

The Carnival of 2023 in Friuli Venezia Giulia:

from Sappada to Muggia among wooden masks, local folklore, language islands and authentic sweets

Trieste, February 7 2023 – **Sappada, Sauris, Resia, Trieste, and Muggia**, but also in **Carnia**, in the **Natisone Valleys**, in the **Karst region**, and **Monfalcone**: the Carnival in Friuli Venezia Giulia is rooted in history, in the streets of its villages and towns, from the sea to the mountains, where a **joyful and irreverent spirit** is in the air. Celebrations with an ancient flavour in an atmosphere of **happiness** and **authenticity**, carved and painted wooden **masks**, parades of **allegorical floats**, events of music and dance, not to mention **confetti, whose invention is claimed by the city of Trieste**. But it is at the table that the true essence of Carnival can still be discovered, with the most authentic **dishes** and **sweets** of Friuli Venezia Giulia.

CARNIVAL APPOINTMENTS

Carnival of Sappada (February 5-21)

One of the most characteristic traditions of **Sappada/Plodn**, a **German-speaking island**, is the Carnival (**Vosenòcht**), a key moment in which **rituals** and **folklore** intertwine. The absolute stars are the wooden masks carved by local craftsmen and handed down from generation to generation. The celebrations of the Carnival in Sappada take place, just like they used to in the past, on the three Sundays preceding Lent, and are dedicated to the three groups of society: the "**Sunday of the poor**" (*pèttlar sunntach*), when people dress in modest clothes and perform the more humble duties to make a living; the "**Sunday of the peasants**" (*paurn sunntach*), which commemorates the age-old farm work, and the "**Sunday of the lords**" (*hearn sunntach*), an expression of the wealthy class and an occasion to show off the most refined costumes. It is during this period that **mogn kropfen** and **orecchiette di coniglio** can be savoured. And last but not least, there are **krischkilan** and **muttn**, local variants of crostoli and castagnole. The **mogn kropfen** are delicious stuffed and fried pancakes that are handed out by the **Rollate** - the undisputed leading character of the Sappada masks - during the parades. These special pancakes hide a filling of poppy seeds and honey. There is also a simple version of ravioli fritti without filling which is called **hosenearian**, because the shape is reminiscent of the ears (earlan) of a rabbit (hosen).

[Carnival of Sappada - Plodar Vosenòcht 2023 \(turismoFVG.it\)](https://www.turismoFVG.it)

Carnival of Sauris (February 18)

Sauris/Zahre, a village nestled in the Carnic Alps, has one of the most deeply rooted Carnival traditions in the alpine range: the protagonists of the feast are the **Rölar** (whose face is covered in soot) and the "**Kheirar**" (with a wooden mask). The Rölar is a magical and demonic figure, and its name stems from the Rolelan, the **bells** it wears around its waist, used to signal to the townsfolk that the masquerade is about to begin. The Kheirar, on the other hand, is the **king of masks** and is in charge of the festivities. The tradition includes the preparation of **vledlan** (pancakes with herbs), which in the hamlet of Lateis is shaped in the truncated form of 'vlé' (a word that also means 'flea' in the local Germanic language). Vledlan is prepared by mixing flour, sugar, eggs enriched with grappa, and herbs, such as wild mint and sage, dried and chopped, which give the pancake a delicate and unmistakable aroma. On the Saturday before Ash Wednesday, **February 18**, the traditional "Night of Lanterns" is held, a picturesque walk under the moonlight

<https://www.turismoFVG.it/eventi/il-carnevale-saurano-der-zahrar-voschankh>

The artistic carnival works of Ravinis

In **Ravinis**, a small hamlet in the municipality of Paularo in **Carnia**, in Val d'Incarajo, enthusiasm and a great love for the territory have driven the community to a lively creative activity, resulting in the development of **unprecedented artistic**

creations related to the carnival. These unique **carnival works**, particularly appreciated for their style and original art, combine sculptural skills, sophisticated tailoring, structural ingenuity, refined materials, and their unique style to create an original and fascinating atmosphere. Over the years, the numerous creations have spawned truly remarkable **collections** that can be visited all year round in the multimedia section of the **Ecomuseum of Ravinis** as well as awarding Ravinis and Paularo with several prizes at renowned national and international events.

