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# Northern Italy's HIDDEN TREASURES

*Emilia Romagna, Trentino, and Veneto are the regions  
attracting travelers who want to go where the locals go.*



There are no bad places to visit in Italy, but there's more to the country than tours of the Tuscan countryside and drives along the Amalfi Coast. Insiders are booking tickets to the country's northern end—specifically Emilia Romagna, Trentino, and Veneto—where they can indulge in all the hallmarks of Italy (think culture, cuisine, and more) at a slower pace and without the tourist crush.

The Ponte di Tiberio in Rimini, Emilia Romagna

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# The Great OUTDOORS

Nature lovers, this one's for you. If flora, fauna, and river landscapes are your thing, you can't do better than **PO DELTA PARK**. UNESCO agrees. The UN organization has designated Po Delta Park as both a World Heritage Site and a MAB Biosphere Reserve.

It may come as a surprise to learn that a region celebrated for its cuisine and culture is also home to Europe's second-largest wetlands. That's what makes Po Delta Park such a hidden gem. More than 400 animal species and almost 1,000 plant types live among its lagoons and salt pans, which can be explored on foot, by bike or boat, or on horseback. Bird-watchers in particular will be thrilled to keep an eye out for the nearly 300 avian species that have flocked to the area (including a permanent colony of pink flamingos). [podelta.eu](http://podelta.eu)

Need a place to stay? Po Delta Park includes **COMACCHIO**, known for the canals that have earned it the moniker "Little Venice." The colorful buildings and uncrowded streets of the town, which rises from the middle of the lagoon it was named for, play host to quiet cafés and leisurely strolls. [visitocomacchio.it](http://visitocomacchio.it)



Comacchio



The Fellini Museum at Castel Sismondo

## Double Feature

*For those needing a break from Renaissance masterpieces, this pair of museums scratches a contemporary itch.*

Rimini's favorite son, renowned filmmaker Federico Fellini was born in this ancient Roman city situated on the Adriatic riviera in 1920. The recently opened **Fellini Museum** celebrates the Italian director's legacy over three locations in the center of Rimini: Castel Sismondo, a 15th-century castle; Palazzo del Fulgor, an 18th-century building; and Piazza Malatesta, a large urban park. An immersive, participatory exhibit combining clips of Fellini films with original set designs, costumes, photos, and notebooks awaits visitors to the Castel Sismondo. A three-minute walk

away, the Palazzo houses the Fulgor cinema, memorialized in Fellini's *Amarcord*. In between lies the Piazza, which combines areas for art installations and performances with spots for reflection and rest. [fellinimuseum.it/en](http://fellinimuseum.it/en)



Casa Museo Luciano Pavarotti

About two hours northwest of the Fellini Museum, you'll find **Casa Museo Luciano Pavarotti** in Modena, the famed tenor's birthplace and also where he spent his final years. Filled with awards, costumes, and other memorabilia, Pavarotti's home turned museum immerses guests in the life and times of one of opera's all-time greats. [casamuseolucianopavarotti.it/en](http://casamuseolucianopavarotti.it/en)

RIMINI: TIMOFEEV ZADVORNOV/GETTY IMAGES; COMACCHIO: MASSAN PH/GETTY IMAGES; MODENA: FRANCESCO RICCARDO IACOMINO/GETTY IMAGES; BOLOGNA: OLGA MAZYARKINA/GETTY IMAGES; FELLINI MUSEUM: DAVIDE PIRAS; CASA MUSEO LUCIANO PAVAROTTI: GIANLUCA CAMPORESI/CASA MUSEO LUCIANO PAVAROTTI; VALLE DI CEMBRA, TRENTINO: MATHAUS GARTNER; CORTINA DAMPEZZO: FEDERICO CORVI.

## PACK YOUR BAGS

Even the non-foodie can't leave Emilia Romagna without stocking up on a few of the region's delicacies. You bought some EVOO DOP on your Italian vacation? That's table stakes. Emilia Romagna is the birthplace of some of the most popular provisions of the modern age, making this an unparalleled opportunity to shop from the source. And if nothing else, you're going to need a thank-you gift for that neighbor who fed the dog while you were away.



### For Parmigiano Reggiano ➤ GO TO REGGIO EMILIA

While you'll be able to find the iconic cheese throughout Emilia Romagna, Reggio Emilia is also home to the main office of the Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium, the governing body that ensures any wheel stamped with the dotted words "Parmigiano-Reggiano" is the real deal. [parmigianoreggiano.com](http://parmigianoreggiano.com)



### For Balsamic Vinegar ➤ GO TO MODENA

At Balsamico Village, operated by vinegar producer De Nigris, guests can explore the entire production process from grape to bottle in the area where balsamic vinegar has been made for nearly 1,000 years. Enjoy a tasting to discover why a bottle of the genuine article can cost upward of \$200. [denigris1889.com/en](http://denigris1889.com/en)



### For Prosciutto di Parma ➤ GO TO PARMA

The city that gives this thinly sliced, cured ham its name has also been designated a Creative City of Gastronomy by UNESCO. Schedule a tour at one of the *prosciuttifici* in the area to see how Prosciutto di Parma is made and be the boss at the next charcuterie board. [parmacrown.com](http://parmacrown.com)



### For Tortellini ➤ GO TO BOLOGNA

Of the various foods Bologna is famous for (think ragù and mortadella sausage), one of the most cherished culinary delights is this small ring-shaped pasta stuffed with cheese, meat, or both. And while Bologna's meat sauce has become a go-to topper for pasta of all sorts, the traditional way to prepare tortellini is in brodo.

