

Sacred buildings along the Albula and Bernina line (selection)



Churches and chapels

Thusis	Protestant Church
Sils i. D.	S. Cassian, Church of the Holy Sepulchre Church at Hohenrätien
Alvaschein-Mistail	St. Peter's Church
Tiefencastel	St. Stephan, Catholic parish church
Filisur	Protestant Church
Bergün/Bravuogn	Protestant Church
Stugl/Stuls	Protestant Church
Bever	Protestant Church
Samedan	St. Peter's, Church of the Holy Sepulchre Protestant Church, in the village Catholic Sacred Heart Parish Church
Celerina	“Bel Taimpel” Protestant Church San Gian Protestant Church. Sta. Maria Protestant Church in Crasta
St. Moritz	Former St. Mauritius (S. Murezzan) Church
St. Moritz-Bad	Former English Church (today Protestant Badkirche) Former French Church (today Protestant Church) St. Karl Badkirche Catholic Church
Pontresina	Sta. Maria, Church of the Holy Sepulchre Protestant Church, in the village
S. Carlo	San Carlo Borromeo Catholic Parish Church
Poschiavo	S. Vittore Collegiate Church Oratorio Sant'Anna. S. Pietro Chapel S. Maria Assunta Catholic Church S. Trinità Protestant Church
Brusio	S. Carlo Borromeo Catholic Parish Church Protestant Church
Alp San Romero	S. Romero Church
Tirano	Madonna di Tirano, pilgrimage Church St. Perpetua's Church St. Martin's Church St. Peter's Oratory St. Rocco's Church

Core zone



Core zone with railway and cultural landscape

Buffer zone



Buffer zone in the near area



Buffer zone in the distant area (backdrop)



Horizon line

Other contents



Other stretches of the Rhaetian Railway

Sources:

Basic map: PK 200'000 swisstopo, Wabern

Geo-data: Amt für Raumentwicklung Graubünden

Thematic data: Ludmilla Seifert

Design: Süsskind, SGD, Chur

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2.a.6 The sacred and secular buildings along the Albula and Bernina line

The various cultural areas along the Albula and Bernina line provide a rich treasury of buildings from the medieval, early modern and modern periods. Taken as a whole, they reflect the cultural and economic history of the valleys traversed by the trains in a graphic and impressive way. A wide variety of types of both sacred and secular buildings are represented. The openness of this transit region to artistic influences from the South and North, West and East, and even from the Orient, is particularly tangible in the churches and their interiors.

Graubünden (Switzerland)

Sacred buildings

Early medieval to Romanesque

The church of Mistail, dedicated to St. Peter, stands alone and impressive on a rocky plateau above the Albula gorge; it is the oldest sacred building on the Albula/Bernina line whose original substance has been largely preserved. Built around 775, it was part of a monastery complex dating from the early 8th century. Besides its spiritual and cultural duties, the monastery assumed functions in connection with the Alpine transit traffic, as the Roman road from Chur to the Septimer and Julier passes crossed the east-west route through the Schin gorge near the monastery (cf. 2.b.3). St. Peter's Mistail has great importance for the history of art as the sole example of a three-apse church that has been preserved without alterations in the whole of Switzerland. The term describes a type of layout where three virtually equivalent apses prolong a rectangular nave. Although archaeological excavations have found traces of it in several places in Graubünden, standing walls have been preserved only in Mistail and Müstair. The convent church of Müstair – on the UNESCO World Heritage List since 1983 – is somewhat larger than that in Mistail, which was built about the same

time but whose interior is dominated largely by late Gothic renovations.

Today, the three-apse interior characterises the concept of sacred architecture in Graubünden at the time of Charlemagne like no other type of building. However, the majority of sacred buildings erected since the 7th/8th centuries, when a comprehensive parish system was established, did not follow this pattern, which was imported from the Adriatic and apparently reserved for larger monasteries and parish churches. They tended to have conventional ground plans from the pre-Carolingian period: single-aisled churches without an apse, with a simple or narrowed apse or an apse integrated in the wall block. A sacred building from the period of early Christianisation of Rhaetia (5th century), recently excavated within the confines of the Hohenrätien fortress complex above Sils i.D., displays a rectangular hall, a baptistery added in the 5th/6th century as well as a hall construction with a cladded apse and an octagonal font. It is one of the earliest of its kind and suggests links to northern Italy.

The increase in population during the High Middle Ages and the expansion of the Swiss frontiers in the 12th/13th centuries occurred parallel to a process of detachment in which smaller church groups broke away from the large parishes of the early medieval period. The



Sils i.D. > The recently excavated 5th/
6th century font on Hohenrhätien.
Archäologischer Dienst Graubünden,
Chur



Sils i.D. > The church of San Cassian
stands in an exposed position outside
the settlement, characteristic for the
rural churches of the Romanesque
period in Graubünden.
A. Badrutt



Brusio > The Romanesque monastery church of San Romerio on a rock terrace, with a precipitous fall of 900 m to the Lago di Poschiavo.
Unknown



Samedan > The church of St. Peter, situated above the old settlement nucleus, with its striking Romanesque tower. The nave and chancel are Late Gothic.
Ch. Meisser/ Staatsarchiv, Chur



Poschiavo > Collegiate church of San Vittore. The tower (the upper storey was added later) reflects the Romanesque origin of this church, which was converted in the Late Gothic period.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



