



European  
Route  
of Industrial  
Heritage



www.erih.net

Cultural route  
of the Council of Europe  
Itinéraire culturel  
du Conseil de l'Europe



## ERIH Italy Newsletter

May 2021 No. 3

### 5th Annual Meeting of ERIH Italy

## AFTER THE LOCKDOWN: NEW IDEAS FOR INDUSTRIAL TOURISM IN ITALY

28 May 2021

In the hope that in the coming weeks we can leave behind us a period of forced inactivity, the 5th ERIH Italian Meeting was held on 28 May 2021, dedicated to a day of reflection on possible initiatives for the reopening of sites and museums of our network. To this end, three opening papers were presented by three tour operators specialized in the industrial sector: Alexandra ALVES representing *Turismo Industrial de S. João da Madeira*, Josep Maria PEY CAZORLA representing *El Generador* and Francesco ANTONIOL representing *Tratto Punto*.

The three operators, who offer consulting, production and management services for tourism and cultural projects, with particular reference to industrial heritage, illustrated their products and the experiences they have conducted in recent years for the promotion of industrial tourism. In particular, Alexandra ALVES presented an original project, called "Industrial Tourism", which through proposals for integrated visits to industrial heritage sites and industrial production sites still in activity (living industrial heritage) has triggered a virtuous process of sustainable development of which

benefits the entire city and the surrounding area. Josep Maria PEY CAZORLA, on the other hand, retraced the activities of *El Generador*, a Catalan consulting, production and management company for tourism and cultural projects, specializing in the industrial tourism sector. Francesco ANTONIOL, head of the Italian Association *Tratto Punto*, illustrated a proposal for a "Grand Tour" of the Italian industrial heritage, which will reconnect Anchor Point and Member Sites of ERIH Italy through itineraries that will integrate the visit of the industrial heritage sites with the other destinations of traditional cultural heritage.

Following the presentations, the floor was given to the ERIH members who, in addition to having expressed their interest in the experiences illustrated by the three operators, anticipated the main initiatives planned for the reopening of the sites after the pandemic. At the conclusion of the work, some associations that have already collaborated with ERIH Italy in the past were invited to provide their own comments on the progress of the Meeting.

Massimo PREITE (ERIH Italy)

### INDUSTRIAL TOURISM: THE CASE OF S. JOÃO DA MADEIRA - PORTUGAL

Alexandra ALVES

Tourism Unit of S. João da Madeira City Hall (<https://turismoindustrial.cm-sjm.pt/>)

With unique characteristics that give the region national and international visibility, S. João da Madeira, a Portuguese city of approximately 22,500 inhabitants is, today, a pioneer territory in the development of industrial tourism. It is the ideal destination for those who wish to come into contact with the heritage of a unique industrial past while immersing themselves in an atmosphere of culture, art and creativity.

In this city, located 20 minutes from Porto, Industrial Tourism of-

fers visits to living and heritage industrial sites, showing the different ways of working in sectors such as footwear, hat making, pencil making, mattresses, labels, textiles, tanning, car industry, leather goods, etc. These "Tours of the Industrial Heritage of S. João da Madeira", better known as "Industrial Tourism", were created in 2012 to allow visits to traditional local industry and new technological and creative industries, which are also a mark of the city's identity.



Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union

the Darsena; and it can be combined with additional parts into the productive areas of the Eastern port.

*Di Molo in Molo* is the very first industrial tourism itinerary in Genoa. Today, therefore, the inGE proposal stands as one of the many cultural and tourist proposals offered to whom is interested to better know the Genoese seafront. In summary, the ERIH Genoa project by the inGE Association aims to

- activate the process of creating an unitary thematic route in the ancient port area;
- involve targeted local stakeholders, professionals and companies, as well as local communities;
- create an organic system of real collaboration and networking, able to bring added value to the territory, and to the tourist-cultural and socio-economic challenge that the city is facing, in particular following the recent regional highway emergency and Covid-19 restrictions.

Among the organizations that has been contacted, many tourist and economic operators were interested. While giving shape to the ERIH Genoa project and process; and in view of being able to present it at the ERIH Board according to the relevant criteria, the inGE Association intents to strengthen and structure the network of contacts and of the unitary story above, through the organization of an initial multi-stage visit-event, involving the selected stakeholders, and possibly organizing the ERIH Italia 2022 meeting in Genoa. The project has obtained the interest of the *Autorità di Sistema Portuale del Mar Ligure Occidentale* and of *Galata Museo del Mare*.

