

ISEO



Among the coastal villages of the lake, Iseo is the one which has better preserved its original medieval urban structure, even if some changes took place between the XV and XVIII centuries.

The origins of the village are very old: its coast was inhabited since prehistoric times as stated by archaeological remains dating back to the Bronze Age (XIII century BC) found in 1999-2000 along Via per Rovato.

The name Iseo seems to come from the Goddess Isis worshipped during the Roman period; the favourable natural conditions allowed the settlement of a *vicus* as stated by the finding of a floor of a *domus* or *villa* dating back to the I century BC.

The importance of Iseo increased during the early medieval period thanks to its Pieve (parish church), harbour-market and castle which made it the most important village of the lake area.

The first reference to a castle situated in Iseo is in the Polittico di S. Giulia, a document dating back to the end of the IX or beginning of the X century; as a matter of fact the list of the properties belonging to the monastery of Brescia, founded by Desiderio, King of the Lombards, mentions the presence of a court and a vineyard in the castle.

Only some centuries later, during the late medieval period, the castle, which is situated on a rock on the south side of the historical centre, became the most important building as regards the defensive questions of the village.

Iseo was surrounded by several walls: the oldest one was probably built around the hill on which there were the castle and the church of S. Stefano (today Madonna della Neve). Later two more circles of walls were added before the final one of the beginning of the XIV century: this circle of walls also included the church which was previously outside the village limits. There were three gates leading inside the village: the Porta del Campo in Via per Rovato, the Porta delle Mirolte, towards the mountain, and the Porta del Porciolo along the coastal road leading to Valle Camonica.

Between the XII and the XIV centuries Iseo was involved, together with the Commune of Brescia, in the disputes between the emperor and the pope which took also to some dramatic events, as the siege and the sack of the 28th July 1161 by the army of Federico Barbarossa (Frederick I Redbeard).

Anyway Iseo kept a high level of prosperity which allowed the flowering of religious and residential buildings, such as the churches of S. Andrea and S. Silvestro or the stone houses situated along via Sombrico and del Campo.

In the meantime several representatives of the local aristocracy increased their importance: among them the most powerful and important family was the Ghibelline one of *Da Iseo/Oldofredi*, who in alliance with the family Federici of Valle Camonica, kept a political and economical control both on the village and part of the lake and Franciacorta territories for centuries.

In 1454 Venice enlarged its control on the provinces of Brescia and Bergamo, which became part of the Venice Republic for about three and a half centuries. The village renovated its buildings inside the XIV century walls, above all the ones around today's Piazza Garibaldi, and slowly enlarged its territory covering the coastal area.

During the years between 1820 and 1860 Iseo underwent a great economical growth: silk mills, factories and tanneries were built along the lake coast so to use the water both for the manufacture and transport of the goods. The port was enlarged and it became another source of prosperity for Iseo together with the market which was kept twice a week.

The medieval gates were demolished in 1840 when architect Rodolfo Vantini built the new Palazzo dei Grani (today's Town Hall) and renovated the interior of the Parish Church of S. Andrea changing it completely. The railway Brescia-Iseo was built at the end of the XIX

century: it was connected to the port (today's Viale della Repubblica) following up the demolition of the medieval houses of the Contrada del Campo. After the World War II Iseo has become the main economical centre of the lower part of the lake thanks to tourism.

ISEO'S WONDERS



OLDOFREDI CASTLE

This fortified complex is one of the best preserved examples of lower medieval military architecture in the province of Brescia . The Castle has traditionally been called Oldofredi because of the presence in Iseo of this ancient Ghibelline family supportive of the Visconti and the Scaligeri and archenemies of the Venetian Republic.

A history of the building

The oldest part of the building is made up of a large tower near the southern wing whose ruins can be seen on the first floor of the present Local Library. This imposing structure has a square base measuring about 10 metres, is 12 metres high and its walls are 2 metres thick. It was a *keep* , an isolated building inside the defensive perimeter of which nowadays we do not have any ruins left. Its formal characteristics let us date it back to the end of the XI and the beginning of the XII centuries.