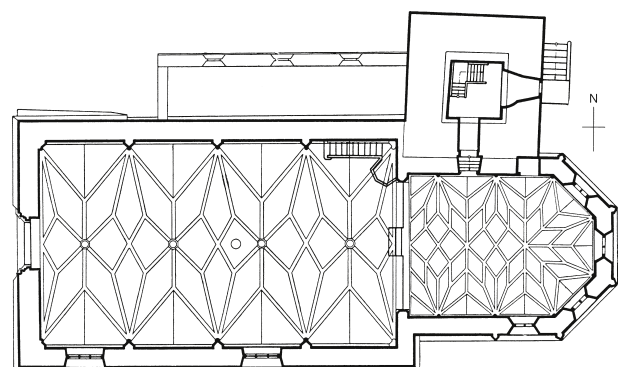
Celerina > San Gian Protestant church. The small Romanesque tower is from period when the church was built, the massive tower behind it from the significant Late Gothic conversion.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Bergün/Bravuogn > Protestant church. Late Gothic panelled ceiling with elaborate decorative painting about 1500; Renaissance frescoes along the walls of the nave.
R. Pedetti



Celerina > San Gian Protestant church. Late Gothic panelled ceiling dated 1478, about the same time as the frescoes on the wall of the chancel vault and in the apse.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Thusis > Protestant church. Nave and polygonal chancel; this uniform Late Gothic ensemble built between 1491 and 1506; elaborate sculpted figures adorn the vaults.
Gesellschaft für Schweizerische Kunstgeschichte, Berne

resulting boom in church building was characterised by a tenacious attachment to elementary ground plans. Thus on Hohenrätien, the Romanesque church replaced its early medieval predecessor: it has a rectangular, flat covered nave and a flush-finished chancel with groined vault. St. Cassian's church above Sils i.D. is of the same type. S. Pietro chapel near Poschiavo, built during the same period, has the same ground plan with a single nave and a narrowed semicircular apse, whereas the Stugl/Stuls chapel above Bergün/Bravuogn represents the earliest rectangular form. In its original state, it was without a chancel. Where later periods have obscured the character of the building work that took place during the High Middle Ages, often only the towers hint at new building or conversions during the Romanesque period, for example in the churches at Filisur, Bergün/Bravuogn, Samedan (St. Peter), Celerina (Sta. Maria in Crasta and S. Gian), St. Moritz (S. Murezzan), Pontresina (Sta. Maria), Poschiavo (S. Vittore) and S. Romerio above Brusio. Only from the 11th/12th centuries did church towers begin to appear in place of the old bell yokes. These towers, with their slim proportions, blind arcades and round-arched windows linked in rhythmic groups, recall the campaniles of northern Italy. If the sacred Romanesque buildings remain modest in their architectural appearance, in many instances they acquire a monumental effect thanks to their exposed and commanding position in the landscape. Striking examples are the little monastery church of S. Romerio, built on a rocky outcrop 900 m above the lake of Poschiavo, and the churches set apart from the heart of the settlements of St. Peter above Samedan, S. Gian at Celerina and S. Cassian at Sils i.D.

Late Gothic

Romanesque features were not completely ousted from European architecture until the second half of the 15th century. In the course of a striking wave of reconstruction, numerous sacred buildings were remodelled between 1450 and 1525 with an orientation to the Gothic style. The initiators of this building activity were the communities who used the conversion of their churches in a new or contemporary style to express their greater autonomy vis-à-vis the feudal nobility and the bishopric or even to assure their rights (cf. 2.b.2) – the late Gothic features were introduced by Austrian master builders and stonemasons. The churches of Thusis (1491 – 1506), Samedan (St. Peter, 1491/1492) and Poschiavo (collegiate church, 1497/1503) show, each in their own way, the ideal-typical form of a late Gothic church in our region, with a rectangular nave and a narrowed chancel closed on three sides. In these examples, both parts of the interior are decked with reticulated or stellar vaults, though these were not introduced so consistently everywhere. In many places, the new polygonal chancel was terminated elaborately whereas the tradition of the flat wooden ceiling from early Christian or Carolingian times was retained in the nave. S. Gian near Celerina (1478), Sta. Maria above Pontresina (1497) and the village church in Bergün/Bravuogn (about 1500) have particularly impressive timber ceilings: the rich decorative painting, covering both frames and panels, has an almost tapestry-like effect. S. Gian was built in 1478 by a master from the Veltlin at right angles to the previous Romanesque building. It is the only late Gothic church along the route that, with its groin vault, follows a southern architectural tradition from Lombardy rather than the late Gothic canon.



Tiefencastel > St. Stephan Roman Catholic church. An “exemplary” edifice built by the Capuchins in the mid 17th century.
T. Keller



Poschiavo > Sta. Maria Assunta church from about 1700 built outside the Burgo on a site that was then completely free of buildings.
R. Pedetti



Brusio > Protestant church. The Protestant baroque sacred building combines a rectangular nave with a polygonal “chancel” with no narrowing. (Rococo gallery and organ 1786/87, pulpit 1727).
A. Troehler



Bever > Protestant church. The 1665–67 Baroque building is designed as a single rectangular room.
A. Troehler

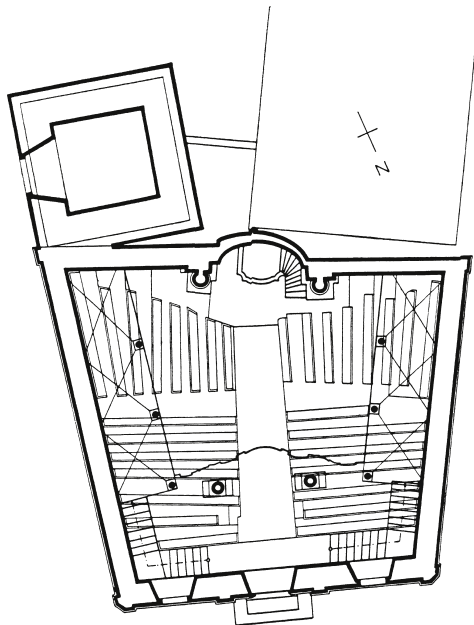
The pointed spire cap of the massive tower, next to the Romanesque campanile, was destroyed by lightning in 1682, giving the whole complex a picturesque appearance.