7



## A REGIONAL WATER ROUTE IN LOMBARDY

Giorgio BIGATTI

Fondazione ISEC ([www.fondazioneisec.it](http://www.fondazioneisec.it))

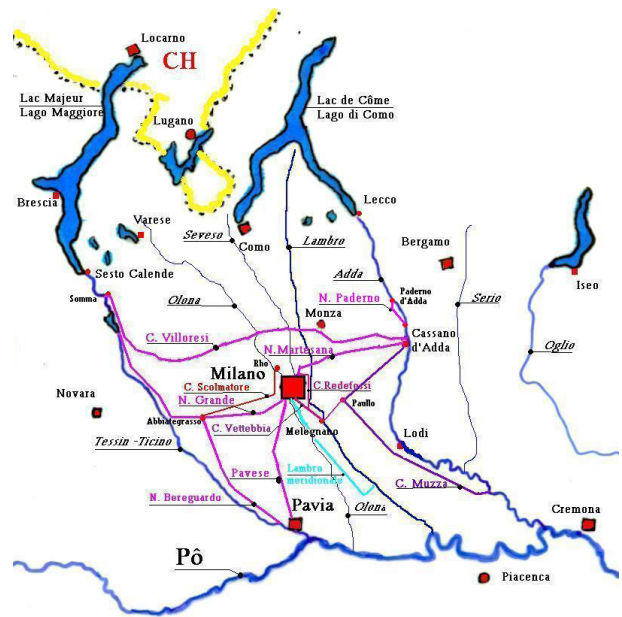
“As the irrigation of the Milanese is perhaps the greatest exertion of the kind that ever was in the world, and certainly the first that was undertaken in Europe, after the decline of the Roman empire; [...] that great exertions were made in this country, at a period when all the north Europe was un a state of barbarism”. In his Notes on the Agriculture of Lombardy included in the second volume of his Travels during the Years 1787, 1788, and 1789 (London, 1794, vol. II, 169), one of the key texts of eighteenth-century agronomic literature, Arthur Young admired the perfection of the canalization work in the Milanese area, underlining the precocity of these artifacts and their perfection. The man-made canals of the Milanese area, whose origins date back to the 12th-15th centuries, are actually technical artifacts of exceptional value, not only for their antiquity but because they performed a “double office” serving irrigation and transport. To these functions they ad-

ded that of energy suppliers, moving the blades of the numerous mills located along their banks. The canals, together with the Muzza, which runs in the Lodi area, have transformed the countryside of lower Lombardy, making it one of the centers of development of a hydraulic culture largely dependent on practice and at the same time the model of an agriculture with an early mercantile orientation based on the alternation cereals and meadows. Without forgetting the drinking uses, to which the drainage of sewage would be intertwined with the progress of urbanization, in Lombardy the management of water had an exceptional importance as a dispenser of fertility to the land, an alternative to expensive land transport and supplier of energy, at first hydraulic and from the nineties of the nineteenth century also hydroelectric. It is a widespread heritage of exceptional historical and cultural importance, which for an important part continues to

play a role of great importance for the regional economy and the hydraulic balance of the area. Just think of the system of alpine containment basins and power plants in Valtellina, the canals and the large irrigation channels, the river regulation works, the drainage pumps and the reclamation plants spreading in the provinces bathed by the Po. Disused plants, such as some power plants, or simply abandoned and at risk of dispersion are still there. Today, the potential of this heritage is finally beginning to be recognized, which on the one hand testifies to the importance of technical culture in the economic and social history of Lombardy, and on the other offers great opportunities for local tourism capable of combining entertainment and environmental sustainability.

It is this set of factors that led Musil, the Aem Foundation and the ISEC Foundation to imagine a Route centered on water and its uses, a path that allows us to weld the environment, economy and society in a very long-term perspective. This is a decisive point because talking about water in Lombardy means going back over time including monuments and memories of the pre-industrial period. Today, the theme of water is immediately reconnected to that of clean energy, sustainability, climate change, issues that give the theme a design value in comparison with the present. Industrial archaeology can thus become a way to look not only at the past but to intertwine past and present in a dynamic form

The creation of a water road aims, while respecting the autonomy of each member, on the one hand to connect realities already active in the area with their strong identity; on the other hand, to offer an edge to subjects who by their nature do not yet have sufficient visibility or lack the ability to enter into relationships with extra local circuits. Furthermore, the constitution of a Regional



route, to which even subjects not strictly Lombard may adhere at a later time, as well as amplifying the communication on the activities of the members, may promote initiatives of a general nature, not necessarily site specific, which also qualify the project for the ability to generate cultural content and projects as a network. Activities and initiatives that will have to move along converging lines knowing that tourism enhancement cannot and must not be separated from study and storytelling. We believe this is the only way to ensure that a regional road, once established, continues to live and does not remain just a virtual reality.

8

## THE PARTICIPATIVE MUSEUM

Giorgio RAVASIO  
Crespi d'Adda - UNESCO World Heritage Centre ([www.crespidadda.it](http://www.crespidadda.it))

In September 2019, in Kyoto, during the general assembly of the International Council of Museums, the body representing museums around the world, a new mission statement for museum institutions was proposed, according to which museums are defined as places of democratisation, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for the development of critical dialogue about the past and the future. In today's conflicting and challenging social context, museums preserve artefacts and artefacts for society and protect memory for future generations and ensure equal rights and access to heritage for all.

Emphasising that the goal of cultural institutions should not be profit, museums should be participatory and transparent and should work in active partnership with and for communities to