

Welcome to another episode of *Through My Eyes!* coverage of the amazing locations my wife, Jayne, and I have visited around the world. Some of these images are iconic while the majority presented here require a more intimate exploration. This particular ebook is devoted to our travels throughout Nothern Italy. My goal is not to present a definitive study of this location, but rather to provide hopefully a tantalizing glimpse to peak your interest! You will find that these images are not just your typical iconic scenes, but also contain some rather different ones as well.

How does one attempt to portray an emotional response to a new and exotic travel location? What does the soul there look like, feel like? My approach was to choose many of these pictures as abstract, intimate versions of elements within each local destination. Many are quiet scenes that may not be noticed while hiking, walking, or traveling throughout this beautiful country.

During October, 2017, my wife, Jayne, and I visited South <u>Tyrol</u>, Northern Italy. The attraction there was the Italian Alps called the <u>Dolomites</u>, a <u>UNESCO World Heritage Site</u>. Our "hub of the wheel" was our timeshare hotel in <u>Tisens/Tesimo</u>, located near the South Tyrol capital city of <u>Bolzano</u>. From there, we radiated outward in various directions for scenic exploration.

We expected a "Sound Of Music" experience, that is, an Italian panoramic version of mountainous vistas around every corner. We got that! What we didn't expect was that the Italian version was really more of an Austrian version! As an added bonus, we found ourselves experiencing the later end of Autumn in the Dolomites!

I hope my pictures will reflect this sense of awe that we felt as we enjoyed our fairyland adventure!

For an interactive country map with the visited sites referenced within this ebook, please click <u>here</u>. Feel free to do your own exploring!

Explore the many informational hyperlinks included within the ebook!

Any image found within this book or on my website is available as a print purchase. Just email me at <u>jerrygrasso96@yahoo.com</u>, or visit my website at <u>jerrygrasso.com</u>.

Enjoy life!



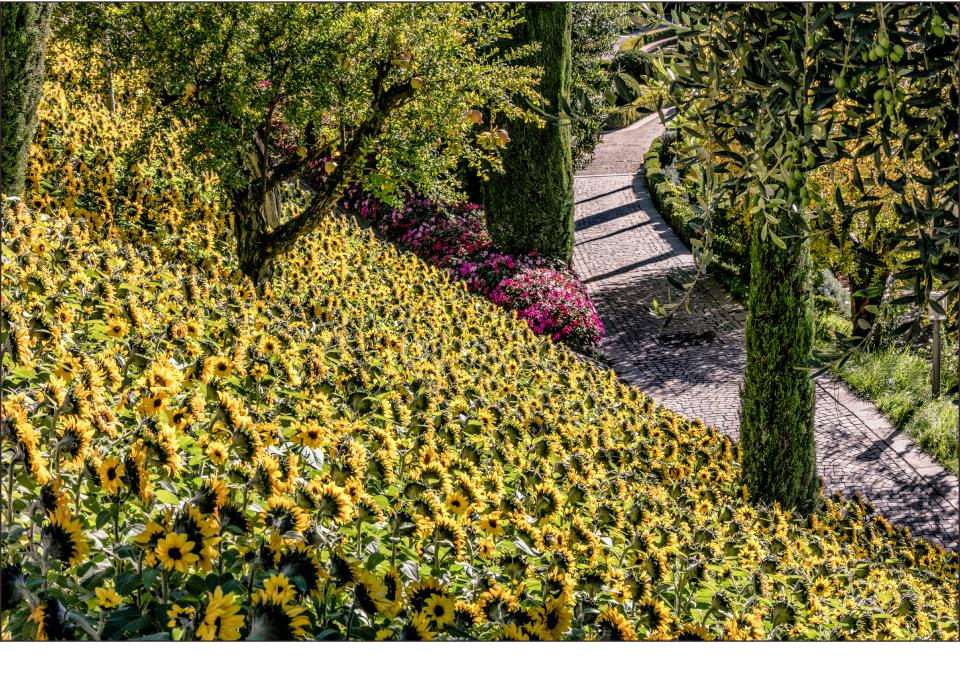
During our first full day, we toured the city of Merano. As is typical of most of the traveling throughout South Tyrol, most of the cities were found in the valleys between the mountains. Because of its temperate, year-round climate, in the years after 1850 wealthy patrons along with artists and writers came from all over Europe to recuperate in Merano and its surrounding valleys, including Franz Kafka, Franz Liszt and Stefan Zweig, as well as the Empress Elisabeth of Austria-Hungary. Today, The native language breakdown in South Tyrol is as follows: 70% German, 25% Italian and 5% Ladin. In fact, town signs are required to list the town name in these three languages. You can view a quick video of the area here from my website!







One stop we made was the botanical gardens located on the grounds of $\underline{\text{Trauttmansdorff Castle}}$. Colorful plants from all around the world thrive and bloom in Trauttmansdorff's more than eighty $\underline{\text{terraced garden landscapes}}$.

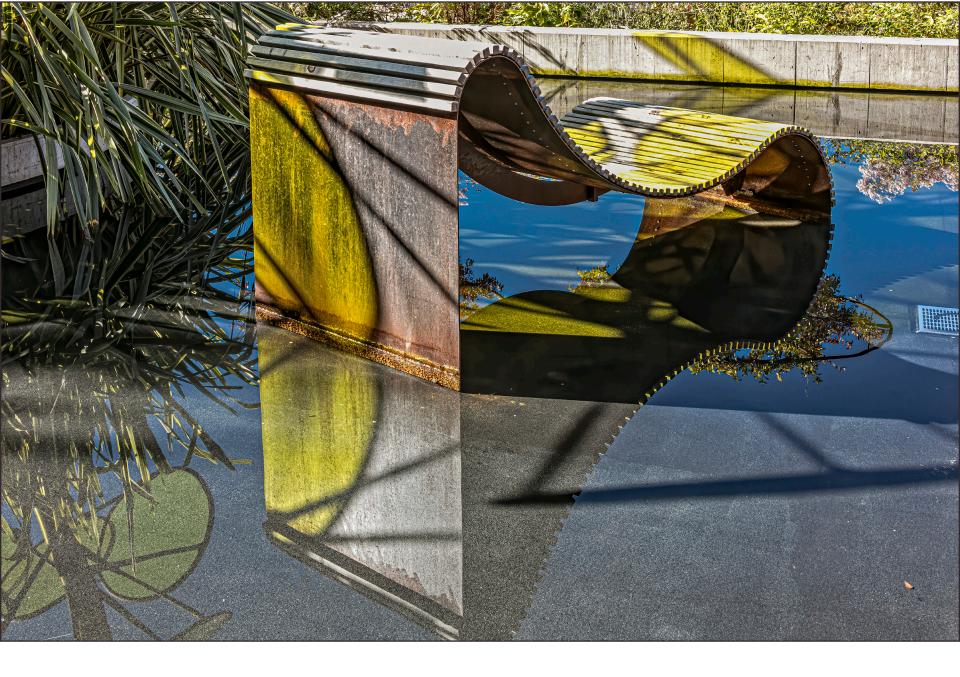








The garden is dedicated to love. Works of art, literary quotations and spatial installations that are said to evoke memories in conjunction with sensory plants such as roses and star jasmine.









In this spine-chilling garden, Nichtlinde the Witch and Rostolph the Raven watch over a ragtag bunch of bizarre sculptures – symbols of the vilest work of witches – and many a poisonous plant.













Roasted chestnuts, Austrian style!











Our next location was $\underline{\text{Lago di Braies}}$. Here was a little chapel just outside of the park.

