oenothera biennis*)

Face lotion with jenny milk (30%) and evening primrose extract (*Oenothera biennis*)

Nourishing hand cream with jenny milk (5%), evening primrose extract (*Oenothera biennis*), potato starch, medicinal marigold and corn protein extract

Nourishing and moisturising body cream with jenny milk (10%), edelweiss extract (*Lentopodium Alpinum Helvetia*) and cornflower

Moisturising bath/shower bubble bath with jenny milk (5%) and edelweiss extract (*Lentopodium Alpinum Helvetia*)

The **Fior di Montagna** cosmetic range includes:

Sun cream SPF 30UVB with evening primrose extract (*Oenothera biennis*) and edelweiss

Mountain pine and thyme conditioner with mountain pine extract (buds) and thyme

Foot gel with mountain pine with mountain arnica extract, peppermint, mountain pine extract (buds) and thyme

Arnica and mountain pine cream with mountain arnica extract and mountain pine (buds)

Lip balm with evening primrose extract (*Oenothera biennis*), mountain pine (buds) and edelweiss (*Lentopodium Alpinum Helvetia*).

The cosmetic ranges are in continuous renewal!

On the left, coneflower and edelweiss.

FROM OLIVE TREES TO LAKE TENNO

Distance: 8 km / Slope: 300 metres / Time: 3-4 hours

A suggestive circular route that allows you to visit the many different environments of Magnone valley, where the sub Mediterranean essence of Lake Garda meets the mountain forests. Starting from lake Tenno, unique in its colour that mirrors like an open sky among the mountains, you can reach, along minor pathways, till you arrive at the ancient hamlets of Canale di Tenno and Calvola, which are part of what is known locally as “*Ville del Monte*”. Preserving the typical characteristics of the Middle Ages has ensured that Canale was inserted in the list of “*I borghi più Belli d’Italia*” (the most beautiful hamlets of Italy), where you can find the “*Casa degli Artisti*” (Artists’ house) and where traditional events are held. The view opens out on the rows of ancient terraces that extend downhill until the “*Busa*” of Riva and Arco, arriving at Monte Baldo and Lake Garda. We find ourselves among the fields, vegetable gardens, vineyards and woodland. From Calvola you descend directly to Tenno, with its famous castle. During the climb down you will encounter the first olive trees, a cultivation that expands the further you go down the path, towards the lower hamlets of the district, alternating among vineyards. The fortified hamlet of Frapporta, in Tenno, deserves a visit, including the entrance gate wall and the castle gate along with the church of San Lorenzo. From here on you descend towards the Magnone stream and cross over the valley until you reach Pranzo.

The climate on this part of the valley is cooler; the olive cultivations are the last few fields, while there is a greater presence of vegetable gardens and other small allotments. Thanks to the presence of acidic soil, of moraine origin, left over from the old glaciers, the outskirts of Pranzo host chestnut trees that produce the local “*Marrone di Pranzo*”. Eventually you return to lake Tenno, passing by a spring known as “*l’acqua del malai*”, a rich fountain and very digestible.

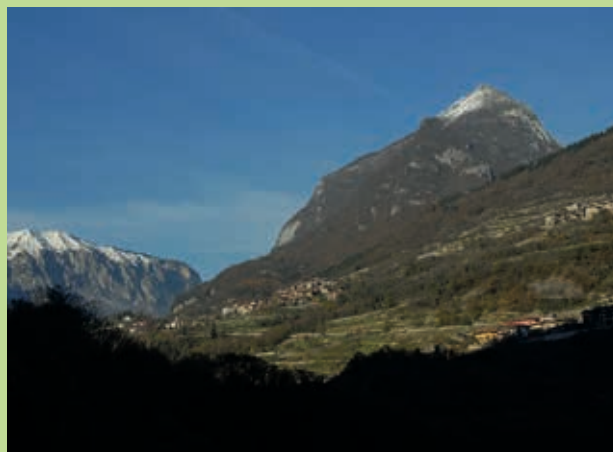


Notes on herbs

Thanks to the great environmental diversity of the trail, the sub Mediterranean influx and the presence of numerous structures, which favour the presence of medicinal herbs, like the dry stone walls, the route allows you to observe the many different species, particularly to those who are interested. Amongst those species you can find are: among the olives are the lesser calamint, rosemary, wild fennel, common rue, oregano, thyme, mint, wild rocket, fern and ivy along the walls. Catchfly, wild sage, valerian, dropwort, yarrow, burnet, dandelion, various chicory, hop, elderberry, hawthorn, cornelian cherry tree, dropwort in the fields and grassland, sorrel, wood sorrel, ferns, nettles, burdock, lungwort, wild strawberry, raspberry, violets and many more in the undergrowth.



Olive tree, symbol of the sub Mediterranean influence in the Ecomuseum; above, an ivy. On the right the ancient villas of Canale and Calvola below Monte Misone, the entrance to the Giudicarie.



THE HERBS OF LOMASO, THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF S. MARTINO AND THE MALGA DI VIGO FARMHOUSE

Distance: 10 km / Slope: 400 metres / Time: 4-5 hours

A suggestive trail that allows you to link your visit to an important archaeological site and observing the cultivation of edelweiss, and arnica and the typical species found in the pastures at an average altitude, around the Malga di Vigo farmhouse. Once you return to the valley we recommend that you visit the Azienda Agricola Agrilife, with its cultivation of medicinal herbs and berries, along with horses and friendly donkeys, close to Maso Redont, an organic farm specialising in the horticultural production. It is possible to buy products like jams, syrups, creams and dairy products. The starting point is in Lundo (700 metre high), following the forestry road (sign posted SAT 425) in the direction of "Malga di Vigo" and "Monte Blestone". After almost 3 km you will reach a diversion for the archaeological site of Monte San Martino (983 metres high). The visit to the ancient ruins that stud the mountain like stars is a way of embracing the age of pilgrims, knights and wayfarers who travelled the ancient mountain paths and found shelter and protection in these places. Once you return to the forest road you can make your way up between woods and pastures towards Malga di Vigo. In a clearing to the right you will find cultivations of edelweiss and arnica, managed by the Azienda Agrilife Farm. Finally, climb up the valley and you will reach a wide-open pastureland, recently recuperated, where you will find the Malga di Vigo farmhouse at (1085 metres high).

Notes on herbs

You can find cultivations of edelweiss and arnica, yarrow, spirea, catchfly, field scabious, thyme, wild sage, nettles, elderberry, common horsetail, ivy, ferns and many more in the pastureland and on the edge of the forest like wood sorrel, woodruff and mountain asparagus in the woods, butterbur in the springtime along the side of the forestry paths.



The herbs of Bleggio

For the visit to Bleggio Superiore, a land of walnuts and boundary roads of the "Filagne", granite slabs positioned vertically, a little digression is recommended in any way you feel appropriate (it is advised to go on foot following the minor paths for a better look at the area) whether Santa Croce, the villages of the "Quadra", Bivedo, Larido, Marazzone and Cavaione, the village of Rango, one of the "Borghi più Belli d'Italia" and Balbido "Il paese dipinto" (painted village), with its murals. Besides the sacred art monuments on show and the ruins of Castel Restor, near Larido, we recommend you visit the Azienda Agricola Erika Caldera farm in Marazzone (near the Fire Brigade depot, telephone number in chapter 6) and discover, together with the owner, the secrets of cultivating wild herbs in the area and visiting the fields that lead to Durone Pass, an ancient path towards the "busa" of Tione. From the Pass you embark on an interesting excursion from the point of view of medicinal plants, thanks to the rich flora at this altitude, continue to Malga Stabio farm and to the south there is the peak of Cima Sera, whereas to the north there is Monte San Martino, where you will find traces of ancient settlements towards the peak, sadly however, spoilt by the presence of mobile phone antennas.

To the far right, scabious 'pink mist' and damask rose and Lomaso yarrow.

THE VALLEY OF MILLS AND THE BOTANICAL GARDEN OF RIO BIANCO AT STENICO

Distance: 4 km / Slope: 300 metres / Time: 3 hours

A short walk yet rich with interpretational ideas that can be conveyed in a typical valley of ancient factories (seven mills, a sawmill, a tannery, a foundry, two workshops and a nail factory) along an old path between Ponte Pià bridge (the ancient “Scaleta”) and the Banale, where you connect to the SAT route “from Garda to Brenta”. Moving on you can find the typical hamlet of Stenico with its magnificent castle and its frescos from the first half of the 1200s. Leaving the castle, turn west of the village you can easily reach the panoramic road to the Botanical garden affiliated to the Flora Visitors Centre of the Adamello-Brenta Park, near the Rio Bianco waterfall, typical karstic resurgence of a seasonal intermittent system. The starting point is located not far from the parking area of Forra di Ponte Pià, on the road between Ponte Arche and Tione, near the hydroelectric powerplant, powered by the vigorous water of the Valle dei Molini.

Notes on herbs

There are thermophile species in Val dei Molini, such as mint, thyme, berberry, lichwort, ferns, ivy, juniper, wild strawberry, chicory, lime tree and various shrubs. Alpine and mountain species are visible in the Botanical garden.



Above, berberry fruit. On the right, *orchis tridentate* (three-toothed orchid) in dry grassland and lichwort, known in Trentino as “vedriola”.



THE FAR NORTH OF THE ECOMUSEUM: FROM S. LORENZO IN BANALE TO LAKE NEMBIA, PASSING THROUGH MOLINE AND DEGGIA

Distance: 13.5 km / Slope: 400 metres / Time: 4-5 hours

The trail starts at San Lorenzo in Banale, a village formed by seven units that have preserved the original features, the reason why they were inserted, Rango (Bleggio Superiore) and Canale di Tenno, into the club of the "Borghi più Belli d'Italia (the most beautiful hamlets of Italy). From the town centre you descend to Promeghin, visible from the basin of Bleggio and Lomaso. Proceeding downwards you go round the relief where you can find the fortifications of Castle Mani, reaching the characteristic hamlet of Moline, a kind of bridge over the Bondai stream. We are following in the footsteps of the ancient path that connected the Valle dei Laghi and Val di Non. At Moline you can find rooms with a tavern and factories that work with wood and iron. Following the cobblestone road you climb to the Madonna del Caravaggio di Deggia sanctuary, built by the ex voto of the village on the occasion of the cholera outbreak in 1855. Moving on through woods and old farms you can reach the hamlet of Nembia, where you can find a nature path established by the WWF, which goes through the basin where individual huts lean against the fallen rocks from the overhanging ridge to arrive at the beautiful lake of Nembia. The way back follows the old road incised in the rock with interesting views, towards Deggia and Moline.

For those who do not have enough time, or stamina for completing the trail we recommend following the path to visit Col Beo (a relief just north of Castle Mani), recently established by the Forestry Commission, with view points, informative billboards and the presence of numerous different species of medicinal plants, and then you can take a car to Nembia and follow the nature trail with the illustrated maps.



Notes on herbs

The path goes through various ecological niches, from cultivations to semi-arid grasslands, to rocks, to screes to thermophile and mesophyll woods, to panoramic views that open out onto average and higher ground. In any case medicinal species prevail situated in warm places, like ivy, fern, lichwort, lesser calamint, and along dry stone walls are dandelion, chicory, wild sage, ribwort, yarrow, catchfly, hawthorn, wild strawberry, berberry and dog rose around the edge of the forest.



The Val Ambiez and Banale hamlets, an area to the north of the Ecomuseum. To the right, young yarrow plants and Nembia lake.





TOURISM TO THE SCENT OF HERBS

THE JUDICARIA ECOMUSEUM COOPERATES WITH SOME FARMS, TOUR OPERATORS AND RESTAURANTS THAT PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE CARE IN SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

AZIENDA AGRICOLA AGRILIFE - Moira Donati

AGRILIFE is a farm immersed in the green belt of Val Lomasona nearby the Spa of Comano Terme founded by the love and passion of breeding donkeys and for the cultivation of medicinal mountain herbs in harmony with Nature. AGRILIFE represents a way of life tied to the discovery of the territory, its fruit and its donkeys, a good friend, who has been neglected. AGRILIFE is a multifunctional farm in Vigo Lomaso - Comano Terme, where they breed donkeys and cultivate medicinal plants (even at 1200 metres), potatoes, corn and an educational farm. It has a retail outlet that sells the farm's produce: aromatic and fruit jams, aromatic syrups, apple juice and fruit, dried apples, natural cosmetics, flour and potatoes.

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AZIENDA AGRICOLA CASTEL CAMPO

Castel Campo is a private residence of the Rasini family, who periodically host various events especially in the Summer; theatre groups and famous musicians and orchestras. The vocation of the “rifugio comunitario” recalls with good results for the public, the musicians and at the same time the valley. The audience is housed in the courtyard or in the refurbished and heated barn, the farmhouse is called “Pacomio” in Curé, inside the castle walls. Castel Campo is also an organic farm and hosts agricultural events such as the “Scampagnate” organised by the Donne In Campo Association, with a little market stalls selling farm products from all over Trentino as well as exhibitions and craftsmen workshops.

The Farm

From Da Campo to Trapp to Rautenstrauch, the gentry of this land, from the '200s to the First World War, they were all involved in cultivation and breeding, in the countryside in the middle of the valley. They cultivated cereal, wine, fruit and walnuts. From 1920, the Rasini family had first experimented with different crops, then they rented out their land to others. The castle's fields climb gradually towards the south west, until the hamlet of Curé, a village that was completely wiped out by the plague in 1630, and there remains only a few houses and a 500 year old church of San Vigilio. “We are restoring our farmland”, said the owner, Marina, “fortunately it is encased by two wooded slopes that descend towards the Duina stream on one side and on the other by the Rezola stream, to give back its traditional look and practice a biological farming method. I am sure it will be a relief to the local wildlife that we have been trying to protect for years with a nature reserve. We are trying to reproduce traditional crops like barley, grains and wheat, which were cultivated in the old days, old autochthonous fruit, and medicinal herbs, above all the wild varieties found in this area. We will continue to produce saffron that we introduced two or three years ago. To conserve the entire area with the same idea of making an effort to maintain the castle, respecting its heritage and I would like to transform the farmland into a wealth of culture and learning. The activities we perform at Castel Campo are concerts, theatre groups, which will become more significant

if we can renew the countryside and offer a fitting type of agriculture, steeped in history and tradition. It is more evident here that certain old ideas can help in bringing new life to an already suffering reality. For the last few years we have been arranging very simple “lessons about the forest”, explaining how relationships with all forms of life have always been important here throughout the centuries. We hope to do the same with the farmland, involving those who know the old trades or for those who are curious and want to learn something. A type of educational farm, that can offer a whole load of new things”. Castel Campo offers guided tours by appointment.

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info@castelcampo.com – castelcampo.com/azienda-agricola.html



AZIENDA AGRICOLA ERIKA CALDERA

All the aromatic, medicinal and wild herb seedlings are grown in the plant nursery on the farm and are then used in the kitchen and transplanted in the certified organic kitchen garden, ready to go on sale to wholesalers and retailers; the plants are given a biological pesticide, teas and treatments with essential oils and bee-glue. All the seeds, whether for the seedlings of the kitchen garden or for the aromatic and medicinal ones, are strictly biological. When sowing the seeds the Maria Thun sowing calendar is used, applying bio-dynamic crop methods. Many of the plants are cultivated in open fields for the production of cosmetics, teas, aromatic herbal salt and soaps. The farm also produces edible wild herbs (such as dandelion, wild chicory, catchfly, etc.) as fresh food, “pesto” with wild herbs being the most popular requested by restaurants for pasta sauce. The Erika Caldera Farm is also an educational centre, which breeds the Kashmir goat.

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AZIENDA AGRICOLA ANITA CICCOLINI

A new business, which will develop in the next few years, to establish a cultivation of many medicinal species associated with ancient fruit together with educational courses conducted in the laboratory where the plants are transformed, and a retail outlet in the nearby medieval hamlet. In the Summer, the farm's products will be available at the Rifugio SAT Agostini Hut, situated in the high altitude area of the Val Ambiez valley.

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Casa del Parco “C’era una volta”

The Casa del Parco (park house) “C’era una volta” is a permanent ethnographic exhibition organised by the Adamello-Brenta Park in San Lorenzo in Banale at the Casa “Osei” a seventeenth century building, which has recently been restored and bought by the local council. The exhibit shows objects from the “Widmann” Collection, which was acquired by the Park a few years ago.

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Casa del Parco “Flora”, Area natura Rio Bianco-Stenico**Un mondo di acqua e di piante**

Water and the wonderful world of plants are the two main themes of the Casa della Flora (flower house). The theme on water, which has shaped the countryside, the life blood of the Earth and an indispensable resource for mankind, is discussed while walking along the educational trail that passes by the stunning waterfall of the Rio Bianco and crosses over the gorge. The Park’s plant heritage is illustrated both in the House, where there are informative posters of the rich flora and the relationship between man and plants, as well as in the open air, with an educational trail that shows the vegetation of the Adamello-Brenta Park and the particularities of the various sections of the plant.

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TESINO ECOMUSEUM





TESINO ECOMUSEUM

THE TESINO ECOMUSEUM IS SITUATED IN THE DISTRICTS OF PIEVE, CINTE AND CASTELLO TESINO IN THE EASTERN CORNER OF TRENTINO

The Tesino Ecomuseum; a land of travelling salesmen, who tell the story of a people long ago, who practiced their trade of selling newspapers, seeds, and knife grinders in the market place, not forgetting the particular surroundings and the historical documents on show to the public. Tesino is a unique plateau, in the shape of a basin, accessible from Forcella Pass and downstream surrounded by a small mountain range, whereas upstream it is overshadowed by the huge granite peak of Cima d'Asta. The plateau is about 900 metres high and the Grigno stream, which flows from the Val Malene and converges with the river Brenta, runs through it continuing on through characteristic ravines downstream to Cinte Tesino. Of the three villages that make up the district, Pieve is where the famous

statesman, Alcide Degasperi was born, and it is also the headquarters of the first cultural office in Italy, founded in 1881 by a group of retired newspaper vendors, who had returned to their hometown.

The work of the newspaper vendors is quite typical to Tesino. In the mid 17th century Tesino saw the end to the pastoral industry, where the shepherds had taken their flocks as far as Tuscany and the northern plains of Italy, and to the trade of flint stones (so called *prie fogaiole*) with which they captured the markets of central Europe, and the newspaper vendors, who had founded shops and publishing companies throughout Europe and North America, all in a span of three centuries, right up to the Great War. The type of commerce changed after the war, many of the market stallers of Pieve became haberdashers,

others like the ones from Castello became seed pedlars, while those of Cinte became knife grinder pedlars with their typical grindstone comprising a big wheel they had to turn by hand or with a grindstone mounted on a bicycle which they had to pedal. In remembrance of these people Pieve recently opened the “*Per Via*”: a museum dedicated to the newspaper vendors

and the pedlars of Tesino, while in Cinte the “*Museo del moléta*” (the grindstone pedlars) has been operative from a few years ago. In Pieve there is the “*Casa Degasperi*”, the statesman’s home converted into museum, while in Castello an “Alpine Flora & Fauna Centre” has recently been opened to the public. For those who are keen on art it is possible to visit a number of



Medicinal herbs in an old Tesino print. At the top, on the left, Cinte, Pieve and Castel Tesino.

churches, especially S. Ippolito with its interesting frescos situated on the hill of the same namesake in Castello Tesino; nearby are the archaeological digs regarding the Rhaetic settlements dated from the 4th and 1st century BC. The ancient Roman road of the Via Claudia Augusta Alinate, built by Drusus in 15 BC and connects Altino, on the Adriatic coast, with Maia, modern day Meran, and Augsburg in Bavaria, passes through Tesino. Other unique things about the Tesino Ecomuseum are local customs, apart from the origins of the newspaper pedlars: it was the custom that husbands and fiancés after travelling around Europe and the world would bring back, on their return home gifts of silk handkerchiefs, special textile samples, aprons or pairs of earrings. It remains to be seen, that with time, the characteristics of what is known as the Tesino customs, especially those regarding women, are represented by the performances of the Folkloristic groups of Pieve and Castello Tesino as well as the Folkloristic Band of Castello Tesino.

The Tesino Ecomuseum, Land of Travellers, is not only portrayed by the presence of museums, churches and historical memories, but there are also nature trails and excursions for the keen explorers such as the *Trodo dei fiori*, *Saltuni de Quarazza*, *Alta via del Granito* trails along with the biotope of mountain pines and the farmhouses of Masi Carretta, but also paths and excursions into the surrounding mountains, of which the climb to the mountain hut of Cima d'Asta, the *Trodo*



delle Malghe trail, the educational Forestry path in Marande and the recently opened trails of S. Maria and Monte Mezza. In short, there is more than one could imagine, but for those who prefer to leisurely walk without any exertion, there is the Tesino Arboretum, in the middle of the basin, an interesting circular trail, looked after by the professors and students of the University of Tuscia di Viterbo. In Pieve you can find their Centre for Alpine Studies: it is here that you can observe many species of autochthonous and exotic plants, a European garden dedicated to the statesman, Alcide Degaspero, the educational "*roccolo*", the maze, the vegetable gardens of Tesino, the forest, the swamp, the Fairies Wood and the Botanical garden.



Visiting the frescos of S. Ippolito church. At the top, S. Ippolito hill in Castello Tesino with, to the right, the Moleta (grinder) museum and the Casa Degaspero museum.

TESINO ECOMUSEUM AND THE SY_CULTOUR PROJECT

Around the Arboretum, the Pieve Tesino council has reclaimed an uncultivated area, supplying a small aqueduct for irrigation, forming the allotments of Tesino, for a small price have been given to the pensioners who have requested them. The vegetable patches reflect a way of life of the three communities, in that they are usually close to houses so that the householders can cultivate common vegetables and medicinal plants. Some of the herbs to be found are: sage, helps to ease sweating and is good for the heart; wormwood, good for the digestion; marigold, heals wounds and skin rash; chamomile, soothes and relieves stress; lavender, for its balsamic qualities and perfumes the laundry; mint, is soothing, but helps to combat intestinal worms; lemon balm, helps to relieve sickness, etc. Apart from this, there are many more medicinal plants that you can come across walking in the fields and woods, that are known by the elders for their specific properties: ribwort, burdock, dandelion, bearberry, mint, juniper, horsetail, St

John's wort and many more. Some products, whether taken directly from medicinal plants and herbs or by-products from beehive production combined with animal substances, are on sale using the old recipes.

The pilot scheme “**the botanical garden of Tesino: local ways with medicinal plants**” consists of creating an educational botanical garden combined with the Arboretum, with technical support provided by the professors and university students who attend the Centre for Alpine Studies in Pieve Tesino.

By establishing the *botanical garden*, the Ecomuseum, Land of Travellers, intends to bring a better knowledge of medicinal herbs and their properties to the visitors of the Arboretum whether or not they take a guided tour and moreover allowing them to see the products on offer by the local farmers. There are a number of restaurants that have cooperated in the project providing herbal dishes in their menu, which helps towards promoting a gastronomic tourism.