Baroque

The late-Gothic boom in church building ebbed with the beginning of the Reformation. Only after the end of the Reformation and Post-Reformation upheavals in Graubünden (cf. 2.b.2) did sacred building activity rise, in the second quarter of the 17th century, to a level that can be compared to that in the late Gothic period. This was principally the case in the regions that had remained Catholic, like the Poschiavo valley and the lower part of the Albula valley. In the spirit of the Tridentine reform, building new churches was seen as an expression of the firm centralising hand of the Catholic Church. The religious buildings of the period are consequently characterised by the adoption of Italian Baroque features. The wave of Baroque building was promoted by Capuchin monks from northern Italy who had organised the “missione retica” since 1621 and assumed pastoral duties in these valleys and the surrounding regions. They had the new parish church, dedicated to St. Stephen, built in Tiefencastel, the regional base of the Capuchin mission. It is an exemplary building in the form of a Latin cross, with a monks’ chancel and two lateral chapels; a faux façade with a raised tympanum was set before the vaulted nave. Although the sacred structures of the Counter-Reformation are based on standardised liturgical and architectural models, they do not follow a uniform building pattern like the late Gothic parish churches but rather show great diversity according to their function as parish or secondary churches, pilgrimage or roadside chapels. This great di-

versity can be demonstrated by the two most valuable Baroque buildings in Poschiavo: virtually all sacred buildings were renovated there after the Counter-Reformation. By the addition of two lateral chapels, Sta. Maria Assunta outside Poschiavo, with its dramatic flight of steps, built in 1692 – 1712 in an area then completely free of buildings, grew into a series of three rectangular units resembling a central building, set apart from the exterior by an octagonal crossing tambour. In contrast, the Oratorio Sant’Anna in Poschiavo, built for a community of lay monks and set between two residential buildings, is designed as a purely nave-focussed construction. Three interior expanses with diverse vaults of decreasing heights connect to a grillework arcaded walk to blend into a whole of remarkably harmonious proportions.

Many a Protestant parish was also infected by the Baroque building euphoria: the Protestant church of Pontresina, built in 1640, and the Bel Taimpel in Celerina, built in 1667 – 1669, retain the pre-Reformation pattern with their architectonic separation into nave and chancel; this concept of the ideal sacred space was apparently so firmly rooted that it could be retained even in new non-Catholic structures. In the Protestant church of Brusio (1645), in contrast, a longitudinal structure enclosed on three sides without narrowing of the chancel demonstrates the determination to pare down nave and chancel to a single unit. Thus a synthesis is achieved between the traditional type with a separate chancel polygon and a simple hall more appropriate to a Protestant service. The majestic Protestant parish church of Poschiavo (1642 – 1653) and the church in Bever built in 1665 – 1667, in part incorporating the previous building, are designed as rectangular halls. The village church of Samedan



Samedan > The Protestant village church, built 1682, is an example of Protestant secular building of the period.
Gesellschaft für Schweizerische Kunstgeschichte, Berne



Samedan > Protestant church. The front façade is highly decorated by Graubünden standards; the polychrome, painted campanile dates from the 18th century.
R. Pedetti



San Carlo > Roman Catholic church of San Carlo Borromeo. Post-Gothic-early Baroque ensemble from the 17th century; the polychrome painted tower has a mortared zigzag roof.
R. Pedetti



Samedan > The Roman Catholic Herz-Jesu or Sacred Heart church from 1910 expresses neo-Romanesque lines reflecting the 'Heimat' tradition.
Engadin Press

can claim to have the most ingenious design of a building designed for Protestant preaching. Built in 1682 on the site of a medieval chapel, the trapeze shape with galleries running along three sides and the interior decked by an umbrella vault is fully oriented to the chancel-apsidole with a communion table set before it. As in the case of the tall campanile in Samedan, built in 1770–1773, the Baroque church towers of both denominations are characterised by lines set off with cornices and pilasters, while the essential octagonal capitals have either low domed or conical roofs or terminate in onion-shaped roofs in the style typical of Austria and southern Germany. Apart from their architectonic ornamentation, Baroque church towers were often characterised by a lively medley of colours that we can now appreciate again since the renovations of the churches in Samedan, Bever, Poschiavo (Protestant church) and San Carlo.

19th/20th centuries

Classicism has left hardly any traces worth mentioning on the sacred buildings in the region. New church buildings came only with the emergence of tourism: an interesting historic ensemble has been preserved in St. Moritz Bad. Besides the former English church (1870/73 with a neo-medieval rubble masonry structure and a tower with a rhomboid roof) there was the French church, built in 1875–1877, above the hall where the guests ‘took the waters’ with a façade tower in delicate neo-Gothic and finally, St. Karl’s Catholic spa church, also built by Nicolaus Hartmann the Elder, a three-nave neo-Romanesque basilica with a freestanding campanile. The Catholic parish church of the Sacred Heart in Samedan, built in 1910 by Nicolaus Hartmann the Younger in mas-

sive rubble masonry, is a two-nave church with tower, an attached vicarage and authentic attributes. It left the academic neo-Romanesque style behind to approach something like folk art (cf. 2.a.5).

Sacred murals

Murals are among the most important evidence telling us what the earliest churches still in existence originally looked like. The Carolingian church of St. Peter in Mistail was covered in murals throughout but only small elements have been preserved. However, it can be seen that the biblical scenes covering the lateral walls of the nave and apses were, as in the convent church of Müstair, enclosed in a multi-register framework. In contrast, the west wall depicted a monumental Last Judgement – together with that in Müstair the earliest known fresco on this theme. There are also close stylistic links to the frescoes in Müstair, created between 785 and 795, probably in a north Italian studio. The paintings in the sacred buildings along the Albula/Bernina line dating from the High Middle Ages are better preserved. The late-Romanesque layer of painting from about 1230 in Sta. Maria above Pontresina again reveals a south-eastern influence: the three scenes that have been preserved (the Epiphany, Baptism of Christ, Washing of the Feet and Last Supper) are the most westerly example of the Marienberger school active in nearby South Tyrol: it was strongly influenced by Byzantine art, with respect both to iconography and style, following the crusade of 1204. In 1350/60, a school of wandering artists from the southern Tyrol or Verona created the exterior frescoes of the parish church in Bever depicting St. George battling with the dragon, Michael weighing souls and a St. Christopher.



