

# Comprehensive Institute Dante Alighieri Izola



Our school is situated in a small town Izola, on the Slovenian coast which is only 46.6 km long. The main towns are: Koper, Izola, and Piran.

The learning language is Italian. Slovene is the language of the environment.

188 pupils go to classes 1 to 9.

122 children are in the kindergarten.

# SALT PANS - OUR NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE



# The landscape and salt

- Places where the Sodium Chloride ( $\text{NaCl}$ ) is extracted from the seawater are called salt works or salt pans.
- Salt pans consist of a series of ponds, situated on a waterproof flat area near the seashore, usually just at the sea level or a little bit above it.
- The sea salt is produced by means of evaporation of salt water (also called brine) and fractional crystallization.



# Work in the salt pans

The salt-pan worker was the main character in the salt pans.

In order to do his job well, he had to be a chemist, a plumber, a meteorologist and many more.

- On St. George's day, [April 24](#) (St. George being the patron saint of the town of Piran) the saltpan workers traditionally moved to their seasonal accommodation in the salt pans of Sicciole (Sečovlje).
- They used to stay there until the first rainfalls in [September](#) which predict the right time for the wine harvest in autumn.





- The saltpans workers used to combine their labour in the salt works with the agricultural work in the fields. While rain was favourable to agriculture, the dry climate and sunshine were good for the production of salt.
- Women played a fundamental role in the salt pans too. They used to replace their men when these were needed for the work in the fields.



# Tools and utensils used in the saltpans





# Common diseases of saltpan workers

- The humid area of the salt pans were inhabited by numerous insects.
- **Thalassemia**, an inherited blood disorder and a reaction of the organism to protect itself from malaria, was evidenced among saltpan workers.
- Called also **the Mediterranean anaemia**, the disease is a blood disorder, in which the body produces an abnormal form of haemoglobin (the protein molecule in red blood cells that carries the oxygen).
- The red blood cells of patients, affected by Thalassemia, are protected from the infection or reproduction of the Plasmodium (the parasite responsible for causing malaria in humans).



# Salt and the economy

- The production of salt has played a fundamental role in the local economy as well as in the daily life style of a specific culture.
- Until the last century, salt was used mainly for **conservation of meat and fish**. The demand for salt was higher in places with a high consumption of pork.





- During the World War II the demand for salt, produced in the Slovene coastal area, increased significantly, especially due to the fact that the Italian farmers from the Padan Plain, the regions of Veneto and Friuli lost some of their usual suppliers of salt, and they started to buy the salt, produced in our area.
- Through history, authorities always wanted to control the processes of production and trade with salt in order to gain economic benefits.
- Some governments put high taxes on salt, which did not reflect the real value of the product itself.
- This situation led to the smuggling of salt.



# POPULAR CULTURE

- Salt has always been very present in the folk culture.
- In popular traditions salt was considered an antidote against demons. Therefore people used to throw salt around their houses or in front of the main entrance for protection's sake.
- It was believed that salt had purifying powers. Priests used to have a brine bath before performing mass or religious rituals.
- Nowadays, people are still used to offer bread and salt or olive oil as a sign of welcome.



- Numerous idiomatic expressions and proverbs give evidence of how important has salt always been in the folk culture:
- *A young goat eats the salt, an old goat the salt and the bag.* (It refers to people who become greedy when they grow old).
- *Oil, iron and salt, the royal merchandise.*
- *Poor the man that knows how much salt a pan needs.* (Poor the man whose wife is so useless that he needs to cook by himself.)
- *One should have been eating salt for seven years with a friend before he can say that he knows him.* (One should know a person well before he could consider this person his friend).
- *To put salt on a tail (of someone)* (to catch someone).
- *To have salt in his /her pumpkin* (to be intelligent).



# SALT PANS IN ISTRIA

- In the past, men created many salt pans on the coast of the Istrian peninsula.
- Some of them are still functioning.
- There were salt pans in the area of:
  - ✓ Pirano, Capodistria, Strugnano (Slovenia)
  - ✓ Brioni, Orsera (Croatia)
  - ✓ Muggia and Trieste (Italy).



