



**Politecnico  
di Torino**

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# Honors Thesis

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**Course**  
**Pianificazione territoriale, urbanistica e paesaggistico-ambientale**

**Abstract**

**Title**

**Urban planning and snow. The cases of the ski resorts of  
Artesina, Prato Nevoso, St. Gr  e and Gairessio-Valle dei  
Castori**

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The ski resorts of Artesina, Prato Nevoso, St. Gr  e, and Garessio-Valle dei Castori, located in the Maritime Alps of Piedmont, are significant examples of settlement development in mountain areas, where architecture and infrastructure adapt both to the natural environment and to tourist needs. Each resort has unique characteristics in terms of design, history, and integration with the territory, responding to different eras and architectural visions. The Artesina resort, located in the municipality of Frabosa Sottana, has developed since the early 1960s in a valley with challenging geographical conditions for the construction of an extended urban center. However, thanks to a group of entrepreneurs from Savona, who still manage the facilities and some properties, Artesina has grown by following the morphology of the area and fully utilizing the characteristics of the land. In the 1990s, the slopes of Artesina were connected to those of Prato Nevoso, thus expanding the ski offer. Prato Nevoso, which originated in the mid-1960s in a natural basin, is known for its ability to provide extensive services to visitors. Its architecture reflects a "classic" Alpine style, in contrast to Artesina, which features an architectural style influenced by the French design principles of the time. This diverse approach is part of a broader tourism strategy aimed at attracting a heterogeneous audience by offering different mountain stay experiences. The St. Gr  e resort, located in the municipality of Viola, lies at a lower altitude than Artesina and Prato Nevoso and is also the product of a visionary 1960s design. Created by the Genoese engineer Fedriani, St. Gr  e is an example of organic architecture that harmonizes with the landscape. The construction of the "Porta della Neve," a commercial center now abandoned, reflects the adoption of the integrated resort theory, an urban planning model already tested in some French ski resorts, with the aim of creating a self-sufficient environment that housed shops and services accessible to skiers. The Garessio-Valle dei Castori resort, located on the Casotto pass, underwent significant intervention by architects Sergio Jaretti and Carlo Caramellino in the 1970s and 1990s. Although the initial idea was to develop a resort fully integrated with the landscape, this goal was only partially achieved, although the natural elements of the area were preserved. The buildings in Garessio reflect a major example of modern architecture emphasizing the connection with the surrounding nature. Today, all four resorts face the challenges posed by climate change, which affects not only the amount of snow and the length of the ski season but also the costs and long-term sustainability of the infrastructure. As a result, the future development and maintenance of these mountain resorts increasingly depend on their ability to adapt and innovate in response to these new environmental and climatic conditions.

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*Figura 1: Building in Artesina 1400.*



*Figura 2: Residential builing in Garessio – valle dei Castori*



*Figura 3: Villa Agorà in St. Gréé*

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