At the top: a section of the boardwalks in a damp area of the Arboretum trail in Tesino; nearby a view of allotments in Tesino.



LOCAL USAGE OF HERBS

THE KITCHEN GARDENS AND TRADITIONAL WAYS WITH HERBS IN TESINO

The tradition of studying the cultivation of medicinal herbs in Tesino goes back a long time and can be traced in the old folk tales, that are seen in the work “*From memories to production. Use of minor forest products for therapeutical or nutritional purposes*” published in 2009 by The Study for Forestry industry, in which they look into the usefulness of pine resin (*rasa, largà e lagrimo*) and the herbs you can mix together according to the stories told by the people interviewed. Besides the many useful edible varieties or those for specific health purposes it is possible to trace an autarchy view in which a few preparations acquire a cure-all character as in the case already mentioned *Onto santo* or *Onto dei Parigini* ointments or as in St John’s wort oil, (*erba pezzaratta ogni male la cata – every herb cures an illness*). In the text we men-

tioned mountain pine buds, juniper berries, ribwort, cyclamen leaf, ivy, fern, valerian, lime tree leaf, arnica, Good King Henry (*gambetta*), bearberry, catchfly (*s’ciopéti*), dandelion (*sierle, radici*), nettles, dock herb (*slavazi, lengua de vaca*) and sorrel (*pan de vin*), snakeweed, horsetail (*coa de mussa*), chicory (*cricchi*), cumin (*cariago*), carline thistle (*pianette*), bitter-sweet (*Polipodyum spp.*), woodruff, butterbur (*tossilago*), hop shoots (*bistinguli*), white campion, *scaleta, fava mata, mulielo*, betony (*bentonega*), horse chestnut (*castagnole*), thyme, wormwood (*mademaistro*). A collection of seeds of poisonous colchicum, commissioned by a pharmacist, is very interesting. The fruit mentioned are wild cherry, cornelian cherry (*cornole*), blackthorn fruit (*brombe*), wayfaring tree fruit, dog rose fruit (*stropacui*), walnuts, buckthorn, vaccinium berries, and

elderberry. The importance of handing down knowledge and customs is enclosed in an interesting historical document of 1916, in which Pieve Tesino was a member of the Civil Commission of the District of Borgo, who advised schools to follow the instructions found in notes 4 and 5 of the document with important references to:

4° It is recommended that each classroom cultivates flowers and plants, not just for orna-

mental purposes, but more so for learning important elements and following important instructions. As far as possible no school should be without an educational kitchen garden.

5° It is explicitly recommended that schools should gather natural material.

Even though therapeutical and edible herbs are not mentioned the message is still very clear.



A view of picking herbs in Tesino.

TRADITIONAL WAYS WITH HERBS

CORNELIAN CHERRY TREE

(*Cornus mas*)

Bark, shoots and roots are employed in aiding a fever. As medicinal plants were used also as an astringent and tonic against enteritis, or with skin problems, articular pain and troubles with metabolism. Cornelian cherry fruit was appreciated by ancient Mediterranean people, who used the candied fruit in honey and preserved it in brine like olives. The fruit's acidic pulp was used in preparing jelly, jam, syrup and fruit juice. Hard and resistant wood was made shiny and smooth and was used in heavy building tools: lathe, spoke wheels; also in making pipes. The young branches, for their flexibility were used in making baskets. All the plant is used for the yellow dye colour. Its fruit, kernels, are often used in making aromatic spirits like Grappa.

HAWTHORN

(*Crataegus monogyna*)

The flowers are used as a herbal tea, which is good for the heart and hypertension in that it helps dilate the blood vessels, as well as relaxing the central nervous system, and is antispasmodic. It is an anti-inflammatory for the mucus. Its fruit properties help with diarrhoea and are diuretic.

JUNIPER

(*Juniperus communis*)

Its fruit has diuretic and antiseptic properties. Juniper is used in meat dishes, in particular game and roasts. The extract is used in reducing intestinal spasms.

Thanks to its balsamic action it makes a good cough medicine, as well as being effective with bronchitis and cold symptoms.

BAY LEAF (*Laurus nobilis*)

The leaf is mainly used in the kitchen whether fresh or dried. It can also stimulate the digestion and is one of the stronger aromas used with meat and salami.

MOUNTAIN PINE (*Pinus mugo*)

The parts mainly used are buds, leaves and young branches. The wood is firm yet elastic and is used in making kitchen utensils and for strengthening casks. Like other *Pinaceae* species also the mountain pine aids in curing types of rheumatism and lung infections. In the past, they would make deep cuts into the base of the trunk as far as the sapwood: a tube was applied to suck out the resin, which poured into a bowl. Once a week the incision was re-applied. This was done throughout Autumn as the resin was plentiful. The cut to the trunk would heal reducing the bark. This practice has since been abandoned, today the buds, the thorns and twigs are distilled, producing the so called *mugòlio* a strong scented essential oil used as balsam, anti-inflammatory, expectorant, fluidifying medicine, soothing coughs and asthma attacks. Its antiseptic, anti-inflammatory action also aids the work of the kidneys with its diuretic effect. As an antiseptic it works well in the mouth and throat when inhaled as on the skin; it helps

heal wounds and can be used for sprains, twists and strained or inflamed muscles. In Tesino, the buds are left to soak in the sun in jars that contain spirits and sugar thus preparing a useful syrup for the throat and for colds.

DOG ROSE (*Rosa canina*)

The rosehip, fruit, leaf and petals are used. The fruit is particularly rich in vitamin C a valid remedy to treat throat infections during the Winter months. As a medicinal plant it is useful as an astringent, helps digestion, diuretic, helps moods, anti-inflammatory, combats intestinal worms, a fortifying tonic and stomach aches; for external use it can be a good treatment for allergies and itching. In cosmetics it is used for a facial mask obtained by whisking the fresh rosehips (cut and carefully emptied then washed several times to eliminate the tiny prickly hairs that can get caught in the skin) is a better way of acquiring its lightening, scrubbing and toning effect on the skin. In the kitchen: the rosehips gathered after the first frost are the best when preparing jams and sauces. Dried and soaked in spirits and sugar they make excellent liqueur.

RASPBERRY (*Rubus idaeus*)

The fruit and leaf are used. The leaf is very popular as a cleanser for blood and skin. They have a diaphoretic, diuretic and choleric action. Their high concentration of tannins is very helpful for gastroenteritis and inflamed intestines. The fruit is rich in vitamin C, vitamin group B, magnesium, copper and iron,

because of their sweetness they are mainly used in syrups, jellies and jams.

BRAMBLE (*Rubus ulmifolius*)

The buds, fruit and leaf are all used. The bramble leaf has particular tonic-astringent properties and is effective for phlogosis of the oropharynx cavity, for angina and for mouth ulcers (gargling). Folklore attributes the leaf with a hypoglycaemia action, otherwise proven by recent experiments. The berries have a fortified vitamin content, other than being refreshing and slightly laxative. As far as nutritional purposes go, the fruit is rich in vitamin C and other types of vitamins and are used in the preparation of syrups, jellies and jams.

ELDERBERRY

(*Sambucus nigra*)

The flowers, fruit, leaf and bark are used. The plant is useful in curing diarrhoea, for calming nerves, for liver complaints, for colds, and for cystitis. Its medicinal properties have always been used in the past: in traditional medicine it was considered a cure for all ills. The ripe fruit is a laxative and cleanser, as well as containing vitamins A and C; its juice is used in curing nervousness and stomach cramps. Recent studies done *in vitro* have shown that the fruit prevents the development of the flu virus and seems to help the immune system: which confirms that the juice obtained from its fruit mitigates the flu symptoms.

YARROW (*Achillea millefolium*)

The flower heads are used. Yarrow is used as a tonic for the

stomach and antispasmodic for the digestive system and is widely used in the herbal industry, which highly acclaims its digestive and hepatic function. This is due to its essential oil, *achillea millefolium*, which is found above all in the flowers. Another particular feature of this plant is its capacity to gradually lighten dark marks on the skin.

DAISY (*Bellis perennis*)

The flower and the leaf are used. The tea is made from the flowers and helps cure sore throats and bronchitis. The daisy was used as a cleanser, slightly diuretic, laxative and refreshing. The leaves can be used as a cooked vegetable; the younger leaves can be eaten fresh.

CHICORY (*Cichorium intybus*)

The roots, leaf and outer leaves are used. Chicory has always been used for its stomachic and cleansing properties, particularly diuretic and slightly laxative. The base leaves and the tips of the branches, gathered in the Winter and Spring can be used as a cooked vegetable.

GOOD KING HENRY

(*Chenopodium bonus-henricus*)
The leaf, the head of the plant and the young branches, gathered before they flower, are cooked and eaten like spinach.

WILD FENNEL

(*Foeniculum vulgare*)
The seeds, leaf, flowers, fruit and roots are used. The fennel seeds have always been used for dyspeptic troubles, eliminating wind in the stomach and spasms in the gastrointestinal tract. Fennel was traditionally

used for treating dysmenorrhea and for stimulating maternal milk. The young leaves can be eaten fresh, mixing them with other herbs. The mature leaves can be cooked. The dried flowers can be used for flavouring food.

GOAT'S RUE

(*Galega officinalis*)

The seeds and outer leaves are used. The traditional use of the plant was for sweating and an anti-toxic generally speaking, but above all it increased the production of maternal milk. Its lactogenic power was more than appreciated, as such, in the past, throughout Italy, it was normal to give the tea to a wet-nurse. Its hypoglycaemia action has been proven due to the presence of galenina above all inside the seeds. It would be beneficial to a diabetic.

COMMON IVY (*Hedera helix*)

The leaf and branch is used. The balsamic and expectorant action makes the leaves very useful in treating bronchitis. It is a soothing agent against spasmodic coughs. The leaf itself is used externally on the skin for abrasions, chapped skin and insect bites.

HOP (*Humulus lupulus*)

Buds and female inflorescence are used. Hops are known to calm nervousness and sexuality. It is used for combating depression, insomnia, menstrual cramp, and troubles pertaining to sleep and nerves. It comes from the same family as *Cannabis*, long ago it was known for its sleep-inducing and calming effect. The workers from the old

Scientific name: *Taraxacum officinalis*

Common name: dandelion, (lion's tooth) in Tesino sierle, radici

The origin of the word comes from the Latin and means remedy, with reference to numerous healing properties, which is very widespread and well known. It grows in the grasslands, and colours the fields with its golden-yellowish flowers in the months of April and May, even though it is possible to find single examples throughout the year. Once it starts to wither the inflorescence forms into a typical "blowball", a spherical seed head, which contains many single-seeded achenes that are dispersed by the wind. Every part of the dandelion is used: from the low ground shoots in salads to the large leaves that are cooked like a vegetable, even the flower heads are added to risotto rice and salad or for the preparation of the so called "dandelion honey", and the buds are preserved in oil whereas the roots are used as tea for cleansing or mixed in a kind of coffee. In a few words it is a plentiful plant, that has no problems of conservation, very useful for cleansing the organism at the end of Winter, as such its consumption is recommended. In the Health shop it is recommended as a cleanser, detox, diuretic, anti-rheumatic, tonic, good for the digestion and recommended for diabetics.



beer factories after a long period preparing beer would complain of tiredness and would take breaks otherwise they risked falling from sleeping on the job. The young edible Spring-time shoots are sought after to replace wild asparagus in the kitchen. The dried female inflorescence has been added to the beer since the 13th century conferring the bittersweet taste to this drink.

WILD RADICCHIO-PERENNIAL HYOSERIS (*Hyoseris radiata*)

The leaves are eaten fresh or cooked.

MALLOW (*Malva sylvestris*)

The leaf and flower are used. The mallow has always been considered as regulating the intestines, particularly suitable for children and older people who need to use a milder laxative. The flowers offer an efficient remedy in calming a bad cough. The plant can be used for external purposes as an anti-inflammatory, alleviating itching, as an astringent, protecting blood vessels and trophic, because of its usefulness in treating irritable mucus and bleeding gums. The leaves can be cooked.

WOOD SORREL

(*Oxalis acetosella*)

The tender young leaves are used in mixed salads.

LICHWORT

(*Parietaria officinalis*)

The outer part is used, particularly in the old days for treating kidney stones. It is known for its diuretic, antiphlogistic and alleviating properties. Externally it is used for healing wounds.

RIBWORT

(*Plantago lanceolata*)

The leaf and outer part is used. Traditionally the plant was used for its symptomatic treatment of inflammatory pathology dependent on the respiratory system by virtue of its emollient and sedative action done by the mucilage as well as for its antiviral action and tannin astringent. For external use the leaves act in alleviating itching caused by skin conditions and in cases of eye irritation. The tender young leaves are cooked together with other herbs.

SORREL (*Rumex acetosa*)

All the plant is used. In the past, sorrel was given to people with the scurvy, an infection caused from the lack of vitamin C. Today, thanks to better nutrition it has been eradicated. However, this has reduced its consumption, even though it has diuretic and slightly laxative properties. The leaves can be eaten like spinach, cooking them and even adding them to soups. There is a trick in making this vegetable more tasty, just change the water once while in its cooking stage, this will reduce its bitter flavour. The tender young leaves can be added to salads, because of its slightly bitter taste it makes a pleasant change; likewise, it can be mixed with other diuretic herbs and be cooked as a vegetable.

BURNET (*Sanguisorba minor*)

The leaf and roots are used. Its botanical name *Sanguisorba* clearly indicates its therapeutic privileges, which were frequently used in the past that is to say for its astringent and anti-haem-

orrhagic properties. Traditional ways employed the burnet as an astringent in cases of diarrhoea as well as curing catarrh and lung infections. Its external use is good as a vasoconstrictor, an astringent, an anti-inflammatory and healing wounds. The leaves can be eaten fresh.

CATCHFLY (*Silene vulgaris*)

The young stems, only a few centimetres long, with their first tender leaves can be picked and then used in different ways in the kitchen.

COMMON NETTLE

(*Urtica dioica*)

There are numerous therapeutic uses of nettles and for example as an anti-inflammatory, diuretic or tonic action. Here are some old traditional uses of the herb: activating digestive functions, fortifying and tonic actions, cleansing and diuretic actions, helps against diarrhoea, is an astringent, hypoglycaemic, lactogenic and emmenagogic. Despite this wide range of therapeutic uses, clinical studies have shown little or no results. The leaves and the tender tips of the stalks are used in risotto rice and omelettes. Some people think that its stinging action is good for aiding rheumatism.

SWEET VIOLET

(*Viola odorata*)

The leaf, rhizome and flower are used. The sweet violet syrup has always been used in treating acute forms of bronchitis and bad colds. The leaves, roots and flowers are used to treat *renella* (gravel are small crystals in the bladder): the tea is appropriate in aiding the elimination of these



At the top, ivy, fennel, mallow and ribwort.

Scientific name: *Hypericum perforatum*
Common name: St John's wort

St John's wort grows along the dry stone walls and in dry grassland, where there are no water pools. It begins to flower towards the end of June, of which determines its common name and the belief in the plant's pharmacological properties are more prominent if gathered on the feast of St John (24th June). It is an eye catching plant with yellow flowers,

which can grow as high as a metre, it is well known thanks to its tiny flowers that dot its little leaves. Highly requested in the flowering period. The flowers and buds are picked for the preparation of St John's wort oil, which is obtained by putting the flowers in a container full of extra virgin olive oil, sealed and placed in the sun for a couple of months, until the product obtains its typical red blooded colour. Afterwards it is filtered, pressing well, and then bottled. This species has soothing, antidepressant properties as well as strengthening the nervous system. The oil is used to treat burns, sores and wounds. The flowers and the leaves are used in herbal teas.



stones in the urinal tract. The tea made from the leaves can also be used for eye irritation.

GARLIC MUSTARD

(*Alliaria petiolata*)

The tender young leaves can be eaten as a salad.

BURDOCK (*Arctium lappa*)

The leaf and roots are used. The plant has always been recognised for its diuretic properties and its strong cleansing action, it is a valid stimulant for biliary and hepatic functions side by side with its interesting hypoglycaemic action as well as being an antibiotic and fighting against cholesterol. Its external use helps treat greasy skin, asphyxia, also for black spots or for those prone to acne and seborrhoea. The small base leaves if picked before the stem grows can be used as a cooked vegetable.

STARFLOWER-BORAGE

(*Borago officinalis*)

The leaf, flower and seeds are used. The borage has diaphoretic, diuretic and emollient properties. It is this latter that the plant is famous especially for treating coughs and bronchial infections as well as having good blood cleansing properties. The leaves can also be used as a cooked vegetable.

RAMPION BELLFLOWER

(*Campanula rapunculus*)

The roots and the base leaves, if they are gathered before the plant flowers, can be eaten fresh in a mixed salad.

SHEPHERD'S PURSE

(*Capsella bursa-pastoris*)

Flowers along with the rest of the plant, except the roots can be used. The shepherd's purse has long been used for moderate menometrorrhagia (menstrual cycle) in puberty and the menopause in that it is a vasoconstrictor and haemostatic in that it regulates the menstrual flow. The base leaves if they are gathered before the plant flowers can be eaten as a cooked vegetable.

CORNFLOWER

(*Centaurea cyanus*)

The shoots and flowers are used. It acts as a digestive; it helps a mild cough as well as being an astringent and diuretic. External use can be employed as an anti-inflammatory for the skin, mucus and ophthalmic conditions.

LAMB'S QUARTERS

(*Chenopodium album*)

The tip of the plant and the young branches, if gathered before the flowering season, can be used as a cooked vegetable.

HAWKSBEARD

(*Crepis vesicaria*)

The base leaves, if gathered in Winter or Spring before the stems grow, can be eaten as a cooked vegetable.

CARROT (*Daucus carota*)

The leaf and the roots once the woody part has been removed, if gathered before the flowering season can be consumed as a cooked vegetable.

EARTH SMOKE*(Fumaria officinalis)*

The whole plant is used. The earth smoke has always been used in the treatment of hepatobiliary. The plant has an antifoliar mechanism: it increases the flow of bile and decreases when in excess and does not intervene when necessary. In traditional medicine it was used to treat various dermatosis perhaps because of its cleansing action and the presence of fumaric acid.

CATCHWEED *(Galium aparine)*

The whole plant is used. It is slightly laxative, cleansing, diuretic, anti-inflammatory, astringent and tonic on the lymphatic system. Like all other *Galium* it is famous as being an alternative and a tonic, especially in cases of eczema and psoriasis and other chronic inflammatory conditions. As a tea it can be used for glandular fever, tonsillitis, cystitis, eczema and psoriasis; its external use is for cases of ulcers, inflammation of the skin, small cuts and psoriasis.

MILK THISTLE*(Lactuca serriola)*

The base leaves, if gathered before the stems grow, can be eaten fresh or cooked.

DEADNETTLE*(Lamium amplexicaule)*

The leaf and the external parts are used. The plant has anti-rheumatic, laxative and stimulant properties as well as treating a fever. The young leaves can be eaten fresh, in a salad or cooked as preferred.

COMMON MELILOT*(Melilotus officinalis)*

The tip of the flower and the leaf is used. Melilot is useful in cases of insufficient veno-lymphatic. Its main therapeutic principles are seen in cases of bad circulation as in haemorrhoids, insufficient chronic venous, varicose and preventing thrombosis, and lymphatic stasis. Traditional methods use the melilot tea, pleasant and aromatic, for headaches, as a digestive or antispasmodic and insomnia in children and elders, substituting chamomile.

POPPY *(Papaver rhoeas)*

The leaf and petals are used. In the past it was used as a mild sedative and anti-cough medicine. The base leaves, if picked before the flowering season, can be used fresh.

PURSLANE*(Portulaca oleracea)*

The leaf and the tips of the tender young branches can be eaten fresh.

WILD RADISH*(Raphanus raphanistrum)*

The base leaf, if picked before the stems develop, can be cooked. Even the tips of the young branches can be cooked.

SOWTHISTLE*(Sonchus oleraceus)*

The base leaves and the stalks and the tender tips of the stems can be eaten fresh.

CORN SALAD*(Valerianella locusta)*

All the plant is used, if gathered before it flowers, and can be cooked as a vegetable.



OTHER WAYS WITH HERBS

Azienda Agricola Aleden of Alessandra Dorigato, situated in Monte Mezza in Cinte Tesino, produces creams, ointments, marigold and lemon balm based balsams, and mint and other herb syrups. The farm is experimenting in the cultivation of edelweiss and other medicinal mountain herbs besides gathering wild species found in the area around the farm. They cooperate with the Ecomuseum when there are festivals and trade fairs helping in promoting the territory and its resources.



Azienda Agricola Maso Franz of Francesco d'Alfonso, situated in Cinte Tesino, besides growing strawberries and other varieties of berries, they also cultivate mint, lemon balm, marigolds, edelweiss, arnica, roses and other medicinal plants, which they use in preparing jams, syrups and cosmetics, giving them a small piece of the market.

MRS ROMILDA GRANELLO RECIPES

Tagliatelle with nettles

Only the Spring nettles are used, because the Summer ones are too tough. Put three eggs into whatever measure of flour you wish and mix with a spoonful of oil and a pinch of salt. Boil the tips of the nettles. Drain and squeeze out any excess water from them, then mince them in a vegetable grinder. Mix with the flour, previously prepared, then iron out with a rolling pin and cut into thin strips like fettuccine. They can be served with whatever sauce or ragù is required, but they are very good even served with butter and sage.

Canederli with nettles

Take some bread, a few days old, and soak in water. Do not use milk otherwise the mixture will be soggy. Boil the tips of the nettles, drain and squeeze out any excess water then mince them in a vegetable grinder. Add an egg to the mixture, a spoonful of flour and a handful of whatever cheese you like. Mix all the ingredients and make little balls in your hand like dumplings then boil them in salted water and serve with melted butter and sage. It is possible to freeze the prepared mix of canederli so as to eat them all year round.

Pasta al forno with hop shoots

Make the lasagna pasta with flour and eggs. Boil the hop shoots in salted water, drain and fry in a pan with butter and grated cheese.

Prepare the lasagna with layers of pasta followed by layers of hops covered in béchamel sauce then place in the oven and cook. This is a great vegetarian alternative.

Elderberry, acacia, and wisteria

Take the elderberry flowers when they are in full bloom and dip them in a beaten egg and then in flour and fry in butter or oil. They can be served as salty or sugary as a dessert. In the same way you can prepare the acacia and the wisteria.

Risotto with wild asparagus

Fry some onions, for a few minutes, in a pan. Add the asparagus tips after a few minutes then add the rice. Pour half a glass of dry marsala vermouth and stir allowing it to evaporate. Then cover the rice with water, but do not stir until it is cooked.

Mixture of herbs

Take the tips of the daisy, tips of the strawberry (external rhizomes of the plant), the bramble, the raspberry, the radicchio, the catchfly (*silene alba*), the white campion (*silene alba*), *pan e vin*, *pan e late* (bread & wine, bread & milk), the ribwort, both the length and the centre – the poppy, the leaves of the violet, the Good King Henry (*gambette*), the nettle, the hops, the burdock, the wild asparagus, the lamb's quarters, the mallow, the sorrel, etc. Wash and rinse them very well then boil them in salty water. You can serve this with some onions, some butter and some flakes of cheese or grated ricotta.

