



Easy trail along the mountain side, east from Como. From Torno it is possible to get back to Como by boat all year round.

**ITINERARY:** Brunate - Monte Piatto - Torno

**WALKING TIME:** 2hrs 30min

**ASCENT:** almost none **DESCENT:** 400m

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy. The path is mainly flat. The last section is a stepped mule track downhill, but the first section of the path is rather rugged. Not recommended in bad weather.

**TRAIL SIGNS:** Signs to "Montepiatto" all along the trail

**CONNECTIONS:** To Brunate Funicular from Como, Piazza De Gasperi every 30 minutes  
From Torno to Como boats and buses no. C30/31/32

**ROUTE:** From the lakeside road Lungo Lario Trieste in Como you can reach **Brunate** by funicular. The tram-like vehicle shuffles between the lake and the mountain village in 8 minutes. At the top station walk down the steps to turn right along via Roma. Here you can see lots of charming buildings dating back to the early 20th century, the golden era for Brunate's tourism, like Villa Pirotta (Federico Frigerio, 1902) or the fountain called "Tre Fontane" with a Campari advertising bas-relief of the 30es. Turn left to follow via Nidrino, and pass by the Chalet Sonzogno (1902). Do not follow via Monte Rosa but instead walk down to the sportscentre. At the end of the football pitch follow the track on the right marked as "Strada Regia." The trail slowly works its way down to the **Monti di Blevio**. Ignore the "Strada Regia" which leads to Capovico but continue straight along the flat path until you reach **Monti di Sorto**. The little plateau up the steps is a pleasant spot to take a rest, with a fountain, a chapel and a nice panoramic view.

Continue along the flat path which skirts a meadow and crosses a little valley and leads you to a group of houses. The trail crosses another little creek to reach the houses of **Monti di**

**Cazzanore**, it turns slightly right and leads to the only fork of the walk: turn right and follow the path uphill as it skips some abandoned buildings and swings into a little valley where you can spot the first houses of **Monte Piatto** ahead of you. When you reach the mule track coming up from Torno, turn right to walk up the steps to reach the centre of the hamlet.

Here you can stop to re-fuel at the typical restaurant Crotto,



*Funicular Como-Brunate*

enjoy the view from the church Santa Elisabetta, or follow the arrows to the **"Pietra Pendula"**, a huge boulder suspended on the apex of a limestone rock. (10 min. – signs)

Those who wish to walk a little bit longer can follow the cart road from Monte Piatto to **Piazzaga** (15min), another nice hamlet with crotto and chapel, and walk down to Torno along a good mule track.

From Monte Piatto you can reach

**Torno** either following the cart-road or a stepped mule track (approx. equal length, 1hr downhill).

The bus stop back to Como is along the main road via Roma, while the boats leave regularly from the beautiful harbor-square, piazza Casartelli.



*Torno*



# The old connection roads between Moltrasio and Laglio



Easy walk along old footpaths and stairways of the western side of the lake from the boat dock in Moltrasio to Laglio.

**ITINERARY:** Moltrasio - Carate Urio - Laglio

**WALKING TIME ONE WAY:** 1hr 30min

**ASCENT:** 120 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy

**TRAIL SIGNS:** Absent

**CONNECTIONS:** - by boat: from Como to Moltrasio every 30 min

- by bus: bus C 10 or C 20, "via lago" bus stop Moltrasio Pontile

Return from Laglio bus C10/20

**ROUTE:** from the boat pier at **Moltrasio** turn left along the main road and pass by the monument to Vincenzo Bellini, the Sicilian composer who lived here for a long time.

Turn right up via Raschi to reach the centre of the village. This stairway is known as "the Scala Sancta" because it was used for holy processions and maybe also because it seems so long and steep. But it is not that tiring if you go up slowly and take your time to enjoy the views it gives of the village below and, on the other side of the lake, Torno, the manneristic villa Pliniana and the mountains Boletto and Bolettone. At the parish church follow via Curiè, piazza Umberto I and via Bianchi along the right bank of the stream and head up the valley by passing under the viaduct of the main road.