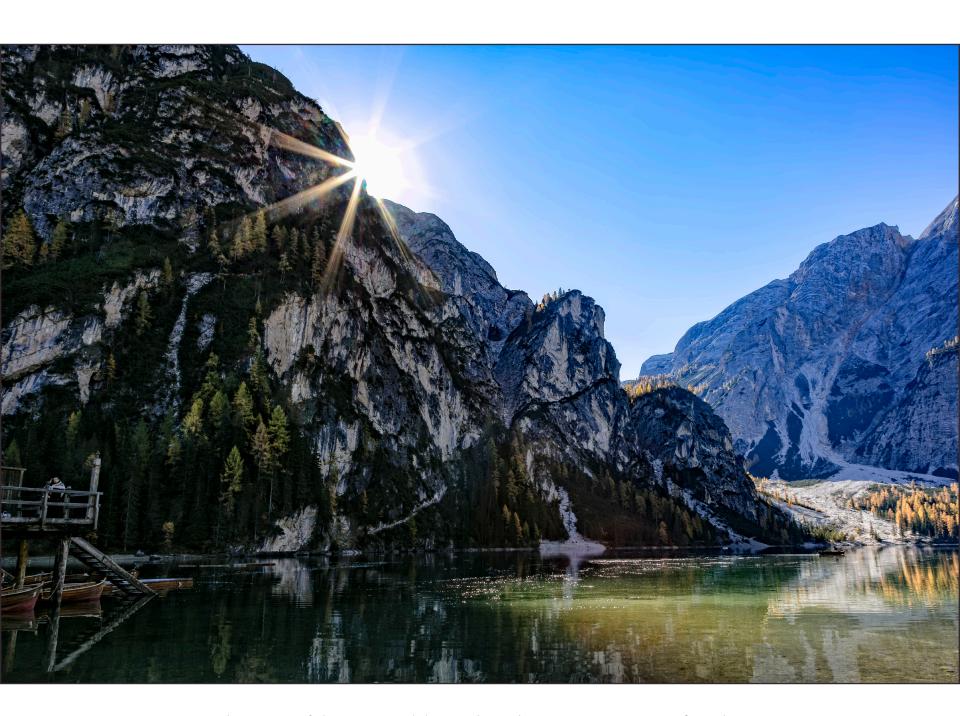






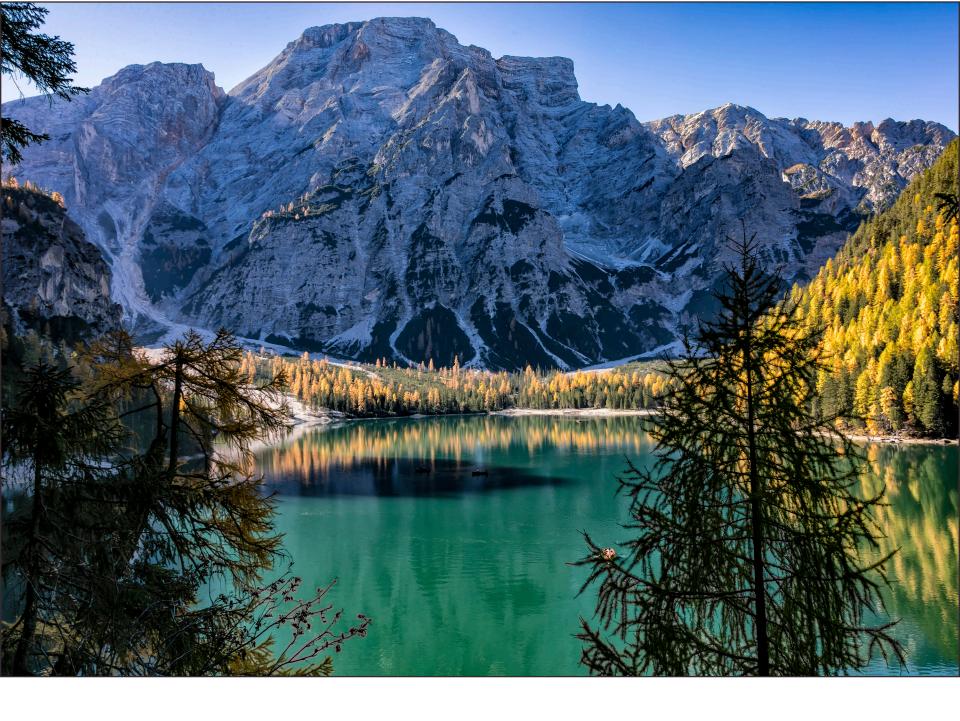






This is <u>one of the must-see lakes</u> in the Dolomites. It sits at 3908 feet elevation.





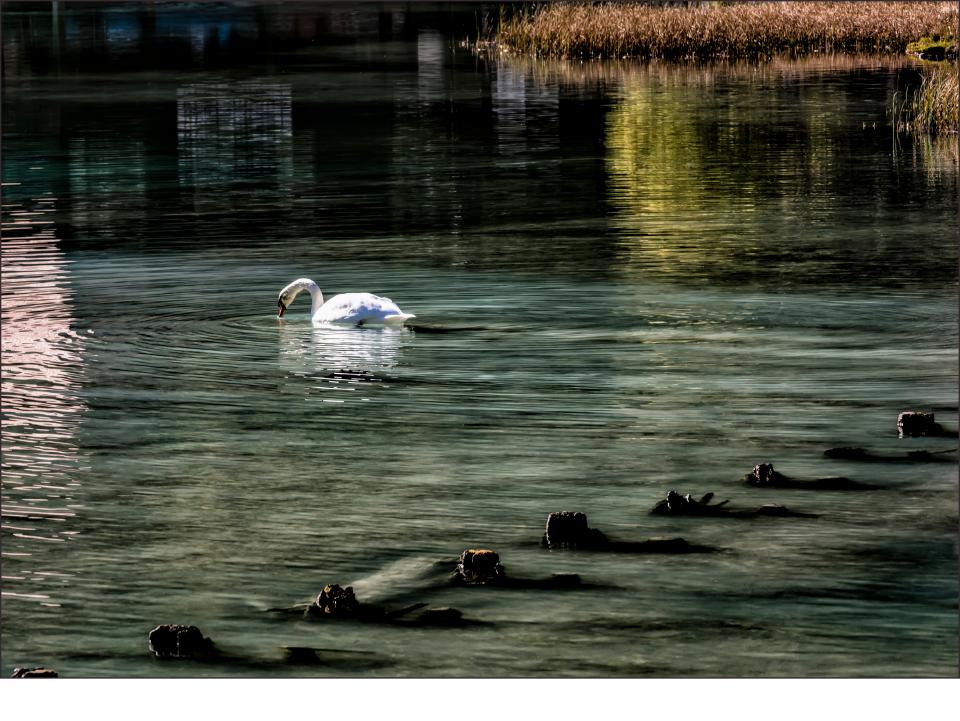














Die Drei Zinnen

Le Tre Cime The Three Peaks

Die Drei Zinnen sind das bekannteste Wahrzeichen der Dolomiten. Dieses imposante Bergmassiv zieht Menschen aus aller Welt an. Nur hier in Höhlenstein sind die Nordwände vom Tal aus zu sehen. Die markanten Felsformationen entstanden vor 200 Mio. Jahren durch Ablagerungen im Urmeer Tethys.

ITA

Le Tre Cime sono le montagne più famose delle Dolomiti. Questo spettacolare massiccio montuoso attira persone da tutto il mondo. Dal fondovalle le sue imponenti pareti nord sono visibili solo da questo punto. Le Tre Cime si sono formate più di zoo milioni di anni fa da sedimenti dell'antico mare della Tetide.

EN

The Three Peaks are the most famous landmark of the Dolomites. This majestic mountain massif attracts people from all over the world and its north faces can be seen from the valley only from this place in Höhlenstein/Landro. The impressive rock formations originated 200 millions years ago thanks to deposits in the primordial ocean Tethys.

Der Monte Cristallo

Il Monte Cristallo The Mount Cristallo

Im Süden erhebt sich die mächtige Berggruppe des Monte Cristallo. Sie spiegelt sich im nahegelegenen idyllischen Dürrensee. Östlich des Sees ragt der Monte Piano empor, ein heftig umkämpfter Schauplatz im Dolomitenkrieg.

