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Carona

Carona is first mentioned in 926 as Calauna. The hamlet of Ciona was first mentioned in 1213. During the Middle Ages the village of Carona and the hamlet of Ciona formed a *Kastlanei* of the Bishop of Como. During the Middle Ages, the Church of Santa Maria was built in the hamlet of Torello. After 1349, the church was supported by a community of Augustinians Canons from the nearby monastery (built in 1217 by Guglielmo Della Torre). For the village's loyalty to the Visconti and Guelph families, it received its own coat of arms. According to Swiss Confederation law, it enjoyed a special status (*terra separata*) which included exemption from certain laws and taxes. The old, medieval statutes were renewed in 1470. The Carona romanesque village church of San Giorgio was first mentioned in 1425. Two years later it was raised to become a parish church. The church of S. Marta was built in the 14th century, and was formerly known as the Church of SS Pietro e Paolo. The Baroque pilgrimage church of Madonna d'Ongero was built in 1624, to the west of the village in the forest. The church of S. Maria delle

Grazie was built in Ciona. The last two churches as well as the homes of the village from the 17th and 18th Centuries represent the growing wealth of the village, through emigration of artists from Carona.



The village remained an agricultural and grazing village until the beginning of the 19th century, when Lugano developed into a tourist destination. In 1943, the S. Grato hill was cleared and farming began on the hill. However, the buildings were later converted into a vacation complex. After centuries of decline, the population doubled in the 1970s and 80s, as new homes were built outside the historic core village. In 2000 21% of the population spoke German. There is a major swimming pool and sports center, that serve the surrounding communities, it also holds top art events. You can read about Carona Immagina in this issue.

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