

1)

Near the eastern border of Treviso Province, Montello's pleasant hills lie: they represent one of the final swaths of the sub-alpine portion of the Venetian Alps, and they are unmistakable thanks to their ample elliptic shape, emerging as a unique element along the right-hand side of the river Piave, between the river itself and upper eastern Veneto plain.

2)

Montello's climate is particularly mild: when summer heat makes the plain sultry, the situation is more bearable on the hills, thanks to better air-circulation and thicker foliage, which offers protection against sunlight. During the winter, pre-alpine mountains represent a barrier and can partially shield from the cold northern and north-eastern winds, insomuch that a few degrees difference may be noticed, compared to the plain and the Adriatic coast.

3)

Montello's southern side is very windy, while the northern one is characterized mainly by breezes. In the last twenty years, snowfalls have much decreased: it snows nearly only above 800mt; the rare snowfalls occurring only last a few hours, and the snow disappears after one day on two, and we can rarely witness an exceptionally abundant snowfall, which is however, no longer visible after a week.

4)

The Montello wood represented a perpetual source of wealth for the Venetian Republic, and preserving its continuity was therefore imperative. What may apparently look like an ecologic and forest-management law, is actually to be considered a wellcrafted wood-growth plan, regulated by the State's laws.

5)

After the fall of the Venetian Republic, the laws which used to protect the wood were no longer enforced and oaks were soon indiscriminately cut down, without worrying about the maintenance of the forest-resource. In the XIX c., forest laws were twice on the point of being re-introduced, although with no success: first in 1811, when Veneto was under French rule, and later under Austrian rule.

6)

The modular route of the Carthusian monastery develops south of the Dorsale Road, in an area located between Presa 3 and Presa 7. Within the area, ten intertwined circle-shaped routes have been identified. The landscape is characterized by gentle slopes where woodland and fields alternate.

7)

Considering the geographic, morphologic, historical and natural Montello structure, we have devised a series of different routes in order to satisfy the different tourist demands. We have tried to meet the needs of the people who prefer either walking or cycling. Four long routes, linked between them, have been devised.

8)

From pre-historic to present times, various events have helped change the identity of flora and vegetation: climate changes on the one side, and human beings on the other. Only some limited and well-defined areas have preserved the original features of the old woodland, in which oaks have, for centuries, been the dominant trees. Nowadays, the commonest tree is robinia.

9)

In the XV c., the Venetian Republic expanded its rule on the mainland, carefully examining its economic policy, and partially re-defining the landscape. The Montello wood was exploited as an entrepreneurial resource, and ever since a constant financial yield.

10)

Many flowers endowed with outstanding colours live in the wood. In the areas receiving a standard amount of sun-light, you can find perwinkles (*Vinca minor*), whose flowers are violet and light bluish. It belongs to the apocinaceae family, from the Greek word “*apo*” (against) and “*kino*” (dog); the name was given by the Greek doctor Discoride.

11)

Montello's orchids are extremely charming for their shape and colours; they can be considered a real ecological thermometer, representing an indicator of the balance of the delicate micro-environments. One of the most beautiful orchids is *ophrys sphecodes*: it comes out in April, in barren fields, and it grows between twentyfive and fifty cm in height.

12)

Nowadays, Montello is renowned for its mushrooms; in motley woods and glades, many varieties are commonly found; the most famous are one agaric mushrooms, “*chiodini*”, much appreciated and sought after in the Autumn; not many people are aware that these mushrooms are toxic and eating them may even be fatal, if they are not properly boiled.

13)

The presence of different animals in the various parts of the wood depends on the vegetation; it is therefore difficult to list all the species and we will here catalogue only the commonest and easy to identify ones. In the earthy layer, a rich microfauna varying according to the soil, lives. In the humid layer, covered with moss, there are many kinds of arachnids.

14)

Castel Sotterra is the biggest Italian cave, originated from conglomerate deposit. Abrami and Maglich first explored and gave a description of this cave in 1963: it is about six kilometers long, and it is made up of passages located on different levels and connected by small wells. The entrance is at the very end of a blind valley, and the first section of the tunnel is characterized by various collapses.

15)

An old religious building used to stand here, as testified by 136 mortal remains, probably belonging to monks, which have been moved to Giavera parish church in 1863 by Giavera priest, who called the Carthusian monastery “an abode of silent ghosts”. It is difficult to identify what really existed in that place: undoubtedly no big buildings, since the morphology of the ground does not show any big plateau suitable for a big complex of buildings.

16)

Chestnut trees can be found along the way. “*Castanea sativa*” is a majestic tree which may be even 30-metre-high; it grows spontaneously in temperate zones and it is one of the typical features in the Montello wood. European chestnut tree may live to ripe old age; the fruit is actually a seed, which grows inside a thorny sheath, called “*riccio*”

17)

The route of Croderi

Its name comes from the stone-cutters who, in the past centuries, used to extract stones from the quarries located on the slope adjacent to the river Piave. A portion of this route lies on an old commercial road, which used to link Montello and Nervesa with the river harbor, where rafts were moored. The itinerary starts in Nervesa and runs parallel to the river Piave.

18)

The abbey's route

This is a ring-shaped route developing along an easy path, winding through gentle slope covered with fields and vineyards, rarely interrupted by small woods. Considered as a whole, the route is easy, suitable both to young and elderly people. Vegetation introduced by humans is at least to be found in three different areas. Silent traces of a longgone past are still clearly visible.

19)

At the beginning of the route, on the left-hand side, the hill stands: its typical mound-shaped structure may, according to its round shape, represent the remains of an ancient castelliere, a peculiar human settlement, dating back to over 3000 years ago. After about 50 metres, we can

discern, on the left-hand side, the ruins of an old building: it is a sacral building, dedicated to Saint Jerome.

20)

The Abbey

St. Eustachius' Benedictine Abbey is considered the oldest monument in Nervesa; the origin of this settlement dates back to the second half of the XI c.. At the time, Rambaldo III, count of Treviso, and his mother Gisla founded and bestowed wealthy livings on a community of Benedictine monks from Cassino, and made them dependent on the Roma Apostolic see. The history of Nervesa Abbey is linked to the political and religious situation of the Middles Ages.

21)

Tavaran Grande

Tavaran is one of the most accessible caves and is about 100-metre long, developing almost horizontally. The entrance is a spectacular cave consisting of two spacious entries; in the lowest one, a stream of water delivering about 30 litres per second flows. The explorable portion is a typical example of karst network, with a maze of small caves along the main section.