A sud si erige il gruppo montuoso del Monte Cristallo che si specchia nel vicino Lago di Landro. Ad est del lago si eleva il Monte Piana, teatro di violente battaglie durante la Grande Guerra sulle Dolomiti.

ENG

Looking south, there are the breath taking mountains of Monte Cristallo. These reflect in the nearby, idyllic Lake Dürrensee/Landro. Monte Piana is peaking in the East and was a fiercely disputed battleground during the war in the Dolomites.

Der Naturpark

Il Parco naturale The Nature park

In Südtirol gibt es sieben Naturparks. Der Naturpark Drei Zinnen besticht durch faszinierende Landschaften und weltberühmte Berge. Er ist Teil des europäischen Schutzgebietsnetzes Natura 2000. Durch das Rienztal führt ein Wanderweg zum Zinnenplateau, wo die Rienz entspringt.

ITA

Il Sudtirolo dispone di sette parchi naturali. Il Parco naturale Tre Cime affascina per i suoi paesaggi spettacolari e le sue famosissime montagne. Il parco è parte della rete europea di aree protette Natura 2000. Un sentiero che percorre la Val Rienza porta ai piedi delle Tre Cime, dove nasce il fiume Rienza.

ENG

There are seven Nature parks in South Tyrol. The Nature park Three Peaks impresses for its fascinating landscapes and world-renowned mountains. Moreover it is part of the European protected areas network Natura 2000. There is a trekking path from the Rienz/Rienza valley to the Three Peaks plateau, where the river Rienz/ Rienza originates.

Das UNESCO Welterbe

Il Patrimonio UNESCO
The UNESCO World Heritage

Seit 2009 gehören die Dolomiten zum UNESCO Welterbe. Diese hohe Auszeichnung ist auch eine besondere Verpflichtung zur Bewahrung und zur nachhaltigen Entwicklung dieser außergewöhnlichen Gebirgsregion.

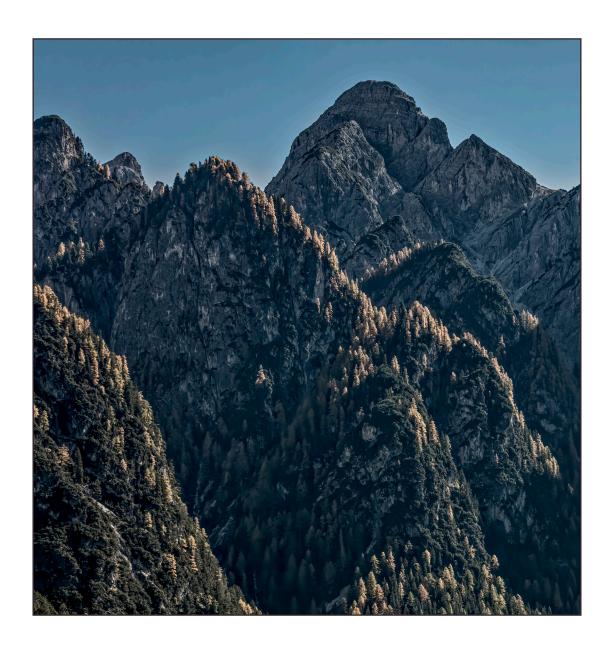
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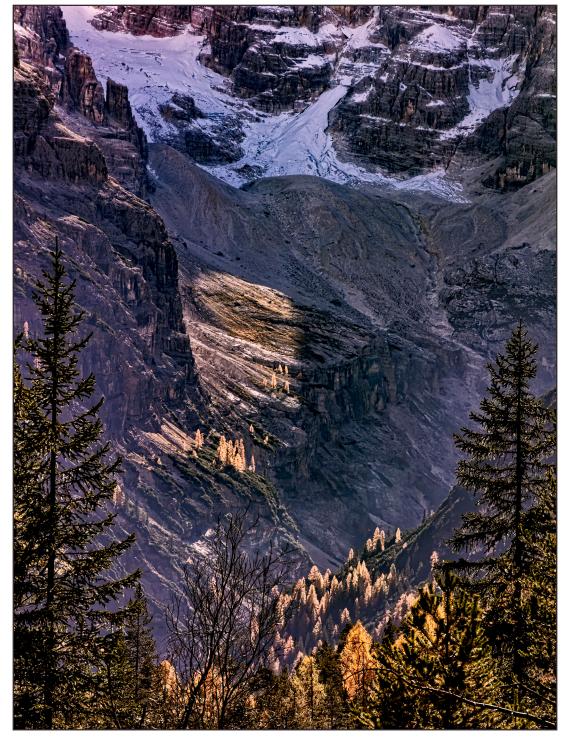
Dal 2009 le Dolomiti fanno parte del Patrimonio mondiale dell'UNESCO. Questo importantissimo riconoscimento implica anche l'impegno di salvaguardare questa straordinaria regione e di favorire uno sviluppo sostenibile.

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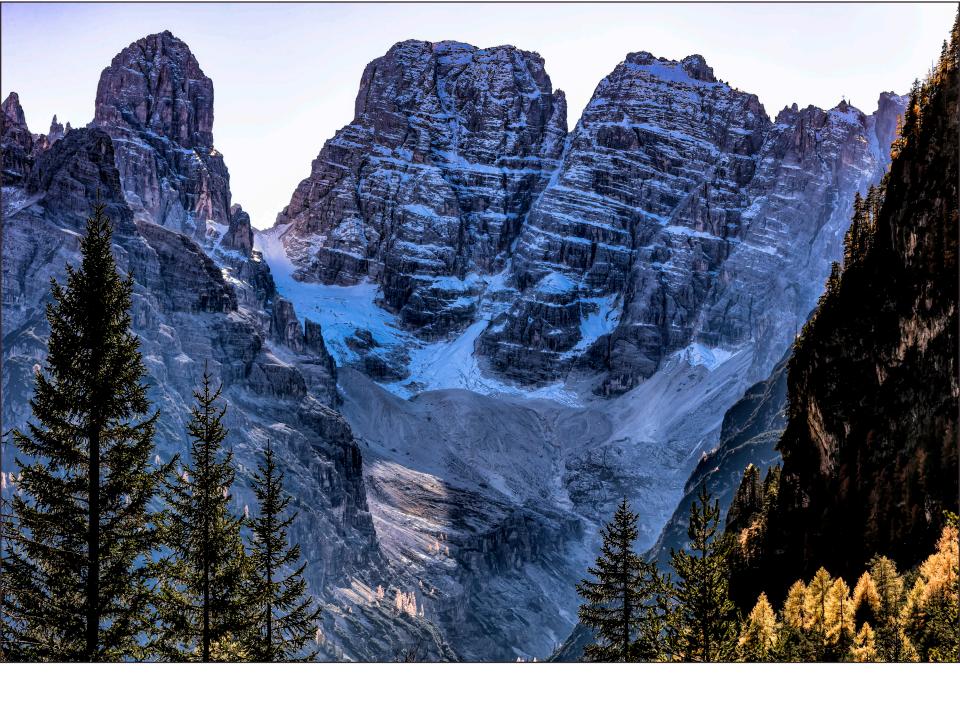
The Dolomites are part of the UNESCO world heritage since 2009. This important award is also a special commitment to preservation and sustainable development of this extraordinary mountain region.







On the way to <u>Lago di Misurina</u>.



















We drove up to the parking lot of the hut at <u>Rifugio Auronzo</u> Oid for <u>a sunset hike</u>. We wanted to be in position to photograph the Tre Cime di Lavaredo (Three Peaks) at sunset, 6:15pm. A wide, relatively flat trail connects Rifugio Auronzo with Rifugio Lavaredo, the first half of the way up. The following images are from the parking lot.



