

# Gardena

2005

## *magazine*



ENGLISH VERSION



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# Gardena magazine

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# Fifty years later

## Italian climbers on Everest and K2

Giovanni Di Vecchia

*Two of them, Karl Unterkircher and Walter Nones, rank high among other great mountaineers from the Val Gardena*

**A**chille Compagnoni and Lino Lacadelli, with the invaluable back-up support from friend and colleague Walter Bonatti, reached the summit of K2, the world's second highest mountain after Everest, on 31st. July 1954 and proudly hoisted the Italian flag. They then nick-named K2 "the mountain of the Italians"! Fifty years after their great endeavour, another expedition was born and decided on the motto "from conquest to knowledge" as the participants hoped to get to know

conquered K2 in 1983 and readily agreed to co-ordinate the "K2 - Fifty Years After" adventure, a challenging double climb of Everest and K2, as well as front the "Ev-K2-CNR" organising committee. The President of the Republic of Italy was invited to act as patron of the adventure as was also the National Institute for Scientific and Technical Mountaineering Research. The expedition intended to do some medical and scientific research, physiology, glaciology, natural science and eco-compatibility tests and was not

only interested in developing and testing various mountaineering skills and techniques. The team included guides from the Val D'Aosta, members of the Lecco Grignetta "Ragni", Catores from Val Gardena

ing System (GPS) with geo-radar. Their diary reads something like this!

Everest 24th. May After a period of continuous bad weather with snowstorms and strong winds which slowed us down considerably, a window eventually opened in front of us giving reason for hope. Mountaineers Alex Busca, Claudio Bastrentaz, Karl Unterkircher and Mario Merelli set off at 9.45 local time and courageously began heading up to the peak, refusing to rely on oxygen to help their climb. A fantastic feat especially as they stayed on the summit for something like two-and-a-half hours without showing any symptoms of psycho-physio distress and carried out various scientific experiments and tests with the geo-radar and GPS system.

K2 26th. July The message "We're at the peak" got through to us at 16.40 local time and there was much cheering and celebration. Five Italian mountaineers, Silvio Mondinelli and Karl Unterkircher at the front followed by Michele Compagnoni, Ugo Giacomelli and Walter Nones, had crossed the Spigolo Abruzzi to conquer what is, without doubt, the most difficult and strenuous climb in the world with all of its 8,611 metres. A fantastic success when you remember the terrible weather which had prevailed from the beginning of June on and which had improved only very slightly



something more about this majestic peak. Agostino Da Polenza, well-known mountaineer and one-time companion of Ardito Desio, was chosen to organise the 2004 expedition. Da Polenza had con-

and various Alpine guides and climbers from Lombardy, Veneto, Abruzzi and Lazio all of whom were equipped with the state-of-the-art scientific equipment and instruments and a Global Position-



just a few days before they set out, storms of wind and snow which had done nothing to dampen their adventurous spirit or persuade them to put off their climb. They left at 2.30 in the morning, with the moon to light their path, and reached the top in just eleven hours climbing without the help of oxygen. They also opened a new, so-called Spanish rope ascent route, managed to do various research and also saved one of their colleagues who had got himself lost during the night on their way back down to Base Camp. Ciampi, President of

to the roof of the world once more” and parliamentary minister Alemanno, honorary leader of the expedition, arrived from Italy to congratulate all the members of the team on their return to Base Camp.

There were further celebrations when the athletes returned home where crowds of fans awaited their arrival at the Milan airport of Malpensa. Val Gardena welcomed Unterkircher and Nones when they reached Selva on 11th. August and millions of people, valley folk and holiday-

of Italy, and his wife gave them a tumultuous reception. The President had a long chat with both heroes and congratulated them on their fantastic success. Roland Demetz, mayor of Selva, presented Unterkircher with a gold medal while General Gianfranco Scanu, Commander of the Carabinieri of Trentino Alto Adige, gave an award to Nones who is in military service under his command. General Giancarlo Maffei and Colonel Lieutenant Peter Paul Tarfuser, Commander of the Alpine Training Centre, were among other important military authorities present at the ceremony.

Their expedition is one of the most glorious in the history of alpinism. It involved both complex organisation and loyal, selfless team work. Every single, individual member of the adventure played an essential and instrumental role in its success and we are all proud to know Karl Unterkircher from Selva Gardena who conquered both Everest and K2 in just three months. Unterkircher is, without doubt, one of the most significant representatives of alpinism in Val Gardena while Walter Nones is one of those characters who we rejoice to call one of our own, even if only by adoption.

Unterkircher was born at Selva Gardena on 27th. August 1970 and still lives in the same little town. He claims that he taught himself how to climb in the company of his friends. He was climbing the Odle, the Sassolungo and the Sella when he was fifteen and later did military service in the parachute regiment in nearby



the Republic of Italy, sent Da Polenza a telegramme with the message “I am delighted and proud to hear that you have reached the summit of K2. Your extraordinary show of determination, technical excellence and dedication has taken Italy

makers alike, civil and military authorities, well-known names from the world of sport and other mountaineers including Enrico Abram who had been a member of the successful expedition to K2 in 1954 as well as Ciampi, President of the Republic







Bolzano. He has been a member of the Gardena section of the Italian Alpine Club since he was a young boy and later became a mountain guide and member of the Catores Rescue Group. He has a two-and-a-half year old son, Alex, and likes reading books about mountains and geography in his spare time. He first seems quite shy and is very reserved but also surprisingly friendly. When you speak to him about his hobby and his various successes, you soon realise that what has already been said about him is absolutely right - "he is perfectly at ease and at home amongst the snow and cold of mountains about 8,000 metres, stays cool and calm even in the most difficult circumstances and is a real pro-

fessional, veteran mountaineer". He has an excellent alpinism and mountaineering curriculum and holds twenty "firsts" on the Sassolungo and Sella groups, has done the fifteen Marmolada climbs as well as the Civetta, Pale di San Martino, Tofane, Odle, the "Cassin" route of the Grand Jorasses, the north wall of Cervino, the Marinelli route up Monte Rosa and many other great climbs including all the thirty-two 4,000 metre peaks of the Alps. He also does extreme ski tours, has climbed Fitz Roy and other peaks in Patagonia, Aconcagua in Argentina and Mera Peak in Nepal. He has spent his whole life surrounded by mountains but has remained modest and generally shy even though he is considered a real

hero of the 8,000's. Walter Nones, on the other hand, was born at Cavalese on 5th. January 1971. He is not married and owes his love of mountaineering to his father who also had a passion for the sport and who accompanied him on his first exploits on Lagorai. He started his military career when he was just eighteen years old and is now a mountain guide and instructor of alpinism at the Vallunga Training Centre. His professional curriculum includes the Yellow Route and the Comici Dimai of the Tre Cima of Lavaredo, the Pilastro ascent of the Tofana of Rozes, the Grande Micheluzzi, the north route of the Sassolungo, the Comici route of the Salame of the Sassolungo, climbs over ice and snow on Monte Bianco, the Ortles and Monte Rosa, the opening of nine new routes for Alpine skiing and adventures in other countries such as Island Peak in 1995, the West Buttress in Alaska in 1999 and the Falso dei Poleccchi on Aconcagua in 2003.

