

## Veneto

Veneto was part of the Roman Empire until the 5th century AD. Later, after a feudal period, it was part of the Republic of Venice until 1797. Venice ruled for centuries over one of the largest and richest maritime republics and trade empires in the world. After the Napoleonic Wars and the Congress of Vienna, the Republic was annexed by the Austrian Empire, until it was merged with the Kingdom of Italy in 1866, as a result of the Third Italian War of Independence. Since 1971 the Statute of Veneto has referred to the region's citizens as "the Venetian people". Article 1 defines Veneto as an "autonomous Region", "constituted by the Venetian people and the lands of the provinces of Belluno, Padua, Rovigo, Treviso, Venice, Verona and Vicenza", Veneto is the 8th largest region in Italy, Several rivers flow through the region: the Po, Adige, Brenta, Bacchiglione, Livenza, Piave, and Tagliamento. The eastern shore of the largest lake in Italy, Lake Garda, belongs to Veneto. The coasts of the Adriatic Sea are characterised by the Venetian Lagoon, a flat terrain with ponds, marshes and islands. The Po Delta to the south features sandbars and dunes along the coastline. The inland portion contains cultivable



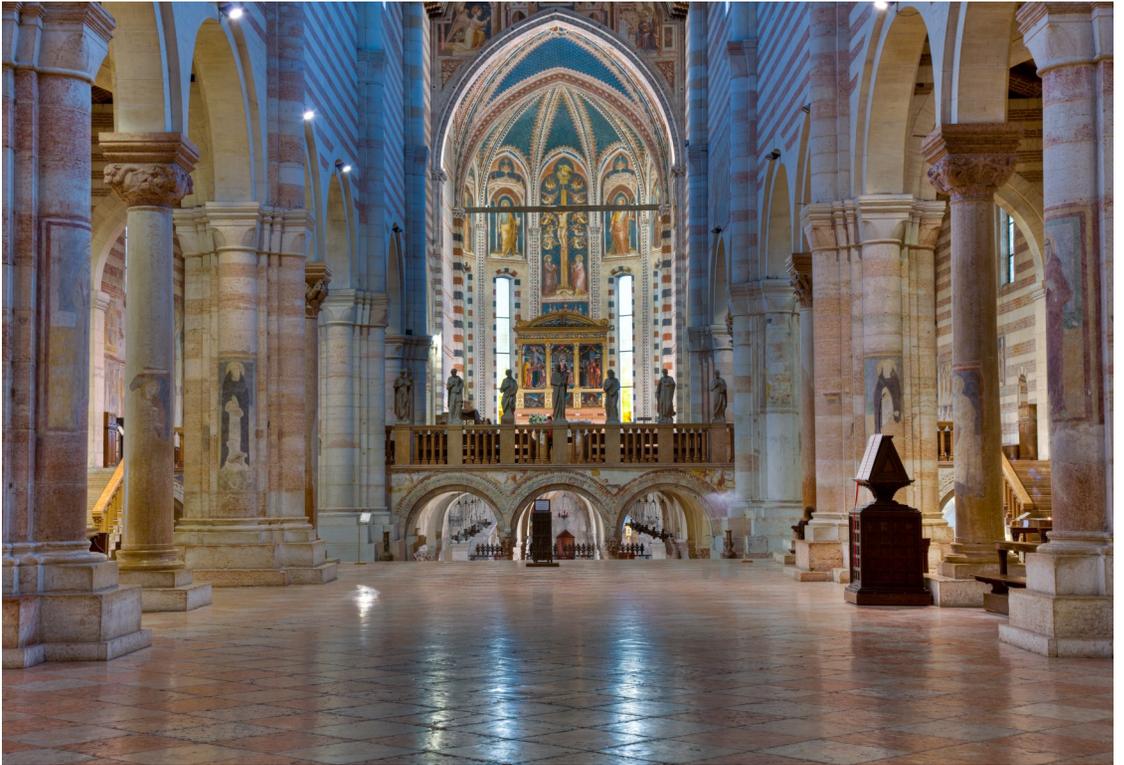
land recently reclaimed by a system of canals and dykes. Fish ponds have been created there as well. The delta and the lagoon are a stopping-point for migratory birds. In history the most powerful time was during the middle age, As the barbarians were interested in the wealth of the mainland, part of the Venetian population sought refuge on some of the isolated and unoccupied islands in the lagoon, from which the city of Venetiae or Venice was born. After a period of Byzantine domination in 8th century, Venice became an independent maritime Republic ruled by its elected doge. The Republic became a commercial superpower and its influence lasted through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. In fact, the Venetian Republic enjoyed 1100 years of uninterrupted influence throughout the Mediterranean. By the 16th century, the Venetian Republic dominated Veneto, Friuli, parts of Lombardy, Romagna, Dalmatia, the Ionian Islands of Corfu, Cefalonia, Ithaca and Zante. From the 13th to 17th centuries, it held the island of Crete and from the mid-15th to mid-16th century, the island of Cyprus.