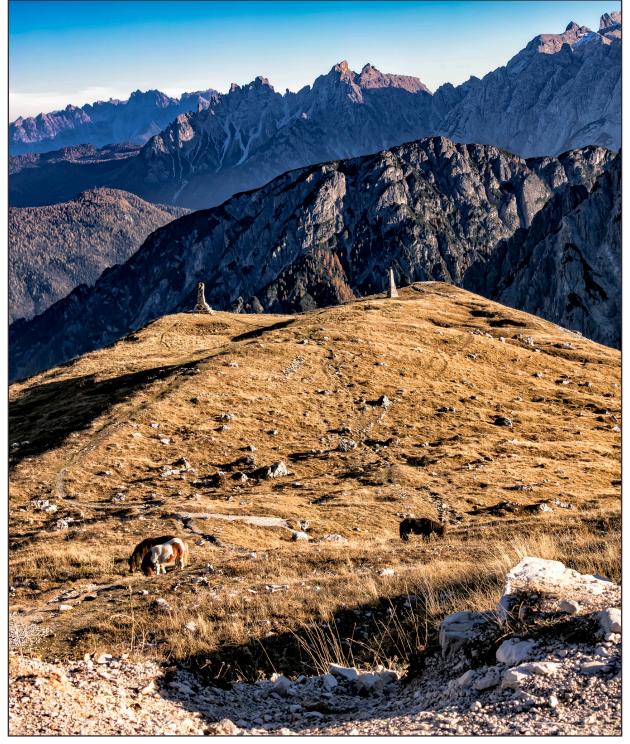






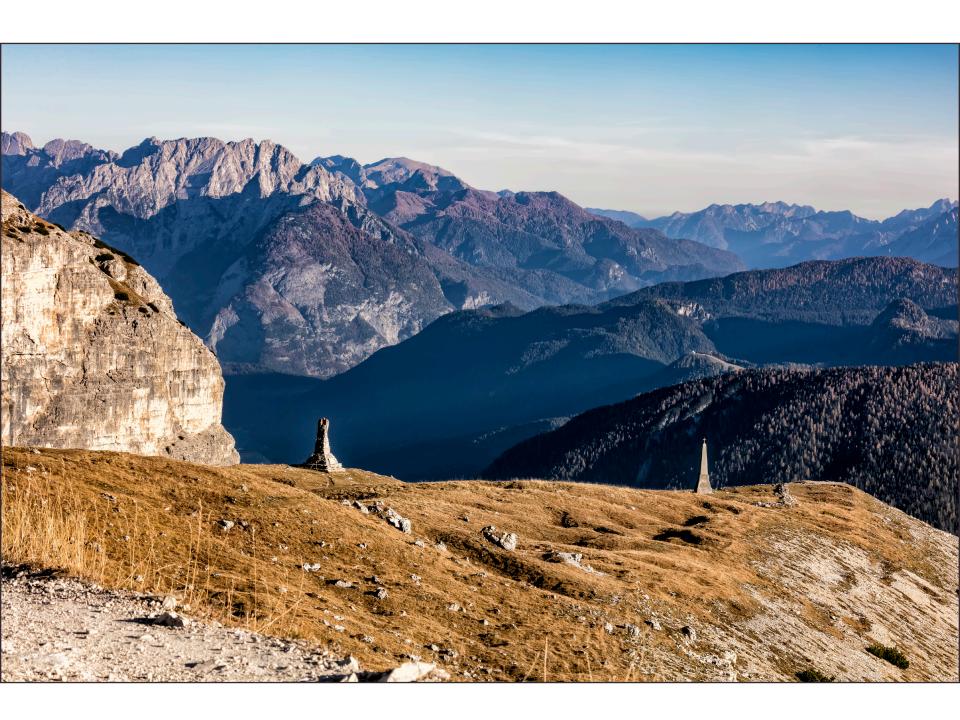


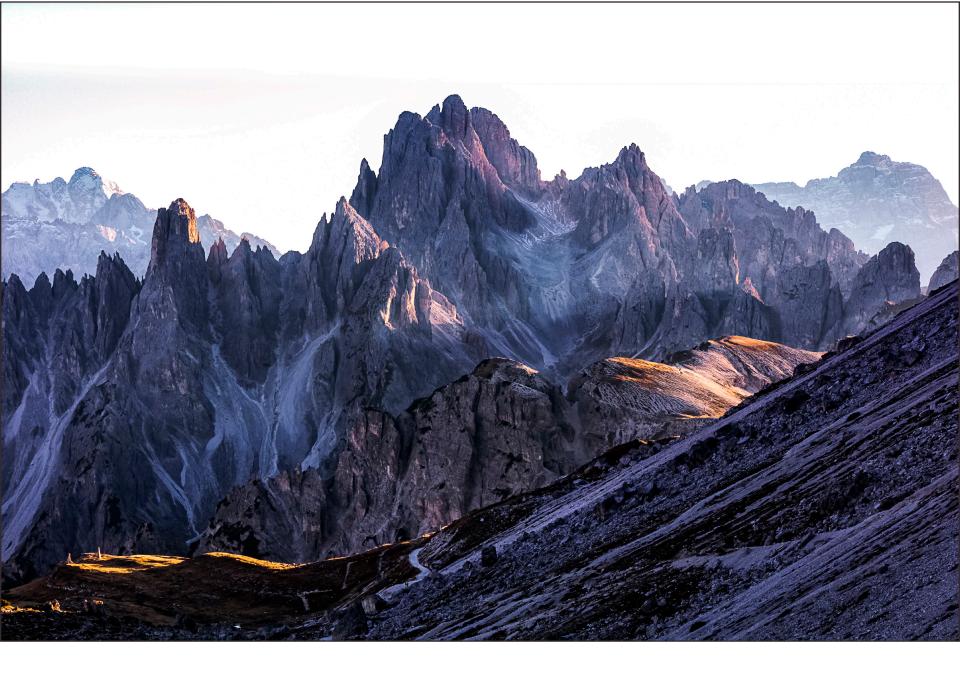




Mountain ponies...













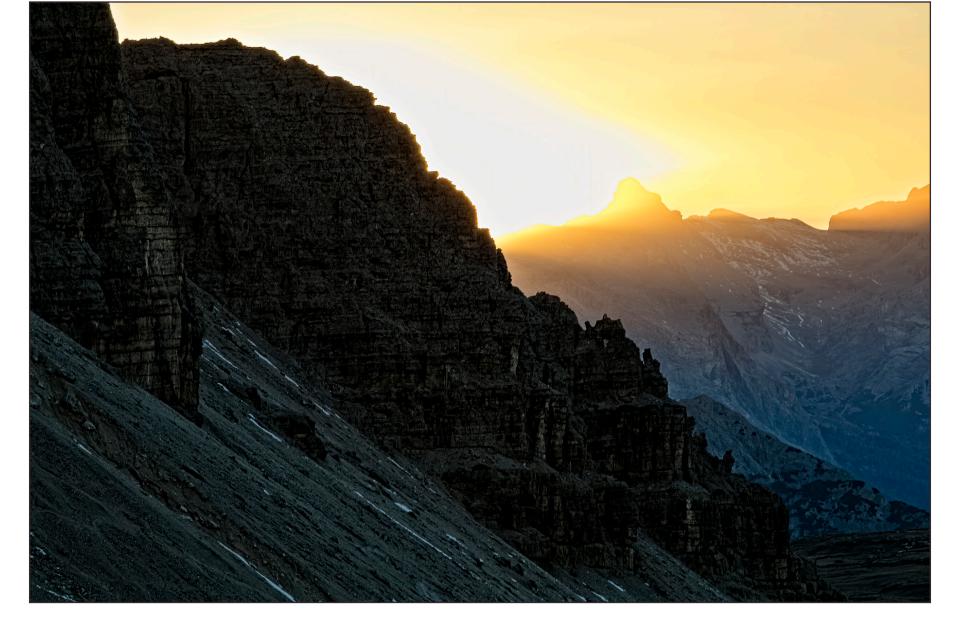
Finally, it was show time: Tre Cime at sunset! The air was cold so we had our hats and gloves on. It was dead calm, thankfully. This only added to the sense of tranquility, and the sense of personal insignificance against the backdrop of the Three Peaks...

