

The Territory of the Distretto Turistico dei Laghi Monti e Valli

The romantic atmosphere of the lakes, the grandeur of the surrounding alpine peaks, the ancient rural history and the excellence of top quality food and wine products typical of the regional cuisine contribute to make the "Distretto Turistico dei Laghi Monti e Valli" in Northern Piedmont, an area directly bordering with Switzerland and located within a short distance from the two important metropolitan centers of Milan and Turin, a perfect destination for a top quality relaxing vacation.

A variety of landscapes, so different but so closely connected and easy to reach!

From Lake Maggiore, with the fascinating Borromeo Islands, to the peaceful and charming Lake of Mergozzo, all the way up to the bewitching scenario of Lake of Orta with the suggestive Island of St. Jules: Nature, art and historical jewels contribute to make this one of the most beautiful tourist areas in the world. Here, surrounded by the seemingly never-ending Alpine range, mountain lovers can explore and enjoy the Ossola Valleys with their extensive forests, alpine lakes, imposing mountain tops and breathtaking parks. Mount Rosa, the Val Grande National Park, the Nature Parks of Veglia-Devero Mountain Pastures and the Antrona Upper Valley represent ideal destinations for hikers looking for the most uncontaminated environments.

The succession of lakes and mountains offers endless opportunities to...

practice summer and winter sports, stop at typical restaurants to savor the traditional regional cuisine, and discover mouth watering menus inspired by both tradition and innovation, visit interesting museums and enjoy the comfort of thermal resorts and take part to international events without forgetting to stop at some of the many craftsmen shops to take a look at, and possibly take home as souvenirs, the many skillfully handcrafted items, houseware and clothing exposed in the windows... All of the above contributes to make this a territory to be enjoyed all year round.

Lake Maggiore, Lake of Orta, Lake of Mergozzo and the Ossola Valleys are...

THE MAIN TOURIST ATTRACTIONS
SACRED MOUNTS, WORLD HERITAGE
PROTECTED AREAS & UNCONTAMINATED NATURE
THERMAL BATHS
FOOD & WINE
OTHER TYPICAL PRODUCTS
EVENTS
CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT
SPORTS
ACCOMMODATION

Everything is...

Distretto Turistico dei Laghi

Monti e Valli

...take your lake time!

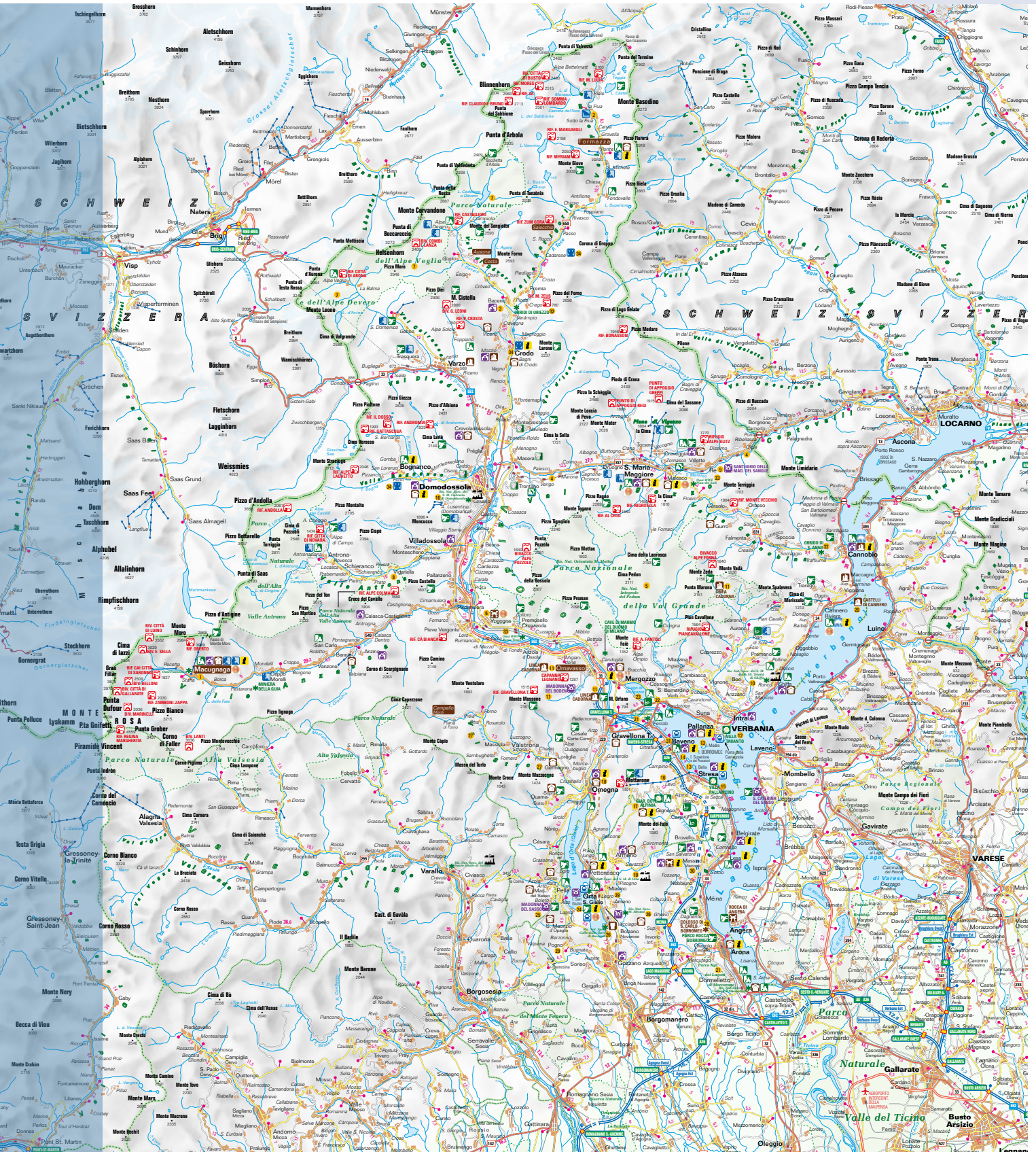


Visit the official website www.distrettolaghi.it and take a look at the...

"Ebook" section (after rapid subscription in homepage - "User Login" space - user name + password required): tourist maps, guides and brochures (resorts, attractions, accommodation, sport, gastronomy, IAT Tourist Offices and their contacts, etc.) to read on line, download or print. IAT Tourist Offices staff is available for further details about their towns and shipment of paper material.

"Lakes", "Parks", "Mountains" sections in homepage: general information about places and destinations (Lake Maggiore/Lake of Orta/Lake of Mergozzo; nature parks and reserves; Ossola Valleys).

"Places to go" section in homepage: detailed description of tourist attractions (categories: nature, history, art, folklore, faith and culture).



Distretto Turistico dei Laghi Monti e Valli

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The main tourist attractions



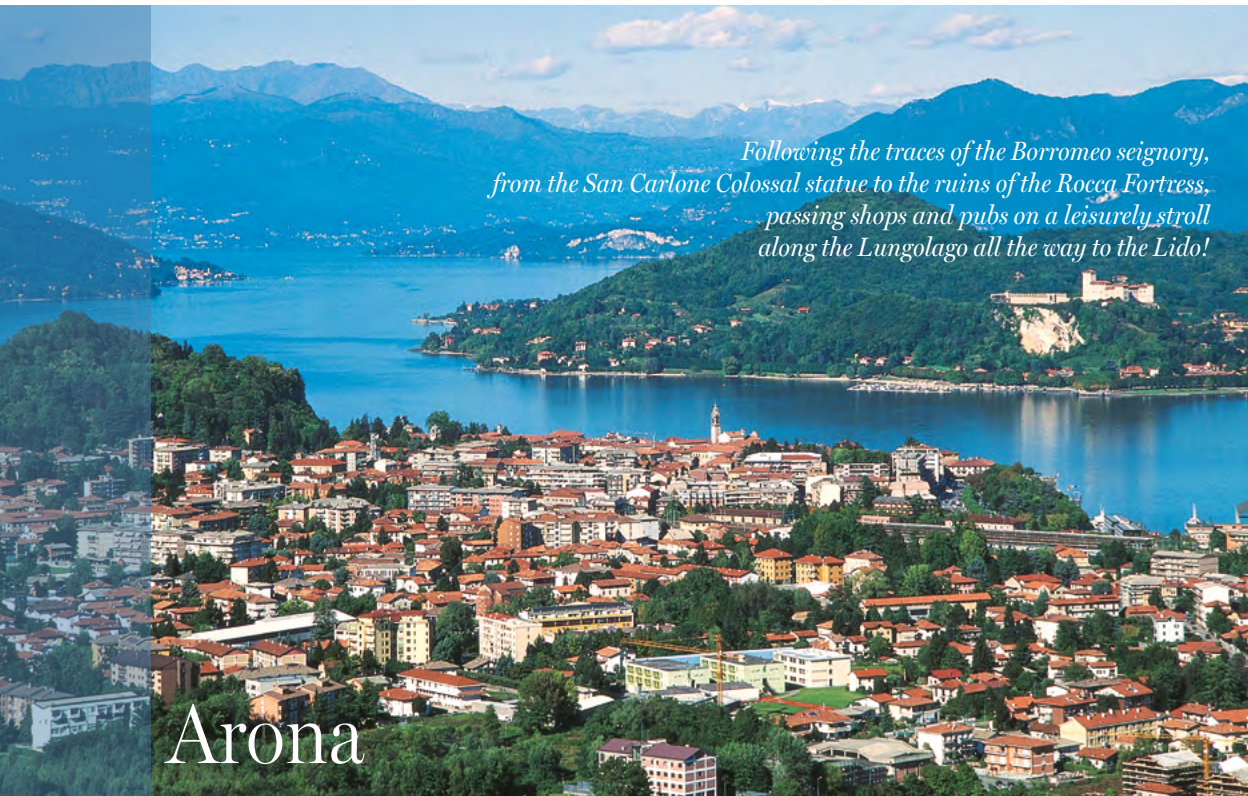
*An ideal destination for every age and passion.
A truly unique vacation of fun on the beach, outdoor activities,
luxurious mansions and parks, trendy clubs and restaurants
along the lake... And everything within easy reach!*

Lake Maggiore

Lake Maggiore extends for 66 kilometers at 194 m. a.s.l. between Italy and Switzerland, from the Po Valley to the alpine chains of Ossola and Ticino. Maximum depth is 380 m. near the Cannero Riviera. Its main affluent rivers are Ticino and Toce. In Roman times it was called "Lacus Maximus" since it is larger than other lakes of fluvioglacial origin. It is also known as "Verbano" a name derived from a combination of two Celtic words.

The western bank is in Piedmont (provinces of Novara and Verbano Cusio Ossola) and the eastern in Lombardy (province of Varese), while the most northerly section extends for 13 kilometers up to Ascona and Locarno- in Canton Ticino. The Piedmontese bank has a more ancient tourist tradition than Lombardy where such development is rather recent. Thanks to the strategic position between two nations, the opening of Napoleon's Route in 1805 and in 1906 of the international Simplon railway line, Lake Maggiore has become through the centuries an important and very efficient

tourist destination. Between the XV and XVIII centuries Lake Maggiore was governed as feudal property by the Borromeo Family and became their traditional holiday destination and representative seat. Breathtaking scenarios created by magnificent mansions and luscious parks and gardens, such as the ones on Isola Bella and Isola Madre, became in the XIX and early XX centuries famous the world over and were greatly appreciated by European writers and musicians (i.e. Stendhal, Byron, Dumas senior, Flaubert, Ruskin, Dickens, Nietzsche, Dostoevskij, Hemingway, Mendelssohn, Listz, Wagner) in the XIX and early XX century, who chose Lake Maggiore as intermediate stop of their Grand Tour.



Arona

*Following the traces of the Borromeo seignory,
from the San Carlone Colossal statue to the ruins of the Rocca Fortress,
passing shops and pubs on a leisurely stroll
along the Lungolago all the way to the Lido!*



Located on the south western bank of Lake Maggiore, Arona is an important trade and tourist destination. After falling under the control of the Visconti family in 1277, Arona became fief of the Borromeo family between 1439 and 1797. The charming Piazza del Popolo is also known as Market Square because of the weekly market that took place there up to the XIX century. The beautiful San Graziano Square is the place where events are held throughout the year. In the pedestrian area the syncretism created between art and commercial activities that enliven the streets of the historical center is very strong. The Virgin's Nativity Collegiate Church, rebuilt in the XV century, holds an impressive polyptych commissioned in 1511 by Lady Bianca Saluzzo, wife of Vitaliano Borromeo, to Gaudenzio Ferrari, the greatest XVI century master of the Piedmontese School. Next to the Collegiate Church is the Holy Martyrs Church, where St. Charles celebrated his last mass. A walk along the picturesque promenade of Arona, known for the many bars and restaurants, is very pleasant. Relaxation areas with benches, a tall fountain within the shaded green area. From spring to autumn the Lido beach offers bar service, sun-beds and a playground.

Rocca Borromea

The fortress was built for defensive purposes on the Piedmont side of the lake, opposite Angera (VA). The ancient Borromeo Castle, founded shortly before the year 1000 under the control of the Lombards, witnessed the birth of St. Charles Borromeo in 1538 in one of the corner rooms of the fortress, known as the "three lakes room" because of the view over the lake. The Rocca was then destroyed in 1800 by Napoleon's army. The park is currently open to the public: from the wide natural terrace in front of the fortress ruins one can enjoy a marvelous view over Lake Maggiore.

Colossus of San Carlo Borromeo

At the top of a hill stands an impressive 23.40 m tall statue dedicated to the Saint's grandeur. Archbishop of Milan, Charles Borromeo (1538 - 1584) was a central figure in the Council of Trent and was canonized only 26 years after his death (1610). The statue is completely plated with copper, while its head and hands are plated with bronze. The complex inside structure is in blocks of stone and partly in iron trellis. The original project was designed by Giovan Battista Crespi, known as Cerano. The statue was inaugurated and blessed by Cardinal Caccia in 1698. It is the second world highest statue after the Statue of Liberty in New York, representing a human figure and made with these materials. Reach the top from the inside and enjoy a fantastic view!