The autumn rains will soon be over and the Val Gardena will be cloaked in its white winter mantle of snow. Karl and Walter will look back on their greatest adventure in the summer of 2004 with pride and a certain sense of nostalgia. They will remember the snow and the ice of two of the world's greatest mountains, the courage and energy the expedition required of them and feel once again the emotions they felt then as they look at the peaks of the glorious, majestic Dolomites in all their fascinating beauty and splendour.

Congratulations, Karl and Walter, and all the best for your next adventure!



*Karl Unterkircher on the top of the world*



# *Selva, past and present*





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da Tieja at the beginning of the  
walk at Selva Gardena.*







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# Dr. Rapisarda

## The unforgettable Doctor

Filly Vilardi

*History is full of little heroes; certain people like Dr. Santi Maria Rapisarda have left an indelible memory in the hearts and souls of everyone who knew them thanks to their humble, honest way of life.*

**D**r. Rapisarda was local medical officer for Selva and Santa Cristina from the forties until his death in the middle of the eighties and his generosity and reputation as a fine doctor are still remembered throughout the valley and its surroundings, by both older and younger generations, more than twenty years after his death.

The doctor was an extremely reserved, quiet man who lived a very simple life. He was born in Piemonte in 1908 and generally preferred not to speak much about his early life, his family, his origins or mention what he had done before his arrival in Val Gardena.

We know that he had had a brilliant career as a surgeon in Milan until problems with his eyes forced him to abandon that branch of medicine. He was advised to move to a mountainous area and apparently asked the Prefect of nearby Bolzano to be transferred to Selva.

He was thirty-three years old in 1941 when he arrived in the valley to start his new life. It cannot have been too easy for him to change from having been a well-known surgeon in a big city with years of experience and responsibility behind him to become medical officer of a relatively poor little

valley amongst the mountains and, yet, he quickly won the hearts and appreciation of everyone who had contact with him. It was said that his sister, Maria Grazia, who he brought with him to Selva, was in poor health and that valley-life had been recommended for her,

isolated mountain farm house, pulling his little sleigh behind him, at any hour of the day or night and was especially well-loved for this. An extremely capable, well-qualified, diagnostic expert, he saved the lives of numerous grateful patients.



His work was his life. He did everything with passion and to the very best of his ability. His greatest reward was to see his patients getting better and he often asked for no payment especially if he knew that the person in question had very little means.

His fame quickly extended to areas outside the valley and, although he was just a local medical officer, patients came from far and wide to seek his advice and ask for treatment.

He was a man of considerable culture and spent much of his free time pouring over his books. He never married although he lived with a companion for many years. Those who know him well, said that he had dedicated himself to

too. The doctor opened a small surgery at the local elementary school and soon earned a fine reputation for himself as being always ready to help the sick and the poor. He would walk to the most

looking after his sister rather than marrying and having children of his own. He loved good food and had a number of somewhat strange, particular gestures and habits. He often asked his friends to accompany him to places where he



claimed they cooked a local speciality especially well.

The doctor was much loved and respected by the valley people and, even if he did not have any particular responsibility on the organisational committee for the 1970 World Cup Championship events, the Gardena delegation took him with them to the meeting in Beirut where Val Gardena was chosen to host the World Championship ski races.

Dr. Rapisarda was forced to leave the valley for two years when German forces arrived in 1943. He moved to Val D'Ossola and fought with the Italian under-ground partisans. He returned to Val Gardena at the end of the war and continued with the work he had been doing before the turmoil had interrupted him. Everyone held him in great respect and consideration and he was made honorary citizen of Selva Val Gardena, an honour which has been given to various other well-known characters who have played an important part in the history of the valley community,

The Gardena people remember Dr. Rapisarda for his honesty and kindness as well as for his ironic sense of humour, his love of telling jokes, his extravagant habits, his bicycle tours and the French Gauloise cigarettes he so loved. Smoking was his only bad habit and he was never without a cigarette: he usually had one between his fingers even when advising his patients to give up the habit!

The doctor died at the age of seventy-seven and smoking was, of course, one of the causes. His death left a terrible emptiness in the hearts of his many friends, companions and admirers and countless Gardena people today like to remember his ruddy, round face and thick-lensed glasses with immense gratitude and nostalgia.



1943 Ossi, Ruth and Margha Pischeider (Hotel Oswald) with Dr. Rapisarda

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# UNIKA

## Artistic craftwork once more to the fore

Leo Senoner

*2004 marks the tenth anniversary of the popular exhibition of wood carving from the Val Gardena which takes place in September every year.*

The concept behind the event is to give local wood carvers an opportunity to leave the four walls of their workshops and show their art to the general public. The early editions of the exhibition were entitled “sculptors to the front” and “sculptors in the town square” and the event has grown in importance and popularity year after year to become a key market-place for this relatively small-scale craft industry.