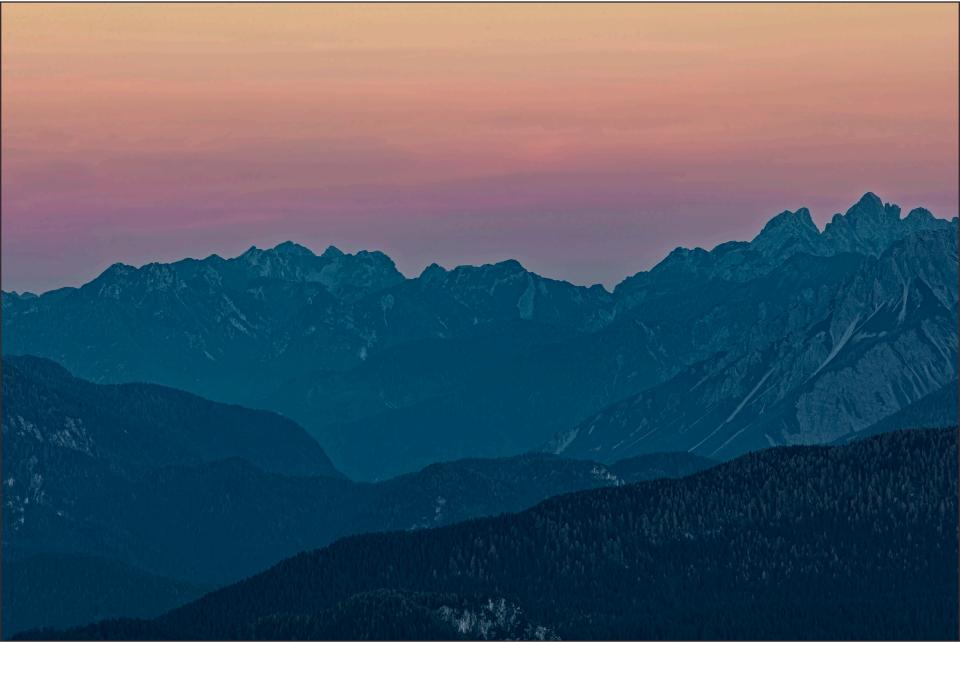






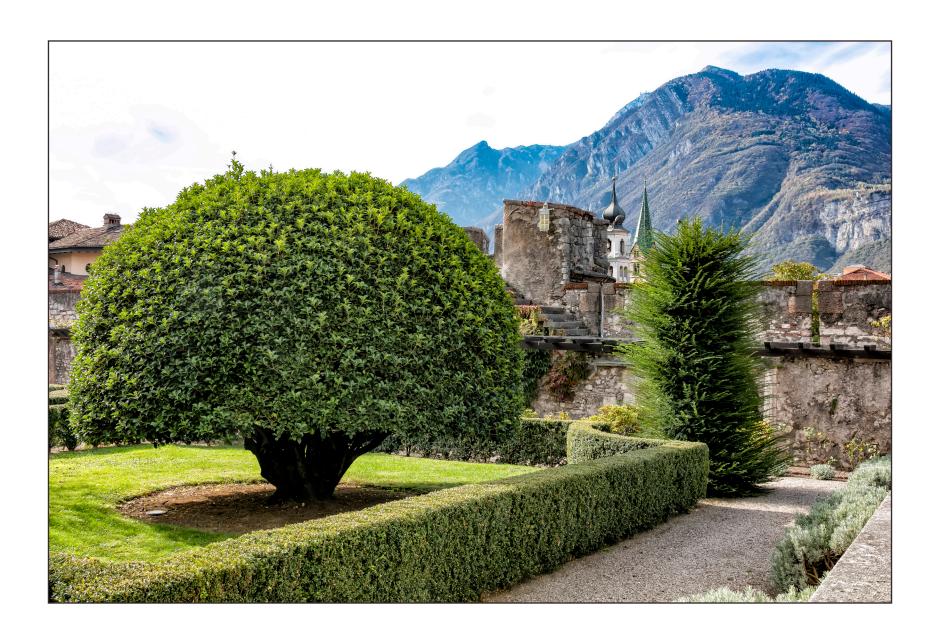








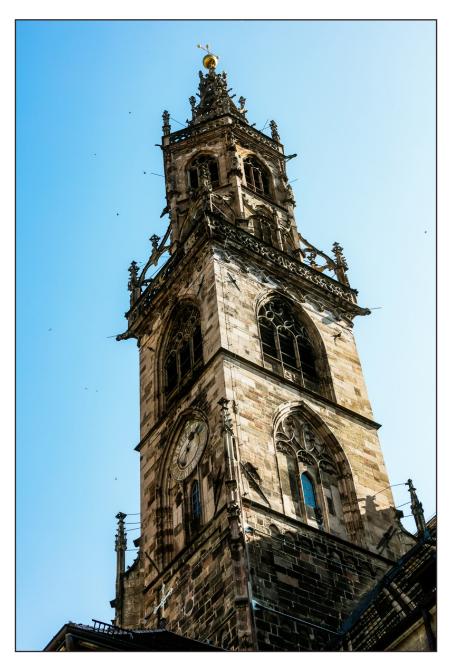








The <u>Cathedral of the Assumption</u> in <u>Brixen/Bressanone</u> dates back to the 10th century, when it was dedicated to Mary's assumption into Heaven. The present building is of the <u>Romanesque style</u>.



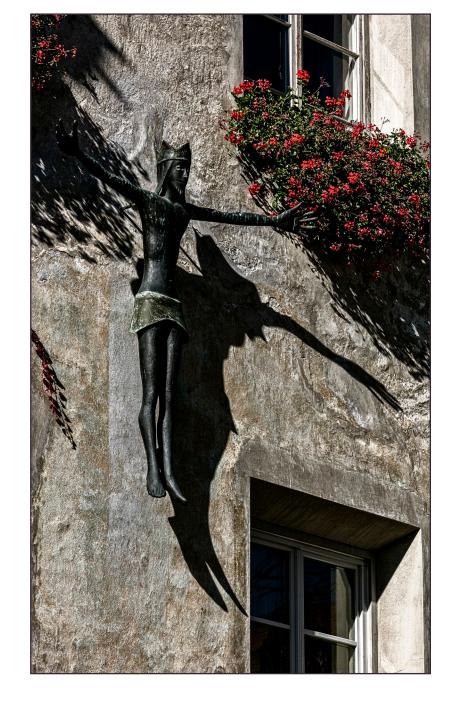
Bolzano was the final location Jayne and I visited. It is the capitol of the province of South Tyrol. This is the Assumption of Our Lady Cathedral from 1420.







