

**18** From Via Museo we go up to the abutment of Ponte Talvera (Talvera Bridge). Crossing the bridge we find ourselves in front of the imposing structure of the Monumento della Vittoria (Victory Monument–1926-28) made of Zadobbio marble.

The Fascist Government wanted it built (planned by the architect Marcello Piacentini) in order to celebrate the victory of the Italian army over the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the First World War. It still carries the obvious fascist symbolism. Behind the monument is a park which leads on to Piazza Vittoria (Victory Square) surrounded by monumental buildings in rational style. Every Saturday the crowded, bustling market which is the focal point for many tourists, takes place in the square.

**19** From Piazza della Vittoria we walk down Corso della Libertà and we pass Piazza Mazzini, where we can see a bronze statue of Giuseppe Mazzini, to reach Piazza Gries.

**20** The square is flanked on the right by the massive architectural complex of the Abbazia dei Benedettini di Muri-Gries (abbey). The monastery, first inhabited by Augustinian monks (1406), was pillaged by insurgent peasants in 1525 and was devastated during the Napoleonic wars.

Suppressed in 1807 by the Bavarian government, it was given to the Benedictine priests of Muri (Switzerland) by the Austrian emperor in 1845.

The oldest part is represented by the castle built in the twelfth century by the counts Morit-Greifenstein, whose keep has now become the church's bell tower. It houses the heaviest bell of South Tyrol (5026 kg).

**21** The Chiesa Abbaziale di Sant'Agostino (Church of Saint Augustine) was built in 1769-71 in Baroque style. The interior vaults of the nave, the cupola and also the seven altar-pieces are richly decorated with frescoes by the noted Tyrolean painter Martin Knoller.

**22** Slightly north of Piazza Gries stands the Vecchia Parrocchiale di Gries - Old Gries Parish Church (open from April to October: Mon-Fri 10.30 a.m.-12 noon/ 2.30 to 4.00 p.m).

A building in gothic style (beginning of the fifteenth century), which houses two exceptional artistic treasures: the altar of Michael Pacher (1471-75) and the wooden Romanesque crucifix from the thirteenth century. The former is without doubt the absolute masterpiece of conserved Gothic wooden altars with wooden doors. The latter's origins are thought to be from abroad, perhaps relating to the sculptures from Northern France and this is considered a work of remarkable artistic importance. The area where the church stands today was inhabited even in Roman times and was known as "Keller" or "Chellare" (cellar) and subsequently was called "Gries" or rather sand or shingle. In the vicinity of the church there was a wine holding of the Bishop of Freising in Bavaria until 1908.

## Museums and Castles



### A MUNICIPAL MUSEUM

The Municipal Museum contains the richest collections of art and cultural history of their kind. In South Tyrol: Exquisite artefacts from the Middle Ages to the 20th Century, Romanesque Madonnas and crucifixes, winged Gothic altars and a department of popular art with panelled Gothic rooms, festival masks and local costumes.

Opening hours:  
Tuesday - Sunday: 10 am - 6 pm  
Wednesday: 10 am - 8 pm  
(last admission one hour before closing)

### B SOUTH TYROL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY

The South Tyrolean Museum of Archaeology houses the famous 5000 year old 'Ice Man'. The collection on exhibit at the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology is structured chronologically and documents the entire history of South Tyrol from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Age (15,000 BC) to the Carolingian period (around 800 AD).

Opening hours:  
Tuesday - Sunday: 10 am - 6 pm  
Thursday: 10 am - 8 pm  
(last admission one hour before closing)



### C South Tyrol's Museum of Natural History

South Tyrol's Museum of Natural History is housed in the building that one time held the administrative offices of Archduke Maximilian. It offers the visitor an overview of the various typical landscapes of South Tyrol. Its principal attraction is its salt-water aquarium. The museum is also known for its interesting special exhibitions.