UNIKA presents articles made by an originally home-based industry which began in the area over four hundred

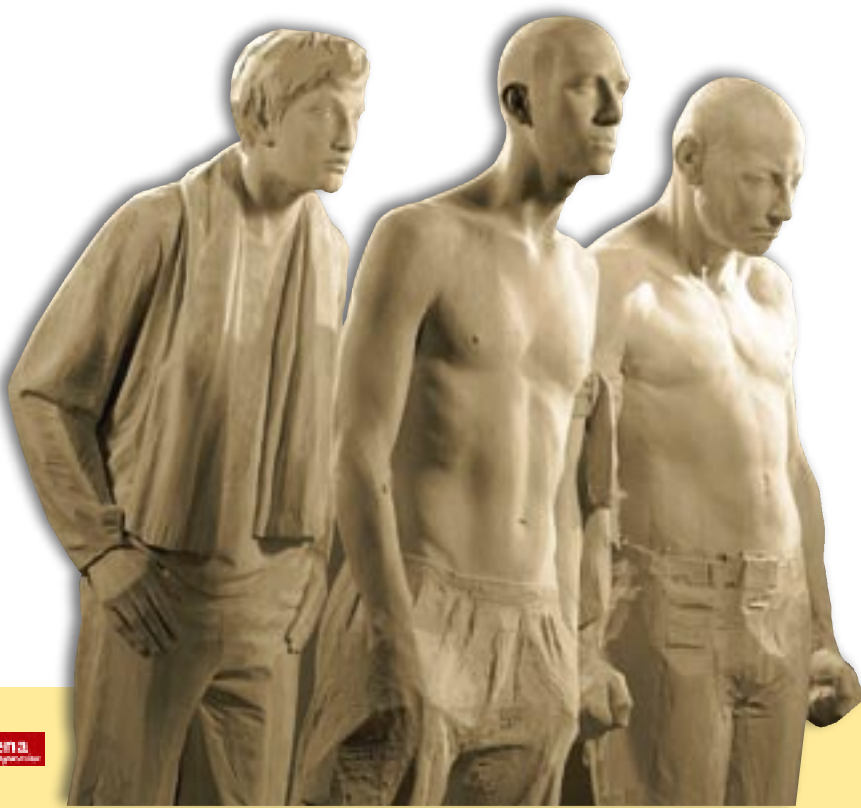
years ago and which has given the little communities of the Val Gardena a very particular cultural, social and economic character.

The first UNIKA was held in the mid-nineties, a period of crisis for local wood production as more and more articles were being made by machine rather than by hand and the market suffered from over-production. The sixties had already marked a time of change and mechanisation although genuine, hand-made pieces had always held a very special place in people’s hearts. A small number of lo-

cal artisans, including Flavio Pancheri, Luis Senoner Tinderla and Luis Piccolruaz, had approached the Chamber of Commerce in nearby Bolzano for help in this matter some thirty-five years ago and an internationally-recognised trade mark was introduced in March 1969 to show and guarantee that the article in question had been made entirely by hand.

This innovative measure was, without doubt, the first positive step towards ensuring the future of quality, artistic wood-carving in the Val Gardena. The appearance of the trade-fair UNIKA, scheduled for the Roncadizza Sports Centre at the end of September, proved to be a further step in the right direction. The event allows local craftsmen to show their talent, imagination, originality and creativity and continues to attract thousands of interested and enthusiastic visitors every year.

UNIKA is, however, much more than just an exhibition. It is the showcase for more than sixty master wood carvers, members of the Val Gardena Association of Artistic Craftsmen, and is an instrument which serves to promote the industry which gives work to wood carvers, decorators, artists, painters and gold-workers in the area. The sculptors who show their work







at UNIKA insist on quality and high standards of workmanship and all have had a highly-specialised professional training.

The very word UNIKA embodies their philosophy as it refers to the uniqueness of the work they do, single pieces which are not re-produced for a mass market and are entirely hand-made. The beauty and formal perfection of their work shows the craftsmen's theoretical and practical training which involves years of apprenticeship, study and practice and gives expression to their own in-born artistic talent and capacity to express their emotions and creative imagination. Their success is based on dedicated, hard work, the efforts of a group working together and their search for evermore important,

ambitious projects. UNIKA has become a very much appreciated travelling exhibition throughout Austria, France, Germany and Italy in Europe and has also ventured further afield to Vail in Colorado, New York and Charlestown in the USA as well as Queenstown in New Zealand. The group has suggested a very original collective effort entitled "Wooden Fans" to mark UNIKA's tenth anniversary.

Their presentation will feature no less than fifty life-size, animated, hand-carved statues of sports and other fans on the terraced seats of a grand-stand and will appear in public for the first time at the 2004 edition of UNIKA at Roncadizza before beginning a tour round Europe, from Bolzano to Milan and Vienna to Munich as far as the

2006 Turin Olympic Games and the 2006 World Football Championship in Germany.

So, Wooden Fans, enjoy your trip and may we have many more thrilling editions of UNIKA in the years to come!







## Our customs: Segra Sacun

Filly Vilardi  
Toni Senoner

*The Val Gardena and all the central European Ladin-speaking areas are especially rich in colourful, historic various which the local communities are justly proud of and do all they can to keep alive.*

Once a great autumn festival, it was held on St. James's Day to celebrate the saint who is the patron protector of pilgrims and travellers generally as well as of the small village just above Ortisei which bears his name.

The Segra Sacun was, in fact, one of the oldest and most popular markets in the entire region of Alto Adige. Farmers and merchants came from near and far to sell their wares and products and buy the various household goods, implements, tools, food and fodder necessary for themselves and their stock during the coming winter.

The most sought-after articles were, of course, those which could not be grown or produced in the Val Gardena itself where winters are long and cold and summers not as hot as in other nearby areas. Farmers from the Isarco valley arrived with apples to sell while those from the Lower Atesina came with pears, grapes and wine.

Pears were the market's main attraction because they were not easy to find then and their shape

was also said to remind people of the rounded, female form.

Young men gave the girl of their choice a pear decorated with gaily-coloured ribbons as proof of their love on market-day after months of casual flirting and courtship.

The young men had already presented themselves at their girl-friends' homes on St. Joseph's Day to ask the girls to give them coloured eggs at Easter to show their approval and serious courting began only after the girls gave them coloured eggs on Easter Monday. They would then be allowed to meet from time to time and exchange small presents until the market of St. James and the gift of a pear put a seal on the arrangement.

The traditional market still takes place at Ortisei every October. There is a tempting selection of little stalls selling a variety of articles and



local specialities. Colourful, beribboned pears remain the high-light of the whole day even though not much is remembered about their original significance. Nowadays, the fruit is given more as a sign of friendship and affection. The day is very popular with the valley people, young and old alike, who enjoy celebrating this much-loved traditional, local custom.