## Art and architecture

The Middle Ages stimulated the creation of monumental works such as the complex of churches on the island of Torcello, in the Venetian lagoon, with the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta founded in 639, its bell tower erected in the 11th century and the adjacent Martyrium of Santa Fosca built around the 1100, notable for the mosaics. They saw the construction of the Basilica of San Zeno Maggiore in Verona, which was Veneto's main centre for that esthetic movement and we note, by the mixture of styles that Verona was an important crossroads to the north of Europe. Examples of Gothic art, in addition to the Venetian church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari and that of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, are the Scaliger Tombs in the historical centre of Verona. While in Veneto Byzantine art was important, an element of innovation was brought to Padua by Giotto, bearer of a new pictorial tradition: that of Tuscany. Towards the 1302 he was commissioned by Enrico Scrovegni to paint the family chapel, now known just by the name of Scrovegni Chapel, one of the most important artistic monuments of Padua and Veneto. The influences of the contribution of Giotto were felt immediately, as in the frescoes of Giusto de' Menabuoi in the Baptistry near the Cathedral of Padua and those of Altichiero in the Basilica of Saint Anthony. Padua was a cradle of the Venetian Renaissance, where influences from Tuscany and Umbria filtered north. Amongst the Renaissance artists who worked there were Donatello, who worked on an altar of the Basilica of Saint Anthony, and Pisanello, whose works are mainly in Verona, for example, the fresco of Saint George in the Church of St. Anastasia. Tintoretto recast Roman Mannerism in a Venetian style, less linear, and with more use of colour to distinguish forms, highlighting the bright prospects for its operations, giving unusual deformations of perspective, to increase the sense of tension in the work. His studio was prolific. Palaces and churches of Venice abound with his paintings. The Scuola Grande di San Rocco alone sports 66 paintings by this painter. The San Giorgio Maggiore houses a huge canvas by him depicting the Last Supper. Antonio Canova was the greatest of the neoclassical artists. The Temple of Possagno, which he designed, financed, and partly-built himself, is among landmarks of neo-classical architecture. His most important works include Psyche Revived by Love's Kiss and The Three Graces.



In architecture, **Andrea Palladio**, born in **Padua**, completed some highly influential works, including Villas in the mainland, in Vicenza, Padua and Treviso. In Venice, he designed the Basilica of San Giorgio Maggiore, the Il Redentore, and Zitelle on the island of Giudecca. Palladian Villa architecture, in masterpieces such as Villa Emo, Villa Barbaro, Villa Capra, and Villa Foscari, evoked the imagined grandeur of antique classical Roman villas. The research style of Palladio has created an architectural movement called Palladianism, which has had strong following in the next three centuries, inspiring architects.



## Venetian food and wine

Veneto is an important wine-growing area producing:



Soave, Bardolino, Recioto, Amarone, Torcolato, Prosecco, Tocai Rosso, Garganega, Valpolicella, Verduzzo, Raboso, Moscato, Cabernet Franc, Pinot Nero, Pinot Grigio, and Merlot. Homemade wine making is widespread. After making wine, the alcohol of the pressed grapes is distilled to produce grappa or graspa, as it is called in the local language. Prosecco is a dry sparkling wine. It is made from the glera grape, a white grape formerly known as Prosecco, which is traditionally grown in an area a near Conegliano and Valdobbiadene, in the hills north of Treviso. The name of Prosecco is derived from the northern Italian village of Prosecco (Trieste), where this grape variety is believed to have originated. Spritz, in the Venetian language also called "spriss" or "spriseto" depending on the area, usually consists of  $\frac{1}{3}$  sparkling wine and  $\frac{2}{3}$  Aperol. Campari or gin may also be used.