Info:

www.comune.arona.no.it
www.ambrosiana.eu
www.parcoroccaaron.com

Arona and surroundings:
see also:

Protected Areas
& Uncontaminated Nature

Events

Culture & entertainment

Sports



Grown-ups and children stand open-mouthed while touring the enchanted palaces and gardens of Isola Bella and Isola Madre or walking around the animal park of Villa Pallavicino!

Stresa



Since the mid XIX Century Stresa has been a major international tourist destination. In a panoramic position facing the Borromeo Islands, it is characterized by Liberty style luxury hotels on the lake-front. It hosts the International Convention Centre and is home to the famous concert festival "Stresa Festival – Settimane Musicali di Stresa e del Lago Maggiore".

Park of Villa Pallavicino

Among many historical villas and mansions of Stresa worth a visit is Villa Pallavicino (XIX century) with over 15 hectares of English style -landscaped gardens, 7 Km long alleys and a zoological park.

Borromeo Islands

The Borromeo Gulf is reachable from Stresa on board of the "Navigazione Lago Maggiore" ferries or by taxi boat in just a few minutes.

Isola Madre

The largest island owned by the Borromeo family offers a beautiful English style garden of rare plants and exotic flowers, with multicolored peacocks and pheasants roaming freely around. The XVI century villa is interesting for the reconstruction of historical environments and collections of liveries, dolls and porcelain. Exceptional the exposure of "Tiny Puppets Theatres" manufactured between '600 and '800. The island is open to the public from March to October.

Isola Bella

In 1632 Charles Borromeo started the construction of the palace and the park which still contribute to make the island famous all over the world. The island was conceived as an imaginary vessel with the villa to the fore and the garden aft. In the stately baroque residence, created in his wife Isabella d'Adda's honor, the tour through a succession of beautiful rooms decorated with tapestries, furniture, statues, paintings and stuccoes culminates in cool grottos covered by stone and shell mosaics. From the palace take access to the magnificent Italian style garden where beautiful white peacocks thrive among enchanting plants, citrus trees and rare plant species of remote origin. Articulated in 10 descending terraces, the garden is embellished by ponds, fountains and a multitude of statues. The island is open from March to October.

Isola dei Pescatori

The Isola Superiore, better known as "dei Pescatori" (fishermen island) to emphasize the trade typical of the island's inhabitants, is a spectacular maze of narrow streets with colorful houses. Jewel of the island is the small San Vittore Parish Church dating back to the XI century. Several restaurants offer the opportunity to enjoy traditional specialties based on lake fish. Many stands and shops along its streets make the atmosphere even more picturesque.

Info:
www.stresaturismo.it
www.parcoszoopallavicino.it
www.isoleborromeo.it
www.stresaturismo.it





Come to the "mountain between two lakes", where a big surprise awaits you with its panorama at an altitude of 1.491 meters, nail-biting ski runs and mountain bike tracks and Alpyland!

Mottarone

Mottarone (1.491 M), situated between Lake Maggiore and Lake of Orta, is considered one of the most beautiful natural terraces in the whole Piedmont and even beyond. Its orographic formation offers the tourists a 360° view from the Po Valley to the summits of the Alps. The visitor's eye is amazed by the close view of the summit of Mount Rosa and the seven lakes (Maggiore, Orta, Mergozzo, Varese, Comabbio, Monate and Biandronno) encased in a natural basin. Mottarone offers not only a breathtaking view but it gives the opportunity to practice winter sports, trekking, hand-gliding and the thrill of experiencing exciting bicycling down the mountain along adequately marked tracks and then relax at the table with mouthwatering menus typical of the local cuisine. Experience then the thrill of a run on "Alpyland", the modern Alpine roller-coaster down the Mottarone slopes!

Cableway Stresa-Alpino-Mottarone

Starting from Lido Square at Carciano (Stresa), the Stresa-Alpino-Mottarone Cable-way can take in 20 minutes up to 40 people per run all the way to the top at an altitude of 1491 meters above sea level.

Alpinia Botanical Garden

Just 300 meters from the intermediate stop of the cable-way at Alpino (Stresa) it is possible to visit the Alpinia Botanical Garden, a 40.000 sq.m. park offering over 1.000 essences of alpine origin unique of their kind. By all means a really extraordinary view of the lake from way up there!



Info:
www.stesaturismo.it
www.stresa-mottarone.it
www.giardinoalpinia.it
www.lagodorta.net
www.alpyland.com



Mottarone and surroundings: see also:
Sports





*...to plunge into quiet and tepid lake water
or slide down into the pools
of the Adventure Park!*

Baveno

Baveno is a charming vacation resort close to the Borromeo Gulf. The town presents all sorts of accommodation, from big 4* hotels offering every comfort to relaxing camping grounds for full immersion in nature. It is location of the famous "Baveno Festival Umberto Giordano". Most important monuments are the S.S. Gervaso and Protaso Parish Church, with a characteristic gabled façade showing traces of an ancient fresco decoration, and the Baptistery, characterized by a square plan on the inside and an octagonal form on the outside. Worth a visit is also the Lago Maggiore Aquadventure Park, a fun park for the whole family with indoor and outdoor swimming-pools, slides and an adventure-zone.



Info:
www.bavenoturismo.it
www.aquadventurepark.com

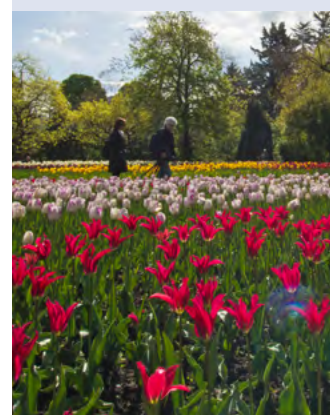


Baveno and surroundings:
see also:
Other typical products
Events



Verbania

*Visit one of the most beautiful gardens
in the world at Villa Taranto!*



Verbania is the main administrative center of Lake Maggiore, founded in 1939 with the unification of Intra, Pallanza and Suna (as well as minor villages). It has recently become the seat of the Verbano Cusio Ossola Province. Among the suburbs of Verbania, Intra is the most important commercial lake-port, characterized by the daily ferry line “Navigazione Lago Maggiore” – the historical public transport company established in 1825 - to Laveno Mombello (Va), on the Lombard bank. The town centre is a pedestrian zone made by narrow lanes and small courtyards and included between the “lungolago” and San Vittore Basilica. Standing out as a shopping destination, its streets Via San Vittore, Via San Fabiano, Corso Garibaldi and the central Ranzoni Square are lined by many shops, cafés and restaurants. The market on Piazza Mercato and Piazza Fratelli Bandiera attracts many visitors from 8.00 am to 4.30 pm every Saturday.

Pallanza is a quiet resort of Roman origins and stands in a panoramic position. Here small restaurants, luxury accommodation structures, private dwellings and breathtaking gardens enchant passerbys. The islet of San Giovanni lies at a short distance from the shore of Pallanza. Known in the past as Islet of Sant’Angelo, the “Isolino” was home to the powerful De Castello family, the local feudatory. Its ownership later passed on to the the Collegiate of Pallanza, which here established its first seat. It was then turned over to the Borromeo family, who still owns it today. The extensive park of romantic inspiration with its terraces overlooking the south gradually decline with wooded areas.

Many famous personalities of the European culture sojourned there. Maestro Arturo Toscanini is a bronze copy of the bust sculpted by Troubetzkoy dedicated to Maestro Arturo Toscanini can be seen in the garden of Villa Giulia.

The Botanical Gardens of Villa Taranto

The garden were created in 1931 by a Scottish officer with a passion for plants and flowers. Neil McEacharn bought the villa and its park along the Castagnola Hill in Pallanza from the marquise of Sant’Elia, and he then decided to create an exemplary English garden on a strip of land that reminded him of Scotland. He called the property “Villa Taranto” in honor of the Duke of Taranto. The officer was a relentless traveler and from every country he visited he brought back new specimens that he would skillfully plant in his garden. Neil McEacharn bought neighboring pieces of land to further extend the garden into a 16 hectare park. He created marvelous terracing compositions, with woods, borders, paths, flowerbeds, lawns and greenhouses for plants originating from all over the world. In 1938 McEacharn donated the park to the Italian State. Today the botanical heritage of the Gardens of Villa Taranto includes about 1000 plants that had never been grown in Italy before, and about 20,000 varieties and species of great interest. Open to the public from March to November.

Info:
www.verbania-turismo.it
www.villataranto.it

Verbania and surroundings:
see also...

Sacred Mounts,
world heritage

Protected Areas
& Uncontaminated Nature

Events

Culture & entertainment

Sports



*Qui, dove sventola la Bandiera Blu
e fanno capolino fiabeschi castelli...*



Cannero Riviera

A one-of-a-kind vacation resort nestled on a small sunny promontory, it has become famous for its mild climate both in summer and winter. Visitors can take a ferry ride to reach the picturesque castles of Cannero. Sport lovers can enjoy swimming, sailing, canoeing, fishing, etc. from its long and wide beach. Its crystal clear waters and the top-quality services granted this area the "Blue Flag" ("Bandiera Blu"). The mountains overlooking the lake offer walking trips and excursions with a wide range of entertainments for the entire family.

The Castels of Cannero

The Castles of Cannero, also known as "Malpaga Castles", rise from the water not far from the shore. They stand on two islets fortified during the Middle Ages as a defense against brigands who would use them as hideaway and to control the trading with neighboring Switzerland. Protagonists of the story are the "Malpaga brothers", five brothers belonging to the Mazzarditi family who seized the town of Cannobio between 1403 and 1404 extorting money from the coastal population. They forced people to build a fortress

to have a safe and fortified place from where to start out on plundering expeditions. To put an end to raids and violence in 1414 duke Filippo Maria Visconti put the fortress under siege forcing the bandits to surrender for hunger. The castles were then razed to the ground. Between 1519 and 1521 the Borromeo, lords of the lake, built in its place the "Vitaliana", a stronghold named after Vitaliano Borromeo, aimed at protecting Lake Maggiore from Swiss incursions. In the XVIII century the castles were abandoned and gradually went to ruins. The modern statue of the Virgin Mary on the smallest islet was realized by Giannino Castiglioni (XX century).

Info:
www.cannero.it
www.procannobio.it

Cannero Riviera and
surroundings: see also...

Events

Culture & entertainment

Sports

Cannobio and
surroundings: see also...

Protected Areas
& Uncontaminated Nature

Sports

Cannobio

Animated tourist resort and destination particularly loved by foreigners, Cannobio has a long "lungolago" lined with coffee bars and restaurants, accommodation structures offering all sorts of services and historical monuments such as the beautiful San Vittore Collegiate Church and S.S. Pietà Sanctuary. In addition Cannobio is well known for water sports like windsurf. Visitors and locals love to take leisurely strolls along the Lido and organize picnics.

*Next to the Swiss border, the perfect mix
of environmental quality for the entire family
and night "movida" for the youngest...*



*Up and down Lake Maggiore
on board the historical ferry...*

Boat Cruises

Explore the wonders of Lake Maggiore on a daily ferry cruise by "Navigazione Lago Maggiore", a public boat company whose ferries cover the entire basin from Italy to Switzerland and back in addition to the car ferry line from Verbania (Intra) in Piedmont to Laveno Mombello (Lombardy).

Lago Maggiore Express

Lago Maggiore Express offers the opportunity to enjoy an unforgettable trip by train and ferry from spring to autumn. First take the train ("Trenitalia" from Lake Maggiore to Domodossola, then the "Vigezzina"/"Centovalli" from Domodossola to Locarno) and finally the "Navigazione Lago Maggiore" ferry (from Locarno back to the town of departure) or vice versa. Discover the wonders of the mountains and lake in just one day!



*A successful tour to visit the lake
and the mountains... in just one day!*

Info:
www.navlaghi.it
www.lagomaggioreexpress.com



A small, intimate and romantic lake where art and mysticism blend together against a background of luxuriant vegetation.

Lake of Orta

Lake of Orta, a water expanse of fluvial glacial origin, is 12.5 Km long and 2.5 Km wide and is located at an altitude of 193 m. above sea level. It is in Northern Italy, West of Lake Maggiore to which it is linked through the Nigoglia stream and the Strona and Toce rivers.

The name takes origin from its most famous town, Orta San Giulio, while the alternative name "Cusio" derives from Usii, the people of Celtic origin who lived there before the arrival of the Roman legions.

Nature, art, history are just a few of the things one can discover on this lake.

Here many illustrious artists and people of culture spent their holidays and celebrated it and business

men established an industrial district (the Southern side of Lake of Orta is a "tap industry district", while the Northern side specializes in the production of houseware). Here again is the birthplace of many important "chefs de cuisine" who were later to become very famous around the world.



*The charm of a medieval hamlet lying
on a peninsula of enchanted the Lake of Orta...*



Orta San Giulio

Orta San Giulio is a renowned tourist center and a summer resort. It takes its name after St. Jules, who was sent here during the IV century by emperor Theodosius to evangelize the area and fight against the Arian heresy. Villa Motta (XIX century) is a private residence famous for its flowers: the garden can be visited in blooming time. Villa Bossi hosts the Town Hall: it has a beautiful garden overlooking the lake, hand-made iron gates and small balconies. The "Palazzo della Comunità" on the Motta Square was built in 1582 and was the Courthouse where the legislative and judiciary authority was exercised. At the top of the "Salita della Motta" road is the Santa Maria Assunta Church, built in 1485 and reconstructed in the second half of the XVIII century; the façade, designed and built by Carlo Nigra, features a XVII century vestibule with coupled columns. Built at the end of the XVIII century, the Villa Crespi Relais has some architectural elements unusual to the area: the style is of Arabian inspiration and the villa is topped by a high tower reminding of a minaret.



Info:
www.comune.ortasangiulio.no.it



Orta San Giulio and
surroundings: see also...

Sacred Mounts, world
heritage

Events

Culture & entertainment

Sports

*Pearl of Lake of Orta
and a mystic symbol for the locals...*

The Island of San Giulio

The island stands just a few minutes by boat from Orta. In the middle, the "Mater Ecclesiae" Abbey has been an important monastery of Benedictine nuns since 1973. Interesting and peaceful are the walk around the island, its villas and views of the lake. Of a very ancient origin as testified by early-Christian archaeological findings (kept in the crypt), the Basilica probably stands on the site where St. Jules is supposed to have erected a church in the IV century. Of clear Romanesque structure, the present church (IX-XI century) is built to a Latin-cross plan and has a nave and two aisles with apses.