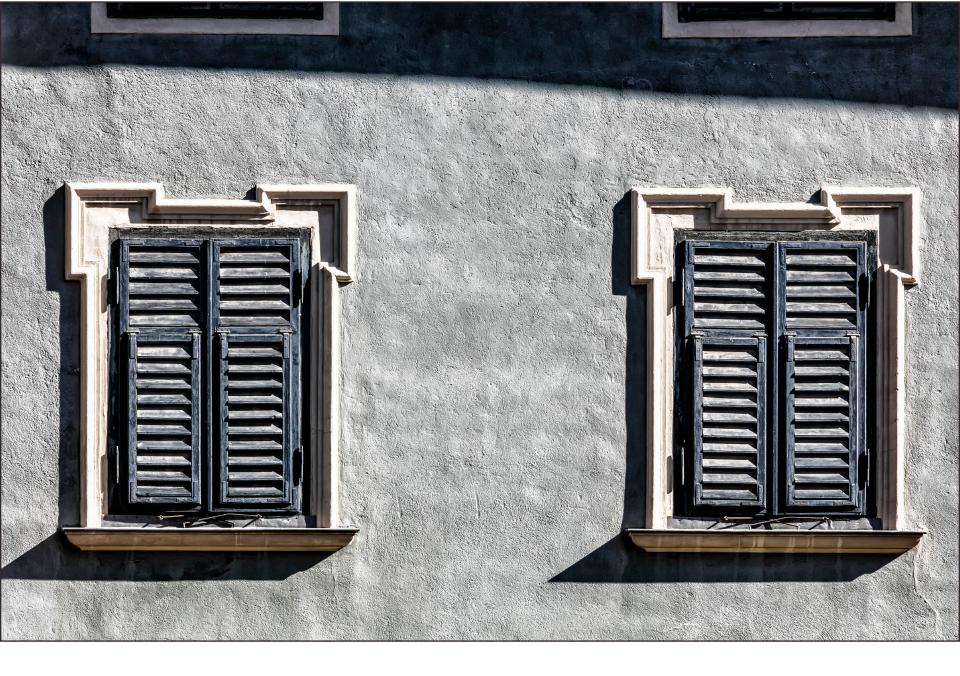
The town of Brixen/Bressanone is the oldest town in the province. There was lots of shopping in this picturesque area with a medieval town center, Cathedral Square.







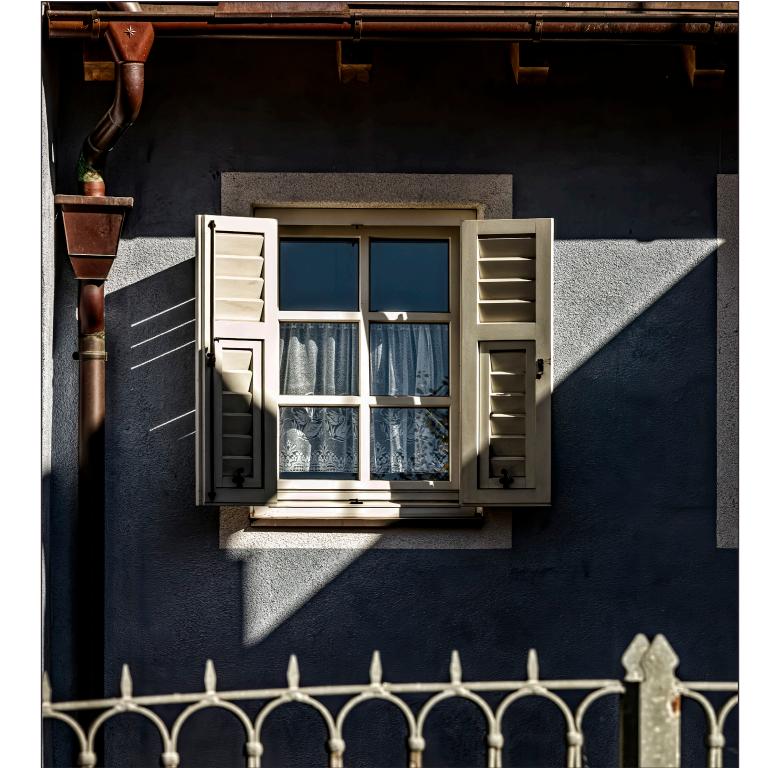










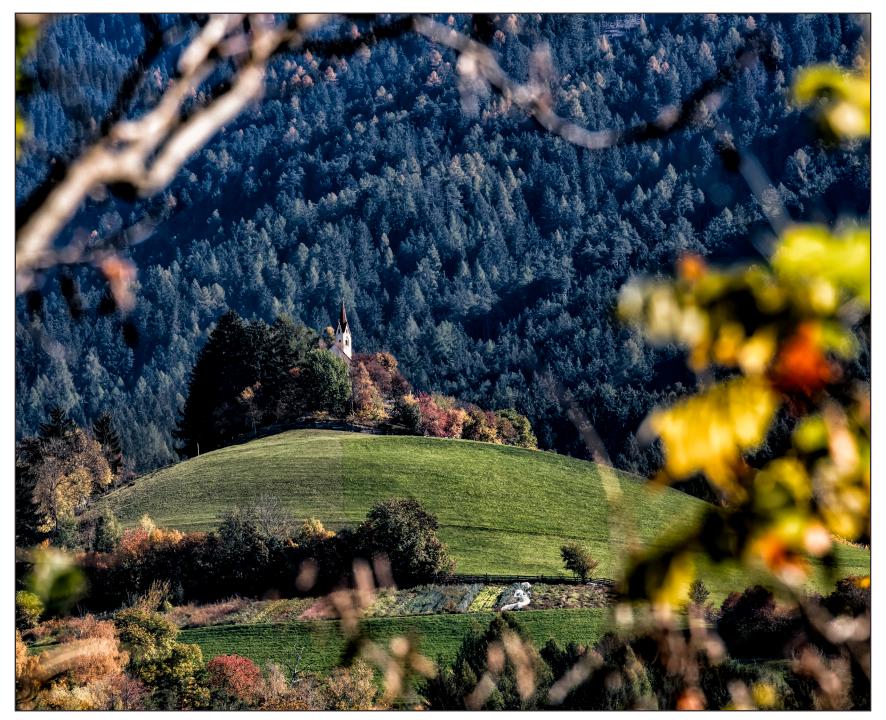












The surrounding contryside around Brixen/Bressanone.





Our next mission was to traverse several of the passes through the $\underline{\text{Val Gardena}}$ area of the Dolomites. The first stop was $\underline{\text{Carezza Lake}}$.











At Pordoi Pass. This was me with our private guide, Paolo Gelmo, of <u>Oiden Tour</u>.

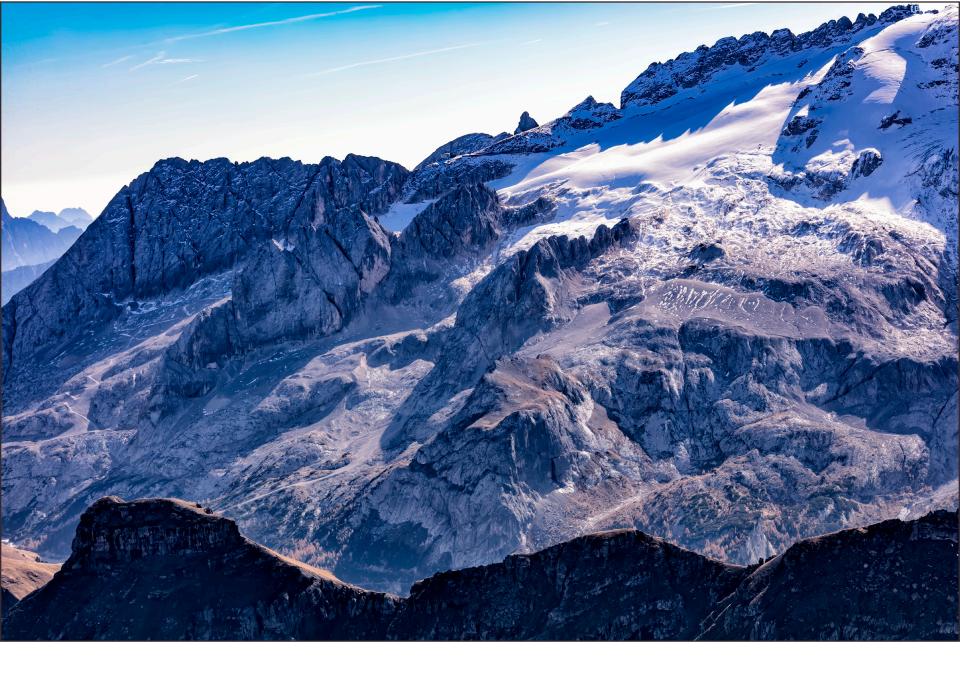


This was <u>Pordoi Pass</u> at an altitude of 7,346 feet. <u>The drive</u> to it is <u>considered</u> to be one of the <u>most scenic</u> in the Dolomites with 28 <u>hairpin bends</u>. I am sure glad Paolo did the driving! We stopped and took the <u>cable car</u> to the top of Sass Pordoi, 9678 feet, for a scenic overlook of the valley.