Cuisine in Veneto may be divided into three main categories, based on geography: the coastal areas, the plains, and the mountains. Each one (especially the plains) can have many local cuisines, each city with its own dishes. The following are dishes typical of the three subregions of the Veneto.

### Vicenza area

Vicenza, along with Venice, has one of the most distinctive cuisines in the Veneto. Asiago cheese. Bacià afa Visentina. Basano del Grappa asparaguses. I bixi de Lumignan and i bixi de Borso ("bixi" means peas). Cren: horseradish. It's usually finely grated and mixed with vinegar into a sauce that accompanies boiled meats. Nanto truffles. Paèta al malgaragno (young turkey with pomegranate juice) Rixi e bixi (rice and peas).



## Venice and the lagoon

Bigoli in salsa: bigoli pasta served with anchovy and onion sauce. Fegato a fa venesiana: a high-class Venetian plate of liver, chopped and cooked together with chopped onions. Moteche: small green species crabs, when they arrived at the peak of phase changes and then soft, they are fried. The moteche are very valuable because the process of changing the water brackish lagoons lasts a few hours, the armor back hard and immediately return to be called maxenete. Pasta e faxioi: bean soup with noodles (typically long pasta rough). Potenta e schie: small shrimp from the lagoon (gray mud, gray-brown from boiled), fried and perched on a bed of very soft, white polenta. Rixi e bixi: a poor but tasty dish consisting of a simple risotto with pancetta and peas cooked in a broth. Rixoto de gò: rice prepared with goby (of the *Gobius ophiocephalus* species), also known as gò, typical fish of the Venetian Lagoon.



## Verona area

Brasato all'Amarone: braised beef meat cooked with Amarone wine, often served together with polenta. Gnocchi. It is tradition to eat homemade potato gnocchi on Venerdì Gnocolar, the last Friday of Carnival. Lesso e pearà. Lesso is the bollito misto popular across entire northern Italy, that in Verona is uniquely served with pearà: a thick, slow cooking sauce made from the boiled meats' stock, grated stale bread, ox marrow and abundant ground black pepper. Some recipes also add olive oil, grated Parmigiano Reggiano or butter. The sauce's name comes from pear, dialect for pepper; hence pearà, "peppered". In the past this was a lavish meal for the majority of the populace and therefore served on major festivities like Christmas. Pastissada de caval: an ancient horse meat stew dating back to the Middle-Age. It's prepared with bay leaves, nutmeg, cloves, salt, pepper, vegetables, and beef stock and slow cooked until the meat melts; it's served with polenta. Polenta e renga: polenta accompanied by typical oil preserved herrings. Salted herrings (renga) are boiled or grilled, then cleaned, cut into pieces, and pickled in olive oil with garlic, parsley and capers; after 40 days of maturation, the herrings are ready to be served or put into jars for preservation. This dish originated in the Parona neighbourhood of Verona (and more broadly or the whole city) and is traditionally eaten on Ash Wednesday. Riso Vialone Nano: a rice variety typical of southern Veronese lowlands (Bassa Veronese). It lends itself best to the preparation of excellent risottos, and used as such throughout Veneto and Italy. Risotto all'Amarone: risotto with the local Amarone red wine. It is typical of the Valpolicella wine region. Rixoto col tastasal: risotto made with the same seasoned ground pork used in salame and sausages; traditionally this dish was a mean of tasting the mix before making sausages (hence the name tastasal, "to taste salt"). Tortellini di Valeggio: hand-made fresh pasta of tortellini kind, stuffed with a mix of beef, pork meats and vegetables, usually served with melted butter and sage. They are typical of the town of Valeggio sul Mincio, southwest of Verona.

## Venetian glass

is thought to have been made for over 1,500 years, and production has been concentrated on the Venetian island of Murano since the 13th century. Today Murano is known for its art glass, but it has a long history of innovations in glassmaking in addition to its artistic fame—and was Europe's first major glassmaking center. During the 15th century, Murano glassmakers created *cristallo*—which was almost transparent and considered the finest glass in the world. Murano glassmakers also developed a white-colored glass (milk glass called *lattimo*) that looked like porcelain. They later became Europe's finest makers of mirrors. Today, Murano and Venice are tourist attractions, and Murano is home to numerous glass factories and a few individual artists' studios. Its Museo del Vetro (Glass Museum) in the Palazzo Giustinian contains displays on the history of glassmaking as well as glass samples ranging from Egyptian times through the present day.