XIII-XIV century

During the XIII and XIV centuries a new rectangular castle measuring 47 by 28 metres was built on the former fortified building of which the *keep* is the only preserved remain. It was built directly on the rocky ground with rectilinear ramparts, defended on the four corners by screened towers with quadrangular crossbars on an inclined base. The Castle was surrounded by a deep moat which had been dug out of the solid rock, part of which is today visible from the southern and western sides when you pass through the two pointed arch entrances. On their keystones you can see the coat of arms of Della Scala, a powerful family from Verona, who in the first decades of the XIV century controlled the area of Brescia and who had close political relations with the Oldofredi and the town of Iseo. These structural

characteristics and its isolated position make this fortified building a real *stronghold* with explicit war functions, conceived as a strategic point for the defence of the territory and military control of the urban population.

XV-XIX century

When the political control of Venice became stronger, the Castle of Iseo lost its military importance and was bought by the family Celeri. Towards the end of the XVI century its upkeep was so expensive even for this noble family that the citizens of Iseo asked the Senate of the Republic of Venice to give it to the Capuchin Friars of S. Francis. In 1585 the Castle was changed into a monastery. Of this new building we can admire the three-floored body with *portico* (porch) and *loggia* (gallery) situated on the south side of the courtyard (dated half XVII century) and the Church of S. Marco (started probably around half XVII century and consecrated in 1629) which is used today as town hall.

The frescoes which decorate some walls of the building date back to the XVII-XVIII centuries. Among them there are: the *Annunciation* on the entrance hall, a large *Crucifix* in the courtyard, a *Madonna della Misericordia* on the south-east side and *S. Fedele of Sigmaringen with Angels*.

In 1797, following up the Napoleonic edicts that confiscated the properties of religious institutions, the friars were compelled to leave the monastery. Later on the Castle became a private property and changed into a block of flats (still nowadays some flats on the north and west sides are inhabited) and a spinning mill was built next to the southern rampart of the stronghold.

The building was bought by the Municipality of Iseo in the 1960s and restorations works have started since then.



THE HOLY AREA OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF S. ANDREA

Set on the northernmost side of the old town, the area of the Parish Church is nowadays one of the most interesting historical points. Around the church square, which is crossed diagonally by the old street leading to the *Porta del Porciolo* and then to the lake, there are the *Parish Church of S. Andrea*, the *Church of S. Giovanni* and the small *Church of S. Silvestro*.

Parish Church of S Andrea

According to an old tradition, this church was founded in the second half of the VI century by S. Vigilio, Archbishop of Brescia, on the area of a roman settlement. During the VIII and XIX centuries it became a Parish Church. The impressive central *Bell-tower* in cluniac style was added at half XII century on the existing façade. The Bell-tower, which is sided by two wings, has in its interior, on the first floor, an oratory with cells enriched by double-lancet windows and niches.

On the right hand side of the Bell-tower, in a niche, there is the tomb of Giacomo da Iseo, the Ghibelline man-at-arms founder of the Oldofredi family.

The Parish church was enlarged and restored many times. The present building is due to Rodolfo Vantini, who, between 1826 and 1840, changed completely the interior into Neoclassical style.

The interior has a central nave and two lateral aisles and houses “S. Bernardino da Siena” by Grazio Cossali, a canvas dated back to 1500, “Il pianto di S. Pietro” by Giuseppe Diotti (1779-1846) and “S. Michele Arcangelo” a wonderful painting by Francesco Hayez (1791-1882).

Church of S. Giovanni

This XVIII-century building was built on the site of a former medieval baptistery of which only three Romanesque tiles are visible on the façade.

The interior has a single nave, a barrel vault and a deep presbytery.

Church of S. Silvestro

Built during the XIII century as a chapel for the archbishop, this church has kept its original architecture in the northern wall containing single-lancet windows and vertical pilasters, and in the semicircular apse decorated with small elegant blind arches.

It became the seat of the *Disciplina della Santissima Croce* in the XV century. During the XVII and XVIII centuries this church was elevated and a two-storey building was added next to its south wall to be used by the confraternity of the Disciplini.

In the interior, along the apse wall, there are some remains of frescoes dating back to the XV century and in the lower part an interesting example of “*dance of Death*”.