Dandelion Tea

Boil the dandelion without putting salt in the water, drain then leave the tea to cool. You can drink two to three cups a day. It has a bitter taste, but is very good for cleansing the liver and the blood.

Horsetail Tea

Use the same method of making the dandelion tea. This is also good for cleansing the kidneys.



The Tesino Ecomuseum stall in Trento during the "Feste Vigiliane", an historical local festival in 2013. Top left, the Azienda Agricola "Aleden" farm products.

THE BOTANIC TRAIL AND THE ARBORETUM OF TESINO

Distance: 2 km / Slope: 100 metres / Time: 1-2 hours

A comfortable trail for everyone who likes walking, that extends to the southern plains of Pieve Tesino, at the beginning of Cinte Testino road. The Arboretum of Tesino was established thanks to the collaboration of the Restoration and Environmental Service – Environmental Department of the Autonomous Province of Trento, the Tuscia University and the districts of Pieve Tesino and Cinte Tesino; it has been open to visitors since 2002. The Arboretum is located in Campagnola in the valley of the Rio Solcena, on the eastern slopes of Coldanè, in the area of Pieve and Cinte Tesino.

It stands somewhere between 800 and 845 metres above sea level and is composed of a large grassland area with trees, patches of woodland, a swamp, which is registered as a biotope district (n° 12 Pieve Tesino - Campagna) and a small lake; all is bordered by a hedgerow. Inside this area is very particular as we can recognise the following sections: a mixed wood of conifers and broad-leaf trees, an alder wood, a swamp and its adjoining island, the Rio Solcena and its adjoining woods, a small lake and its adjoining stream, a European species sector, an Asian species sector, an American species sector, hedgerows and an orchard. In August 2011, inside the Arboretum, a European garden was built, dedicated to the Italian statesman, Alcide Degasperi, who was born in Pieve Tesino, one of the founding fathers of the European Union. The garden was designed by the Botanical Garden Centre of the Tuscia University, the work of professor Anna Scoppola and architect Sofia Varoli Piazza, in the form of an amphitheatre that recalls the shape of the European Parliament. In 2012, at the Visitors Centre, a pilot scheme, which was part of the European SY_CULTour project, was established, "The botanical garden of Tesino: traditional ways with medicinal herbs" significant in creating an educational botanical garden.



Notes on herbs

Along the path you can observe most of the grassland herbs and towards the lower and mid-altitudes of the mountains in Tesino, aside from the numerous woodland and brushland species, pointed out for traditional usage, are for example the dandelion, wild chicory, mountain asparagus, goldenrod, St John's wort, hop, ribwort, yarrow, fern, valerian, spirea and even medicinal plants linked to humid areas. Despite being a comfortable walk, the route does have its advantages in that it helps people, whether alone or with a tourist guide, to recognise the different species.



Woundwort, goldenrod, woodland medicinal plants. On the left, the buckbean, typical humid zone plant, seen along the botanical trail.

THE FLORAL PATH "TRODO DEI FIORI"

Distance: 5 km / Slope: 450 metres / Time: 3 hours

The Trodo dei Fiori is a wonderful nature trail on horseback between Vanoi and Tesino, established in 1980, by Rino Ballerin and his passion for nature, which follows on from Brocon Pass to Col del Boia, paying attention to the splendid array of flowers along the way, but also with a beautiful view looking towards the surrounding region. The interest in this path is brought about from the fact that you can find, in such a short space of time, many different types of species in calcareous and siliceous substratum, consequently enriching and varied.

Notes on herbs

The variety of terrain translates also to medicinal species that you can encounter, like eyebright, yarrow, arnica, and gentiana on the southern grasslands, and wild rose in the old trenches, dwarf junipers and Erica in the crests towards the north. On the rocks we can find thyme, edelweiss, primrose, cinquefoil and many more.



Edelweiss along the floral path "Trodo dei fiori".
On the left, above, panoramic wheel at the top of the floral path "Trodo dei fiori".

THE FARMHOUSE TRAIL “TRODO DELLE MALGHE”

Distance: 6 km / Slope: 250 metres / Time: 3 hours

The path begins at Malga Arpaco (1668 metres high), near the Brocon Pass, an interesting circular trail with a lovely view, it winds through pastures and forests of conifer and beech, reaching Malga Valorsella (1458 metres high), Malga Valrica di Sotto (1629 metres high), Malga Valarica di Sopra (1703 metres high) and the ring road on the ridge of Monte Coppolo. An area of great variety where you can find typical plant species of poor grassland, with wonderful flowers like gentiana and orchids, woodland and brushland varieties and some rocky outcrops with rock plant species, fertile pastures and cattle wells, where the cows graze among the rich nitro-philous flora (slavazi).

Notes on herbs

Along the path you can observe yarrow, lady's mantle, cinquefoil, gentiana, primrose, woodruff, blueberry, dwarf juniper, ribwort, willowherb, raspberry, thyme, eyebright, sorrel, dock herb, good king henry, goldenrod, wild chicory and conifers that supply three types of resin for the “Onto dei Parigini” ointment, larch, spruce and silver fir trees.



Malga Valarica di sotto farmhouse.
Above, the Elder-flowered orchid (L.)
along the farmhouse Trodo path.

THE FIELDS OF CELADO

Distance: 5 km / Slope: 200 metres / Time: 2-3 hours

The plateau of Celado has always been one of those typical places for herbs for the local inhabitants of Tesino. It features a mix of grassland for hay and pastures, with a few conifer woods, shrubland and some rocky outcrops. In the poor grassland areas there is an array of acidifying thorny grassland that allows for pure acidity species in the calcareous terrain, for example arnica. On the southwest edges of the plateau you can find the Astro-Observatory of Celado, an important scientific research facility. The proposed route follows the northern ridge of the grassland basin, to later return on the provincial road as far as the observatory and then descends using minor paths within the basin continuing until you arrive at the starting point.

Notes on herbs

Along the path, as we have said, you can encounter typical varieties in the fields around, like dandelion, yarrow, cumin, arnica, gentiana, ribwort, primrose, burnet, knapweed, cow parsley and sorrel. In the areas of shrubland you can find wild rose, juniper and berberry, while on the edges of the forest you will come into contact with raspberry, fern, blueberry, willowherb and angelica herb. In the rocky outcrops and along the side of the road you can also observe thyme, cinquefoil and other species.



The harmonious slopes of the Celado pastures. Above, rosehip fruit, the famous "*stoeпаса*" rich in vitamin C.

MONTE MEZZA TRAIL

Distance: 5 km / Slope: 300 metres / Time: 3 hours from Cinte Tesino

Distance: 3 km / Slope: 150 metres / Time: 2 hours from Monte Mezza

A walk that starts at Cinte Tesino or from the lower part of Monte Mezza (Chiesetta Alpina) basin. From the San Lorenzo church, in Cinte Tesino, going south you join the old road that takes you to Monte Mezza, which was later named "Sentiero dell'Olivè". There is a diagonal climb, which crosses first of all the pastures and fields, then the woods and to look towards the Monte Mezza basin near the Alpine Chapel. For those who have little time it is possible to reach the area by car using the new road. From the church you go across fields and woods alternately in a southwest direction, climbing an interesting path as far as the road that borders open land upstream. Here you will find cultivated fields of vegetables and medicinal plants of the Azienda Agricola "Aleden" farm, who sell their products directly to the public. Returning north you come across the path SAT 397 that briefly follows upstream until you reach a Forestry path, keeping north, that leads through the first set of woodlands and arrives at some farmhouses and so "Prà della Castellana", where you can find a parking area next to a small lake called "Fontanazo". Continuing on the Forestry path and on past the Fir trees of the dosso delle Buse will arrive at the point where you climbed from Cinte Tesino.

Notes on herbs

Along the path you can observe a great many grassland herbs and in the lower and mid-altitudes of the mountains in Tesino, aside from the numerous woodland and brushland species, pointed out for traditional usage like dandelion, wild chicory, catchfly, hillside asparagus, goldenrod, St John's wort, hop, ribwort, yarrow, knapweed, scabious, larkspur, willowherb, woodruff, fern, ivy, berberry, hawthorn, blueberries, raspberry and bramble.



ANOTHER INTERESTING PLACE TO VISIT: THE BOG OF MONTE SILANA - BIOTOPE "I MUGHÌ"

The biotope "I Mughì" is located in Drio Silana in Pieve Tesino at an altitude of approximately 1250 metres. In order to reach it you must turn left at the Pradellano lake and follow the Rive di Pradellano road for about 4 kilometres. The protected area extends in a wide basin, visible on the map found on the information board. The nature reserve "I Mughì" is a vast basin of almost 21 hectares; integrated into woods of spruce, silver fir and beech trees. There are also examples of mountain pine, unusual for this low altitude, therefore giving their name to the biotope. The area is of great naturalistic importance for its three peat hollows of extraordinary environmental value, where in the past there were lakes dug out by the ice in the Quaternary era. Thanks to these humid areas we can find many botanical species and extremely rare vegetation along the southern slopes of the Alps. The fauna of the biotope is rich in typical species from humid environments and mixed pine woods: reptiles like the harmless collar snake, amphibians like the alpine newt and the speckled salamander, mammals and birds that in the woodland find food and nesting places. You can visit the biotope along a 2.3 kilometre path that winds in part along the boundaries of the reserve. Along the track you can find some information boards that illustrate the main characteristics of the protected area and its surroundings.




A stretch of biotope "I Mughì". Above, the Monte Mezza path.



TOURISM TO THE SCENT OF HERBS

THE TESINO ECOMUSEUM COOPERATES WITH A FEW FARMS, TOURIST OPERATORS AND RESTAURANTS THAT PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO SAFEGUARDING THE TERRITORY

 **AZIENDA AGRICOLA ALEDEN - Alessandra Dorigato**
Cultivation of mountain medicinal plants, berries, potatoes and vegetables
Via San Rocco, 18/A – 38053 Castello Tesino (TN)
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 **AZIENDA AGRICOLA MASO FRANZ**
Cultivation of medicinal plants, edelweiss, strawberry and other berries
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 **AGRITURISMI**
Contact the Tourist Information Office of Castello Tesino and Valsugana-Lagorai, Terme Spa & Lakes



CONTACT US ON ARRIVAL AT THE FOLLOWING ECOMUSEUM OFFICES



Ecomuseo del Tesino
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VALLE DEL CHIESE ECOMUSEUM





VALLE DEL CHIESE ECOMUSEUM

“THE VALLEY, LOCATED IN THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER OF TRENTO – A HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL STRATEGIC BORDER – PRESENTS ITSELF TO THE PRIVILEGED VISITOR AS “ENTRANCE TO AN ALPINE WORLD AND TO TRENTO”, INSPIRING TO THE NAME OF ITS ECOMUSEUM”.

The Valle del Chiese is a typical pre-alpine valley that is located in the southwest of Trentino, on the border with Lombardia, named after the river that crosses through and originated there. Even though the Valle del Chiese is only a transit zone it is far from large populated areas. It is **this particular geographic position**, which has allowed its mountainous territory **to guard its exceptional natural beauty, typical of the pre-alpine landscape** since ancient times up to the present day. Its unique strategical position has made this territory, over time, **into a wealth of diverse historical, cultural and artistic heritage**. It comes as no sur-

prise, in context with its varied landscape, preserved and culturally wealthy, that the Valle del Chiese Ecomuseum was born, of which its name “*Porta del Trentino*” (gateway to Trentino) gives merit to the history of these places.

THE MISSION

Recognised by the Autonomous Province of Trento in May 2002, by the willingness of the Syndicate of Councils B.I.M. of Chiese, which was structured within this framework, the Ecomuseum has become a **fundamental project** to serve in the development of the territory. The complex action of the Valle del

Chiese Ecomuseum **has finalised the creation of sound opportunities for the growth of the territory** through the realisation, and put in place a rich variety of physical and spiritual accounts of the character of this precious corner of Trentino. Alongside the many historical projects and the opportunities of understanding the area and its culture (educational for local schools, publications about historical, festival events and local market prod-

ucts, etc.), the Ecomuseum, in close synergy with the Council B.I.M. of Chiese and Tourism of the valley, **has accepted the challenge of boosting tourism through marketing**, capable of linking the economical benefits of the “tourism trade”, with the needs of the inhabitants, laying down a *condicio sine qua non* conditions while paying attention to the delicate balance of the historical and natural landscape of Chiese.



Picking wild herbs. At the top, the flora of Boniprati plain.

THEME TRAILS

MEMORY AND ART

The Great War

Heir to a significant yet tragic historical past, the Valle del Chiese still maintains its deep scars and first hand testimonies of the First World War, as seen by the recent documentation that brought to light **over 2000 accounts of the war in Valle del Chiese**. During the conflict, along the front line, descending from the Adamello range, which extends horizontally dividing the valley in two, along with forts, trenches and military road blocks and mule paths recalling the past when the Austro-Hungarian army faced the Italian soldiers. A powerful testimony to the Great War are the fortifications that outlined the defences of the Austro-Hungarians and were built right in the middle of the valley making a new, unexpected border. The five original ones that formed the “road block of Lardaro” only three remain: the fascinating **Fort Lardino**, south of Lardaro, the imposing **Fort Corno**, in the district of Praso and Fort Carriola in the Pieve di Bono area. The Great War, which was fought in the everlasting snow of the Trentino mountains, is documented in the **Great War museum of Valle del Chiese** in Bersone, that houses a rich collection of relics left by soldiers of many nations, that fought in this area, while a remembrance to the suffering of all wars can be seen at the **Bondo Monument Cemetery**, that houses the tombs of 697 Austro-Hungarian soldiers.

**The Parish: works of art**

A centuries old testimony to religious tradition, the Parishes and the Christian churches erected in the heart of every town and village of the valley, from the most populated to the smallest village suspended along the mountain slopes. These represent the highest possible expressions of artistic spirit, in which the craftsman's knowledge and local art blends with the genius and talent of the great Masters who visited the area. Among the most important religious monuments of the valley in particular are:

- the San Fioriano church in Storo, built by the **Lombard Comacine masters in the early 1500s**;
- the **parish church of Santa Maria Assunta in Condino**, an authentic jewel of the local Renaissance, still tainted with the gothic style of Lombardy in which **32 artists adorned their work** and to which the mason Maffeo Olivieri ded-

icated his most important woodwork: the monumental altar of the Assunta, carved and decorated;

- the parish church of Santa Giustina in Pieve di Bono, that offers an important series of frescoes of 1410;
- the Santo Stefano church in Roncone that houses a precious **wooden organ of the 17th century**.

The noble house of the Lodron family

The Valle del Chiese is the birthplace of the Lodron family, the old feudal lords that dominated undisputedly these lands: the oldest story of the lineage, that folklore dates them back to the First Crusades, takes place in the plains and on the hills north of lake Idro, in an area included in the Bishop's Principality of Trento. Symbol of the undisputed power and glory gained by the Lodron family are the three imposing castles that they possessed in Valle del Chiese. The



The smithy master **Alberto** at the forge in Rio Caino. To the left, the formidable **Fort Corno**.

first one is the **Castel San Giovanni** arriving from the south, erected in a strategic position on a spur of the rock that faces lake Idro, underneath the village of Bondone. The second one, though only ruins, is the **Rocca Santa Barbara**, that dominated the district of Lodrone for almost a thousand years. The third manor house is **Castel Romano** that rises above the basin of Pieve di Bono. Besides the castles, what remains of the Lodron family are their beautiful residences: **Palazzo Caffaro** palace and **Palazzo Bavaria** palace in Lodrone.

The ethnographic path of Rio Caino

An open-air museum that narrates the work, history and heresy of the craftsmen. Woodlands and fields, rural culture and the old master masons ties to the land are testimony to the daily life of a people, their jobs and an unspoilt symbiosis with nature and the countryside that



The ancient parish of S. Maria Assunta in Condino.

they were able to maintain over time. The Rio Caino trail is one of the proposed routes of chapter **Discovery trails herbs, pages 54-55**.

Rural tradition: Casa Marascalchi house of Cimego and Casa Bonus house of Bondo

The farming community that once populated the valley relives among the ancient walls of Casa Marascalchi and Casa Bonus, simple yet wonderful museums **of traditions and customs of the local people**, where the surroundings bring back the atmosphere of the old villages of Giudicaria valley.

The art of woodcarving

The abundance of wood was one of the few benefits that the Valle del Chiese had to offer. Wood was the material used in construction and for fires, but also was the material for carving

and carpentry, that in this area was a noble tradition. Such a historical ability has been preserved, in the last few years, by the **School of Carpentry in Praso**, that organises numerous courses for carving and sculpting, open to everyone other than what seems to be an **inevitable artistic event that attracts professionals from all over the world**, otherwise known as the 'Conference of wood sculpting' of Praso. You must visit the sculpture laboratory that allows you to discover, at first hand, the art of woodcarving, by participating in a demonstration of the art, like the **"timber trail"**, a true open-air exhibition established thanks to the initiatives of the sculptors, that have donated their first works to the village of Praso.

The white gold of Darzo

A recent past of the archaeological industry typifies the village of

Darzo and its mountains. **"White gold"** was once extracted, **baryta sulphate**, known as "barium". In 2009 it was closed, after 115 years, also the extraction at Marigole, which was the first deposit to be discovered. However, the exhaustion of these mineral deposits enticed the Authorities and the inhabitants of Darzo, who for some time had their own project known as "On the road to the mines", which established three large wall paintings on the village houses that tell the story of the epic mines.

NATURE

A valley of water

Water is the main element of the river Chiese in the valley, which is freed by the melting of the Adamello glacier and flows down with its tributaries into the cracks formed millions of years ago and eventually into the Idro lake. In the 1950s, the water from the river Chiese was **exploited for the production of electricity**. The most important changes in this era were the three giant artificial basins built in Val Daone: the dam of Ponte Morandin, the dam of Malga Boazzo and the incredible **dam of Malga Bissina**, constructed at the entrance to Val Fumo at an altitude of 1778 metres and capable of containing up to **360 million cubic metres of water**.

The beautiful Valle of Daone

The Valle of Daone is a **wonderful invitation to the beauty** and amazing for those who love nature in all its glory and the freshness of its authentic vitality. It concerns the massive

glacial crack that opens on the west side of Valle del Chiese, deeply eroded by the Chiese river. To visit such a place means travelling through a succession of **varied and suggestive landscapes**, from the green pastures at the bottom of the valley, dotted with barn houses, to woodland of chestnuts, beeches, firs and larches, populated by a rich variety of animals, like mountain **goats, deer, stag, eagles and marmots**. From a naturalist's point of view, the splendid alpine lakes are certainly noteworthy and enchanting, of which the valley is scattered and of which, for their beauty, the lakes of Campo, Casinei, Copidello, D'Avolo and Mare stand out. The natural value of this valley is exemplified by a few locations and trails such as:

- the nature trail **"Fauna of fields and pastures"**
- the **historical nature trail**
- the **Casa della Fauna house – the Adamello-Brenta natural park**
- the **Val Fumo: one of the most suggestive valleys of the alpine range**, beautiful for its wilderness, fully immersed in the Adamello-Brenta natural park, which acts as a spectacular gateway. The extraordinary and indisputable landscape of this U shaped glacial valley, once again eroded by the flow of the Chiese river, that makes its way craftily, rushing through the vegetation, guardian of a **wealth of fauna and botanic heritage**.

The plain of Boniprati

On the right side of river Chiese, and to the west of Monte Meli-

no, there is a wide green valley dotted with beautiful mountain chalets, nestled in freshly cut meadows, shady forests and fascinating corners. Before and after grazing, in Spring and Autumn, the cattle breeders would rest for long periods and their huts began to look like a village mounting to eighty in all. Today, visitors can see **a wide open plain at an altitude of about 1160 metres** that pans out into a splendid, **multi-coloured loveliness**, after the long winding descent to the bottom of the valley floor.

The biotopes

The biotopes, literally means “areas of life”, are small protected areas that safeguard particular environments, once there were many, but today are quite rare due to human impact. In Valle del Chiese you can find three biotopes that have become part of the network of the Nature Reserves of Trentino:

1. Lake Idro, in the district of Bondone. Along the shores of this clear water that joins Trentino with Lombardia and where sport has become the main attraction, there are some magnificent examples of the white willow tree (*Salix alba*). These trees present – in the point where the branches bend, where the leaves accumulate – young plants which develop particularities that make **the willows a suggestive element of the landscape**. On the other side of the shore the cane thicket grows, in which predominates the water reed (*Phragmites australis*) that blends into the swampy grass and damp grassland. As

regards to the vertebrate fauna, the **Biotope** represents an important landscape for spawning of amphibians (especially the red frog *Rana sinkl. esculenta* and common toad *Bufo bufo*), in the Spring, the period when the water of the lake pushes towards the canes. However, the main interest in the fauna is connected to the **many different aquatic species**: here the mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) makes its nest along with, the moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*), the reed warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*), the marsh warbler (*Acrocephalus palustris*), the great reed warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) and the reed bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*).

2. Palù di Boniprati, in the district of Castel Condino and Prezzo. It is located in the centre of the plain, where the type of terrain and particular microclimate have been able to establish a unique protected area. From a naturalist's point of view, the bog of Boniprati presents small piles of peat moss (*Sphagnum spp.*), particularly moss whose heaps remain humid and types that have evolved for example the **insect eater plant** (*Drosera rotundifolia*). The biotope is also composed of **swamps with large sedges** (a mix of *Caricetum elatae* and *Caricetum paniculatae*) and **humid grassland**, area of **particular natural interest**. The biotope of Palù di Boniprati hosts some worthy species like the **common frog** (*Rana temporaria*), the **common toad** (*Bufo bufo*) and the **grass snake** (*Natrix natrix*).



3. The swamps of Malga Clevet in Val Daone, in the district of Daone. Among the humid zones we can find different types of landscapes: wide spaces of bog and damp grassland, little round bogs, ponds and swampy lakes. The extended damp grassland is composed of a complex water network, flows into numerous rivulets that descend the slopes where you can find typical vegetation of the lower bog areas, with a mixture of *Caricetum fuscae* and *Trichoperetum caespitosum*, as well as small areas of peat moss with an abundance of *Eriophorum sp.* and *Carex limosa*. The small round or elliptical bogs are composed of *Caricetum* and *Trichoperetum*, but with a more extended area of peat moss, with piles of colonised *Calluna vulgaris* and *Vaccinium vitisidaea*. The ponds and

lakes are surrounded by swamp composed of a mix of *Caricetum* and *Trichoperetum*, and the area near the water that can be defined as “*magnocariceto*” is again composed almost exclusively of *Carex rostrata*. From a fauna point of view, the **biotope is an important area of reproduction arthropods, amphibians and reptiles**, an area of food and shelter for the fauna in the surrounding woods. The small pools of water are the principle habitat for many insects, like **water striders, water beetle and dragonfly of dazzling colours**. The water pools, furthermore, influence the water supply acting as a natural reservoir of water.

