FONDAZIONE BRUNO KESSLER
MAGAZINE

Hidden Pieve Tesino

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The history of nineteenth-century print merchants in an app

For more than two centuries, street vendors and print merchants from Tesino have sold printed images. They established print shops and stores specializing in prints, photographs, and antiques throughout Europe and beyond. Their remarkable story, which began in the second half of the seventeenth century, has been studied for more than fifty years from a variety of perspectives, including its more difficult and tragic aspects. For more than a decade, this history has been told at the Per Via Museum in Pieve Tesino, and today it represents a shared cultural heritage of the entire Tesino plateau.

Hidden Pieve Tesino, available free of charge on the iOS and Android app stores beginning in summer 2026, is an application created by Fondazione Bruno Kessler's Italian-German Historical Institute in Trento and funded by NEXT GENERATION EU, the Italian Republic–Ministry of Culture, the Municipality of Pieve Tesino, and the PNRR project Pieve Tesino Borgo d'Europa. The app offers a new way to showcase this important body of historical research. It presents the latest scholarship on the print trade and itinerant commerce between the early modern and contemporary periods and is part of the European family of History City Apps. It is a digital public history project developed by the Italian-German Historical Institute and the University of Exeter in collaboration with Fondazione Trentina Alcide De Gasperi, the Per Via Museum of Prints and Itinerant Trade, and the Daziaro-Gaudenzi Foundation.

Available in both Italian and English, the **app** features a walking tour through the streets and squares of Pieve Tesino led by a historical character. Set in 1881, at the height of the print merchants' era, the story follows the itinerant vendors who spent more than two centuries traveling roads and public spaces, selling devotional, decorative, educational, historical, and geographical prints produced by the Remondini publishing house of Bassano del Grappa and other renowned printers. Users follow the story on their smartphones as they walk through the village, with the option of using a historical map—the Austrian Land Registry map (1858–1861)—which can be georeferenced using the device's GPS.



The **itinerary**, *titled The Return of the Merchant,* begins in Piazza Garibaldi in Pieve Tesino, just a short walk from the Per Via Museum. The full tour lasts about an hour and it can also be experienced remotely or completed one stop at a time. Among the cultural sites included in the audio tour is Villa Daziaro, which is currently being enhanced through the Pieve Tesino Borgo d'Europa project.

The walking tour is **narrated by Adamo**, a print merchant whose story reflects the experiences of many emigrants from Tesino who traveled throughout Europe during the nineteenth century, particularly to France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, and Russia. His return home from Paris in 1881 unfolds across six stops, where his account is brought to life through archival documents, prints, and photographs. Along the way, users are invited to identify architectural features connected to the history of the nineteenth-century print trade and the village's most significant

public spaces.

Hidden Pieve Tesino is a free, accessible tool that highlights the stories of emigrants and print merchants from Tesino in close connection with local museums. It also promotes the community's cultural and architectural heritage while offering an enjoyable open-air walk to discover one of Italy's most beautiful villages.

The Hidden Pieve Tesino App can be found here:

Apple Store: https://apps.apple.com/us/app/hidden-pieve-tesino/id6776151703
Google Play: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.ac.exeter.hiddenpievetesino
ISIG website: https://isig.fbk.eu/it/ricerca/progetti/history-cities/

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