Pontresina > Protestant church of St. Maria. Late Romanesque, with an Epiphany, strongly influenced by Byzantine art, on the west wall.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Alvaschein-Mistail > Church of St. Peter. paintings in the "gotico internazionale" style in the central apse.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Bever > Protestant church. St. George fighting the dragon on the outside west wall 1350/60.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Stugl/Stuls > Protestant church. Painting in the Giotto style, about 1360/70.
W. Roelli

An entirely different world opens up to the observer in the small barrel-vaulted church in Stugl/Stuls, painted in 1360/70 with scenes from the life of Christ and a *Majestas Domini*. These frescoes painted by wandering artists are directly related to Giotto's murals in the Arena chapel in Padua and, together with those in Sta. Maria Assunta (Brione-Verzasca TI) and Santa Maria dei Ghirli (Campione d'Italia), are the most northerly examples of the Giotto school. The paintings in the central apse and on the north wall of Mistail church, created about 1400, are fine representatives of the soft style also known as *gotico internazionale* that predominated in European art between 1390 and 1430.

Towards the end of the 15th century, wandering artists from north Italy and southern Tyrol stylistically adhering to the early Italian Renaissance appear in the Albula/Bernina area: particularly noteworthy here are the comprehensive, well-preserved murals in the churches of Sta. Maria in Pontresina (1495) and S. Gian at Celerina (about 1480/90), and particularly a cycle of frescoes painted about 1500 in Bergün/Bravuogn parish church. The painting fields with an Annunciation, a passion cycle and a series of apostles are partly framed by acanthus borders set with rosettes, partly by friezes with medallions of the prophets between garlands of leaves and fruit. The paintings in Filisur church are stylistically related to the Bergün murals. With the Renaissance, the traditional pattern in the apse – mostly a *Majestas Domini* between evangelists below a row of apostles and an Annunciation on the wall of the chancel vault – was often replaced by freer configurations. An example is found in the little church of S. Pietro by Poschiavo, where a master painter from Lombardy paint-

ed a Lamentation of Christ in 1538 in lively colours against a landscape background in the apsidiole, framed by a transverse arch with medallions and a frieze of grotesque figures and coats of arms.

The themes become more differentiated in the Baroque period together with the increasing use of stucco decoration, an essential element of Catholic sacred architecture. A first, particularly fine example of Baroque painting dominating the entire room can be found in the polygonal vaulted passion chapel of S. Carlo Borromeo church (about 1629), the work of a Lombard master. The overwhelming visions of heaven depicted in ceiling frescoes are particularly characteristic of the late Baroque; examples are the vault fresco that seems to dominate the architecture of Sta. Maria Assunta (1719) and, also in Poschiavo, the ceiling painting from 1760 with the Adoration of the Apocalyptic Lamb in the Oratorio Sant'Anna. On the other hand, the architectonic or ornamental stucco work can also dominate the wall paintings; this is the case in the parish church of Tiefencastel, where the sculptural stucco in the chancel and lateral chapels severely restricts the painting fields. Protestant church interiors were often embellished with such stucco work. The ornamentation in the village church of Samedan is particularly original.

Altars and pulpits

In the church of Mistail, the three “empty” Carolingian block altars in the apses give us an idea of how the chancel zones, so important to Carolingian liturgy, looked in the 14th/15th centuries. Not until the late Gothic period, between the second half of the 15th and the early 16th centuries, does the reredos, mostly in the form of a winged altarpiece, become the central



Poschiavo > Roman Catholic church of Santa Maria Assunta. Illusionist cupola representation of the Assumption of the Virgin with the Holy Trinity, painted by Giuseppe Brina in 1719.
R. Pedetti



Poschiavo > Oratorio Sant'Anna. Illusionist painting with the Adoration of the Apocalyptic Lamb in the cupola of the nave, painted in 1760 by Lorenzo Piccioli (painted over 1879).
R. Pedetti



Poschiavo > Roman Catholic church of Santa Maria Assunta. Left lateral chapel with stucco work ensemble and altar 1712–30.
R. Pedetti



Tiefencastel > St. Stephan Roman Catholic church. Mesocco stucco work and painting on the vault over the chancel.
R. Pedetti

element of the churches. In Protestant regions, the carved retables made in workshops in southern Germany disappeared only a few years after they had been mounted, whereas in the Catholic churches caught in the Baroque wave of the Counter-Reformation they often had to give way to “modern” altars. Parts of a late-Gothic carved altar have been preserved in the immediate vicinity of the Albula/Bernina line only in the collegiate church of S. Vittore in Poschiavo, where older reliefs have been integrated in the neo-Gothic main altar, which forms a historic ensemble together with two side altars and the pulpit; the interior was renovated in the Gothic style in 1902/04.

The Tridentine reform led to the replacement of the built-in tabernacle by one placed on the high altar, often with tempietto. Consequently, most altars were rebuilt during the Baroque period. Worth mentioning are the uniform marble altars of S. Carlo or the wooden altar to St. Stephen in Tiefencastel (1650) that, together with the one in Brusio (1625), represent the Italian tabernacle-altar type. The Tiefencastel chapel altars with their great altar paintings are made of stucco like most of the Baroque altars in the Poschiavo valley.

In the 17th and the first half of the 18th centuries, decorative wooden pulpits were introduced to many churches of both denominations in Graubünden. The octagonal pulpit in the chapel of Sta. Maria Presentata of the old convent in Poschiavo (about 1680), attributed to a master from the nearby Veltlin, is the most richly sculpted octagonal pulpit in our region; also remarkable is the exquisite Renaissance pulpit built in 1624 in the church of Sta. Maria Assunta in Poschiavo.



