



# Piolet d'Or 2024

An International Celebration of Grand Alpinism

Press release #1 - June 2024

**We are very delighted to announce that the 2024 edition of the “Piolet d’Or” will be held in San Martino di Castrozza, in Trentino, on December 8th to 11th.**

It will be the first time that Piolet d’Or will be organised in the Dolomites, a major mountain range in the Alps and in the world, in particular for its infinite options for alpine rock ascents, and also because of the special role the Dolomites have played in the development of classic Alpinism in the last 150 years.

World class alpinists such as Angelo Dibona, Reinhold Messner or famous climbers such as Manolo are from the Dolomites; this big range with thousands of peaks – beyond the Palagroup, the Tre Cime di Lavaredo, Marmolada, Sassolungo, Catinaccio and Civetta being probably the most famous - has attracted climbers and alpinists from all over the world; in the evolution of the art of climbing mountains, remarkable ascents in the Dolomites by figures such as Paul Preuss, Giovanni Piaz, Michele Bettega, Luigi Micheluzzi, Emilio Comici, Riccardo Cassin, Cesare Maestri, Armando Aste, Georges Livanos, Pierre Mazeaud, Lino Lacedelli have marked the history of Alpinism.

It was thanks to the travellers (geologists and botanists mainly from England and later alpinists also from the Netherlands and Germany) who came to the Dolomites in the second half of the 19th Century with the aim to discover new peaks, that San Martino di Castrozza was born as a tourist destination, with shepherds and hunters working as alpine guides. At the time, they were the only ones who could take visitors up to the mountains, knowing them better than anyone else. The first alpine guide of the area was Michele Bettega, followed by Giuseppe Zecchini, Antonio Tavernaro and Bortolo Zagonel. They started to be recognized as the ‘Eagles of San Martino’, a sort of legend for the wealthy climbing tourists. Michele Bettega, for example, climbed the Cimon della Pala more than 250 times.

At the time, San Martino di Castrozza was appreciated also by famous visitors, such as Sigmund Freud, Arthur Schnitzler, who wrote a novel ‘Die Fraulein Else’ located exactly in San Martino, the King of Belgium and Dino Buzzati.

*“If you don’t know San Martino di Castrozza, you don’t know the Dolomites”* claimed the well-travelled Alpinist and author Gunther Langes. He probably was the best climber in the Pale di San Martino during the years between the two world wars. Among his many important climbs in the ‘Pale’ the two most famous ones are “The Spigolo del Velo (the well-known Schleierkante in german)” which means the ridge of the veil on cima della Madonna and the Gran Pilastro (great Pillar) at the Pala di San Martino.

San Martino di Castrozza is situated in the heart of what is perhaps the wildest part of the Dolomites, at 1.450m. The Palagroup (in Italian Pale di San Martino), which is the widest group of the Dolomites, fascinates visitors with its unique skyline, which is recognized as a symbol of the Dolomites mountains all over the world. Its most important peak is the Cimon della Pala (3.184m), also known as “the Matterhorn of the Dolomites” because of the similar shape, when observed from the Passo Rolle. The Cimon della Pala, conquered by the english alpinists Francis Fox Tuckett and Edward Robson Whitwell, is not the highest peak of the “Pale”, which is the Vezzana peak, with its 3.192m.





San Martino di Castrozza is an ideal basecamp in all seasons for mountain activities such as hiking, bike, climbing, running, orienteering and canyoning in an authentic spirit, where a unique hospitality can be experienced.

The Tourist Board ApT San Martino di Castrozza Primiero e Vanoi, in cooperation with Trentino Marketing, and the patronage of the UNESCO Dolomites Foundation is proud to host this year's edition of the Piolets d'Or and to welcome alpinists from all the world in this enchanting corner of the Trentino Region, where the Dolomites are so closed, that you feel you can touch it, and where you can still enjoy the pureness and authenticity of the mountains, just like those who first discovered and conquered these peaks, a long time ago.

The event is supported by the Municipality of Primiero San Martino di Castrozza, the Community of Primiero, FPB Cassa di Fassa Primiero and Belluno, the group of the mountain guides "the Eagles" of San Martino di Castrozza" and the tourist operators of San Martino di Castrozza, Primiero and Vanoi.

**Maurizio Rossini CEO Trentino Marketing:** *"In Trentino, on the walls of the Pale di San Martino, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, important pages of mountaineering history have been written since the mid-1800s, making it an ideal location to host such an important event. Scrolling through the list of recipients of the 32 editions of the prestigious Piolets d'Or and the Piolet d'Or Lifetime Achievement Award "Walter Bonatti" means retracing some of the most extraordinary pages of international mountaineering, celebrating passion, spirit, and values. Among our Dolomites, in a place recognized as an excellent destination for all mountain lovers, we share the values that this recognition aims to reward: prioritizing style over performance, passion, authenticity, creativity in seeking innovative routes, team spirit, and respect for people and nature. These values are part of the heritage that characterizes the DNA of our mountain people, and being able to share them with the protagonists of this "Oscar" of the mountains is a great source of pride for Trentino".*

**Antonio Stompanato, President of the Tourist Board ApT San Martino di Castrozza, Passo Rolle, Primiero and Vanoi:** *"We are very pleased to host such a prestigious event as the Piolets d'Or. The journey to bring it to San Martino di Castrozza began three years ago, thanks to the crucial efforts of some local operators. Being the first Dolomite location to host an award of such international stature is a great honor for us. I am convinced that the entire region will be ready for the event, maximizing the value of a significant investment made with a view to the strategic positioning of the area".*

**Christian Trommsdorff GHM President :** *"After several editions in France, we are very pleased to move abroad once again and to be hosted by San Martino di Castrozza for the 2024 edition of the Piolets d'Or. This location perfectly represents the beauty and hospitality that characterize the Dolomites, but most importantly, it is a place with a great mountaineering tradition, where indelible pages in the history of mountaineering and rock climbing have been written."*