PIAZZA GARIBALDI

The square has been the seat of an important market, which today takes place on Tuesday and Friday, since ancient times. Even if it has been restored many times during the centuries, it has always maintained its original functions: to exchange goods and to be a place suitable for social meetings. In the Middle Ages there was a “Broletto” with a tall tower, the seat of the main authorities of the Commune.

To the west there is the old “casa dei Palatini”, so called because of its frescoes representing ancient captains, knights and heroes of the literary tradition (above all from the *Chanson de Roland*), which today are only partially preserved on two walls.

At the beginning of Via Mirolte, opposite the tower (XIII century) belonging in the past to the family Pontoglio, there is the small Church of S. Maria del Mercato (XIV century). The church was built by the family Oldofredi, who asked the friars of the convent of S. Francesco in Iseo to celebrate the Mass for the population here. In the

interior there are frescoes dating back from the XIV to the XVIII centuries. During the period in which Iseo was controlled by the Venetians (XVII-XVIII centuries), remarkable buildings with porches supported by columns in stone of Sarnico (a type of local sandstone) were built around the square.

The “Palazzo dei Grani” was built in 1833 on the side of the square towards the lake, according to a project of Architect Rodolfo Vantini, which required the demolition of the existing old houses, shops and warehouses. The new building housed the Stock Exchange of wheat and grain until 1952 when it became the Town Hall, a larger building which includes the former Church of S. Rocco, a church of the XVI century which rose on the corner with Piazza Statuto.

In the centre of the square there is the first monument in Italy dedicated to Giuseppe Garibaldi: it was made in 1883 by Pietro Bordini and it was the first time that the leader war represented in a standing position instead of riding a horse.

CONVENTO DI SAN FRANCESCO D'ASSISI

According to the tradition, the founder of the convent was S. Francis of Assisi himself who, while coming back from Egypt, stopped in Iseo and here he accepted a house built in an insalubrious area near the lake situated north of the village as a gift. He turned the house into a small church and in the centuries a convent dedicated to Santa Maria degli Angeli and called della Madonna Nuova was built around it.

According to the tradition also S. Antonio of Padua spent some time in the convent. This monastery is mentioned in some documents of the XIV century and the family Oldofredi asked the friars of the convent to say Mass for the population in the small elegant church of the Madonna del Mercato. During the XV century it was often abandoned probably because of the bad and unhealthy conditions of the area which caused serious diseases, about which the Commune sent its complaints to the Doge Francesco Foscari asking for the arrival of *Padri Osservanti* (Observants) instead of the friars.

This request was accepted in 1465 by Francesco della Rovere, the future Pope Sisto IV, who allowed Amedeo Mendez de Silva and his followers to settle in the convent. Under his leadership the monastery was restored and was named after S. Francis. In 1510 for order of Pope Pio V the two groups of friars joined together and the monastery was abandoned once more until 1569, when the Observants settled again in the convent until its suppression by the Venetians in 1771. The friars returned in 1798 but they were definitely compelled to leave the convent when Napoleon arrived. In 1841 the complex was turned

into a hospital, as it is today. The restoration works that followed changed greatly its original aspect.

A remarkable cloister with frescoes of the XV, XVI and XVII centuries is still visible in the part facing the lake as well as a church with a wood painted ceiling of the XVII century representing

S. Francis on a fire cart.

BUCA DEL QUAI AND STRONGHOLD OF S. GEORGE

The Būs del Quai (the hole of the den) is a wide cave situated on the right side of Mount Punta dell'Orto, near the small village of Covelo.

The cave is connected through underground passages to the karstic area of Piane di S. Martino and, when it rains heavily, a large quantity of water comes out of it.

This cave is very important from the historical and archaeological points of view because of the clay and metal objects of prehistoric and Gallic origin which were found here during the XIX and XX centuries. Other objects, also found here, dating back to the Middle Ages show how this place was chosen as a settling site during the different historical periods.

The oldest remains (middle bronze age, XV-XIV centuries BC) found under big stones fallen from the upper part of the cave, are fragments of unrefined clay bowls and a pin in bronze, probably linked to propitiatory rites for the water. In Roman times at the foot of the mountain there was probably an aqueduct leading the water from the springs situated in Covelo to the area of today's Parish Church in Iseo.