# Val Gardena Ronda Express

## The first under-ground funicular railway in the Dolomites

Leo Senoner

*Val Gardena now has its very own little train again after an absence of forty-four years!*

The year 1960 had marked the closing of the original romantic little train which puffed its way back-and-forth between Chiusa and Plan. The railway had taken only a few months to build with the help of thousands of Russian prisoners-of-war during the winter between 1916 and 1917 and the little train had long been a characteristic symbol of the valley. The new service is ultra-modern, futuristic, efficient and clean: a "innovative" train to connect the various ski areas rather than running from one village to the next.

The new service is all part of the "Gherdëina Ronda" which connects all the ski areas of the Val Gardena as an alternative attraction to those of the well-known Sella Ronda. Ski fans will have access to the Gardena ski runs and a total of eighty lifts in the Val Gardena-Alpe di Siusi area from all the villages along the valley.

The Val Gardena Ronda Express is actually a funicular railway inside a tunnel and connects the one end of the valley with the other as well as the ski areas of Ciampinói-Socherz-Ruaccia and those of Col Raiser-Seceda. It runs under-ground and is a classic funicular

with two rails, two coaches or wagons and a station where passengers change coaches half way along the track. The railway is 1,246 mt. in length and the train travels at a maximum speed of 10 metres per second or 36 km. per hour. The full trip lasts just 3 minutes. The coaches can accommodate 140 passengers each and complete fourteen trips an hour either way for a total capacity of 2,000 passengers per hour in both directions. Waiting time at the mountain and valley station, including the time necessary for passengers to get on and off the train, is just one minute.

The funicular works with a pulling cable operating from the mountain station and a hydraulic, weighted, ballast cable which controls the tension operating from the valley station. It is designed to work automatically according to a programmed time-table with a qualified attendant at the central controls or to work semi-automatically with staff commanding it from inside the train itself.

The entire system, the body-work, coaches and compartments are fitted with the most modern security devices using the very latest technology including control measures, emergency bells,

security control video and dual-directional sound controls, smoke and fire alarms, automatic blockage system for individual, single compartments and emergency lighting. The coaches are made of non-combustible materials which produce very little smoke when subjected to undue heat or other stress.

The Val Gardena Ronda Express is part of the Dolomiti Superski service and skiers with a normal ski pass can use it at no additional cost. The building of the tunnel funicular which joins the Ruaccia area with the Col Raiser was started in April 2003 and the railway is scheduled to be ready for use in December 2004 at a total cost of 13 million Euro.



Technical data regarding the coaches:

✦ width: 2,50 m  
✦ length: 15,45 m

✦ height of iron base above rails: 3,30 m  
✦ height of lighting inside the compartments: 2,30 m  
✦ weight when empty: 15.500 kg

✦ total weight: 26.000 kg  
✦ cost: 1 million Euro



## Ciampi and Casini in Val Gardena

The President of Italy, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, promised "we must return to this valley" as he said goodbye to the enthusiastic crowd of well-wishers gathered in front of the "Centro Addestramento Alpino della Vallunga" in August 2003 after a few weeks holiday at nearby Selva. During his stay, he had commemorated his predecessor, the well-loved Sandro Pertini, who had also holidayed in the valley a number of times. Ciampi said that he intended to return to the valley and did, in fact, go on to keep his promise. He and his wife, Franca Pilla, came back to Selva in the Vallunga at the beginning of August 2004 and spent a quiet, restful time there. The occasional stroll through the village and along the paths winding through the countryside, a chance to meet local people and visitors alike, a few public appearances at folklore festivals but very few official appearances. Their meeting with Karl Unterkircher, a member of the Italian

"K2 – Fifty Years Later" expedition which climbed both Everest and K2 in just two months, was one of the highlights of their stay. Ciampi, like Pertini before him, has come to know and love the valley and its splendid mountains and again said "goodbye till next year!" when it was time for him to leave. Pier Ferdinando Casini's first visit to the Val Gardena was "short and sweet" although he also promised a return visit. Casini, President of the "Camera dei Deputati", arrived at Ortisei on 19th. August 2004 but could only stay for one day. He visited the headquarters of the "Aiut Alpin Dolomites" mountain rescue service, met the mayor and council members, strolled around the village, walked through the "Curta" tunnel and met crowds of people in the central pedestrian-only zone. He clearly liked what he saw and said that he would return sometime in the near future for a better look so all that remains to be said is "Goodbye for now, President Casini!"



## The Ladiner Duo and Belsy: two "made in Val Gardena" success stories

4th. September 2004 was an important day in the history of popular music in Val Gardena when some musicians from the Ladin area took part in the well-known "Gran Prix der Volksmusik" festival of Alpine popular music at the "Stadthalle" in Vienna, Austria and won first and second places. The competition featured sixteen groups from Austria, Germany, Switzerland and the Italian South Tyrol and is the most important popular Alpine music event in the German-language region of Central Europe. The four best groups from preceding heats held in the various countries taking part in the event compete in the final in September every year. The local "Die Ladiner" duo, comprised of Gardena musicians Joakin and Rafael Stuffer, presented their highly original composition "Beuge dich vor grauem Haar" (Show Some Respect for Grey Hair) which deals with the subject of the older generation while first prize went to very popular young singer Belsy. Belsy was born in India and adopted by a Gardena couple when she was just one year old. She sang in the "Zecchino d'Oro", a children's music competition on Italian national television when she was only seven years old and her current hit, with the Italian title "Madre di Dio" and text written in German, won her the well-deserved first prize this year. She has a lovely, clear voice and had already arrived third in last year's event. The Gran Prix was a great success for both the Ladiner and Belsy who together have made the name Val Gardena known in the field of traditional popular music from the mountainous regions of mid-Europe.



## Roberta Capua, Miss Gardena who later became Miss Italia

Roberta Capua, the young, attractive television presenter from Naples, took her first steps in show business in the Val Gardena where she and her family often spent their holidays.

She entered the 1986 edition of the "Miss Val Gardena" competition, held at the "Cavallino Bianco" discotheque almost as a joke and was suitably surprised when she was awarded the winner's red sash.

She then went on to compete in the Miss Alto Adige competition and later in Miss Italia which she won following in the footsteps of her mother, Maria Iossa, who had taken the same title in 1959.