Opening hours:  
Tuesday - Sunday: 10 am - 6 pm, closed on Monday  
(last admission one hour before closing)

### D MUSEION - MUSEUM OF MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

Museion was founded in 1987 and presents modern and contemporary art in temporary exhibitions. The completion of a new museum building, by the Berlin architectural firm of Krüger, Schubert and Vandreike, is scheduled for 2005.

Opening hours:  
Tuesday - Sunday: 10 am - 6 pm  
Thursday: 10 am - 8 pm  
(last admittance one hour before closing)

### E MERCANTILE MUSEUM

This museum traces the economic history of Bolzano and it is housed in the Mercantile Building, which was formerly the seat of the Mercantile Court, founded in 1635. The tour leads through various council rooms, the chancellery, and the hall of honour, with its original furnishings, historical documents, paintings and objects of art

Opening hours:  
Monday - Saturday: 10 am - 12.30 pm



### F RUNKELSTEIN CASTLE

The walls of the first Runkelstein Castle were built by the Baron Wengen on an outcropping of porphyry on the outskirts of the city in the 13th century. A renowned cycle of frescoes from the 14th century depicts Tristan and Isolde, while others show games, jousting, and giants and dwarves. They are considered to be the most comprehensive and varied of medieval secular frescoes still in existence anywhere in the world.

Runkelstein Castle can be reached by car or by bus (n. 12). If you would like to walk or to go by bike up to the castle, you can follow the path starting from the town centre, Piazza Walther, going along the footpath next to the Talvera river. You'll really enjoy it!

opening hours:  
Tuesday - Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm



### G CASTEL MARECCIO - MARETSCH CASTLE

It is a singular example of a castle on the valley floor. Surrounded by vineyards, just a few steps from the city centre, it has been transformed into the city's most prestigious conference centre and boasts precious frescoes, as well. Guided tours are possible.

For information: Congress Office Castel Mareccio - Via Claudia De Medici Tel. 0471-976615 Fax 0471-300746



### CASTEL FIRMIANO - SIGMUNDSKRON CASTLE

One of the most historic symbols of South Tyrol. It was cited as early as 945 AD as the site of a military engagement between noblemen from north and south of the Alps. In the 1950s it was the site of the landmark demonstration for South Tyrol autonomy. Today it is a favourite destination of visitors.

At the moment it is closed for renovation. It will probably be the site of the new mountain museum of Reinhold Messner.



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bolzano bozen

Nature · History · Culture

Historic and cultural route



**Our itinerary**  
to discover the artistic and cultural treasures of Bolzano  
begins in the city centre at

**1** **Piazza Walther** (Walther square), also known as the "gute Stube" or parlour of the city. In 1809 King Maximilian of Bavaria wanted this square built and at first it took his name, later that of the Archduke Johann of Austria (Johannesplatz) and in 1901 it received its present name after Walther von der Vogelweide (1170-1230), one of the greatest German poets of the Middle Ages. When South Tyrol became part of Italy, the square was named after King Vittorio Emanuele III until the end of the second World War. In the centre of the square stands the Walther monument in neo Romanesque style made by the sculptor Heinrich Natter (1889) in white marble from Lasa. From 1935 to 1985 the fascist government ordered the monument to be placed in Parco Rosegger, just outside the very centre of the town.

**2** On the south-west side of the square stands the mighty Gothic structure of the **Duomo** (cathedral) (Mon-Fri 9.45 a.m.-12 noon/2 p.m.-5 p.m. Sat 9.45 a.m.-12 noon), dedicated to Our Lady of the Assumption. Its original structure dates back to 1295 built in Romanesque style by workers from Lombardy; the work was continued in 1340 in the Gothic style by Swabian workers and it was finished at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The 65 metre high (approx. 200 feet) bell tower with its towering sandstone open-work spire is the work of the Swabian sculptor Hans Lutz von Schussenried (1501 - 1519). Details of the church to note: on the front the Romanesque door with its two columned supported arch, the rose-window (XIV century), the fresco of the Virgin Madonna with Child (1475), and the recent bronze door from the sculptor Defner of Innsbruck; on the north side the fresco of the Crucifixion (end of the fourteenth century), the little wine door (end of the fourteenth century); inside the late Gothic pulpit, the Baroque monumental high altar made of polychrome marble (1710-20); the fourteenth century crucifix; the Baroque chapel of Grace with frescoes by Karl Henrici (1771).