Sils i.D. > Fort Hohenrhätien. The four-storey residential tower in the foreground is one of the oldest buildings that has survived complete – to the tip of the gable.
Kantonsarchäologie Zürich



Brien/Brinzauls > The imposing ruins of the Belfort fortress built on a narrow spur of rock. Construction started about 1228 and was continued in several phases.
Archäologischer Dienst Graubünden, Chur

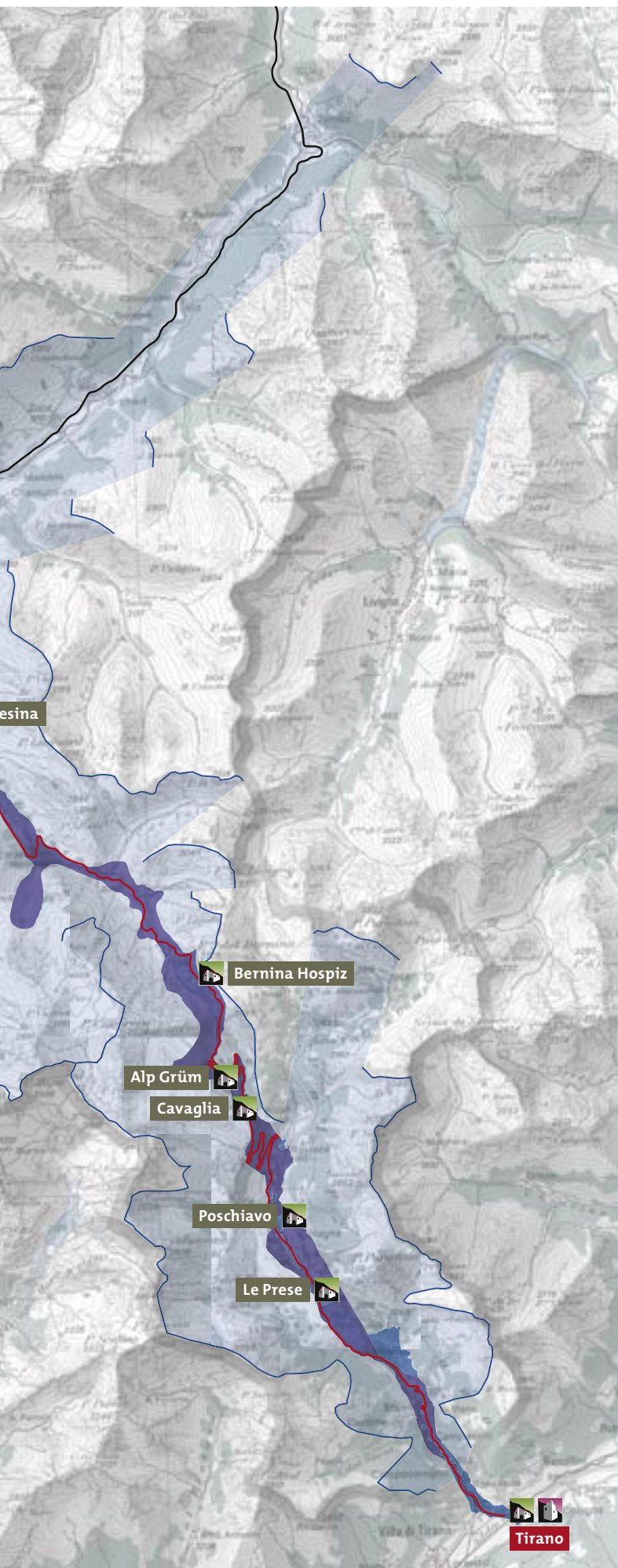


Filisur > Greifenstein castle. Typical example of a Graubünden small scale castle, built early 12th century.
Archäologischer Dienst Graubünden, Chur





Sils i. D. > Burg Ehrenfels. The Middle Ages fort was expanded in the 17th century to a aristocratic residence.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur









Secular buildings along the Albula and Bernina line (selection)

-  Forts and residential towers
-  Aristocratic and upper-class houses, farmhouses, hotels and museums


Core zone

-  Core zone with railway and cultural landscape

Buffer zone

-  Buffer zone in the near area
-  Buffer zone in the distant area (backdrop)
-  Horizon line

Other contents

-  Other stretches of the Rhaetian Railway

Sources:

Basic map: PK 200'000 swisstopo, Wabern

Geo-data: Amt für Raumentwicklung Graubünden

Thematic data: Ludmilla Seifert

Design: Süsskind, SGD, Chur

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Secular architecture

Forts and residential towers

The oldest secular buildings along the railway whose walls are still standing are defensive structures dating back to the 12th/13th centuries. These forts were the focal point of smaller dominions or served as bases for the more extensive developing territories of individual noble families or for the Bishop of Chur (cf. 2.b.2). One of the bishopric's feudal towers was Höhenrätien, built on a crag rearing above the eastern entrance to the Viamala gorge (cf. 2.b.1) that has been used a settlement site since prehistoric times; it was expanded into a citadel in the early medieval period. The lords of Rialt, as officers of the bishop, built a four-storey residential tower here in 1180 – today one of the oldest secular buildings in Switzerland that has been fully preserved, right to the tip of the gable. With the building of a stone house and two further towers as well as an outer and an inner circumvallation, by the 13th century the complex had acquired the impressive dimensions still apparent today even in its ruined state.