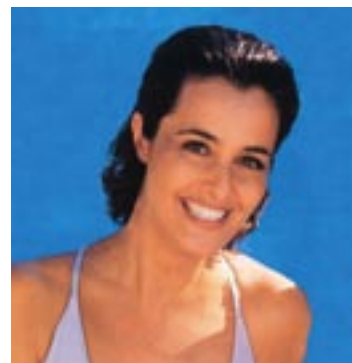
Her success in this event saw the beginning of her professional career first as a highly-quoted model at national and international level and then later, in 1996, as presenter of the popular television programme "Non Solo Moda" (Not Just Fashion) which put her even more in the public eye.

She then proceeded to front other extremely successful programmes, including "Tappeto Volante" and "Fantastica Italiana", and began presenting "In Famiglia" in 1999 which kept her occupied for the next three seasons.

She was chosen to present "Una Mattina", a cult Rai Uno morning programme, for the 2002-2003 season and stayed until the Spring of 2003.

She has been working with Maurizio Costanzo in his "Buona Domenica" Sunday afternoon variety show since September this year and this new venture has brought her still more fame-and-fortune.

She has, however, not forgot where everything started and still returns to the Val Gardena for the occasional short break whenever she can.



## Giorgio Moroder, king of disco dance music

Practically everyone remembers the 70's and 80's as the years of great dance music when discos all over the world pulsed with catchy sounds and rhythmic beats which got generation after generation tapping their feet and up onto the floor!

Disco dance numbers wrote a vitally important chapter in the history of music in the twentieth century in general and was a cultural and social phenomenon throughout North America, Europe and all over the globe. One of its inventors and most important, prolific, popular composers was Giorgio Moroder, a local guy. Moroder was born at Ortisei in the Val Gardena but later moved first to Germany and then to America where his musical talent came to the fore and helped make disco music so successful. „Love to love you, baby“ with Donna Summer was his first great international hit in 1975 and was soon followed by other enormous successes. He has won to date three Oscars for the best sound track for the hit films Midnight Express, Flash Dance and Top Gun as well as four Golden Globes, three Grammy Awards and a long line-up of other prestigious international titles.

He wrote Reach Out, the official music for the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, Hand in Hand for Seoul in 1988 and To Be Number One for the 1990 Football World Championships in Italy.

He has also composed and produced hits for such stars as Barbra Streisand, David Bowie, Donna Summer, Janet Jackson, Berlin, Olivia Newton-John, Bonnie Tyler, Blondie, Jennifer Rush, Limahl, Cher, Irene Cara, Asia, Freddie Mercury, Elton John and Graham Nash to name but a few.

In Autumn 2004, Giorgio Moroder was awarded the most prestigious Crystal Trophy of the Hall of Fame for his contribution to music as composer, musician and producer, a fantastic honour for the musician from the Val Gardena who now has his rightful place alongside such heroes as Elvis Presley and the Beatles.

## The Free Ride Club of Val Gardena

The Free Ride Club Val Gardena was officially founded in November 2003 as the successor of the Crazy Canucks Acrobatic Team Selva which had been in existence since 1999. The athletes originally concentrated their attention on acrobatic exhibitions and technical demonstrations at various ski shows while the club now wishes to provide more than mere entertainment and sheer adventure by promoting Free Ride as a real sports discipline. All this requires professional organisation of events with sports management criteria and total support services necessary for competitive activity with special attention given to the future of promising young athletes.

Free Ride is an English expression which means "free-style skiing" but it also nowadays includes Ski Cross, Half Pipe, Big Air and Free Ride contests, all sports recognised by the FIS and featured in the competitive calendars of winter sports events. The Free Ride Club Val Gardena is following the international trend of promoting these new sports phenomenon at local level and organises various events, shows and competitions while also looking for help to build the necessary infrastructure and trying to attract more and more young fans. A number of athletes from the Free Ride Club Val Gardena have already taken part in national events such as Coppa Italia and also in the World Cup. The Free Ride movement is still at its beginning in Europe and it is difficult to say if it will ever become as popular here as it already is in North America, France and Scandinavia. It is a really spectacular, alternative, young sport and may well have a great future in front of it. If so, Free Ride Club Val Gardena hopes to be part of that future!







# Ernesto Prinoth

## A charming man and successful racing driver

Leo Senoner

*Ernesto Prinoth, a charming local man, was a brilliant racing car designer and ingenious inventor of snow ploughs which he produced using the most innovative technological techniques.*

He was born at Ortisei in 1923 and studied at the Commercial High School in the nearby city of Bolzano. His family ran a business selling articles made of wood and Ernesto seemed set to follow in their footsteps until he became interested in sport and technology and took another

### His passion for racing and technical engineering

He opened a bicycle and motorbike workshop in the cellar of his father's house at the end of the Second World War. He then started repairing and servicing cars and ran the busi-

ness together with two friends, Rudi Runggaldier and Franz Linder. The workshop was very successful and quickly became the meeting place for motor sports fans from the valley. Young men who work on racing cars and their delicate engines are usually keen fans of the same sport and Prinoth showed a natural talent for racing when he took part in his first competition, the 1955 Abarth 700, in the Gran Turismo category. He was a brilliant driver and was successful right from the very start, later moving on to compete in Formula 3 and Formula 1 events until he was taken on by the British Lotus team, managed by Colin Chapman, in 1960.

