

What to do and see

Tourist Office: It is located outside the "Nord" railway station in Laveno.

IAT Laveno Mombello - Tourist Office - iatlaveno@stradasaporivallivaresine.it

Piazza Europa, 1, 21014 Laveno-Mombello Phone: 0332 667223

Opening hours: Tuesday-Sunday 10.00-16.00

Here are some tips:

10 MINUTES ON FOOT

Cerro - Fishermen's village with some restaurants

The beach of Cerro

International Ceramic Design Museum - MIDEC- concerts and cinema - Cerro

Romanesque Church San Defendente - they used to burn witches here- Ceresolo

Hermitage of St. Catherine (Santa Caterina del Sasso Ballaro)

The beach of Reno

The "Germans" beach - Ceresolo - Gulf Polidora

BY CAR 5 MINUTES TO LAVENO (The "Lake Maggiore Portofino")

Lungolago of Laveno with restaurants (parking in Via Gaggero)

Mount Sasso del Ferro with cable car (16 minutes) - Lake view and restaurant

Castle of Laveno ("Forte Castello")

Villa De Angeli Frua (townhall)

Monteggia hamlet - spectacular view

Laveno-Cittiglio cycle/pedestrian track - along the Boesio stream

Local Market in Laveno every Tuesday

The famous submerged nativity scene (in winter) Lungolago Laveno

FERRY FROM LAVENO (20 MINUTES)

Verbania (Intra and Pallanza) and Villa Taranto

Stresa and Borromean Islands: Beautiful Island, Fishermen Island, Mother Island

The castles of Cannero - Mazzarditi: Pirates of Lake Maggiore

The park of the Val Grande, Mottarone Mount, Val d'Ossola, Macugnaga -Monte Rosa, Toce falls

BY CAR 10 MINUTES TO ANGERA

The beach of Arolo and the village of Arolo with the Roman street

Angera Fortress (Rocca di Angera) with doll Museum

"Picuzz" and S. Clemente Mount and Church - Sangiano - Lake view

The Sanctuary of S. Maria del Sasso (Jubilee Sanctuary for Catholic Holy Years) - Caravate

Acquapark - Brebbia

BY CAR 10 MINUTES TOWARDS LUINO (LAKE ROAD)

The village of Caldè, the beach, church of S. Veronica, Le "Fornaci"- Castelvecchana

The waterfall of Froda in Nasca, Church of S. Giorgio in Sarigo - "La Rocca" -Castelvecchana

The Collegiata of Brezzo di Bedero- Baptistery of Domo and the winter and summer church

Local market in Luino every Wednesday - the biggest in Europe

BY CAR 15-20 MINUTES TOWARDS VARESE

Cittiglio Falls and Ferrera Falls

Alfredo Binda (cycling) museum, the small hamlet and the church of S. Biagio - Cittiglio

Villa della Porta Bozzolo - Casalzuigno

Painters Village - Arcumeggia

Vararo - Mountain village

La Gigliola - view of Lake Maggiore and restaurant - Casere di Laveno

The village of San Michele (Celtic remains) and abandoned village of Cavojasca, the pass of Cuvignone and Sant'Antonio

The Campo dei Fiori Park and the Orino Fort - Orino

The Virginia islet - UNESCO World Heritage site - Neolithic Palafitte - Biandronno

www.isolinovirginia.it/

Brabbia swamp - birdwatching - Inarzo www.lipu.varese.it

The Caves of Remeron - Comerio - www.grottaremeron.net/

The Cloister of Voltorre, the Pipe Museum, Cycle track (Lago di Varese) - Gavidate

Salvini Museum and Bodini Museum - Gemonio

Rural culture Museum - Brinzio

BY CAR 40 MINUTES TO VARESE

Villa Panza - Park and Museum of Contemporary Art

Sacro Monte - UNESCO World Heritage Site in Varese, Astronomical Observatory

The historic center of Varese, Palazzo Estense garden

Villa Toepfitz, Castiglioni Museum and the Castle of Masnago

Villaggio Cagnola Adventure Park - Rasa di Varese

Arona (40 minutes by car): The statue of San Carlone

Volandia (40 minutes by car): Aviation Museum <http://volandia.it/en/>

Monteviasco (1 hour by car): mountain village - you can go only on foot or by cable car

Maccagno - Parisi Valle Museum - Lake Delio (1 hour by car)

Torba Monastery (40 minutes)

Castelseprio (40 minutes) UNESCO World Heritage Site

Lake Orta and Isolino of S. Giulio (1 hour)

Golasacca (30 minutes) - Tombs and Cromlech - 3000 years ago- archaeological Museum

Quadventure, Aquatic Park Wave, Sass de la Preja Buia - Sesto Calende (30 minutes)

Lugano- Switzerland (1 hour 15 minutes by car) - Swissminiature

Locarno- Switzerland (1 hour 15 minutes by car) - little train of Centovalli

Milan (1 hour 15 minutes by car or by train, from Laveno) - Duomo (among the largest churches in the world), Leonardo's Last Supper, The Fashion Streets, La Scala, Milan Walk of Fame

Milano - Malpensa airport (40 minutes by car or by train)

Enjoy Lake Maggiore!

Sport

- *Tennis: Various facilities in Laveno*
- *Horse riding: Scuderia del Diamante - Castelvecchiana / Scuderia Al Roccolo - Brenta - pony / Club Ippico Euratom / Circolo Ippico del raggio verde- western riding - Angera / Scuderia only horses- Angera.*
- *Archery: Arceri Varese (www.arcierivarese.org) Calcinate (18 km)*
- *Diving: Water Club (www.acquaclub.com)*
- *Fishing: Lake of Gold (www.agriturismolagodoro.com) Cavona (8km)*
- *Kayak, Flyboard, Hoverboard: DK Summer Club (<http://www.dksummerclub.it/>)*
- *Paragliding: Paragliding Club Laveno (www.parapendiolaveno.it) Laveno*
- *Tandem Hang Gliding: Delta Club Laveno (www.deltacclublaveno.it) Laveno*
- *Trekking: www.vareselandoftourism.com/english/*
- *Motorboat rental: Nautica Costantini (www.nauticacostantini.it) Reno*
- *Quad: Sesto Calende (www.quadaventure.it)*
- *Tandem paragliding: we fly (www.wefly.gibi.info)*
- *Free Climbing: Falesia del "Picuz" - Sangiano, www.falesia.it/de/crag/516/campo-dei-fi-ori.html VeQSkfntmko*
- *Golf: Golf of the Lakes (www.golfdeilaghi.it/) Travedona Monate; Golf Club Varese (www.golfclubvarese.it)*
- *Sailing Boats: Centrovela (www.centrovela.com/)/ Circolo Velico Medio Verbano www.cvmv.it/ Cerro Top Vela www.topvela.org/*
- *Gliding (Glider): Aero Club Calcinate del Pesce [//acao.it/?lang=en](http://acao.it/?lang=en)*

Aperitif by sailboat at sunset in front of the Hermitage of Santa Caterina (www.centrovela.com/) Water and sky sports

Born in 1997 as a sailing school and recognized by the Italian Federation, the Sailing Center (www.centrovela.com) operates in Cerro, in an easily reachable and moderately windy Lake Maggiore area. Five areas of activity for a more or less experienced audience: the school for adults and children, the training area (from nautical licenses to educational initiatives), rental and charter services for business meetings, maintenance and transportation, professional sports with the Centrovela Sailing Team.

The oldest tradition is hang gliding (Deltaplano), which was born in Laveno around the mid-1970s thanks to a Swiss fan who knew the enormous potential of the area for the position of the town and the comfort of taking off from the Sasso del Ferro and Monte Nudo (Naked mountain). Soon the fascination of this sport affected several young people in the area who founded the Delta Club Laveno (www.deltacclublaveno.it), today one of the largest in Italy. Being a member of the Italian Free Flight Federation, he has some federal instructors and even two world-class hang gliding champions, Manfred Ruhmer and Christian Ciech. There is, around the landing area, a pleasant retreat in the greenery and Icaro 2000 flight school. Since the mid-1980s, paragliding (www.parapendiolaveno.it) has been spreading, which soon brought together enthusiasts and experienced pilots.

The two-seater flight is very popular since, accompanied by an instructor, it gives the unexperienced the emotion of touching the sky with a finger.

People linked to the area

Alessandro Manzoni, a writer and poet, famous for the novel "The Betrothed" - universally ranked among the masterpieces of world literature, stayed in Cerro (there is a plaque in Via De Ambrosio) and in Via Gattirolo at Villa Stampa (now Villa Sironi, opposite Via Brugo). In the first months after the end of World War II, Laveno, for unclear reasons (it is said to make documents written to Mussolini disappear), British Prime Minister **Winston Churchill**, who led the United Kingdom during World War II, stayed in Laveno

Giuseppe Garibaldi, leader and patriot ("Hero of the Two Worlds"), landed at Laveno and attacked the "Fortino" di Laveno, which was guarded by the Austrian army, without success: until 1859, Lake Maggiore was the border between the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom Of Sardinia (Piedmont).

Enrico Cuccia, the most important post-war Italian banker (Mediobanca), as a guest of friends, has often stayed in Cerro.

In Cerro (Gattirolo) there is a German tourist colony since after World War I and there is a "Germans" beach in Ceresolo.

Renato Pozzetto, famous Italian comedian, lives in Laveno.

Gigi (Luigi) Riva, a football player, Italy's striker against Germany in the "Match of the Century" (Italy-Germany 4-3, Mexico World Cup 1970), was born in Leggiuno and played in the Laveno Football Club.

Tizano Nava, a sailor, several times world champion and 3 times strategist in the America's Cup, lives in Laveno.

Dario Fo, Nobel Prize for Literature, was born in Sangiano and grew up on Lake Maggiore.

Charles and Diana, Prince and Princess of Wales, in 1985, passed by Laveno and stayed at Isola Bella, guests of the Borromeo family.

Vincenzo Peruggia, born in Dumenza (Lake Maggiore), stole the Leonardo Da Vinci "Gioconda" (**Monna Lisa**) from the Louvre in Paris in 1911. After having kept her under his bed for two years, he returned it to Italy that Peruggia considered the right owner.

Ernest Hemingway, Nobel Prize winner for literature, set part of his novel "A Farewell to Arms" on Lake Maggiore.

Napoleon Bonaparte and Joséphine slept in the Borromeo Palace of Isola Bella.