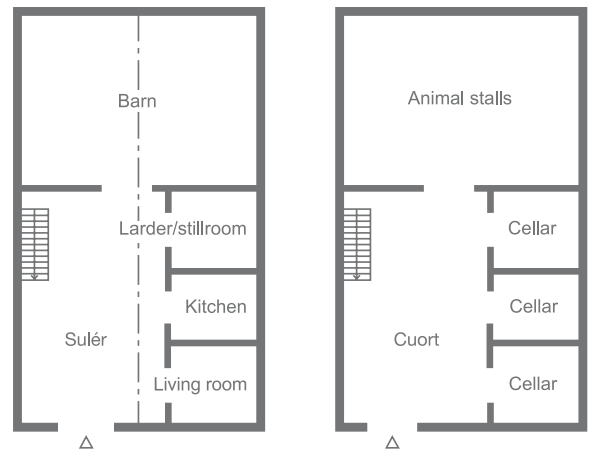
The fort of Belfort, near the village of Brienz/Brinzauls, which can be seen for miles around, symbolises the territorial ambitions of the free lords of Vaz who had risen to be the most powerful noble family in Rhaetia during the 13th century in bitter rivalry with the Bishop of Chur (cf. 2.b.2). This defence complex was built on a narrow ridge of rock in 1228 and expanded into a feudal residence with a main tower, a gate tower, living quarters and new buildings around a central courtyard; it was destroyed in 1499. However, most of the forts do not have such imposing dimensions, but are smaller, more rural, comprising a tower-shaped main building surrounded by smaller outbuild-

ings and are circumvallated. Examples of such small representative rather than military forts are Ehrenfels, Baldenstein and Campi in the village of Sils i.D., all three built in the early 13th century as residential towers and expanded in stages with circumvallation and other residential buildings. The fort of Greifenstein should also be mentioned in this context; it was built in the late 12th century by the lords of the same name on the precipitous crest above Filisur as a power base for the upper Albula valley.

The Bishop of Chur had been able to secure all the rights due to a count in the Upper Engadin since 1139. Any tendencies to establish territorial powers centred on a fort were quashed. The bishop's valley chancellors, officiating until 1244, were the Pont-Zarisinos from Pontresina; they resided in the pentagonal tower above Pontresina, near the church of Sta. Maria. In the 13th century, the defensive residential tower also became established as a construction model among the upper classes of the local villages. Thanks to their height and design, these towers stood out against the surrounding farmhouses which were built in timber and dry masonry until the 14th century; mortar construction was restricted to churches, defence works and the representative buildings mentioned above. While the residential towers in villages had been integrated into farmhouse buildings since the 16th century, those with a feudal function were often given a new purpose: in Poschiavo the community acquired the tower of the Bishop of Como's bailiff on the piazza and had it converted into a Rathaus tower. It thus became a symbol of the independence and judicial sovereignty of the village community. Events followed a similar pattern in Samedan, where the village tower served the community as a prison,



Celerina > Typical Engadin style house in the Crasta district (the tower of the Protestant St. Maria church in the background). Loaded hay carts could drive through the enormous door on the left of the façade straight into the barn.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Ideal layout of an Engadin house.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Filisur > Engadin style house with façade murals by Hans Ardüser, the 'peripatetic' master from Graubünden, dated 1595.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Samedan > Detail of a 17th century sgraffito decoration.
J. Arni

or in Bergün/Bravuogn where the Platzturm was turned into a bell tower in the 17th century, losing its medieval character by the addition of a Baroque cap roof.

Farmhouses

Rural architecture accounted for by far the greater part of secular building until well into the 19th century. The Albula/Bernina area produced something unique in this respect, namely the Engadin house, a style that was developed in the 15th/16th century and was found solely in the Engadin until the end of the 18th century. The Engadin house is not restricted to the Engadin itself, but extends to the neighbouring valleys, to the north as far as Bergün/Bravuogn and Filisur, and in isolated cases as far as Alvanu and Surava. It combines all the functions of a farmstead under one roof. In contrast to other multi-purpose buildings, it has two passages through the living area, the Sulèr to the barn and the Cuort below it providing access both to the stables and cattle shed and to the cellars, and even including the manure heap in the house. The exclusive access to the farm through the home and the consequent combination of two elements in both constructional and functional respects make the Engadin house typologically unique. The basic room layout of the Engadin house includes a timber-panelled living room with a bedroom above it, a vaulted kitchen and a storage chamber that is also usually vaulted. The position may vary, but the living room and kitchen are always alongside the Sulèr: the connection between the smoke-free living room and fire-safe kitchen is predetermined, as the living-room stove is always fired from the kitchen. The characteristic asymmetry of the façades, aligned to the valley road and the well wherever possible, results from

the contrast between the small, heated living rooms and the spacious Sulèr designed to take a loaded hay cart. From the exterior, the Engadin house appears as a sturdy stone construction, although the masonry often covers an older timber framework. Southern influence and the need to be representative, but perhaps also fire protection, may have been the reasons for the stone cladding. Typical decorative elements on the Engadin houses are small oriels and wrought-iron grilles in front of the windows. In the Upper Engadin, sgraffito became the predominant facade ornamentation from the 16th century. This decorative technique for flat surfaces was developed in medieval Italy: ornaments are scraped, scratched and incised on a layer of plaster with a wash of chalk to reveal their figures against the darker underlying plaster. The motifs are mostly drawn from Italian Renaissance models and are primarily used to emphasise the corners of houses, doorways, windows and roof-lines. In contrast, many façades were painted in the Albula valley and the designs are freer, as shown in a particularly impressive example in Filisur dating from 1595 that is attributed to the painter-poet Hans Ardüser from Davos, a well-known figure in Graubünden. Val Poschiavo also has a dominant type of farmhouse that is geared to cart transport: this comprises a single stonework unit with drive in, sometimes splitting into two ramps in the interior, one to the stabling the other to the hay barn. The Casa Tomé in Poschiavo is a well preserved example.

Aristocratic and upper-class houses

In the 15th century, the “free state” of the Drei Bünde established itself in the territory of Graubünden: it was fundamentally a democratically constituted but de facto oligarchic state.



