

## **The Convent of Saint Nicholas**

### **Video structure and layout choices**

The video is comprised of the following segments:

1. Short historical introduction and geographic collocation
2. Description of the structure of the convent
3. Description of the convent to the present day

### **Contents**

The Convent of Saint Nicholas was built in Almenno San Salvatore. It was built after the outbreak of a plague epidemic raging between 1483 and 1484. The population of Almenno made a vow to God: they would build a chapel in honor of the Saints Sebastian and Rocco, the traditional protectors against infectious diseases, if the infection ended soon, and this actually happened.

On 10<sup>th</sup> August 1488 they founded the Church and Monastery of Santa Maria della Consolazione. The construction started around the year 1495 and they were concluded around 1510. The complex reached its peak at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the bell tower was eventually built and the master organ builder Antegnati created a beautiful organ.

At the end of the century the Republic of Venice suppressed the convent which was bought later on by the Vitalba family ensuring the decorum and religious worship. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century the complex started to be called Saint Nicholas.

The convent is situated at the right side of the façade of the church.

Once inside the cloister, it is easy to notice right away that the convent is quite small. That's due to the fact that it was designed to welcome no more than twelve monks. It leans on the South side of the church and it has a central square court which is enclosed into a porch made on every side by five ogival arches.

The first floor of the court is overlooked by various rooms. In the East wing there were the sacristy, the chapter house, the kitchen and the refectory. A part of the refectory and three other premises made up the South side. The West side did not have closed rooms, but only the inferior colonnade and a hallway above. On the upper floor of the convent, there are the monks' cells, one in front of each other, each one equipped to accommodate just one Augustinian hermit monk.

The monastery remained unchanged on the East side while its aspect on the West side was completely transformed: originally there was only a wall that reached the roof, but during the second half of the XIX century a rural building with stables and barns was created and the actual entry with a corridor was opened.

Since the convent is now a private property, inside there are a winery and a restaurant.

Thanks to the love shown by the community, the Antenna Europea del Romanico, a really active association of the territory, made sure to signal the complex to the census in order to grant protection, maintenance and restoration, which is needed due to the humidity of the place.

### **Bibliography**

- P. Manzoni *Romanico, gotico e rinascimento ad Almenno: guida dialogata*, Ed. Bolis, 2014 (in Italian)

### **Sitography**

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<https://www.fondoambiente.it/luoghi/convento-di-san-nicola-s-maria-della-consolazione?ldc>.

- Portale Itinerari Bergamo:

<https://www.itinerari.bergamo.it/convento-di-san-nicola-almenno-san-salvatore/#>