They stayed on Lake Maggiore and were enchanted by the lake: **Montesquieu, Flaubert, Stendhal, Hemingway, Dickens, Byron, Dumas, Goethe, Toscanini, Verga, D'Annunzio, Walt Disney, Thomas Mann.**





Sacro Monte di Varese - to admire a spiritual, but also artistic and naturalistic destination that has become a UNESCO World Heritage site



Hermitage of Santa Caterina del Sasso Ballaro - Leggiuno - a place to meditate and enjoy spectacular views of Lake Maggiore



*Park Campo dei Fiori (field of flowers) - for walks
Even if you are not strong walkers but love the woods and tranquility*



Castelseprio with the church of Santa Maria Foris portas - UNESCO World Heritage - to be thrilled in front of the Enigma of Byzantine paintings of apocryphal gospels, in a forgotten Longobard capital of the darkest centuries of the Middle Ages



Castiglione Olona Isle of Tuscany in Lombardy - to see the exceptional Frescoes by Masolino, Masaccio's master



Cloister of Volterra in Gavirate



Cycle track on Lake Varese



Villa Bozzolo - Casalzuigno - to imagine how a nobleman of the 700's lived in the Varesotto countryside



Villa Panza in Varese - to walk in the beautiful park and see works of Contemporary art



Monte San Giorgio with Besano UNESCO World Heritage - to discover the ancestors of dinosaurs and walk where the sea was long time ago

The **Borromeo Islands** are named after the noble Borromeo family that still exists: some time ago Beatrice Borromeo married Pierre Casiraghi of the Principality of Monaco in the Borromeo Islands just as Lavinia Borromeo married John Elkann, the heir of the Fiat-Chrysler Group.

An excursion to **Stresa** is indispensable in order to enjoy the wonderful views of the islands that are just a few steps from the shore. The **Beautiful Island (Isola Bella)**, the **Mother Island (Isola Madre)** and the **Fishermen's Island (Isola Pescatori)** are easily accessible by a boat that allows you to walk along the lake for a truly romantic or group journey. Stresa's lakeside, however, stands out for its noble hotels and gardens rich in flowers and plants with extraordinary beauty such as the **Villa Pallavicino Park**. Mount Mottarone can be reached from Stresa by a cable car in 20 minutes. From the top you can enjoy a sensational view of the Alps, many lakes and sometimes Milan and Turin. In Alpyland (Mottarone) you can experience a breathtaking descent on the extraordinary rail bobsled track.

Just 20 minutes from the Ferry to Laveno, Intra and **Pallanza (Verbania)** is a destination not to be missed for those who love nature. The magnificent lakefront and the extraordinary botanical gardens of **Villa Taranto**, in fact, especially in spring, offer really special events and exhibitions. There is the beautiful black tulip, a rare flower, of inestimable value. The gardens of Villa Giulia (Pallanza) have a view of the **little island of San Giovanni**, where the famous composer Toscanini spent his holidays. The Val Grande National Park, one of the largest wilderness areas in Europe, can be reached from the small town of Cicogna, which is not far from Verbania. Other interesting places: Baveno (with its famous marbles) the small lake of Mergozzo and the top of **Monte Orfano** with its small church. From Mergozzo, begins the Val D'Ossola (Macugnaga, the village "Walser", the Toce waterfalls), southwards the lake of Orta with the Isolino di San Giulio.

Not far from **Arona** stands the **Colossus of San Carlo** (called Sancarlone), a statue of over 35 meters, which immortalizes the pillar of the Borromeo family: San Carlo. The statue is open to the public, who can climb first through a spiral staircase and then a ladder, arriving inside the head of San Carlo. Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi stayed in the city of Arona in order to study the structure of the colossus for his project of **the Statue of Liberty** in New York.



San Carlone



Rocca Borromea

Rocca Borromea in Angera is an attraction not to be missed. Inside, still visitable today, there is the Doll Museum

A FEW ORIGINAL ROUTES

Palazzo Perabò (Perabò Palace) and the International Ceramic Design Museum (Midec)

Elegant residence of the late '500 on two floors with loggia and square courtyard inside. Built by the Guilizzoni, it went to the Hospital of Cittiglio and then to the Perabò family (1863), whose name is preserved. In 1883, by the will of Don Leopoldo Perabò De Colombiani, the palace became the property of the "Opera Agricola" (agricultural works) that Perabò wanted to be established. Since then the palace has hosted several institutions and was the home of the agricultural school, which has been active since 1907, elementary school, child care center and municipality. During the Second World War, the Agricultural School's activities were interrupted, the palace housed the retirement of the elders until in 1968 the Municipality bought the building. Since its reopening in 1970, it hosts the International Ceramic Design Museum (MIDEC). The International Museum of Ceramic Design is of great interest as well as the solar courtyard dials, one of which marks the morning hours, the other those of the afternoon (italic hours).

The ceramic is in the heart of Laveno and its inhabitants: after a glorious past in which production boasted industries, craftsmen and artists, today the workmanship and decoration of the terraglia (more clay than ceramic, cooked at lower temperature and therefore suitable for very bright colors) are handed down by some young workshops.

Ceramics and Terraglia are a tradition dating back to 1856 and that the present International Ceramic Design Museum - housed in the sixteenth-century Palazzo Perabò on the Cerro lakeside promenade - helps protect it.

A monumental door overlooking the "Lungolago" accompanies the inner courtyard on three sides. The loggia on the first floor continues with a balcony overlooking the lake.

*The museum exhibits products of common use, such as those of a high artistic level, made by thousands of local craftsmen under the guidance of renowned artistic directors such as **Giò Ponti**, Guido Andlovitz and Antonia Campi who, with their design, gave an impression of timeless to the entire production of the territory.*

The exhibited works are, in part, a deposit of the Richard-Ginori company, partly from the donations of the Scotti Meregalli and Franco Revelli and encompass a span of time from 1895 to 1935. So many the styles on exhibition: from the romantic Verism, rich of color and nuances, to liberty, to the more free and loose decorations of the 1920s.

*Among the most significant pieces of contemporary production are works by Ambrogio Pozzi of Gallarate, Candido Fior of Bassano, Zanini and **Thun** of Milan, Galassi of Faenza, Bucci of Pesaro, Antico of Savona.*

Of particular value is a cross-plate with Madonna and San Giovannino by Focosi in Milan (1892-93), a large panel of Angelo Biancini (1940), two dishes with Jacopini's liberty-covered

landscapes (1906), a large enamel jar on terraglia and a panel exhibited at the "Triennale" of Milan by Antonia Campi.

Fundamental donations that have happened in recent years include many pieces of quality, a large number of publications and catalogs, notepapers of bathroom fixture and tableware that were donated by Antonia Campi.

Today, museum activities are accompanied by cultural events (concerts, movie projections), temporary exhibitions and educational activities for schools. www.midec.org

Laveno - Cittiglio cycle / pedestrian trail



To connect Laveno Mombello with Cittiglio there is a beautiful track with little difference in height and suitable for everyone.

Length 5.3 Km

Elevation difference 50 m

Upward slope 3%

Duration 30 min

Dirt percentage 2%

The cycle path connecting Laveno Mombello to Cittiglio starts from the Nord Station of Laveno to reach the Nord station of Cittiglio, in a nice path along the Boesio River, that crosses forests and cultivated fields and only in a couple of points crosses secondary roads. It is a little altitude and almost completely paved path, suitable for children and people with reduced mobility, fresh in the summer thanks to the proximity of the Boesio River and the shade of the trees, about 5 km. In a half-hour of biking you ride it quietly, walking slowly in about an hour can be completed without problems, so it can be fine for some mom or grandmother who wants to take a walk with a baby in a wheelchair.

Near the town of Cittiglio, "Sti Park"(Sti is Cittiglio in Lombard dialect) was inaugurated, which is a playground with lots of equipment to play and train. There is table tennis, elastic rug, a volleyball net, and a Tyrolean slider to slip by holding hands. There are also picnic tables and racks to park the bikes while you are together with your children or friends. Do not forget to bring with you table tennis bats or a ball if you want to play with the park equipment!

La Torbiera



The Torbiera, a protected area, is what remains of what was a pond of glacial origin embedded in a small crown of moraine reliefs. The Torbiera (peat bog) dates back to the quaternary era, when the territory, covered by a vast glacier, began to shape in its present appearance. In fact, in the midst of a moraine hills, the melting of the ice led to the formation of a small lake that, over time, slowly decreased its waters to become a marshy area. The lush vegetation and the supply of materials through the water inlet channel, has determined the filling of the lake and the transformation of vegetable materials into peat. For several years, even in the postwar period, this has become a peat extraction site, whose name is "Torbiera" (Torba is peat in Italian). Just during the extraction of the peat they found remains that document the presence of a pile-dwelling settlement already in prehistoric times.

*Although its poorly oxygenated waters are not hospitable for the most demanding fish species, Torbiera today represents a highly natural ecosystem. The dominant vegetation is the hydrophilic plants such as the 'fragmiteto' (*Phragmites australis* is the common marsh straw) in association with the white willow (*Salix alba*) and the black alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). As far as wildlife is concerned, Torbiera is an ideal habitat for both amphibians (especially frogs and toads) and reptiles, among which are the common collar snake "biscia dal collare" (*natrix natrix*). Some migratory birds nest near the peat; the most common are the Mallard Duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) and Coot (*Fuliga atra*).*

*Among the mammals, the water-borne populations, water shrew-mouse (*Neomys fodiens*) and vole (*Arvicola terrestris*) are to be mentioned.*

At the edge of the old pond there was an ancient human station that harks back to the Lower Neolithic and the Copper Age (3000 BC). A village on stilts (palafitte), whose traces were already spotted in the nineteenth century, during the excavation of the peat, by Don Carlo Tinelli who had also found a Roman bust. Around here, a geologist is now working on behalf of the Fine Arts Superintendent, who with the difficulties of the muddy and water-rich territory and with the use of waterpumps is bringing to light as much as possible a part of the ancient palification. The works, authorized at various levels, required a special supervision by the Superintendence for Archaeological Heritage of Lombardy.

