

CHRISTMAS MARKETS IN ITALY

Alpine Italy lights up for the Christmas season with some of the most interesting Christmas Markets on offer in Europe, combining Mediterranean flavours and German traditions, festive food and wine, gift ideas, decorations and local handicraft. Here is a selection listed by region.

ALTO ADIGE (South Tyrol/ Südtirol)

www.suedtirol.info

BOLZANO/BOZEN: ALPINE - MEDITERRANEAN CHRISTMAS



Bolzano is home to South Tyrol's largest Christmas market. It's held in the Waltherplatz square and though the whole square is a dazzling spectacle of light, the historical Old Town around the square is also a glorious sight before Christmas – lovingly decorated and at its most picturesque. Don't miss the town hall square with its Christmas display of handicrafts, the Silbergasse street and the Kornplatz square with its charity market, and the famous arches with their traditional shops. But what

makes it all so magical is the special mix of the traditional conservative values of the Alps and the easy-going Mediterranean lifestyle. An irresistible attraction is the Waltherplatz square with its varied range of concerts and readings, not forgetting the plethora of Christmas gifts and culinary delights on offer. You should definitely sample the Zelten, a traditional fruitcake, with its delicious aroma of cinnamon and carnations.

Venue Piazza Walther/Waltherplatz
Open from 22 Nov. 2018 to 6 Jan. 2019 (25 Dec. closed)

BRESSANONE/BRIXEN: ART AND HISTORY

The Bressanone Christmas market is held against the magnificent backdrop of the Domplatz square, which features the cathedral, St. Michael's Parish Church and the town hall. If you're looking for some really special presents for friends and family, you'll find lots of great ideas amongst the handmade Christmas decorations and wood carvings displayed on the stands. And if it's a tasty morsel you're after, you'll be spoilt for choice with the wide range of sweet and savoury South Tyrolean delicacies ranging from speck-flavoured dumplings with cabbage to Kaiserschmarrn, shredded pancakes. Children won't believe their eyes when they see the historic steam carousel and people of all ages will love a gentle horse-drawn carriage ride and an exciting tour through the wintry Old Town of Bressanone. Afterwards you can warm yourself up with a mulled wine or hot apple juice and let the joyful Christmas mood work its magic. Or you could take a stroll to the Hofburg, the mighty former residence of Bressanone's prince-bishops, which is home to the Diözesanmuseum with an impressive collection of cribs and other treasures.

Venue Piazza Duomo/Domplatz (Cathedral Square)
Open from 23 Nov 2018 to 6 Jan 2019 (25 Dec. closed)

MERANO: SENSUAL DELIGHTS AND RELAXATION



The fashionable spa town of Merano has style and its own leisurely rhythm, which is impressively evident with its Christmas market during the festive season. As you stroll along the Kurpromenade, you can hear the waters of the Passer river and smell the enchanting aroma of roasted chestnuts and mulled wine. You simply have to stop and marvel at the wide range of beautiful regional hand-crafted products. And there are so many ways to escape the hustle and bustle. You can join an atmospheric torch-lit city tour, explore

the city on one of the well-kept walking trails or relax in the modern thermal baths. Children can let off steam at the ice rink on the Thermenplatz square or forget all about the time as they enjoy the varied programme in Goldys Häuschen on the Pfarrplatz square. There's also much for art lovers to enjoy at the Kunst Meran museum, the Palais Mamming and the Landesfürstliche Burg. And those who love to wander further afield will find lots of small but rather splendid Christmas markets around Merano.

Venue : City Centre

Open from 23 Nov 2018 to 6 Jan 2019 (25 Dec. closed)

VIPITENO/STERZING: LIVING TRADITIONS

Vipiteno, South Tyrol's northernmost and highest-lying city, hosts an irresistible Christmas market with an enchanting festive atmosphere only to be found in the heart of the Alps. In the time leading up to Christmas, the beautifully floodlit 15th-century Zwölferturm tower houses a crib exhibition and rises majestically over the picturesque Stadtplatz square, where wooden huts with a wide range of handmade regional and traditional products make shopping and tasting an unforgettable pleasure. Colourful facades decorated with oriel windows give the pedestrian zone featuring many attractive shops its typical character and testify to Vipiteno's past as a major mining and trading city. The region boasts a mining history dating back over 800 years and exciting special tours through the Ridnaun-Schneeberg Mining World bring this period vividly to life. From Vipiteno's pedestrian zone, winter sports fans have just a five-minute walk to the Rosskopf valley station. This not only offers lots of fun on a wide range of ski slopes, but also the longest floodlit and artificially snowed sledging trail in Italy.

