



KWONDER GARDA

Myth and
Speed

LAGO DI
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“THE AUTOMOBILE IS FEMININE”

In 1893, the first *automobile* was delivered to Italy and began to appear on Italian roads.

But how should it be defined: masculine or feminine? The term ‘*auto*’ had come from France a decade earlier: *vettura automobile*, *carrozza automobile*, as well as *carro automobile*, *veicolo automobile* (‘automobile car’, ‘automobile coach’, but also ‘automobile wagon’ and ‘automobile vehicle’). The French considered it

correct to use the masculine gender, as did the Italian Dizionario Moderno and the Futurist writer Filippo Marinetti (who used the Italian masculine form when he wrote: ‘the magnificence of the world has been enriched with a new beauty; the beauty of speed. A racing automobile... that seems to run on machine gunfire’). Gabriele d’Annunzio changed things when, on 18 February 1926, he published a letter in the *Corriere della Sera* ad-

dressed to Giovanni Agnelli: ‘My dear Senator, at this moment I am returning from my camp in Desenzano with your car, which seems to me to resolve the question of gender already debated. The automobile is feminine. It has the grace, the slenderness, the vivacity of a seductress; it also has a virtue unknown to women: perfect obedience. But, on the other hand, in overcoming roughness of all kinds, it has women’s nonchalant levity.’





Since September 2017, the Vittoriale has housed the 'L'Automobile è Femmina' (The Automobile is Female) museum, which celebrates Gabriele d'Annunzio's love of cars as symbols of modernity, speed and progress.

One can admire the details on the FIAT Tipo 4 in which d'Annunzio entered Fiume and from which he would never again be parted, together with the Isotta Fraschini Tipo 8B, his last car. There is also a post-war Bentley RType that belonged to Vittorio De Sica.

Personal items and various trophies are on display, as well as photos and videos of official meetings, but also of more intimate moments such as his meeting with Tazio Nuvolari, to whom he gave a small tortoise as a good luck charm, which the recipient then kept with him continuously.



THE MILLE MIGLIA ON THE ROADS OF LAKE GARDA

Speed is at home in Brescia. In 1899, an exceptional 'automobile competition' took place on the circular route starting and ending in Brescia via Cremona, Mantua and Verona.

This was the 'automobile race' on one, two or four wheels, a spectacle of courage and modernity. It was on these roads that five years later the Great Exhibition, the Brescia-Cremona-Mantova motor racing circuit and, in Montichiari, the Coppa

Florio (which would later be transferred to Sicily) were born. In 1905 it was again Montichiari that hosted the Coppa d'Italia motor race; the finish line and grandstands were built at Fascia d'Oro, where in 1920 a permanent racetrack was created that would host the first Italian Grand Prix on 4 September the following year. The track is entirely enclosed within the city area; it is 18 km long, has a triangular shape and at Fascia d'Oro there is a 544.6 metre parabolic

curve, the first to be built in Italy and one of the first in the world. 'No circuit, including Indianapolis, can hold a candle to Montichiari,' say the drivers.

It was also in Montichiari that the Italian Grand Prix started in 1921. Five years later the Mille Miglia was born, 'the most beautiful race in the world' according to Enzo Ferrari's definition, which starts in Brescia, arrives in Rome and returns to Brescia, today also passing through the streets of Garda.

Vintage & Glamour.

Why not rent a historic car and spend your holiday driving up and down the Gardesana in a gleaming spider, coupe or elegant vintage sedan?



THE SKIES OF MONTICHIARI

In 1909 Montichiari was once again the home of speed.

At the Brescia Air Circuit held from 8 to 20 September, 14 pilots from Italy, France and the USA took part, in the presence of King Victor Emmanuel III. The desire and emotion proved too strong and, unwilling to restrain himself and throwing caution to the wind, Gabriele d'Annunzio climbed into the plane of the American pioneer Glenn Curtiss and flew with him. A passion for flying, busi-

ness reasons and turbulent personal affairs united a few illustrious personalities for a few moments: Gabriele d'Annunzio, Giacomo Puccini, Franz Kafka, Arturo Toscanini and Guglielmo Marconi were unknowingly seated next to each other in a club near the runway. One was scrutinising the planes in flight, seeking inspiration for his poems; another was a young reporter sent to Italy to report on the event; yet another was fleeing the discomfort caused by his forbidden relationship

with a maid.