From: "Lakes and Torbiere of the district of Varese (Province of Como)" - Ing. Arch. Giuseppe Quaglia - Macchi and Brusa Typography 1884

"Located in that area northwest of the village, in a plain of 10 hectares lined with morainic hills, drain the water with a lazy route, flew into Lake Maggiore in Cerro, owned by the city, 7 hectares of that marsh in the total peat land, were sold in 1838 at public auction at Carlo Tinelli for £. 10,000, who knew the peat as fuel, in 1844 started the excavation and burning it. Later on in his lavender kilns in Laveno, and also traded it, carrying it on wagons to the banks of the Verbano, and then with boats to the ovens. Tinelli, a man blessed with agricultural knowledge and of peat bogs, was the first in the Varese Circondario (region) to excavate peat and knowledgeable on use and value. I was a student while I was in Gattarolo (Gattiolo) hamlet of Cerro, possession of Count Stefano Stampa, I made several trips to the Mombello peat in the early years of the excavation, and from then on I became acquainted with that fuel as was prepared; But, being too young I did not take much advantage of it. The remaining peat bog, in addition to the Tinelli, was in possession of Dr. Carughi, De Ambrosi and Ratazzi, already on town's lists, that later those owners also made excavations, since peat from Mombello is without earth, soft, tobacco-like color to the surface, darker and pasty below, until it lies in the center on the so-called jelly and always on a sandy layer.

For a third of the marsh the peat reaches the height of m. 10, and all m. 6. Detailing, still kept in the bath by the waters, though lowered a few feet by the Tinelli, in the discharger channel, with heavy spending. Peat from Mombello, which I would say good, burns in the furnaces with flame and with a lot of calories, does not leave earth's residues, or if they are, they cling to ashes and do not agglomerate to block the grids; these are necessary for the air to effectively combust. In that swamp, when in the past it was occupied by the waters without the current peat, the first men lived in prehistoric huts on stilts, implanted at the west edge, leaving their stone and bone arms and their tools in kind, like pots of jars, some cups, a few arrows, some knives, including one centim. 12, exhibited at the Varese industrial horticultural exhibition in 1871, and by inexperienced hand broken in two, refurbished, now found at the patriotic museum of Varese, donated by sac. Gius. (Priest Giuseppe) Della Chiesa. Tinelli also exhibited a tree trunk two meters long, pinned and with some hollow in his belly, found in his peat, at m. 2.50 of depth, as were prehistoric objects, indicating what a dugout pirogue was used on primitive waters in the Mombello basin. "

How to get there: The route starts off from the Cerro car park (Piazza Dante), (near the Museo della Ceramica- MIDE) and takes via S. Rocco to reach via Gattiolo. After that you head to the right and you walk around in a well-shaded street that winds through parks and gardens of acidophiles and noble villas. Shortly before leaving the area, you will meet on the left side via Vignola, which will take you to the pebble on its northwest side. The road is initially flanked to the left by residential parks of the last century, then homeowners. Go all the way to Via Vignola, exit on the street, and go to the right for a very short stretch. After civic number 9, always turn right on an asphalted road on a steep descent that after a few meters becomes a wide path (indicated by the yellow sign) that enters the wood of chestnuts and robins and affords the peat in position Higher, on the eastern side. After any deviation, it is advisable to return to the path and, always following the yellow markers, go through it in full. From here, turn right, to walk on a narrow, slightly downhill slope, lined with dry stone walls, which opens out to Roncaccio. At this point, the itinerary continues along via Brughiera (Comune of Leggiano), turn right. Afterwards, in the territory of Laveno, the road takes the name of via Gattiolo. Then return to your own steps by completing the excursion exactly at the starting point.

Travel time: 1.30 ' hours

Equipment: Suitable for cross-country and wet routes (boots are recommended)

Indicator signs: yellow signal (in paths and in unclear points)

The mystery of erratic boulders

Large rock blocks often placed on the backs of the Pre-Alp Mountains, the erratic boulders date back to the glacial era when Alps and Pre- Alps were covered by a huge sheet of ice that pushed to the plain.

In the area of Laveno Mombello, on the slope of Sasso de Ferro, there are still some that can be reached: about twenty minute walk from Casere, here is the Sass du la Poma (stone of the apple in Lombard dialect) for the presence in the past of a wild apple but in shape it recalls a mushroom.

At about 110 meters high, on the plateau of Cujaga, south-east before the downhill path leading to Cittiglio, some signs point to the Masso del Sasso del Ferro for the typical gray color, partly covered with musk, that reaches over 20 meters of perimeter, with a table thickness of up to 2 meters.

Again here, a midsize monolith rises, surrounded by oak and chestnut trees, known as Sass dul Mergoz, for the wind blowing during the storms, or Sass dul Bocc, which in the local dialect indicates the male of the goat. The proposed path starts from Casere, near Magone, in the direction of Poggio Sant'Elisa. At an altitude of about 850 meters, the trail bends to the right to cut the wooded slope of Sasso del Ferro and get zigzagging to Cujaga's place after crossing the rocky spurs of Sassale. From Cujaga, the path then proceeds long in the direction of Cittiglio. Along the way described above there are numerous erratic boulders of glacial origin.

Travel time: (inclusive of round trip) 2

Equipment: Suitable for medium mountain trails

Signs indicators: 3V, white-red signal.

Pizzoni of Laveno from Laveno Mombello

Beautiful panoramic ring tour with the Pizzoni of Laveno destination.

Laveno Mombello (216 m asl) - Casere (761 m asl) - Pizzoni di Laveno (1035 m asl) - Passo del Cuvignone (1046 m asl) - Rifugio Adamoli (976 m asl) - Pass of the Cuvignone (1046 m asl) - Mount La Crocetta Pass of the Cuvignone (1117 m asl) - Pass of the Cuvignone (1046 m asl) - Vararo (755 m asl) - Laveno Mombello (216 m asl) -

The Pizzoni di Laveno are one of my favorite destinations: on the one hand they are close to my Laveno, on the other hand it allows to vary the itinerary according to the season and the time available in a splendid landscape. It is possible to get to Pizzoni from Monteggia (from Laveno deviation to the right in the road to Luino), or to make the itinerary ring with departure from Vararo. Or a slightly different ring from Laveno Mombello starting from the public library (Piazza Fontana): the itinerary includes, among other things, lunch at the Adamoli refuge.

The departure can be from the large free car park (coming from Laveno is on the right just before the roundabout on the SP69, in Via della Repubblica), once there, cross the road: the signs are available. The itinerary is generally well-marked, but fairly articulated so it is

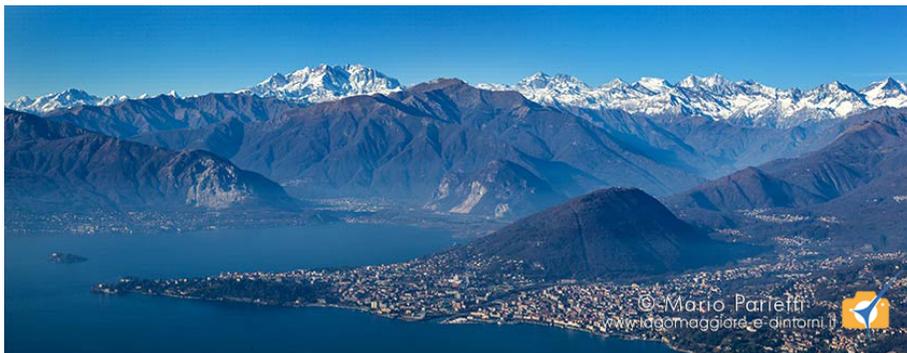
advisable, especially if you are not from the area, to have a map with you. From the parking lot, go along the path with a pergola (Via della Pergola, "Tupiun" in local dialect), pass through a porch and go through the historic center of Laveno, passing by the town hall and the municipal library (Piazza Fontana), then follow Via Caprera and Via Vararo and start climbing towards Monteggia. After crossing the hamlets of Brenna and Monteggia you reach a bar beyond which the road turns into semi-shaded cobbled mule track, requiring some commitment: the average slope is 18% for about 3 km.

At the beginning of the hamlet of Casere, taking the path on the right towards Cujaca, you can reach, following a massive mule track, Poggio Sant'Elsa which has been transformed into a terrace on Lake Maggiore. Here is a bar-restaurant and the arrival of the cable car that climbs from Laveno. From here, you can finish the walk and return to Laveno with the cable car if you are tired or go back the same route.

In the small hamlet of Casere, you walk along a stretch of road again, then begin climbing to the Pizzoni di Laveno (on the left), almost entirely in the wood except the final part when you begin to enjoy the splendid view of Lake Maggiore.

You walk a few meters on rocks, helping a little with your hands, but you are never exposed or are in dangerous areas. From the top, with the imposing cross of the summit, you enjoy Intra, with the ferries to Laveno, the Borromee Islands, the Mottarone, the Valgrande Mountains and in the distance the Alps with Monte Rosa, which stands out for beauty.

You continue along the ridge, with the panorama that opens towards Luino and the coast of Switzerland, then enter the woods with a path that alternates different ups and downs; Before the Cuvignone pass, where you come back on the paved road (follow a downhill to the left for the Adamoli refuge) you meet another lookout point that gives you a glimpse of Caldè with its Rocca (if you want the refuge can be reached with a direct path opened recently, the path bifurcates in the woods). Not to be missed, just a few minutes' walk from Adamoli, the balcony on Lake Maggiore. After the stop, with good and abundant food, the excursion goes back to the Cuvignone pass where you proceed for a short downhill section along the paved road until you reach a curve (junction with Buseggia) where the trail leads to Vararo in addition to the mule track for Mount La Crocetta which deserves the deviation for the panorama it gives; there is another interesting reason: it is a popular launch point for paragliders.



Panorama from Pizzoni of Laveno



Vararò



Paragliding and hang gliding point



Mount la Crocetta

The path that goes down to Vararò offers once again fascinating landscapes and panoramas; Reaching and crossing the village you get to the “provincial” road that climbs from Cittiglio, follow it for a short stretch until you find the deviation, on the left, for Casere where the ring closes, proceed for Laveno on the way home.