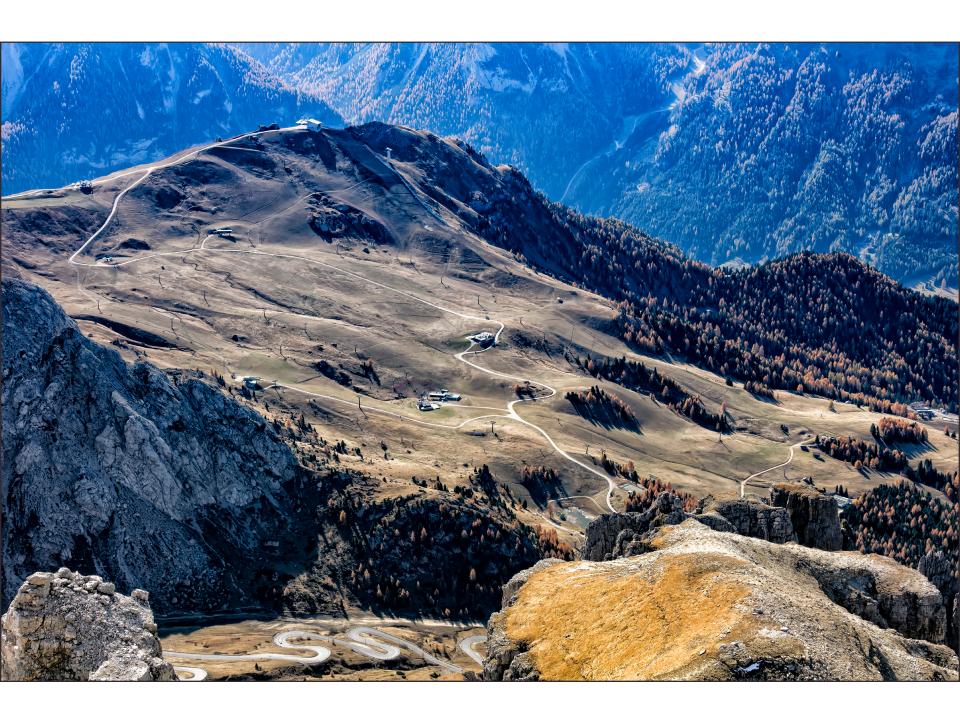


Scenes from the top of Sas Pordoi.



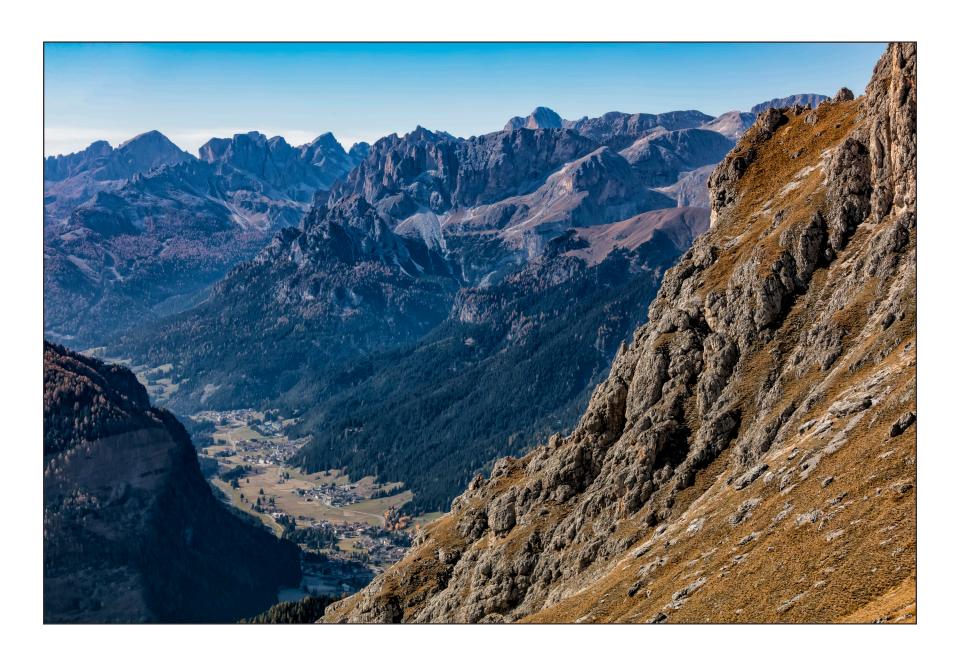


















This is the $\underline{\text{Benedictine Church}}$ of Saint Maurice at the Monastery Major that was started in 1503.





The village of <u>Ortisei</u>.









These images are of an old convent in the hills as we drove back to <u>Bolzano</u>.







These are from the colorful daily farmers' market.







These are some street and window scenes.