As you reach Villa Memy bear right to reach **Tosnacco**, the highest suburb of Moltrasio (312 m). Cross the asphalted road and continue uphill following the way marks of the mountain trails. At a junction near the fountains, continue straight on via Marconi until you reach a T-junction with a stairway. Go down a few steps and turn left to follow via Linera, marked as "Panoramica per Urio e Carate." The route is now very easy and plain with several lake vistas. The footpath leads to the rural house Pancino and along via Corridoni to the graveyard of Urio and the bridge over the stream Fesnàa. Continue straight on until you reach the suburb **Cavadino**.

**DIVERSION (40 min):** if you follow via Taroni on your left you can reach the **Santuario della SS. Trinità**, a little church surrounded by meadows and woods. Its natural parvis with benches is a great little place to rest and enjoy the view.

At Cavadino down along via Cavadino and via IV Novembre which lead you to the complex of Santa Marta, with a church



*The diversion to the Sanctuary of the S. Trinità*

dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> cent., a plague memorial column of the 17<sup>th</sup> cent. and an old graveyard with Neo-Gothic tombs.

Walk down along the stepped via Santa Marta which passes under the main road and is lined with the 18<sup>th</sup> century aedicules of the Stations of the Cross. When a surfaced road is reached (attention children!) take via S. Rocco on the opposite side of the road to reach the crossroads of alleys of the hamlet **Carate**.

Follow the narrow via Vittorio Veneto and via

Olzavino keeping parallel with the lake, cross a little panoramic square and continue straight on until the road reaches another stairway which you follow for a few steps down. At a fork you turn left and continue along a flat footpath 30 m above the lake among higher and lower fences, plantations and villas of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, via Piave takes you for a few steps uphill and then goes straight to **Laglio** and affords views of the village of Pognana Lario on the opposite side of the lake. After a few meters downhill along via Val Crotto, turn left along via delle Frazioni and follow the pavement and then the stairway which reaches the lake over little bridges and through porticoed passageways. Along the lake you can find many nice places to rest, like piazza Riva Silvio and piazza Barchetta, near the frescoed parish church and the Oratorio dei Confratelli.



*The church of S. Marta at Carate*

## WAY BACK TO MOLTRASIO

You can walk back to Moltrasio along the same route or take the bus no. C10 / C20 from piazza Riva Silvio direction Como. You can also walk along the road Regina Vecchia which is not very busy but be careful because the road is narrow and there is no pavement nor walking lane. Walking back towards Como, you pass the wharf of **Laglio**, a nice viewpoint on the lake and Villa Oleandra, which belongs to a famous American actor. The boat pier of **Carate** (some boats to Como, journey duration 40 min) is a 40 min. walk from Laglio. The dock of **Moltrasio** can be reached in 1 hr from Laglio.







This route takes you along the ridge of the hill northwest of Como in the park Parco Spina Verde. It is an easy walk which affords many panoramic points and refreshment possibilities in restaurants and picnic areas.

**ITINERARY:** Como, piazza Camerlata - San Fermo della Battaglia

**WALKING TIME:** 2hrs

**ASCENT:** 250 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy

**TRAIL SIGNS:** Signs "Dorsale della Spina Verde". Where not present, follow the main trail

**CONNECTIONS:** From Como city centre to piazza Camerlata bus no. 1 direction S. Fermo every 20 minutes. Urban ticket.

From San Fermo to Como city centre bus no. 1 direction P. Chiasso. Zone 1 ticket needed.