Venue Piazza città/Stadtplatz (Town Square)

Open from 23 Nov 2018 to 6 Jan 2019 (25 Dec. closed)

BRUNICO/BRUNECK: HANDICRAFTS AND TRADITION



The city of Brunico, located in the heart of the Pustertal valley, is a beguiling and natural fusion of alpine tradition, enthusiasm for mountains and nature, and of course an openness to innovation. The city's intense vibrancy is truly tangible at its Christmas market by the Graben and in the Tschurtschenthaler Park. On those cold winter days and nights, the wooden huts offer a wonderful range of woven and knitted fabrics, teas and schnapps made from organic

herbs and a large selection of high-quality regional products which you can give as a present or enjoy yourself. Children can try their hand at ice skating on the town hall square, with adults free to go window shopping through the Old Town and delight in its appealing boutiques. There's the same vibrant atmosphere in the upper town around Mary's Column, and the Palais Sternbach has interesting exhibitions of new and old craftsmanship and handicraft demonstrations. It's also worth your while taking the short walk to the Schlossberg: the medieval Schloss Bruneck castle houses the Messner Mountain Museum Ripa, and the Bergfried offers wonderful views of the city, the mountains and the Kronplatz ski area.

Venue Via Bastioni, Parco Tschurtschenthaler and at "Oberstadt"
Open from 23 Nov 2018 to 6 Jan 2019 (closed 25 Dec.)

TRENTINO

www.visittrentino.it

TRENTO



The Trento Christmas Market in Piazza Fiera is one of the most famous festive markets of the region. The market also extends to Piazza Cesare Battisti with a great number of stalls and mini-chalets offering a wide selection of Trentino's many excellent foods, wines and crafts.

Open: 24 November 2018 – 6 January 2019 (closed 25 Dec)

www.mercatinodinatale.tn.it

ARCO, Lake Garda

It is the time of lights, of colours and Christmas flavours, mulled wine and Christmas bakery. Forty market booths, spread all over the centre of Arco, offer Christmas tree decorations, ideas regarding Christmas presents, handicraft products and local delicacies. Various events taking place in the evenings complete the offer of the Arco Christmas Market.

A ride on the back of the camel Ali or a little pony will make children's eyes sparkle. Moreover there are crafting workshops, a parade with Santa Claus who walks across the roads together with his reindeer, as well as a ride with one of the colourful little trains driving through Arco.

Open: 16 November 2018 – 6 January 2019 (closed 25 Dec. and 2 Jan.). Historic centre of Hapsburg Arco

ROVERETO

Little wooden houses, smell of resins, fresh air, starry sky and a dust of snow, will take you into the magic atmosphere of Christmas. Walking across the streets you will find different items: artistic handicrafts, clothing, sweets, typical food and wines in the whole historical centre between palaces, squares and museums.

Open 24 Nov 2018 – 6 January 2019 (closed 25 Dec.) Centre of Rovereto.

www.visitrovereto.it



LEVICO TERME

The fairytale-like Habsburgs Park of Levico, every year hosts a large number of market booths. The Austrian tradition reflects former times, when the Habsburgs have chosen Levico as their summer

domicile. Especially when it snows or if the landscape is snow-covered, this park changes into a fairytale-like area: some 30 market booths are spread all over this park between the huge trees and it really seems to be a winter wonderland. Local handicraft products, Christmas tree decorations, ideas for Christmas presents as well as local products such as honey, “Luganega”, a local meat product as well as boar ham. Music and entertainment with folk music groups, Elf Village for the kids and an exhibition of more than 100 cribs as well as concerts complete the wide offer of the Christmas Market.

Open: 24 November 2018 – 6 January 2019 (closed 25 Dec).

VENETO

www.veneto.to

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO



In the shadow of the Tofane, the advent period takes on its traditional colours thanks to the Cortina Christmas Market, which brings lights, colour and a festive atmosphere to the main street, Corso Italia. The famous pedestrian street lined by renowned national and international shops, will be scattered with small wooden huts where artisans and local producers exhibit their products. All accompanied by mulled wine, roasted chestnuts and traditional sweets. Inside each of the characteristics wooden huts, a variety of seasonal merchandise, representing the crafts and

traditions of the area, will be exhibited and offered for sale. To complete the atmosphere, and to make the browsing and shopping even more enjoyable, there will of course be music to fit the mood, in the form of all the most cherished and traditional Christmas songs.

Open: 1 December 2018 – 7 January 2019

ASIAGO

The gardens of Piazza Carli host the Asiago's Christmas Market, several huts will sell traditional decorations in glass, wood and ceramic, typical Asiago patisserie, natural products and the famous Asiago cheese. There will also be huts selling local dishes and mulled wine.

Open: 11 November 2018 – 7 January 2019 (open from 10.30 on 25 Dec.)

VERONA



Verona hosts each year a Nuremberg Christmas Market in the central Piazza dei Signori. The German styled market will have all the traditional huts, elegantly illuminated and decorated selling typical food, handicrafts, Christmas tree decorations, cribs and serving specialities such as mulled wine, Stollen and Lebkuchen cakes, bratwurst and more.