The arched portal is preceded by a pronaos with two columns, surmounted by a large window. Behind the left apsis stands the remarkable bell tower, decorated with twin and triple arch windows. The frescoes portraying Saints were partly painted by the apprentices of Gaudenzio Ferrari and by members of the Cagnoli family. The real work of art is the Romanesque style pulpit: it was realized with Oira serpentine and decorated with Christian symbols (four evangelists) and the portrait of Guglielmo da Volpiano, a Benedictine abbot.

Info:
www.comune.ortasangiulio.no.it



*More surprises along the way...
out of the most beautiful nature balcony
on Lake of Orta!*

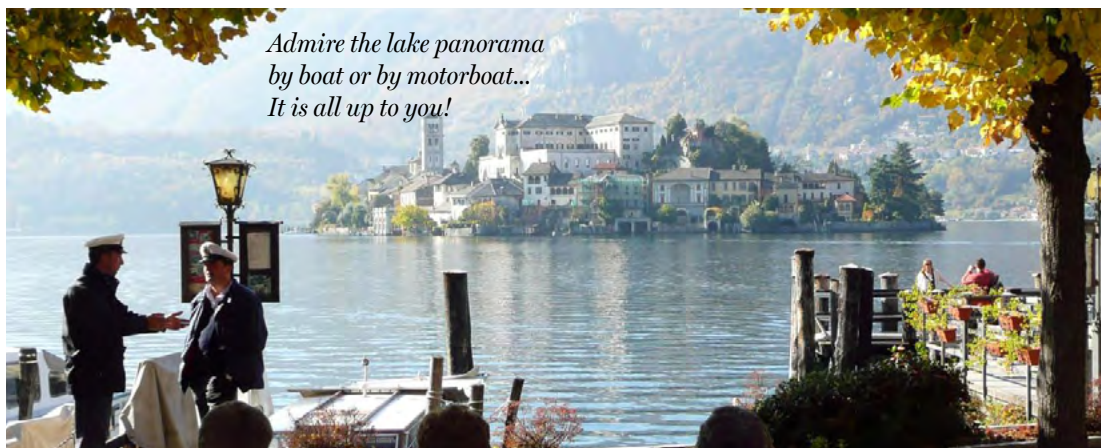
The Sanctuary of Madonna del Sasso

The complex, which includes the church, the bell tower and the hermitage, was built on the wave of a miracle by the Virgin's intercession during the first half of the XVIII century on a rocky spur located on the Western lake bank. From there one can enjoy an exceptional panoramic view over the entire Lake of Orta, the hills around, the Alps and the Po Plain. In occasion of the 250th anniversary of its building (1730-1748), The whole complex was completely restored on the 250th anniversary of its construction.

Lake Tours

On Lake of Orta the public boats "Navigazione Lago d'Orta" offer many line routes covering the entire basin as well as special proposals, like daily cruises or trips for special events. The Island of San Giulio and the surroundings of Orta are also reachable by Orta San Giulio private motorboats.

*Admire the lake panorama
by boat or by motorboat...
It is all up to you!*



Info:
www.comune.madonnadelsasso.vb.it
www.motoscafisti.com
www.navigazioneilagorta.it

Madonna del Sasso and
surroundings: see also...

Culture & entertainment

Sports



Omegna

*There, where the renown names
of Italian houseware industry were born...*

Main town of the Lake of Orta region and well-known industrial center specialized in the production of houseware since the early '900, Omegna is characterized by a nice "Lake Promenade", with shops, pubs and ancient buildings in the historical center. Gianni Rodari (1920-1980), a famous author of children stories, was born there. To him is dedicated the "Parco della Fantasia", a literary and fantasy park where an educational staff organizes didactic workshops and recreational activities for the youngest.



Info:
www.proloco.omegna.vb.it
www.rodariparcofantasia.it



Omegna and surroundings:
see also...

- Protected Areas
& Uncontaminated Nature
- Other typical products
- Events
- Culture & entertainment
- Sports



*A tiny jewel surrounded by gigantic mountains.
Crystal-clear waters that as a result of the ban on motor navigation
has been transformed into a nature paradise
with beaches suitable for the entire family...*

Lake of Mergozzo



Info:
www.comune.mergozzo.vb.it

A peaceful corner with crystal clear waters very near to the point where the Toce river flows into Lake Maggiore, basin from which the Lake of Mergozzo originates. In ancient times, this tiny lake was in fact a gulf of Lake Maggiore. Now it is one of the cleanest lakes in Italy, since the use of motor boats was forbidden many years ago.

Consequently at present the lake is considered a paradise for water sports. It is 2.5 Km long and maximum 74 m deep. Prehistoric findings just above Mergozzo date human presence back to at least 5000 years ago.

Mergozzo

The ancient "Ruga" and "Scarpia" streets, the typical houses built with local stones from the "Sasso" area and the precious religious buildings, many of which dating back to

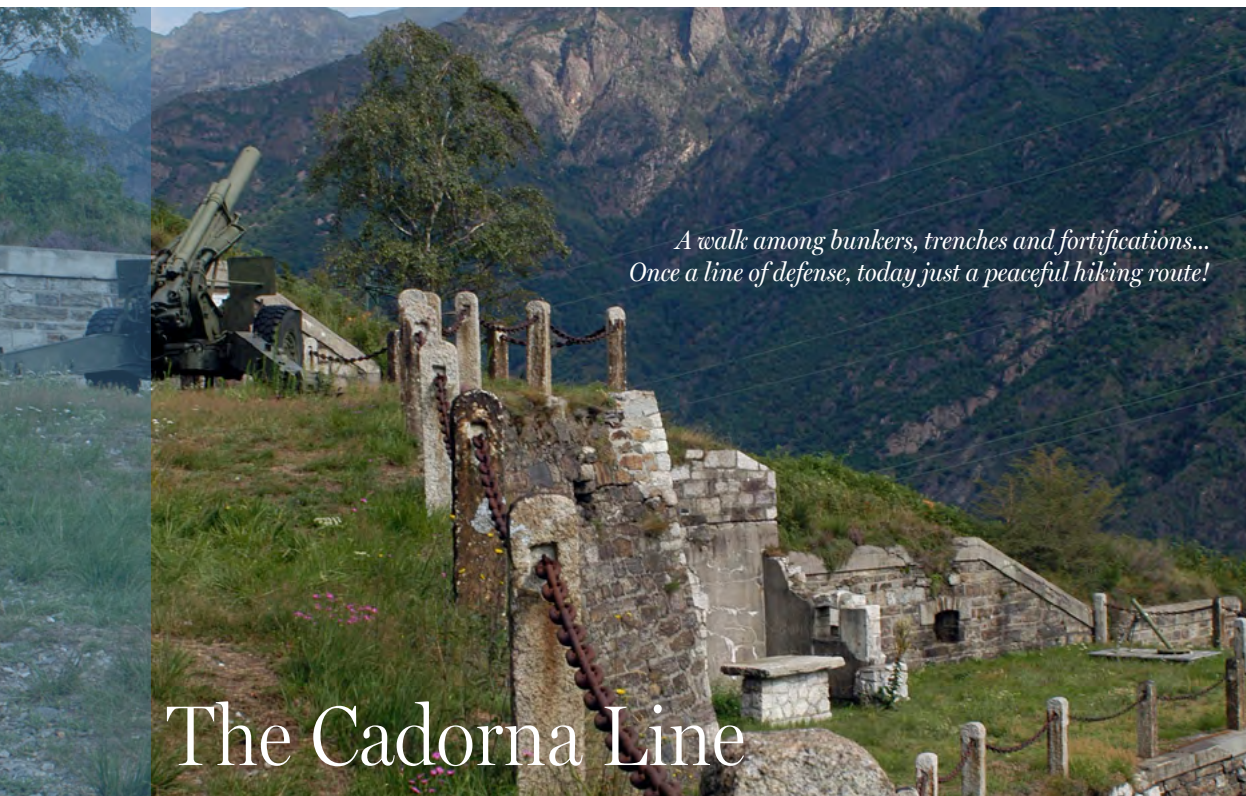
the Romanesque period (the San Giovanni Battista Church in Montorfano village and S. Marta Oratory in the old village), are special characteristics of Mergozzo. Picturesque alleys lead to the main square where an age-old elm still stands, under whose shade the village magistrates used to sit as far back as XVII century.



*This delightful little town overlooking the lake
has been awarded the "Orange Flag"
for the environmental quality of its shores.*

Mergozzo and surroundings: see also sections...

Other typical products
Culture & entertainment
Sports



*A walk among bunkers, trenches and fortifications...
Once a line of defense, today just a peaceful hiking route!*

The Cadorna Line

A thick network of military fortifications built to defend the northern border between Italy and Switzerland. The fortified lines protected the Italian territory between the Gran San Bernardo and Valtellina. Within Lake Mergozzo these defensive works spread out in the area of Montorfano mount and between Ornavasso and Migliandone. Commissioned during WWI by General Luigi Cadorna, Chief of Staff of the Italian Army up to 1917, the fortifications were built between 1916 and 1918 to defend the Italian border from possible attacks by the German-Austrian army through Switzerland. The fortified complex includes a thick network of roads, military mule-tracks, look-outs and artillery posts, field hospitals, logistic structures and command centers. Today the Cadorna

Line represents a rich trekking patrimony used also by the Civil Protection Team. It is a very impressive example of military archaeology not only for the construction works but also because through it one can relive moments of WW1.



Info:
www.comune.mergozzo.vb.it
www.comune.ornavasso.vb.it

Ornavasso and surroundings: see also...
Other typical products
Culture & entertainment





*A really rapid bounce from the Lake of Mergozzo (196 M)
up to Mount Rosa (4637 M), a central long plain
with the Toce river flowing slowly through,
against a background of tall mountain peaks and seven narrower valleys.*

Ossola

www.distrettolaghi.it

This is Ossola, so close to the Swiss border and yet, so Italian as shown by its attractions, typical cuisine and tradition.

Here Nature is in any way the absolute protagonist: alpine lakes, parks, forests and white slopes contribute to shape the rich landscape.

The Val Grande National Park, the most extensive Wilderness Area of the Alps (about 15,000 hectares) is enclosed between Lake Maggiore and Ossola, that is the Val Grande National Park. The European Wilderness Association declared the only area in Europe that completely maintains original environmental properties.

The second highest European summit, Mount Rosa, represents the real jewel of the Anzasca Valley.

From the Bognanco Valley, also known as the "valley of 100 waterfalls", a paradise for canyoning and hiking lovers, to the Antrona Valley, lately declared Regional Nature Park, and the Antigorio-Divedro-Formazza Valleys, with the famous 145 M high Toce Waterfall: a definitely dreamlike combination for a holiday immersed in the most uncontaminated nature.

Discover the green, pure and wild Ossola and enjoy a 360° mountain experience!





Vogogna

*The majestic castle, the buildings
as well as picturesque stone houses and narrow roads
have made this one of Italy's most beautiful hamlets!*



The Visconti Castle was built in 1348 by will of the Bishop of Novara and Lord and Archbishop of Milan Giovanni Visconti. It was designed to defend Vogogna,, a small town, and the Ossola lower plain. Walls enclosing the town center were also built to improve its fortification. Today there is almost no trace of the boundary wall, whereas the castle of the Visconti family, with its towers and typical battlemented walls, preserved its powerful medieval grandeur through time. Vogogna has recently been declared one of the "Borghi più belli d'Italia" (Most beautiful Italian hamlets).

Info:
www.comune.vogogna.vb.it



Vogogna and surrounding:
see also the section...

Protected Areas
& Uncontaminated Nature



*A culture city and more!!... Visit Domodossola on Saturdays
and surround yourself by thousand of colors
of its century-old weekly open air market!*

Domodossola

Domodossola is the capital of the Ossola mountain region and it is situated within the Toce river plain, at the convergence point of the valleys and roads coming from every direction (both Italy and Switzerland). It is a mountain pass heavily used by both Italians and foreigners. Its historic center still transmits the elegance of the medieval and Renaissance periods with its Market Square, the Galletti Theatre, noble buildings and typical stone roofs. The patron saints of Domodossola, Gervasio and Protasio, are celebrated on June 19 with a solemn Mass in the Collegiate, followed by a procession along the downtown streets. Events such as the "Giugno Domese" mean music, entertainment and solidarity initiatives.

Info:
www.prododomodossola.it



Domodossola and
surroundings: see also...
Sacred Mounts, world
heritage
Other typical products
Events
Culture & entertainment
Sports



*Just one hour is the distance from the sandy river beach
to the second highest peak of the Alps... to catch the view
of the closest Himalayan-like panorama in Europe
at 3,000 meters above sea level!*

Macugnaga and Mount Rosa

Situated at the foot of the spectacular Eastern side of Mount Rosa (4,634 M), the hamlet of Macugnaga is known not only for the extraordinary view it offers but also for the typical wooden houses - the old town was founded in the XIII century by Walser settlers coming from the neighboring Wallis (CH) - and as a winter ski resort with the famous runs of Mount Moro (Cable-way Bill-Moro) and Belvedere Glacier (Chairlift Burki-Belvedere). From there one can start out on excursions up to the second highest mountain of the Alps.



Info:
www.macugnaga-monterosa.it

Macugnaga and
surroundings: see also...

- Protected Areas
& Uncontaminated Nature
- Events
- Culture & entertainment
- Sports





*Discover the Simplon by car or by train and...
follow Napoleon's footsteps!*

The Simplon

The Simplon (2,008 m.) is a high mountain pass between the Pennine and Lepontine Alps directly connecting Italy and Switzerland at Brig in Wallis (CH) with Domodossola in Piedmont (Italy). The pass itself is on the Swiss territory together with the first villages across the border such as Gondo. For centuries the pass had been a normal connection for the local mountaineers but it only acquired real importance during the Napoleonic occupation. Later on the emperor ordered engineer Nicolas Céard to construct a road to transport heavy field artillery between the Rhône valley and Italy. Since then the pass has been used by busses, cars and trucks. In the early XX century the Simplon Tunnel was built near the pass (construction works finished in 1906) to enable rail traffic between the two countries.