**ROUTE:** Head up the hill following via Santa Brigida e Respaù behind the bus stop in **piazza Camerlata**, waymarked as "Parco Spina Verde." Follow the cobbled road uphill as it winds into the woods and leads to a junction near a meadow with a war memorial. Our route continues on straight but we recommend bearing right to reach Castel Baradello (15 min.), a medieval defensive tower. The **Baradello hill** was a strategic defensive site and now it affords beautiful views of the town. You can visit the rest of the medieval defensive works and in summertime follow a guided tour of the tower on Sat. and Sun. The restaurant Baita Club Amici del Baradello, open upon reservation, and a picnic area with shadowy benches, offer the first refreshment site.

Head back to the war memorial and follow the cobbled road "Salita degli Alpini" which skirts the property of the Hostel **Respaù** (393m), a nice rural house on a sunny hillock with an educational botanic route, rooms and restaurant open on weekends in summertime (in winter it opens on reservation).

Walk past the entrance of the hostel and aim for the path up the hill which leads to a plateau where you can find the waymarks for San Fermo, which you follow turning left. Follow the fence of Cascina Respaù di Sopra (445m), ignore the path to Baita Elisa (unless you want to eat there: restaurant open on the weekends, nice panoramic terraces) and at the following junction follow the signs to **Croce Sant'Eutichio**. Walk along the path uphill to reach



*Cross of Sant'Eutichio*



*Viewpoint along the ridge*

an aerial tower, then follow the line of some properties on your left. When the fences end, take the first trail right winding up and downhill to Croce Sant'Eutichio (1 hr from p. Camerlata). From here you have a wonderful view over the city of Como, the first part of the lake and the mountain of Brunate.

A few steps from this cross there is the restaurant Baita Monte Croce, open on the weekends, with a playground for children and a wide meadow.

The route continues along the mountain ridge towards **San Fermo** and leads to another panoramic point over the city and the lake. Continue downhill by following the largest trail and down a flight of cement steps to reach the first houses of San Fermo della Battaglia. Bear right through the meadow and follow via Monte Croce, then left along via Raimondi (attention children: surfaced roads!) and at the stop-sign turn right to reach the bus terminus beyond the pharmacy.



Easy walks at the bottom of the peaks Corni di Canzo along a geological trail and the Trail of the Wood Fairy. From Terz'Alpe it is also possible to take longer excursions to the mountains around.

**ITINERARY:** Gajum - Terz'Alpe - Gajum

**WALKING TIME:** 2hrs

**ASCENT:** 250 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy

**TRAIL SIGNS:** no. 2 for the Geological Trail

**CONNECTIONS:** Canzo is situated along the road Erba-Bellagio. If arriving by car reach the railway station Canzo-Asso in piazza Verza and follow the signs to Gajum (parking).

Public transport: Lenord trains line Milano-Erba-Asso or bus no. C49 from Como to Asso. From the station in Asso to Gajum 30 min walk.

**ROUTE:** From the car park **Gajum** follow the path skirting the stream in the valley bottom and marked as "Sentiero Geologico." The educational panels installed along the trail explain the geological characteristics of the area: rocks of marine origin, erratic blocks and natural pools created in the boulders by the water. When the dirt road you are on comes to a junction we recommend to turn right and follow the track uphill to reach the little church of **San Miro**. The church was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> cent. and dedicated to Saint Miro Paredi, a hermit who lived here in the 13<sup>th</sup> cent., highly honored by the locals. Many miracles of water were ascribed to him, for example the spring gushing from the rock on the little square off the church (20 min for the diversion).

