

WELCOME TO THE MUNICIPALITY OF ROVOLON

We have created this site hoping it could be an important reference point for the democratic life end for every productive, social, cultural, musical, turistic and sporting activities of our community.

The site has a simple structure: if you click on a link, an index of subtitles automatically will open; then you can go back to the home page clicking on the higher line.

There's room for everyone in the site, every citizen can advise us and give us new ideas; there's also a page called "FORUM" (short questions and answers) E-mail info@comune.rovolon.pd.it), an open space for every subject for discussion, in which citizens have the possibility to ask personal questions, to which anyone in the world can answer.

E-mail addresses you can connect to are:

info@comune.rovolon.pd.it to ask personal question and to publish them also;

sindaco@comune.rovolon.pd.it to put yourself in contact directly with the mayor or with the members of the council;

segretariocomunale@comune.rovolon.pd.it to communicate personally with the secretary of the municipality.

We hope this initiative will be a means for the citizens to become informed and as an invitation for everyone to visit our municipality not only virtually, but also physically.

Have a good navigation!

Francesco Baldan – Rovolon's Major

Municipality of Rovolon – History and Territory

Municipality of Rovolon – Province of Padua – Region of Veneto - Italy - Europe

Population 4200 – Area: 27,56 square kilometers

Neighboring municipalities: Cervarese S. Croce (PD), Teolo (PD), Vò (PD), Albettonne (VI) Barbarano Vicentino (VI), Mossano (VI), Nanto (VI), Montegaldella (VI).

The territory of the municipality (herein called *Comune*) of Rovolon extends itself partially on a plain and partially in the hills on the northwestern side of the Colli Euganei, situated on the border between the Province of Padua, to which it belongs, and the Province of Vicenza.

Rovolon, the oldest town in the municipality, is located on the hilly portion of the territory with a beautiful position overlooking the nearby plain. At an altitude of 152 meters, it sits on the slopes of two hills, Monte Grande (m.481) and Monte della Madonna (m.526).

Bastia, where the City Hall is situated in the municipality of Rovolon, is located on the same plain as **Carbonara**, which rises at the foot of the western side of Monte della Madonna. Another town is **Lovolo**, on the border with the Province of Vicenza.

From an orthographic point of view, from the South, the western slopes of the larger hills of **Monte della Madonna** and of **Monte Grande** are closely followed by some **smaller hills: Spinazzola, Viale, Sereo and Frassanelle**. In these smaller hills, the villas of the Paduan and Venetian patricians of the Renaissance can be found instead of medieval castles.

The **vegetation** is varied and flourishing: vineyards, cherry trees, groups of conifers, chestnut and hazelnut trees. Scattered a bit everywhere is the ever present false acacia which covers the green gentle slopes.

Owing to the humid climate of the area in the autumn, between the roots of the chestnut trees can be found **edible mushrooms** such as *porcini*, *russole*, *chiodini*, *vesce* including the so called “drum sticks” (*lepiota procera*), mixed in with the strawberries and wild berries that grow prolifically in the undergrowth. In fact, it is the presence of this **fruit-bearing bramble** (*rubus fruticosus*) from which it is thought that the name “Robolone” derived, later becoming “Rovolone” in modern times. However, some claim that the name could have derived from an augmentation of Robur (rovere, quercia).

HISTORICAL EVENTS

The Colli Euganei have an uncommon naturalistic and historical heritage. We do not exactly know how today’s territory of the Comune of Rovolon used to be in ancient times. Possibly the plain was swampy and the hilly part was covered by trees. What we do know is that the first inhabitants of the Colli were probably the **Euganei**, an ancient people that during the Bronze Age (II millennium B.C.) were heavily influenced by the Greeks who, coming from the sea and sailing up the rivers of the region for commercial purposes, introduced them to the use of metals. Around 900 BC the **Veneti** arrived, a populace which, as a legend states, arrived from Asia Minor by sea, where they had allied themselves to the **Trojans** in order to defend the capital of Troy from the siege of the Greeks.

The connection between these Veneti and other populations also called Veneti, scattered all round ancient Europe, is unknown: maybe it was just a generic denomination which meant “conquerors”.

After the conquering and destruction of the city of Troy, the Veneti abandoned their land and, along with the Trojans guided by Antenore, embarked to find shelter in the West. Once arriving there, they united and intermixed with the local population. This gave a new impulse and vitality to the region (from which they then got their name) thanks to their ability of working with any kind of material, like metals, leather, bones and wool, in addition to the commercial trading with the Greeks of agricultural products, cattle breeding (mainly horses) and wool textures through the river ports of Padua, Este and Adria.

