

NORTHEAST ITALY

TRENTO

In a wide valley edged by mountains, Trento has a charming pedestrianised centre with a medley of pavement cafes, a magnificent cathedral, statuesque castle and Renaissance palazzi with decorated facades that date back to the 16th century and the Council of Trent. The city is the capital of beautiful Trentino, the southern and more typically Italian half of Trentino-Alto Adige region.

STAY

The location of *Boutique (boutiquetrento.com)* on Trento's charming Piazza Duomo (*below*) couldn't be more central. Some of the 16 contemporary rooms have views over the cathedral, most have private in-room spa facilities and one a balcony.

EAT

Look for the 'Osteria Tipica Trentina' sign for restaurants with a traditional atmosphere and specialities including strangolapreti dumplings, carne salada (salted meat) or freshwater fish. *Il Libertino (illibertino.it)* in Trento's village Piedicastello neighbourhood, offers quality home-cooking, a remarkable wine list and an inviting wood-paneled interior. On a quiet central piazza, *Osteria Il Cappello (osteriailcappello.it)* has a stone-vaulted downstairs room, outdoor tables in summer and a small menu of dishes such as home-made pasta with rabbit, or duck with raspberry.

DRINK

A must for wine lovers, Trento's *Enoteca Provinciale* in Renaissance *Palazzo Roccabruna*

(*palazzoroccabruna.it*) provides personalised tastings of Trentino wines accompanied by typical produce. Further south along the river Adige, opposite Rovereto in Isera village, *Casa del Vino della Vallagarina (casadelvino.info)* showcases Marzemino and other Vallagarina region wines in a characterful palazzo, also offering a daily paired menu.

VISIT

In an idyllic setting at 550m overlooking Trento, the 17th-century *Maso Bergamini (masobergamini.com)* run by the Tomasi family has an open fire in winter and a garden for summer tastings of its outstanding wines with dishes incorporating home-grown, foraged or local produce.

One way to visit the many wineries of Trentino is by bicycle: a cycle path extending to about 100km follows the river Adige through beautiful landscapes with pergola-trained vines and apple orchards. North of Trento, the Piana Rotaliana plain is home to the red Teroldego grape and the fruit-filled, velvety wines are celebrated during a biennial event, *Incontri Rotaliani*, taking place this year on 5-6 November (*pianarotaliana.it*).

The fifth-generation cousins running mainstay Teroldego-specialist winery *Dorigati (dorigati.it)* in Mezzocorona are among the dynamic young producers behind the Teroldego Evolution association formed to raise the wine's profile. The Martinelli brothers, too – they've brought their family's *Cantina A Martinelli (cantinamartinelli.com)* winery near the Monte Mezzocorona cable car back to life, restoring the monumental structure and making old-vine Teroldego.



Above: strangolapreti dumplings (see 'Eat', left)



Insider tip

Exploring the area is made easy by Trentino's *Strade del Vino e dei Sapori (tastetrentino.it)*, which organises wine-themed events and tailored experiences year-round, including winery tours and cycling or walking wine routes.

At Lavis, the Simoni family's *Cantine Monfort* winery (*cantinemonfort.com*) sources grapes from four Trentino areas, including Valsugana for rare old-variety wines and Val di Cembra, where steep terraced slopes characterise the landscape. They've very recently moved into larger 19th-century premises with space for their expanding Trentodoc spumante production.

Currently enjoying widespread success, Trentodoc producers have Giulio Ferrari to thank for introducing traditional-method production, together with Chardonnay vines, in 1902. *Ferrari Trento (ferraritrento.com)*, now run by the Lunelli family who continue the founder's quest for perfection, is a major player, also sponsoring Formula 1. Tours include the vividly decorated 16th-century *Villa Margon* and dinner at Michelin one-star *Locanda Margon (locandamargon.it)*.

South of Trento, the basaltic terrain of Vallagarina is ideal for spicy red Marzemino. The atmospheric 18th-century *De Tarczal* winery (*detarczal.com*) makes several versions, the Eos Rosso being amphora-aged. Nearby, professional



musician *Igor Lajceti (gammacavalita)*, the first to bottle wines from his family's century-old estate, produces an impressive range including an enticingly peachy Moscato Giallo.

Native Nosiola dominates the lakesides of Valle dei Laghi for fragrant whites and vin santo sweet wines. Also famous for grappa, the valley links Trento to Val Rendena, an area of stunning mountain scenery and ski resorts. Here a trio of pioneering winemakers have started producing astonishingly fresh, mineral-infused wines from fungus-resistant grape varieties such as Solaris and Sauvignier Gris, which are gaining ground throughout Trentino: *Il Petar* also produces cheese and apple juice, while *Maso Loera (masolera.it)* is run by a former international skier, and *Filanda De Boron (filandadeboron.it)* has a cosy restaurant. ■