Walk back down to the junction, cross the little wooden bridge and follow the trail as it swings up the valley in the woods. The easy trail crosses the stream many times over little bridges and eventually climbs and leads to **Terz'Alpe**, a typical rural building of the 50s, when farmers used to live on the moraine terraces of these mountains. Terz'Alpe now houses an agriturismo with livestock, farming, restaurant and sleeping facilities. Those wishing to take longer excursions in the mountains can follow the waymarks to:



*Church of S. Miro*

- Monte Cornizzolo (ascent 500m – 1hr 30min)
- Corni (ascent 580m – 1hr 30min). Access to the peaks should only be attempted by experts and when the ground is not muddy nor icy
- Monte Prasanto (ascent 503m – 1hr 45min)

*A spirit of the woods*



The route back commences 20m off the agriturismo and it is called the **“Trail of the Wood Fairy”** because a clever sculptor, Alessandro Cortinovis, scattered it with carved gnomes, elves, animals and other installations. Winding gently downhill the trail leads to another rural building, Prim’Alpe, in 40 min, but take your time to discover and admire the wood fairies hiding along the path.

**Prim’Alpe** is managed by Legambiente (Italian League for the Environment) and affords a little natural museum, meadows and a fountain with a nice stone basin. Head down the hill following the cobbled road to reach the parking at **Gajum** (20 min).







This walk, which starts with the breathtaking cable car ride from Argegno to Pigra (860m), follows ancient cobblestone tracks with a beautiful view of the lake down to Colonno.

**ITINERARY:** Argegno - Pigra - Corniga - Colonno

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 2hrs

**ASCENT:** 90 m **DESCENT:** 660 m

**DIFFICULTY:** From Corniga to Colonno the track leads very steeply down hill

**TRAIL SIGNS:** some signs

**CONNECTIONS:** Argegno can be reached by bus line C10, by boat or hydrofoil

Cable car from Argegno to Pigra: ask for the time table tel. 031 821344

Colonno is connected with bus line C10

**ROUTE:** From the boat dock at **Argegno**, walk to the cable car station which is at the northern end of the town where there is also a bus stop (bus stop Funivia). In just four minutes the cable car will take you from 200 m to 860 m. The view of the lake and the mountains is breathtaking. From the cable car station at **Pigra** you go straight on as far as the roundabout and from there continue straight on till you reach the post office (PT). From here take the street leading uphill to a wash house. Turn right and walk along via Sociale to the end of the town. Here stands a big building with the writing "Antica Societa Operaia" where you pick up the track with the sign for Lomia / Corniga. You pass a little chapel dedicated to the Madonna del Soccorso and from here the track leads down in wide bends into the "Valle delle Camogge." Having passed some streams, you reach the farmhouse Lomia (800 m). The track reaches the stream of the Val Camogge and you cross it over a bridge. The trail then continues steeply uphill to **Serta** (830 m), where there are a few houses. From here a comfortable track leads to the big settlement **Corniga** (760 m) at 0.50 hrs. from Pigra. The little church dedicated to St. Anna is of 1631. Behind the church there is a "nevera," a cylindrical formed construction. These stone constructions, which lead deep into the ground, were filled with snow (neve) and used in the summer to conserve food. From the church continue downhill to the right and follow the track, at some points very steep, which connects Corniga with the town Colonno. After you have passed the settlement **Cambianico**, you enjoy a beautiful view of the "Dosso di Lavedo," the Island Comacina, and of Monte San Primo (1600 m) on the opposite shore. At the end of the track, when you reach the paved road continue left and after 200 m,



View of Isola Comacina (© J. Bents)

take the flight of steps to the left which lead down to the centre of **Colonno**. At the end of the steps, from the small piazza continue straight on till you reach the bridge over the stream Pessetta. Here you find yourself on a part of the ancient Roman road called "L'Antica Strada Regina." This ancient route, used till the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, used to be one of the important connection routes between Como and the countries situated north of the Alps. At Colonno the "Greenway" starts, a most pleasant walk of about 3h30 that follows parts of this historic road through the towns of Sala Comacina, Ossuccio, Lenno, Mezzegra, Tremezzo, and Griante. At Colonno a Greek colony was established by the Romans. They founded in addition to Colonno the towns of Lezzeno, Lenno, Nesso and Griante, and introduced olive groves and vineyards. The typical small cobblestone streets of Colonno with narrow passages and alleys which lead down to the lake are typical of a medieval town.



