

**Carnival 2021 is celebrated at the table:
from Sappada to Muggia the many culinary and popular traditions
of Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italy)**

The Carnival is an ancient celebration, born with man and his wish to celebrate life and the passage from winter to spring. Every year Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italy) is coloured with confetti and float parades. Still, it is in the **memory of food and popular traditions** that you can continue to discover **the true essence of Carnival**. In Friuli Venezia Giulia there is no shortage of ideas: climbing **the regional mountains of the Alps and Prealps** and taking a backward **route to the coast of Trieste** you will find cultural and linguistic islands that present the **most original carnival celebrations and cakes of Friuli Venezia Giulia**.

Sappada Carnival

One of the most characteristic traditions of **Sappada/Plodn**, a German-speaking island, is the **Carnival** (Vosenòcht), a real moment in which rituality and folklore intertwine. The absolute protagonists are the **wooden masks carved** by local artisans and handed down from generation to generation. In Sappada during the Carnival period, you can taste the **Mogn Kropfen** and Orecchiette di Coniglio (rabbit ears). There are also the **Krischkilan** and the **Muttn**, local variants of crostoli e castagnole (pastries). The **Mogn Kropfen** are delicious **tortelli** filled and fried that are distributed by Rollate - the undisputed protagonist of Sappada carnival masks - during the parades. These particular pastries hide a **filling of poppy seeds and honey**. There is also a simple version of fried ravioli without filling that takes the name of **Hosenearlan (rabbit ears)**, since the shape resembles the ears (Earlan) of a rabbit (Hosen).

Sauris Carnival

Sauris/Zahre, a village nestled in the Carnic Alps, has a tradition linked to Carnival among the oldest in the Alpine arc: the protagonists of the festival are the **Rölar** (with their faces covered with soot) and the **"Kheirar"** (with wooden mask and broom). The **Rölar** is a magical and demonic figure, whose name derives from the Rolelan, the bells he carries around his waist and which he uses together with his broom to warn the inhabitants of the beginning of the parades. The **Kheirar**, on the other hand, is the king of masks and is the one who takes care of the festivities. For Carnival, the tradition involves the preparation of **Vledlan (a type of doughnut with herbs)**, which in the hamlet of Lateis takes the truncated form of 'vlé' (which in the local Germanic language also means flea). Flour, sugar, eggs enriched with grappa and **aromatic herbs, such as wild mint and sage**, dried and shredded are used to prepare vledlans, which give the doughnut a delicate and unmistakable aroma.

Resia Carnival

Once isolated between the Musi Mountains to the south and the imposing Canin massif to the east and north, Resia has a very important Carnival (Püst) tradition, the fundamental element of which is represented by the dance performed with the typical **Resia musical instruments**, the cõtira (violin) and the bünkula (cello). **Traditional Resia Carnival masks** are of two types: te lipe bile maškire, beautiful white masks, with a high hat adorned with coloured paper flowers and small rattles and babaci/kukaci, ugly masks. During the Püst of Resia the protagonists become **two very particular cakes: sope** and **bujarnik**, the latter counted among the agri-food products typical of Friuli Venezia Giulia. **Sope** is a doughnut that is so substantial that in the past, it was prepared for mothers who had just given birth. It is prepared with slices of white bread and a batter with flour eggs, liqueur, sugar and salt. **Bujarnik** is a true institution in the valley. It is proposed in two versions: one for the day of the dead (a loaf wrapped in cabbage leaves and cooked in a wood oven) and the carnival version, a mixture composed of cornflour and wheat, eggs, sugar, cream, apples and/or pears, dried figs, sultanas, dried fruit, yeast, wild fennel seeds, cinnamon or carob that is simply scattered on the plate of the oven of which it takes the shape.

Carnival of the Natisone valleys

The Pust v Benečiji is an ancient carnival rich in traditions, just like the landscape of the Natisone valleys where it is celebrated. **Pust**, a word that in the local Slovenian dialect means “joke”, also assumes the meaning of “Carnival” understood as a holiday in its entirety. The word Pust also identifies the main masked character of the Valley carnival, the protagonist of all the parades. These characters are covered from head to toe by fluttering multi-coloured fringes under which they hide cowbells that create a joyful din with each jump. **Each village of the Valleys then has its own peculiarities and its symbolic masks:** the Pustje of Rodda with their bright colours and their playful impertinence, the rooster and the hen of Mersino, the famous Blumarji of Montefosca who running with their white clothes awaken the earth for spring. There are also the tin face masks of Stregna, and in Montemaggiore there is no shortage of te liepe, the beautiful girls, with their characteristic flower hats, finally in Clodig, the spectacular wicker masks. The strucchi together with the gubana are the typical cakes of the Natisone Valleys: soft fried morsels of pastry, containing a delicious filling rich in nuts, hazelnuts, raisins and pine nuts. Born as a carnival treat, in the past, they were served for important occasions instead of sugared almonds.

Trieste, where confetti was invented, and the Muggi Carnival.

From the Alps and Prealps descending to the Carso, the coast and **Trieste, where one of Carnival's undisputed symbols was invented: confetti**. Ettore Fenderl was a celebrity in the field of nuclear physics, but it was not only his studies that were innovative. In 1876 the fourteen-year-old Ettore had no sugared almonds or rose petals available to throw on the parade during the Carnival that passed by his house in Piazza della Borsa in Trieste. So he cut small pieces of coloured paper and threw them over the masked characters as they passed. He was immediately copied by many of those present,

and the invention quickly took hold in Vienna, Venice and the rest of the world. And so confetti was invented.

Reaching **Muggia**, we discover the very ancient origins of the town's **Carnival**. The first official mention is in the municipal statutes of 1420 in which reference is made to the reimbursement of a duchy to those Companies, who would then commit to spend at least three times as much to hire musicians. El Carneval de Muja was characterized by some customs including **Caccia al Toro**, (the Bull Hunt), of Venetian origin, and the **Ballo delle Verdura** (Vegetable Ball), which took place on Fat Tuesday in what is now Piazza Marconi. Men and Women dance with their heads adorned with green garlands, holding a golden arch of branches and oranges. **Trieste frittole** are par excellence the typical Carnival treat. They are little "dough balls" with raisins and pine nuts, fried and in some cases stuffed with cream or chocolate. **Crostoli** also have a high position in the ranks of culinary excellence in Trieste: the fried sweet dough is very reminiscent of the better-known chiacchiere. Not to be missed are also the **krapfen**, a dessert of Austrian origin, but smaller in Trieste.

Karst Carnival

There are masked characters and allegorical floats in **Opicina**, on the karst plateau a few kilometres from the centre of Trieste. On Saturday afternoons the groups give life to the masked race to compete for the Karst Carnival prize. **Kraški Pust** is to celebrate the victory with dances, music and shows. **The frittole con anima** (Fanci z duso) are the protagonists of the table. The original recipe is from Contovello, a hamlet of Trieste: once the "kontovelci", people of Contovello, were excellent fishermen and the women had the task of selling the catch. So, the frittole con anima were born, they are **fried dough filled with salted anchovies**.