Samedan > The Chesa Planta (built 1595, extended to a two-family house in 1760). A particularly impressive example of an Engadin-style aristocrat's house.
Denkmalpflege Graubünden, Chur



Poschiavo > Palazzo De Bassus-Mengotti (built 1655, extended 1701-1713 and early 19th century). The most striking aristocratic seat in Poschiavo.
Studio Pollini, Sondrio



Poschiavo > Hotel Albrici. Elaborate 17th century panelled room, called the "Room of the Sibyls".
Studio Pollini, Sondrio



Sils i.D. > Palazzo. Aristocratic building in Domleschg, built about 1740.

Today, the term aristocrat implies a representative of a small group of local gentry who managed to share out all important political offices among themselves (cf. 2.b.2). This social group promoted a building style of their own in secular architecture. In contrast to the feudal buildings of the Middle Ages, that as a rule sought to maintain a certain distance from the village, the aristocratic dwellings are integrated in the existing settlement structures. The deliberately sought-after place within the village unit was expressed by the adoption of traditional local building patterns. Whereas the rural ground-plan is long retained, the typological identity is gradually and increasingly overlaid. The means of aristocratically enhancing the rural types of the local building tradition are invariably the same. Apart from the sheer size of the exterior, it is the stronger emphasis on the entrance area as well as the cladding of the timber parts that defines the difference to a conventional farmhouse; in the interior it is the generous size of the rooms, their greater number and the luxury of the furnishings. In general, the introduction of vaults and the generous design of a flight of steps in the interior make a more representative impression. Further, a vaulted reception room usually at ground level, known as the “sala terrena” is usually integrated in the room structure. Also the “stüva bella”, the ostentatious best room, with superior panneling, becomes an established feature. The aristocratic attitude to building aimed – if to differing degrees in the exterior – at a clearer differentiation from rural farmsteads by greater size and embellishment while keeping to the ground plan of a farmhouse on principle. Prominent examples include the Chesa Planta in Samedan, extended in 1595 by the von Salis family and converted into a two-dwelling house; the present Hotel

Albrici in Poschiavo, built for a local potentate in 1678; but above all the Palazzo de Bassus-Mengotti built in 1655 (extended in 1701 – 1713 and the late 19th century), also in Poschiavo though outside the historic nucleus of the town. The move away from the farmhouse pattern was not completed until the 17th century, and in the Engadin only in the following century. The central-corridor building based on Italian models, where the rooms run along a – vaulted – passage, now becomes the aristocrats’ preferred model. The Palazzo in Sils i.D., built in 1740 for an officer serving in Piedmont, with its symmetrical design of façade, ground plan and garden, is a perfect example of this change in aristocratic building patterns.

International architectural trends in secular building were not established until the 19th century, when, as a consequence of the emigration of craftsmen, the middle-class type of village architecture developed: the villas of confectioners who had been successful abroad and returned to their native valleys have left their stamp on many a village in the region. They include the Lorsa (1829) and Frizzoni (1836) houses in Celerina and Fenner (about 1860) in Samedan, and in Poschiavo the unique row of Palazzi (1857 – 1891) give the southern rim of the village its unmistakable profile (cf. 2.b.4).

Tourism architecture

One can hardly speak of a specific tourism architecture in the Albula/Bernina region before 1850. Travellers and spa tourists were accommodated in simple guest-houses and hospices, often in private houses. The earliest examples of Upper Engadin tourism in Samedan were the Hotel à la Vue du Bernina opened by Johannes Badrutt in 1845 in a barrel-roofed commercial building, and from 1856 his Hotel Engadiner Kulm in the



Bergün/Bravuogn > The “Hotel Kurhaus” opened after the Albula line was built; the only surviving “grand hotel” in the Albula Valley (built 1904–06).
L. Fleischer



St. Moritz > Segantini-Museum. Built in the “Heimat” style by Nicolaus Hartmann the Younger, in 1908.
A. Mende/Kur- und Verkehrsverein St. Moritz



The planned Railway Museum designed by the Hans-Jörg Ruch, Axel Fickert and Kaschka Knapkiewicz group of architects.

St. Moritz residence of the aristocratic Faller family. Since 1864, the classicistic Neue Kurhaus has defined the profile of St. Moritz Bad, which was later developed with further palatial hotels and landscaped gardens (cf. 2.b.4). In 1865, the double-angled Bernina hotel at the edge of the village of Samedan was built as a purely tourist hotel. In other places, particularly in Pontresina, the hotels developed successively from small-scale buildings: with their dimensions and neo-classical, neo-Baroque or castellated features, these establishments made an ever sharper contrast to the village settlement, reflecting the sharp social difference from the hotel guests. Later hotels were built at a distance from the villages in locations with a particularly good view. Particularly striking examples of the many tourist buildings along the Albula and Bernina line include the former Hotel Viamala in Thusis (1845/96) and the art-nouveau Kurhaus Bergün (1904–06), in St. Moritz the eclectic showpiece of the Palace Hotel (1896) or the La Margna Hotel (1906/07). Pontresina has the luxurious Hotel Kronenhof (1850/1898) and the Saratz (1875/1995), extended in modern style, and Poschiavo the romantic Le Prese Kurhaus (1857) on Lago di Poschiavo.

The Modern

The “Heimatstil”, a regionalising version of the architectural reform movement in the 1900s (cf. 2.a.4 and 2.a.5) has left its mark in the Albula/Bernina area: The already mentioned Hotel Margna, the Museum Engiadinais (1906) and the Segantini Museum (1908) are text book examples of this style. All three of these works in St. Moritz were designed by Nicolaus Hartmann the Younger, who also built for the railway (including the Bernina Ospizio and Alp Grüm stations; cf. 2.a.5) and the hydroelectric compa-

nies (including the Palü and Cavaglia command stations; cf. 2.b.7). Interest in regional building traditions and forms revived at the close of the 1970s. A characteristic example of this new regionalist trend is Robert Obrist’s municipal hall in Bergün/Bravuogn built in 1977. The subtle juxtaposition with the rural surroundings, the quest for an appropriate contemporary response to tradition and topography also characterise the work of a younger generation of local architects who even succeeded in evoking an international echo. The Railway Museum in Bergün/Bravuogn promises to become a highlight of contemporary architecture along the Albula/Bernina line; its completion is scheduled for 2007. It will contribute to a heightened awareness of the cultural significance of this Alpine railway far beyond Graubünden.