*Cable car Argegno - Pigra*





The Greenway" is a leisurely and pleasant walk of about 10 km that leads from Colonno to Cadenabbia following traces of the "Antica Strada Regina", an antique connection road.

**ITINERARY:** Colonno, Sala Comacina, Ossuccio, Lenno, Mezzegra, Tremezzo, Griante

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 3hrs 30min

**ASCENT:** 100 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy

**TRAIL SIGNS:** Green metal signs on the pavement and road signs

**CONNECTIONS:** to Colonno by bus - C10, from Griante: by bus - C10 or ferry

**ROUTE:** The Green Way starts at the south end of the town **Colonno** where there is a bus stop. Follow the signs indicating La Greenway del Lago and ascend the road named via Cappella. Then continue along via Civetta that leads to the historic centre of the town. You pass the street that leads down to the main square of Colonno (a worth while deviation of 200 m) and then cross the bridge over the Pessetta stream. Here you find yourself on a part of the ancient Roman road called "L'Antica Strada Regina". This ancient road used to be an important connection between Como and the countries situated north of the Alps. After a pleasant walk of about 30 min. you reach **Sala Comacina** where near the cemetery the chapel S. Rocco stands (from the chapel there are steps that lead down to the medieval centre of the town, approx. 300 meters). The Greenway continues along the Antica Strada Regina, up near the parking on the left, offering a wonderful view of the lake and of the Island Comacina. Past the bridge on the Premonte valley, you will enter the town **Ossuccio**. The cobble stone path reaches the main road at Spurano. Cross it in order to reach the church of S. Giacomo that dates back astride the X or XII century. Then recross the main road and follow the street up in the direction of the Madonna del Soccorso Sanctuary. At the crossroads with via Castelli take the road to the right which crosses through the town with a lovely view of the Santa Maria Maddalena bell tower. At the roundabout you descend towards the locality Isola and pass the church SS. Eufemia and Vincenzo. Cross the main road and walk past the beautiful villa Balbiano; after crossing the bridge on the Perlana stream you enter the picturesque historical centre of **Campo di Lenno**. At the exit of Campo follows a brief unattractive stretch but then it continues along Dosso di Lavedo on the right and a small campsite on the left. Just past the Hotel Lavedo you have the possibility of deviating towards villa Balbianello (1 km – open from mid March till mid November - attention! the walk way is only open on Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday) or continuing along the Greenway to the lido of Lenno. Continue along the lake side front of Lenno with its lovely villas and the piazza with the Santo Stefano church and the Romanesque baptistry of San Giovanni to the boat dock. You cross the bridge over the Pola stream and pass in front of the S. Giorgio hotel. A small alley way leads to the main road that you cross. It continues uphill for about ten minutes in order to reach **Mezzegra** and via Pola where you turn right. At the next



View of Colonno (© J. Bents)

crossroad turn left into via Pola Vecchia” .

You come out in via Brentano that you follow to the right, past the oratory of San Giuseppe, to the church of S. Abbondio. From the churchyard you have a splendid view of the lake. From the church you continue slightly downhill in order to arrive at Palazzo Brentano. This palace of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was built by the influent local Brentano family, who made their fortune as merchants mainly in Holland and Germany. They left their native towns, like other local families, as merchants of local products like lemons, chesnuts and olive oil , and achieved to occupy important posts in the European commerce. In all the towns of the north of Europe where the East Indian Trade Company brought the first spices, there was a member of these local families like the Brentano, Mainoni, Pini and Carli. With time some of these merchants became so rich that it enabled them to built beautiful palaces in their native towns. You cross through the antique urban centre of **Bozzanigo** and near Palazzo Rosati of the 17<sup>th</sup> century you end up on the road. From here descend towards the lake and then turn left in via delle Gere. Cross the bridge over the Bolvedro stream, and continue the descent towards the lake until you reach the main lake side road. The final stretch of the Greenway runs along its safe side walk; you pass the beautiful villa La Quiete with its Italian-style front garden and a beautiful wrought iron gate and then enter Parco Olivelli with its elegant fountain. Once out of the park it continues along the lake under the arche of La Darsena hotel to the **Tremezzo** boat dock. Just past the Bazzoni hotel, we suggest crossing the road in order to walk along the antique arcades with shops and restaurants. Recross the main road and pass the Grand Hotel Tremezzo built in 1910, one of the finest lake side hotels. You walk along the entrance of the Villa Carlotta built in 1690 with its beautiful park and museum and then enter the commune of **Griante**; opposite the English Church, consecrated in 1891, you will find the **Cadenabbia** ferry dock and the bus stop.