Info:
www.prododomossola.it

The Antigorio and Formazza Valleys: up to the Piedmont northernmost point



*Before you reach this point though, stop...
at the National Monument Church in Baceno,
a Formazza Walser town, to admire what is
considered the Alps most beautiful waterfall!*



San Gaudenzio Parish Church in Baceno

The Parish Church of Baceno, located at the intersection between the Formazza and Antigorio Valleys is a singular example of religious architecture. The church dates back to the XVI century with the construction of the first chapel. In time the little structure was modified and enlarged, becoming the greater work of genius of today. The church with a nave and double aisles is dedicated to San Gaudenzio. Besides the impressive high altar, it is possible to admire seven other altars dedicated to different saints together with the XVI baptistery.

Formazza

Formazza, the main town named after the valley name, is an ancient Walser colony. In fact in the XII century a group of shepherds of German origin coming from the Wallis (CH) settled there, peacefully adapting their life to the strict and demanding mountain rules. They have been preserving their language, traditions, architecture and costumes ever since.

The Toce Waterfall

At La Frua (1,861 M a.s.l.) the water of this sensational natural display falls into the ravine for 145 m. reaching a width of 60 meters at the base. As it is used for hydroelectric purposes, the water is partially led into a forced duct and "let free" in all its majestic power only during specific summer periods.

Continuing along the main road one reaches the imposing dam wall of the artificial Morasco Lake. Follow the trails to Lake Sabbione (2,475 M), another marvelous artificial lake, and reach Switzerland via the Gries Pass (2,463 m.). The San Giacomo Pass (2,313 M). leads back to Italy along the shores of Lake Toggia (2,191 M), the waters of which are "regenerated" by the overhanging Lake Castel (2,244 m.)

Info:

www.comune.baceno.vb.it

www.valformazza.it



Antigorio and Formazza
Valleys: see also...

Protected Areas
& Uncontaminated Nature

Thermal baths

Culture & entertainment

Sports

*On board of a picturesque
little train to peacefully admire
what the peerless painters
from Vigezzo impressed on canvas...*

Vigezzo, the "Painters' Valley"

Santa Maria Maggiore

Santa Maria Maggiore, nice capital town of the Vigezzo Valley, is home to the Chimney Sweep Museum and the Rossetti Valentini School of Fine Arts, witnessing the customs and traditional trades of a poor valley affected by heavy expatriation to France, Holland and Germany. The first museum houses tools, clothes and utensils used by chimney sweeps as well as photographs and documents of the jobs that characterized an era. The historical art gallery houses a collection of some of the most significant works of art, particularly portraits, by the Vigezzo Valley painters.

Madonna del Sangue Sanctuary in Re

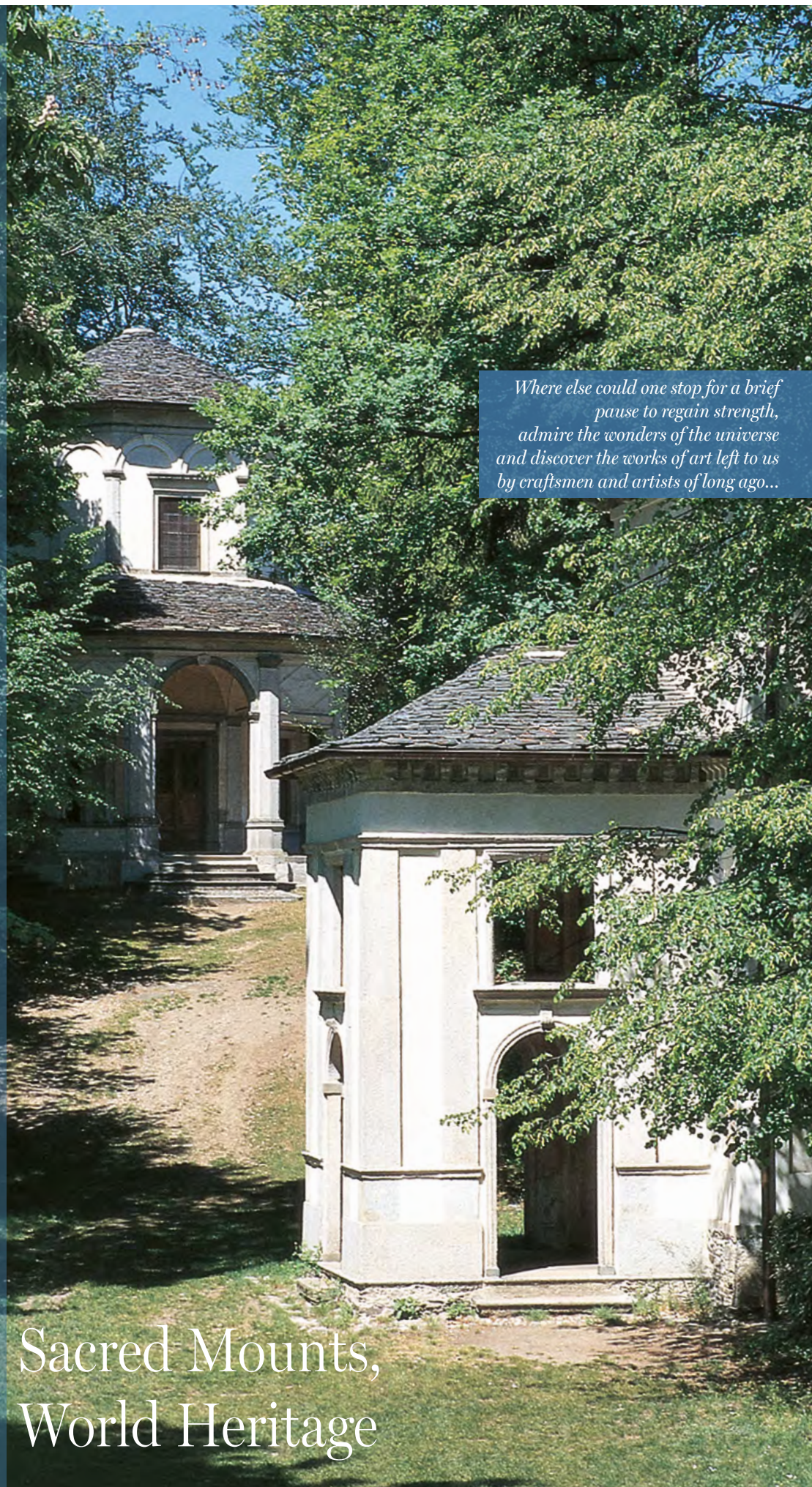
Visitors of Re are left speechless by the impressive structure of the sanctuary's dome, which stands out against the sky with its 51 m. tall structure. The sanctuary was built to celebrate a miracle occurred on April 29, 1494: tradition narrates that young Giovanni Zuccono, defeated in a play, threw

a stone at the painting of the Virgin, which started bleeding. After that event, the small village of Re became destination of many pilgrimages. Today the Sanctuary, managed by the "Padri Oblati Diocesani", presents three big portals decorated with alto-reliefs narrating the Virgin's life and the miraculous event.

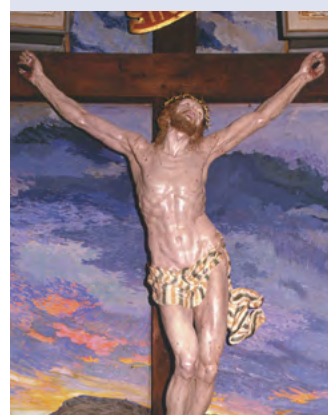
Vigezzina-Centovalli train

The railway connects Domodossola (Italy), in the heart of the Alps, to Locarno (CH) on Lake Maggiore, along a route of 52 Km (32 in Italy and 20 in Switzerland). This itinerary is no doubt one of the most fascinating among alpine railways with its panoramic wonders to be admired during the trip: woodlands, green plateaus, wild mountains and sparkling glaciers, waterfalls and ancient villages.





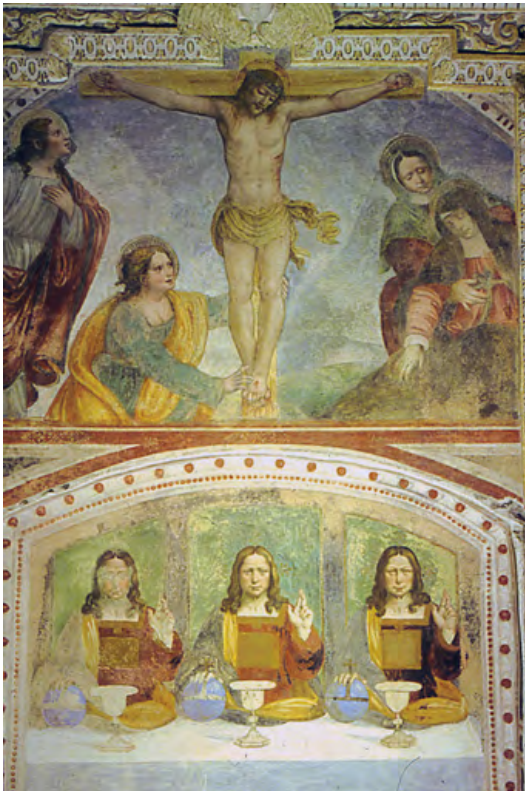
*Where else could one stop for a brief
pause to regain strength,
admire the wonders of the universe
and discover the works of art left to us
by craftsmen and artists of long ago...*



Info:
www.sacri-monti.com

A spectacular 200-hectares terrace covered with green meadows and woods overlooking Lake Maggiore!

Lake Maggiore – The Holy Trinity Sacred Mount of Ghiffa



Just above the town of Ghiffa and easy to reach following the signs along the road, is the Special Nature Reserve of the Holy Trinity Sacred Mount, established in 1987 to protect the buildings of this monumental area and valorize the surrounding environment.

In central position is the monumental baroque complex of the Sacred Mount, in 2003 declared by Unesco part of the World Heritage. Its Sanctuary and the three chapels celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Erected to replace an ancient oratory, the Sanctuary of Ghiffa was constructed in 1605 to receive the great number of pilgrims who would come to visit it as it was considered miraculous. The initial project probably anticipated the realization of about ten chapels but the idea was later left unfinished. Visitors walking up to the Sacred Mount can today admire the chapels of the Virgin Mary's Coronation, of Saint John the Baptist and the most recent Abraham Chapel. The Via Crucis arcade includes fourteen frescoed bays depicting the Passion of Christ. Two nature trails are also open to the public: "Etchings in the Stone" and "A Nature Reserve in a Green World".

Info:
www.sacri-monti.com
www.sacromonte-ghiffa.com

Just like the pilgrims of long ago walk up to the Sacred Mount and let yourself be pervaded by the ecstasy aroused by the wonders around you...

Lake of Orta - Sacred Mount of San Francesco in Orta

The construction of the Sacred Mount started in 1590 where once rose the ancient Church of San Nicolao, dating back to the Middle Ages and containing a venerated image of the "Madonna della Pietà". The Sacred Mount of Orta is a monumental complex dedicated to Saint Francis of Assisi, elevated at the top of hill behind the downtown area. It was in the XVII century that first Saint Charles Borromeo and then Carlo Bescapè Bishop of Novara started the construction of the Sanctuary, aimed at contrasting the effects of the Transalpine Protestant Reform. The project was completed only much later during the XVIII Century. 21 chapels narrating the life of Saint Francis in chronological order follow one another along a spiral course. Today's visitor climbs up

toward a moral regeneration at the same time enraptured by the beauty of the terracotta statues and the frescoes decorating the chapels. The high religious and artistic value combines perfectly with the effect of the Special Nature Reserve: here and there among the chapels one can spot hornbeams, beech and tall oak trees around which thrives the fauna of this tranquil green oasis. In 2003 the Sacred Mount was declared by Unesco part of the World Heritage. One of the most beautiful panoramas overlooking the lake can be admired from the medieval church of Saints Nicolao and Francis.

Info:
www.sacri-monti.com
www.sacromonte-orta.com



*In a dominating position south of the town of Domodossola...
the place beloved Antonio Rosmini*

Ossola Calvario Sacred Mount in Domodossola

The Special Nature Reserve of the Sacred Mount Calvario declared by Unesco in 2003 part of the World Heritage, rises on the historical Mattarella Hill, one of the areas so beloved by Antonio Rosmini. The Sacred Mount complex was started in 1656 with the Sanctuary followed then through the centuries with the 15 chapels that narrate the Way of the Cross. Visitors of the Sacred Mount can enjoy landscape foreshortnings as well as works of art, sculpture and architecture.. The itinerary through the Sanctuary and the chapels leads to the Belvedere Gardens and its breathtaking view.

In 1828 the religious philosopher and priest Antonio Rosmini established himself there and founded the 'Istituto della Carita', an institution still managed by the Padri Rosminiani. Contiguous to the sacred complex, the excursion itinerary leads through the "Via dei Torchi e dei Mulini" where it is possible to see ancient specimens of rural traditions.

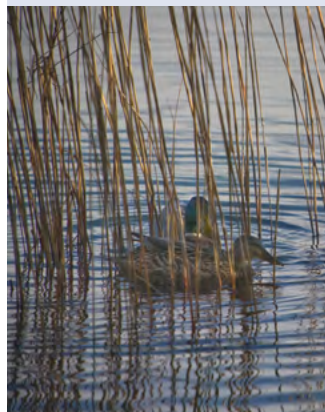
Info:
www.sacri-monti.com
www.sacromonte-domodossola.com





Protected Areas & Uncontaminated Nature

www.distrettolaghi.it



Visit www.distrettolaghi.it and, in the "Ebook" section, read or download our TOURIST MAP, the institutional brochure DISCOVERING THE LAKES, MOUNTAINS & VALLEYS and the guide OSSOLA!

Nature Park of Lagoni in Mercurago

On the gentle morainic slopes of Lake Maggiore is the Lagoni Nature Park, a precious casket of natural and archaeological treasures!