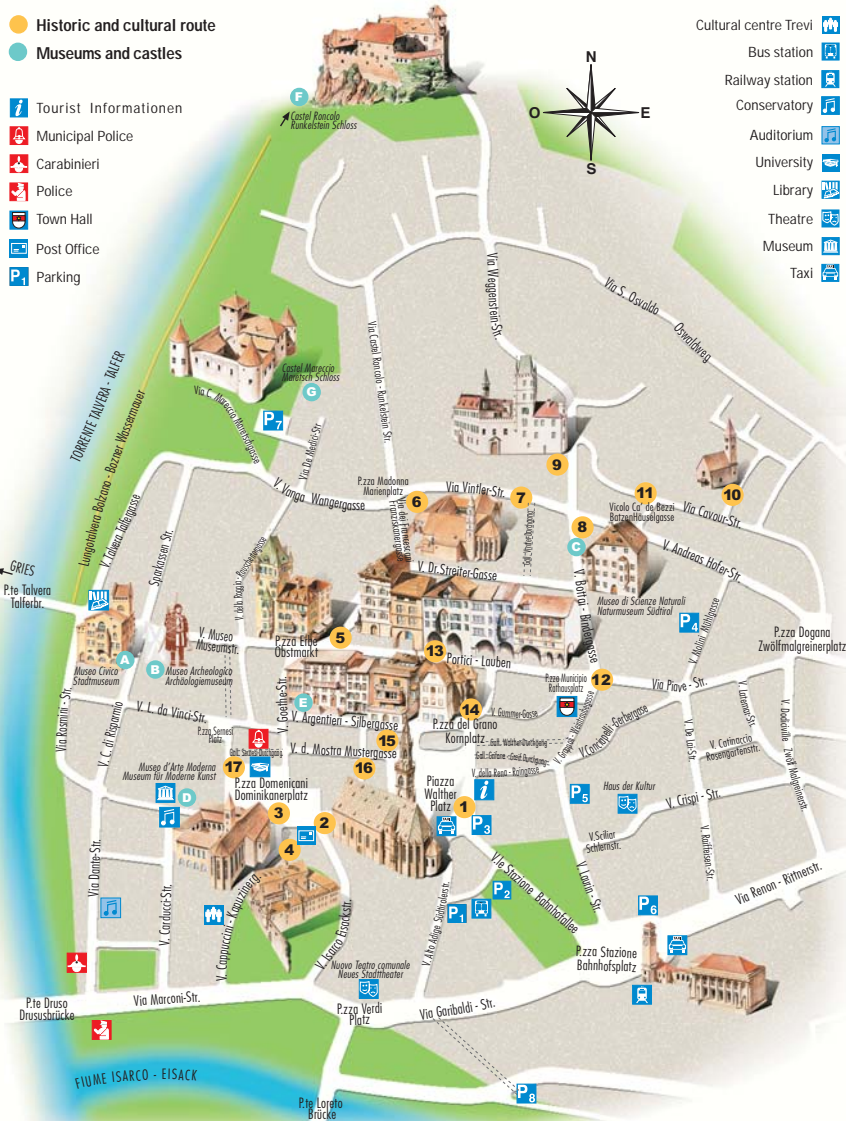
**3** About one hundred metres west of the cathedral in **Piazza dei Domenicani** (Dominican Square) is the site of the Dominican church with old cloister (Mon-Sat 9.45 a.m.-5.30 p.m.). Built around 1270, it was one of the first Gothic buildings in our Province. The chapel of St. John, the chapel of St. Catherine and the cloister are of great artistic importance due to the rich and splendid frescoes of the Gothic School of Padova (first half of the XIV century). In particular, the frescoes found in the Chapel of Saint John can be considered the "jewels" of Gothic picture in Bolzano and South Tyrol. The frescoes by Friedrich Pachler (1496) in the charming cloister are also of particular importance.