The church of San Martino is located at an altitude of 475 m on the steep slopes of Sasso S. Martino above Griante. An easy path leads to the church from where you have one of the most beautiful views of the central lake area.

**ITINERARY:** Cadenabbia - Griante - San Martino

**WALKING TIME ONE WAY:** 1hr 15min

**ASCENT:** 275 m

**TRAIL SIGNS:** some signs indicating San Martino

**DIFFICULTY:** ascending trail but without technical difficulties

**CONNECTIONS:** to and from Cadenabbia with bus line C10, by ferry or boat

**ROUTE:** This walk starts from the ferry boat dock at **Cadenabbia** in front of the English Church. Since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Griante has been one of British tourists' favorite holiday resorts. In fact many settled here and founded a community so important that an Anglican Church was built, consecrated in 1891, the first in Italy. Cross the main road and pick up the little street on the right side of the Hotel Britannia and continue along the flight of steps (via Mazzini) which lead to the paved road near the town hall. Continue along via Franzani that ends in via Tommaso Grossi where you turn right. You pass in front of the parish church dedicated to SS. Nabore and Felice that was built at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century on the site of an ancient temple. Slightly further on the left side of the street stands the house where Achille Ratti, a former Pope and well know alpinist, often spent his holidays. One of his favourite walks was the one to S. Martino. You then enter the historical centre where it is nice to wander through the little alleyways to admire the beautiful palazzi of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>



*The church of San Martino (© P. Ortelli)*

century. Just outside the historic centre you pass the little church of St. Rocco and at the end of via San Martino you find the beginning of the walk to the San Martino church.

Along the cobblestone path, there are several small chapels decorated with mosaics representing episodes of Christ's life. Half-way up you will find the "Cappella degli Alpini" dedicated to S. Carlo. Above the altar there is a painting dedicated to the saint, the other paintings represent the Alpine troops during the war painted by the painter Azzimonti of Menaggio.

The church San Martino was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and became a venerated sanctuary after the discovery of a 15<sup>th</sup> century wooden statue of the Lady with the Child.

According to a local legend, the statue was discovered in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by a young girl in a cave of the mountain. The statue was probably set there by a man from Menaggio about a hundred years before, when Menaggio was invaded by the Swiss, who used to destroy all the statues of the Saints. When the inhabitants of Griante heard the notice of the finding, they brought the statue to the parish Church of SS. Nabore and Felice, but it miraculously disappeared and was later found again on the mountain called Sasso San Martino. This fact was interpreted as the Lady's wish to be adored on the mountains, so a niche was built and then, later, today's church.

*The Church of San Martino (© J. Bents)*





Rifugio Menaggio (1400 m) is situated on the southern slope of Monte Grona where one can enjoy a spectacular view of Lake Como and the surrounding mountains. From the rifugio you can extend your hike to Monte Grona (1736 m) and to Monte Bregagno (2107 m). The rifugio provides refreshments and lodging and is open daily during the summer – the rest of the year on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. For information and reservations tel. 0344 37282 or 388 3494812.