A natural park with three big lakes ("lagoni") of glacial origin and various wood types where you can walk, run and ride bike. Located in Mercurago, a few kilometres away from Arona town centre, it is mostly a forested place, which includes also the local moss. Moreover it has maintained an area always grazing for the horse breeding. Since 1980 this area has been protected. Much wildlife living there is protected too. Some species of migratory birds are attracted by the presence of ponds and bogs. Finally, a particular species of mushroom was found in the park: the "crepidotus roseor-natus", the only one in the world.

The site is an important prehistoric settlement, dating from the Bronze Age, and archaeological, having been found inside of it some Roman "domus", the findings of which are now precious kept in Arona and Novara museums.

The park has numerous hiking thematic trails allowing visitors to admire many aspects of nature (such as forests and wetlands) or the work done by men throughout the centuries.

Special Nature Reserve of the Thicket Grove of Dormelletto...

A 4 Km long lake environment (157 hectares) located in the municipality of Dormelletto, between Arona and Castelletto Ticino, which has perfectly kept its typical lake and nature characteristics for decades.

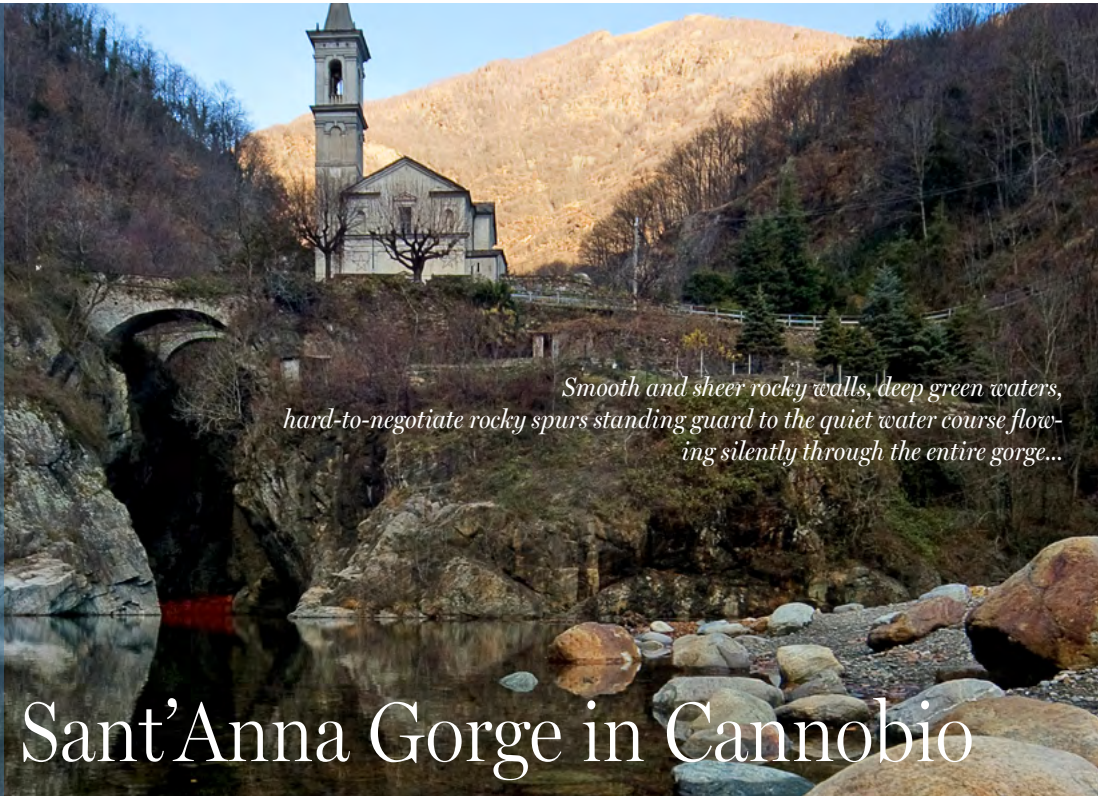
*Among the reed thickets
of lower Lake Maggiore...*



and Fondotoce

Thick reed groves are an essential environmental condition for reproduction of lake fish and for bird nesting and wintering. A 360-hectare reserve along the Toce plain, the most important river in the Ossola region, which offers also some beautiful beaches and plenty of opportunity for walking and biking.

*Walk or cycle round the green reserve
and observe the animals living in...*



Sant'Anna Gorge in Cannobio

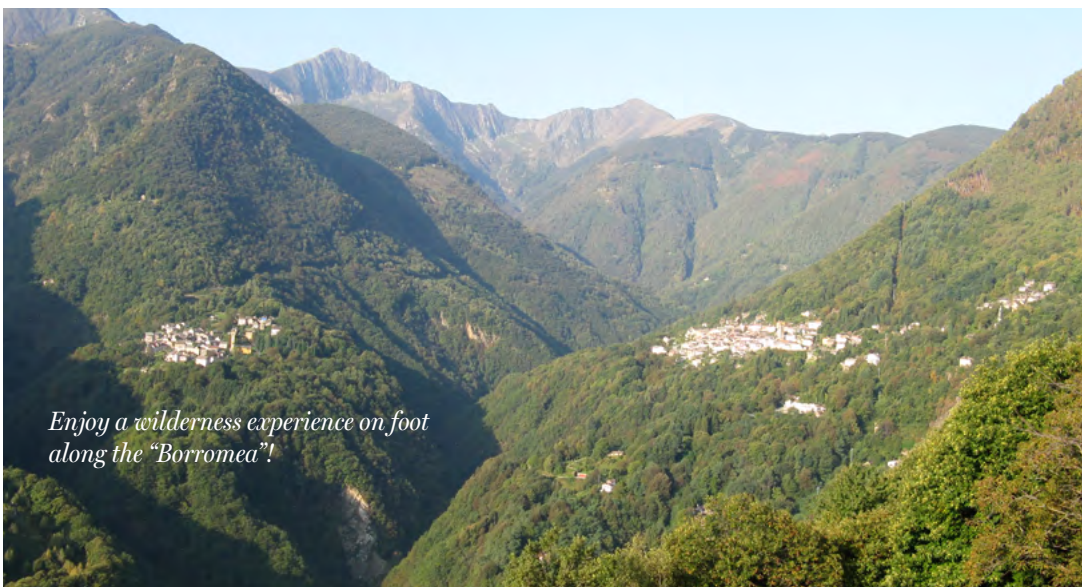
A true wonder of nature at just a short walking distance from Cannobio towards the mountains above: the Sant'Anna Gorge. The unrelenting millennial activity of the Cannobino stream has hollowed out this 25 m. deep ravine. From the top, the gorge can be crossed with two bridges, the narrowest and most ancient (known as "dell'agostana") and the motorway one. The gorge was named after the Sanctuary

nearby, built in 1638 by the natives. Of special interest are the black marble spiral columns of the main altar and the valuable paintings dedicated to Sant'Anna's life; priceless and certainly worth admiring is the apsis, with its splendidly frescoed chapel dedicated to Madonna of Loreto, very ancient and probably pre-existent to the church.

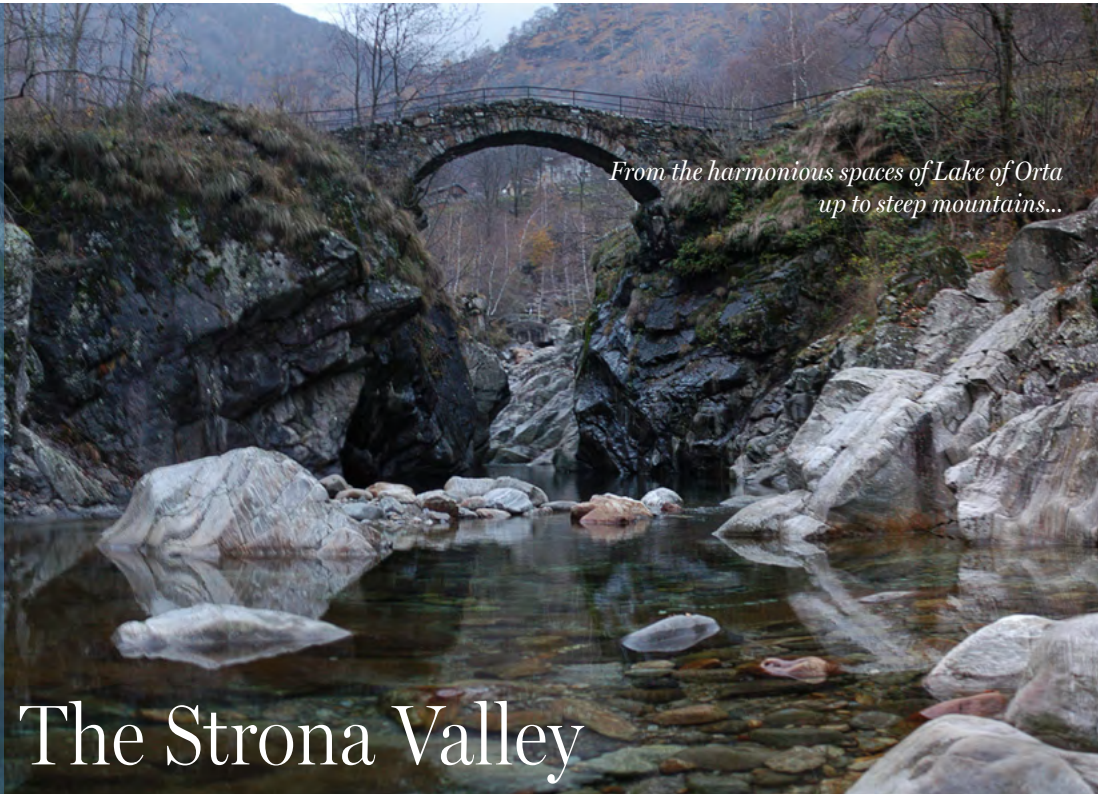
Info:
www.procannobio.it
www.vallecannobina.it

The Cannobina Valley

The Cannobina Valley is a wild and narrow mountain area so called for the main town at its entrance (Cannobio) coming from Lake Maggiore. The valley includes the hamlets Cavaglio Spocchia, Falmenta, Gurro and Cursolo Orasso. From an orographic standpoint it runs through the Ticino Alps and the Verbano Prealps. It is crossed by the Cannobino stream, which forms deep gorges and offers striking views. Following San Carlo Borromeo's pastoral visit in 1574, the old mule track, still practicable on foot, was named "Strada Borromea".



Enjoy a wilderness experience on foot
along the "Borromea"!



*From the harmonious spaces of Lake of Orta
up to steep mountains...*

The Strona Valley



This green, narrow valley extends from Omegna (300 M) on Lake of Orta up to Campello Monti (1,300 M) winding up through a wild mountain area. Hardwood forests, home to foxes and hares, gradually give way to low vegetation, where chamois and roe deer roam freely. Streams are full of trouts, toads and frogs.

Shortly after the town of Piana di Fornero there are the Caves of Sambughetto, undoubtedly the most interesting underground complex of the valley.

Winding passages, exciting trails, waterfalls, ravines and

small rooms of spectacular beauty. A truly unspoiled and well-preserved environment where to clearly observe the geological history of this corner of the world.

A tour of this area makes one really feel in close touch with nature and local culture. Germagno is an old village that preserves ancient architectural traces. Luzzogno is characterized by the most precious parish church in the valley. Valstrona, the capital town (1285 inhabitants) includes nine smaller hamlets.

Info:
www.comune.valstrona.vb.it



*Fully wild, in the figurative meaning of the word.
A heaven for lovers of adventure and unspoiled nature...*

The Val Grande National Park

Val Grande was established as National Park in 1992. It covers approximately 15,000 hectares of land enclosed between Lake Maggiore and the Cannobina Valley on the East side, with the Vigezzo Valley on the North and Ossola on the South and West. The World Wilderness Association defined this Park as "the sole European natural area that integrally maintains its original environmental conditions". It was once inhabited by shepherds who practiced deforestation. It is now deserted and during the last forty years of total abandonment by man nature has savagely taken over. The rich variety of vegetation is one of the most interesting characteristics of this park, where chamois, roebucks, foxes, deer

and many other animal species live totally free. The park is a secluded territory, protected by steep mountains, and can be accessed only through walk-through trails. The most suitable seasons of the year to visit it are spring, summer and early autumn due to favorable climate conditions. The network of tracks and trails should be accessed carefully and with the assistance of experienced guides. The Nature Park headquarters are in Vogogna (Ossola) while the center dedicated to night animals is in Intragna (Verbano).

Info:
www.parcovalgrande.it



*While walking through the yet wild Antrona Valley
one might end under a waterfall
or "meet" some alpine rock goats*

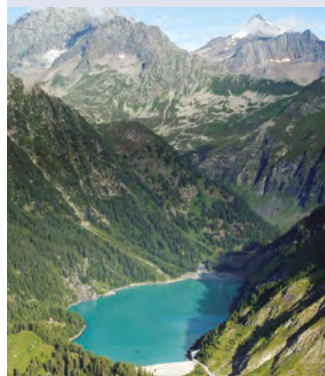
Nature Park of the Antrona Upper Valley

In the Antrona Valley near the town of Villadossola is a peaceful park where pure air is mixed with the joyful sounds of mountain feasts and the sweet smells of typical cooking. Remote, alone, wild... This is the Antrona Upper Valley: quite intact nature environment and sustainable presence of the man. Once a good place for gold extraction, the park is surrounded by numerous alpine lakes. The most important is the Antrona Lake. Created in 1642 after a landslide, it is now a hydroelectric basin and an attractive tourist destination. It is then followed by the Lakes Cavalli, Camposecco, Cingino and Campiccioli (the last with a dam). The picturesque village of Cheggio (1,497 M) lies in front of a beautiful scenery created by incredible 3000-4000 m. high tops.

