

# The

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From a forbidden fruit to an icon of health, the apple is the emblem of Trentino and a characteristic feature of its landscape and traditional cooking. Whether you're walking or cycling, there are many unknown aspects of a flourishing landscape to discover

# apple trail



01



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#### **GOLDEN DELICIOUS**

The apple par excellence, it accounts for 70% of production in the Val di Non and the Val di Sole, because of their perfect geographical features. The temperature changes between day and night promote the appearance of the “little red face” that is a guarantee of provenance and flavour.



03

#### **CANADIAN REINETTE**

Present in Europe since 1600, it arrived in the Val di Non over two centuries ago. It is the main ingredient of the famous strudel, unbeatable as a cooking apple and the best variety for making juices and distilled drinks.

#### **RED DELICIOUS**

As the iconic fruit of the Snow White fairy tale, the Red Delicious has created the classic image of the apple in the minds of adults and children. Cultivated in the Val di Non for over 50 years, it has found a particularly favourable environment. Its smooth and waxy skin is an intense and velvety red, often streaked, crunchy and perfect eaten raw.

# Apple growing is rooted in ancient times. Mentioned in the “Carte della Regola” by Dardine as early as 1564, the cultivation of apple trees is pictured in coats of arms and sacred paintings

**PAVILLO (VAL DI NON)** - At certain times of the year you can just travel around aimlessly and rely on instinct, stopping when you find the right perspective and are captivated by the spectacle: the Val di Non opening up like a fan, surrounded by millions of pink and white petals. Everything shouts that spring is here.

5,000 growers have made the Val di Non the cradle of the most cherished apples. For now, the Golden Delicious, Canadian Reinette and Red Delicious apples are but tiny potential ideas enclosed in the pistil of each flower; by autumn they will have turned into refined and juicy fruits, ready for us to eat.

Cultivated for centuries in the “brolo” - an ancient word that describes orchards located near houses - today apple trees grow in larger plantations that cover the whole valley in systematic and very accurately planted rows. The “Apple Trail” is not an itinerary but a whole context, built with dedication and patience by one generation after another.

In the Val di Non, apple growing is rooted in ancient times. Mentioned in the “Carte della Regola” by Dardine as early as 1564, apple tree cultivation is pictured in coats of arms and religious paintings. For modern visitors, however, the apple trail is above all visual, olfactory and omnipresent. The whole valley is criss-crossed by many different itineraries, easily travelled on foot or by bicycle, that

pass through places suspended between the modern and the ancient world. One of these is Valer Castle, which, in the month of April, stands out with surprising vigour among the blossoming apple trees. Located a short distance from the “Brolo di Umberto”, and mentioned for the first time in 1297 as the site of a negotiation between two local landlords, the manor has been in the hands of the Spaur family, who still live there, since the fifteenth century. Since 2018, visitors have been allowed into the public areas at specific times, accompanied by a guide. The ticket for the tour, lasting an hour and a quarter (and also available in German), must be purchased in the town of Tassullo, a short distance away. The visit is well worth the small price. The octagonal keep of Valer Castle - the only one of this shape anywhere in the Alps - is silhouetted against the mountains; the two-coloured shutters tell a story of ancient nobility, and the chapel of San Valerio, frescoed by the Baschenis in 1473, preserves a splendid example of brightly coloured Gothic-Renaissance paintings. The trip along the dirt road that runs between the apple orchards, from Tassullo to the castle, takes about fifteen minutes. Our advice is to proceed calmly, immersing yourself in the delicate fragrance of the blossoms and picking out the varieties with the rosiest flowers here and there among the rows of white-flowered trees. These are pollinating plants, which produce less

fruit but more pollen: with the help of the bees, it is their job to ensure the pollination of the surrounding trees.