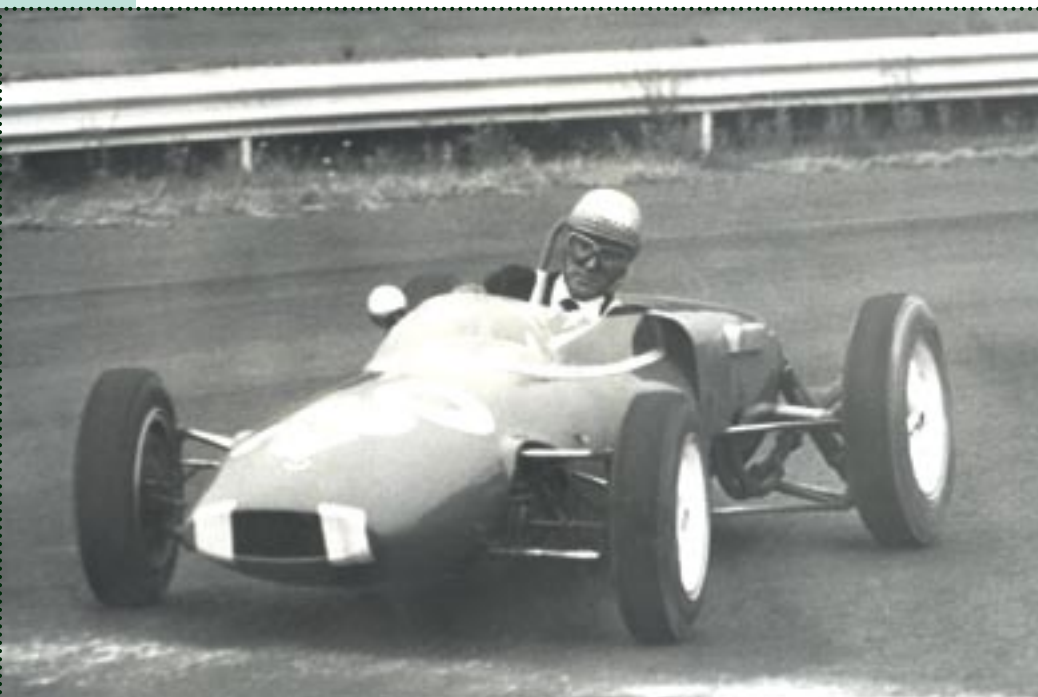
He had a number of fantastic wins and was often in the first five drivers in a race if not the first three. Prinoth was, however, much more than just a racing driver and he soon made a name for himself as a builder of cars. He designed the well-known 1962 Baby Junior racing car which dominated the field in its category for the next three years and remains the only South Tyrolean driver to have competed in Formula 1 events. He retired from competitive driving in 1965 after a series of minor accidents and turned his attention to designing and producing snow ploughs.

### Prinoth and his snow ploughs – a world innovation

Ernesto Prinoth became interested in snow ploughs and their production when he saw a rolling-track tractor from Canada for the first time towards the end of the fifties when skiing and

er direction. He started skiing, speed skating, light athletics and playing ice hockey while still a young boy, became inter-regional champion of speed skating in 1939 and then turned his attention to racing driving when a little older.

ness together with two friends, Rudi Runggaldier and Franz Linder. The workshop was very successful and quickly became the meeting place for motor sports fans from the valley. Young men who work on racing cars and their delicate engines are usually





tourism were developing and there was an increasing demand for professional, well-prepared runs. He started his first experiments in this direction in 1960 and soon managed to sell his first copy-right to the Ratrac company. Prinoth was a very capable, ingenious engineer as well as an astute businessman and realised there was more money to be made in this market than from racing driving.

He developed a prototype for his first snow plough, the Prinoth P60, in 1962 and presented it on the market. His next model, the Prinoth P15, was soon ready and was a great success for the Gardena factory which became the top snow plough producer in Europe. Prinoth extended his market as far as America and Japan and technology from Val Gardena was regarded as something quite innovative in the world of skiing. He invented the rotary mechanism for snow ploughs in 1973 and introduced other more modern, efficient models including the T1, T2, T3, T4 and the ALL series to a flourishing market.

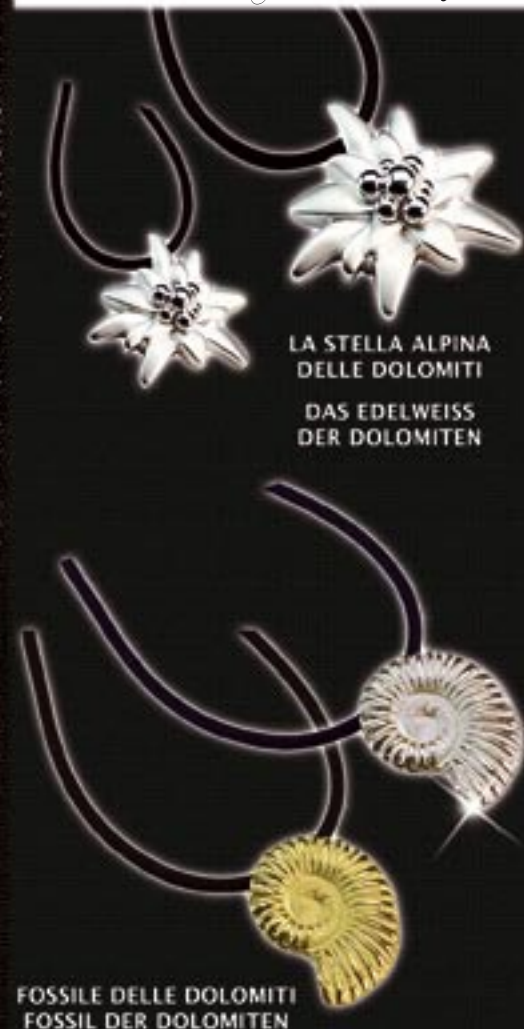
Ernesto Prinoth, genial, charming racing driver and inventor, died at the early age of fifty-eight years in 1981. The company he founded merged with Leitner SPA in 2000 and currently produces the best selection of top-quality snow ploughs available at world level.



Prinoth is, without doubt, the most well-known and successful racing driver the Val Gardena has ever produced although various other local men including Tschucky Kerschbaumer, Herbert Demetz I, Herbert Demetz II, Rudi Runggaldier, Franz Linder, Martele Schenk, Hans Peristi and Pepi Pitscheider also did extremely well in this sport as members of what was once known as the "Val Gardena Connection". Ernesto Prinoth raced for the Abarth, Alfa Romeo, NSU Prinz, Lotus Elan, Porsche and Ferrari teams in the years between 1955 and 1965 and won almost all the Gran Turismo categories up to Formula 1.