The Paleovenetian culture then slowly faded into the Roman world: Polibius narrates that the Veneti were always **Roman** allies. Because of their loyalty, they were rewarded with a pact of no interference for what concerned their internal affairs. Nevertheless, ever since the II century B.C. Veneto gradually entered more and more into the sphere of influence of Rome due to a shrewd combination of alliances and protectorates, also made possible by the construction of a great transportation infrastructure: the highways of Emilia, Postumia, Annia and Popillia, which essentially allowed for the Romans to control the *Pianura Padana*.

In 49 B.C. Rovolon belonged to the *Municipium Patavii*, created by Julius Caesar. Due to the barbarian invasions, in particular by the Huns (452 A.D.), the area suffered its first period of decay. In 569 A.D., the area of the Municipium Patavii was fragmentized and divided by the **Lombard** King Alboino, and as a result the western part was put under the jurisdiction of Vicenza, including Rovolon, which belonged at that time to the ecclesiastical diocese of Padua. A document dated in the year 970 declares states that the bishop of Padua Gauslino made a large donation to the great monastic complex of Santa Giustina, which after the invasion of the **Hungarians**, fell into a condition of severe decline. The act of the donation, among the other goods, included the church built in honor of Saint George in the locality of the committee of Vicenza called Rebolone, along with its land and people. The successors of bishop Gauslino, Orso in 1014, Burcado in 1034, Ulderico in 1064, confirmed this donation and the area of Rovolon remained the property of the powerful abbacy of Santa Giustina until the XVIII century.

The oldest evidence of the Benedictine presence in our municipality is represented by the small church of Saint Peter (XI century), transformed today into a cellar, that today is located in the town of Carbonara.

There is also another hypothesis that states that Rovolon was founded between the VII and the VIII century during the Lombard domination. There are many elements that confirm this: the dedication to Saint George, one of the patrons along with the Archangel Michael of the Lombard kingdom. Also the fact that until the XI century the families of Rovolon still followed the rules of the Lombardian law and also that the noble family “**Da Rovolon**”, extinct in the XII century, belonged to this lineage.

The medievalists sustain that Rovolon was under the jurisdiction of the “**Counts of Padua**”, who also owned the fort called “Castello delle Rocche”, which was located on the road that leads to the Monte della Madonna. Today, only a tower remains. Rovolon then shared the common events of the city of Padua, first governed by the Carraresi, then by Venice.

In the XIV century the **Conti Papafava**, descendants of the noble family “Da Carrara”, received goods in Rovolon.

The Republic of Venice gained control of the territory of Padua in 1405 and retained it until 1797. It faced the problem of the control of its mainland territories in an original way, completely different from the other solutions adopted by other contemporary regional states: the existing laws which regulated the life of every single community remained the same, after being approved, updated and completed where necessary by acts of the Venetian magistracy.

Even the Benedictine presence became more intense in the first decades of the XV century: in 1441 the Abby of Santa Giustina acquired the location called “la Costa”, near Rovolon, and obtained in donation a vast portion of land in the area of “Vegrolongo”, of over 700 Paduan fields, particularly abundant with trees which were then part of the “Carpaneda forrest”, which were difficult to access due to the presence of swamps. A great Benedictine court was built and given to a *gastaldo*, who lived there and was responsible for commerce while the administrative management was of a monk rector who resided in the “Palazzo della Costa”, today called *Villa Ottavia* so named by the succeeding owner. Only in the XVII century were the San Bartolomio and San Leandro farms built, both under the ownership of the *gastaldia of Vegrolongo*.

In 1806, with the Napoleonic suppression of all the goods of the ecclesiastical law, 16690 Paduan fields were evicted from the monastery of Santa Giustina, along with the ones placed in the territory of Rovolon. The Hapsburg occupation followed and lasted until the third Italian war of independence (1866) and ended with the plebiscitary adhesion to the Italy Kingdom of King Vittorio Emanuele II. From that period onwards, the history of today’s Commune of Rovolon, after two world wars, followed the faith of the Italian Republic.

THE INHABITED CENTERS – SOME NOTES FOR THE VISIT

Rovolon, with its many restaurants and *trattorias* (family owned and run restaurants), with views of the Pre-Alps and Monti Berici, is the destination for anyone who desires acquaint themselves the local cuisine. The church of Saint George, which is documented as being built in 1077 but that could have been built in even as early as between the VII and VIII century, dominates over the plain. Particularly interesting are the apsidal frescoes created at the end of the 1400s. To the left of the church there is the “Antica Osteria Fardigo” (or Palazzo Lion) of the XVII century, an elegant building with a façade consisting in architectural elements in stone from Zovon and a small arcade in the interior.