# The Sečovlje - Sicciole saltworks

- They are called Sečoveljske soline in Slovene. Together with the Strunjan - Strugnano Saltpans, they are the northernmost Mediterranean saltworks.
- They are located in Slovenian Istria, at the Adriatic Sea, along the mouth of the Dragonja River.
- The saltworks have been active since the 13th century.
- Nowadays, the salt production is carried on in a traditional way , in order to preserve natural and cultural heritage.
- The area of the saltworks and the Seča peninsula have been declared the Sečovlje Salina Landscape Park.
- The Museum of Salt-Making in Sečovlje received the Europa Nostra Prize for the preservation of cultural heritage in 2003.
- The salt produced at the saltworks is marketed as the Piran Salt (Slovene: Piranska sol).
- In 1993, the saltworks were put on the list of Ramsar wetlands of international importance and a breeding place for waterbirds. The wetland covers 750 hectares.





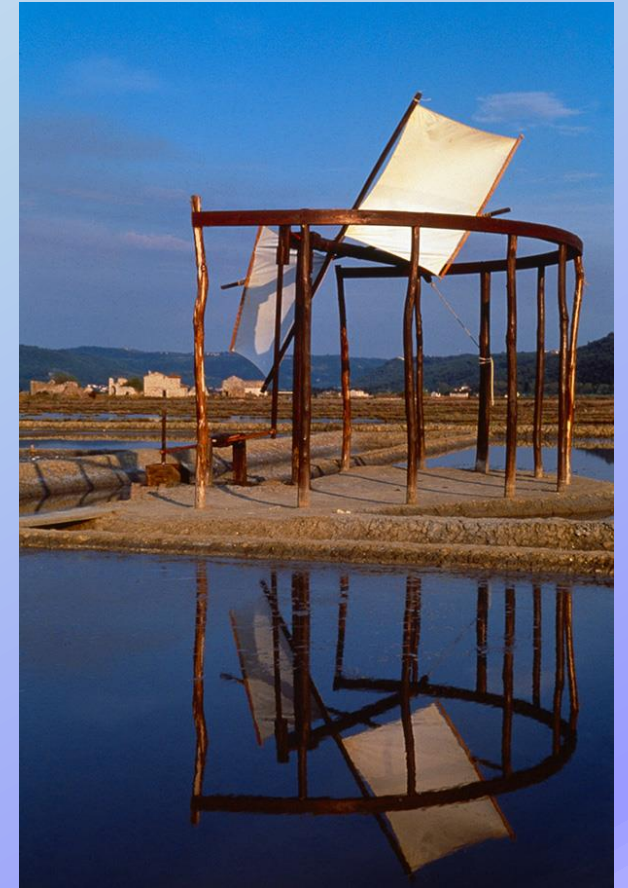


- The Sečovlje Salina Nature Park is divided into two areas: Lera and Fontanigge, which are separated by the river Drnica.

- **Fontanigge** is full of large basins which are overgrown by vegetation – the halophytes. The basins are crisscrossed by the system of ancient embankments. Along the wide channels, the former salt-pan houses are scattered.

- At Fontanigge, salt-harvesting was abandoned in the 1960s, **but the traditional way of salt-making** (which originates from the 14th century) is still shown within the Museum of Salt-making.

- Each salt-field here is used to form an independent salt-pan with its own **basins for seawater condensation and crystallisation**.



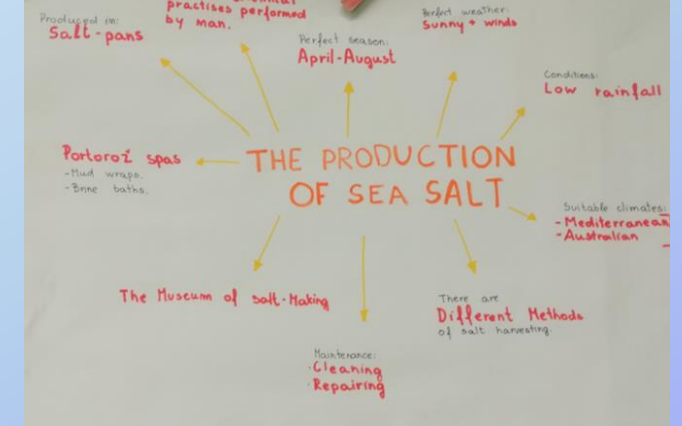
At [Lera](#) the production of salt is still active.

Here the salt-fields used for [crystallisation](#) are separated from those used for the condensation of the seawater ([evaporation](#)).