If you want to enjoy an undulating flower-decked trail that's also accessible for buggies, head for the Santa Giustina Lake. Starting in the settlement of Revò, a narrow surfaced and signposted path runs down and through the apple orchards planted on the slopes and on to the largest artificial lake in Trentino, a destination for canoeists, fishermen and lovers of rustic charm. The beach you come to at the end of the last stretch is not equipped for bathers but from here you can admire the vastness of the artificial lake and its picturesque canyons. Gazing around every curve of the lake, depending on the orientation, you can admire the spring beauty, with its blossoming orchards and snow-covered peaks. The large expanse of water ultimately provides that sense of completeness that is so much a part of a proper holiday far from everything

There is also a circular itinerary, ideal for families, that transforms the blossom experience into a proper excursion. Starting from Romallo, follow the signposts for the Almeleto trail, which begins with a walk through the orchards. In spring you'll often meet people working in the fields as this is the perfect season for planting new specimens, perfecting existing ones and preparing the ground to produce the best possible crop. All along

the Almeleto trail you'll find games and installations for learning through play. The signs and illustrations reveal the secret ingredients of the apple universe that is the Val di Non: fresh water, the mountain ranges that provide protection against the frost, temperature changes between day and night that turn each fruit into a crisp and colourful jewel.

The path leaves the apple orchards behind to venture into the woods, crossing the ancient bridges over the Novella stream and passing by the San Biagio Hermitage, revealing various kinds of humid-loving forest vegetation. Then it retraces its steps beautifully and heads back to Romallo, inviting you to walk quietly, enjoying the frothiness of the apple blossoms.



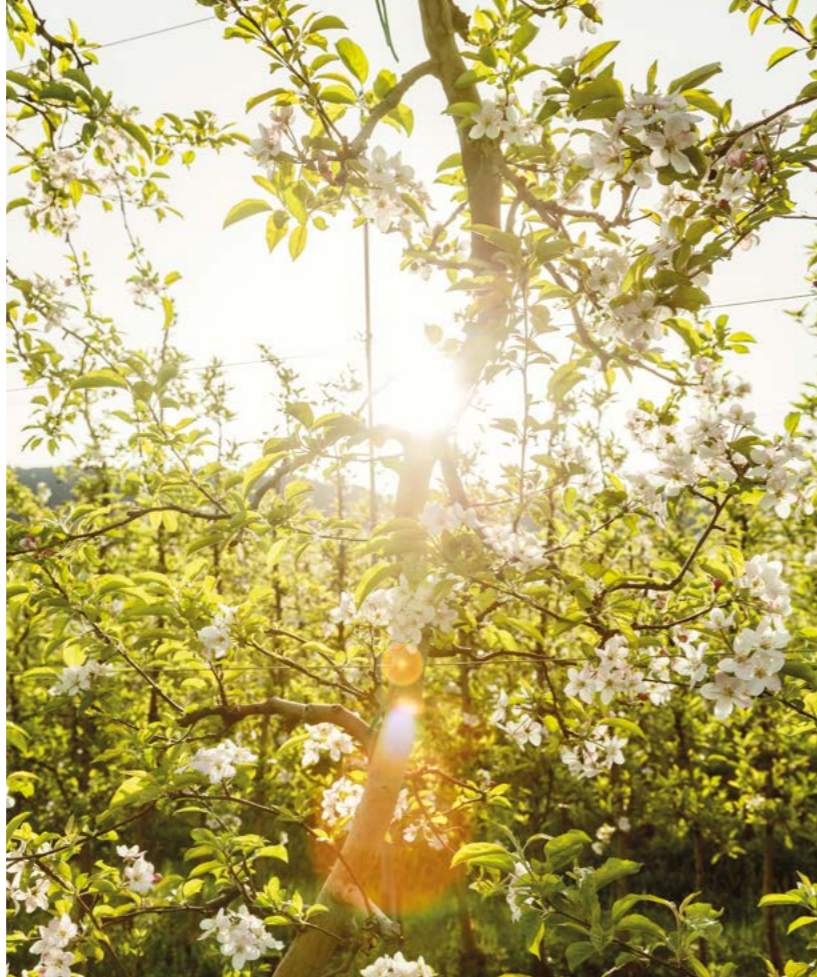
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#### ELISABETTA CURZEL

A journalist who specialises in popularising science and culture, has dedicated the last twenty years to squaring the circle of creating real dialogue between different cultures. She also thinks every day about everything that can be used to safeguard the planet.