# North STAR

Venice gets all the glory, but to experience *la dolce vita* on ice, head two hours north to **CORTINA D'AMPEZZO** (“Cortina” to insiders), tucked into the Belluno Dolomites. While its downhill and cross-country runs

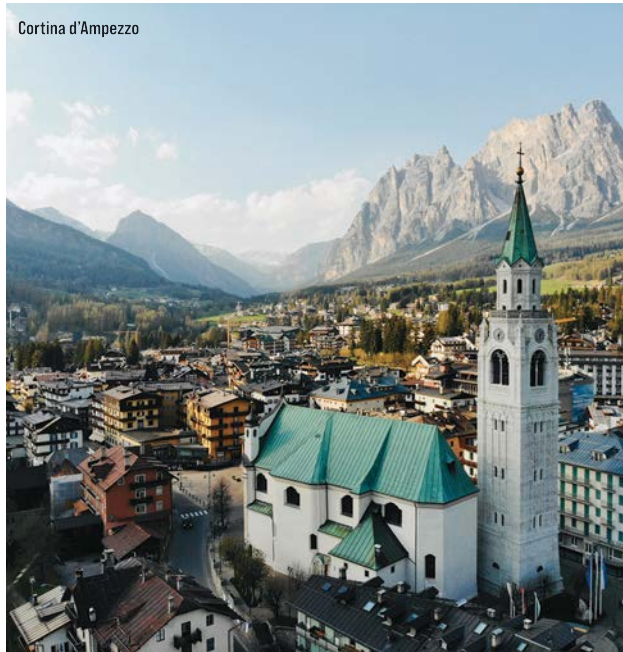
are second to none, Cortina’s après-ski scene is what has drawn society types since the mountain hamlet hosted Italy’s first Winter Olympics in 1956. (An honor it will repeat 70 years later: Along with Milan, Cortina is the site of the 2026 Winter Olympics and Paralympics.) With its mix of traditional and haute cuisine, a shopping street—Corso Italia—to rival

Milan’s famed Via Montenapoleone, and a packed roster of cultural activities, it’s no wonder Cortina received James Bond’s seal of approval and featured heavily in the debonair spy’s 12th outing, *For Your Eyes Only*. [dolomiti.org/en/cortina](http://dolomiti.org/en/cortina)

Closer to the Grand Canal, the **VILLA PISANI NATIONAL MUSEUM** sits 20 minutes outside of Venice, in Stra. Situated along the Riviera del Brenta, Villa Pisani boasts innumerable art treasures among its 144 rooms, the centerpiece of which—the ballroom—features *The Glory of the Pisani Family*, a fresco by Giambattista Tiepolo, 18th-century Italy’s greatest painter, on its ceiling. [villapisani.beniculturali.it](http://villapisani.beniculturali.it)



Villa Pisani National Museum



Cortina d'Ampezzo

TRENTINO

## Choose Your Own ADVENTURE

*Locals flock to Trentino for its majestic mountain views, plentiful outdoor activities, and top-notch food and drink. For those willing to put in the legwork, it's possible to hit all three at once.*

### SIP, CYCLE, SAVOR

One of the best ways to explore this region centered in the Italian Alps is by bike. The Giro del Vino 50 is a 31-mile self-guided bike trail winding through the Piana Rotaliana Königsberg wine-producing area along the Adige River. While the trail’s two rings can be completed in a day (and are both described as “undemanding”), there are more than 50 wineries along the route, all of which can be booked for guided tours and tastings. For that reason, many cyclists plan to spend more than 24 hours in the “kingdom of Trentino wine” and arrange a stay in one of the villages on the trail—all the better to sample the local cuisine. [giodelvino50.it](http://giodelvino50.it)

### TREK BACK IN TIME

History buffs with a few days available may choose to retrace the steps of Saint Vigilius, bishop of Trento from AD 380 to 405. The Cammino di San Vili starts at Piazza Duomo in Trento where the cathedral holds the remains of the martyred bishop. From there, the walk winds through ancient villages, along cart tracks, and past notable chapels, before entering the Valle dei Laghi and heading toward the Brenta Dolomites. The entire trek is about 62 miles and has two levels of difficulty: low and flat or high and inclined. You can complete it in a week or choose to tackle a section over four days. [camminosanvili.it](http://camminosanvili.it)

For more adventure ideas, check out [VISITTRENTINO.INFO](http://VISITTRENTINO.INFO)