The difference between the two procedures of salt-making lies:

- in the technological process and
- in the difference of the implements used.

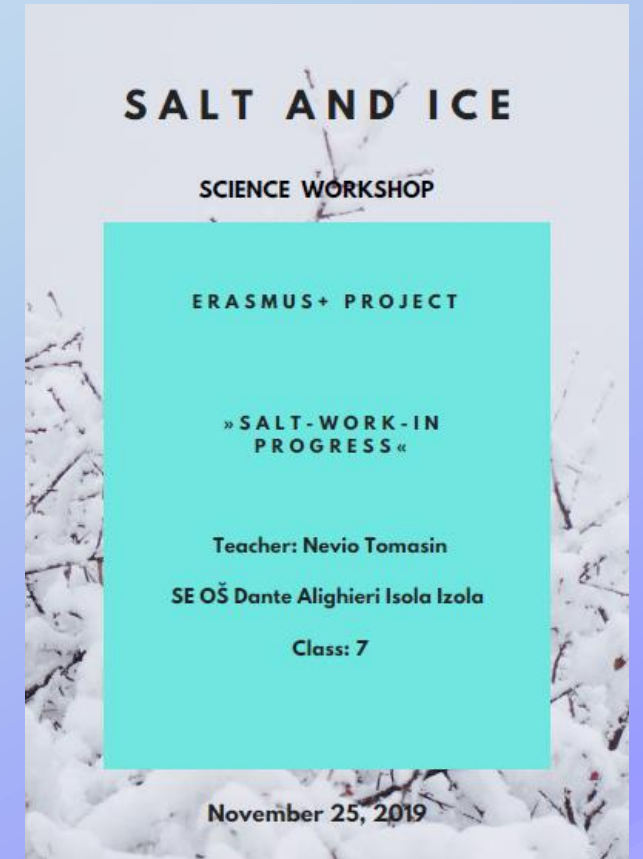
In both cases, salt-workers cultivate, on the bottom of salt-fields, the so-called [petola](#), a special type of biosediment that prevents sea mud from mixing with salt and at the same time stops separate ions from building in salt.





# SALT TODAY

- Salt is still an important product in our daily lives;
- besides in the kitchen, it's been used:
- for therapeutic purposes,
- in pharmacy,
- in road traffic (to melt ice),
- as a material for decorations.







Piran salt with protected designation of origin

Salt is light, rich in sea minerals, and has an exquisite taste, supplemented by the parent water caught within the crystals.



Traditional Sea Salt with Herbs



Salt Flower

Salt of distinct taste and fragrance, gathered in a thin layer on the surface of the salt pans basins.

## HELPS THYROID FUNCTION PROPERLY

- important role in metabolism
- your body needs the mineral iodine
- o The signs and symptoms are:
  - enlarged thyroid
  - constipation
  - issue thinking
  - fatigue
  - sensitivity to cold

## PROMOTES GOOD VASCULAR HEALTH

- Sea salt has protective effects against heart disease.

## IMPROVES SYMPTOMS OF CYSTIC FIBROSIS

- lose more salt when sweating
- need of more water and salt

# THE BENEFITS OF SALT

## KEEPS THE BODY HYDRATED

- Salt promotes healthy hydration levels and electrolyte balance.

## IMPROVES SLEEP

- Sea salt enhances sleep.

## SUPPORTS A HEALTHY NERVOUS SYSTEM

- Sodium regulates water flow
- That's crucial for a healthy nervous system.

## PREVENTS LOW BLOOD PRESSURE

- Inadequate amount of sodium in your weight-reduction can also result in low blood stress.

Daily recommended salt intake:

- Children of 1-5 years of age can have max. 3 g
- 5 to 10 years: 5 g
- over 11 year-olds: 6 g



The LEPA VIDA THALASSO SPA centre at Lera offers the thalassotherapy and uses natural products.

BRINE – mother water remains at the bottom of the salt evaporation ponds after salt harvesting. It is rich in minerals (bromine, iodine and magnesium).

A BRINE BATH :

- strengthens the immunosystem,
- calms people down,
- accelerates the blood circulation and detoxication,
- makes the skin healthier.