In his book 'The Aeroplanes in Brescia' Franz Kafka writes about a youthful wrong committed against a coachman.

A youthful shenanigans he regrets, but it is now too late to make amends: 'Our behaviour has not been right, unfortunately; this is not how it should be done in Italy, it may be fine elsewhere but not here. But in the rush who's thinking about it? There is nothing to be done: in one short aviation week you certainly cannot become Italian.'



THE SCHNEIDER CUP

On 13 October 1913, the Schneider Cup was launched in a hotel in the Principality of Monaco. Only 10 years had passed since the Wright brothers' first flight, and this competition for seaplanes was intended to encourage technological progress in civil aviation. The event immediately became a competition of pure speed, the impact of which was also felt on Lake Garda.

Desenzano housed a seaplane base used in WW1, which was placed under the command of Gabriele d'Annunzio. For Gabriele d'Annunzio, the exaltation of speed was simultaneously a concept and a lifestyle; he was fascinated by

all the technological innovations, especially the 'velivolo' aeroplane that made rapid transportation possible, even for the masses.

In the wake of the enthusiasm for flying, on 15 May 1928 Air Marshal Italo Balbo established the 'School of High Speed' in Desenzano, which later became the better-known 'Department of High Speed' or Reparto Alta Velocità (RAV). The aim was to prepare pilots to participate in (and win) the Schneider Cup.

On 23 October 1934, test pilot Francesco Agello beat the absolute world speed record for seaplanes, reaching an average speed of over 709 km/h on the route from Manerba

to Moniga del Garda. The record is still unbeaten for aircraft of that class (seaplanes with reciprocating engines).

Every year the Air Force, together with the Municipality of Desenzano and the Comitato Idroscalo (seaplane base committee), celebrates the High Speed Department by opening the Idroscalo Park to visits. On display are memorabilia, technical drawings, aircraft parts and artefacts from the period and, shortly, an original scale model of the Agello seaplane. Visitors are taken on a guided tour and can explore the base, which remains largely unchanged since the 1930s.





FORMULA ONE GO-KARTS

Vintage cars, racing cars, car manufacturers choosing Garda as the perfect location for shooting advertisements, but also 'minor' cars... Garda has it all. And speed is the order of the day.

In 1998 the South Garda Karting go-kart track was designed and built in Lonato del Garda. It is a true champions' track, frequented by drivers from all nations and the venue for important national and international competitions: world, European and Italian championships, the Winter Cup and many others, with a packed weekly calendar of events. An international, CIK-FIA homologated kart track, it has a 1200 metre long track which is up to 10 metres wide in some sections, with optimum technical characteristics; the best drivers in the sector train

here, as well as Formula 1 champions, whom it is not uncommon to find alongside, in the paddock.

The South Garda Karting offers a variety of facilities: ample parking, a well-equipped paddock, a shop where you can find everything for karting, a bar-restaurant and a grandstand that can accommodate up to 2,000 spectators.

Karting is often the first step in a career as a racing driver. A picture of a young Michael Schumacher right here in Lonato with his own kart stands at the entrance to the offices; various champions have attended international karting competitions here at the start of their careers, including Ayrton Senna, Alain Prost, Fernando Alonso, Kimi Räikkönen and Lewis Hamilton.

**What does it take to win a go-kart race?
How to try your hand at it.**

Experience is important, but on its own it is not enough; discover karting at South Garda Karting by attending courses. In addition to official races, the circuit offers kart hire for adults and children and two-seater karts; of course, it is possible to race with your own kart. Corporate and amateur races are organised for team building, parties, birthdays and more, with timing, medical and catering services.



ON THE TRACK ON TWO WHEELS

Racing on a bike requires strength; competing in a velodrome, with fixed-gear bikes and in an original setting, still requires strength, but above all great technique.

Opened in 2009, the Montichiari Velodrome indoor facility for track speed races is a beautiful, futuristic structure, reminiscent of a cyclist's helmet.

Its statistics are impressive: 1,400 seats, which can become 2,000; a 250-metre laminated beam track with a 43% gradient, technical and fast; with champions reaching 90

km/h top speed. The Montichiari velodrome is the only indoor velodrome in Italy and this makes it one of the very best places for both track cycling events at competitive level somewhere all cycling enthusiasts must try their hand at least once to experience new emotions.