Aquatic spectacle of Val Daone.



FLAVOURS

Living and breathing the 360° degrees of the Valle del Chiese means tasting the genuine side: the polenta, flour, alpine char, farmhouse cheese are the standard-bearers of this area. The DNA of this mountain region awakens to its authentic flavours, a pure and simple mirror of the rural community, a kind of passport unaltered over time. Flavours that tell the story of the mountain pastures, grassland, clean air, free grazing animals, what better recipe than these genuine products born in the high altitudes of this valley.

Yellow flour of Storo

To make a very special polenta of course the quality of the corn is very important, but also the

water and the way of grinding the flour, and the climate under where everything happens. The yellow flour of Storo is produced from the wheat “*Marano*”, cultivated by respecting rigorously the seasonal cycles of nature, without pressurising agronomics, thus, preserving the authenticity. The corncobs, of an intense red colour, are grounded at the Storo Mill and the flour you obtain is easy to digest and always ready to become the fragrant polenta, an irreplaceable element to any Trentino dish. It is employed in various ways and by now the polenta “*carbonera*” the polenta “*Macafana*” and the polenta “*concia*” have become very popular dishes in the restaurants at the request of the clients.

The Trout and Char

Plenty of running water, clean and sparkling: in such an environment it is impossible not to find trout. Unlike the plains, **the mountain trout needs about 4-10 months more to reach their ideal size.** This improves their quality, which makes it more substantial, **more appetising and less fatty.** Perfect for those who are watching their weight: the trout in fact is rich in protein and mineral salt, with a low level of cholesterol, easy to digest. Valle del Chiese is the home and **king of all sweet-water fish; the char** is bred in fresh stream water. Traditional methods are used to preserve it with only a touch of salt and sugar, which helps conserve its delicate taste and is smoked slowly over a saw-wood fire. This exalts its delicious flavour.

The Spressa DOP cheese

Managing the fields, constantly reaping and mowing, the scented grass and the mountain flora convey a special quality to the Chiese cheese. *Spressa*, a renowned quality product with the trademark DOP is a typical local cheese. Not fatty and seasoned for more than 8-12 months, it is prepared according to traditional methods and often used in local recipes.

Honey

In a typical alpine valley like Valle del Chiese it is impossible not to find honey. An array of plants and flowers allow for a vast range of assorted honey: wildflower, acacia, elderberry, dandelion, rhododendron, chestnut honey and even more.

Sweet chestnuts

Sought-after, ancient fruit grows only in particular areas surrounded by the Darzo woods. Very different from the common chestnuts, sweet chestnut have a superior quality and pulp, a fine grain and very sweet.

The Radicchio dell'Orso

Another product that nature provides us with is the radicchio (*Cicerbita alpina*), known locally as “Radicchio dell'Orso”. The species of the Asteraceae family that is gathered when it is still a young shoot, the colour can vary from green to red, and grows in the canyons at the side of the high mountains around Valle del Chiese, that are covered in snow until late Spring, (for details see the table on page 43).



The first picture above shows the reddish corncob of Storo and local specialities of Okm impact. On the left, Malga Romanterra.

VALLE DEL CHIESE ECOMUSEUM AND THE SY_CULTour PROJECT

Within the Ecomuseum network “**Rural Trentino**”, a system where **Valle del Chiese Ecomuseum – Gateway of Trentino** for some years, has been involved in a pilot scheme, which has been operating since 2011 known as “From Traditional to Production: sustainable use of medicinal herbs and wild plants and other minor woodland products, in the context of rural tourism”, with the aim of increasing the usage of Trentino’s medicinal herbs in accommodation facilities and spreading the knowledge around the community. The Valle del Chiese, thanks to the involvement of various local people, has begun work on the project known as “**KITCHEN GARDEN REMEDIES** – educational experiments concerning the cultivation of medicinal plants in Valle del Chiese”.

THE PROJECT

The idea of developing a project aimed at the cultivation of

medicinal plants came from an educational course, called “Recognising aromatic and medicinal herbs in our territory” held in the Autumn of 2011 included in the initiative promoted by a group of elders “Giulis” supported by the Council B.I.M. of Chiese. The course was presented by a series of evening classes and educational trips around the territory with the aim of increasing the awareness relating to particular species of aromatic and medicinal plants and not just in mountainous areas. The success of the course, joined with the increased interest about practical and technical methods of cultivation on the part of the participants, brought about the development of the project, where the objective is to contribute to the **consolidation and improvement of mountain agriculture through the cultivation of aromatic and medicinal varieties in the sub-alpine region**. The experimental project



was structured into two distinct stages spread over a period from 2012-2013.

Education and Tourism

“Planning, building, experimenting, developing a new theme trail linked to the medicinal herbs in Valle del Chiese”.

The tourism industry is looking more and more interesting as it begins to play a central role in our economy, upholding as much as 17% PIL in terms of wealth in Trentino. It is a number of years now that the **Valle del Chiese is employed in the tourist industry** and improving the area by providing new initiatives for holidays by proposing and executing in terms of **marketing the varied specialities of the territory**, giving particular care to natural resources, placing the mountains as the “central” attraction along with **values such as eco-sustainability, bio-diversity, including the relationships between man and his environment**. All this

in the context of existing strong ties – even ontological – between tourism and agriculture and of course **emphasising the concept of quality, authenticity, and zero impact on the environment and not least local produce**. Such an important industry, however, necessitates hard strategies and an essential cooperation of a singular development plan that involves all the participants of the territory. With this in mind, in 2012, the **Board of Valle del Chiese** (represented by the three main bodies, Council BIM of Chiese, Ecomuseum and Tourist Information of Chiese) gave rise to the initiatives, consolidated in the previous year with a plan known as “**Rural Experience**” improving the offer with further proposals, always tied to the rural sector, and placing particular attention to the area of medicinal plants. Proceeding by forming a professional working group comprised of the Valle del Chiese Ecomuseum, Tourist Office of Chiese, and a few young voluntary workers



Experimental field of the Ecomuseum.
On the right, Brigida ‘the witch’s potions’ workshop.

as well as professionals from the tourist and environmental sectors (Dr. Manuel Zorzi and Angelo Rigacci), it was possible, through a series of operational meetings, to provide tangible construction to **new trails dedicated to herbal themes**, plus adding the attraction of the **medicinal herb laboratory**.

Support for the new industry

“Planning, building, a new experimental field project for the cultivation of medicinal varieties in Valle del Chiese”.

A demanding activity, from the point of view of economical resources, but also human, is apparent in the **creation of an experimental field project** and the **involvement of so many people around the territory**. The organisation for this project called for a **varied group of professional people** including: a group of pensioners known as “Giulis”, Culturnova Association, Council BIM of Chiese, Valle del Chiese Ecomuseum, Dr. Manuel Zorzi,

Agritur Casa Essenia Farm B&B. Under the direction of Dr. Zorzi and the Ecomuseum, a team of workers formed from the above-mentioned authorities, together with numerous volunteers occupied themselves in establishing this field project. In the two years, and in particular the Summer/Autumn of 2012-2013, the Ecomuseum has activated **various educational and instructive sessions, free of charge**, and an open invitation to all those associated with the world of cultivation: from correct methods of harvesting to the cultivation of wild herbs, incorporating awareness of the therapeutical and organoleptic properties of each singular species, which have finally brought about the realisation of tasting events of herbal dishes. The job of organising practical-theoretical activities around the territory and at the experimental field project, were not only managed by those with a passion, but also by **two novices to the local industry**, who thanks to the



project were the first to cultivate the wild herbs. In order to sustain their activity – as is the case for anyone who wishes to involve themselves – a **drying machine**, used in the project, was put at their disposal, which made the first start up stages easier allowing them to freely use this equipment and above all to be under observation in case of immediate assistance regarding drying methods of these products.

bility in gathering wild herbs in Chiese followed by the realisation of a **well-informed manual about the territory of Valle del Chiese**, which was compiled by the generous cooperation of the group “Giulis”. Thanks to the participation of some passionate young people, the idea of transmitting the experience of cultivation at high altitudes, was born. The association of **“Fuori Quota”** is involved in the management of a mountain farmhouse and its pastures, at an altitude of 1400 metres high, in the hamlet of Gras in the district of Storo. They also occupy themselves, on a regular basis, with an experimental field in the same area. One of the young students from the Faculty of Science and Forestry in Padua, was curious about the **high altitude cultivation experiment** and thanks to the project’s technical support, was able to conduct a **research**, in this way it was possible to spread the word regarding medicinal plants in Valle del Chiese.

Information and awareness

It was important to establish, in a correct way, the instructive needs, which were requested by the local population, also in satisfying curiosity and brushing up on old traditions tied to the use of particular varieties along with a calendar of instructive appointments, it was decided to expand the informative offer with further training. From this emerged extra initiatives such as trips pertaining to the responsi-



Grappa and local spirits. On the right, natural recipes.



LOCAL USAGE OF HERBS

ACCOUNTS FROM RESEARCHERS AND BOTANICAL PARTICULARITIES IN VALLE DEL CHIESE

The area around the Ecomuseum is of particular botanical and floristic interest thanks to the combination of the geological substratum and the different microclimates that exist between the Idro lake and the Adamello glaciers. Without doubt a rich flora has stimulated the local people, who have discovered or accepted, also through cultural exchanges with other valleys, the health and nutritional benefits. **The Valle del Chiese is perhaps the place where you can find the most concentrated numbers of wild and edible species**, similar to the border areas with Brescia. A few typical varieties like “radicchio dell’orso” excite a similar or even greater attraction like that of gathering mushrooms, with the inevitable problems of trying to preserve species that are indiscriminately taken. A practical interest in medicinal plants and their cus-

tomary usage was quickly overtaken by an academic interest concentrating on the flora of the **pre-alpine zones and the Valle del Chiese**, in which even the current floristic map has confirmed the richness, identifying it as **one of the places with the most bio-diversity in the Alps**.

Time's running on...

Subsequently the publication of the first botanical studies and summaries regarding Trentino was the work of Francesco Calzolari (1522-1609), apothecary of Verona, who published his work “the flora of Mount Baldo” in 1566 and **Pietro Andrea Mattioli** (1501-1578) personal doctor to the historical figure Bernardo Clesio, who dedicated himself to botany and the study of therapeutical properties of plants, who started the first serious work on local flora. Already towards the beginning of the 1800s, **Caspar Graf von Stern-**

berg (1761-1863), a passionate aristocrat of natural science, described for the first time the *Saxifraga aracnoidea* picked from a crag in Val d'Ampola, near the hamlet of “alla Tolla” in Storo. It was due to the systematic exploration of the Tombea massif (a range of mountains that includes Monte Bondone), that **Francesco Facchini** (1788-1852), a brilliant botanist, who often worked in the Giudicarie valleys, discovered the presence of **several endemic spe-**

cies like *Telekia speciosissima*, *Orchis spitzelii*, and numbered even new types. Among these were *Daphne petraea* that he, because of doubt, did not manage to classify before his death. However, it was later “rediscovered” by the Bavarian pharmacist and botanist **Friedrich Leybold** (1827-1879), who gave the first official description. Leybold was also the first to realise how many other primroses inhabited the alpine slopes around the Adamello massif and in honour



Local species. At the top, from Malga Stabol Fresco to Cima Corona peak.



The herbalist at work.

of the area where he discovered them he gave the name **Primula daonensis**, the primrose of the Valle di Daone.

The collection of herbs by Facchini and Leybold were distributed throughout Europe and the “Flora Tiroliæ Cisalpinæ” of Facchini and the “Botanische skizzen von den Grenzen Sudtirols” of Leybold excited the botanists of that period to visit these areas. This stirring in Valle del Chiese attracted the distinguished **Geneve botanist Edmond Boissier** (1810-1885), who in 1856 went to mount Tombea, to gather *Saxifraga* which had been indicated by Leybold. He soon realised that his sample was different, therefore he sent it to a German expert Adolph Englerche, who in his turn, in 1869 published Boissier’s description in the Società Botanico-Zoologica bulletin

of Vienna. This is how the official discovery was made of one of the most famous endemisms in the area, the *Saxifraga tombea-nensis*, the **saxifrages of Monte Tombea**. There was the work conducted by the Swiss botanist **Émile Burnat** (1828-1920), who in 1878 described the *Viola dubyana*, just like the canon **Pietro Porta** (1823-1923), a native of Valvestino and a tireless enthusiast of studying flora, who also discovered a particular late flowering endemism: *Silene elisabethae*. On a track marked out by Don Porta also the following people set off on the same path like Silvestro Cimarolli (1854-1924), a teacher of Baitoni and Storo as well as Filiberto Luzzani (1909-1934), a priest from Valvestino. In the 1900s studies continued with an important contribution on the part of the experts in varied natural disciplines of the

Scientific name: *Cicerbita alpina*
Common name: alpine sow thistle



The alpine sow thistle is a perennial herbaceous plant that belongs to the Asteraceae family, very common in the mountains at an altitude of 1400-1500 metres. It grows in cool, damp areas, in siliceous and clayey ground, along streams and gullies, among the shrubs that cover the slopes. It can also be found on calcareous ground, especially in the battle zones of the First World War. From its underground rhizomes, immediately after the first snow has melted, its typical fleshy shoots of a violet colour and its tooth margined leaves, spring up, not to be mistaken with poisonous varieties like corn lilies (veratrum), which grow in similar areas at the same time. The plant grows to about a metre in height, with reddish stems, pale green leaves and a beautiful violet flower. It is an extremely sought-after species and in demand by the gourmets. It is picked as soon as the shoot appears and can be eaten fresh or preserved in oil or in a sweet and sour brine, a good starter dish. It is widely used in some of the valleys of Trentino, especially Valle del Chiese and Val di Ledro. The indiscriminate harvest, however, has made locally this species very rare, in some areas extinct, so a law was imposed from 2006, which limited the amount gathered to 2kg per person per day with specific hours of the day from 7am-7pm. The aim was to protect the species in its natural environment and to guarantee its availability for catering we are trying to experiment the cultivation of this species, ensuring the correct microclimate conditions, up to now with some success. Today, you can find the alpine sow thistle in plant nurseries and can be dug out and begin a harvest of the first shoots after the third year.



Scientific name: *Aruncus dioicus*
 Common name: goat's beard



The goat's beard is a perennial herbaceous plant, fairly common in woodland, which flowers at the beginning of the Summer with characteristic feathery white plumes that give the plant its common name. It is a hardy plant with large rhizomes that develop long stiff stems even up to 2 metres, which then dries with the remains of the fruit until the following year. Its pinnately compound leaves are long, and petiolata with tooth margined edges. The flowers are very small, creamy-white, grouped in long inflorescence like cobs that become floppy once mature. The stems shoot up quickly in the Spring, they are stiff and fleshy, and pinky-white in colour then grow assuming green tones. It is at this stage that the plant gets its name "mountain asparagus", even though it is not related to the popular asparagus. The variety has a bitter taste and is sought-after and often gathered excessively, without respecting the existing laws or common sense that suggests not taking more than one or two stems per plant, so as not to stress the rhizomes unnecessarily, perhaps changing area year after year would be better. The fresh goat's beard is parboiled and added to omelette or risotto rice or even preserved in oil and used as a side dish. It must be mentioned that consumption of this variety is only possible when picked at the first stages of its growth before it turns green, otherwise it produces a toxic glucoside that can have grave consequences. Therefore, it is wise, as with other common used species, to check the following: recognition, caution and gathering in moderation. The goat's beard can also be cultivated and "asparagus beds" are often established in mountain gardens or portions of them, transplanted and then propagating the rhizomes.



The Herbarium of Valle del Chiese.

Civic Museum of Rovereto and the Natural History Museum of Brescia, which still carry on today. The work of increasing awareness in the usage of wild herbs, at a local level, carried out by the **Capuchin monks of the S. Gregorio convent of Condino**, is very important, of which we owe, without doubt, an increasing interest and knowledge of the usage of the various species. Even today, as an inheritance of such teachings, many people make a habit of using goldenrod (*Solidago virgaurea*), bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), lady's mantle (*Alchemilla sp.pl.*), even though the most appreciated species are and remain St John's wort and arnica, the latter is also incorporated into the **coat of arms of the district of Praso**. This coat of arms shows three arnica flowers in gold – symbol of the three Villas of the ancient community and the culture of medicinal plants – placed inside a blue triangle, which represents the "Doss dei Morc", against a silver background.

The herbarium today

Within the realms of the European project "SY_CULTour – rem-

edies of the kitchen garden", the Valle del Chiese Ecomuseum, along with the pensioner's group "Giulis", have established a herbarium of Chiese, presented to the public for the first time at the Christmas Fair of 2013-2014, which spurred interest in the botanical varieties of this territory. The manual illustrates, through a series of 80 folders, the different varieties of plants and herbs that inhabit the woodlands around Valle del Chiese. From the renowned "Radicchio dell'orso" to the mountain asparagus, to the types with unusual properties, a journey into the discovery of a rich botanical heritage treasured by the valley.

What is a herbarium?

The word herbarium has a double meaning, it can mean a collection of dried plants, or simply a place where you can conserve and study the material. Botany in ancient times was the practice of recognising edible and medicinal plants that Greek and Latin authors already described in their works. The practical interests went hand in hand with a pure understanding: the plants, even if they are not al-

ways “useful” are collected and described based on morphologic characteristics of the flowers, fruit, leaves and roots. Botany develops even more, and with progress in studies arises the need to preserve, describe and simply consult the material collected. This is how herbariums are born. Among the most ancient there are those illustrated (like the precious Herbarium of Trento, at the end of the 1400s) where, next to the botanical description, a splendid illustration appears.

Why a herbarium?

A herbarium, besides being a document of great historical and scientific value to exhibit like a record of the past, and as a base for educational programmes, it is considered today an indispen-

sable means for history and botany research. It is often a singular source of reference that can be consulted when looking for the areas where you might find extinct species, or nearly extinct, threatened and rare. It allows you to compare different examples of the same genus that grow in different locations. A herbarium progresses and keeps collections for classes on local flora, horticulture, botanical methods, forestry studies, etc. we should never forget the importance of herbal samples for bio-geographic study, besides being an historical document which delves into the local usage of the various species and of the natural essence of the local culture. To pass on a herbarium is also a good motive for socialising and comparing.



The spotted gentian. On the right, a larkspur.



NATURE TRAIL IN VAL DAONE

Distance: 3 km / Slope: 200 metres / Time: 3 hours

The historical nature trail of Daone valley is a surprising walk in the discovery of not only woodland, but also an extraordinary array of vegetation like that of the Valle del Chiese. The route begins from the plain of Pracul (925 metres high), and goes beyond the old stone bridge of Manoncin, passing near the Manoncin Agritur with herbs and berries cultivation, then leads towards a quiet oasis, (Manon 1100 metres high) across an old cobbled road. What awaits the visitor is a magnificent view, where you can admire a large chunk of Valle del Chiese. From this strategic point you can observe the ruins of the battle trenches of the Great War. Descending the long forestry path of Lert-Malga Nova, you can reach the “Grotta dei Ciclopi”, in the hamlet of Plana (1080 metres high), a shelter frequently visited by climbers and a place of myths and legends. Before completing the trail there is still time to observe numerous varieties of plants, crossing over the clearings of Gincà nave (960 metres high) you come across an interesting open-air geological museum.

Notes on herbs

Along the way it is possible to encounter numerous varieties of medicinal herbs like: *Achillea millefolium* L., *Allium ursinum* L., *Ajuga reptans* L., *Arctium lappa* L., *Aruncus dioicus* L., *Asperula odorata* L., *Carum carvi* L., *Echium vulgare* L., *Equisetum arvense* L., *Equisetum pratense* L., *Equisetum hyemale* L., *Eupatorium cannabinum* L., *Fagus sylvatica* L., *Filipendula vulgaris* Moench, *Galium verum* L., *Geranium robertianum* L., *Heracleum sphondylium* L., *Hypericum maculatum* Crantz, *Leucanthemum vulgare* Lam., *Malva sylvestris* L., *Myrrhis odorata* (L.) Scop., *Oxalis acetosella* L., *Peucedanum ostruthium* (L.) Koch, *Plantago major* L., *Polygonum bistorta* L., *Polypodium vulgare* L., *Prunella vulgaris* L., *Rumex acetosa* L., *Salvia pratensis* L., *Sanguisorba minor* Scop., *Taraxacum officinalis* L., *Timo* sp.pl., *Urtica dioica* L., *Valeriana officinalis* L.



Above, clockwise: sweet fern, viper's bugloss (*echium vulgare*), dandelion, horsetail. On the left, view towards Bissina dam – Val Daone.

THE HIDDEN FOREST OF CASTEL ROMANO

Distance: 2 km / Slope: 100 metres / Time: 2 hours

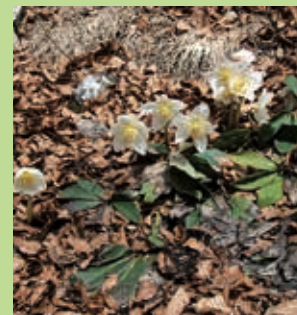
From the parking area near the Tourist Office of Valle del Chiese, on the side of the road that takes you to Caffaro, climb towards Cologna, a small hamlet of about 150 inhabitants, continuing on the path that borders the fields and grassland, arriving at an old washtub near a building that was constructed over the Rio del Luf. In the past it was a mill once used by the inhabitants of the village to grind corn. Follow on over a cobbled path then climb a flight of steps, turn right and continue to flank the stream; after a few metres you will find another fork in the road, this time follow the trail to the left and climb to enter the forest of Castel Romano. The path is easy and the view is striking: trees, flowers and even animals if you are lucky (badger, deer, squirrel, fox, hare and many other small creatures like the harvest mouse and also various insects). Along this pleasant walk there are many species of trees: the **pussy willow**, a small tree with smooth grey bark, which like all the other willows contains **salicin, used in the pharmaceutical industry**. Further on you can find the **cornelian cherry**, a tall tree up to 5-7 metres high, it often appears like a bush with small yellow flowers that open out before the appearance of the leaves. Its fruit is an oblong red drupe that is used in **jams, jellies and juices**. In the old days the fruit was preserved in brine just like olives. What is striking is the majestic **beech tree** that can reach heights of up to 30-35 metres with diameters more than a metre and a half and thrive for 300 years. Its crown is thick and globular and in Autumn takes on a rich beautiful red colour. For some animals of the Castel Romano forest the **beechnut** is very important, the fruit of the beech tree is rich in nutritional substances. Our great grandparents prepared an oil that they used in cooking. The gentle climb continues and very near a **hornbeam tree** there is a fork in the path where you can smell the sweet scent of **cyclamen**; look down and you will see a patch of the underbrush whose colour will bewitch you! Then there is the **liverwort** with its white and violet flowers, the **Christmas rose** (helleborus), the **Erica**, and even more flowers. If you go straight on you will come across the **spruce**, the **elderberry**, the **Scots pine**, the **walnut**, if you go towards the left you enter the middle of the Castel Romano forest. There are many hop hornbeams and the ivy that winds tightly round the flowering ash, juniper shrubs and the dogwood, and again the cherry, the Turkey oak and the larch. By now you have arrived at the terrace where you can observe the entire countryside of the Valle del Chiese, with its precious water that up to the 1950s, Man utilised especially with high technology and intelligence. Now you are very close to the Castel Romano, an ancient fortress of the noble Lodron family, of which there are legends and stories of passion and intrigue, which we invite you to discover along the way.