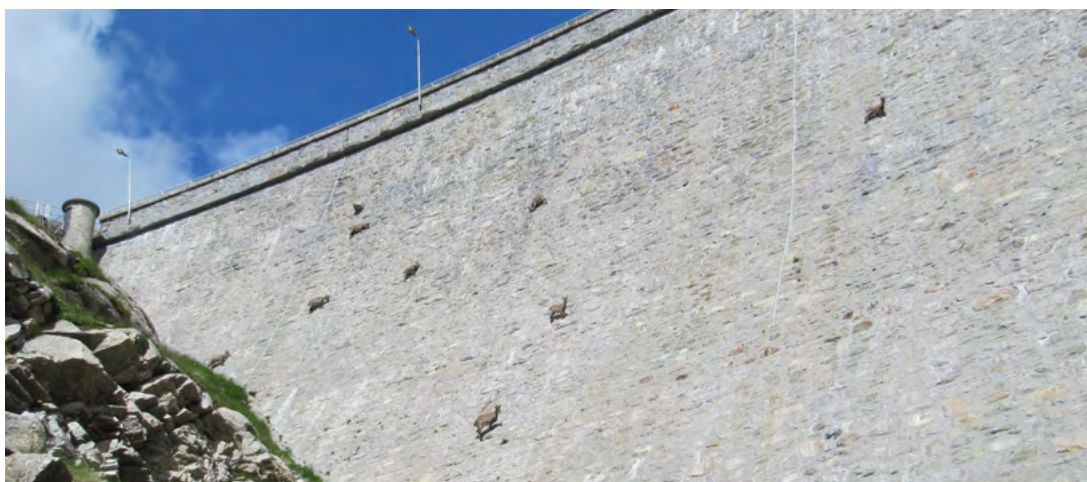
In the surroundings...

The mountain goats of Cingino lake

Herds of Alpine ibex goats use to wander fearlessly across the side of the near-vertical Cingino dam (2230 M) in the Antrona Valley! The gravity-defying goats typically live on very steep and rocky terrain at altitudes of up to 4600 M and have no fear of falling whether climbing up or down the 160 ft dam wall. They apparently are licking the salt off the stones. The Alpine ibex is a species of wild goats that live on the mountains of the European Alps and seek refuge at high altitudes to protect themselves from predators. The "show" of the Cingino goats can be admired only after a 4-hour walk along the «Strada Antronesca» trail.



Info:
www.valleantrona.com
www.areeprotetteossola.it



*Simply amazing and definitely offering
a great number of accommodation facilities!*

Nature Park of the Veglia - Devero Alpine Pastures

Hard and yet sweet at the same time seems living between the Divedro and Antigorio Valleys: green plains and grey mountain tops, strong wind and quiet lake water. A long, respectful and loving human colonization based on stock-breeding didn't influence the two Alps negatively in the past nor in the present. The rich variety from both ecological and climatic point of view allows to identify a great number of plants (up to 500!) and shrubs (from small to perpetual snow-thriving) types in the park. Numerous chamois, roe deer, ibex goats and marmots have found their ideal habitat here and can be observed during the summer. Over 60 trails connect San Domenico (Varzo), Piana del Veglia and Devero. And why not savor the mouth-watering menus offered at local "agriturismi"!

The surroundings...

The Divedro Valley: Davino lake

The lake lies in a wide valley surmounted by Mount Leone. Originally a natural alpine lake, it was then transformed into an artificial basin to produce hydro-electric energy. It is about 30 M deep and 4 Km wide.

The Antigorio Valley: Uriezzo Gorges

The Uriezzo Gorges are deep ravines hollowed out by the erosive action of the rushing water, which flowed under the ice that once covered the entire Formazza Valley. Today they probably represent the most perfect image of the ancestral molding of a territory, which is extraordinarily rich of fascinating and unique evidence of geological history. Gorges (Baceno, Arvera, Santa Lucia, Balmasurda, Silogno), geysers (Croveo), particular rocks (Verampio) and ravines (Balmafredda) welcome visitors in the heart of the earth. The distinctive feature of the Uriezzo Gorges is that, since water no longer flows through these narrow and deep incisions in the rock, it is possible to walk inside three of them. The existing complex ecosystem is another notable feature: various plant species can easily be observed, particularly

mosses and ferns, which are able to adapt themselves to these difficult environmental conditions.

Alpine Lakes in the Formazza Upper Valley

Several are the artificial lakes in the Formazza Upper Valley such as Lake Morasco, Lake Sabbione, Lake Toggia, Lake Kastel, Lake Vannino, Lake Busin and Obersee. They were created in the first half of the XX century for hydroelectric energy production. All dams are nowadays property of ENEL (National Body for Electric Energy). Among them the most important one is Morasco: it is 565 meters long and 55 meters high, with a capacity of 17,320,000 M³ and regulates the spectacular flow of the near nearby Toce Waterfall. During the low season the water from the Toce river is deviated toward the hydroelectric plant of Ponte (Formazza).





*The Rosa glacier. Where the ibex,
earlier considered extinct in the Alps, has finally returned!*

Faunal oasis of Macugnaga



The protected area extends along the slopes that stretch out towards the peaks of the Mount Rosa Eastern face, which is over 2500 m. above sea level. The oasis was instituted in 1969 to reintroduce the ibex considered in danger of extinction in the Alpine territory. The birds were brought up from the Gran Paradiso National Park and they have successfully adapted to the environment of the Anzasca and Antrona Upper Valleys. The ibex can be admired in late spring and autumn when it flies at a lower altitude. In winter they tend to prefer steeper sunnier slopes, where the snow melts faster. Chamois and rock goats eat grass most of the year and juniper or shrubs in winter. A day-long excursion can be taken following a quite complete itinerary from the oasis to the edge of the glacier. An interesting geological phenomenon can be observed on Locce Lake: since it was formed inside the channel left by the Belvedere glacier when it was retreating, parts of its shores are still frozen.

In the surroundings...

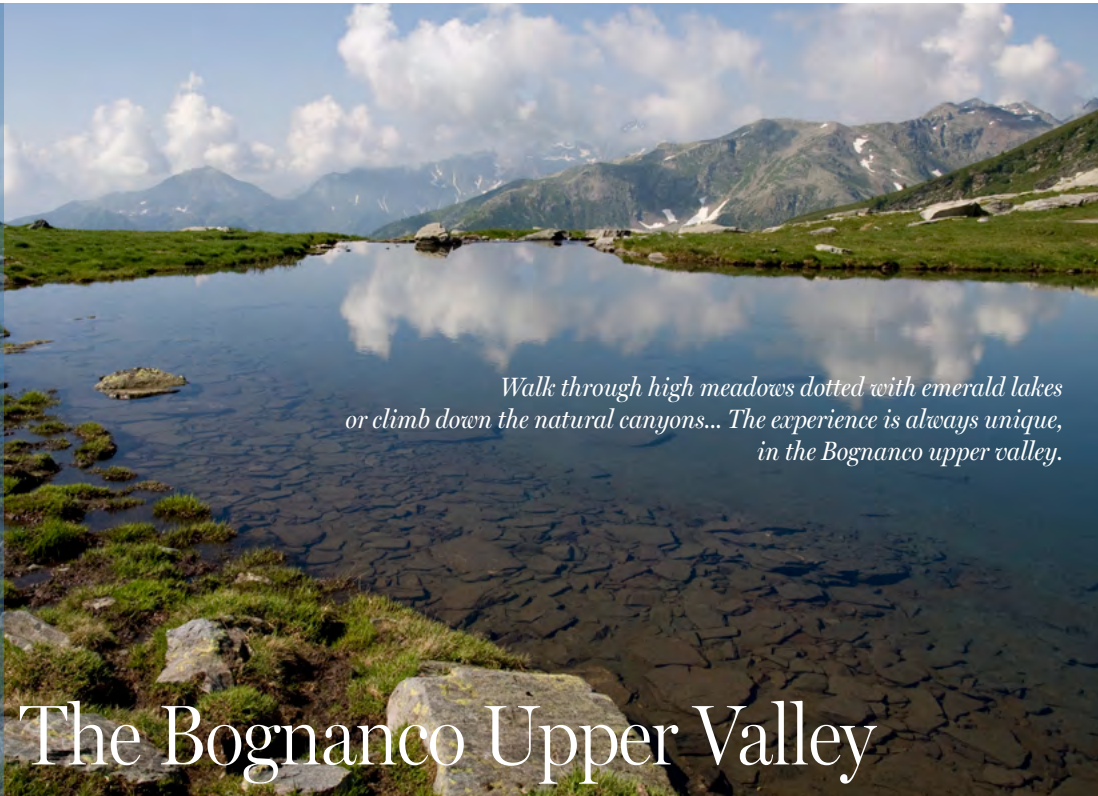
Anzasca Valley: the Fairy Lake

Leaving Borca (1195 M), village belonging to the municipality of Macugnaga, visitors can reach a small side valley called Quarazza where is the enchanting "Lago delle Fate" (fairy lake). It is a natural basin surrounded by grazing lands and barren mountain slopes.

Info:

www.macugnaga-monterosa.it





*Walk through high meadows dotted with emerald lakes
or climb down the natural canyons... The experience is always unique,
in the Bognanco upper valley.*

The Bognanco Upper Valley

The Bognanco Valley is internationally renowned for its waters. Bognanco offers a tranquility second to none. The walks from the town are numerous and relaxing. In the woods you can hear the "hundred waterfalls" running. The valley offers a wide choice of excursions: the Fornalino, the Verosso and the Gattascosa summits as well as three Paione Lakes. Several groups of tourists from Switzerland cross an ancient smuggling route, the Monscera pass, towards Bognanco before walking to Antrona. Not so tiring, but just as inspiring, are the walks to Gomba and the St.

Bernard mountain pastures. It would also be worth the while to go visit the ancient boroughs of San Marco, Messasca, Possetto, Pizzanco, Camisanca, San Lorenzo and Graniga where one can still admire typical stone roofs, religious and civil buildings and natural terraces from where to gain a breathtaking bird eye view over the entire valley.

Info:
www.altavallebognanco.it



*Don't forget to take a nice dip into our thermal water!
Do you prefer the historical and traditional appeal
of Bognanico or the modern area of Premia?
Either will in any case energize your body and soul*

Thermal Baths

Premia Thermal Baths

At 800 M above sea level and only 20 Km from the international train station of Domodossola, the "Premia Terme" complex (Formazza Valley) is the most important thermal centre in Northern Piedmont. This modern hot spring spa offers a variety of treatments for many different pathologies (i.e. saunas, indoor and outdoor pools, gym and fitness facilities). The natural hot springs (42,5°) are classified as hyper-thermal and contain a fixed residue of calcium sulphate of 180° per 1414 mg/litre of water which makes it a very efficacious health treatment. The presence of medical and paramedical personnel at the spa guarantees that the most appropriate therapy for every request can be safely identified. A specially designed pool for children with appropriate depth and temperature is also available.

Bognanico Thermal Baths

Bognanico hosts a modern and well organized center with full assistance by a professional medical team. They offer personalized treatments for ailments of skin and metabolism, intestinal and digestive problems. A thermal swimming pool with hot water is also available. The complex is located within a pleasant and relaxing park. There are three different natural springs: "Fonte Ausonia", rich of carbon dioxide, "Fonte San Lorenzo", laxative and diuretic, and "Fonte Gaudenziana", for renal problems.

Info:

www.premiaterme.com
www.comune.bognanico.vb.it
www.valbognanico.com

Visit www.distrettolaghi.it
and, in the "Ebook" section,
read or download our guide
WELLNESS!





Our territory offers not only the pleasure of environmental beauty and sports but it also appeals to our taste!

Food & Wine

Come and visit local shops, restaurants and “vacation farms” or participate to the country events held along the lakes, on the hills and up in the mountain, where one can enjoy the typical dishes from Ossola, prepared following the ancient traditional recipes and especially using exclusively genuine ingredients! Some examples? **Black bread** with rye flour: the type prepared in Coimo has always been a favorite even though this bread is generally produced in the entire Ossola region.

As for first courses worth mentioning are the “**gnocchetti all'ossolana**”: home-made dumplings prepared with potatoes, chestnut flour and pumpkin flavored with butter or local “Ossola” cheese cream and small dice of lard.

Ossola is also known for its unique or even rare cured meats, such as the “**Violino di Capra**” (whole air-dried leg of goat shaped like a violin), the **raw ham of the Vigizzo Valley** (a real treat reminiscent of the resinous scent of the forest), the “**Brisaula Val d'Ossola**” (especially lean meat steeped in wine, then seasoned with spices and air dried) and the lard seasoned with herbs and spices.

A great variety of cheese are also produced in this area, i.e. the **DOP Ossola Cheese**, the unique “**Bettelmat**” produced exclusively in seven pastures of the Antigorio Valley or the “**Toma of Mottarone**” produced up among the tallest peaks between Lake of Orta and Lake Maggiore.

Why not savor then such specialties accompanied by various types of **honey** from Lake Maggiore and the surrounding valleys?

Lakes Maggiore and Orta are home to a great variety of **fish**: trout, baked in tinfoil wrapping and seasoned with herbs; perch and white fish (“lavarello” or “coregone”), usually fried or soured; then pike, brook trout, gardon and bleak. Very often lake fish is used to prepare and flavor first courses too, like the “risotto” with the special rice coming from the Novara rice fields.

Absolutely a “must” of the most typical Piedmontese menus is “**polenta**” that can be served alone, mixed with cheese or added to pork meat (spare ribs and small salami) and **mushrooms** (boletus is the finest species) gathered in autumn on the hilly or mountain areas of the territory.

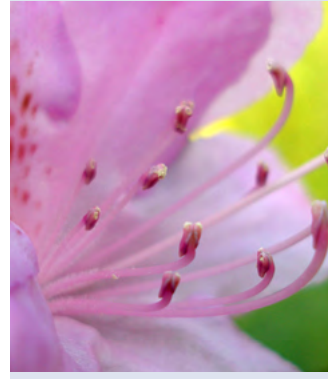
Everything to be served with **wine from Novara Hills** (“Colline Novaresi” DOC, “Boca” DOC, “Fara” DOC, “Sizzano” DOC, “Ghemme” DOP) or that from Ossola (“**Valli Ossolane**” DOC that is “Prunent”, “Tarlapp” and “Cà d'Matè”). There is also a wide choice of baking products: “**Imperialine**” and “**Reginette**” biscuits of Omegna, “**Margheritine**” biscuits of Stresa, “**Fugascina**” biscuits of Mergozzo, “**In-tresine**” from Intra and “**Amaretti**” biscuits of Pallanza.

On the Lake of Orta the **Bread of St. Jules**, rye bread filled with walnuts, raisins and/or chocolate, is prepared fresh for the Patron Feast only, on January 31.