**4** A dozen or so metres to the south of the Dominican church is the **Chiesa dei Cappuccini** (Capuchin Church: Mon-Sun 7 a.m. 7p.m.) dedicated to Saint Anthony of Padova, built in 1600 on the ground where Wendelstein Castle, the seat of the counts of Tyrol, once stood. Of particular interest is the Baroque high altar and the altar-piece showing Saints Francis, Anthony and Andrew.

**5** **Via Goethe** begins in the north-east corner of **Piazza Domenicani** and leads to the colourful and lively **Piazza delle Erbe**, where you find the famous fruit market. On the corner with the Arcades of Via dei Portici stands the fountain of Neptune (1745), otherwise known as "Gabelwirt" (inkeeper with a fork), with the bronze statue by G. Mayr from Fie. On the opposite site, on the corner with Via Museo, a plaque marks the place where the old Hotel Sonne, which hosted important people like Goethe, Herder and Emperor Joseph II, used to be.

**Historic and cultural route**  
**Museums and castles**

- Tourist Informationen
- Municipal Police
- Carabinieri
- Police
- Town Hall
- Post Office
- Parking



**6** If we leave Piazza delle Erbe heading north, we find ourselves in **Via dei Francescani** with the homonymous church, cloister and convent (Mon-Sat 10 a.m. - 12 noon / 2.30 p.m. - 6 p.m.). The Gothic buildings date back to the first half of the fourteenth century. Behind the choir gallery, bathed in light streaming through the modern Josef Widmoser glass windows is the wooden altar with doors carved by Hans Klocker (XVI century). This is definitely one of the most famous Gothic works of art preserved in a church at Bolzano. From the left side of the church we can reach the cloister with its three-lobed little arches, built at the beginning of the fourteenth century and decorated with an elaborate series of frescoes from the Gothic school (1330-40). Of particular interest is the chapel of Saint Erardo, which, according to popular belief, was visited by the young Saint Francis and his father.

**7** Leaving Via dei Francescani back to the junction with Piazza delle Erbe, we take the road to the left which is named after **Dr. Joseph Streiter**, formerly a lawyer and mayor of the city around the middle of the nineteenth century. This road runs parallel to the road with the Arcades and it used to be the northern ditch of the old Episcopal village. The buildings on the right belong to the same construction bodies as those on the northern side of the Arcades. Details to note are the fish market's old white marble stands, the two lancet arches, the half-walled large arch of the "Zallingerturm" passage and the northern side of the old town hall (civic building 25).

**8** At the end of Via Dr. Streiter we arrive in **Via dei Bottai** which is one of the most typical streets in the historic centre of Bolzano characterised by its original signs in wrought iron of the numerous artisans' cellars. At the north end we find the **Maximilianhouse**, built in 1512 in the late Gothic style; once it used to be the seat of the administrative offices of Emperor Maximilian I. Now it houses the **Natural History Museum of South Tyrol** (G).

**9** Continuing to the north along Via Weggenstein, we find the Gothic **St. George's Church of Teutonic Order** (Chiesa di San Giorgio dell'Ordine Teutonico) on the left. Inside this church we can see the pulpit and the altar by A. Filippini (end of 17th Century), and a lot of flags by the Teutonic Order on the left wall.

**10** From St. George's Church, we go back to Via Cavour. Turning left after 200m into via San Giovanni, we will find the church **San Giovanni in Villa** (St. John's in Town). This very pretty little church dates back to the 12th Century and it houses precious frescoes of the "Trecento". The church is usually not visitable in the inside.

