

Ilona Seifert, Her Sister And Their Mother Iren Riemer In Abbazia



On holiday in Abbazia, Yugoslavia (now Croatia), in the 1920s. The two little girls on the left are me and my sister, and my mother is sitting right behind us. The photo is from the 1920s. From early childhood until quite late, we went to Abbazia and to Semmering for summer holidays. We went to Semmering supposedly to give us a better appetite, because we were so skinny. Daddy came to Semmering only on the weekends. We spent a month at each place. In Abbazia, Daddy was with us for a few days, sometimes even for two weeks, but we were there with Mommy for a month (and in Semmering too). The whole extended family went down to Abbazia at the same time. We traveled by train. It was a long journey, which took almost a whole day, and we had to change trains at Fiume, not so easy with our large amounts of luggage. In Abbazia, we all lived in the Breiner Hotel, a strictly kosher hotel. I remember that the meat table and the meat section were set with red covers, and the milk table and section with nice blue tablecloths. You could eat either meat or milk-based meals, but the two parts were kept separate. The Breiner was the only kosher hotel in Abbazia, so all our Jewish acquaintances also went there. The family all went together, my mother and the two of us, and of course our Fräulein Herta. Since she worked all year, it was natural that we wouldn't leave her out and go on holiday without her! My mother's younger sister with her two sons also went, as did our grandparents, and, I think, others as well. There were lots of children in Abbazia, as well as our acquaintances, relatives and neighbors. Everybody knew everybody else. There was also always a rabbi who spent his summer holiday there, because the place was kosher enough, even for him. He conducted a religious service every Sabbath, as there was a synagogue there, too. I must have been around 15 when we went to Abbazia for the last time. We also went to Semmering in Austria, supposedly to give us a better appetite, because we were so skinny. We continued to go to Semmering on holiday, even when we no longer went to Abbazia.