



ITALY

WAITING FOR THE SUMMER

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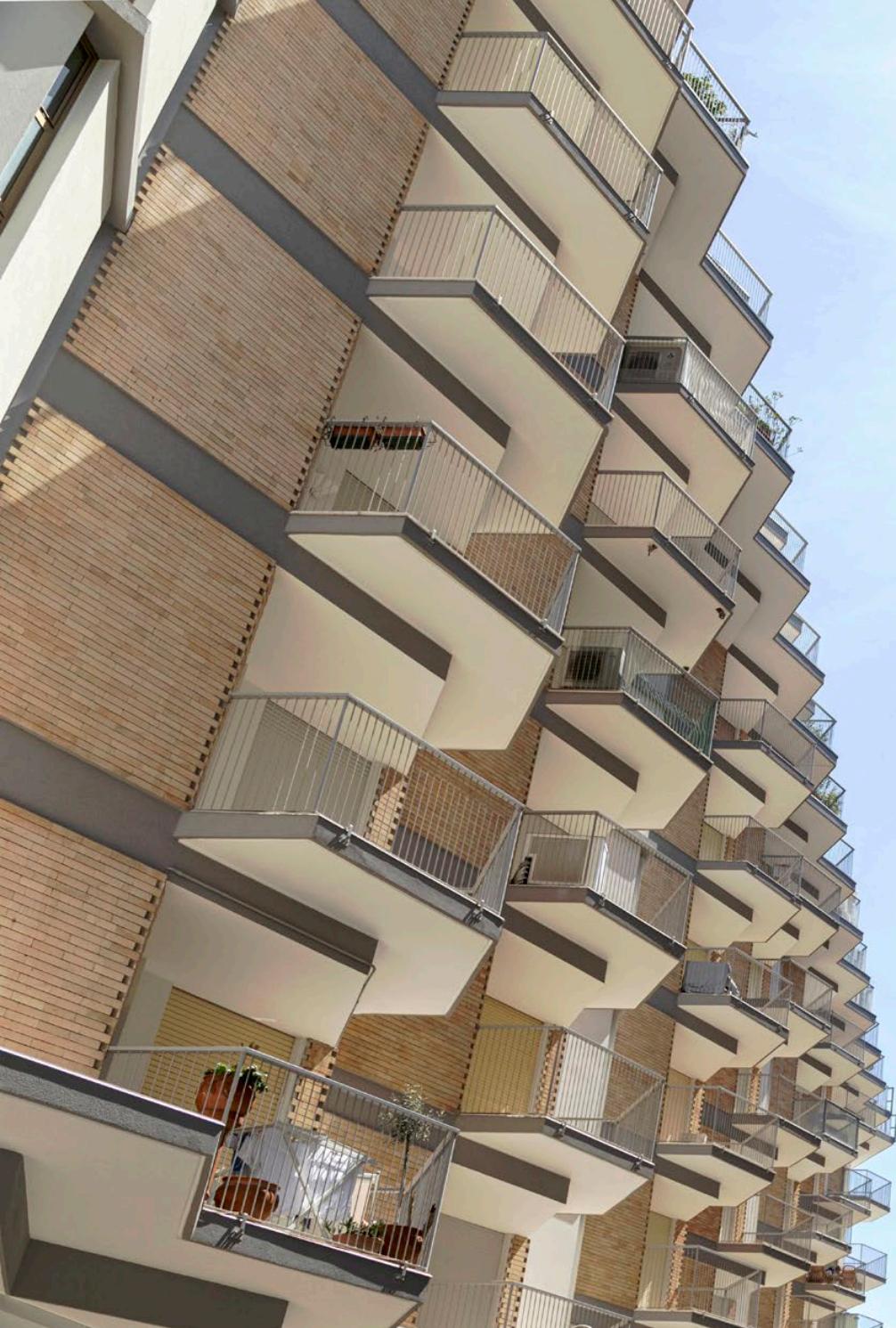
Jesolo. Marco Sacapolo, a partner of the company Arcadia srl, which is responsible for property sales on behalf of the Walter Rigato estate agency. "February, March and April are key months for property sales. Usually in May the sites are handed over ahead of the summer season. This year sales have plummeted and the few properties that have been sold have gone for 20-25% lower than previous market levels. The forecast is that at the end of the year revenues will be down by 70%.

Italy's Veneto region is the country's most popular tourist destination, and the sixth most popular in Europe. It generates revenues of around 18 billion euros a year through direct and indirect services. There are, in fact, thousands of businesses in the region involved in tourism, producing 11.5% of the revenues of Veneto's service sector and 14.3% of its entire production (source: Veneto regional administration-Tourism industry analysis). Every year around 32 million visitors head to the region to enjoy its beaches and the variety and quality of the services it offers.

The restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 emergency have had a huge impact on the tourism sector, pushing businesses into crisis, many of which only open for the tourist season. The greatest uncertainty derives from the complete lack of directives that could allow even a partial reopening. Unionmare Veneto, the main trade association responsible for the protection and development of beach tourism in the Veneto Region, has begun the maintenance and preparation of the beaches for the summer season, installing beach huts, walkways and beach umbrellas.

Due to the lack of precise official directives relating to safety and precautionary measures, the association has had to improvise its actions based on common sense. The same goes for beach clubs, bars, restaurants, clothes shops and hotels that want to reopen. The regulations concerning sanitisation, respect for distances, and the eventual arrival of customers remain parameters that are still unknown, however, these will form the starting point for recovery in a season that has already been heavily compromised by the health emergency. The spring months, a primary source of revenue for the restaurant sector, have already been written off due to the total shutdown and consequently thousands of jobs have vanished.

A large number of tourists arrive from abroad each year, in particular, from Germany. This year German tourists are shifting their attention towards Croatia, the government of which is negotiating the opening of a preferential corridor premised on the fact that both countries have experienced relatively low levels of Covid-19. If this should come into being, the losses for Veneto would be enormous. It is estimated that the region would miss out on 13 of 18 billion euros in revenues.



Jesolo. Seafront apartments are almost all empty and there is a complete lack of demand for the summer season.



Caorle. Having been left unmaintained for three months, nature has taken the upper hand on the beach that now looks like it has been abandoned for years.



Jesolo. Amalia D'Amico, owner of the Alletorri Cafè. "We're usually open all year round and reopened just a few days ago to provide a takeaway service. I work with both locals and tourists. For now I'm on my own, but at the height of the season there are 10 of us. I'll probably be forced to lay off staff, without even calculating the thousands of euros of supplies that I had to throw away when the lockdown came into force."



Jesolo. Pedalos parked on dry land.



Chioggia Sottomarina. Palm trees on a desolate beach. Local authorities have banned walks along the shore.



Chioggia Sottomarina. Mattia and Federica, owners of Joe bar. "We're open all year round and compared with last year we're down by 75%. We have no idea whether the summer season will go ahead."



Caorle. A digger moves rocks to reinforce a sea barrier.



Chioggia Sottomarina. A view of the Ponte di Vigo during the lockdown.



Caorle. A walkway has been swallowed up beneath the sand.



Chioggia Sottomarina. A go-kart track lies closed.



Jesolo. Stefano, owner of Perbacco Wine bar. "Compared with last year I predict a reduction in business of about 80%. I offer a takeaway service but that isn't enough to cover our running costs."



Caorle. The bell tower of the cathedral.



The beach at Lido di Jesolo has been prepared for levelling.



Chioggia Sottomarina. Simone Zin, owner of the Simone Parrucchieri hair salon. "The drop in business compared with last year has been 100% due to the shutdown resulting from the coronavirus. We don't know when we're to reopen, neither do we know what precautionary measures to take to protect my health and that of my customers."



Jesolo. A hotel lies closed.



Caorle. A hotel lies closed. All hotels for the time being have had to put their activities on hold. An estimated 20-25% of them will not reopen this summer.



Chioggia Sottomarina. Matteo Boscolo, owner of the Baia Del Sole beach club and restaurant. "We're open all year round. We can do hundreds of covers but, nevertheless, the spring season has seen dozens of cancellations. In spite of everything, I'm optimistic even though the situation is very difficult."



Caorle. A swing that cannot be used. All the rides in the playground have been cordoned off and taped up to make them unusable.



Chioggia Sottomarina. A path down to the sea.



Chioggia Sottomarina. Having experienced a revival in recent years thanks to investment in youth tourism, Sottomarina has been forced to keep all its beach clubs closed.



Chioggia Sottomarina. A statue of a pirate used to entice people into a bar on the seafront.



Jesolo. Levelling work takes place on the beach ahead of the summer season.



Caorle. Beach huts are transported onto the beach.



Chioggia Sottomarina, Claudia Cavallarin, owner of the shop Enjoy. "Compared with last year it's all negative and when we reopen it will already be time for the sales, without the chance to make any money. We still don't know what measures to take in the shop. Already some customers are asking us if the garment they're interested in has been tried on before or whether it has been sanitised. How far away do we need to stand? Can I let a mother and daughter come in together for example? How much will sanitisation cost? We haven't had any directives about these issues."



Jesolo. Due to the lockdown restrictions this hotel and swimming pool have not been prepared for the summer season.

HOTELS ★★★
LILIA - GIOIOSA

H
S

NEW SALA
JESOLO
GIOCHI

FAMILY
ENTERTAINMENT



Jesolo. Children's rides in front of an arcade.



Jesolo. Andrea Carpanedo, owner of the Chiosco Loredana. "This is my second year of business and I predict that I won't recoup the investments I've made. It looks like I'll be seeing a 50% loss this year and that's if the tourists are allowed to come."



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