Tirano (Italy)

Sacred Buildings

Tirano nestles in the southern foothills of the Alps. It lies at the heart of the Veltlin (Valtellina) and is notable for its wealth of sacred buildings.

The parish church of St. Martin was built in the 13th century and converted to the Baroque style in the 17th. The façade was designed by Milanese architect Carlo Maciachini in 1870. Shortly afterwards, Giovanni Gavazzeni added the frescoes in the narthex. However, the bell tower, built by Jacopo di Valsolda, is in the Renaissance style. So is the interior of the church, which is divided into one principal and two lateral naves separated by vaulted pillars. The 16th century St. Peter’s oratory stands to the left of the church square. It was built when the parish was enlarged and today houses five remarkable 17th century oil paintings. Tirano



Bernina line > The Bernina Railway crossing the square in front of the Madonna di Tirano church.
Foto Geiger



Tirano > St. Perpetua church.
Fondazione Provinea

gained fame due to the vision of the Madonna granted to blessed Mario degli Omodei on 29th September 1504. The most important sacred building in the town, the pilgrimage church of Madonna di Tirano, was erected to commemorate this event. The foundation stone was laid on 25th March 1505. During the upheavals of the Reformation the church was a bastion of Roman Catholicism. The architects of the church, which was consecrated in 1528 but not completed until 1703, were the Rodari brothers from Como. Other renowned artists were also involved: the dome was built by Pompeo Bianchi, the frescoes painted by Cipriano Valorsa and the imposing marble portal built by Alessandro Della Scala from Ticino. The massive church structure fits in harmoniously with its setting on the square, once the site of the most important market in the Veltlin. The lofty bell tower is exceptional with its post-Romanesque fenestrations and tiered Baroque dome. In the background, on an outcrop of rock above the basilica, is the small 11th century church dedicated to St. Perpetua. It was built along the pilgrims' route leading from Tirano to Brusio and the Bernina Pass. The church includes a hospice to accommodate the pilgrims. The octagonal church of St. Rocco, in the Via Rasica, has a striking large-format canvas of the Crucifixion dating from the 16th/17th century and a notable veduta of the city of Jerusalem; according to legend the old city of Tirano stood as 'model' for this painting. The church of La Chiesetta, dedicated to St. Borromeo, was built at the beginning of the 17th century and served the von Salis family as their private chapel. There is a single-nave church dedicated to St. Teresa in the Via XX Settembre with a Baroque façade dating from the 17th century. This church houses five large oil paintings from the same period.

Secular Buildings

Parts of the city walls of Tirano, with its three Renaissance gates and numerous old patrician houses, have survived. The old St. Jacob's church on the Piazzetta Arcari has been converted to house the municipal library (Biblioteca Civica "Paolo e Paola Maria Arcari"). The civic council is housed in the old Palazzo Marinoni on the Piazza Cavour. At one time the building was an Augustinian monastery; namely from the late 14th century until 1654. The cloister with its old fountain and 16th century entrance are of particular interest.

One of the most beautiful buildings in Tirano, at the beginning of the Via Salis, is the Palazzo Sertoli Salis. This monumental late 16th century edifice was the city residence of the von Salis family who came from Bergell in the Graubünden; numerous dignitaries in the Veltlin under the Ancien Régime came from this clan. The 16th century façade is flanked by two towers. The massive stone portal was created by architect Giacomo Vignola. The crenellated façade is decorated with antique spoils – inscriptions, coats of arms and friezes. Three ceremonial rooms in the interior deserve special mention: the 'Honours' room (Salone d'Onore), the 'Great' reception room (Salone) with an 18th century painted ceiling attributed to Enzo Cucchi, and the smaller reception room (Saloncello) with an excellent painted ceiling dating from about 1700 and a Baroque fireplace with the Salis-Wolkenstein 'Alliance' coat of arms in stucco work.

The Palazzo Visconti Venosta in the street of the same name is one of the most striking buildings in the old part of Tirano. The famous politician Emilio Visconti Venosta and the equally famous writer Giovanni Visconti Venosta lived here. The Palazzo Torelli in the Via Torelli – once the residence of the statesman Luigi Torelli –



Tirano > Castello di S. Maria was part of the town defences in the Middle Ages; only a few ruins can be seen today.
Fondazione Provinea



Tirano > Porta Milanese.
Città di Tirano



Tirano > Porta Bormina.
Città di Tirano

is impressive with its Baroque doorway surmounted by a balcony. Alberto Caimi painted a scene depicting St. Karl Borromeus who was in Tirano in 1580. Further on is the massive Torelli Tower which was refurbished in the 19th century in the Historismus style. In contrast, the Porta Poschiavina, one of the three city gates, is largely in its original state; commissioned by Duke Ludovico il Moro, it was built between 1492 and 1498. The murals have in part survived with a Justitia, two ‘noble savages’ as well as coats of arms and inscriptions. Along the Via Besta is the Porta Milanese, the mighty city gate that opens the way to Milan. Today, all that is left of the Porta Bormina is a simple arch linking two houses on the start of the road to Bormio. The ruins of the Castello di S. Maria can be seen in the Via Trivigno; better known as the “Castellaccio” it was once a strategic element of the city’s defence system. The large 16th century Palazzo Paravicini dominates the square named after it. On the Piazza della Basilica, near the Madonna di Tirano pilgrimage church, is the Ethnographic Museum (Museo Etnografico Tiranese), founded in 1973 and displaying Roman finds and ethnographic artefacts from the region. A magnificent wine press is a particularly striking item.