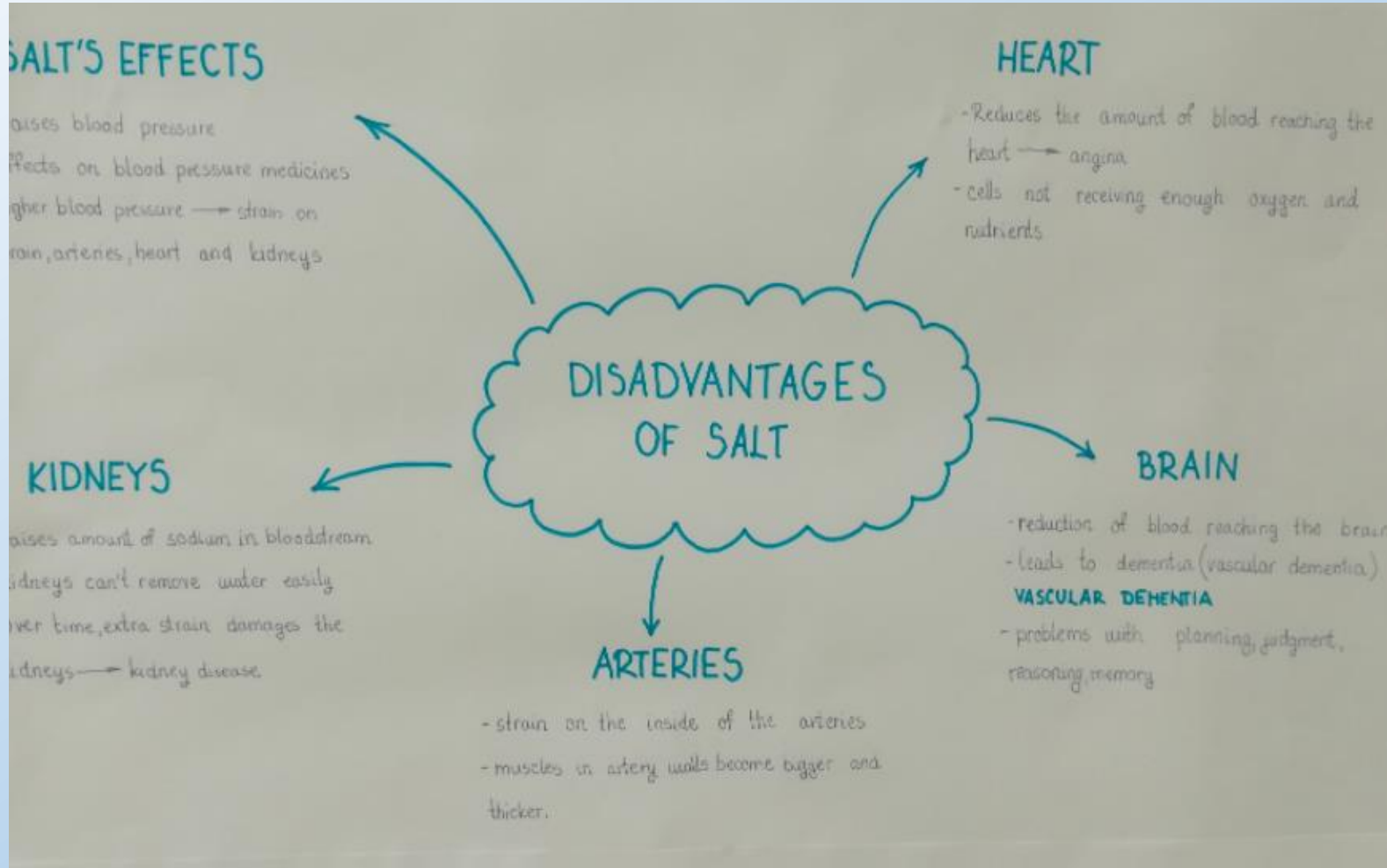


SALT-PAN MUD WRAPS (Istrian clay enriched with brine) contains a lot of minerals. It is a natural remedy for:

- rheumatism,
- pain relief in the locomotor system,
- relaxation and beautifying purposes (detoxi treatments),
- cellulite reduction
- and skin diseases.

SEA SALT SCRUBS  
MANUAL MASSAGES





Avoid high-salt foods:

- Bacon
- Ham
- Salami
- Cheese
- Pickled Olives

Read the nutrition label on the products you buy.