*A present from  
Gardena Valley*



 **Flaim**

Via Mèisules Str. 251, Selva/Wolkenstein - Tel. 0471 794 391

Via Rezia Str. 110, Ortisei/S. Ulrich - Tel. 0471 796 255





# FASHION &

**Conte of Florence Val Gardena**  
Extreme, Church Square



**Caps Eisbär**

Extreme, Church Square  
Arnold Demetz Sport, Str. Mëisules  
Sport Bruno Riffeser, Str. Mëisules



**Sweat shirt Sweet Years**  
Extreme, Church Square  
**Ski goggle Adidas**  
Flaim, Str. Mëisules



**Watch Suunto X6HR**  
Flaim, Str. Mëisules



**She: skisuit Bogner**  
Sport Bruno Riffeser, Str. Mëisules  
**He: cap Bastard**  
Tribalplanet, Str. Mëisules  
**He: skisuit Body Glove**  
Extreme, Church Square  
**Sun glasses: Prada, Gucci**  
Flaim, Str. Mëisules



**Sweat shirt La Martina**  
Imagine Junior, Str. Mëisules  
Arnold Demetz Sport (Adults),  
Str. Mëisules





# TRENDS

## Helmet Briko, ski goggle Briko

Arnold Demetz Sport, Str. Mëisules  
Sport Bruno Riffeser, Str. Mëisules  
Sport Walter, Str. Mëisules  
Flaim, Str. Mëisules

## Belt Bastard

Tribalplanet, Str. Mëisules

## Ski boot Salomon

Arnold Demetz Sport, Str. Mëisules  
Sport Bruno Riffeser, Str. Mëisules  
Sport Walter, Str. Mëisules

## Glove Reusch

Extreme, Piazza Chiesa

## Ski Salomon

Arnold Demetz Sport, Str. Mëisules  
Sport Bruno Riffeser, Str. Mëisules  
Sport Walter, Str. Mëisules

## Boot Cesare Paciotti

Novelli, Str. Mëisules

## She: skisuit Body Glove

Extreme, Church Square

## Kid: skisuit Colle

La Cuna, Church Square  
Sport Walter (Adults), Str. Mëisules

## Sweat shirts Converse

La Cuna, Church Square  
Extreme (Adults), Church Square





A letter from one of our guests:

## Val Gardena: my one, true love

Claudio Annaratone

**I**t was in 1942 that my parents decided we would spend our summer holidays in the Val Gardena. My father was still in military service then and my mother, my brother and I rented an apartment from the Runggaldier family at Ortisei. After a long, tedious train journey, we arrived at our destination having covered the last part of the trip from Chiusa onwards on the mythically slow little steam train which puffed its way from village to village. Although I was only six years old at the time, I

remem-



ber that holiday very well and look back on it with enormous joy. At the end of the Second World War, when my family was re-united, we returned in the summer of 1946 to spend another holiday at Ortisei, again guests of the Runggaldier family and, from then on, we have never failed to come back to what I consider to be the most beautiful valley in the whole world. So, it became a pleasant "duty" to pack our corduroy trousers, heavy sweaters and walking boots into our suitcases and pile our luggage in the boot of the car ready for our usual summer adventure. I could not possibly describe, minute for minute, everything I did during the marvellous days I spent in the valley because we went for many walks, trips and excursions to remember them all! We always made a point of taking the cable-car, perhaps the only one then in existence in the whole of the country, up onto the beautiful Alpi di Siusi. The spectacular views of the "natural sculptures" of the Sassolungo with the Forcella, the Cinque Dita and the Sassopiatto in the distance have always filled me with an indescribable feeling of joy

and still do so today even after so many years. The Dolomites change their appearance as the day passes and their colour varies in different light. When I reached my eighteenth birthday, my parents allowed me to holiday alone and, of course, I came to the Val Gardena which had an almost hypnotic effect on me by that time! I chose to stay at Selva at the modest little Hotel Luna which suited my rather limited means then and it was a delight to get to know the hotel owner, Giovanni Demetz, who was also the village butcher, a reserved, yet exquisitely kind man. I well remember that Selva at that time only had three hotels, the Oswald, Posta and Luna, two or three houses in the centre, a council house, little church, one more small hotel, the Biancaneve, which stood in the middle of an enormous meadow and, just below it, the tiny wooden station for the valley's one-and-only train. Then came a time in my life when I chose to spend my holidays at the mountain rescue hut at Passo Sella. I had some really marvellous times there and something I like to remember is how all the members of the Valentini family, who then managed the chalet, welcomed their guests. They ran the simple little place as if it was a five-star hotel and their kind-hearted hospitality made everyone feel comfortable and at home. While staying at Passo Sella, I also got to know Toni Demetz, one of the great characters of the Dolomites. Toni had built his little rescue hut on the Forcella del Sassolungo which, before the lift was installed, could only be reached on foot. My young friends and myself delighted in seeing which of us could climb the steep Città dei Sassi in the shortest time and I seem to remember that my own personal record was 25 minutes. Unbelievable! When we arrived, our friend Toni would give a generous bread roll filled with Speck and a large glass of wine to wash it down with! I got married in 1962 and my wife and I spent our honeymoon in the Val Gardena, of course! The love of my life had never been to this part of the world before and, as we drove round the last corner in my mythical Fiat 600, she gasped in wonder at her first sight of "my Sassolungo". Our two little daughters also spent many happy holidays there with us and soon fell in love with Selva. The holidays we have spent at Selva have always been the most relaxing stays for all of us. There are two local people who I will never be able to thank enough for all they have done for us. We have stayed with Mrs. and Mr. Bernardi at their Casa Majorca for years and they have given us the honour of their ever-lasting friendship. During the time we have spent at Selva, the valley has had the





pleasure of  
welcoming Sandro Pertini,  
first at Hotel Des Alpes when he was an  
honourable member of parliament and later, when as  
President of the Republic of Italy he stayed at the  
Police Headquarters in Vallunga. We had the honour  
of his company on several occasions at the mountain  
chalet owned by our friend Luis Schenk when Pertini  
was still a parliamentarian. He visited Schenk's  
refuge hut almost every day and was happy to perch  
my little daughters on his knees, as he and myself  
chatted about this and that. After he became Presi-  
dent, he often stopped by for a few words with me  
when we met at the restaurant owned by our mutual  
friend Gerard Mussner but these visits were, of  
course, rather restricted by the strict security  
measures necessary for him to take. In 1988, I re-  
ceived an invitation from the Selva council to take  
part in a celebration dedicated to guests who had

spent at least twenty years holidaying  
in the area. I was thrilled to accept and  
must confess that I felt quite emotional  
when the mayor presented me with a plaque  
to commemorate the occasion. Even when our  
daughters got older and no longer wished  
to accompany us on holiday, my wife and I  
continued to return to our well-loved val-  
ley although we then preferred to escape  
the crowds and confusion of the village it-  
self and chose to stay a little further up  
at Hotel Monti Pallidi, owned by our friends  
Gerard and Helga and their two delightful  
daughters, Nives and Alexa. It seems impossi-  
ble that sixty-three years have passed since  
1942 but, although I now suffer from heart  
problems, I can still manage the over-2,000  
mt. Dolomite passes and am ready to burst  
with happiness as I see the Sassolungo appear  
round the bend of the road at the beginning  
of the Val Gardena. I sometimes ask myself how  
much longer I'll be able to make the journey,  
year after year but then, I think I'll be com-  
ing back for years to come ... for always!