Homologated by the International Cycling Federation, it is the venue for the World Track Cycling Championships and the World Disability Championships. Among the disciplines that can be practised

on the track are: sprint, Olympic speed, keirin, kilometre sprint, points race, sprint series, American or madison, elimination, scratch, flying lap, team pursuit, individual pursuit and omnium.

Competitions are at international level (World Junior and Disabled World Championships, European Masters, Italian Absolute and European Denny Championships) and the best world teams come here to train. Space is also made available for amateur cyclists, with a dedicated school. The centre is currently closed.



THE VOLLEY

Lonato del Garda is home to Trap Concaverde, an authentic kingdom of shooting.

It all began with four friends, shooting aficionados, who, tired of wandering around the various national shooting ranges, decided in 1982 to build their own range, which over the years became the world's largest.

"The 'University of Shooting' occupies an area of 20 hectares and is located in a strategic position, close to motorways and airports, served by a modern accommodation system and close to the headquarters of the most important Brescian manufacturers of sporting and hunting weapons in Italy and the world. There are 12 shooting ranges, arranged along a longitudinal axis, side by

side, facing north to minimise disturbance due to direct sun exposure. Great attention is paid to the full safety with which the shooting activities are conducted, both for the participants and the public, and to the environment, with the careful management of residues originating from the activity. A large earth barrier covered with tarpaulins is placed in front of the shooting platforms along the longitudinal profile of the facility, so as to mitigate the noise produced by gunfire and ensure ballistic safety conditions (there are protective barriers between one shooting platform and another to prevent possible mutual interference).

Professionals practise Olympic specialities such as Trap and Skeet, but even at the amateur level,

fun is ensured by testing one's skills, in compliance with the rules in force and using the same three types of facilities intended for Olympic specialities.

During competitions, all results and rankings are broadcast in real time on colour monitors. The facility is equipped with its own armoury, with a rifle storage service, checks and repairs and the any accessories related to shooting are available for purchase. The facility was built eliminating all architectural barriers and regularly hosts events organised by the Italian Paralympic Committee. A facility that is rightly considered one of the best and most functional on the world shooting circuit, where you can experience a new emotion and test your skills: technique, intuition, speed.





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In addition to the 12 shooting ranges, there is a practice range dedicated to beginners and novices, to introduce them to the sport under the supervision of shooting instructors, in a separate area from that intended for competitive activities.

THE CENTOMIGLIA

The Centomiglia always anticipates the themes of nautical evolution.

It was already doing so at its first edition in 1951, with classic but already very light boats; then came the libera, today the multi-hulls and the ultra-modern foils, winged monohulls that participate in the America's Cup after the Centomiglia. The Centomiglia is the most famous and important sailing regatta, and takes place every year on Lake Garda in September. It is also the longest regatta (split into two stages from 2022) held in Europe on inland waters and the longest-running in Italy. The waters of the lake are not as calm as one imagines, the pitfalls are many, and the winds

from the north put the crews to the test. There are over 200 competitors, divided into several classes; the prize is awarded to the boat that crosses the finish line first.

The regatta starts at the small harbour of Bogliaco (Gargnano), sails up the lake to Limone sul Garda, then heads south towards Desenzano and Sirmione, rounds the buoy and returns to Bogliaco again.

Since 1989, the Centomiglia Cup has also been held, whose competitors are the winners of previous editions. Many competitions take place on the waters of Lake Garda and precede or follow the Centomiglia: above all the Gorla, Marchi, Castellani and Omboni

trophies, which take place over a week called 100 Week.

Technology, carbon fibre, sails and history come together; but on the water one also comes across authentic pieces of history such as the 'Galeotto', which back in 1930 won the 2nd 'Regata dei Bragozzi', which was open to the participation of working sailboats capable of carrying up to 30 tonnes of cargo. The "Galeotto" was originally the Austrian cutter "Sirius", sunk by the Austrians, recovered from the lake bottom and renamed; today it is the VIP boat of the Circolo Vela Gargnano regattas.

In 1930, a cup was donated by Gabriele d'Annunzio and awarded to the winners of the Regatta.



Circolo Vela Gargnano's activities are non-stop and aimed at everyone. And we mean everyone.