**ITINERARY:** Breglia - Rifugio Menaggio

**WALKING TIME ONE WAY:** 1hr 45min

**ASCENT:** 650 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Hike with a steep ascent

**TRAIL SIGNS:** Red-white-red

**CONNECTIONS:** Breglia can be reached from Menaggio with bus line C13

**ROUTE:** From the bus stop at **Breglia** (749 m) cross the road and ascend the small road leading up to Monti di Breglia (sign indicating Rifugio Menaggio). At the second bend, just beyond a fountain, you find the first shortcut to the right (sign Monti di Breglia/Rifugio Menaggio). The steep trail ends up on the road again, which you cross to pick up the next shortcut. After 20 m, at the high tension mast, turn right. The steep trail leads on to the road once more, which you follow for about 300 m. Then you find the next shortcut to the left which leads across a field. Cross the road another time and follow the trail through the woods which leads on to the road at Monti di Breglia (1000 m).

After another 100 m you reach a picnic area with fountain and beautiful view (you deserve a rest). Here you leave the road and follow the trail over some rocks up to the left (sign). Once on this trail you continue to follow the signs. You reach a open space used as parking area which you cross and then pick up the trail to the left. At the junction where you find the metal trail sign we recommend the "Sentiero Alto" to the right because of the better view (after heavy snow fall we recommend il "Sentiero Basso" to the left). It leads among birch trees and brooms up to the junction for S. Amate and Monte Bregagno. At this junction you keep to the left. The now even trail leads along the slope and you soon reach the rifugio.

## WALKS FROM RIFUGIO MENAGGIO

Fifteen minutes from the rifugio there is a viewpoint called "**Pizzo a Coppa**" from where you have a view not only of Lake Como but of the whole Menaggio valley with Lake Piano and Lake Lugano. Not to miss!! Take the trail on the left side of the rifugio (facing the building).

From Rifugio Menaggio you can reach the top of **Monte Grona** (1736 m) from where one can admire one of the best views of the Pre-Alps; apart from the three



*Ascent to Monte Grona (© A. Morganti)*

lakes (Como, Lugano and Piano) you can also see the close-by peaks of Monte Bregagno, Legnone, Pizzo di Gino, Grigne and, if the day is clear enough, many peaks of the Alps from Monviso to Bernina. Here are three different ways to get to the top of Monte Grona from Rifugio Menaggio (good walking boots and experience required):

- **Via Normale** - Time: 1.15 hrs.; ascent: 336 m; the beginning of this trail (the easiest) is just behind the rifugio. It leads up to the "Forcoletta" and from there, to the left, a steep rocky trail leads to the top.
- **Via Direttissima** - Time: 1 hr; ascent: 336 m; the beginning of this trail starts (facing the building) left of the rifugio. The steep trail winds up the south face of the mountain. During the winter this trail, as it is exposed to the south, remains snow covered less time compared to the Via Normale on the north side of the mountain.
- **Via Ferrata** - (Only for Alpinists with adequate equipment) Time: 3.00 hrs. In order to reach the beginning of the Via Ferrata you follow part of the Via Panoramica.



Rifugio Menaggio (© J. Bents)

From Rifugio Menaggio you can also hike to the little chapel of **Sant'Amate** (1.623 m) - time 1hr - ascent 240 m, and to the top of **Monte Bregagno** (2.107) time 2hrs - ascent 707 m (from the rifugio).

**ROUTE:** Pick up the steep trail behind the Rifugio with the indication "Forcoletta" and "Grona Via



Normale." At the bifurcation Forcoletta-Grona/S. Amate take left for Forcoletta. The rocky trail ascends steeply to the saddle called Forcoletta. From here you follow the easy trail over the grassy mountain ridge to the right and enjoy the spectacular view of the lake as well as the woods and pastures of the Val Sanagra. From the little chapel of S. Amate you can continue on the now steep grassy ridge to the top of Monte Bregagno characterized by a huge cross. The view on the Val Albano and the northern end of the lake is extraordinary. Back at S. Amate you follow the sign for Breglia. The trail runs along the grassy slope of the mountain to a little saddle. From here the trail descends and meets the path you followed up to the rifugio.