**11** Closed to the church we find a narrow street called "vicolo Ca' de Bezzi". At the corner with Via Andreas Hofer stands the antique building of the "Ca' De Bezzi" (Batzenhäusl), which was frequented by many famous artists in the past.

**12** At the southern end of Via dei Bottai we arrive at the small square named **Piazza del Municipio** (Town Hall Square), where the Neo-Baroque (1907) Town Hall stands. The square is surrounded by numerous houses with beautiful façades decorated with stucco in the Rococo style.

**13** The renowned **Via dei Portici** with its arcades begins at the western side of Piazza Municipio. This is definitely one of the most visited streets of the town. Not only are the Arcades the heart of commercial life in Bolzano, but they are also regarded as one of the best known shopping centres, thanks to the uninterrupted sequence of elegant, traditional and modern shops with their particularly attractive windows.

Details to note: the facades of the buildings-one of them richly decorated with floral patterned plaster work in the Baroque style and embellished by the characteristic "Erker" (wooden shutters on the wall). We also suggest having a look at the two old chemists, "Alla Madonna" and "Aquila nera" (the former is regarded as a small museum of oils, essences, dyes, infusions and balms) as well as the store of the South Tyrolean Artisans' Cooperative.

**14** Several small passages link the Arcades to the parallel roads, via Dr. Streiter and via Argentieri. One of these is vicolo della Pesa, which leads us into **Piazza del Grano**, where the grain and agricultural market used to be. This is the oldest urban centre of the Episcopal Town, where the castle of the bishops of Trento, which was demolished by Mainardo II of Tyrol in 1277, and Saint Andrew's church demolished in 1785 once stood. On the northern side of the square is one of the most picturesque buildings of the city: the Casa della Pesa (1634). It was the main public weighing-house until 1780.

**15** Via Argentieri begins to the south-west of Piazza del Grano; it used to be the southern ditch that ran along the wall of the old Episcopal village. On the right side is the Baroque structure of the **Mercantile Palace** (G) (1708-1727) with wide steps leading to the entrance. It was formerly the seat of the Merchants' Magistrate (the institute of Claudia de' Medici in 1635) and of the offices of the Chamber of Commerce until 1979. The "House of Trade" has been extensively renovated and is now open to visitors as a museum. Of particular interest to the visitor is the beautiful interior courtyard and two lines of loggia, the monumental staircase and the elegant hall of honour. Slightly further on from the Mercantile Palace, still on the same side of the street, we find the Casa Troilo (circa 1603) with corner pillars and an interior passageway that joins via Argentieri with the Arcades (a stone door with a coat of arms).

**16** Almost directly opposite the Casa Troilo, Vicolo della Parrocchia links Via Argentieri with Via and **Piazza della Mostra**. The latter is the centre's richest street, where throughout the eighteenth century the wealthiest exponents of the city's bourgeoisie have built prestigious palaces such as the **Palazzo Campofranco** (on the south side on the corner of Piazza Walther), the opposite **Palazzo Menz**, which nowadays houses the Banca Intesa BCI and the **Palazzo Pock** on the south side of the square, which formerly housed the most prestigious of the city's hotels (zur Kaiserkrone).

The south-west side of the street is conspicuous due to a short line of Arcades. Where the Fink restaurant now stands was once the seat of the city's judge complete with torture chamber, prison and guard quarters.

**17** From Via della Mostra, following the Sernesi Gallery we reach Via Sernesi. From here we can visit the **Museum for Modern and Contemporary Art "Museion"** (B), or we can go on along via Leonardo Da Vinci and turn right into Via Cassa di Risparmio to reach the **Municipal Museum** (A) and the **Archaeological Museum** (E).

*This is the end of our historical route in the old part of the town; it will be also very interesting to have a short visit to the part of the town called Gries. Incorporated into the city of Bolzano in 1925, Gries was primarily known as a health resort, with many hotels, villas, gardens, parks and vineyards.*