Courses and pre-competitive training for youngsters from 6 to 15 years of age (for example, the Youth World Championship, a true Olympics for skippers under 20 with 40 nations competing); events such as world and European championships and meetings of all the sailing federations in the world. But also a social activity that is little publicised but of great significance. Since 1996, it has hosted courses for blind sailors from the 'Homerus' group (in September 2022, a new world championship in Gargnano), with which it promoted the first National and World Championships, and since 2011, every season it has organised the European and Italian championships of all classes for sailors with motor-skills disorders and the Paralympics fleet. To sail in the great lake of solidarity.





FUTURE CHAMPIONS

One sailing club every 4.5 km; 14 clubs spread out along 64 km of coastline. Not bad for those who, during a short or long holiday on Lake Garda, want to learn how to steer a sailboat or practise any of the other water sports: from windsurfing and canoeing to (for the more adventurous) wing sailing or wing foiling. Technique is important, but that's what sailing clubs are here for. A short theoretical course, a simulation on land and you

are immediately on the water, steering the boat and discovering the secrets of the winds that blow constantly from north to south (the Peler) and from south to north (the Ora) on Lake Garda, accompanied by expert professionals, in safety and with fun guaranteed. All it takes is a day, a weekend or a residential course and the champions taking part in the Centomiglia are no longer intimidating, to adults or children.



FLYING ON WATER

Campione del Garda - Univela ('the university of sailing') is the place to learn how to sail and many other water sports.

Ever heard of wing foil or wing surfing? Want to try your hand at taming water and wind? Then this is the place to be and these are the sports for you. What is it all about? Wing foil, also called wing surfing, is practised in various places in the windiest ones; such as Lake Garda, in fact. What makes it special is the incredible freedom of movement compared to windsurfing, which allows the rider to enjoy an experience inches from of the water: thanks

to the foil and the hook-less sail, you feel as if you were flying. But maybe that's not enough if you are very skilled or even a professional. In this case Garda Kite Surf is for you: with the riders of the GKS Community in a discipline that is practised by very few.

Univela offers courses at different levels in: windsurfing, Royal Yachting Association first & sustained flights foiling, 49 ER basic and intensive, dinghies, sup, kayak...

There are many nautical clubs in the municipalities around the lake; they organise courses and boating experiences for everyone. You are spoilt for choice.



**Rowing at the Garda Salò
Rowing Society.**

Founded on 10 August 1891, this is the oldest rowing association on Lake Garda. 130 years of history confirm the strong link between the sport and the environment.

The 'Bandiera del lago' ('Flag of the Lake') is a beautiful water-related event which sees crews from the three Garda regions participating. They use bisse, ancient flat-bottomed rowing boats (for moving through the reeds), traditionally used by fishermen.

Rowed standing up, these boats date back to the period of Venetian rule.



SKYRUNNING

Imitating the greats, putting yourself to the test, resisting the strongest temptation of all: to stop and look at the landscape, to let its beauty intoxicate you, to breathe, to feel good. No, you have to run, climb, descend and climb again. Garda's newest arrival is skyrunning, the high-altitude race, which finds its ideal setting in the upper Lake Garda area. Elsewhere, on the slopes of Valtenesi, on the dirt roads of the moraine hills, south of Desenzano and Sirmione, trekking or walking is the order of the day; but here it is all about physical and mental strength, training and pure adrenalin.

Limone sul Garda has

become the place to be. For years in October it has hosted the Limone Extreme, an international skyrunning competition. Two races are held, one is the Skyrace, the other the Vertical Kilometer. In the latter race, runners are competing to become the world champion in their category, which gives you an idea of how beautiful and challenging the race is. Therefore, the tourist who wants to venture along the trails of champions (there are many in Limone and throughout the Upper Garda) must be trained to withstand the psycho-physical effort, have endurance, know that in the mountains the

climate can change rapidly, and, finally, have adequate clothing.

You don't have to be a champion. Everyone runs (or walks) at his or her own pace, following a few basic tips to complete the walk or enlisting the assistance of experienced mountain guides and companions who make it possible to have fun in extremely safe conditions. There is no point in trying to hide it: The beauty of these excursions lies in being together, challenging each other of course, but above all seeing the lake as you have never seen it before, for a powerfully inspiring experience.





Discover more fascinating facts
and find detailed information
on Myth and Speed



HOW TO GET THERE



Texts and photos: Archivio Consorzio "Lago di Garda - Lombardia" and project partners, Alessandro Bonaldo 69F media, Maurizio Torri, Stefano Maraggi

Edition 2022.

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