#### LUCA ROTONDO

Since 2013, he has worked with various Italian and foreign magazines and taken part in both personal and collective exhibitions. In 2015, he won the Ponchielli prize and for the last 4 years he has been teaching Landscape Photography at the IED in Milan.



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06

**01** Plantation near Revò, on the slope down to Santa Giustina Lake

**02/03/05** Plantation near Taio

**04** The hand of Mr Guido Agosti, the owner of a farm in Romallo

**06** Mr Guido Agosti during the planting of new trees

**07** Cyclists near the Castellaz bridge on Santa Giustina Lake



07

#### HIGH MOUNTAIN COOKING

## THE PERFECT APPLE STRUDEL

The Segna family have been running the Locanda Alpina, in Brez, since 1933. The restaurant kitchen has always been the domain of the women of the house: the sceptre has now passed into the hands of Silvana, who serves a menu made with the typical local produce, while never failing to amaze diners with lively and refined details.

**This has been a working kitchen for almost a century: are there equally ancient recipes on the menu?**

Yes, our apple strudel is made according to a recipe handed down by my mother-in-law, who in turn learned it from the previous generation. I taught my daughter Giulia to make it as she is now in charge of making desserts.

**What is the secret to turning out an excellent apple strudel?**

We believe that the best apple strudel is the simplest one, which is why we follow

the oldest and "poorest" recipe that uses nothing but apples, sugar and cinnamon. One trick that few people know about is to add two or three different varieties of apple, never only one, having the foresight to use at least one apple with some acidity, like the Reinette, for example.

**What is the best accompaniment to strudel?**

There is a trend now for eating it with ice-cream or vanilla cream, but good strudel can definitely be eaten as it is, with a dusting of icing sugar, without adding anything.

**Do you also use your apples in other preparations?**

Apples go well with many ingredients. In summer we use them in salads, to enrich the dish and refresh the palate.

In autumn, we use the first Reinettes to prepare a savoury pie that we serve with wild chicory leaves, following another very old recipe, also handed down by previous generations. My sweet and sour apple compote is a staple and very appreciated condiment for a variety of meat dishes.

**But there is more to the food served in the Val di Non than just apples...**

Of course, no one should leave this area without tasting the potato tarts, cheeses, game dishes, pretzels and, why not, raw potato gnocchi with toasted bacon!

#### TIPS

## Farm holidays among the apple trees

**A warm welcome, a peaceful environment and the beauty of nature: here are five agriturismi or farm holiday centres where you can enjoy the blossoming apple trees in Trentino, Val di Non and beyond.**

1

**Agriturismo Il tempo delle mele**  
Frazione Samoclevo - Caldes

[agriturdellemele.it](http://agriturdellemele.it)

Surrounded by apple orchards and close to monuments like Caldes Castle and the Rocca di Samoclevo, embraced by the Brenta Dolomites, the Iachelini family farm is the perfect place for a Trentino stay dedicated to nature, with guests pampered in the on-site wellness centre.

2

**Agritur Golden Pause**  
Frazione Toss - Ton

[goldenpause.it](http://goldenpause.it)

A stone's throw from Thun Castle, surrounded by beech woods and apple orchards, the Agritur Golden Pause is the ideal place to explore the Val di Non, charging your batteries every morning with the hearty breakfasts lovingly prepared by Signora Carla. You'll also find a wellness area equipped with a sauna and steam room.

3

**Agriturismo Verdecruco**  
Località Maso Murari - Caldonazzo

[verdecruco.it](http://verdecruco.it)

As well as the Val di Non, the plain between the lakes Caldonazzo and Levico is also a fertile ground for apple orchards. Thanks to the large restaurant windows, Agritur Verdecruco provides a stunning view of this part of Trentino. Don't miss the refined vegetarian menus offered monthly by the Murari family.

4

**Agriturismo La Dolce Mela**  
Frazione Ciago - Valle dei Laghi

[agriturladolcemela.it](http://agriturladolcemela.it)

Organic apple juice, jams, olive oil, pasta and bread made with local wheat: the La Dolce Mela organic farm delights its guests with the best local produce. An ideal base for discovering the charms of the Valle dei Laghi, this property is located in Ciago, a few minutes from the romantic Lake Toblino.