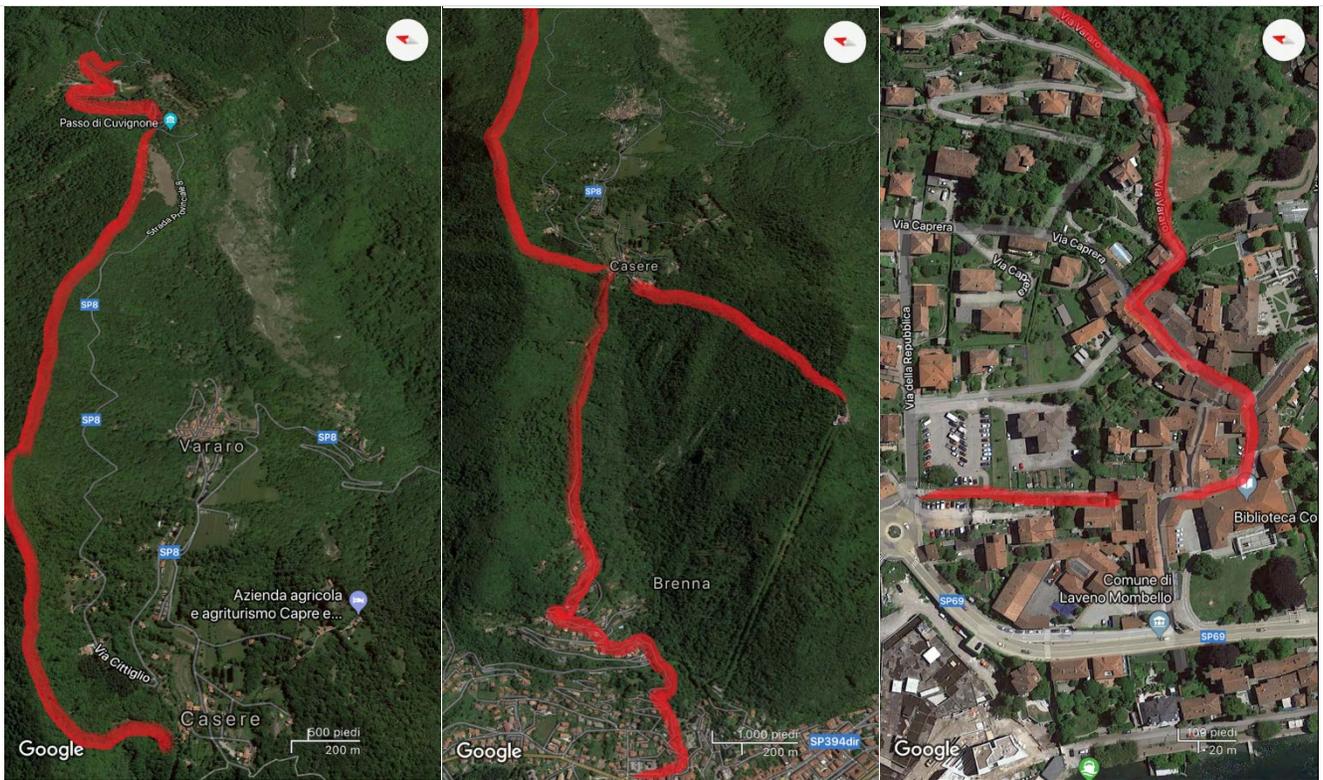
Additional information (up to S. Antonio)

- *ITINERARY TYPE: Walking*
- *ITINERARY DURATION: 7 hours Ca for the whole ring*
- *ITINERARY DIFFICULTY: Medium*
- *VALLEY / LOCATION: Lake Maggiore and Valcuvia*
- *STARTING POINT: Laveno Mombello*
- *PARKING: Easy and free*
- *DIFFERENCE IN ALTITUDE: 1050 mt. Ca.*
- *LENGTH: 17 Km Ca.*
- *RECOMMENDED PERIOD: All year round*
- *SIGNATURE TYPE: Good*
- *DOGS: No problem reported, on the leash*
- *INTEREST: naturalistic scenery*

Additional info (only up to Poggio S. Elsa)

- *ITINERARY TYPE: Walking*
- *ITINERARY DURATION: 4 hours between return trip including stops (2 hours if return is via cable car)*
- *ITINERARY DIFFICULTY: Easy*
- *VALLEY / LOCATION: Lake Maggiore*
- *STARTING POINT: Laveno Mombello*

- *PARKING: Easy and free*
- *DIFFERENCE IN ALTITUDE: 800 mt. Ca.*
- *LENGTH: 12 Km Ca.*
- *RECOMMENDED PERIOD: Spring, Summer, Autumn*
- *SIGNATURE TYPE: Discrete*
- *DOGS: No problem reported*
- *INTEREST: naturalistic scenery*



The Cadorna Line



The Cadorna line, better known as the Italian defense system at the North Frontier with Switzerland, was thought and designed in the late 1800s and early 1900s to protect border areas from possible foreign attacks (the generals expected an attack by the Austrian Empire that would first invade Switzerland). Luigi Cadorna (born in Verbania) was an Italian General and Marshal of Italy, most famous for being the Chief of Staff of the Italian Army during the first part of World War I. The idea, taken over and rejected more than once, came to an end in 1911. In particular, the work was intensified and completed with the outbreak of the Great War. The work was really impressive, starting from the Val d'Ossola until reaching the Orobic Alps. Muleways, roads, trails, trenches, hospitals, observers and artillery sites were often built between 600 and 2000 meters. Fortunately the work was never used to fight. Today, it is possible to retrace, with extremely satisfying routes, the ancient mule track to rediscover the enormous work; If some traits are lost, due to carelessness and damage due to nature there is really much to see. All the proposed itineraries lead to follow and discover the traces of history, while on the other hand they allow you to enjoy excursions in the beautiful nature and the unspoiled landscapes. Excursions vary in length and nature, and are generally suitable for everyone, I recommend the normal trekking gear as well as a front torch, which is often important for exploring deep tunnels. The Cadorna line was not forever unused. Indeed, between November 13 and 15, 1943, the fortifications of Mount San Martino saw the first clash of the Italian Resistance and the only battle ever disputed along the line. Besieged by a much larger Nazi army, in the afternoon of November 15, Colonel Croce commanded the partisans to retreat. Through underground tunnels, the fighters reached Cassano Valcuvia and, from there, the Swiss border, rescuing themselves. The Nazi attack did not spare even the top of the mountain, guarded by nine men. After having resisted three-quarters of an hour under the Nazi air bombardment and overwhelming enemy power, the partisans came out and were captured and later shot. In addition to the rock and concrete fortifications bordering on the summit of the mountain, the San Martino summit houses a shrine in memory of the tragic battle.

[//www1.provincia.va.it/lineacadornavarese/it/infopoint.htm](http://www1.provincia.va.it/lineacadornavarese/it/infopoint.htm)

Itinerary: Cassano Valcuvia - Vallalta (Duno) - Monte San Martino - Cassano Valcuvia

(complete travel ring)

Departure: Cassano Valcuvia

Intermediate stages: Cassano Valcuvia, Sasso Cadrega, Vallalta, San Martino in culmination.

Arrival: Cassano Valcuvia

Distance: 13 km

Height difference: uphill 797 m

Maximum quota: 1087 m

Travel time: about 5 hours. At this time you need to add the time to visit the fortifications that vary according to your own curiosity, interests and individual abilities.

Signpost: red yellow (Line Cadorna).

Recommended period: Spring is surely the most suitable period, vegetation has not become intrusive; in the fall, on the one hand, the fall of the leaves facilitates the identification of artefacts within the woods on the other, can be found annoying accumulations of foliage within the walkways that can mask insidious holes. In winter, the short days and the ice hazard on the trails recommend paying particular attention to these excursions.

Equipment: light shoes

Main artifacts: "Ridotto" San Giuseppe, trenches and walkways in Visighee and Bùs and Bocc, stations for machine guns, look-outs, cave batteries, Cadorna barracks.

We park in Piazza IV Novembre, in front of the Cassano Valcuvia Town Hall, which we reach via the state n. 394 Cittiglio-Luino.

Crossing the Ten Park Marco Giani we enter the historic center of the town and, following the signposting, head towards the parking lot of Via Pasubio, located at the southwestern end of the town.

We take a narrow dirt road that after 200 m cross the paved military road, we go up to Bùs and Bocc, recognizable by the presence of a flat clearing at 370 m above sea level, passing in front of the Giani toll booth.

We go through the clearing and begin the visit to the first artefacts of the Cadorna Line: galleries, trenches, observers and shooting stations, then admire a panoramic view from the center of Cassano Valcuvia and the hill of San Giuseppe.

Following the route we arrive at Visighee, where we continue our visit to the fortifications, spread over a vast area of 54,900 square meters of special interest both for the considerable extension and for the variety of the type of artifacts; we climb up the staircase leading to a bombard and high walkway, through which we reach a forest track that we are going for about 2 km.

At the end of this journey, where the traces of the fortification system are lost, we come to the spur of the Sasso Cadrega (stone of chair, in dialect), which we find on our left top: a boulder with a particular shape that recalls a chair. Here we take the path that leads us to the automatic weapons stations and then, through a system of walkways, to the fortified system of Val Alta, built near the Mesenzana-San Martino military road.

During the stop to observe the cistern, the water that was destined for animal feeding, we decide to continue on the military road (alternatively you can start the descent to return to Cassano Valcuvia) climbing to San Martino in the culmination. After about 300 m, on our left we find the former Cadorna barracks 831 m ; we stop for a brief visit to the outer perimeter of the barracks, named Villa S. Giuseppe; returning on our steps, we leave the military road to go, turning to the left, the mule track.

Halfway down we find a cave observation well, accessed through a vertical duct equipped with steps "marinara style" (you cannot step in) that access to a small room system; we continue the ascent to the top of San Martino where we stop to visit the Observatory under the refuge, which that pierces the mountain from side to side.

When the route is over, we go back to Val Alta and then take the military road towards Mesenzana; following the indications, we return to Cassano Valcuvia, passing through the hamlet of Cà di Rocco.



Walk to the Hermitage of Santa Caterina del Sasso Ballaro

The Hermitage is easily accessible and signposted. Once you arrive there are several free parking lots. Continue on foot for a few minutes; to reach the Hermitage you can descend a panoramic staircase of 268 steps or take the elevator. At the hermitage you can also arrive by boat, by ferry (here the times and routes: [//www.navigazioneIaghi.it/ita/m_orari.asp](http://www.navigazioneIaghi.it/ita/m_orari.asp)), in this case the steps are eighty. A tip, read well the opening and closing times before getting on (or getting off), you risk going up and down for nothing.

Opening hours: from 15 June to 15 September every day from 9.00 to 18.00 (Church closed from 12.00 to 13.30) Mass: every Sunday at 16.30.