Near the entrance of the cave there are some parts of walls and some holes which probably were the fixing places of wood beams which suggest the presence of structures built to exploit the water power in medieval times. Other holes are situated at the top left of the entrance and they probably were suspended human settlements built there for safety or defence.

The cave has always aroused fears in the local inhabitants so that the Capuchin friar Fulgenzio Rinaldi in 1685 invited his contemporaries not to enter it.

On the top of the rock wall above the cave (Bosine), Giacomo Oldofredi ordered to build a castle which was meant to control the road leading to Val Trompia and the military movements around the area. That was the stronghold of S. Giorgio della Corna.

The building of this modest castle, set in a panoramic position, is mentioned on the tomb of the feudal lord (who died in 1325) situated on the façade of the Parish Church.

The inscription reports that the original name of this “stronghold of Bosine” was “Castle of the Crucifix” because of the presence of a nearby church and a graveyard. The place-name was then changed into S. Giorgio because the place was dedicated to this warrior saint, who was also the protector of the family Oldofredi. To confirm this dedication inside the church there were an altar dedicated to S. George and a wall painting representing him. The castle was already ruined during the XVII century and today only some remains are visible.



CONTRADA DEL CAMPO

Before some houses of this district were demolished to let the railway pass and get to the port, the *Contrada del Campo* spread from the final part of the medieval walls, which here reached the lake, to the present Piazza Garibaldi.

There was a tower where now there is Vicolo Millefiori and a gate, *Porta di Campo*, from which the southern road started. The gate was demolished in 1849 and instead of it a marble wainscot was added to the basement of the buildings which supported the gate. The internal lanes keep their medieval characteristics with stone portals and openings. Remarkable remains of the old walls are visible along vicolo Millefiori while the XIII century tower is included in the building on the corner between vicolo Zuccoli and via Campo.

During the Middle Ages this district was known as “delle Fornaci” (of the kiln) because of the numerous kilns that here had their workshops and which represented the most flourishing activity of Iseo. The kilns were built along the lanes leading to the lake, while the shops were set along the main street. Evidences of the houses of the potters and their kilns are visible in the lanes Porto Oldofredi, delle Stalle, Zuccoli, delle Scodelle, Porto Cappuccini and in the house which was situated in Piazzolo Rampinelli, an open space in front of Casa Nulli that in that period was part of this district.

During the first half of the XV century this district housed a group of Jews. During the plague of the XVII century the Lazzaretto (lazaretto) was situated in one of the lanes; the plague-stricken people who were unable to find a place in the Lazaretto were hosted in some huts built in the ditch outside the walls of the village. The exact position of this ditch, called “Fossa del Morotto”, hasn’t been identified yet.



PIAZZA STATUTO AND ARSENALE

Piazza Statuto, situated between Piazza Garibaldi and Via Sombrico, was, during the Middle Ages, an important and elegant meeting point, centre of the political and economical life of Iseo.

The winding via Sombrico follows the former course of the stream Cortelo, which, before being diverted into the present course, flowed into the lake in this place. Along this street there were also the old walls that from Piazzolo, between the present Via Pieve and Via Cerca, limited the village to the north.

Outside this line of walls there were some modest wooden buildings, lately reconstructed in stones and bricks. The urban development towards the north side of the village was included in the walls about the year 1000 with a first enlargement of the defensive perimeter along via Cavalli and a further one effected by the Oldofredi at the beginning of the XIV century.

In Piazza Statuto there were two palaces belonging to the Oldofredi, who for centuries were the most important family in Iseo: the Palazzo della Quadra and the Arsenale. The Palazzo della Quadra, probably dating back to the XIII century, was renewed and decorated during the XV century. The face towards the street dates back to the late XVI century. Inside there is a wooden ceiling with painted coats of arms and human heads. The building has an internal courtyard and it was the seat of the government of the Quadra (district) during the Venetian Republic and it housed the Town Hall at the beginning of the XIX century, while the present seat of the municipality of Iseo was being built.