[Ravinis – ECOMUSEO I MISTIRS \(ecomuseomistirs.it\)](http://ecomuseomistirs.it)

Carnival of Resia (February 17-22)

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 main element of which is the **dance performed with typical Resian musical instruments**, the *čitira* (violin) and *bünkula* (cello). There are two types of traditional masks: *te lipe bile maškire*, **the beautiful white masks**, with a tall hat adorned with coloured paper flowers and small rattles, and *babaci/kukaci*, **the ugly masks**. A full calendar of **events, nature excursions, and dance workshops** are planned from **February 17 to 22**, as well as the opportunity of enjoying typical dishes in the village restaurants and visiting the **Museum of the Cutler** and the **Museum of the People of Val Resia** (info: www.resianet.org). During the **Püst**, **two** very special **sweets** become the protagonists: **sope** and **bujarnik**, the latter counted among the typical food products of Friuli Venezia Giulia. The **sope** is a fritter which, in the past, because it was a hearty dish, was prepared for women who had just given birth. It is prepared with slices of white bread and a batter of eggs, flour, liqueur, sugar, and salt. **Bujarnik** is a real institution in the valley and is offered in two versions: one for the Day of the Dead (a loaf wrapped in cabbage leaves and baked in a wood-burning oven) and the carnival version, a mixture of corn and wheat flour, eggs, sugar, cream, apples and/or pears, dried figs, raisins, dried fruit, yeast, wild fennel seeds, cinnamon or carob.

Carnevale delle Valli del Natisone (February 11-12)

I Pust v Benečiji is an ancient carnival rich in tradition, exactly like the landscape of the **Natisone Valleys** in which it is celebrated. **Pust**, a word that means "prank" in the local Slovenian dialect, also directly takes on the meaning of "Carnival" as a festivity in its entirety. Moreover, the word **Pust** identifies **the main mask of the valley carnival**, the leading character in all the parades. These are masks covered from head to toe with **fluttering multicoloured tassels** under which cowbells are hidden, creating a joyful din with every jump. And each village in the Valleys maintains its own peculiarities and characteristic masks: the **Pustje from Rodda** with their bright colours and playful sassiness, **the rooster and hen of Mersino**, the **Blumarji of Montefosca** who run around in their white clothes awakening the earth for spring. There are also the tin face masks from Stregna, and from Montemaggiore there will be *te liepe*, the beautiful ones, with their characteristic flowery hats, and from Clodig finally the spectacular wicker masks. **Strucchi**, together with **gubana**, are the typical sweets of the Natisone Valleys: they are soft, fried morsels of short pastry, containing a delicious filling rich in walnuts, hazelnuts, raisins, and pine nuts. Originating as a carnival treat, in the past, they were also served at the most important events instead of sugared almonds.

Bisiacaria Carnival of Monfalcone (February 16-21)

The Carnival is also a very popular event in **Monfalcone**, in the province of Gorizia, with a rich programme of **parades, games, events in the squares, and masks**, behind which one can catch a glimpse of the life of the town, the values of the territory, references to its history, identity, and traditions: from the "**cantada in piazza**" (singing in the square) to the traditional majestic parade of floats and groups with over **participants in costume**. You can then enjoy typical local dishes at the various kiosks and restaurants in town.

[The Monfalcone Carnival - Pro Loco di Monfalcone](#)

Karst Carnival: parade on February 18 in Opicina

Carnival masks and floats also take part in the parade in Opicina, located on the Karst plateau a few kilometres from the centre of Trieste. Saturday afternoon the groups stage a masked parade to compete for the prize of the Karst Carnival/Kraški Pust and then celebrate the victory with dancing, music, and entertainment. Sweets known as **frittole con l'anima** (Fanci z

duso) are the stars of the table. The recipe originates from Contovello, a suburb of Trieste: once upon a time, the "kontovelci", the people of Contovello, were excellent fishermen and the women were in charge of selling their catch. This is how "frittole con anima", which are fritters filled with salted anchovies, were created.

Trieste (February 18- 21) and the Carnival of Muggia (February 16 -22).

From the Alps and Prealps, we head down to **Trieste**, where one of the undisputed symbols of the Carnival was invented: **confetti**. Ettore Fenderl, in fact, was a celebrity in the field of nuclear physics, but his research was not the only aspect of his innovative thinking: during the Carnival parade passing below his house in Trieste's Piazza della Borsa in 1876, the 14-year-old Ettore, who did not have any **sugared almonds or rose petals** to throw on the parade, cut up small pieces of coloured paper and threw them on the passing carnival figures. He was immediately imitated by many in attendance, with the invention spreading very quickly to Vienna, Venice, and all over the world. **Thus confetti were invented.**

As we arrive in **Muggia**, we discover the very ancient origins of the Carnival of the town. The first official record is in the municipal statutes dating back to 1420 in which reference is made to the refund of one ducat to those companies, which would then pledge to spend at least three times as much to hire musicians. **El Carneval de Muja** (the Carnival of Muggia in the local dialect) was characterized by several customs, including the **bull hunt**, of Venetian origin, and the **vegetable dance**, which took place on Shrove Tuesday in present-day Piazza Marconi. Women and men dance with their heads adorned with green garlands, holding a golden bow of branches and oranges. The parade will take place on **February 19**. The sweets include **frittole triestine**, the quintessential Carnival dessert. They are "patties" with raisins and pine nuts, which are fried and in some cases filled with cream or chocolate. Crostoli also have a high position in the ranks of culinary excellence in Trieste: the sweet dough that is fried is very similar to the better-known chiacchiere. There is also no shortage of **krapfen**, a pastry of Austrian origin, but which in Trieste is smaller in size.