

This small town is situated on a lonely hill in the northern part of central Istria in the middle of a wide valley where the River Mirna flows. The location has been inhabited since pre-historic times. Beneath Buzet was the cross-roads of the main routes from the north to the south (at the foot of the limestone massif Cicarija) and from the west to the east (from the karst to the sea along the Mirna valley). The present settlement is spread out at the foot of the hill, in the Funtana area.

In Roman times the hill town was known as Pinguentum, from which came the Old Slavonic Plzet, or Blzet and then today's form, Buzet. Many archaeological finds date from the time of the great migrations: below the town a food store from the Langobard-Avarian-Slavic migrations has been found (Brezac about AD 600), an old Slavonic burial ground (Mala Vrata 9th-10th centuries), and an ethnically mixed settlement, Byzantine (soldiers) and Slavic (peasants and their families), in the area of Mejica. After all these movements, the town became a Slavic community with a local chieftain at its head. In the Middle Ages it was the property of the Patriarchs of Aquileia, and then various feudal families, until it was taken over by the Venetians in 1421. After 1511 the military leadership of Venetian Istria had its headquarters in Buzet. It remained under Venetian control until their empire fell in 1797. During the 15th century the town was frequently subjected to attack by the Turks, so it had to be protected by high walls. The present appearance of the town also dates from this time. Once the danger from the Turks had passed, homes were built along the walls. Two gates remain intact, the main one from 1547 (Vela vrata) and the northern gate (Mala vrata) from 1592.

In the centre of the town there is a large Baroque communal cistern with Baroque architectural decorations. On the main square, on top of the hill and on a terrace which has been cut out of natural rock, stands the Parish Church of the Assumption (Uznesenja Marijina) which was restored in 1784. The church has many valuable silver items amongst its treasures, which are the work of local masters. In the fraternal Church of St. George (Sveti Juraj), on the northern side of the town, which was built at the beginning of the 17th century (1611), there is a

large altarpiece showing the Miracles of St. Anthony (Sveti Antun of Padua). It is of the Tiepolo school. The wooden choir stalls are the work of a local master of the second half of the 18

th century. The cemetery church which was built in 1651, has some Roman carved reliefs built into its stonework. The Folk Museum of the Buzet Region (Muzej Buzestine) was founded in 1963 and consists of a collection of stone monuments, archaeological, ethnographic, cultural and historic collections, as well as an exhibition of more recent history in the Buzet area. The museum also houses several old craftsmen's workshops which have been preserved, both in the museum itself and in the town (a baker's, a potter's, a combmaker's and a blacksmith's). The stone collection includes examples of cult carvings (sacrificial altars) gravestones (stelae, cippi, tituli); special prominence is given to representations of the god Silvanus and the goddesses Diana and Ceres. The archaeological collection includes finds from the area around Buzet, from pre-historic times, the Roman era and more important finds from the time of the great migrations. There are some very significant finds from the old Slavic burial ground below Buzet. The ethnographic, cultural and historic collection has objects relating to the spiritual and material life of an Istrian village: national costumes, town and village furniture, as well as documents relating to the period of the National Revival in the second half of the 19

th century, and of the period of Fascism and the national resistance during World War II, and contains original documents and items that round off the historical presentation of the Buzet area from pre-historical times until the present day.

Stipan Konzul Istrian was born in Buzet. He was a Croatian Protestant writer from the second part of the 16th century, who printed the first book in the Glagolitic, Cyrillic and Latin

alphabets in Urach in Germany, as well as several books in Italian. Important editions in Croatian include the New Testament and other religious and religious propaganda books.