The palace of the Arsenale is situated at the beginning of Via Sombrico. It was built around the XIII century as a commercial building: some portals set close one to the other opening on via Sombrico and having the same jamb are evidence of the presence of a commercial warehouse connected to the lake. Quite certainly it belonged to the family Oldofredi and during the XIV and XV centuries it was restored and the upper floors were turned into a residential house. The ground floor housed the local military troops and this is the reason for which it was named Arsenale. In 1619 it became a property of the municipality and it was turned into a warehouse. Between the XVIII and XIX centuries it was abandoned and after the Restoration it was used as a prison until 1980. The name of the lane north of the building, “vicolo della malinconia” (lane of melancholy), where the cells of the prison were situated reminds this function.

The restoration works which took place during the 80s have given the building its original aspect and also show the later changes it underwent in the centuries. The porch with round arches of the XIV century and the upper wooden open gallery are particularly interesting. Today the building houses cultural events and exhibitions.

On the corner between Piazza Statuto and Piazza Garibaldi there was the Church of S. Rocco dating back to the XVI century. It was demolished during the XX century to enlarge the present seat of the Town Hall (Palazzo Vantini).

Between Via Sombrico and the Holy area of the Parish Church of S. Andrea there is a well preserved medieval district with its lanes, vaults and stone buildings.



PORTO GABRIELE ROSA

In ancient times the port was a deep inlet near the Market square. The present shape of this square is due to the continuous occupation of an area previously covered by water in order to build houses. Both houses and the tourist port were built during the XIX century .

The narrow passage linking the port to piazza Garibaldi was called “*vicolo della Galea*” to remember the large Venetian ships that sailed

on the lake and stopped in the medieval piers. The vicolo della Galea divided today's Palazzo Vantini from a palace built on the site of the "Torrazzo" belonging to the family Oldofredi which had been built to protect the port, as reported by Fulgenzio Rinaldi in his *Monumenti Historiali dell'antico e nobile castello di Iseo*, published in 1685.

The port has always been the second centre of the economy of Iseo after the market square as regards the exchange of goods and people with Valle Camonica. The importance of lake navigation was increased when, between the XIX and XX centuries, a railway which reached the lake was built to help load and unload the goods.

The port and the square are dedicated to an important citizen of Iseo, Gabriele Rosa (1812-1897), a patriot, a journalist and a historian. The monument dedicated to him was made by Ettore Ferrari and inaugurated in 1912. In 1995 it was restored by the sculptor Kalari because it had been mutilated due to vandalism in 1991. The bust of the local patriot is set on a pedestal in the middle of a green bed of flowers and has bas-reliefs representing Liberty, Faith, Determination and Education. The writing on the base reminds the three years that Gabriele Rosa passed in the famous prison of Spielberg because of his revolutionary ideas during the Austrian rule.

THE EARLY MEDIEVAL NECROPOLIS OF BREDA

In 1981 in the area that maintains the medieval place-name "breda" eleven east-west oriented burial sites of different types were discovered.

The tombs made of scraps (stone slabs, fragments of roof tiles and pebbles) showed a quick workmanship: two tombs follow the traditional roman style (a cappuccina), while five more are made according to the "a cassa" style, that is limited by low walls bound with mortar or soil. Four more are built according to the shape of the body (they are larger at the shoulder level) and are covered with rough stone slabs in *medolo* (a type of local stone). The bodies, all belonging to adults, lay on their backs and had their heads to the west. The object found both in and out of the tombs have allowed historians to date them back to the VI-VII centuries AD. In particular there was an iron buckle of elliptic shape quite common in that period. The necropolis of Breda is the only surviving graveyard of the numerous ones set around Iseo in the early Middle Ages. The others were situated near the Parish Church of S. Andrea, along the roads leading

to the mountain, Via Cavone and Via Bonomelli, in Via Roma out of the medieval gate of Mirolte.



