



## **Underground**

International Landscape Study Days 2025

Thursday 20 February 2025, h 1.30pm-2.15pm

### **A look at underground Treviso**

Bastione di Santa Sofia

guided visit by the association "Treviso sotterranea"

Visits take place inside the bastion of Santa Sofia, located near the river Sile, in via Jacopo Tasso. The wall facing of the corner bastion was subjected to considerable changes following the radical restructuring mid XIX century, when the communal slaughterhouse was built to the plan by the engineer Mr Bomben in 1866. The construction had a circular floor plan, using the solid sixteenth-century walls as perimeter foundation. The bastion of Santa Sofia, found at the right-angle corner between the east side of the Venetian Renaissance fortification and the south side close to the river Sile, should originally have had a very similar structure to the other four bastions of San Tomaso, San Marco, Altinia and San Paolo. The flanks of the bastion had the usual underground casemates needed to house defence militias assigned to use artillery for grazing fire to cover the adjacent stretches of curtain wall.

The original sixteenth-century underground structures were partly altered during the construction of the nineteenth-century slaughterhouse to create six large underground rooms inside the rampart for use as storerooms for dry-ageing the pieces of cattle previously processed in the rooms on the floor above.

The entire construction was unfortunately hit by a wartime bomb during one of the raids on the town in 1944. The bomb was launched by an allied plane and went straight through the roof and the ceiling of the second storeroom starting from the western side before exploding upon contact with the floor of the underground area. The shockwave caused by the deflagration coming from the underground rooms amplified the destructive effect, demolishing the whole construction and resulting in detritus falling into the external ditch. The rest of the building material left at the top of the bastion was later tipped into the three intact storerooms. Then in the year two thousand, the town council at that time decided that the detritus should be removed and the remaining underground structures cleaned. The excavation exposed the remains of the rooms partly demolished by the bombing of '44, connected by a wide tunnel to other rooms still perfectly preserved under the rampart of the bastion.

It has been a few years now that the structures have been made accessible and open to the public for educational visits thanks to the work of Treviso Sotterranea with the cooperation of the Municipality of Treviso.

The guided tour of underground Treviso can be booked at the reception (Palazzo Bomben) on 20 February from 9 to 10 am and during the coffee break.

Tips for the visit: sports shoes are recommended.