A walking tour around the Hermitage of Santa Caterina:

The path C1 is a ring of about 17 km that starts from Cerro di Laveno and ends at the same point. The route crosses the hermitage, Arolo and Leggiuno passing through meadows and woods.

On Lake Maggiore there are many proposals and can be found on the Agenda 21 site called Le Vie verdi dei laghi.

We walked the ring of Santa Caterina that starts and arrives at Cerro di Laveno through about 18 km of roads, paths and cart roads. A walk that, including stops, takes about five hours. It is almost completely safe and well marked: some steps require attention, but downloading the maps ([//www.gpsvarese.it/cartina_dettaglio.asp?ID=52&tipo=mtb](http://www.gpsvarese.it/cartina_dettaglio.asp?ID=52&tipo=mtb)) it is difficult to make mistakes.

From the Cerro Ceramics Museum take the short stretch of lakefront to reach Ceresolo quickly where the beautiful church of San Defendente is located. From there you cross the provincial road 69 and climb up to Roncaccio and then to Reno to cross the road and go up to Santa Caterina. A visit to the hermitage is a must. Keep in mind that until October 31st it is open from 9 to 12 and then from 2 to 6 pm.

From the hermitage of Santa Caterina, go up and down to Cellina and from there to Arolo. In all, they are about 5 km very beautiful, mainly in the woods and along meadows. The beach of Arolo is the most southerly point on the lake. We are almost halfway and from there we move back to the opposite side of the Sp 69 near Monvalle.

We move from the small hamlets of Bosco, Ghirate, Ballarate to get to Leggiuno. From there you enter, after two and a half kilometers in the wooded area of the Torbiera and Vignola, and then descend again to Cerro.

A nice ride that allows you to see places still completely immersed in the green. Atmospheres that can only be perceived passing from the road that leads to Laveno and which can be discovered on foot in all their beauty.

The path is clean and well marked even if there are several points, especially in the second half, where there is some risk of making mistakes, but certainly not to lose, given the many points of reference.

Santa Caterina del Sasso Ballaro

A miracle of nature for those who see it, enchanted, by the lake. A relaxing and happy place for those who reach it, on foot, from the staircase immersed in the vegetation.

It is the hermitage of Santa Caterina del Sasso Ballaro di Leggiuno (www.provincia.va.it/santacaterina), not far from Laveno, a monastic complex of three buildings dating back to the 13th and 14th centuries. One of the most fascinating beauties of Italy and, thanks to its very special position overlooking one of the deepest points of Lake Maggiore, a unique wonder in the world.

It was founded by Blessed (Beato) Alberto Besozzi of Arolo who voted to St. Catherine of Alexandria during a shipwreck on Lake Maggiore and who lived here for 35 years as a hermit. In the 14th century it was inhabited by a community of Augustinian monks, who in 1379 were replaced by the Ambrose "Romiti" and then in 1649 by the Carmelites. From 1986 to 1996 he was ruled by a Dominican community, while today it is managed by the Benedictine oblates.

There are numerous pictorial cycles inside and outside the walls of the church, a heritage that embraces centuries where art and history fit into perfection.

Since 1970 the hermitage is the property of the Province of Varese, which in recent years is bringing it back to the ancient splendor besides making it reachable, with a modern elevator hidden in the rock, to all the visitors.

In addition to welcoming pilgrims, there are many initiatives proposed each year, including a rich program of summer concerts.

Skyscanner search engine that compares flights from all over the world, draws the top twenty Italian of the most beautiful Italian churches set in the rock. In fourth place, the only site reported in Lombardy by the famous English search engine, there is the Hermitage of Santa Caterina di Leggiuno. "A wonder on the water, that of Lake Maggiore. The Hermitage of Santa Caterina is perched on a rock face overlooking the blue, and offers one of the most evocative scenery of this lake area: the Borromean Gulf, Stresa and its islands - this is the description that Skyscanner gives the Hermitage - After Having walked through a portico with four round arches, you can access the church which is the result of a singular fusion of three chapels, once distinct and created in different periods ».

And again: "It is not only the structure and context that fascinates, but also the art kept inside: the pictorial cycles are well preserved and cover a period of time that goes from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century. The richness of this attraction is its accessibility: the hermitage can be reached from the square above where you can arrive by car and then descend a stairway of 268 steps, or with a lift in the rock for those with mobility difficulties. From the lake, however, the ascent counts 80 steps ".

The Hermitage of Leggiuno attracts thousands of visitors each year from around the world. Numbers that led to the opening of the Eremo inn in August 2016.

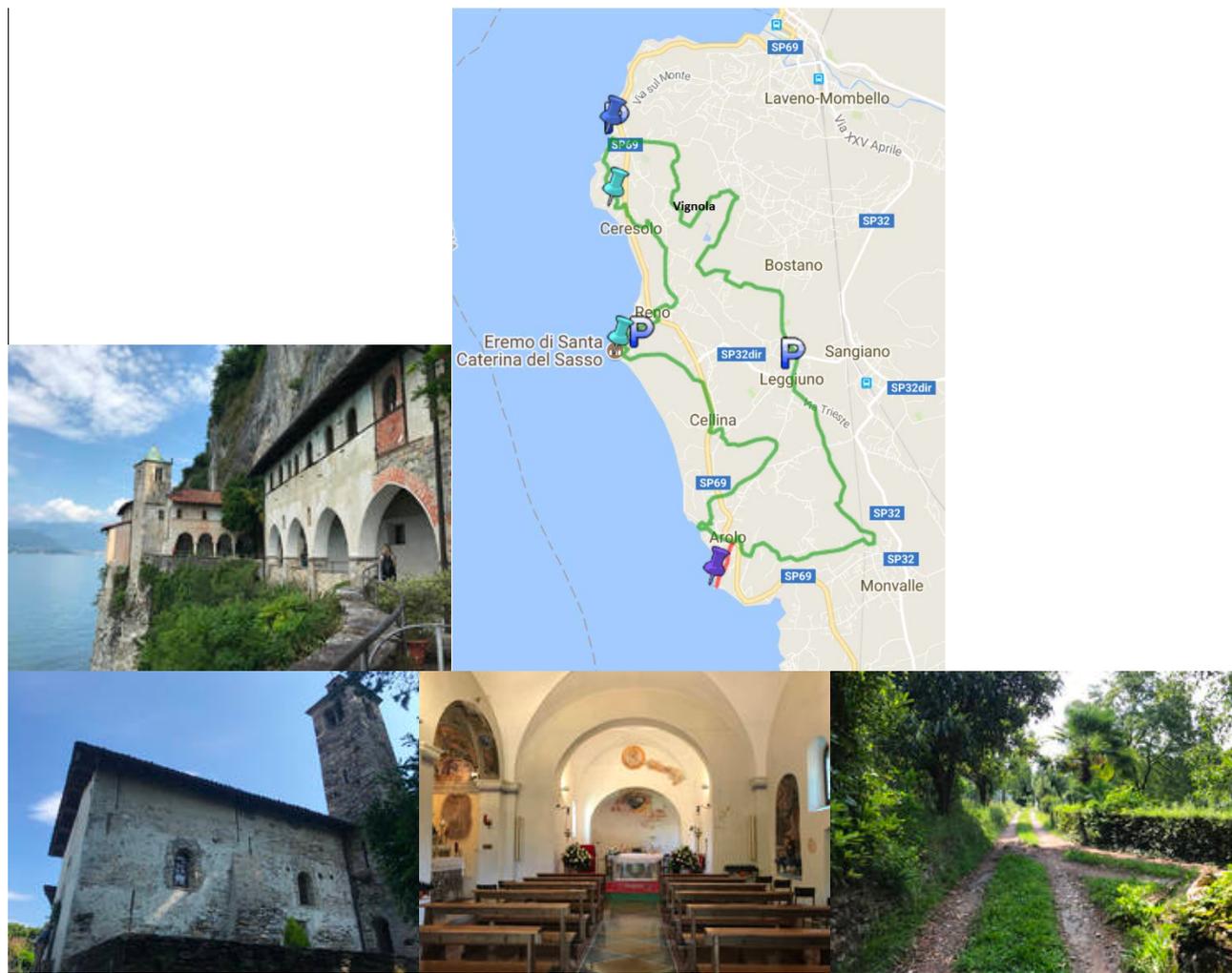
Overlooking Lake Maggiore, in a wonderful panoramic position, on the slopes of Sasso Ballaro, this architectural complex consists of three distinct buildings: the Convent known as "Meridionale" (mid-15th century), with an elegant portico of seven arches that shade three large rooms; the "Conventino" (14th century) also on two floors with a pointed arched portico; the church of S. Caterina, which has an irregular and curious plan, which can be reached through a frescoed portico. The church consists of a main body in the shape of an irregular rectangle, on which three chapels overlook the upper side, while on the other side a small side aisle runs along the cliff over the lake. At the back of the church is a tiny building in the shape of a parallelepiped, the "sacellum" of Santa Caterina d'Alessandria, the original nucleus of the whole complex. Both the two convents and the church are rich in frescoes and oil tables of various ages.

Blessed Alberto de 'Besozzi: considered by tradition the founder of the Hermitage, his stories are told in a manuscript dated 1319 but probably later, edited in various printed copies between the end of 1500 and the beginning of 1600.

Here is the story. The noble and rich merchant Alberto withdrew to a hermit's life in a solitary cave, near the Sasso Ballaro (steep cliff between the shore of Arolo and that of Reno),

by vow made to Santa Caterina d'Alessandria during a shipwreck. On the occasion of a pestilence, perhaps at the end of 1100, the inhabitants resorted to him to implore the cessation of the epidemic: the hermit asked, in exchange for grace, the construction of a chapel dedicated to the saint of which he was so devoted. At his death, Alberto is buried in this small building. Towards the end of 1200 some of the Ispra nobles built a new chapel, S. Maria Nova, in thanksgiving for having been freed from an invasion of wolves. Meanwhile, to assist the many pilgrims who come here in procession, a small monastic community meets, housed in a small convent.

It will be St. Charles Borromeo in his pastoral visits at the end of the sixteenth century to encourage the cult of the founder, now called Blessed Albert.