PILZONE

Pilzone is situated South-West of the stream Vaglio on the north side of Mount Punta dell'Orto. It is a hamlet of Iseo and it has its own Parish Church even if originally it belonged to the Church of Iseo. It was a Commune in 1280 and in the XIV century it was also included in the bishop properties. Probably it was one of the courts of the Oldofredi, the family that for long times controlled Iseo. Later Pilzone passed to the feud of the family Fenaroli, who possessed plots of lands and a beautiful house of the XVII century in the area. The house, in Venetian style, has a portal with rusticated ashlar in stone of Sarnico (a type of sandstone) and a small tower with a moulding. Apart from the Fenaroli other families, such as Borrelli and Buffoli, lived here in the XVII century. From the administrative point of view Pilzone belonged to the district of Iseo and it was a self-governing municipality until 1928.

The historical centre is rather compact, with lanes running up the mountain slopes; most buildings are rural, but there are also some elegant residential houses with their openings framed in stone of Sarnico.

The Romanesque church of S. Tommaso is situated at the northern limit of the village: it was first mentioned in the XV century and it has been restored many times since the XVII century. The route of the Via Valeriana, a road along the lake leading to Pisogne and Valle Camonica passing through Croce di Zone, starts from the small square of S. Tommaso.

When the church of S. Tommaso was too small to contain the local people, the parish Church was moved to a lower position along the coastal road of the lake where there was another church dedicated to S. Peter, probably of Cluniac origin. The new Parish Church has been restored many times since the XVI century and today it is dedicated to Madonna Assunta and the saints Peter and Paul. In the upper part of the village there is a path which, through a steep valley, leads to a small plateau where there is a rural complex including the small

church of S. Fermo (XVII century). The tower bell of this church is characteristic because it is on the edge of a steep rocky wall separated from the other buildings and it is visible from the lake.

Opposite the village, towards the lake there is Montecolo; a document of the X century reports the presence of a stronghold which was built on a low hill in Pilzone, sold by the bishop of Cremona to the son of Earl Teutaldo, who already owned the northern side of the hill. On the south-west side of the hill there are some quarries of hydraulic lime, called "Calce di Palazzolo", which were highly exploited since the XIX century but that today are no more working.

At Covelo, half way between Iseo and Pilzone, lies the small peninsula of Montecolino, which was chosen at the beginning of the XX century as a base of a school for seaplanes until the end of the World War I..

Closed at the end of 1918, it was opened again in 1930 as a test site for the seaplane Caproni 97: Caproni had here a factory for the production of seaplanes until 1943 and used the lake area facing it as a test site for small submarines and for the training of their crews.. These small submarines, turned into means of attack, were part of a project meant at attacking New York and the port of Freetown in Sierra Leone, where the English navy had some of its ships. The project was abandoned after the armistice of 1943. The submarines were kept at Montecolino until the end of the war and the factory became the seat of the Officina Meccanica di Precisione of the Decima MAS.

Along the road of the lake there are also two remarkable buildings: the first one is the former Casa Negrinelli (XIX century) where the first Italian flag of the Risorgimento waved in 1848; the second is the complex in Liberty style of the hotel "Araba Fenice" which gave hospitality to the famous English statesman Winston Churchill in 1944.



CLUSANE

Clusane, whose place-name could come from Clodius or from Chiusa, can be defined as one of the oldest settlements of the lake thanks to

its favourable position: as a matter of fact there are evidences of lake dwellings as well as Roman, Lombard and Cluniac sites.

The natural environment with its ponds and reeds represented a rich ecosystem which let the primitive settlers have a various diet thanks to hunting, fishing and vegetable growing since the Palaeolithic, as the finding of arrow barbs and other archaeological remains have stated.

The name Clusane is quoted on thirteen Roman stones, of which the one dedicated to Jupiter now kept at Museo Maffeiano in Verona is particularly interesting. The remains of a Roman villa are still visible along the Lungolago where, on a stone wall there is a semicircular niche sided by a series of small blind arches. The pots found during some archaeological excavations have been dated back to the I-II centuries AD.

During the Lombard period the fishing reserves of the monastery of S. Giulia of Brescia were situated in this area

In 1093 some Lombard nobles gave the chapel dedicated to the SS. Gervasio and Protasio situated in the castle of "Clixiano" to the Benedictine monastery of Cluny as a gift. The French monks settled in the old castrum on the hill where today there is the old church and there they founded a priory. Probably they started the drainage of this wet area and gathered farmers and fishermen around their small monastery. The Vicinia and the Commune of the following centuries probably developed from those small communities.