Open: 17 November – 26 December 2018 (closes at 5pm on 24 Dec and opens at 3pm on 25 Dec.)

www.nataleinpiazza.it

BELLUNO

The traditional Christmas Market of Belluno will crowd and light up the gardens of Piazza dei Martiri, one of the most beautiful squares of the city, with its wooden stands, decorations, and bright, colorful lights. Called Christmas Gardens, the market sells wool and wood handmade objects, original gift ideas and local and regional specialties.

There will be about twenty stands and many outdoor refreshment areas with mulled wine, sandwiches and hot chocolate. In the weekend there will also be entertainment such as music, games for children and shows.

Open: 2 – 24 December 2018

AOSTA VALLEY

www.lovevda.it

AOSTA



The successful recipe of the “Marché Vert Noël”, one of the most known Christmas markets of the Alps, is explained by the location. A coloured alpine village surrounded by music and lights, with roads, squares, bridges, wooden chalets and a true fir forest, is recreated in the “heart” of Aosta. Visitors will be able to walk around the “streets” of the village searching for a gift or simply admiring the traditional

handicrafts such as ceramics, wooden items, clothing accessory in wool, felt, leather and hemp fabric, Christmas decorations and typical gastronomic products.

Even this year, the colourful and suggestive scenery of the Christmas markets in the City of Aosta will take place throughout the Christmas holidays from November 24 2018 to 6 January 2019 (opens at 4pm on 25 Dec. and 1 Jan.)

FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA

www.turismo.fvg.it

TRIESTE

In Trieste you can experience the old charm of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire in its Christmas Market in Piazza Sant’ Antonio and surrounding streets: typical Trieste foods and wines, Christmas decorations, artificial snow, songs and music to accompany the visitor during the festive season. Open: 8 to 26 December 2018.

SAURIS



The Christmas Market in Sauris re-lives each year the tradition of this delightful mountain village. Along the narrow streets and the quaint squares Father Christmas and wooden hut selling festive food and wine, toys and decoration will animate the atmosphere. Not to be missed is

the opportunity to discover the old Sauris on a horse-drawn carriage.
Open: 8-9 December 2018

CHRISTMAS IN THE CITIES

Christmas is a well loved tradition all over Italy and traditional Christmas markets and fairs can be found all over the peninsula in the most important cities.

BOLOGNA



Fiera di Santa Lucia
Portico of Chiesa dei Servi in Strada Maggiore
The Santa Lucia market takes place at Portico dei Servi at the Church of Santa Maria dei Servi in the heart of the centre of Bologna. In front of the church building there is a airy space surrounded by porticoes of tall marble columns.
This traditional Fair dedicated to Christmas, stalls full of decorations for the Xmas tree, the nativity crib, food and wine and other

delicacies.

Open: 17 November to 26 December 2018

VENICE

Christmas fairs in various piazzas (campo) in Venice: Campo S.Bartolomeo, Campo San Salvador, Campo San Luca, Campo Manin, Strada Nuova (where you can find the "Venice Christmas Fair"). You can also find a Christmas Market in Mestre with ice rink in Piazza Ferretto. Another ice rink is located in Venice in Piazza San Polo.

On the Island of Murano you can find "Christmas of Glass" during the month of December until 5 January 2019, with hand-crafted baubles and the Tunnel of Lights, a spectacular glasswork regatta.

FLORENCE

Mercato Tedesco di Natale (German Christmas Market)

Piazza Santa Croce

This Christmas Market is inspired by the tradition of the German city of Heidelberg, wooden huts and stalls selling Italian and German delicacies, decorations, handicrafts.

Open: 28 November - 21 December 2018

www.firenzeturismo.it

NAPLES



Nativity Crib in Via S. Gregorio Armeno

This narrow street is famous all over the world for its handcrafted Nativity Crib figurines, from the traditional ones to the most sophisticated, it buzzes at Christmas time with Neapolitans and tourists alike.

TURIN

This traditional market returns with many new exhibitors and full of joy, colour, tradition, celebration, solidarity, peace, light and sweetness: a wide range of gift items for Christmas, together with tastings and selling of culinary delights and specialties of Piedmont producers and other Italian regions.

Open: 24 Nov 18 – 6 Jan 2019 in Piazza Castello.

“Sogno di Natale” is another market with Father Christmas village open in the gardens of the Reggia Venaria with an elf house, sleigh circuit and festive street food, open from Nov. 2018 to Jan. 2019

www.turismotorino.org

MILAN



Il villaggio delle meraviglie

Giardini Indro Montanelli, entry from Corso Venezia.

Christmas market and other seasonal activities for adults and children takes place in these gardens in the centre of Milan, with a skating rink and shows with various performance artists throughout the festive season.

Open: 2 December 2018 – 7 January 2019

Milan also hosts every year the “Oh Bej Oh Bej” fair during the celebrations of its Patron Saint, Saint Ambrose, in the area near the Sforza Castle. It is a very traditional market fair with typical Milanese artisan food, wines and other products.

Open 7-10 December 2018

NB: information is correct at time of publication

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