From Laveno to Cittiglio

Time: 5:15

Climb: 605 m

Downhill: 555 m

Route: Laveno (200) - Chiso- Profarè- Cerro- Torbiera- Roncaccio- Mombello- Gaggio- Capo di Sotto- San Clemente (528) - Cascina Vallone- San Biagio (250)

Access to departure station: Valcuvia, Laveno

Access to the locality of arrival: Valcuvia, Cittiglio, San Biagio

Difficulty: None, even with sneakers. Easy orientation, accessible even without map

Walk along the paths of the Valcuvia Valley, a ring route divided into 13 stages with departure and arrival in Laveno connecting the most interesting resorts of Valcuvia. The colors that identify the path are yellow and green. We decide to go on the last two stages, identified with the letters N and O, starting from Laveno and arriving at Cittiglio, in San Biagio.

We leave a car in San Biagio (Cittiglio) and we move to Laveno where we park near the railway station Nord (Gaggetto). We go from the parking lot of Gaggetto and cross the pedestrian bridge over Boesio. When we reach the asphalt road, we follow the roundabout and climb to the hill of Monte Brianza, finding the first yellow-green signs. We go to Bassani Menotti (retirement home) and head for the Chiso hamlet. Always following the signs, we leave the asphalt road to walk into the woods on a dirt road leading us to the village of Cerro. When we get close to the lake we go up the road to Mombello.

We turn right onto a flat wooded road that reaches the Roncaccio site, where we find the asphalt road. We take a path that runs along the marshy pond and goes to Mombello's streets. Once we reach the Rocca hamlet, we are in the area of the monument of I Caduti (the Fallen), from which you can enjoy a wide view on the Gulf of Laveno. We pass in front of the ancient church of San Michele and descend among the forests in Gaggio. Returning to the road we arrive at Capo di Sotto where, after crossing the provincial road, we begin climbing on a mule track that enters the dirt track that reaches the small hamlet of San Clemente. We are now on an asphalt road, enclosed by a bar that rises along small wooden chapels up to the summit of the mountain that houses the sanctuary of San Michele. We stand on the terrace offering great views of the lake and Valcuvia. Returning to San Clemente we go down a path in the direction of the Caravate quarry. We continue to the Vallone Cascina and return on the road to Piazza San Biagio, where we left the second car and the walk ends.

Travel Times: 1h7 'in Cerro, 2h27' at Mombello, 4h13 'at San Clemente, 5h19' at San Biagio.

Actual travel time 4h47 '.

Length of the trail: 17,4km.



Walk around Mombello

In 1632 Count Vitaliano Borromeo began building the baroque palace: an elegant and sumptuous environment that preserves important works of art such as tapestries, furniture, statues, paintings, stuccos alongside curious places such as mosaic caves.

The enchanting Italian garden, which is decorated on ornate and overlaid terraces, offers from March to October multicolored blooms among the various floral species (roses, orchids, bulb plants, magnolias, orchards, azaleas, gardenias, wisteria).

Mother Island (Isola Madre)

A garden of rare plants and exotic flowers, where peacocks, parrots and pheasants live in full freedom, give this island a tropical charm.

Particularly famous for the flowering of azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias and the ancient wisteria pergolas, the Mother Island houses, alongside Mediterranean plants, also distant plants such as Hibiscus and Ginkgo Biloba.

To admire, in the beautiful sixteenth century palace, the reconstruction of the environments of the time, the collections of lions, dolls, porcelain and the exhibition of puppet theatricals (XVII-XIX sec).

Fishermen's Island (Isola Pescatori)

The belfry with red roofs, the low porches overlooking the lake, the stone doorways of the houses, the alleys and the underpasses, the boats lying on the shore: Fishermen's Island is the most picturesque of the archipelago and the only one habitually inhabited.

Also known as the "Superiore" for the northernmost position compared to the other two "Sister Islands", there are some typical shops and, above all, those renowned restaurants where you can enjoy the famous Perch fish, to which even Mussolini- at the famous Stresa Conference in 1935 - could not resist.

The church of San Vittore preserves the original apse with single-faced windows of the 11th century, the chapels dedicated to the Virgin and the Sacred Heart and, inside, a sixteenth-century fresco depicting Sant'Agata, some seventeenth-century canvases and wooden busts of Apostles Peter and Andrew, patrons of fishermen.

The Isolino di San Giovanni (in local dialect *Isolin de San Gioann*) is an island in the archipelago of the Borromean Islands on Lake Maggiore. It is located in the Borromeo Gulf, opposite Pallanza, a few meters away from the shore.

*The island is known for being the residence, between 1927 and 1952, of the conductor Arturo Toscanini who lived in the seventeenth-century Palazzo Borromeo. The palace and the island are private and not open to visitors. The little island was the theater, at the beginning of the 20th century, of the love story between Vittoria Colonna, princess of Teano and duchess of Sermoneta and Umberto Boccioni, Italian painter and sculptor, exponent of Futurism. The gossipers had attributed to the princess affairs with **King Edward VII** and with **Churchill**. It seems that the latter asked her to intercede with the Italian government for an alliance in favor of the British. It was also whispered that the Aga Khan, to express her esteem, had submerged her in orchids and that Gabriele D'Annunzio did not hide her admiration for the noblewoman.*

How to go: from Laveno: park in Via Gaggero and take the ferry to Intra; Intra: take the boat to the islands or drive to Stresa. Alternatively, take the boat from S. Caterina del Sasso.

www.illagomaggiore.com

www.borromeoturismo.it



Villa Della Porta Bozzolo

In the historic center of Casalzuigno, a ten-minute drive from Laveno, there is the sixteenth-century Villa Della Porta Bozzolo, now owned by the FAI Fondo Ambiente Italiano, Italia Environment Foundation (www.fondoambiente.it/beni/villa-della-porta-bozzolo.asp).

Born as a country villa, it became a noble residence and was enriched in the first half of the eighteenth century by an imposing Italian garden, among the most majestic and harmonious green architecture creations that remain today in Italy.

Thanks to an unusual setting on a main axis parallel to the façade of the villa, the park connects successively, from bottom to top, the long avenue of entrance, the main parterre enriched by flowerbeds, four terraces joined by a large staircase, The "theater" (a green space enclosed by a large fountain), and the avenue of cypresses that crumble into the woods up to the summit of the hill.

On the ground floor of the villa, the vast central lounge, the ancient ballroom, is embellished with a magnificent marble fireplace and trompe-l'oeil frescoes with fake architectures, trabeations, frames, niches, doors. The ceiling of the vault, which, thanks to the optical effect, is transformed into a sky populated with mythological figures and putti that support medallions.

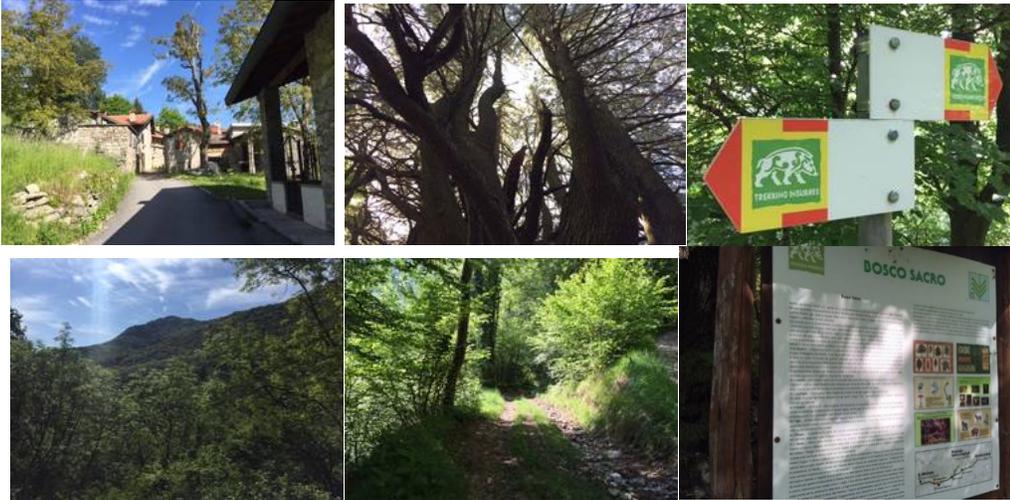
The interior environments retain one of the most important pictorial cycles of the 18th century, probably from the workshop of the artist Magatti from Varese.

The villa's body is flanked by well-preserved rustic houses, including cattlesheds, stables, cellars, granaries and imposing presses.

There are many initiatives proposed by the FAI in the environments of the villa, also open to guided tours for schools.

The walk of the Insubrians: S. Michele, Altar of the Ancestors, the ghost village of Cavojasca

A path leading from the Alpe di San Michele to the center of Mesenzana through altars venerated by the Celts and the ghost village of Cavojasca. It is the brand new "Trekking of the Insubrians".



Trekking of the insubrians is a path that leads after 500 meters of altitude and about four kilometers from the summit - in San Michele, municipality of Porto Valtravaglia - to Mesenzana passing through Brissago Valtravaglia.

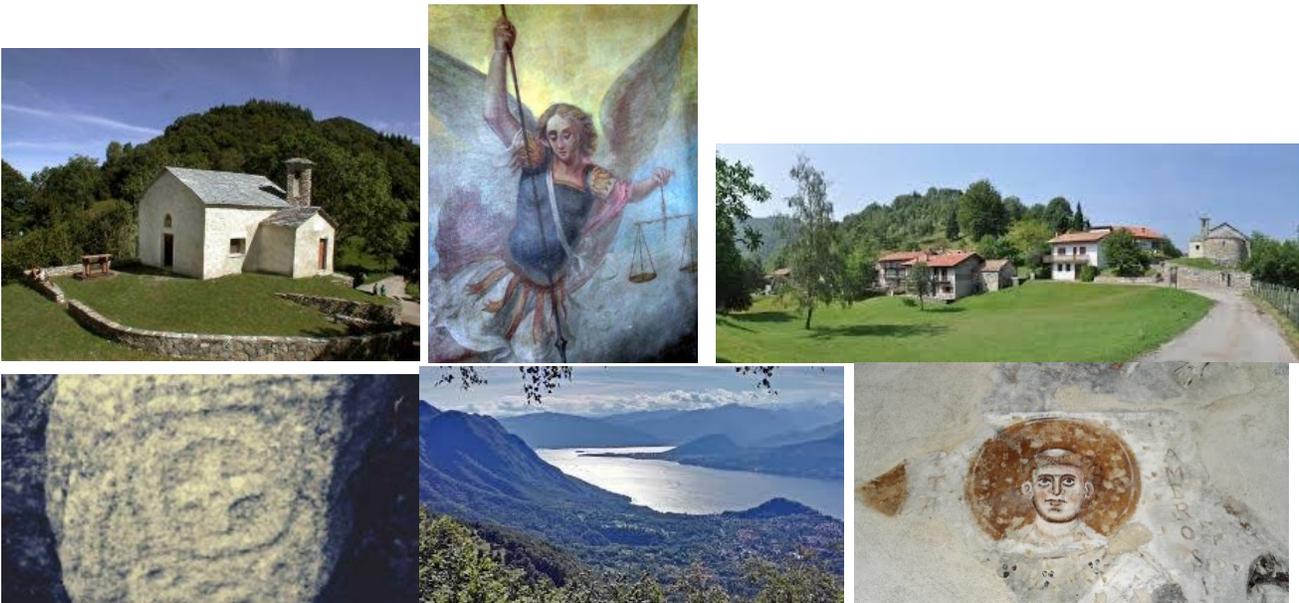
A "new" road discovered unusually. The Mayor of Mensenzana, while looking at the Mesenzana aqueducts, rediscovered a few years ago a marvelous path that, with the help of historians and experts, renamed "trekking of the insubrians": you can leave the car at San Michele, hamlet of Porto Valtravaglia and go downhill. The insubrians were a Celtic tribe inhabiting the Lake Maggiore area, which originated from Gaul (the present France) or southern Germany.