The village grew around the old castrum which included the church and a small group of houses. A residential castle (named Carmagnola) was built by the Ysei family on the west side of the hill outside the fortified area during the XIV century. There was also a small harbour surrounded by the houses of the fishermen facing the lake.

The Catastico by Giovanni da Lezze (1610) reports the presence of a castle surrounded by walls and with a drawbridge, some beautiful houses belonging to the noble families Sali, Maggi and Coradelli from Brescia and two mills situated near the lake. The inhabitants of Clusane were mostly fishermen up to the end of the XIX century and the factory of the spinning mill Pirola was open only in 1906 to employ women.

Clusane was autonomous until 1927 and now it belongs to the municipality of Iseo. The shape of the village changed completely at the beginning of the XX century when the road leading from Iseo to Paratico was built and when the fishermen changed their former activity and became restaurateurs. This change was due to their ability to cook the lake fish, in particular tenches .

Many houses were built along the main road and up the hill where most restaurants are situated. Near the lake there are many evidences of the long and important activity of the fishermen as well as their instruments: in particular the *furù*, the harpoon, here used as a fishing spear. Other interesting ways of fishing developed in this part of the lake such as “i légner”, “le fascine”, “le pescaie”, il “rét”, which today are no more used. Various types of fishpots are still visible today among which the typical bertavelli and tamburelli, as well as the *paròla*, one of the three huge pots in which fishing nets were dyed using chestnut peels. The lake area situated in front of the village is called “Foppa di Clusane” and it is a place suitable for tenches, fish living in shallow waters. When the first fishermen started baking it, stuffed with bread and served with polenta, it was immediately successful and Clusane became “the village of the baked tench”.

CARMAGNOLA CASTLE

The castle of Clusane rises on a small hill west of the old centre of the village and dominates the southern side of the lake. It is a big and massive fortified building, with a squared plan and a central court; around the walls there is a deep defensive ditch and some characteristic arched bridges which cross it.

There were two entrances: one on the east and one on the west side where there was a drawbridge and small outpost towers which today have completely disappeared. There are only a few documents regarding the origin of this “*palace-castle*”: the first structure was due to the Ysei (Oldofredi), the feudal lords of the area, who built it during the XIV century probably inside an early-medieval fortified castrum of the XI century belonging to the Lombard family Mozzi. The documents state that in 1412 its property passed to the Malatesta and then in 1427 to the Republic of Venice following up the forfeit of the estates of the Oldofredi. The following year the castle was given to Francesco di Bussone, named Carmagnola, as a present for his service as chieftain of the army. The great leader became the lord of the castle for only four years because in 1432 he was executed in Piazza San Marco in Venice for treachery and his estates were sold.

The castle of Clusane was then bought by the noble family Sala of Brescia: they immediately started renovating it and changed it into a renaissance residence. A small open gallery with fourteen arches supported by stone columns was added on the east face and a decoration was frescoed on the wall just under the roof. There is no

more evidence of a coat of arms in stone of the family Sala mentioned in some documents of the XIX century.

Some renovating changes dating back to the XVI century are visible in the internal court which also has a well, a porch and an open gallery. The castle was later divided among various families. In 1641 the families Soncini, Maggi, Coradelli and Lana were the owners of the castle. Each family changed its part of the building according to its own necessities so that it lost its main military features.

CLUSANE, HISTORICAL CENTRE

Via della Chiesa Vecchia, Via Molino, Via Castello and Via Ponta surround the original site of Clusane. The first historical document regarding Clusane is a deed of gift of the Lombard brothers Aliprandus and Albertus Mozzi to the monastery of Cluny; the document, dated 12th July 1093 is about a chapel “*quae edificata est in castro de loco Clixano et est consecrata in honore Sanctorum Gervasii et Protasii*” (built in the fortified site of Clixano and dedicated to SS. Gervasio and Protasio) and of all the houses and annexes of the above mentioned “portion” of property.