I will never forget everything the Val Gar-  
dena and the Dolomites have given me. The sheer  
joy I feel as I stand and admire their splendid  
rocks appear suddenly through a conifer forest  
or high above a green meadow - these are vi-  
sions which will remain with me for ever. Then,  
the hospitality of the people from Gardena is  
truly unique. I am convinced that they consider  
their guests to be sacred, they do everything  
possible to make your stay as perfect as they  
can and I refuse to think that this has any-  
thing to do with money. Perhaps a little of the  
original homely atmosphere of the past has now  
disappeared, there are not as many cows grazing  
on the mountain pastures nowadays, the little puffing  
train no longer threads its way through the valley  
and I miss the tap-tap of heavy, nailed mountain  
climbing boots, the corduroy three-quarter pants  
of enthusiastic hiking fans with ropes hanging  
round their necks and farmers in their traditional  
blue aprons. Now, instead, I see girls with flimsy  
footwear and unsuitable clothes on the Sasso Pordoi  
but real mountain lovers still wear warm wind jack-  
ets and knee-length cord pants and perhaps all the  
changes really do not matter at all! It's enough to  
be able to look at the wonders of nature we cannot  
change and ignore certain other things which have  
to do with progress rather than a lack of respect  
for all the beauty around us!

*Do you have some special memories of your  
holiday in Val Gardena?*

*Send us an e-mail: [info@snowevents.it](mailto:info@snowevents.it)*



# HIGHLIGHTS



25.02.2005  
Sellaronda Skimarathon



26.-29.12.2004  
Concorso di sculture in neve  
Schneefigurenwettbewerb  
Snow sculpture contest



06.02.05  
Igloo Big Carnival Party



22.-25.03.05  
Gardena  
Spring  
Trophy



Luglio/Juli-agosto/August 2005  
ValgardenMusika



# 2004/2005

17.-18.12.2004  
FIS - Ski World Cup  
Super-G/Men's downhill



03.-04.09.05  
marcia popolare  
Völkswandertag  
excursion days  
"Luis Trenker"

30.01 - 06.02.2005  
Tennis - ITF Futures  
Women's Circuit



←  
Estate/Sommer/  
Summer 2005



02.-04.09.05  
UNIKA - scultori alla ribalta  
Grödner Kunsttage  
Val Gardena woodcarvers



31.07.2005  
Val Gardena Star Bike







# Vail – Colorado (USA)

## Leading Mountain Resorts of the World



Vail – Val Gardena – Bariloche – Queenstown

*The main aim of the international co-operation network which brings together the various mountain resorts of Vail in the USA, Bariloche in Argentina, Queenstown in New Zealand and the Val Gardena in Italy is to promote its partners by excellent marketing and publicity campaigns and this year, the organisation is delighted to present Vail, the well-known resort in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado.*

Vail is one of the North American members of the Leading Mountain Resorts of the World project and, although has a relatively short history as a traditional tourist centre, it has become immensely popular over recent decades.

Vail's fame-and-fortune began about the middle of the fifties when work started on the Colorado Highway, the motorway which crosses the Rocky Mountains in the state of Colorado. The head engineer of this incredible undertaking was a certain Charles Vail who later gave his name to the community which grew up at the foot of a then un-named mountain not far from the highway itself. Two pioneers of tourism, Peter Seibert and Earl Eaton, had long wanted to construct a winter sports resort right there. Seibert, a great skiing fan, was a naturalised American who had originally arrived from Central Europe.

He served his country as a ski guide with the X Mountain Regiment during the Second World War and later gave his attention to the matter of promoting modern tourism. In 1962, he managed to fulfil his dream of building a resort practically at the "back-of-beyond". He got permission from the US Forest Service to develop the area of his choice in January and the resort was ready to be opened to the public in December of the same year, just eleven months after. The new resort was named Vail and

became one of the most popular places in Colorado within a mere two or three years.

It is now one of the most well-known resorts in the whole of North America and registers 1.5 million guests a year. 31% of its visitors come from Colorado itself and 59% from other parts of the USA while another 10% are international holiday-makers who fly into the airport at Eagle which is 50 km. from Vail or Denver which is 160 km. away. The valley of Vail extends from Eagle, the capital of the county, to Minturn, Edwards and Avon as far as Beaver Creek and Vail itself and the two latter resorts are skiers favourites.

Vail is also a successful summer resort thanks to the beautiful scenery of the imposing Rocky Mountains and wide choice of trekking and adventure trails. It is known for its lovely natural surroundings, interesting cultural programmes, various festivals and family-orientated events and entertainment as well as for being the perfect place for romantic weekend stays, international-standard shopping, important congresses and a whole line-up of other events and shows.

Winter is, however, still the season which attracts the largest number of visitors with fantastic hotel offers, fine restaurants and eating places, cosy bars, exciting Apres Ski, night-life and great choice of snow sports at the three ski areas of Front Ride, Back Bowls and Blue Sky. The resort

also boasts an innovative ski-pass system which includes the ski runs of nearby Breckenridge, Beaver Creek, Arapahoe Basin and Keystone.


It is a true paradise for skiers and the favourite place for fans looking for a certain unique, emotional experience only Vail can offer. Important World Cup races are hosted at Vail every year and the resort also hosted the 1989 and 1999 World Cup Alpine Ski competition. A survey done by Ski Magazine, America's most well-known and read winter sports publication, named Vail as the unrivalled leader for winter tourism in the whole of North America.





# CHANEL



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Via Rezia Str. 110, Ortisei/St. Ulrich - Tel. 0471 796 295

# DATCH



**EXTREME**  
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Str.Rezia 129, ORTISEI/ST. ULRICH - Tel. 0471786 399



# *The Traditional Way*



# PSENNER

*The premium distillery in Alto Adige*