The “**torta del pane e latte**” is a typical mountain cake made with rye bread, fresh milk, cocoa powder and raisins, then baked in a traditional terracotta pan and finally decorated with pine kernels and rosemary or bay leaves. The “**Credenzin**” from Ossola is instead a sweet black bread with walnuts, raisins and figs.

In Cannero Riviera several **citrus fruit** trees are cultivated thanks to the micro-climate of Northern Lake Maggiore. Lemon, orange, grape fruit, cedar fruits are used to prepare cakes, biscuits, tea and marmalades.

Last but certainly not least is our **water**. Excellent mineral water flows from the several natural springs of Ossola. For example “Crodo Lisel” in Crodo (Antigorio Valley), famous town also for the production of the non-alcoholic aperitif drink “**Crodino**” (Campari Group), “**Gaudenziana**”, “**Ausonia**” and “**San Lorenzo**” in Bognanco (Bognanco Valley) and “**Vigizzo**” and “**Alpia**” in Malesco (Vigizzo Valley).



*The colors of lake blossoms, the scent of forest wood,
the smooth silky feeling of textiles, the boom of rocky blocks
extracted from the mountain...
A holiday here is an experience for all senses!*

Other Typical Products





Lake Maggiore Other Typical Products



The Flowers of Lake Maggiore

The hills of the Vergante region and Verbano lakeside resorts are famous for the excellent cultivation of azaleas, rhododendrons and camellias. A mild climate and the typical acidic soil are the elements that make Italy famous for the cultivation of these flowers. Since 1992 the "Fiori Tipici del Lago Maggiore" (typical flowers of Lake Maggiore) logo has guaranteed a real quality production and identifies a high specialized profession practiced in the flower district of the Lake Maggiore Western territory.

Textile Production of Lesa

Herno's leading products – known for high quality material, used for clothes and winter coats - come from the deep tie with its place of origin. The logo has in fact taken its name from the Erno river flowing through the town of Lesa on Lake Maggiore. The guidelines on which the firm was based right from the start were and still are: strong ties to the territory, pursuit of functionality beyond just aesthetics, and preservation of creative and productive control. With Herno the textile sector gives an international and prestigious impulse to local economy.

The Granite of Baveno

The town of Baveno is set against the background of the "Camoscio Mountain" known for the extraction from its quarries of the pink granite. This is one of the stones most widely used for construction and decoration since the XVI century that adorns many famous monuments and buildings all over the world, as for example the Arc of Peace and the Vittorio Emanuele Gallery in Milan, the columns of the Paris Opera House, the St. Charles Church in Vienna, the Christopher Columbus Monument in New York and more...!

Info:

www.lagomaggiorefiori.it

www.herno.it

www.bavenoturismo.it





Lake of Orta Other Typical Products

Houseware Production of Omegna

The firm Lagostina was founded in 1901 in Omegna centre, capital town of the so-called "houseware district", while Alessi established in 1921 in Crusinallo. Both are symbols of Italian genius in the productive sector supporting it in the country as abroad thanks to innovative research in art&design (Alessi) and functionality (Lagostina). Visit the corresponding outlet stores next to the factories!

At the Omegna Forum there is a Permanent Museum Collection, which directs the archiving and maintenance of the historical objects and iconographic materials of Cusio metal kitchenware production (i.e. Alessi, Bialetti, Calderoni, Lagostina, Piazza, Girmi). The firms Lagostina founded in 1901 in Omegna and Alessi in Crusinallo in 1921 are located in the center of the so-called "houseware district". Both are symbols of Italian genius known both in Italy and abroad for innovative research in Design and Development (Alessi) and functionality (Lagostina). Visit the corresponding outlet stores contiguous to the factories!

The Omegna Forum hosts a Permanent Museum Collection, which directs the archiving and maintenance of the historical objects and iconographic materials of Cusio metal kitchenware production (i.e. Alessi, Bialetti, Calderoni, Lagostina, Piazza, Girmi).

The Wooden "Pinocchios" of the Strona Valley

The ancient woodworking trade is characterized by the use of the wood turning lathe common in the green and narrow Strona Valley in the north of Lake of Orta, a very ancient craft favored by the exploitation of the stream water flowing through the valley. The "Pinocchio Puppet" is carved out in different dimensions and colors in Fornero and Piana di Fornero, while chessboards, spoons, houseware items and kitchen furniture are made in Forno and the surroundings. In Piana di Fornero and Casale Corte Cerro the Mastro Geppetto family-run company has kept this tradition alive for over 50 years.

Info:

www.forumomegna.org

www.mastrogeppetto.net

www.alessi.com

www.casalagostina.it



Lake of Mergozzo Other Typical Products



Candoglia Quarries: the Marble of the Milan Cathedral

Candoglia is renowned for its quarries of white-pink marble. Since 1387, on Duke Gian Galeazzo Visconti's authorization, the "Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano" has been mining the material for the construction of the "Duomo", the cathedral of Milan. Centuries ago the marble, marked with AUFA logo ("ad usum fabricae ambrosianae"), would be loaded on rafts on the Toce river to be then transported to Milan along Lake Maggiore, the Ticino river and the canal Naviglio Grande.

The Granite of Montorfano

Green but mostly white: these are the prevailing colors of the granite of Montorfano. Ever since the Middle Ages its quarries, hollowed out along the sides of the mount, have yielded the granite stone used for construction and paving of churches and monuments. The twelve pillars of Milan Leper Hospital were realized in 1506, while the 82 pillars supporting the arcade of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome were put up in 1830. The solid, long lasting, fine and luminous "Bianco Montorfano" (Montorfano white) is still used and requested all over the world.

Info:

www.ecomuseo.granitomontorfano.it

www.duomomilano.it



Ossola Other Typical Products

Stone and Marble

The type of marble hidden in the heart of the Ancient Marble Quarry in Ornavasso goes through the river valley and since the late XIV century it has contributed to the construction creation of the Cathedral of Milan and other relevant Italian monuments, such as the Certosa and the Cathedral of in Pavia and the Arch of Peace in Milan. Along the gallery and in the great marble hall one can admire the majesty of nature and the human ability of our ancestors.

When one thinks of Ossola one of the first things that comes to mind is stone. This is an indissoluble triptych. In this land stone has been the mean of livelihood for generations, in the open quarries or down in galleries just like at many workshops along the road where "Picasass" (dialect for stone-cutters) operate. Through the centuries they have written the history of Ossola sweating at their hard work, and their art still shines in local monuments, portals, balconies, roofs, streets and squares.

Bognanco Waters

The Bognanco Valley is internationally renowned for its mineral water which can contribute to cure skin and metabolic problems as well as intestinal and digestive ailments.

"Fonte Ausonia": digestive and rich of carbon dioxide

"Fonte San Lorenzo": laxative and diuretic

"Fonte Gaudenziana": effective against renal problems

Ceramics

The historical Kamares firm produces in Domodossola and Crevoladossola special ceramics characterized by blue and purple floral decorations following an ancient tradition original from the Antigorio Valley.



Info:

www.anticacava.it

www.assocave.it

www.bognanco.it

www.kamares.it





Events

A long series of well-known events accompanies the flow of seasons... Great music and spectacular fireworks on the lakes alternate with tasty cuisine and folklore up in mountain villages!





On Lake Maggiore Unmissable Camellia and Citrus Fruit Exhibitions

In March in Verbania and Cannero Riviera the almost unique **Camellia National Exhibition** is dedicated to the "perfect flower". On this occasion experts of the trade and visitors can meet at the historical residences of Verbania Pallanza and Cannero Riviera and admire numerous varieties of camellia cultivated by over 200 local leading flower growers, associated to "Consorzio Fiori Tipici del Lago Maggiore".

The mild temperature enjoyable both in winter and summer along the northern shore of Lake Maggiore favors the growth of a luxuriant Mediterranean vegetation of palm, citrus and olive trees. The pretty and sunny town of Cannero is worth a visit in March during the typical Citrus Fruits Festival called "**Gli Agrumi di Cannero Riviera**", which delights every visitor with the exhibition of locally grown fruit trees thanks to the micro climate enjoyed by the town. Lemons, oranges, grape fruits and citruses are so special not only because of the attraction they have on the tourists but also for the local production of jams, liqueurs, biscuits and the "Bercencione" (citrus flavored tea). A Citrus Fruit Park, clearly marked and located at walking distance from the town center is open in the area. The "Cantone Lido" was established in 2012 based on a project of collaboration between the University of Turin and the Municipality of Cannero, aimed at encouraging the cultivation of special fruits and boosting the agricultural tradition.

Important Music, Theatre and Literature Summer Festivals

The "**Stresa Festival - Le Settimane Musicali di Stresa e del Lago Maggiore**" is an important classic music festival known the world over. Every year the program offers a series of not-to-be-missed events to be held on Lake Maggiore and its surroundings. The first part, a short jazz festival entitled "Midsummer Jazz Concerts", is regularly scheduled in July. The festival continues then with "Musical Meditations" (Renaissance and Baroque music) and ends with the main part from August to September. All performances by famous artists take place in wonderful locations such as the Borromeo Palace on Isola Bella, the Cashmere Loggia on Isola Madre, the Visconti Castle in Vogogna, the Rocca Borromeo in Angera and several other locations overlooking the lake.

The "**Baveno Festival Umberto Giordano**" is an important Italian musical festival dedicated to Umberto Giordano, a renowned Italian composer, who used to spend his vacations and composing time at Villa Fedora on Lake Maggiore. Protagonists of the festival are famous artists performing in July during various art shows (music, poetry, etc.), held at carefully chosen locations.

Info:
www.verbania-turismo.it
www.cannero.it
www.stresafestival.eu
www.festivalgiordano.it





Events

In summer on the hills above Lake of Orta everyone can enjoy the live jazz music performed during the **"Miasino Jazz Festival"** and **"Ameno Blues"** by some of the most important national and international bands.

"Tones on the stones" is the music, dance and theatre festival occurring in July at the VCO quarries. The so-called "stone theatres" are source of inspiration for many artistic performances.

The **"Un paese a sei corde"** festival, offering a series of live concerts dedicated to contemporary guitar music, can be enjoyed at different locations of the "Distretto Turistico dei Laghi Monti e Valli".

The **"Fiori di Fuoco"** firework festival is coordinated every year by "Distretto Turistico dei Laghi" (Lake District Tourist Board). It is patronized by the company "Parente Fireworks" for technical support and the partnership with the municipalities involved in the festival. From June to August breathtaking firework shows are performed in fantastic places on Lake Maggiore, Lake of Orta, in the Ossola Valleys and in some Lombard towns. Summer nights are brightened up by thousands of colorful artificial flower fireworks projected against an emotional musical background!

Folklore and Typical Products from Ossola to Lake Maggiore and Hills above Lake Orta.

The Ossola Valleys and the hills around Lake Orta (Cusio) and Lake Maggiore (Verbano) propose every year some of the most eagerly awaited events in Piedmont dedicated to local food&wine and traditions.

Some interesting examples follow below.

The **"Sagra del 1° Maggio"** Ornavasso (Ossola), focused upon local traditions and typical products, is followed in July by the **St. Bernard Fair** held at the marvelous Walser village

of Macugnaga at the foot of Mount Rosa (Anzasca Valley, Ossola). Then from the end of August to the beginning of September there's the absolutely unique **International Chimney Sweep Meeting** at Santa Maria Maggiore (Vigevano Valley, Ossola). The **"Giugno Domese"** (June) in Domodossola and the **St. Vito Patron Feast** (August) in Omegna are not only religious, as they also offer rich summer festivals with music, fun, mouth-watering cuisine and shows held by national artists.

And that's not all as a long series of gastronomic fairs and festivals follow.

The **Potato Festival** held in August at Montcrestese (Antigorio Valley, Ossola), the **Blueberry Festival** scheduled in September at Bognanico (Bognanico Valley, Ossola), the **Grapes Fair** also in September at Maserà (Ossola), the **"Sagra Settembrina del Lago d'Orta"** in September at Gozzano (Lake Orta), **"Sapori in Festa"** in September at the Dal Pozzo Castle in Oleggio Castello (Lake Maggiore), the **Transhumance** (transfer of herds from one pasture to another) at the end of October in Nebbiuno (Vergante), the Porcino (Boletus) **Mushroom Feast** in September at Trontano (Ossola) and finally the **Pumpkin Festival** of Omegna (Lake of Orta) in October.

The **Traditional Militias of Bannio and Calasca** always accompany the celebrations in honor of the Virgin of the Snow at Bannio Anzino and the Virgin of the Assumption at Calasca Castiglione (August), both in the Anzasca Valley. The two militias were established in 1641 during the Spanish invasion, as land "militiae" to protect the mountain passes and later became a traditional part of the events dedicated to the Virgin Mary, still celebrated today with great participation.

The year ends with several **Christmas and Epiphany events** occurring all through the region from November to January such as the picturesque Christmas Market at Santa Maria Maggiore (Vigevano Valley, Ossola), which offers the greatest number of typical products.



Info:

www.miasinojazz.com

www.amenoblues.it

www.tonesonthestones.it

www.unpaeseaseicorde.it

www.distrettolaghi.it



*The culture of a territory can be found in
its large and small destinations...
down to the heart of the earth!
Museums, permanent exhibitions
and theme parks are true forms of entertainment.
The perfect addition for the main ones!*



Culture & Entertainment



Culture & Entertainment

Lake Maggiore

In the territory of Lower Lake Maggiore, the GOTTARD PARK of Castelletto Sopra Ticino describes the history of transportation means – from cars to military vehicles, from engines to airplanes – all staged within an open-air area and some indoor spaces, while the ARCHEOMUSEUM of Arona offers an interesting chronological collection of archaeological findings coming from the town itself and the Lower Verbania area.

Located at the old Pretorio Building next to the Parish Church of Baveno is the GRANUM MUSEUM, a multimedia and multi-sensory information point focused on local pink granite and its economical and historical importance for the town.