Notes on herbs

Along the way it is possible to encounter numerous varieties of medicinal herbs like: *Achillea millefolium* L., *Ajuga reptans* L., *Artemisia vulgaris* L., *Bellis perennis* L., *Calamintha nepeta* (L.) Savi., *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (L.) Medicus., *Carpinus betulus* L., *Cornus mas* L., *Corylus avellana* L., *Fragaria vesca* L., *Hedera helix* L., *Helleborus niger* L., *Humulus lupulus* L., *Juglans regia* L., *Larix decidua* Miller., *Ostrya carpinifolia* Scopoli., *Plantago lanceolata* L., *Plantago major* L., *Polypodium vulgare* L., *Populus tremula* L., *Rosa subcanina* (H. Crist) Dalla Torre et Sarnth., *Rubus idaeus* L., *Rubus fruticosus* L., *Rumex acetosa* L., *Primula veris* L., *Pinus*



sylvestris L., *Picea abies* (L.) H. Karsten., *Salvia pratensis* L., *Sambucus nigra* L., *Sanguisorba minor* Scopoli, *Symphytum officinale* L., *Taraxacum officinale* Weber., *Tussilago farfara* L., *Urtica dioica* L.



Above, clockwise: the legendary Castel Romano castle, Christmas rose (*helleborus niger*), violet, dog rose.

HERETICS, WITCHES, HERBALISTS: RIO CAINO TRAIL

Distance: 4 km / Slope: 300 metres / Time: 3 hours

A journey back in time that narrates the craftsman trade, history and heresy: this is the ethnographic trail of the Rio Caino in Cimego. Among woodlands and fields, the **farmer and the ancient trades** relive the memories of the old way of life, the people their work and their unspoilt symbiosis with nature that they were able to maintain all this time. The trail begins from the suspension bridge over the river Chiese and follows on into the Rio Caino valley with its factories: the forge, the mill, the saw-mill and continuing on to the lime kiln, locally known as the "poiat" and numerous noticeboards describing and illustrating the tools of these mountain craftsmen. Then you walk through legendary places like the **alcove of Frà Dolcino and Margherita**, who lived in Cimego and denounced as heretics **around 1300 and 1303** and the fairy-tale **garden of Brigida**, the witch, where many mixed wild herbs grow that were used by the witch, a true story that dates back to 1470. This part of the track leads you into a more recent past tied to the Italian front of the First World War, with **battlements and trenches**, besides two **canons** that were used in 1914-1918 against the Austro-Hungarian army. Reaching the higher ground you arrive at **Malga Caino** farmhouse, which was restored to provide food and refreshments for the tourists and climbers. It is a good example of rural architecture in the last century and houses a small museum, which exhibits the **tools of the old mountain craftsmen**. The trail is engulfed in a calm, pleasant area and characterised by a mixed conifer and broad-leaf forest, it takes you through one of the most unspoilt areas of the region, where you can bump into the stag and the deer or just listen to the beautiful songs of the many birds.

**Notes on herbs**

Along the way it is possible to encounter numerous varieties of medicinal herbs like: *Ceterach officinarum* DC., *Equisetum arvense* L., *Polypodium vulgare* L., *Juniperus communis* L., *Abies alba* Miller, *Pinus mugo* Turra (agg.), *Berberis vulgaris* L., *Anchusa officinalis* L., *Cynoglossum officinale* L., *Echium vulgare* L., *Symphytum officinale* L., *Humulus lupulus* L., *Sambucus nigra* L., *Saponaria officinalis* L., *Achillea millefolium* L., *Artemisia vulgaris* L., *Carlina acaulis* L., *Eupatorium cannabinum* L., *Leucanthemum vulgare* Lam., *Matricaria chamomilla* L., *Solidago virgaurea* L. subsp. *virgaurea*, *Taraxacum officinale* Weber, *Tussilago farfara* L., *Cornus mas* L., *Corylus avellana* L., *Alliaria petiolata* (Bieb.) Cavara et Grande, *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (L.) Medicus, *Nasturtium officinale* R. Br., *Hippophae rhamnoides* L., *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* (L.) Sprengel, *Fagus sylvatica* L., *Geranium robertianum* L., *Hypericum perforatum* L., *Juglans regia* L., *Ajuga reptans* L., *Calamintha nepeta* (L.) Savi, *Mentha suaveolens* Ehrh., *Origanum vulgare* L., *Prunella vulgaris* L., *Salvia pratensis* L., *Stachys officinalis* (L.) Trevisan, *Thymus* spp., *Anthyllus vulneraria* L., *Galega officinalis* L., *Medicago sativa* L., *Melilotus officinalis* (L.) Pallas, *Lythrum salicaria* L., *Oxalis acetosella* L., *Plantago major* L., *Rumex acetosa* L., *Primula veris* L., *Agrimonia eupatoria* L., *Amelanchier ovalis* Medicus, *Alchemilla xanthochlora* Rothm. (agg.), *Arunch dioicus* (Walter) Fernald, *Crataegus monogyna* Jacq., *Filipendula vulgaris* Moench, *Fragaria vesca* L., *Malus domestica* Borkh., *Prunus domestica* L., *Prunus mahaleb* L., *Prunus spinosa* L., *Rosa subcanina* (H. Crist) Dalla Torre et Sarnth., *Rubus hulmifolius* Schott, *Rubus ideaeus* L., *Sanguisorba minor* Scop., *Galium verum* L., *Verbascum thapsus* L., *Angelica sylvestris* L., *Daucus carota* L., *Pastinaca sativa* L., *Urtica dioica* L., *Valeriana officinalis* L., *Verbena officinalis* L., *Allium ursinum* L.,

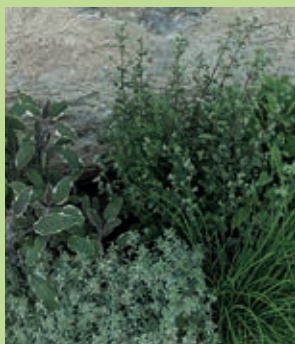


On the left, wild chicory, hawthorn fruit and the magic of Rio Caino at night.

REMEDIES FROM THE GARDEN AND HERBS OF THE FOREST

Retaining the memories of the ancient usage of herbs is one of the cornerstones of the SY_CULTour project. In the Valle del Chiese Ecomuseum handing down this knowledge passed on from father to son in the Condino area, maintaining contact with the Capuchin monastery and the monks understanding of herbs, especially the novice, Father Atanasio da Grauno, who had been a real expert on the subject. Therefore it was natural to build an experimental field for the cultivation of medicinal herbs near Condino, in the hamlet of Mon at the Agritur Casa Essenia Farm B&B, known as "Remedy garden" in cooperation with the pensioners group "Giulis". The garden is about 200 sq. metres, and 26 varieties of edible and medicinal herbs were planted: thyme, savoury, oregano, rosemary, horehound, sage, crimson bee balm, mallow, lovage, common rue, chive, rhubarb, borage, fennel, dandelion, ribwort, campion, chamomile, marigold, cornflower, yarrow, lavender, St John's wort, mint, lemon balm, lippie.

The use of the facility, besides giving instruction to those who wish to engage in cultivating medicinal plants, serves as a base for organising farm activities, with the help of experts, around the area of the Ecomuseum, as well as researching grassland and woodland medicinal varieties.



Above shows, catchfly, crimson bee-balm, greater celandine and a mix of herbs.



LAKE IDRO AND THE WONDERFUL BOTANY OF CIMA TOMBEA PEAK

The area of Bondone could be described as the "grassland of herbs", because its territory has been overwhelmed with **studious botanists and herbalists** searching for precious flora. The ideal visit to this amazing natural land would be to move around from one area to another by car and then on foot starting at the **Biotope of lake Idro**, the remains of a humid environment at the bottom of the valley, where very rare species grow that are included in the provincial register of endangered species. After having seen the biotope and the beautiful edges of the lake the next step is surely the **Castel San Giovanni**, the famous Lodron family abode, built overlooking the lake with a breath-taking view. For those who are passionate or curious, the journey can continue towards the lovely **hamlet of Bondone**, where Angelo, the so called "farmer" of the farmhouse specialises in harvesting and transforming wild plants for the catering industry, like the renowned "Radic de l'ors" (alpine sow-thistle), or the goat's beard and the dandelions. He will take you to visit the educational field dedicated to medicinal herbs positioned on a hill at a height of 1100 metres. Climbing even further you will enter a true and wonderful paradise for botanist. **The fields of Malga Alpo** farm with their splendid flora, and the Bocca di Cablone, accessible by an old military track, are surely places of natural beauty. To top all this on our rich nature trail is **Cima Tombea** peak, a place that has seen many a noteworthy discoverer of endemisms in these mountains. It is a hot spot for its floristic diversity, a **unique area out of the entire alpine range**. A place where you can take your time, and with an attentive eye browse and discover the numerous mountain species.



Heath spotted orchid (*dactylorhiza maculata*) and the lesser butterfly orchid (*platanthera bifolia*).



TOURISM TO THE SCENT OF HERBS

The Valle del Chiese concludes a moment of great emotions and a variety of countryside comprising two extremes, going from 200 to more than 3400 metres high, from cultivated fields and rural life to never-ending glaciers and alpine peaks. In the middle there is a world of woodland, waterfalls, shelters, and farmhouses, but also old settlements, in each case respecting the environment that – in Valle del Chiese – is the real centre of things. This is the gateway to Trentino for those who arrive from the south-west and is expressed through its forests, its ancient hamlets, its mountains, which are a **passport to this land that is capable of transmitting its wonderful genuineness, of its people and products, of its flourishing nature and of the emotions they give you.** A land, which narrates many stories through its variety: of agriculture and its local produce of the bottom of the valley, of its timber industry; those tied to both rivers and streams that tell stories of fishing and ancient trades, of tragedies of world war battles in trenches more than 2000 metres high, of which this valley still holds testimony. It is through these accounts that life is given to this territory, like a red line that indissolubly ties mountains and lakes, forests and rivers, farmland and villages. Holidaying in the Ecomuseum area means being able to choose between a range of hospitality. From guest houses, rented rooms, farmhouse accommodation, B&B, camping, rented flats, mountain shelters and hostels, to numerous restaurants, where you can taste the local cuisine.

A brochure of all the facilities with more information about bookings is available from the Tourist Information office in Valle del Chiese or browse its website at www.visitchiese.it

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DISCOVER MORE OF THE ECOMUSEUM:
ROUTES, GUIDED TOURS AND EVENTS AWAIT YOU!



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Youtube ch.: [EcomusValledelChiese](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

The farms that are involved in the project “L'ORTO DEI RIMEDI” are as follows:



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AZIENDA AGRICOLA LA CONTADINA - Angelo Rigacci

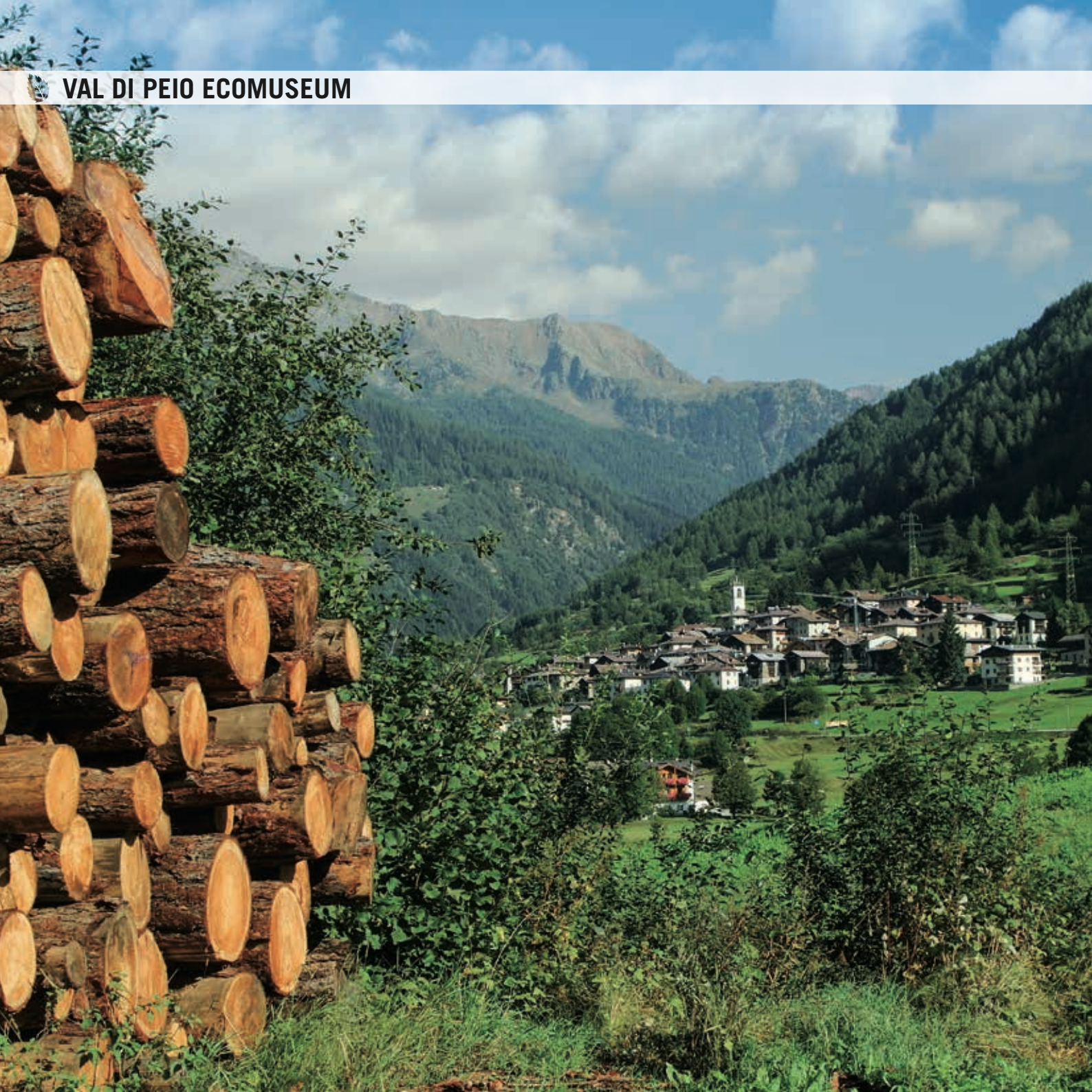
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 VAL DI PEIO ECOMUSEUM





VAL DI PEIO ECOMUSEUM

Small Alpine World

ON THE EXTREME NORTH-WESTERN EDGE OF TRENINO, ON THE BORDER BETWEEN LOMBARDIA AND ALTO ADIGE, WE FIND VAL DI PEIO, A SMALL ALPINE WORLD WHERE HUGE PEAKS COVER THE ORTLES-CEVEDALE GROUP

In 2002 this small valley was allowed an Ecomuseum for the peculiarity of its territory, the richness of its historical heritage, both religious and cultural, but above all thanks to the efforts of its inhabitants, who initially where spontaneous and then little by little more articulate, have preserved their history and customs. The inhabitants of Valeta, a local name for Val di Peio, are scattered throughout seven small hamlets: Comasine, home to the ancient mines along with the little church of Santa Lucia, built above an old castle; Strombiano with Casa Grazioli and the ruins of the “Casacia”, most likely was a medieval tower; Celentino with the Casa of the Ecomuseum and the Permanent Textile Laboratory; Celledizzo with its Ethnographic Museum of Wood, the many fountains

and farmhouses with open roofs and big wooden beams; Cogolo, the administrative centre of the valley, with its old parish church and magnificent frescos and the Palazzo Migazzi palace; Peio Fonti with its thermal Spa water, already famous in the 17th century; Peio Paese, the highest hamlet in Trentino (1584 metres high), with its War Museum and the last cheese factory in the province. The L.I.N.U.M. Association (working together to narrate the mountain customs), with the help of the local library, has marked the way for an ethnographic research in Val di Peio by creating themed documentaries such as “Il tempo del grano” (1994), “Il lino dei ricordi” (1996) and “Vestir di lana” (2000). In particular, a film dedicated to the cultivation and work of linen has been fun-

damental in establishing a group of women who have recovered traditional techniques for fabricating this precious plant fibre, allowing in some way preserving knowledge otherwise destined to oblivion. In 2012, another piece was added to the documentary: along with the Fondazione Museo Storico del Trentino, a film entitled “Peio, a story of water” was made, where twenty-five accounts retrace almost a century of history of the valley from memories of the Great War to the construction of the first ski slopes, passing on to the hy-

droelectric plant and tourism of Health Spas. The themes on which the Ecomuseum focuses on recovering the cultural origins of the population are as follows:

- THE SOUL: to rediscover the “personality” and “its unique identity” of the valley through poems, tales and legends.
- THE HOLY: besides churches, numerous tales of Christianity throughout the valley, from steeples to crosses, to shrines, to tabernacles.
- THE GREAT WAR: fought on the mountains of Val di Peio, as seen by the trenches, the



View of Val di Peio.

forts, the military paths and the many war relics collected by the War Museum of Peio “1914-1918: war on our doorstep”.

- **THE WOOD:** landscape and architectural element that defines the valley and that once had a role in its economy.
- **THE MINERALS:** especially iron, whose extraction continued for over a millennium in the mines of Val Comasine and due to difficulties concluded in 1967.
- **THE CHEESE:** an excellent product from the last remaining cheese factory Caseificio Turnario in Trentino, where cows and goats' milk are produced with traditional methods.
- **THE BREAD:** the cultivation of cereal in Val di Peio was once a thriving industry, is recalled by its many windmills. In particular, with rye they used to bake the famous paneti, a daily supply for all families.
- **THE LINEN:** a widely used and cultivated fibre up to World War II and its aftermath; almost every family were producing the thread which was essential for the manufacturing of cloth and material.
- **THE WOOL:** the many pastures and grasslands at high altitude provide now as in the past, the breeding of sheep, both for its meat as for its wool, which was once an essential fibre for the local economy.
- **THE WATER:** defines the landscape in all its form, with eternal snow, alpine lakes, streams and even fountains, spring water and hydroelectric basins.



A FEW AREAS OF THE ECOMUSEUM

Casa Grazioli - “Casa de la Béga” in Strombiano is a good example of the evolution of local architecture, where you can perceive the simple life, yet proud of their past. Throughout the period of the exhibition “**el pan de ‘na volta**” you can watch them making the traditional “paneti” bread made from rye and baked in the old ovens. The house is open during the Summer, with guided tours, on Tuesdays and Fridays from 3 pm to 6 pm.

At **Casa dell'Ecomuseo** house in Celentino the **Sala della Tessitura G. Rigotti** hall is decorated with different types of tapestries that depict various eras, as well as the **felt wool** laboratory and **educational lessons on herbs**. Courses on textiles and manufacturing are organized, even for pupils, as well as transforming aromatic herbs, creating soaps and making a herbarium. The house is open all year long, on

Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, from 10 am to 12 am. All workshops must be booked.

The **Caseificio Turnario** in Peio organizes the distribution of *caserada* in shifts among its members, based on the amount of milk acquired. The cows and goats' milk is prepared fresh. The “casolet” cheese has been awarded by Slow Food. Products may be bought everyday from 10 am to 12 am.

The **Museo della Malga**, that was once the old barn house of Malga Campo, demonstrates the old customs of farmers to the visitors. Each barn, with its tools and objects, left as they were, describes an unaltered history of the last centuries.

The **Museo Etnografico del Legno** museum, located in the old sawmill of Celledizzo, preserves an ancient carriage with an electrical powered saw. There are guided tours twice a week during the months of July and August.



The **Museo Peio “1914-1918: War on our doorstep”**, is a mixed collection of relics, weapons, photographs and daily life objects which were used by the soldiers on the front line and later recovered from the snow and ice of Val di Peio. The museum is open everyday during the Summer months as well as in the Winter.

The **Hydroelectric plant in Cogolo - Pont** is a masterpiece of art and architecture of the 1920s. It is open to the public during the exhibition “Centrale Aperta”.

Frescos in the SS. Filippo and Giacomo church: on the right, Casa dell'Ecomuseum.



VAL DI PEIO ECOMUSEUM AND THE SY_CULTOUR PROJECT

To recognise and use herbs for food and medicinal purposes was once widespread among the simple folk and it was the custom to go into the fields and gather zicoria, comede and sciopeti, etc. The SY_CULTour project, which every Ecomuseum has interpreted and adapted to its own territory, found fame in Val di Peio, both cultural and cultivation: with the reintroduction of edible plants used by the locals for remedies; the name chosen for this project is "Gli orti dei Semplici in Val di Peio". The involvement of restaurants, hotels, but even farmers and collectors have reflected and decided on proposal in harmony with nature

and tourism. Some collectors, in particular, have benefitted by the project in transforming a simple passion into a business, attending specialised courses on the use of herbs and proposing products such as aromatic salt and herbal soaps which through the Ecomuseum, have become sought after.

The Botanical garden part of the headquarters of the Ecomuseum in Celentino is inspired by the medieval use of spices. The plot of land for the project near to the Casa dell'Ecomuseo, has a good position and is protected from the wind allowing for the cultivation and the natural propagation of less known plants: in a confined space it is possible to count seventy varieties of herbs, plants and crops.



Allowing visitors to discover and recognize the many species, even without a guide, as every plant is labelled by a small informative tag. The entire area is fenced off with larch wood, built using traditional methods. Just beyond, in the near village of Strombiano, thanks to the project, a small cultivation of medicinal plants has been established: thyme, lavender, marjoram, oregano, lemon balm, rosemary, mint, etc. For this site, as for the Botanical garden,

precise informative cards have been attached to every plant, as well as explaining the project in general. Another activity, which was made possible thanks to investments, was in establishing a small educational distillery for aromatic herbs. This was designed especially for primary school children, which shows one of the most ancient and fascinating processes of transforming herbs, which bury their roots in the Alchemy and in the Spagyric of Paracelsus.

The botanical garden in the Casa dell'Ecomuseum and, on the opposite page, a presentation of the Sy_cultour project to a group of Slovenian members.



LOCAL USAGE OF HERBS

TRADITIONAL WAYS WITH HERBS IN VAL DI PEIO

The traditional ways of using herbs and forest products in Val di Peio (firstly resin taken from larch and spruce), was a custom that was slowly disappearing, remembered only through the people that a sudden change from subsistence farming, breeding and harvesting, to a modern day society of consumption where everything

is sterile and packaged. Fault perhaps of an economic crisis, in the last few years a return to ancient customs aimed at the tourist industry has helped our valley. In this way the Ecomuseum has organised guided tours of the Botanical garden and the area of medicinal herbs, with educational workshops on the transformation and distillery of herbs for students and adults.