Going down the hill towards Bastia, on the so called “Poggio della Costa”, one can admire the

XV century Villa Ottavia, a large imposing villa with an arcade on the first floor, with a *loggia* of six light columns from which five full scale arcs are formed, built by the monks of Santa Giustina and former residence of the Rector of the great monastic property called *Corte del Vegrolongo*, located on the nearby plain.

The Villa da Rio-Soranzo, today Schiavinato, is from the XVI century. It is a grand building located in a position with a beautiful view overlooking the northern part of the slope. **Bastia** is the town where the city hall of the Commune of Rovolon is located and is the most developed center thanks to its position, and where, as a consequence, most the greatest economic, agricultural and crafts activities take place. It probably got its name from a bastion built by the Paduans and destroyed by the Scaligeri in 1312. It was located on the site of today's piazza next to the church and was surrounded by two streams of the *Fossona*, an antique and grand channel that from the Saint Martino della Vanezza Castle of Cervarese Santa Croce flowed towards Bastia, then continuing with the name of *Fossa Nina* after the junction with the *Bandesà*. Near this bastion, there was a very important road connection to the Riviera Berica with the road that, through the village of Tencarola, ran directly into the heart of the Paduan territory. Even in successive periods, Bastia remained a quite popular station post for chariots traveling between Verona, Vicenza, Padua and the Laguna, surrounded by numerous villas owned by nobles.

The first villa that greets visitors coming from Padua is the Villa dei Conti Papafava, located on a low hill inside the great Parco di Frassanelle, now partly transformed into a prestigious golf course. The building, sober and compact, was built in the beginning of the 1800s on the site of a preexisting settlement. The forest that surrounds it is made up of ash trees (from which the name of the area is taken), cypress, poplar trees, among others. There are natural and artificial caves, a distasteful Neoclassic temple (XVIII century) designed by Giuseppe Jappelli.

Close to Frassanelle, on the slope of the small Colle Sereo (300 mt), that probably got its name from the word *cerrus* (cerro -*Quercus cerrus*), a wonderful construction rises in the greenery: the Villa Barbarigo-Martinengo-Montesi, built in the XVII century. The three level façade on the northern side and the single level one on the southern side, adorned by a fifteenth century *portico*, deserve to be mentioned.

Near the center of the town, on the road that goes to Monte Sereo, there is a farmhouse named "La Colombara", probably built in the XV-XVI centuries. Of particular interest are the elegant brick blind arcs that form a double frame on the highest portion of the tower that used to be the *colombaia* (pigeon houses), the stone basin placed on the external wall next to the entrance door, and the cross vault which dominates the ample hall located on the first floor.

Another villa, today completely rebuilt after a fire, apart from the oratory later added in 1757, is located in Via Ca' Marchesa, on the provincial road that leads to Nanto: Villa Barbaro.

In Lovolo there is the Villa Priuli-Fogazzaro-Maruffa, an elegant building of the end of the 1600s, with an interesting façade with an arc at the entrance and two rows of overlapping porticos. It is surrounded by a beautiful park and other rural buildings, one of which is the well-known "colombaia". Annexed to the villa is the imaginative church dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, that hosts inside a precious marble altar with an antique and venerated image of the Madonna. In a document dated 1777, it is stated that religious ceremonies by the Benedictines took place here under the parish of **Carbonara**, sustained by the religious of Praglia.

This fraction of Rovolon takes its name from *carbonarius*, a medieval term linked to the production of wood and coal. In fact, ever since the middle ages it was inhabited by woodmen and merchants of wood and coal. Along the path to the Monte della Madonna there still can be seen coal areas, traceable by the presence of leaning turnouts dug from the slope and the dark color of the terrain caused by the combustion.

The new parish church, originally built as a humble “villa” in the X century (until the Napoleonic age it remained under the jurisdiction of the Benedictines of the nearby Abby of Praglia - now the Commune of Teolo), then rebuilt at the end of the 1400s was the site of the antique church dedicated to San Giovanni Battista. In the end of the 1700s, the Benedictines possessed over 800 fields that were under the antique Corte de Spiràn, located on the western side of the Monte della Madonna, along today’s Via Manzoni. At one time at the Corte de Spiràn, there was a cemetery and a church dedicated to the Santa Maria Immacolata, In the cellars one can observe many imposing arc vaults.

Even the former rural church of *San Pietro*, of the XI century, which stands on the cultivated plain on the northwestern side of the Monte della Madonna, was built by the Benedictines and has been a point of reference, not only for religious reasons, but also for the people that lived in these hills. Now the antique church is part of our rustic heritage. At the end of the last century and in the 50s and 60s, prehistoric material was found on the surface in the vicinity of the church., generically dateable to the middle Paleolithic period (before the 35th millennium B.C.).

(Traslation edited by Giovanni Lazzaro end Patricia Sours)