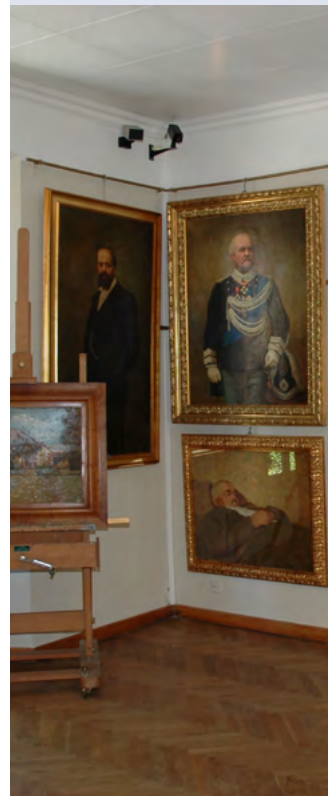
In Verbania the CASA DEL LAGO is an interactive museum exposing a 360° panorama of the scientific and cultural lake ecosystem, narrating a variety of experiences on films and multimedia, chemistry and biology laboratories, a library of pertinent documents and art workshops.

The Viani-Dugnani Palace in Pallanza is seat of the LANDSCAPE MUSEUM - Painting, Sculpture, Photography, Graphic and Archaeology. Founded in 1909 on Antonio Massara's will, in 1914 the museum took the current name based on the purpose for which it was founded, namely to "promote the study of natural and artistic beauty of the region and

foster their protection". In the Painting section the most significant collection includes Lombard and Piedmontese paintings dating back to the late XIX century and the early XX century. The Sculpture section includes 342 works in chalk, marble, bronze, wax and "terra cruda" by impressionist Paul Troubetzkoy's (1866-1938), representing some of the most relevant artists of the time. Meaningful from a historical point of view are also the Giulio Branca (1850-1926) and Arturo Martini (1889-1947)'s collections.

Not far from Verbania, in Cossogno, where great fun is assured by ACQUAMONDO, an Environmental Education Centre dedicated to the natural aspects of water and its exploitation by mankind. In the aquarium and terrarium hall there is an exhibition of the most characteristic species and environments of a river, from the source to its mouth.

The Alto Verbania Museum Network includes, among others, the HAT ART MUSEUM of Ghiffa, where outfits and tools are displayed together with a rich collection of fine felt hats, the archive of the glorious Panizza hat factory as well as films and photographic documents illustrating one of the most original handicraft traditions of the Verbania Upper region, and the ETHNOGRAPHIC AND SAGE BROOM MUSEUM in Cannero Riviera, where objects, pictures and documents are gathered referring to past local traditions (house chores, traditional crafts, etc.) and to the "Verbania" broom manufacturing shop established in Cannero in the XIX and XX centuries.



Info:

www.museogottardpark.it
www.archeomuseo.it
www.bavenoturismo.it
www.lacasadellago.it
www.museodelpaesaggio.it
www.parcovalgrande.it
www.museodellartedelcappello.it
www.museoconvista.it



Lake of Orta

The CUSIUS Ecomuseum of Lake of Orta and Mottarone represents a new kind of cultural offer tied to the enhancement and protection of environmental resources, cultural, historical and ethnographic values. It consists of a network of visiting points located around the lake and along the slopes of Mottarone, organized around three main subjects: traditional culture, art and nature, some of which are mentioned below:

On the lake the WOOD TURNING ART MUSEUM of Pettenasco hosts a collection of ancient as well as more recent turned items together with tools and equipment. The HOUSEWARE MUSEUM at the Omegna Forum is a Permanent Museum Collection, in charge of archiving and maintenance of the historical objects and iconographic materials used in the Cusio District for the production of metal kitchenware such as Alessi, Bialetti, Calderoni, Lagostina and Piazza. Here it is possible to see the first Bialetti coffee-maker and the Lagostina pressure-cooker.

Up on the mountains surrounding Omegna is the quite unique ETHNOGRAFIC AND WIND INSTRUMENT MUSEUM of Quarna Sotto, which describes the techniques to make clarinets, saxophones, flutes and a variety of winds required to perform symphonic and band music, as well as ancient and modern notes.

On the foothills along the eastern bank of Lake of Orta, the CALDERARA FOUNDATION of Ameno exhibits Antonio Calderara's paintings as well as other works by different artists from all over the world, who in the late '50s were connected to him by friendship or research affinities.

The HOTELIER MUSEUM of Armeno is a unique collection gathered together by cooks and famous chefs, unknown waiters and "commis" who contributed to it with memories and souvenirs of their wandering around the world (i.e. tools, pictures, rare cookbooks, dinner menus, old newspapers, etc.); the UMBRELLA AND PARASOL MUSEUM of Gignese, hosts the only collection in the world devoted to umbrellas and sunshades. The museum exhibits over 1000 items, among which handles of stunning beauty; tools used to repair umbrellas and informational panels referring to an ancient trade that umbrella makers from Vergante brought all over the world during their emigration.

On the hills of the western bank of Lake of Orta, at San Maurizio d'Opaglio, stands the TAPS AND FITTINGS MUSEUM, which exhibits ancient tools used by the bell-forging and brass and pewter handcrafting laboratories to create the taps and valves that enabled mankind to gain control of water turning personal body care from an elite habit to a mass phenomenon. The STONE CUTTER MUSEUM in Madonna del Sasso focuses on the hard and dangerous work of the masons, who for over a century worked in the granite quarry; the exhibition itinerary describes with tools, handiworks, documents and videos, a trade no one could do better than the craftsmen from the Cusio region.

Lake of Mergozzo

Through the ages several populations came to settle in Mergozzo, leaving trace of their passage in the Parish House ANTIQUARIUM MUSEUM. The exhibition includes findings dating back to Prehistory, the Bronze Age and the Roman Age; many of them were dug out of local necropolises. Since the Montorfano white and green granite is identified with Italy's architectural history, another museum section (GRANITE ECO-MUSEUM) is devoted to this stone and its dressing such as traditional chiseling tools, chiseled stone items, Pre-Roman and Roman epigraphs.

Info:

www.forumomegna.org
www.lagodorta.net
www.museoquarna.it
www.comune.quarnasotto.vb.it
www.fondazionealderara.it
www.comune.gignese.vb.it
www.comune.armeno.no.it
www.museodelrubinetto.it
www.comune.madonnadelsasso.vb.it
www.comune.mergozzo.vb.it
www.ecomuseogranitomontorfano.it





Culture & Entertainment

Ossola

The type of marble dug out of the ANCIENT MARBLE QUARRY of Ornavasso (Lower Ossola) is an example of excavation through a gallery. Since the late XIV Century, thanks to its underground connection to the Quarry of Candoglia, it has been widely used for the construction of the Cathedral of Milan and of other important Italian monuments, such as the "Certosa" and the Cathedral of Pavia and the Arch of Peace of Milan. The magnificence of nature and the craftsmanship of the ancestors become quite evident when walking through the gallery and the great marble hall – both open to the public.

In Macugnaga (Anzasca Valley) the GUIA GOLD MINE is the first gold mine in the Alps to be open to the public and the CASA WALSER MUSEUM is an example of old Walser building, the rooms of which are still furnished traditionally and rich in tools of past everyday life.

The itinerary through the THERMAL PARK of Crodo (Antigorio Valley) enables the visitor to observe and understand how river waters have been used for centuries as important source of hydro-electrical energy for the entire valley. The visitor center features an info point and a permanent exhibition dedicated to the local fauna.

The "Musei d'Ossola" Association was founded in 2006 with the aim to transform a number of fragmented top quality museum realities possessing strong cultural and tourist potential into a better organized network system. The "AMO" association supports and promotes 34 museums, historic halls, monumental buildings and traditional manufacturing enterprises in Ossola. Among them worth mentioning is the SIMPLON MUSEUM of Domodossola, which recreates the story of the millennial challenge with the mountain, from the ancient tracks traced down by brave lonely traders to

the construction of the Simplon Tunnel, from Napoleon to Geo Chavez, the first, heroic and unlucky pilot who tried to fly over the Alps in 1910. The CHIMNEY SWEEP MUSEUM of Santa Maria Maggiore (Vigezzo Valley) established in 1983, shows valley traditional work- and house-chore tools, clothes and utensils used by local chimney sweeps as well as photographs and publications of the time, while the historical Art Gallery on the first floor of the ROSSETTI VALENTINI ART SCHOOL exhibits a collection of some of the most significant Vigezzo Valley paintings, focusing especially on portraits.

The ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF THE SOAPSTONE of Malesco (Vigezzo Valley) AND THE VAL GRANDE NATURE PARK are included in two different sections: the archaeological museum exhibits evidence of the use of soapstone for the cooking pots as well as for urban and architectural purposes; the geological section focuses on some significant phenomena observed in the area. In Calasca Castiglione (Anzasca Valley) the small MILITIA MUSEUM exhibits a collection of "militaria" (weapons, uniforms decorations, etc.) belonging to one of the still operating most ancient military formations, the Traditional Militia of Calasca; in Macugnaga the MOUNTAIN AND CONTRABAND MUSEUM describes instead the two sides of a coin: people acting as guides during the day turned into smugglers at night; famous guides and gendarmes' stories marked by strain and often due to necessity, on both sides of the second highest peak of the Alps, from the 16th century to the 1970s thus generating popular smugglers and border police stories. The CASA FORTE MUSEUM, of Formazza (Formazza Valley) housed in a valuable 16th century building, shows the most relevant aspects of the Walser life and culture, that can be interpreted through the emblematic man-mountain and man-God relationship.

Informazioni:

www.anticacava.it
www.minieradoro.it
www.comune.ornavasso.vb.it
www.museowalser.it
www.comune.crodo.vb.it
www.comune.domodossola.vb.it
www.amossola.it
www.museospazzacamino.it
www.comune.santamariamaggiore.vb.it
www.parcovalgrande.it
www.leuzerie.it
www.comune.calascacastiglione.vb.it
www.comune.macugnaga.vb.it



Sports



From spring to fall our territory offers the opportunity to practice several activities in the open air. Not only regenerating walks, bike or horse riding but also water and air sports... The sky is the limit! Isn't it?



Sports

In Summer

The protected areas between lakes and mountains as well as the slopes of (Mottarone, Strona Valley, Ossola) or again the foothills of Vergante and Upper Verbano are perfect sites for **trekking** and **excursions**, alone or together with expert guides. In the area between Cannero Riviera and Oggebbio a **Nordic walking** park has recently been created, while Oggebbio and surroundings offer a **Nordic trekking** park. The Reserve of Fondotoce and the Lagoni Nature Park are ideal for **running**.

Up on the high mountain try the exciting **free climbing** on cliffs with various difficulty levels. Some valleys in Ossola are a paradise for **canyoning**. **Kayak**, **paragliding** and **hand gliding** complete the exciting sport offer for mountain lovers.

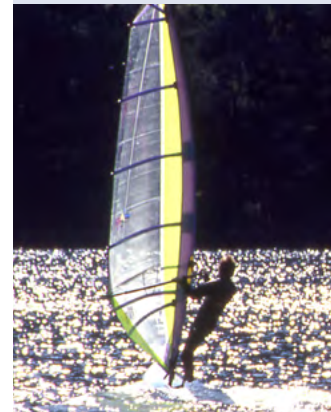
Many opportunities exist also for **cyclists** and **mountain bikers** who can find routes on asphalted roads or in the woods, from the lakes to Mottarone or the Ossola. There are plain cycling routes along the western bank of Lake Maggiore, around Lake of Orta, from the mouth of the Toce river up to the Bosco Tenso Oasis and following the Toce Plain, while rises are located on Vergante hills and the Mottarone or in the Ossola Valleys.



The most enchanting bike itinerary lake view can be enjoyed in the Vergante region, while the most demanding trails are of course the mountain ones on Mottarone, in Upper Verbano and the Cannobina Valley, and in the Vigezzo, Antigorio and Formazza Valleys.

On Lakes Maggiore, Orta and Mergozzo visitors can alternate **water sports** such as canoeing, sailing, windsurfing and diving with more traditional swimming and sun bathing on the beach.

Well-equipped and internationally appreciated **golf clubs** are also available between Lake Maggiore and Lake of Orta.





*"Neveazzurra" is the winter sport paradise.
A ski district created for people and families,
athletes and not... enjoy it with the seasonal ski pass!*

Sports

Winter is Neveazzurra

150 kilometer-long runs and trails with programmed snow system, 50 well spread, innovative and safe ski complexes at an altitude of 1000-3000 meters and several sport activities are possible at these wonderful mountain resorts - **Baitina di Druogno, Antrona, Ceppo Morelli, Devero, Domobianca, Formazza, Macugnaga, Mottarone, Pian di Sole, Piana di Vigizzo, Santa Maria Maggiore and San Domenico** – and last but certainly not least a “seasonal ski pass!”.

A unique ski district among the Ossola, Cusio and Verbano regions, able to offer to sport fans and simple visitors a variety of entertainments and pleasures – for example **cross-country skiing** (fully-equipped trails in Formazza Riale and San Michele, Santa Maria Maggiore, Macugnaga, Antrona Piana and Devero), **ice skating** (day-and-night rinks in Macugnaga, Antrona Piana, Premia, Formazza, Santa Maria Maggiore and Malesco), **snowboarding, free ride, heliski** or **down-hill skiing** (several kilometers long

and panoramic runs on the slopes of majestic Mount Rosa (4.634 M) and the Lepontine Alps) – as well as beautiful landscapes, lake views (Mottarone or Pian di Sole) and rich nature (Antrona Valley). About a hundred routes for **snow shoes** in all valleys of high Piedmont: another form of slow sport and tourism!

Snow parks and **Alpyland** at Mottarone, the most modern roller coaster in the Alps, complete the local winter offer.

Finally... drink a cup of chocolate and take your time to relax in comfortable mountain huts and cozy hotels!



Info:
www.neveazzurra.org



NEVEAZZURRA
Provincia del Verbano Cusio Ossola



Accommodation

*"Distretto Turistico dei Laghi Monti e Valli"
offers excellent accommodation facilities
and is able therefore to please any guest...*

...to those:

...who are looking for luxury hotels, exclusive SPAs, first quality convention centers and wedding venues
...who love the intimate and typical atmosphere of small hotels, B&B and "agriturismi"

... who prefer an entertaining vacation in the open air: camping sites, bungalows, mobile homes and the entertainment resulting therefrom
A proposal for every season!