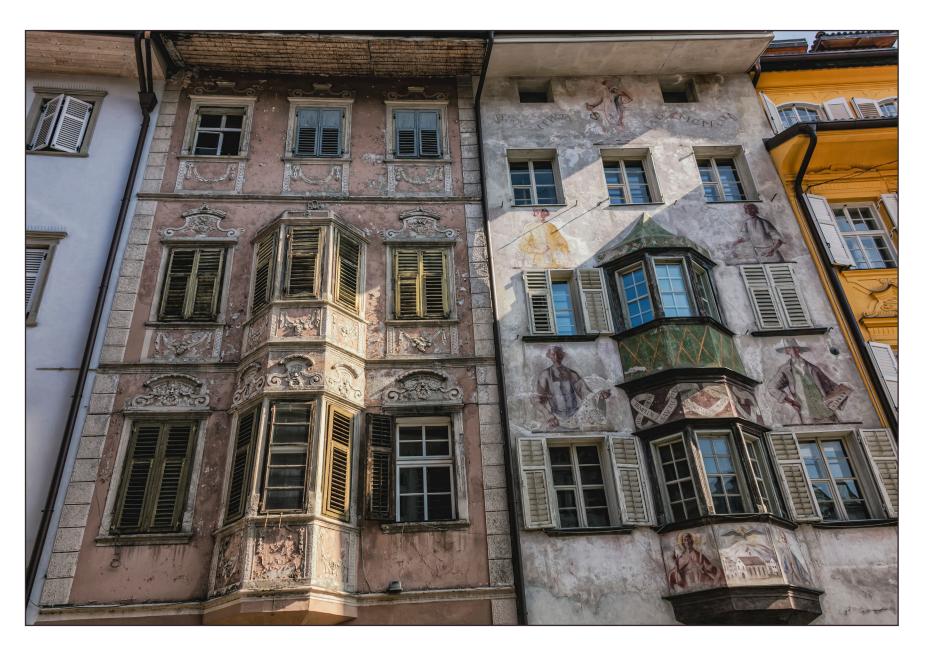




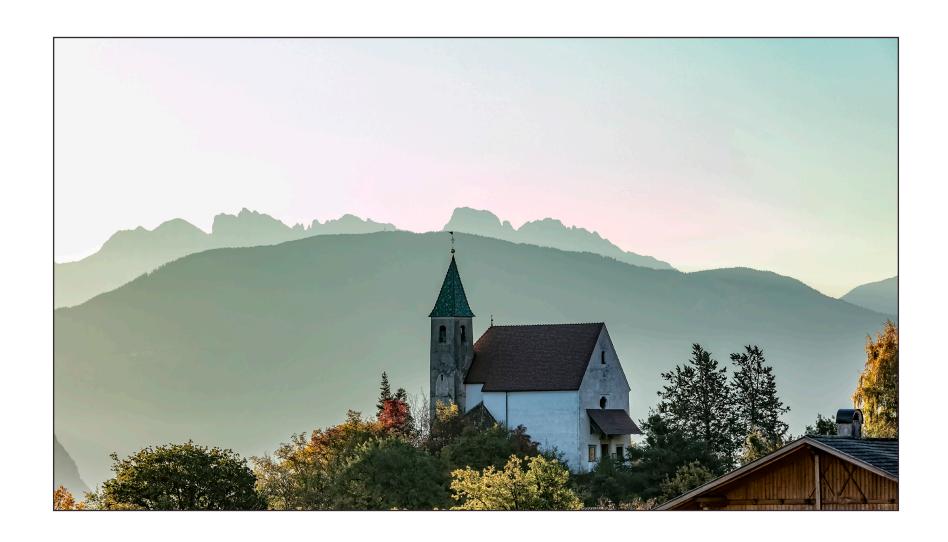




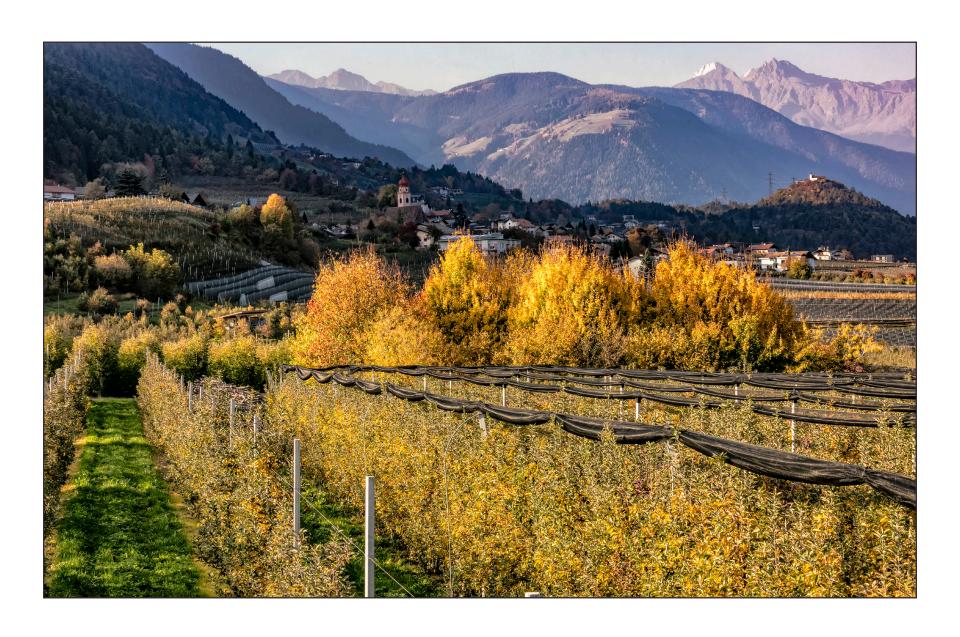




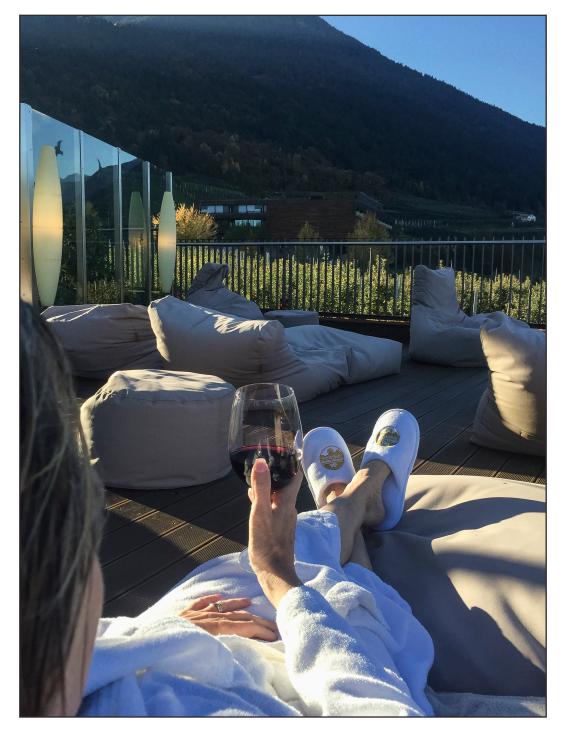
These are the buildings that line the $\underline{\text{Via Bottai}}$. It is characterised by its original signs in wrought iron of the numerous artisans' cellars.



These final scenes are from the area around our "hub of the wheel", our timeshare hotel in $\frac{Tisens/Tesimo}{Tisens/Tesimo}$, located near the South Tyrol capital city of Bolzano.







The end of a perfect day and a spectatular trip!

My Artistic Mission

Child-like wonder and inquisitiveness

are qualities frequently put aside once we become adults. We tend to slowly become sterilized by our right-or-wrong kind of world which too often has too little time to explore the what-if's and the what-could-be's. I believe we all need to re-connect with these qualities to reenrich our lives. A first glance at a photograph of an onion often reveals the fact that, indeed, it is an onion. But what also lies beneath its surface? We won't know until we peel back its layers.

Animation innovator, Walt Disney, recognized this and tried to bring back the power and importance of imagination. Inspired by his spirit, my mission therefore is to encourage the use of viewer imagination. My work attempts to explore and suggest what often lies hidden within the personalities and mysteries present in the world that was, and the world that is around us.

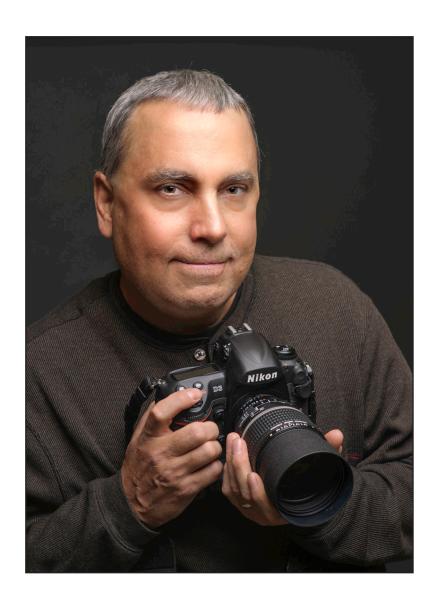
For me, my photography often is not so much about the decisive moment. Rather, it is about creating an awareness of place and a sense of history, with an aura of mystery. It is the starting point for my artistic journey, not the destination. I try to use what I produce

as personal metaphors for my reactions to what I saw and felt. My favorite motivational quote is that "Life begins at the edge of your comfort zone." My works attempt to reflect this as I probe the emotional, mind's eye after-image that was captured by both the eye and the heart, and which often defies logical explanation by the mind.

My goal is that my projects will serve as a springboard into inventiveness and exploration with the hopes of awakening my viewer's inner child. I try hard to show the connections and implications of things that others may not readily see. My hope is that my work may also help viewers discover the beginnings of their attempt to understand and perhaps even learn to tolerate and sympathize with the human condition and the world in which we live. I will try to do whatever I can to make viewers linger longer in front of my works so as to ignite their imaginative response through discovery and inquisitiveness.

Any image found within this book or on my website is available as a print purchase. Just email me at jerrygrasso96@yahoo.com, or visit my website at jerrygrasso.com.

Enjoy life!



JERRY GRASSO has been an award-winning, international fine art photographer and visual artist since 2002. He has mentored locally with photographer, <u>Mallorie Ostrowitz</u>, and then with internationally-renowned visual artist, <u>John Paul Caponigro</u>. Photography is only the starting point for many of his projects. His favorite motivational quote is that "Life begins at the edge of your comfort zone."

In addition to his travel photography, Jerry specializes in the intimately abstracted architectural photography, the photo essay, and the photo composite series.

Jerry's mission is to awaken his viewer's inquisitive inner child by creating an awareness of place and a sense of history, with an aura of mystery.



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