HOUSEHOLD USE OF WILD HERBS

The people we interviewed were very enthusiastic about the opportunity we offered them of handing down their experience of old customs and being able to relive them, even if only a memory of time gone by. The vet or the doctor is usually called out if there is a serious problem, while in the past they were called out for everyday things concerning the daily life of animals and people.

PLANT REMEDIES AGAINST CATTLE DISEASES

During the Summer of 2013 the 80 year old Mr. Renzo Stocchetti was interviewed and he recited the following remedies:

- lack of appetite and difficult digestion or for cramp and colic take a portion of wormwood (white herbs that normally grow on the walls) with table salt;
- against *bloating*, especially if

HEALING WITH HERBS



A **medicinal herb** is a plant that contains useful substances (leaf, seed, fruit and root) in its organism for therapeutical purposes so called active principles. Sometimes these herbs are known as medicinal plants (or wild herbs) because they were prepared in proper medical laboratories (*officine*) up to the times of Simple Gardens, which have now become botanical, whereas today they are used by pharmaceutical firms for their specialised medicinal products. There are many stories of remedies and usage in Peio for man or beast, some of these have been collected in a series of interviews conducted to complete this work.

they have swallowed 'terzol' in Autumn, prepare a drink: boil some cumin seeds (*carèi*) for 5 minutes make them drink while it is still warm. This tea immediately causes wind and the animal can soon egest;

- after birth, or for a weak calf, mix some rye flour with hot water. This drink was given three times a day to the animal;
- for indigestion collect a few larch buds, add salt, grind it all together into a powder and give it to the animal. Even *caffè dei campi* (lupin, similar to a white bean with tall stalks, produces pods containing grains that once dried in the sun they were grounded) aided the digestion;
- against diarrhoea boil some rice or grounded flax seeds;
- against *swelling* and infections make mudpacks with an ointment made of turpentine and pig's fat. Cover the infected part with the mudpack and keep it firm with a strip of material or bandage. Repeat this process a couple of times a day until the puss is expelled;
- for any kind of ailment where you are not sure of the cause, give a drink made by boiling juniper berries and peppermint. After administering this drink give the animal a meal of dried nettles mixed with hay so the animal will eat them;
- to cure foot and mouth disease, administer 1-2 litres of thyme herbal tea several times a day (a natural antibiotic). The same tea can be used for washing and disinfecting the nails affected by foot rot. It is necessary to firmly massage the kidneys,

using thyme, because it is in the kidneys that the disease ordinarily lays. Farmers have always been worried about the foot and mouth disease. As soon as it was discovered immediately all the other farmers in the area were notified. The nails were immediately washed and a mudpack made of turpentine and pig's fat was applied kept in place by a bandage. The cowsheds were closed until the disease had been eradicated. The cowsheds would be disinfected with a mixture of lime and ichthyol. In some cases the farmer would ask the chemist for a "solution of S. Romedio" (disinfectant);

- for internal inflammation the 'lavacri' (bowel wash) were very efficient. Dissolve lead capsules in water and add mallow herb;
- for stomach cramps boil chamomile flowers in water. Give the drink every three to four hours;
- for mastitis use clay mudpacks (*creda*);
- lucerne herb, still in use, was cultivated and when animal got sick, the herb was added to the hay or even substituted it.



PLANT REMEDIES FOR MEDICAL CARE

In the Summer of 2013 an 85 year old, Mrs. Maria Daprà Dalavalle was interviewed and she recited the following remedies:

- if someone at home had a cold, you would fill a pan with water, add turpentine, thyme and mallow. This mix was left to simmer on the fire in a way that the aroma would fill the house;
- for coughs you would apply the 'caldei': take the paper that was used to hold sugar (a little spongy), spread some butter and turpentine (*argà*) and sprinkle over some chamomile. This was placed on the chest, covered by a cloth to keep it warm, and it was left for a whole day. The process was repeated in the morning and at night until you were better;
- a mudpack was made of butter and *argà* and applied to infections;
- even the "papina de lin" (flax pulp) was used for coughs. The flax seeds were grounded and added to a little milk and put on the fire to warm. The mudpack was then spread over the chest and covered with a cloth. It was replaced two or three times a day;
- flax seeds are also digestible and act as an anti-inflammatory. The liquid obtained by leaving a spoonful of seeds to soak overnight, should be drunk the next morning and is very good for the digestion;
- to help the digestion you would prepare a grappa (spirits) made from star anise or else from gentiana roots;



At the top, arnica in the fields, sheep, wild thyme and chamomile. On the left, a heifer grazing.



- wormwood would be ground- ed in a pestle and mortar, then mixed with pig's fat and used on sprains;
- the flowers of Aaron's rod were placed in a jar and sealed then exposed to the sunlight, release an oil that can be applied to burns, even sunburn;
- after childbirth it would be correct to cleanse your organism by drinking the water that had been used to boil juniper berries and twigs;
- the *carei* (wild cumin), besides being useful like coffee, it also helps the digestion. It was used above all to ease wind in small babies;
- blueberry was often used for eyesight, for blood vessels and also intestines;
- to cure bronchitis and coughs, Icelandic lichen would be used not to be mistaken with lichens that grow on plants. A tea was made by boiling them, though it left a bitter taste;
- in cases of hypertension and angina make a herbal tea with hawthorn;
- with the grounded leaves of ribwort you would apply a poultice to the wound, to warts and to insect bites. The tea was good for coughs;
- a nutritional tea was made with the flowers and leaves of mallow, soothing and anti-inflammatory, helps clear ca-

Scientific name: *Linum usitatissimum* Wulfen

Common name: linen

The linen fibre (*Linum usitatissimum*) was extensively cultivated in Val di Peio and the oldest inscription of this can be found in the Codice Vanghiano, dating back to 1250, as far as Trentino is concerned, it can be dated back much further in the past, up to the discovery of threads and fragments of material linked to the ancient pile dwellers of Ledro. The unaltered linen culture resisted through the ages right up to the outbreak of World War II, when the invention of synthetic fibre became more popular, this event brought about a slow decline also because the women of the community finally felt relieved of an arduous task. The varied and complex stages of manufacturing linen, from seeds to textiles are very well presented in the documentary 'Il lino dei ricordi', filmed in 1996 by the A.N.A. of Celentino and recently digitally remastered by the Association of ethnographic studies LINUM. The hand sowing of linseed was plentiful, according to folklore 'spés' like 'l'lin' and by tradition was sown on the feast of Santa Croce, the 3rd March; to fertilise the field, besides the usual cattle manure, they used human excrements taken from the outside lavatories – very effective in growing hardy plants with a soft thread. A heavy job that was done by teenagers was that of carrying soil in a wheelbarrow – transporting the soil from the lower parts of fields to the upper parts – with the aim of keeping a uniformed density to the terraces. From June it was possible to admire the blossom of the wonderful blue flowers, that throughout the Summer would little by little be substituted with fruit - le *còcole* – and finally, after August Bank Holiday the harvest season would begin, which would be followed by extirpation. The bunches of linseed – *mazèti* – were placed in the farmyard for separating the fruit from the stalks – la *scocoladūra* – which were then taken apart to extract the thread fibre. The LINUM Association, thanks to an enthusiastic group of women volunteers, has been working for years in providing an awareness of this craft of sowing, spinning and weaving. Moreover, the traditional work of the fibre has been proposed through demonstrative exhibitions like "Dalla pianta al gomitolo... e al tessuto", shown in various market squares around Trentino and not only. The sowing field in *Campapradi* in Cogolo, is decorated with wooden female mannequins to bring attention to the women who were involved in these tasks. In Celentino, at the Casa dell'Ecomuseo house, in a traditional wooden cellar *stua*, a functional workshop Laboratorio Permanente di Tessitura with its replica weaving machine of the Casa Grazioli house, now on show at the museum Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina di S. Michele all'Adige.





tarrh. For the digestion eat the cooked leaves like spinach;

- a chamomile tea made from the flowers was used for stomach problems, insomnia, colic, fever and digestion in general;
- against indigestion problems a herbal tea made from Senna was taken;
- with arnica above all ointments were made for sprains, cuts and infections. Arnica tea was used for swelling, fever and inflammation of the feet.

PLANT REMEDIES FOR MEDICAL CARE

During the Summer of 2013 a 64 year old woman, Mrs: Elia Moreschini was interviewed and she recited the following remedies:

- the *shepherd's purse* was prepared in various ways to cure many illnesses: the tea was used against fever, for diarrhoea and blood stained urine; the juice relieves ear infections; the powder was used on scars and for nosebleeds;
- the tea made from the flowers of coltsfoot relieves coughs and catarrh. Also the roots, gathered before flowering can be made into a tea and help with lung problems;

- St John's wort, besides being used as a tincture, was also used for headaches or for indigestion. The leaves and seeds were grounded and made into mudpacks for wounds;
- the hop seed cones have soothing and digestive properties as well as being placed in pillows to induce sleep;
- the latex of the greatercelandine is very effective against corns, warts and verruca. The fluid extract was used for gout;
- tea made from the ribwort leaves was used for catarrh on the lungs. The grounded leaves are an effective poultice on wounds and insect bites;
- against stomach cramp, difficult digestion, migraine, earache and toothache the lemon balm tea is useful;
- the lungwort has sudorific and emollient properties. It was often used against coughs, hoarseness and catarrh on the lungs;
- for mouth and throat inflammation, but also for eye problems a tea made from dog rose or even mallow and chamomile;
- even ribwort was used for tired and inflamed eyes;
- with the rhododendron berries, arnica, juniper, larkspur and other medicinal plants you can make a good cream to use against haematoma and inflammations;
- during the Winter the elderberry flower and the dog rose fruit can be used to prepare a tea against the cold Winter months;
- for urinary inflammation bearberry or mallow was used;
- horsetail was used for miner-



At the top, bearberry, coltsfoot, rosehip and dandelion.

Scientific name: *Achillea moschata* Wulfen
Common name: musk milfoil

The musk milfoil is found in all alpine zones with siliceous substratum, while in Dolomitic calcareous zones it is substituted by the *Achillea clavennae*. It grows at a height of 1900-2900 metres and is an annual plant. This medicinal herb was used in the past to aid digestion. It appears that even the Similaun Man (a 5000 year old skeleton) had it in his sack along with other herbs including musk milfoil. This variety is used as a complementary plant in preparing various bitter tasting herbs that are found in the shops. The yarrow is a good substitute for the musk milfoil, it grows in the fields (depending on the height of the grass) and has the same active principles. It is harvested in full bloom. The flower tips must not be damp and they must be picked in the morning using a pair of scissors. In this way the roots are not damaged, rather they are strengthened and the following year they will spread and produce new shoots. It flowers in July-August. A dry, shady ventilated area must be used in order to dry them and avoid direct sunlight, because the essential oil of the flowers will evaporate. The dried tips are preserved in sealed containers in a dark room. A 57 year old man, Mr. Eugenio Moreschini told us about its popular use: "it was used as a tea, leaving it to stand in boiling water for 5-6 minutes, three or four flowers per person. The dried tips of the flowers could be placed in spirits and kept for twenty days then filtered you can get a liqueur. A drink after meals was good for the digestion. Even the yarrow tincture was popular. You could put a few drops into tea, water or other refreshing drinks. It was also used in mudpacks or for massaging. Musk milfoil added to other herbs was made into a cream".



alizing and like a haemostatic;

- when the hairy insides of the dog rose were cleaned they were put in honey (heated in a double pan to make them liquid) and were eaten as sweets.

USE OF WILD HERBS IN THE KITCHEN

Again Mrs. Elia Moreschini explained that when there was not enough food on the arrival of Spring many wild herbs were collected.

- the dandelion was widespread in the fields and recognisable by its yellow flower. The tender leaves were gathered for salads. If the plants had already developed then the larger hardy leaves were cooked;
- even berry was widely available. It grew along the pavements and on walls. It has its sweet leaves;
- to sweeten a rather bitter salad mix, the sow thistle was added;
- the garden cress has a slight peppery taste and this was also used in salads;
- it was very easy to find chicory in the fields, also this was used in salads or even par-boiled with some butter or oil;
- many wild herbs were added to omelettes to give them extra taste;
- soups and pastries were enriched with wild herbs;
- good king henry was used a lot;
- the tips of hops were very good.

Even today the wild herbs are used for preparing delicious dishes:

- nettles make excellent gnocchi or else, cut finely and heated in a pan, or mixed with flour and eggs and prepared as homemade Tagliatelle;
- homemade pasta can be enriched with wild herbs;
- sow thistle in oil can be served as a starter. It makes a dish extra special, besides the taste, it is pleasing to the eye;
- the petals of marigold, cornflower and mallow bring colour to the plate and also the flowers or the tiny leaves are used to decorate the dish.



Mallow flowers. On the left, at the top, yarrow (*achillea millefolium*).



NATURAL COSMETICS

Natural cosmetics come from the land. Using simple vegetable ingredients and very little work. Based on a synergic and harmonious relationship with nature. The products obtained are scented with herbs and flowers. The skin is a sensitive organ and absorbs and expels our body's substances, even damaging ones like for example polluting agents. For this reason we must take care of what we come into contact with, above all checking the contents of every product we use. The Azienda Agricola Biocertificata farm "Olga Casanova", situated upstream of Peio Fonti, cultivates alpine plants for cosmetic-herbal use paying attention to the environment,

communication and education. Other than conducting a biological farm they use natural colours on their printed packaging and do not use glue. The particularity of the cosmetic products that the farm offers, obtained from their own plants and of a high quality has turned the farm into one of the best in the biological cosmetic industry. Edelweiss is present in most of the products, noted for its antioxidant properties. The flavonoids it contains fight the free radicals and are excellent adjuvants for a healthy skin. Recent studies conducted by the Biology and Evolution Department of the University of Ferrara have shown that the extracts from edelweiss cultivated

on this farm are six times more superior than the antioxidant flavonoids present in the usual products you can find in the shops. This is a reward for three years work of tests done on marketed edelweiss compared with "Olga Casanova" farm's production. The cultivation methods, the particular care taken in harvesting and the innovative process of extraction made by Agripharma, a laboratory that concentrates on the processing of the products guarantees the quality of the final product. The "Olga Casanova" farm produces a series of cosmetic products with alpine herbs: the edelweiss antioxidant cream, rugosa rose

illuminating cream, edelweiss face cream for men, edelweiss hyaluronic acid under-eye cream for men, edelweiss aftershave balm, edelweiss face serum, edelweiss under-eye serum, edelweiss under-eye gel, lip balm, edelweiss and marigold hand cream, edelweiss nutrient foot cream, edelweiss body lotion, arnica and thyme cream, mountain balm, thyme salt, marigold cream, edelweiss deodorant and liquid soap.

In the large picture, gathering edelweiss. On the right, a marvellous edelweiss and arnica.

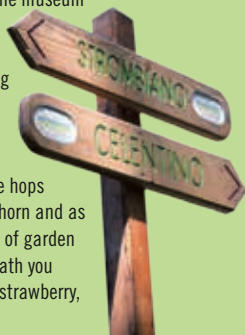
ETHNOGRAPHIC TRAIL L.I.N.U.M. (Lavorare Insieme per Narrare gli Usi della Montagna – Working Together to Narrate Mountain Customs)

Distance: 3 km / Slope: 200 metres / Time: 2 hours

An interesting circular trail equipped with informative notice boards, which meander between grassland and woodland connecting the villages of Celentino and Strombiano. Adjacent to the square in Strombiano, the start of your journey, you will see the chapel of S. Antonio, a little way beyond the farmhouses in *Bugnidei* is the beginning of an old mule path that is well known by the local community, once a bare wood and pastureland. From *Plazola* the path climbs steeply crossing over *Mas dei Spade*, a small rustic barn for hay and horses, and then reaching a wide clearing called *Conca di Mârec*, where you can find a small pond formed from rainwater. From here, you make your last climb to arrive at a Forestry path, which brushes past *Prati di Stavel* downstream and a wood *Fontanè* upstream. The dry stone walls are still visible built to form the boundary between a local wood and private grassland. The Forestry path leads to a hamlet called *Plazi*, an area upstream of Celentino, where an attentive eye can spot the cupels engraved on the *Sass del Béch*. Now the trail descends towards the village of Celentino along the old road of *carghe da mont*. Go past the tiny cemetery, you must stop off at the *Casa dell'Ecomuseo* where the hall of Sala della Tessitura (textile) and the educational centre exhibit workshops of felt wool as well as the preparation of herbs. By the side of the museum there is a common garden, a small vegetable patch of about seventy autochthon plants used for medicinal and nutritional purposes many of which have been seen along the LINUM trail.

Notes on herbs

Leaving the last houses of Strombiano you bump into the hops on the upstream side of the road, then a patch of blackthorn and as you approach the torrent you will notice the small plants of garden cress that decorate the damp area. Climbing the mule path you will encounter burnet, wild thyme, sorrel, lungwort, wild strawberry,



raspberry and violets. In the poor grassland there is yarrow in abundance. The trail becomes more gentle and you can see more garden cress downstream of the road where you cross over the torrent again to reach the *Sass del Béch* with its mysterious engravings then the varieties seem to repeat themselves as you descend towards the *Via delle Carghe* in the direction Celentino. On this stretch you can also see wild rose, berberry and elderberry. Immediately after the *Casa dell'Ecomuseo* a dirt road descends towards Strombiano and in the fields you can see a few useful edible species like nettle, dandelion, chicory, ribwort and campion. Almost at the end of your climb down you walk by the *Campo delle erbe officinali* in which various medicinal and aromatic herbs grow: mint, thyme, rosemary, lavender, hyssop, mallow, crimson bee balm, savoury, chamomile, marjoram, etc. At Strombiano, we advise you to visit the *Casa Grazioli* house, you can find accommodation at: the *Dimora al limite del bosco* or at *Casa Sulis*.



The *Carghe* way, under the *Sass del Béch*.
Above, at the top, blackthorn, lungwort and spring water, the habitat of cress.

THE HIGH ROAD OF THE MOUNTAIN PASTURES

Distance: 16,7 km / Slope: 966 metres / Time: 5 hours

The route starts at Ortisè (1487 metres high) a hamlet in the district of Mezzana, the birthplace of the famous mycologist Giacomo Bresadola, who became a priest in 1870 and dedicated his life to the study of mushrooms, cooperating with some very important European botany magazines as well as with other famous international mycologists. At the edge of the village you take a dirt road that leads to *Malga Stabli*. The farmhouse has recently been restored in a local architectural style and offers food to its visitors with a range of local dishes known as “conditi” all served with a magnificent view. Following on, the path crosses over hillside pastures that abound with beautiful landscapes. At the beginning of Summer the alpine pastures come alive with radiant colours because of the multitude of flora and their intensive perfume. Then you reach Malga Monte, also restored, where you must visit the *museum – Laboratorio dell’Epigrafia Popolare*. Leave the dirt road, walk along the trail that leads to lake Celentino, a small alpine lake that is visible only in Spring. Here your gaze stretches to the high ground of Val di Sole with the village of Vermiglio up to the high peaks that embrace the Valeta. The path continues bordering the lake towards Malga Campo, headquarters of a new farm B&B, and the barn that has remained how it was has now become a museum *Museo della Malga*. Established in collaboration with the museum Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina di San Michele, the area was defined ‘a truly unique area of interest in Trentino and not only’. An easy cart road leads finally to the village of Celentino. A long route but not difficult, that crosses a valuable and beautiful landscape, which has some logistic problems: it is a daily bus route, but not frequent, to the village of Ortisè, therefore it is better to organise your own transport.



Notes on herbs

Along the way the curious visitor will soon recognise the interesting edible and medicinal varieties like wild thyme, yarrow, eyebright, arnica, garden cress, Icelandic lichen, good king henry, gentiana, wild strawberry, raspberry, blueberry and many more.



Above, clockwise, pasqueflower, gentian, larch in bloom and iced flowers.
On the left, the Carghe way.

ANCIENT LARCH FOREST

Distance: 4,7 km / Slope: 200 metres / Time: 2 hours

Setting out from the parking area in the hamlet of *Camp* (2140 metres high) you join a path that leads to the bottom of the valley. Nearby are the ruins of *Malga Vecia* the route links up with the path SAT 126 arriving from Bevedere, and then climbs towards *Malga Val Comasine*. As you reach the farmhouse, which is used in Summer for grazing, you can stop to watch the *caserada* and taste the cheese. The educational trail is equipped with 18 explanatory boards engaging the visitor in the Antico Bosco di Larice (ancient larch woods): the entire woodland is more than five centuries old. Thanks to dendrochronology, by looking at the rings of tree trunks it is possible to determine the evolution of the valley and of the people who lived there. The route continues until *Malga Mason*, from where you start back. Follow a Forestry road where a fork to the right will bring you in contact with an old activity that was once indispensable for the development and maintenance of iron extraction: the preparation of charcoal. The charcoal kiln, meticulously reconstructed, turns back time when Man, forest and mountain were all one. Following the forestry path you will return to *Camp*.

Notes on herbs

The trail, besides the magnificent larch woodland where once the resin (*argà*) was used for medicinal purposes, offers the possibility of coming in contact with numerous alpine varieties, typical of pastures and underbrush of which many examples of Erica, dwarf juniper, lichen, thyme, yarrow, lady's mantle, arnica and many more.



How to arrive

Upstream from the village of Comasine you trace a dirt road for about 3,5 km to an altitude of 1580 metres where an authorised road begins (about 5 km to reach *Camp*). An alternative route is to follow the path SAT 126 that brings you out at Bevedere, reachable on foot from the village of Peio Fonti. In Comasine there is accommodation like **B&B Sotto le stelle** managed by the Penasa family and a good restaurant is **Il Mulino**.



Centuries old larch. On the left, the Malga Val Comasine.

THE LAKES IN VAL DE LAMARE

Distance: circa 10 km / Slope: 730 metres / Time: 5 hours

Those keen on wild herbs and in particular the musk milfoil "*medico gentile*" should go to the Parco Nazionale dello Stelvio (Stelvio National Park), in *Pian Venezia*, following the path that leads to the Rifugio Cevedale (mountain shelter). By car you can arrive at Malgamare (1972 metres high), that is about 10 km from the village of Cogolo, take the old mule track that climbs with a few bends, to the sparsely dense forest and to *Pian Venezia*. From here you can see a fascinating alpine landscape with the splendid snow capped peak of Vioz and Cevedale, you will by now be nearing the first stop: Rifugio Larcher (shelter) 2608 metres high. A long the way you may see wild animals: hoofed animals, birds of prey and marmots with their characteristic whistle. Leaving the shelter continue along the path SAT 123 which flanks some beautiful alpine lakes: Marmotte, Lungo and Nero. You arrive at lake Careser (2608 metres high), an artificial basin built in the 1930s that collects the water from the Careser glacier overshadowed by Cima Venezia peak. The lake is one of the largest reservoirs in Trentino and the Alps at this height with a capacity of 16 million cubic metres. From here the climb down is along the path that leads to Malgamare. For those who are not interested in stopping at the shelter, at the entrance to *Pian Venezia*, on the right, the path SAT 146 that leads directly to lake Lungo divides. From here, continuing along the trail you will arrive at the Careser dam where you can join the path for Malgamare.