It takes about two and a half hours: it is impossible not to stop, after entering the dirt road to the left of the road leading to St. Antonio, watching the contrast of the watershed with Mount San Martino. Then you go down the wide gorge formed by the waterway between secular fir trees and fresh mouflon tracks: there are so many of them.

Then, clinging to a wall, the altar boulder (Altar of the Ancestors). It was discovered not long ago by explorer Franco Rabbiosi and has just been cleaned by moss. Now it is possible to easily distinguish all rock engravings: from cups to Celtic crosses, from Celtic god with square head Cernunnos to tree-like engravings. It is a visit that gives a great impact, almost a magical encounter: engravings can be taped, admired and fantasized on every sign left on that dark stone. In the summit - but you have to be careful to get there - a demarcation line is drawn in the rock, and letters M and B are written: this is the ancient boundary between Musadino (now Porto Valtravaglia) and Brissago.



*Still an hour of walking, with different fords, overhangs and new forest paths, and here you get to the ghost village of Cavojasca. There are huge ruins: in the heart of the woods a fortified village was built, perhaps with the same stones as the Mesenzana tower: arches still standing, water cisterns, forts to look at the enemy, terraces for cereal cultivation : Mountain behind, and river very close.
From Cavojasca take the municipal road that in a quarter of an hour, downhill, leads to Mesenzana.*



The Alpe di San Michele (S. Michael), between Valcuvia and Val Travaglia, not only offers an unbeatable view of Lake Maggiore, but also a starting point for beautiful walks in the surrounding forests around Monte Colonna.

'San Michele's Alpe is thus called for the presence of the ancient church of the same origin. The trails that wind up from San Michele are different. One of these is the trekking of the insubrians, appropriately reported, leading to the Boulder of the Cross or Altar of the Ancestors, an erratic boulder covered with engravings of probable Celtic origin.

There is a story of the mystery surrounding the area, hypothesizing the possible presence of Irish monks in these places, given both by the type of engravings on the erratic boulder (Celtic Cross or Irish Cross?), And by the presence of some iconography in the nearby Romanesque church, St. Michele, who was one of the first saints of Christianity, revered by the warriors of the Germanic tribe of the Longobards /Lombards. In this Romanesque church, which has also been known for various interventions over the centuries, frescoes from the 1000's have been discovered with "Byzantine" and archaic flavor, one of which depicts a curious S. Ambrogio, callow.

Continuing on the trail you arrive at Brissago Valtravaglia, without first passing through the abandoned village of Cavojasca, also a source of popular legends where the border between reality and myth remains subtle.

Ancient Celtic village of Cavojasca - Mesenzana (VA)

In the territory of Mesenzana (Valcuvia) there are some localities called Cavoì and Cavoiasca, today a destination for pleasant hiking; Formerly they were inhabited by charcoal makers, and in any case their name denotes the existence of an ancient mining activity: even the name of the village of Ferrera (always in Valcuvia) confirms this hypothesis.

The ancient village of Cavoiasca seems to date back to the Celtic period, both for the name ending in "asca" (celtic) and for its relative proximity to the altar boulder at the springs of the river Gesone.

In fact, there are iron ore mines in this area, and the richness of the forests allowed an inexhaustible reserve of wood to feed the blast furnaces of the time. In a document of 1570, there is the existence of "cavalanti" (horse riders) carrying coal to the lake, for distant markets. We do not know why this economic activity was abandoned.

The village was hit by the plague in 1630: a "lazzaretto" was built from huts to accommodate the sick. Remembrance of the plague remains in a fresco in a house that portrays a crossed Christ surrounded by the plague sufferers

The uninhabited village of Cavoiasca has a long history dating from the Celtic-Ligurian period: since it was inhabited since 1,300 BC. In 1500 it was the refuge of Francesco da Cavoiasca, a bandit even excommunicated for his wrongdoings.

There are huge ruins: in the heart of the woods a fortified village was built, perhaps with the same stones as the Mesenzana tower: arches still standing, water tanks, forts to look at the enemy, terraces for cereal cultivation : Mountain behind, and river very close.

This place was inhabited until 1943 and was the scene of the death of its last inhabitant, Paola Cerini, killed after the armistice with the Anglo Americans (after the arrest of Mussolini).

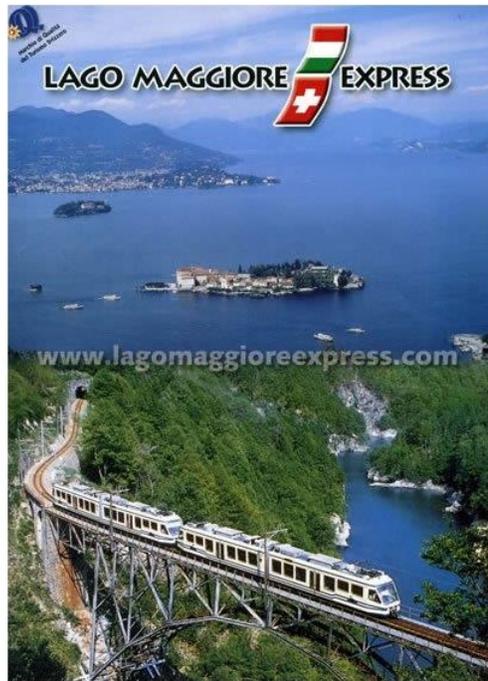
In the hamlet of Cavoiasca, beyond the bridge on the Gesone river, on the day of the Nazi assault (the Nazis attacked the partisans on Monte San Martino), a woman, Paola Cerini, that did not know what was happening, lit a fire to burn as usual chestnut curls. From Brissago Valtravaglia, presided by the Nazis, machine gun strikes hit her severely. Paola awaits her daughter, a little girl, to seek help from the Roncaccio of Brissago from where

the peasants saw her, heard the desperate screams and welcomed the little girl, but no one was able to bring relief. That woman of Mesenzana died bleeding.



The little train of The Centovalli and Viguzzo valley: boat and train, between Lake Maggiore, Switzerland and Piedmont

The wonders of Verbano, the narrow-gauge railway of the Val Viguzzo: that's why you can go without a car for a wonderful circular path





A panoramic route that gives great emotions, combining a boat trip to a train ride. It is the fascinating "Treno più" barca "itinerary that combines sailing in the waters of Lake Maggiore up to the Swiss town of Locarno and then continue by train with the characteristic narrow-gauge train of the Centovalli railway and Vigevano valley, Immersed in nature and in an unspoiled landscape, until you reach Domodossola; From here you will be in the starting point on board the "Trenitalia" trains. A succession of lovely panoramas that change color as the spring is replaced by the summer and autumn.

*The route can start from each of the main resorts on the shores of Lake Maggiore: Arona, Stresa, Baveno, Pallanza, **Laveno** ... and can be done clockwise or counterclockwise using the railway service on the first part of the voyage and the water navigation of the lake in the afternoon at the sunset. Itinerary suggested, for the availability of a large public car park near the starting point, is the tour from Arona (in Laveno parking in Via Gaggero) to Locarno on board one of the motorboats of the Lakes Navigation, with which you can have lunch on board with an unusual view of the lake. The panorama offers suggestive views immersed in nature. You sail at a gentle rhythm admiring the Rocca d'Angera and the famous Sanctuary of Santa Caterina del Sasso overhanging the water, then reaching the lake center and admiring the "pearls of the lake", the Borromean islands: beautiful islets, rich of gardens where plants and flowers of each species are cultivated and characteristic villages where once fishermen families lived. Continuing northward, pass the elegant towns of Verbania and Laveno, respectively on the Piedmont and Lombard shores, and connected by the frequent ferry service of the Lakes Navigation with car and vehicle transportation, and still Porto Valtravaglia, Luino and just close the remains of the Castles Of Cannero Riviera.*

Then head towards Maccagno and Cannobio before reaching the Swiss territory where you can admire the Brissago Islands, renowned for the Botanical Park, and Ascona, until reaching Locarno. You land and visit the town and then change the transport and views: aboard the train you will cross impressive landscapes, a rich and varied nature, sunny slopes, imposing viaducts, woods and streams. The route begins climbing with steep slopes, passing through the villages of Intragna and Re, then reaching 830 meters above sea level in Santa Maria Maggiore, a characteristic mountain village where you can take a break. From here the train begins its descent down to Domodossola, from where you come to the starting point through the Trenitalia convoys.

INFORMATION

The proposed itinerary is made until October every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and holidays.

All info: www.lagomaggioreexpress.it.

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The Italian village that reminds of Scotland

In the small village of Gurro (300 inhabitants) immersed in the Italian mountains of the Canobbina Valley, the suggestions of Scotland appear everywhere you look. The window supports are modeled like the Scottish flag. About 40 women wear kilt nowadays, but it is not used among men. The local dialect includes hundreds of words believed to be of Gaelic origin, which people from neighboring villages can not understand. According to a local legend, the inhabitants of the village descended from Scottish mercenary soldiers who passed by there in 1525: after the battle of Pavia the Scottish soldiers tried to cross the Alps, but stopped on the green mountains that reminded Scotland. Even some of their surnames, including Gibi, Patriti and Donaldi, are only Italianized forms of Gibbs, Fitzpatrick and MacDonald.

