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Cividale del Friuli  
November 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> 2015  
Italy

## THE TERRITORY

Cividale (formerly known as Civitas Austriae) is a city of the north-east of Italy and belongs to the region called Friuli Venezia Giulia, to which has given the name (the word Friuli comes from the contraction of Forum Julii, name of Cividale during the Roman period).

Friuli has always been important because of its position: most of its relations between Italy and the rest of the Continent had taken place through this region during the ancient times, mainly because of the scarce height of the Alps at this point. This fact has led to a situation of multiculturalism in this area. The best proof of that is the *Mittelfest*, a yearly cultural event, which takes place in Cividale, and during which the most different



cultures of Europe can meet and compare one another.

Friuli is not interesting just from a historical and cultural attractions, but also for his breath-taking landscape and unique natural enviroments.

## THE HISTORY

Cividale was founded by Julius Caesar around 50 b.C. as a market place

with the name of Forum Julii: the city was near to an important commercial road which linked the north of Italy with the Noricum, an important region for the presence of iron mines. Cividale gained importance in the late-roman period, assuming a fundamental role in the defensive system that the Romans settled along the Alps as an extreme defence against barbarian populations that where trying to invade Italy, and becoming the seat of the roman governor of the tenth provincia "Venetia et Histria".

When Alboin, king of the Lombards, decided to conquer Italy, in 568 a.D., Cividale was the first city he met after having passed the Alps. He found the city still enclosed by strong walls; so here established the capital of the first Lombard duchy, and gave it his nephew Gisulfus. Under the Lombard domination the city knew the moment of its highest prosperity, becoming an important cultural and political centre. After the defeat of Lombards it didn't lose completely this role, as it was still the residence of the patriarch of Aquileia. During a siege of the city, in 1331, guns where used for the first time in Europe.

After its annexation in 1419, Cividale remained under the control of the Republic of Venice until 1797, when was surrendered to Austria. It became eventually part of the Italian Realm in 1866.





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