Notes on herbs

Along the trail the passionate visitor will be able to observe many types of wild herbs of which alpine aromatic and arnica. To the left orographic side of the Noce Bianco, which is usually the place where you find the very rare *musk milfoil* a protected species with interesting medicinal properties.

At Malgamare you can taste a typical cuisine at the restaurant with the same name.



Some views of the trail.
On the left, the Malga Mare power station.



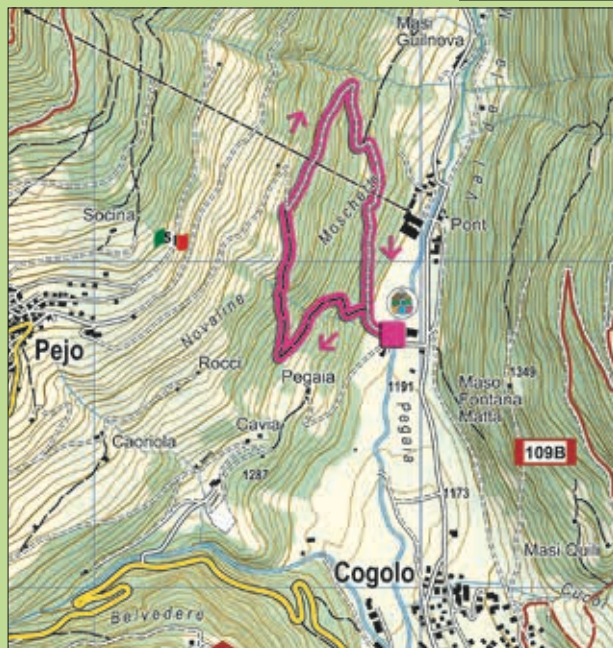
BOTANIC TRAIL: THE MAIN ARBOREAL SPECIES OF THE STELVIO NATIONAL PARK

Distance: circa 3 km / Slope: 230 metres / Time: 1 hour 40 mins.

The circular trail, maintained by the Stelvio National Park, begins close to the little chapel of *Pegaia*, on the outskirts of Cogolo, and carries on towards the slope below the village of Peio Paese. Passing by the river, to the left you can find the Azienda Agricola Farm Bruno Caserotti, which specialises in the cultivation of strawberries and red radicchio, excellent produce both for the altitude as for the different climate compared to the plains. The first part of the trail is a steep climb paved in stone, which used to be the old road that connected Cogolo with Peio. As soon as the road straightens, always following the directions, you join the path. The arboreal species that typify the route are indicated by informative boards giving the correct definitions, even the local dialect names of the plants. Along the short track you can observe a great variety of plants of which the sycamore maple, black and red elderberry, hazelnut, pussy willow, larch, spruce, hawthorn, birch, grey alder, waverly or aspen, cherry, ash, raspberry, rowan, mountain ash, false acacia, *red-leaf rose*, *dog rose*, berberry, blackthorn, as well as moss and lichens present on the trunks and branches. Along the trail there are benches to rest on that offer wonderful glimpses of the entire valley. Sometimes the path is marked off by fences and for stretches follows the old stone walls built in the past with true precision to section off fertile land for crop growing. To return go along the old road of the "Moschetti" and come out at Pegaia then continue towards Cogolo to take a last look at the flax that in the morning, during the Summer months, it is an array of blue amongst the green.

Notes on herbs

There are many herbs in the fields and underbrush like willowherb, nettle, variety of chicory and particularly appreciated the goat's beard.



What you can find along the trail and a view of Cogolo. On the left, a stretch of the botanical trail.





TOURISM TO THE SCENT OF HERBS

VAL DI PEIO ECOMUSEUM “LITTLE ALPINE WORLD” COOPERATES WITH A FEW FARMS, TOUR OPERATORS, AND RESTAURANTEURS THAT PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO SAFEGUARDING THE TERRITORY

MALGA CAMPO FARM

Malga Campo is a new idea of attracting tourists to Trentino, a type of tourism that stimulates a different relationship with the environment, an authentic mountain pasture organised to host whoever wishes to gain experience from contacts with tradition, crafts, and nature, open to alternative tourism. The ideal place for someone who wants to be confronted with “farmhouse customs”, for those who wish to spend time at high altitudes far away from city life and for those who are looking for space without human contact. Malga Campo offers a traditional formula of hospitality with 5 rooms that can accommodate 10 people, to choose from full board or half board with all homemade farmhouse food served in the restaurant and as far as possible with “a view”. The milk, for example, is produced from traditional methods respecting the norms of hygiene and the cowshed is open in conjunction with the traditional ways of milking, roughly about end of May to end of September. Moreover, the farm houses a museum “*Museo della malga, which is a unique experience in Trentino and not only*”.

38024 Celentino di Peio (TN) – lucapodetti@live.it

BAITA SCAIA, ROOM AND BREAKFAST - Famiglia Delpero

The most cordial moment in our shelter is breakfast served with local produce or homemade, but what we cherish the most is to bring you emotions with our love and respect in that what surrounds you is nature, people and their way of life and hope that you will join in.

Via al Cercen, 55 – 38024 Cogolo di Peio (TN)
Tel. +39 331 5965938 – www.baitascaia.it – info@baitascaia.it

B&B SOTTO LE STELLE - Famiglia Penasa

In our tavern you can begin your day with a hearty breakfast: homemade biscuits and cakes.

Via Val Comasen, 2 – 38024 Comasine di Peio (TN)
Tel. +39 331 2280111 – info@bbsottolestelle.com – www.bbsottolestelle.com

CASA BAMBY - Famiglia Delpero

Situated in Cogolo di Peio in the Stelvio National Park, we offer our guests home-grown produce and a welcome basket containing typical local fare. We are at your disposal to accompany you around the farms of Val di Peio and offer advice on places to visit.

Via S. Antonio, 16/b – 38024 Cogolo di Peio (TN)
Tel. +39 0463 754532 – info@casabamby.it

CASA SULIS - Famiglia Groaz

The house, a few steps from *Casa Grazioli*, offers its guests a seasonal product as a welcoming gift and makes its vegetable and aromatic herb garden available to guests. There are special courses associated with the Ecomuseum like lessons on spinning, weaving and preparing herbs.

Via alla Casacia, 10 – 38024 Strombiano di Peio (TN)
Tel. +39 0463 746100 / +39 340 6269490 – oscar.groaz@alice.it

CASA VACANZE - Famiglia Pegolotti

Pegolotti will give you a warm welcome and guests are shown to typical alpine style apartments furnished with particular care. We welcome our guests with products of zero impact from the Val di Pejo, and fruit from local farmers sharing in the values and traditions of our land.

Via Cercen, 3 – 38024 Cogolo di Peio (TN)
Tel. +39 0463 754080 / +39 339 2210894
info@casavacanzepejo.it – www.casavacanzepejo.it

DIMORA AL LIMITE DEL BOSCO - Famiglia Pretti

They offer two bedroom apartments with garden and vegetable patch and are situated at the edge of the woods a short walk from the Ethnographic L.I.N.U.M. trail.

Via da Ronch, 33 – 38024 Strombiano di Peio (TN)
Tel. +39 0463 751064 – ambodue@katamail.com

CAMPEGGIO VAL DI SOLE

Come to the Stelvio National Park for a holiday immersed in nature. We offer our guests interesting nature and cultural trails. Our facility is located near to the Botanic trail and you can go on foot to the local farms in a short time. In our new bar-restaurant you can taste local dishes cooked in the traditional way.

Località Dossi di Cavia – 38024 Peio (TN)
Tel. +39 0463 753177 – info@valdisolecamping.it – www.valdisolecamping.it

ALBERGO CENTRALE

Situated in the oldest hamlet of Valletta, at an altitude of 1585 metres, surrounded by the majestic mountain range of Ortles Cevedale. We will take care of you

starting with breakfast, dinner and tea, using only genuine local products from the farms around the area.

Via XXIV Maggio, 8 – 38024 Peio Paese (TN)

Tel. +39 0463 753244

info@albergocentralepeio.com – www.albergocentralepeio.com

HOTEL DOMINA Parco dello Stelvio

We organise trips to interesting cultural and naturalistic areas that our region can offer: the ancient Larch Forest, the L.I.N.U.M. trail. We try to engage in local events accompanying our guests on visits to local farms. In our restaurant, we offer menus with our food supply coming from Trentino according to EcoRistorazione laws.

Via S. Antonio, 16 – 38024 Cogolo di Peio (TN)

Tel. +39 0463 754553

info@hotelstelviodomina.it – www.hotelstelviodomina.it

HOTEL GRAN ZEBRÙ

The hotel was designed according to strict building laws imposing reduced energy consumption. The kitchen offers genuine menus using only ingredients supplied by the local farmers and supplies limiting the carbon impact. There is a new Spa in the hotel where guests can be pampered with unique, gentle treatments using biological and natural cosmetics from the Olga Casanova firm.

Via G. Casarotti, 92 – 38024 Cogolo di Peio (TN)

Tel. +39 0463 754433

info@hotelgranzebru.com – www.hotelgranzebru.com

HOTEL ORTLES

We specialise in excursions and outdoor activities, organising trips to farmhouses and mountain retreats, helping you to recognise the flora and fauna of the Stelvio National Park. Breakfast buffet offers yoghurts, jams, homemade cakes also supper has a buffet of salads and vegetables from our own garden as well as a variety of local cheese.

Via G. Casarotti, 66 – 38024 Cogolo di Peio (TN)

Tel. +39 0463 754073 – hortles@tin.it – www.hotelortles.it

RISTORANTE IL MULINO

The building was originally the headquarters of the *Molin de Contra*, restored in 1976, a friendly atmosphere where you will find traditional dishes from around the valley. Perhaps not such a variety of food, but certainly tasty, like bread made with wild cumin, local cheese from Peio and aromatic herbs as well as mountain honey, all part of the restaurant's culture.

Località Contra, 2 – 38024 Comasine di Peio (TN)

Tel. +39 0463 754244 / 338 1689215 – info@mulinpejo.it – www.mulinpejo.it

RISTORANTE MALGAMARE

The restaurant was built out of the old farmhouse structure and takes the same name. It offers a typical local menu which incorporates herbs and local produce: rye bread with lard and starters made with a traditional cheese called “casolet” from Peio with dandelion honey; canederli (dumplings) with sage and butter on a

bed of crispy Speck ham from the local butcher; yoghurts with fresh strawberries from the Caserotti farm.

Tel. +39 0463 921715 / +39 329 2192339 – davidemontelli@libero.it

RISTORANTE SANT HUBERTUS

Besides local dishes, you can taste excellent highlander beef, bred on the farm in Pino. At the shelter of Tre Larici you can try delicious homemade cakes and our own Kaiserschmarren (smorn) served with preserves. Our ice creams are also supplied locally.

Viale delle Acque Acidule, 20 – 38024 Peio Fonti (TN)

Tel. +39 0463 753213 / +39 348 3069423 Agnese / +39 349 7157786 Pino

santhubertus@gmail.com – www.santhubertus.it

MALGA STABLI RESTAURANT

The Malga farmhouse is located along the Alta Via degli Alpeggi, and today it is a restaurant that prepares typical food with a fantastic view.

Tel. +39 347 3514177 – info@malgstabli.it

CONTACT US ON ARRIVAL AT THE FOLLOWING ECOMUSEUM OFFICES

Ecomuseo della Val di Peio “Piccolo Mondo Alpino”

Via dei Capitèi, 24 – Celentino di Peio - TN

Tel. +39 339 6179380 – ecomuseopeio@gmail.com

www.linumpeio.it – www.facebook.com/Piccolo.Mondo.Alpino



Associazione Linum

Tel. +39 335 7429017 – linumpeio@gmail.com

Parco Nazionale dello Stelvio, Settore Trentino

Via Roma, 65 – 38024 Cogolo di Peio - TN

Tel. +39 0463 746121 – info.tn@stelviopark.it – www.stelviopark.it

www.parcostelviotrentino.it

PARK FACILITIES IN THE ECOMUSEUM TERRITORY

Area faunistica di Peio

Between Peio Fonti and Peio Paese, where you can encounter stag, deer and obtain information about the fauna in the National Park.

Centro visitatori di Peio

Cogolo – Tel. +39 0453 754186

“Bosco degli Urogalli a Malga Talé”

Trail dedicated to the capercaillie organised by the farmhouse of Malga Talé about 40 mins. From Peio Paese.



VANOI ECOMUSEUM





VANOI ECOMUSEUM

VANOI ECOMUSEUM IS A MUSEUM OF THE WIDE OPEN SPACE, EXTENDED TO ALL THE ENVIRONMENT, THE LANDSCAPE, PLACES AND HUMAN ACTIVITY AND TO WORLDLY AND SPIRITUAL CULTURE, OF KNOWLEDGE AND EVERYDAY LIFE

A *museum of time, from Man's past in this territory, that follows him in the present, and grasping the future, recognizing the continuity of history, its transformations and possible evolutions; a museum for the community, a mirror upon which the population may recognize itself, where to look for the values to which they are tied, offering to help guests understand better their crafts and their identity; a museum of customs, demonstrated in the activities, in the memories and craftsmanship of its many inhabitants, still providing value in new creative and entrepreneurial forms.*

The Vanoi Ecomuseum is part of the local administration of Canal San Bovo and has a territory of

about 125 square kilometres, named Valle del Vanoi – south east of Trentino. The valley gets its name from the Vanoi stream that marks out the bottom of the valley with its many tributaries, it shapes the slopes, characterised by extensive forest, fields, pastures and the embrace of the mountains: the granite massif of Cima d'Asta and the porphyry of the Lagorai range. From a naturalistic point of view, the valley is distinguished for its rich fauna and the biodiversity of its vegetation. Such variety is due to the presence of mixed environments, for morphology and altitude, and for isolation that has always been a part of the area. At the bottom of the valley we can find the village of Canal San Bovo, the main village of the

district, and scattered along its slopes are six hamlets: Caoria, Cicona, Gobbera, Prade, Ronco and Zortea. In the past the sustainability of the population was based on agriculture, breeding (cows, goats and sheep) and forestry, managed thanks to a well-defined “vertical” exploitation and seasonal work of the territory. The Winter months were spent in the houses at the bottom of the valley where there were churches, schools and shops, everything a community needed. In Spring, the families

climbed to the farmhouses, habitats found half way up the mountain, to graze the cattle in the first stage before taking them to higher ground. The mild months of late Spring and Summer were dedicated to agriculture (potatoes, cereals – corn, barley, wheat and rye – cabbage and a few vegetables) and of haymaking, an essential job for feeding the cattle during the Winter months. From June to the first weeks of September all the cows were taken to the higher pastures and barns. In Autumn,



Kitchen garden in Pradi di Tognola. At the top, the massive Cima d'Asta peak.

before the freeze, men and animals slowly descended down the valley, taking their crops and hay harvested and packed in the months before and of course wood to keep at bay the cold season. By the end of the 1800s the phenomenon of the seasonal and/or permanent emigration had deeply changed the life of the community determining a progressive abandonment of the territory, and emptying the villages, a common reality for most mountain areas. In time, the people have shaped the territory with manufacturing and visible imprints and their stories live on; a heritage of crafts and wealth that the Vanoi Ecomuseum has collected and preserved for its community. The Ecomuseum was opened in 1999 by the district of Canal San Bovo with the support of the Park Authority of Paneveggio - Pale di San Martino Park and recognized by the Autonomous Province of Trento in 2002.



A FEW PLACES OF THE ECOMUSEUM

Casa dell'Ecomuseo house

A brief description of the Vanoi Ecomuseum's mission. On the ground floor beyond the reception you can find **the hall that is dedicated to the seven themes** which the Ecomuseum holds dear: **water, grass, wood, stone, holy, war and mobility** and ideas to invite you to visit the territory; the **water zone hall** and the **story-telling zone**. On the first floor you can find the multipurpose halls where temporary exhibitions are on show, organised meetings with the public, informative lessons, group conferences and **the needlework group**. On the top floor there is a library and the offices of the Ecomuseum. When the house is closed there is an area outside that can be used; **a map of the outlay** is provided and describes through the seven themes the rich heritage of the territory, and a **Totem** of the four keys to the reading of the ecomuseums. You will also find a bookshop in the Casa with the pocket guides

of the trails and themes. The house is also the starting point to the circle of water, a walk around the village of Canal San Bovo dedicated to the events linked with the water theme that speak of the history of the community.

The Great War Museum of Lagorai

It was opened in 1991 in the village of Caoria, in via Ghiaie, the museum is managed by the **Alpine Group of Caoria** and preserves the historical memories of the First World War fought on the mountains of Lagorai. The uniforms, weapons, personal objects of the soldiers whether Italian or Austrian and **relics of all sorts** found in the war zones are on show as a reminder of the tragic days of battle. Since 2009, on the ground floor of the museum, it is possible to visit the permanent exhibition **"Art of taxidermy"**, wild animals from Vanoi and Primiero and the techniques of stuffing, it is open with the same times as the War



The hall of the seven themes at the Casa dell'Ecomuseum.
Above, a totem outside the Casa dell'Ecomuseum.
On the right: Great War Museum at Caoria.

museum. **Opening hours:** in the Summer, for the rest of the year you must book at the Casa dell'Ecomuseo.

Museum of Art and Crafts

Since 1999 can be found in Caoria, next to the Coop store. This museum's aim is to hand down to future generations the old ways. There are collections and pictures of all kinds of simple objects used in everyday life and craftsmen's tools divided into 'corners' of the different themes, for example the production of cheese, linen, carpentry, etc. In the corner dedicated to linen you can see a functional weaving machine, with warps, yarns and loom at the ready, which is a lovely sight in itself: it looks ready to start up. Next to it is all you would need for manufacturing linen and hemp, for the harvest of the material: strong wooden hammers to break the bark that is wrapped round the stalks, the scutch for crushing and finally the 'spigo-la', spiky with sharp points that takes the excess off and leaves a clean fibre ready to be spun. There are the spools for spinning "corli and nasp" for winding and unwinding the skein of



the yarn. Two large wooden tubs are testimony to other tasks the women had to do after making the material, they had to whiten with whatever was available at the time, the ashes from the fire. Rich in sodium, the ashes mixed with boiling water and filtered were used to make the 'lissia', a liquid that whitened and cleaned the sheets of linen and hemp.

Opening hours: all year round if you book at the Casa dell'Ecomuseo.

Ethnographic Trail of Vanoi

It is a journey **through space and time** in an area built and lived intensely, sadly today it has been abandoned. The Ethnographic trail is a series of paths that wind in and out of the village of Caoria, 845 metres high and Malga Vesnòta de sora at 1879 metres high passing through places that were once loved by the inhabitants, built yet altered over the centuries by the their activities. A project has been launched by the **Paneveggio Pale di San Martino Nature Park**, financed by the **European Union** and the **Province of Trento** and the park itself in cooperation with the **districts of Canal San Bovo** and the **museum of Usi and Costumi della Gente Trentina** in San Michele all'Adige (TN). The Ethnographic trail proposes **four routes** dedicated to particular themes. The first route, '**Anello della Val**', has the theme of the change of seasons



A totem on the Ethnographic trail. On the left, the Art & Crafts Museum.

in the village and religion. The path winds around Caoria, lovely views and the information office of the Casa del Sentiero etnogrifico, and next door there are terraces, vegetable gardens and fields slowly being taken over by woodland.

The second route named '**Anello dei Pradi**', whose theme is haymaking and the seasons in the fields, it includes a visit to Pradi de Tognola, a one of its kind hamlet, at one time was an area of harvest. In Prà dei Tassi there is accommodation for 12 people.

The third route, '**Anello del Bosc**', dedicated to cultivation and usage of woodland. Particular points of interest are Val-sorda and Siega de Valzanca, a hydraulic saw-mill (dates back to 1870), which takes its energy from the Valzanca stream and has recently been restored thanks to the Park authorities. The fourth route, '**Anello del-**

In Greenland there are ten ways to say 'snow'. In Vanoi there are even more ways of saying 'erba' (grass). Thick, thin, light, very thin, round, barren, tall, bad, bitter, poisonous grass... grass for milk, for meat, poor that looks like hair off a donkey and grass that stimulates the palate of a calf like a child who loves chocolate. Shiny grass, tough grass to mow, grass that makes the goats drunk and make the calves dribble, grass that is torn with the hands leaves a yellow substance that gives you blisters, dry grass, pasture grass and farmhouse grass, grass that gives you tummy ache, grass that cleans a wound, grass that stops a baby crying...

Extract from the book 'Voci del Trentino' by Milka M. Gozzer.

la Montagna, whose theme is the business of farmhouses and haymaking along the alpine slopes, you can reach Malga Piani in Valzanca and Malga Vesnota de sòra farms. In the Summer excursions, appointments and tastings are organised by the various facilities along the path. Moreover, Malga Vesnota de sòra has booking accommodation. You can buy a guidebook of the Casa dell'Ecomuseum house and the Ethnographic Trail of Vanoi at the places of the Ethnographic trails.

The Holy room

Opened in March 2002 in Zor-tea, near the Casa della Cultura, the exhibition proposes the relationship between **man, religion and territory**, throughout Vanoi's history. There are **three permanent sections** that deal with historical themes that have shaped the life of the community. There are also **temporary exhibits** that show aspects of history and religion in Valle. A **multimedia screen** allows the visitors to delve into the various arguments presented being able to consult archives, texts, study documents and references. The **Holy trails** are comfortable walks of five routes that wind in and out of the village centres in Valle to discover the marks left behind throughout the centu-

ries of a devout people: frescos, steeples, chapels and churches, shrines, crosses; fleeting traces and at the same time eternal dotted around the territory. You can buy a **guidebook of the Local Paintings of Vanoi**, which includes a map of the trails, at the Holy Room or the Casa dell'Ecomuseum.

The mills of Cainèri

In Ronco Cainèri two ancient hydraulic mills have recently been restored. They were abandoned after the tragic events of the November 1966 floods. *El molin de sora*, dates back to 1779, equipped with a milling grinder and a wheel for crushing barley and is now an educational centre. It is hoped that a local group of amateur farmers who specialise in growing a local variety of corn – *sòrc* – known as **dorotea**, can use the mill. The units of *molin de sot* mill have been converted into exhibit halls to house water generated machines as well as documents and accounts linked to the mill and the millers. During the Summer there are workshops for children, dedicated to the production of corn: from field to fascinating rooms and wheel mills; guided tours that show the visitors the workings of the mill are held in the evening.



At the top, the “Madonna on throne with saints” fresco by Zanbatista Costoia about 1670 in Ronco Gasperi. Below: the mill, *Molin de sora* in Ronco Cainari.