There are many evidences of the old castrum in this part of the village: a stone arch situated in Via della Chiesa Vecchia to protect the highest part of the settlement, and a gate with an outer door in Via Molino where there are some remains of walls and bases of medieval houses. In 1144 the church of “S. Gervasii de Clusanis” is mentioned because of the duties it paid to the Parish Church of Iseo while in 1275, due to some difficulties of management, the Cluniac priory “Cluzanum de Clusanis di Clusanis” passed to the near monastery of Provaglio. In the XIV century there was a Parish church mentioned in the list of the churches dated 1410. In the XVI century the rector of the Parish church was Lancellotto Sala of the feudal family of the castle Carmagnola. In 1517 Orlandino Sala made his heirs build a new church dedicated to S. Rocco in the area of the “Ponta” with a nearby house for the priest who had to celebrate a daily Mass for his own soul and the ones of his heirs. The old parish church changed with the passing of the years: it was enlarged up to the end of the XIX century when the two lateral aisles were added. The church was definitely abandoned in 1835 when the new church

dedicated to Cristo Re was completed. The old church has been completely restored and today it is a public hall.

In Via Molino, just outside the walls, there are the villa Mondella of the XVII century and the villa Baroni of the XVIII century. The modern mill situated in this street was closed in the '90s as happened for the old ones dating back to the XVII century which probably were situated in the same place. Along the Lungolago there are remains of arches dating back to the Roman times and bases of medieval houses.

CREMIGNANE

Cremignane is a small hamlet situated about 3 km south-west of Iseo and belongs to the same municipality. The hill on which it is situated is an example of an ancient conglomerate of fluvial origin smoothed and carved by the glacier of the Quaternary period.

The name Cremignane comes from Grémegn o greben, which means either a very wet area or a dry and sterile land. The place-name suggests that this area must have been woody and swampy, so to be considered a fishing and game preserve during the Middle Ages.

During the Early Middle Ages it was inhabited by a small community and a document dated 790 reports the name of a rebel monk, Ardosino, who came from Cremignane.

In the XI century the Cluniac monks founded a priory here which depended directly on the Pope: as a matter of fact in the censorial book of the Roman Church edited at the beginning of the XIII century by Cardinal Cencio Savelli, the future Pope Onorio III, the Church of S. Pietro of Cremignane is mentioned as one the churches of the area of Brescia as directly depending on the Holy See. From the ecclesiastical point of view it depended on the Parish Church of Iseo which appointed its priests. When the priory lost its importance during the XII century, the properties of the church passed to the Parish Church of Iseo and later to the family Coradelli who built a castle, of which we do not have any remains today, next to the church.

The church is also known as S. Pietro della Lama (*swamp*) because of its position close to the peat bog and the swamp. According to Father Fulgenzio Rinaldi's *Monimenti Historiali dell'antico e nobile castello di Iseo* (1685), at the beginning the church was simply a small chapel built in the same period as the church of S. Andrea in Iseo (early VI century).

A further and larger religious building was probably built between the XV and XVI century. Father Fulgenzio Rinaldi reported that around the altar there was a fresco representing the *Last Supper*

commissioned by Bartolino di Pietro de Stefanina in 1512 and that another fresco decorated the church, a *Madonna di S. Luca* commissioned by Berardo di Facino delle Donne in 1574. He also reported that between 1584 and 1627 the church was also used as a graveyard for the inhabitants of the local community. As reported in a memorial tablet the present church was built in 1750 on an area belonging to the Parish Church of Iseo. The altarpiece is dated 1729 and signed by Antonio Paglia and it represents *The Virgin Mary with the Child and S. Peter (Madonna col Bambino e S. Pietro)*. The church was decorated in the XIX century with stuccoes and frescoes by Teosa (*Our Lady of the Assumption* on the vault of the presbytery) and by Santo Cattaneo (*SS. Andrew Apostle, John the Baptist, Francis of Assisi and James Apostle* in the corbels of the vault). It was enlarged at the beginning of the XX century and the vault of the nave was decorated with a fresco representing *The miraculous catch of fish* by Pietro Servalli, a pupil of Loverini coming from Bergamo. The decoration was completed by Pietro Muzio Compagnoni and his son in 1945. The church was consecrated in 1963.