The Winds of Lake Maggiore

Introduction

It is not easy to talk about the winds of Lake Maggiore; many and changing, they vary in direction and name depending on where you are and the "language" used: in Piedmontese, for example, our Lombard "Marengo" (or Marengo, wind from East-South-East) changes sex becoming the "Marenca"!

But let's proceed with order.

The classic regime of our lake (breeze regime) is formed by the two main winds, "Tramontana" (from the North the morning or / and the night) and "Inverna" (from the South the afternoon)

Is there always Tramontana in the morning and Inverna in the afternoon? Unfortunately not! This situation occurs only in the absence of perturbations (depressive areas), ie in optimal climatic conditions (high pressure). It often happens to have only one of the two winds, not to have one, or to have different winds caused by low pressures arriving or departing from our area or, in summer, storm winds (on the latter, very intense but short, we will not dwell).

Obviously the orographic conformation of our area has a decisive influence in defining the direction and intensity of the air displacements. Each zone can thus have small changes of direction for the same wind.



(photo above: "piles of good weather" behind Intra, announce the arrival of the winter)

Pressure (gradient) winds

These are the winds created by the presence (or the arrival) of a "cyclonic" (depressionary) area. They are generally of strong intensity. This is how the "Invernone" or "Inverna Novarina" is of greater intensity than the normal winter (up to 2/3 times) and comes slightly inclined from the South-West. The "Marengo", mentioned at the beginning, comes from Valcuvia and blows very strongly from the Gulf of Laveno towards Intra (where it raises a remarkable wave) at a speed that can reach over 50 knots (about 90 kilometers per hour)); it lasts a few hours to half a day and is quite rare. The "Mergozzo" (or Margoezz) that, coming from the Simplon, is channeled in the Val d'Ossola, rises above the lake of Mergozzo (from which it takes its name) falls from above on the part of the lake in front of the Isola Madre and it breaks against Cerro with "almost marine" waves. The Mergozzo is considered one of the most fearsome winds of Lake Maggiore because of its intensity (up to 100 km per hour) and, above all, its unpredictability: since the first signs appear on the horizon (the Gulf of Baveno), when it arrives on the Lombard side of the lake, it may take a few tens of seconds (sometimes less)! The Mergozzo does not "mount" progressively, it arrives suddenly already at its maximum intensity. Fortunately it lasts a little: from a few hours to, more often, a few tens of minutes. It ranges from the tip of San Michele, on the right side of the Gulf of Laveno, up to Arolo and offers truce only outside its area or inside the small

bay of Polidora protected by the tip of Ceresolo. You can have Mergozzo also towards Lisanza, Ispra and Luino, ... but it is not the "original" one! (photo below: Mergozzo in Cerro)



The "Mergozzino" is a mild Mergozzo (from 8 to 15 knots) that can last a whole day and that has the characteristic of rhythmically going and coming, varying its intensity every time. Sometimes it turns into Mergozzo, other times it lasts long without altering. The "Monscendrino" ("Muscendrino") appears in the high lake and takes its name from Monte Ceneri. It comes from the Valle Leventina that sends it to Lake Maggiore very rarely, sometimes even once in a year. It is particularly terrible in the upper basin, between Locarno and Maccagno, or in the narrow of Cannobio. It arrives almost tamed in the middle of the lake, but pushes forward sea waves that reach the turn of Angera. The inlets of Laveno, Intra, the Borromean Islands, Cerro and Monvalle are almost immune to it because it is a central wind that runs along the axis of the lake. The "Maggiore" is the prince wind of our lake (from which it takes its name). It blows from the North East, along the axis of the Lake, with strength and power and creating a remarkable wave. It can last up to three days, especially in winter, and is the wind most loved by sailors. Usually it is a good weather bearer and can be of favonic origin (ie warm). It can happen, during the cold winter months, to have one or two days with the thermometer on 20/24 degrees: it is thanks to Favonio (or foehn)! The "Valmaggino" is a strong and gusty storm that blows from the Valmaggia towards the center of the lake. Sometimes it can be confused with the "Maggiore".

Montive and Bozzasche (the lesser winds)

<The "Montive", which blow from the ground in the summer nights, are the normal heat discharge of the earth overheated by the sun: they blow silently from every small valley and attack the surface of the lake a few hundred meters from the ground, almost without raising the wave and with a very limited incidence, so that they never reach more than a kilometer from the banks. The night sailors know that in the absence of the "Inverna" they are waiting at the right distance from the ground to return to the ports, and the fishermen who breathe the scent at night while spreading their nets.

The "bozzasche", no wider than a beautiful little lawn, curls the waters near the drafts or flat inlets like that of Monvalle or Germignaga. They are real breezes, precious in the days of flat calm, but almost useless for the sailor who deludes it a few minutes and immediately sees the collapsed sail fall again as soon as the very short circle passes through it. (1)

Many Montive and bozzasche have a proper name usually due to their origin. Among the Bozzasche I am reminded of the "Quassetta" that turns sideways towards Ispra, while regarding the Montive the "Cannobino", the "Ceresolo" (Cereseu), the "Mercuraghina", the "Cavandonera" (from Suna towards Baveno), the "Ernina" and the "Intragnola", which blows from Intra to Cerro (in the summer evening hours with good intensity), almost reaching it. For decades it has had the characteristic chocolate scent due to the presence of

the Nestlé factory in Verbania (now closed), of which it carried around the smells. As a child I liked to go out on a sailing boat, on summer evenings and "sniff" a bit of Intragnola!

The "breeze regime" of the lake

In our lake the "breeze regime" is formed by two dominant winds: the Tramontana which comes from the north at night or in the morning

The Inverna that comes in the opposite direction normally in the afternoon (from one - one and thirty until evening in the summer).

These winds are nothing more than the "local" version of the so-called mountain and valley breezes, which are formed, in the unperturbed days, thanks to the different degree of heating of the lake water (downstream) and the surrounding mountains that are more to the north.

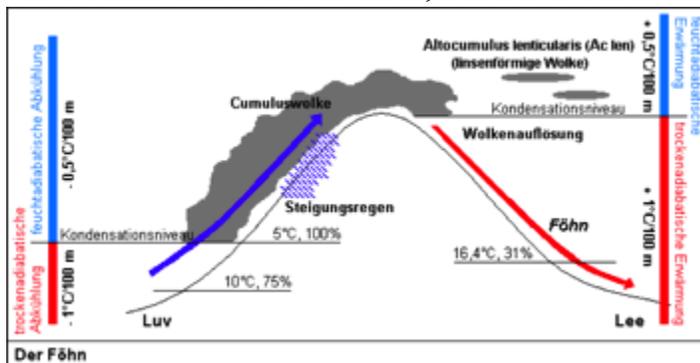
At night and early in the morning the water, which is warmer (have you ever tried to bathe at night?), heats the surrounding air, which rises upwards (because less dense) and is replaced by the coldest air that is on the hills (have you ever noticed that the Tramontana is a cool wind?). Towards mid-morning the wind from the north falls and, after a brief calm of wind, appears the Inverna, coming from the South, which with the characteristic short wave, rises from the lower lake towards Reno, Laveno, Caldè up to Luino (l'Inverna of the "Canalone" instead originated after the Castelli di Cannero). This is due to the fact that the Sun, beating on the sides of the mountains, arrives, towards noon, to heat them more than the water below (in the summer it is nice to have a bath in the afternoon to cool off); this causes the ascent of the air around them to be replaced by the colder one that rises above the water.

Typical of the arrival of the winter are the "heaps of good weather" (those isolated white clouds that look like cotton balls) that appear above the top of the mountains, to indicate the creation of the updrafts (thermal). The air, rising, finds lower and lower temperatures, (at the same conditions the temperature drops on average about 6 degrees every 1000 meters in height) and this causes condensation of the moisture it contains, creating the cloud.

The "Föhn" (Favonio)

The Föhn or Favonio is a characteristic wind of the North-Western Alps caused by a strong inflow of humid air from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. It is mostly located on Lake Maggiore, Lake Lugano and North Lake Como.

Its main characteristic, besides its strong intensity, is that, although it comes from the North-East it is a warm wind, even when it comes during the winter.



The humid air coming from the North Sea, driven by the strong wind, rises along the northern slope of the Alps, cooling (humid adiabatic: 0.5 ° C every 100 meters) and, condensing, causes heavy rain (STAU condition).

When the air has passed the mountains, it loses its humidity and can then descend, on the leeward (southern) side of the Alps, heating itself following the curve of dry adiabatic (1 ° C every 100 meters). The condition of Föhn is here.

Since the height of the Alpine arch is on average 3,000 meters, the air buys around 15 ° C in its path through the mountains (0.5 ° C every 100 meters: the difference between the wet and dry adiabatic).

The Favonio therefore, despite its northern origin, is a very strong wind, dry and warm (attention to the fires on the coast!).

What speed can the Favonio reach?

In the most intense moments (in the northern part of the lake or off the peak of S. Giovanni a Pallanza where the wind coming from the "Monte Ceneri" joins with what comes from the "Passo del Sempione") can also touch the 55/60 knots (110 Km / h).

What are the winds of the lake?

Usually the "Maggiore" and the Monscendrino, sometimes the Valmaggino. (Much more rarely) the Mergozzo, when the wind coming from Northern Europe is channeled through the Simplon pass and the Val d'Ossola, (but the vast majority of times the Mergozzo has a thunderstorm genesis).

The "tromba d'aria"

Lately, more intense temporal phenomena have become more frequent, similar to real "tornadoes".

They usually take place in the August-September period (or more rarely in May) following a long period of intense heat. (photo below: trumpet outcomes in Luino)



The most affected places are Lisanza (Arona), Monvalle (from Belgirate), the bank from Cerro to Caldè (coming from the area that goes from Mottarone to Ghiffa) and Luino (from Cannero).

The result is fallen trees, houses without roofs and overturned boats (both in water and on land).

They last about twenty minutes at most, from arrival to when they leave. The warning is a strong darkening of the sky, down to low altitudes, which makes it look like a layer of ink.

(1) Paragraphs in quotation marks (<>) are taken from Piero Chiara's article "The Great Bridge and the Winds of Lake Maggiore" appeared on "La Prealpina" on July 21, 1961.

(2) The rest was drawn and expanded by an article entitled "The Lake and the Wind" written by me for "Informa Sport" on May 13, 1999.