VANOI ECOMUSEUM AND THE SY_CULTour PROJECT

The valley of Vanoi is full of different botanical varieties of wild plants and the *'cercare l'erba'* (looking for herbs) has been a daily activity for centuries, along with timber, it meant survival for the population. Many methods have evolved around herbs: from naming to distinguishing each type of herb, knowing their medicinal properties, and their usage in the kitchen or pantry as well as curing ailments and healing cattle. Such a heritage brings a lot of responsibility to preserve, to live up to today's needs and offer a means by which we can appreciate and

safeguard our own territory. **"Come il sol, come l'erba"** (like the sun like the herb) is a local saying, chosen by the Vanoi Ecomuseum for the *"SY_CULTour: Sinergia tra cultura e turismo"*. The project proposes establishing tracks and refurbishing excursion trails, properly signposted, that guide the visitor across the inhabited areas of Vanoi, to discover ecomuseum paths and their numerous sites of wild botanical varieties that you can find along the routes and show some local reality towards medicinal plants. The first actions taken were in the Summer of



Flowerbeds with medicinal herbs decorate Caoria.
On the right, a kitchen garden of the Agritur S. Romina farm B&B.



2013, but other routes are expected, along with further proposals and explanations about the local flora. The pilot scheme of the Ecomuseum was to find support from the four Local councils of Valle. In the centre of Caoria, the Council have recovered a small plot of uncultivated land to use as a vegetable garden, rather a garden where cultivating with the aim of teaching and instructing visitors the main medicinal and aromatic herbs of the area. In the outskirts of Zor-tea, the Council of Prade-Zortea have created an interesting trail: **"Il sentiero delle erbe che curano e delle piante che proteggono"**, passing through woods and fields, and following the old mule paths, you will come across some signposts, indicating the presence of wild aromatic and medicinal plants and they illustrate the principle characteristics (for more information see pages 260-261). The Council of Ronco, regarding the trail *"Giro dei Colmèi de Ronco"*,

have proposed moments to learn more about medicinal and edible plants that you can find along the paths and on the edges of fields, using the knowledge found in a Herbarium dedicated to the local varieties (for more information see pages 262-263). Every year, on the second Sunday of August, the village comes to life for the special event called *"In giro per i Colmèi de Ronco"*, a guided gastronomic walk along the mule path that connects the many small hamlets of Ronco: the *colmèi*. The day offers many opportunities for learning and appreciating the history and traditions of the community and it is divided into stages dedicated to tasting local products, like teas made with aromatic plants. At Canal San Bovo, a local group of volunteers from the community has established a few flowerbeds and placed flowerpots along the street of the village to attract the attention of passers by. Each plant has its label that indicates its



type, offering a wide range of information. The Ecomuseum has supported the construction of these small initiatives and promoted many appointments to understand further (excursions, laboratories, lectures and tast-

ings) and to recognize the use of wild plants aimed at the local population and its visitors, in order to endorse an awareness of the SY_CULTour project and the benefits nature can offer.



From the top to the bottom: a popular activity of the project; the flora of the Azienda Orto Pendolo farm.





LOCAL USAGE OF HERBS

HERB GARDENS AND TRADITIONAL WAYS WITH HERBS IN VANOI

Thanks to the intervention of the Local Council and the actions put forward by the Ecomuseum, after decades of oblivion, Valle has seen a widespread interest in the themes regarding wild, medicinal and cultivated herbs. The *'semplici'*, that is to say medicinal herbs, have always been studied by Man and his knowledge acquired has been handed down and improved with generation after generation. Today, modern pharmacy recognises and confirms the active principles and medicinal properties of the plants yet advises people to check with their doctor or herbalist before assuming these herbs. Slight troubles and aches, on the other hand, are normally resolved by simple remedies known to most people and the rediscovery of the therapeutic and nutritional virtues of the more common

varieties could not be more beneficial to everyone. Local knowledge, often a woman's privilege; the person who medicates and manages the needs of the family and orally hands down customs, numbers many local botanical varieties for their



healing and culinary properties. An easy guide to consult is the herbarium produced by the Local Council of Ronco which illustrates the characteristics and properties of the main local varieties very clearly; supplying also many useful recipes and usages. The publishers of the work have very kindly given us permission to illustrate an extract. The Herbarium can be obtained through the Ecomuseum.



A moment of instruction at the garden in Caoria.

RECOGNISING AND HEALING WITH HERBS WALKING AMONG THE COLMÈI DE RONC. HERBARIUM OF THE LOCAL VARIETIES AND ADVICE ON USAGE

The Local Council of Ronco, Valle del Vanoi – with the publication of “*Riconoscere e curarsi con le erbe passeggiando tra i colmèi de Ronc. Erbario delle varietà locali e consigli per l'uso*” wanted to combine the love for its territory with the intention of recognising and appreciating the therapeutical virtues of some of the plants and herbs that grow in the grasslands and woodlands around the Valle del Vanoi, restoring and giving value to those who over the years have been able to adapt to seasonal changes, letting nature do its work and understanding the value of medicinal plants. An immense wealth of knowledge and experience to maintain and pass on to future generations.



The job was done with the help of some dear passionate people who have lived and managed a healthy relationship with the environment and the richness that the territory offers. The Herbarium is divided into two parts: the first wishes to offer to whoever embraces the world of herbs, an explanation of harvest methods, transformation, preservation and usage of the medicinal plants. The second part groups together the files dedicated to each singular plant, providing botanical descriptions, illustrations and accurate photographs that make it easier for consultation and recognition. For every variety the properties and some medicinal uses are shown, by means of recipes and procedures in preparing: teas, extracts, tinctures, oils, creams, pillows and much more; simple transformations that do not alter the active principles of the plant, nor produce pollution or waste and where, by means of their manipulation, promote an intimate reconciliation with the rhythms of Mother Nature.

Scientific name: *Sambucus nigra*
Common name: black elderberry



In remote times, the elderberry would have thrived along the banks of the Vanoi stream, in that the first inhabitants christened their valley by its name: “Canale dei Sambuchi”. By the end of the 1600s the name, without any particular reason changed name to Canal San Bovo even though the plants still thrived in the bottom of the valley and in the Springtime brought amazing colour with their white scented patches. A herb with many uses and virtues, the elderberry is normally a bush that grows on the edge of woodland and streams, along the roadside and in uncultivated land and on ruins. Its flowers are borne in flat corymbs of ivory white colour with an intense perfume and attracted by insects. The flowers are used to make a refreshing concentrated juice, or fresh to be used in omelettes, while the berries are used in jams and jellies. It is possible to use the entire plant: besides the flowers and fruit, even the bark can be used in herbal teas and the buds as a fresh vegetable. In the Health shop, elderberry is known for its sweating, laxative, diuretic, cleansing properties and it helps in stimulating mother's milk. It strengthens the immune system, in Winter a cup of hot tea made from the dried flowers, before going to bed is soothing.



Scientific name: *Chenopodium bonus-henicus* L.
Common name: Good king henry

Wild spinach known as good king henry, is a perennial that grows on the hills and at heights above 2000 metres and likes rich fertile soil that can also be anthropic (farmhouses, kitchen gardens) or natural (at the edge of the woods). Its name comes from the Swedish naturalist Carlo Linneo who wanted to honour king Henry IV of Navarra, protector of botanists, giving his name to a plant that has renowned virtue. It is the mountain version of the common lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium album*), and in common they both have triangular shaped leaves, which are whitish on the underside, a good way to recognise them. Thanks to the spread of their underground rhizomes and tiny seeds, the species thrives forming large patches making it easier to gather their leaves and fresh shoots, before they flower. They are harvested normally for food, the good king henry has a flavour and properties similar to spinach, both of them being rich in vitamins and minerals, especially iron. They are often used in soups, pasta, stuffing for ravioli as well as a side dish of vegetables. A good combination with fresh farmhouse ricotta cheese and in preparing gnocchi. Therapeutically the leaves can be cooked in oil and made into mudpacks for burns and scars.



A LITTLE SAMPLE...?

Lemon balm spirits

Put 150 gr. of fresh lemon balm in a litre of spirits of 40°. Expose it to sunlight for four weeks then filter. This ancient recipe was used as a sedative, against nausea and sickness, (even car sickness), and to ease digestion: a teaspoonful of lemon balm spirits on a sugar cube, or diluted in a cup of very hot water



Ribwort syrup

Chop 4 generous handfuls of ribwort leaves. Add a little water to the pulp you have made and 300 gr. of honey. Slowly bring to the boil stirring continuously with a wooden spoon until you have a thick liquid, pour still hot into glass jars and conserve in the fridge. Ribwort is an excellent remedy for coughs, it acts by protecting and soothing the mucus, dissolves catarrh, is antibacterial and anti-inflammatory.



Elderberry wine

Soak two grams of bark for three days in a litre of good white wine. Filter and leave to stand for a couple of weeks. Both the extract and the elderberry bark wine are diuretic and without any side effects, are excellent for eliminating water retention. Take a cup of extract or a glass of wine twice a day.



Dandelion honey

Put 4 generous handfuls of flowers in a litre of cold water and bring to boil slowly. Once boiled turn off the heat and leave to stand overnight. Filter squeezing all the juice from the flowers. Add 1kg. of sugar and half a



From the top: gathering wild herbs, ribwort, elderberry flowers, dandelion flowers.

lemon cut into slices to the juice. Place on the heat without a lid. The liquid should evaporate slowly until it reaches a thickness that you can spread, (leave to cool to check the thickness).

Dog rose soft drink

Collect 2 handfuls of berries after the first frost, cut them and place in a blender, add a litre of water and leave to stand overnight. Filter and use as a soft drink. It is rich in vitamin C and particularly useful in the Winter. Look how nature offers its gifts at the right moment!

ADVICE ON KEEPING A KITCHEN GARDEN

Nettle and horsetail

Soak the nettles and horsetail (**equiseto**) in plenty of water and water the garden and vegetable patch: the plants will be free from parasites, aphides even the carrot worm!

OTHER USES OF HERBS

In Canal San Bovo, the Baita Oasi uses preparations based on local herbs in their own Wellness Centre and offer herbal teas to their guests. A presentation of their accommodation and their services with contact numbers can be found in chapter 6.



Baita Oasi chalet.
On the right, rosehip and horsetail.



THE TRAIL OF THE HERBS THAT CURE AND PLANTS THAT PROTECT IN ZORTEA

Distance: about 4 km / Slope: 200 metres / Time: 2-3 hours

A pleasant walk for everyone on mixed terrain: tarmac, mule paths. The trail of “the herbs that cure and plants that protect in Zortea” was established thanks to the work of voluntary people from the community of Prade Ciconia Zortea, who were asked by the Vanoi Ecomuseum. The trail is very easy and winds around fields and woodland around the village of Zortea taking the walker towards the splendid Valle del Lozen. Arriving in Pradi di S. Romina it is impossible not to notice the chapel, which stands out in a group of houses. Along the path to the edges of the trail or in the neighbouring fields you can observe the many varieties of wild, medicinal and edible herbs, well known to the local people. To illustrate the plants’ characteristics and properties a series of boards containing herbal themes have been erected for the visitors: the “*prato da mangiare*” (what is edible), the “*biodiversità coltivata*” (biodiversity cultivated), the herbal teas can be obtained from the main areas of botanical interest.

Edible grassland

Often we trample over these herbs in the fields without thinking about them, even in our gardens, but wild edible herbs are good and very useful. In the past, during Springtime the pantry was almost empty and the vegetable patch was still dormant... Today, however dandelion (*radicio*, *Taraxacum officinale*), campion (*susel*, *Silene vulgaris*), hops (*bruscandoli*, *Humulus lupulus*), good king henry (*sgamaita*, *Chenopodium bonus Henricus*) have become sought after delicacies.

Cultivated biodiversity

The vegetable patches in the mountains have always been areas of biodiversity and conserving rare varieties. The garden, besides stocking the pantry, was also a pharmacy. The edible species alternated with medicinal plants and scented plants for the laundry, for example wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*) was used for the lye (solution for washing).

The teas

The clean fresh spring-water was used by our grandparents to obtain the benefits of medicinal plants. They usually made teas from them, with a mixture of dried herbs, cut finely or grounded. They were made into extracts or teas. Different parts of the plants could be used to make extracts, like the tough parts, bark, root or stalk, while the teas were made by putting herbs or flowers in boiling water and leaving them to stand for some time before drinking. Along the path you will reach the Agritur Maso Santa Romina farmhouse, an area of cultivation of wild and medicinal herbs.



Above, clockwise: the garden of the Agritur S. Romina farm B&B; S. Romina chapel; signpost along the trail; gentian.



GIRO DEI COLMÈI DI RONCO TRAIL

Distance: 3,8 km / Slope: 300 metres / Time: 3 hours

A pleasant walk for those who want to calmly stroll and discover the little corners of the Ronco village: "i colmèi". Each little group of houses are marked by a fountain and one or two shrines: wall paintings, steeple or inscriptions. The "i colmèi" are linked to each other by an intricate web of tracks and mule paths that from the bottom of the valley climb up the side of the mountain, passing through woodland, fields and offer the visitors spectacular sceneries of the Valle del Vanoi, the eternal peaks. The path allows for numerous variations along the trail, which are signposted.

Notes on herbs

Continuing along the trail there are many possibilities of noticing edible and medicinal plants at the edges of the mule path or in the various ecological spots like: dry stone walls, banks, fields of hay, pastures, woodland and damp areas. Among the most common are: mint, ribwort, elderberry, thyme, dropwort, yarrow, St. John's wort, butterbur and various umbellifers. Among the edibles are: nettle, good king henry, goat's beard, campion, dandelion and many more, of which near the streams, garden cress; indicates how clean the water is. Along the path, in Colmèi dei Gasperi, you can find two farms that cultivate medicinal herbs: the educational farm l'Orto Pendolo and the Vanoi Officialis, where it is possible to observe and experience the local interpretation of the world of herbs.



Flowers in the garden "tra i colmei de ronco".
On the left, a stretch of the trail "Giro dei Colmei".



THE ETHNOGRAPHIC TRAIL OF VANOI – “ANEL DEI PRADI”

Distance: 3,7 km (7 km starting from Caoria)

Slope: 215 metres (365 metres starting from Caoria)

Time: 4 hours

The Ethnographic trail of Vanoi is a very interesting path in the worldly nature of Man and the countryside of Vanoi that winds around the village of Caoria up to the farmhouses and alpine pastures, touching numerous organisations and infrastructures. In Caoria you can find the Casa del Sentiero Etnografico house, which has information about the trails, on the Ecomuseums and the nature reserve of Paneveggio Pale di San Martino Park. A good introduction to the wonderful things that you can discover step by step journeying along the Anel dei Pradi path, which starts at the Visitors Centre in Prà Madègo, reachable from Caoria on foot or with a shuttle bus in the Summer months. Visiting the site will help you understand the peculiar aspects of the zone 'pradi', the fields half way up the mountain reclaimed over the centuries from tillage of the forest, where families holidayed from March to November in order to stockpile the hay and other produce for the Winter months. The circular route touches Pont de Stel, the large houses of Fiamena on the orographic left slope, then descend to Pont de Gioreto and climb up the orographic right to Masi de Tognola, a well preserved example of settlements half way up the mountain, with houses, barns, stables and vegetable patches.

Notes on herbs

In these hay fields plant life of great interest have evolved, even from an edible and medicinal point of view, which flank the numerous types of species of the forest and of ecotone (on the edge of forest and cultivated fields). You will notice nettle, mint, yarrow, lady's mantle, ribwort, campion, field scabious, wild thyme, willowherb, raspberry, blueberry, fern, good king henry, dandelion, Aaron's rod, goldenrod and St. John's wort.



From the top to the bottom: in the mountains yarrow often paints the fields pink, rather than the usual white. This variety is well sought after, as it is more efficient or simply the most decorative as a tea. Below, the campion flowers, good to eat. On the left, *Prà de Madègo*.



TOURISM TO THE SCENT OF HERBS

THE VANOI ECOMUSEUM COOPERATES WITH SOME FARMS, TOUR OPERATORS AND RESTAURANTS THAT PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE CARE IN SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

AGRITUR MASO SANTA ROMINA

This was an old farmhouse, of the family, built in 1920 that Mirella and Luigi converted into a B&B 13 years ago. A well-positioned terrace looks out onto the beautiful valley of Vanoi with its fields in Santa Romina near the little church of the same name. The farm business deals in the **cultivation of herbs and berries** with particular attention to **cheese making** that for years was the job of Giglio, who has now handed over the craft to his daughter, Mirella, whose duty it is to prepare the ricotta and tosèla cheese every day. The catering is very particular about being original yet it uses only local garden produce and seasonal food with a **different menu prepared each day**.

THE PRODUCTS: from berries to preserves made with herbs, to teas and liqueurs

The farm produces **strawberry, raspberry, blueberry, blackberry and red currant**, which in part are sold to the Coop Sant'Orsola Company, while others are **made into jams**. Besides the classical flavours like strawberry, blueberry, blackberry, wild fruit and red currant there are the added flavours of **raspberry and mint**, Mirella's favourites, because she loves the fruit, but also the mountain herbs. Her passion is also seen in their range of teas, to be taken any time of the day. Finally, fruit and herbs make up their special **liqueurs**. For whoever wishes to take it easy there is a blueberry liqueur prepared by Luigi, but for those who want to try their hand at some-



thing there is a **herbal syrup**: pour the syrup into a litre of pure Grappa Trentina (spirits) and you have a drink to help your digestion after a heavy meal.

THE CUSINE: from the garden to the plate

The welcome starters are: 'casada' (a ricotta cheese and fresh cream) **served with jam** or with homemade rye bread. For the First Course there is '**orzotto**' (barley), which **changes according to the season**, for example barley and blueberry or with the S. Romina herbs like mallow, cress and coltsfoot. For the Second Course the game is excellent like stag and red currant or hare and brandy born out of Luigi's passion for hunting. Finally, dessert with **Tiramisù with blueberry, raspberry or strawberry** or cakes made with berries, but above all a **delicious jam tart of raspberry and mint served with cream**. All meals can be served with Trentino wines and homemade beer, for example Bionoc' of Primiero. There are always the well-experienced suggestions given by Luigi himself to complete your exquisite meal.

Via Mureri, 9 – 38050 Zortea – Tel. +39 0439 719459

The farm is open all year round. For those who wish to buy the products it is advised to telephone first. The restaurant activity is closed in February and March. It is always better to book a table.



Tempting culinary proposals based on the Agritur's herbs and wild berries.

AZIENDA AGRICOLA BIOLOGICA ALLEVAMENTO DEL MAZARÒL

The farm is located in **Valle del Vanoi**, in the east corner of Trentino, near the village of **Fiera di Primiero** and San Martino di Castrozza. The owners are a **young couple**, graduated in Padua, who moved to the area in 1998 to satisfy their needs for a simple life. It has taken them ten years to build their farm with the idea of offering their visitor the chance to come in contact with the world of mountain farming. They breed goats for their milk and have **about 50 animals**. **The milk** is used to make soft and hard cheese, yoghurt and ricotta; they also have several beehives, which provide a **high quality honey**, other products include goat salame, berries, medicinal herbs as well as a rich organic vegetable garden. The farm is a **certified educational bio-farm**, which hosts schools as well as adult groups. Their aim is to entertain, through **cultural activities**, as well as instruct their guests so that people will go away with the satisfaction of having learnt something.

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Billy goat. On the right, the Baita Oasi chalet.



BAITA OASI – CENTRO BENESSERE

Encased in the wonderful natural surroundings of the Vanoi stream, the “Baita Oasi” welcomes their guests to a new experience of relaxation and sensation. The peace and quiet stimulates positive reactions both physical and spiritual. From the Baita Oasi you can reach the riverside park in just a few minutes, an ideal place to practice some sport. It is also a starting point for various paths like “Anello dell’acqua” promoted by the Vanoi Ecomuseum, the “Canyon della Cortella” and the “Grotta della Fosca” trail. The accommodation offers rooms with half board or B&B and guests can use the wellness centre and arrange personal beauty treatments. There is a large dining area where guests can enjoy a buffet breakfast. The evening meal offers tasty, healthy and genuine good food. Quiet nights and a peaceful sleep awaits guests in their room with wooden panelled furnishings in the bathroom and splendid views of the valley from the balcony. In the evening in front of the fireplace guests can discuss their days activities between themselves or with others all in the comfort and relaxing atmosphere of the house. The wellness centre is managed by qualified personnel and offers massage and beauty treatment as well as Jacuzzi showers and bath, Turkish bath and Sauna. Afterwards you can enjoy a herbal tea in the relaxation area.

Località Simbolda, 88 – 38050 Canal San Bovo (TN)

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info@baitaoasi.it – www.baitaoasi.it

Opening times for the wellness centre and beauty salon: from 4pm to 7pm - Sunday from 5pm to 10pm – Tuesday closed. It is always better to book appointments.

VANOI OFFICINALIS

Vanoi Officinalis is an efficient small farm since 2010 that has embraced the project of knowledge and medicinal plants. It produces herbal teas and aromas for cooking of various wild and cultivated mountain herbs. The farm is in Valle del Vanoi. The plants are gathered by hand in the wilds, like the elderberry flowers, the raspberry leaf, the pod from the hops and are mixed with mint, lemon balm, marigold flower, cornflower and sunflower, which are cultivated in two small patches situated in Ronco near the village of Gasperi. There is a small laboratory in the village of Ronco Pieroi where we select and dry the herbs. All the work is done by hand from sowing to packaging the products. We welcome visitors to our garden patches and would be more than pleased to present our methods, products and territory.



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L'ORTO PENDOLO: AZIENDA AGRICOLA, ATELIER DELLE PIANTE OFFICINALI, ATTIVITÀ E VISITE AGLI ORTI

We are a small mountain farm located in Ronca, in Valle del Vanoi, in the heart of Trentino. We cultivate according to synergic agricultural principles such as vegetables, medicinal and aromatic plants, linseed and crops. All our operations are done manually respecting natural seasonal cycles so we can offer high quality products and service to the environment and local culture. Visitors can book workshops on themes like medicinal plants and mountain agriculture, educational courses are available for the production of linen and the intercropping of plants, sensorial activities and walks with the Terra negli orti.



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For details about activities and products available from the gardens consult our blog on the website www.lortopendolo.blogspot.it or Facebook L'Orto Pendolo

CONTACT US ON ARRIVAL AT THE FOLLOWING
 ECOMUSEUM OFFICES



**Ecomuseo
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Ecomuseo del Vanoi
 Casa dell'Ecomuseo house
 piazza V. Emanuele, 9 – 38050 Canal San Bovo (TN)
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Ente Parco Paneveggio Pale di San Martino

Sede Centro visitatori di Villa Welsperg
 Località Castelpietra, 2 – 38054 Tonadico (TN)
 Tel. +39 0439 765973
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Coneflower.

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Special thanks to those involved in the publication, which is the result of the hard work put in by the people who have collected the necessary material and contributed to the documentation of this guide (supplying photos, interviews, references, logistic support and much more). Furthermore, we would like to thank firstly the Argentario Ecomuseum, Ivan Pintarelli, Giusy Depaoli, Stefano Delugan, Raffaella Lunelli, Damiano Casagrande, Mariano Avanzo, Maria Avanzo, Adriana Stefani (coordinator of the Ecomuseum Network) and Silvia Corrado (collaborator of the Organic Production Office and the SY_CULTour project).