This walk starts at Menaggio, leads through its historical centre and the lovely hamlet of Lovenò and continues through the Val Sanagra Park to the splendid village of Cardano. From here an easy cart track leads along the Val Menaggio and reaches the cycle foot path which follows the traces of the ex-railway line Menaggio – Porlezza, through the Natural Reserve Lake Piano. The stretch between La Santa and Castel S. Pietro is suited for children.

**ITINERARY:** Menaggio, Lovenò, Cardano, Gonte, La Santa, Lago di Piano, Castel S. Pietro

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 4hrs

**ASCENT:** 200 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Some brief steep ascents

**TRAIL SIGNS:** See the description

**CONNECTIONS:** To Menaggio: by bus - C10, by boat or hydrofoil  
from S. Pietro: by bus - C12

**ROUTE:** At **Menaggio** from Piazza Garibaldi you pick up via Calvi. At the end of it you cross the main road and turn into via Caronti, along the left side of the Parish church St. Stefano. At the end of the street turn right and after 30 m turn left into via Castellino da Castello. This cobble stone alley leads to the upper part of the town called Castello. The “Castello” of today gives only a faint idea of how it was in the Middle Ages. In fact it was completely destroyed in 1523 by the communities from the Swiss canton Graubünden. Left intact are parts of its enormous perimeter walls which you can admire at various points. Just past the church S. Carlo (1614) the alley ends into via N. Sauro, which you follow to the right. Go up the steps on the right side of the Hotel Lovenò and, back on the road, follow it to the left. At the next bend, pick up the continuation of via N. Sauro to the left. You are now in the hamlet **Lovenò** with its splendid villas. To begin with, on the left at the beginning of the street, there is the Villa Bel Faggio and after 200 m you pass Villa Garovaglio Ricci and Villa Vigoni now owned by the German Federal Republic which hosts an Italian-German cultural



*Piamuro (© J. Bents)*



*Villa Bagatti Valsecchi*

centre. The villa and its park can be visited on Thursday afternoon at 14.30 (tel. 0344 361232). You pass the church San Lorenzo with its baroque façade and the sport centre and then, after a brief ascent, you reach **Piamuro**, a big pasture (40 min. from Menaggio). From here go straight on following trail n°4 of the Parco Val Sanagra. After a few hundred meters you skirt a small pine wood on your left where you ignore the deviation for Tobi / Torre Galbiati and proceed another 100 meters. At the limit of the pine wood, near a gate, take

left following the indication for Tobi / Cardano / Belvedere. You enter a clearing with big chestnut trees and before continuing to Tobi, we suggest a small deviation (10 minutes) to the **Belvedere** from where you have a splendid view of the gorge of the Sanagra river, the garden of Villa Bagatti Valsecchi, and of the town of Cardano with Monte Crocione in the background.

Back on the clearing follow the indications for Tobi. The path leads down in bends in the valley of the Sanagra river past a picturesque bench that offers a nice view of the Villa Bagatti. At the fork continue straight on and after a brief descent you reach the beautiful stone bridge of **Tobi**. You can notice the remains of the antique water captivation that used to conduct water to the brick and iron ovens. The vegetation in this area is typical of the river gorges. You ascend the

## Map 1



mule track on the other side of the bridge that leads up to **Cardano**. It finishes on a field with a row of linden trees. Turn right in order to reach the historic centre of Cardano built around the Villa Bagatti Valsecchi. The origins of the Villa Bagatti Valsecchi go back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century; it was enlarged between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. The villa is built around two court yards on two different levels. One faces the gorge of the river Sanagra that flows 90 m below; the other court yard faces the historical centre of Cardano.

Continue along via Galbiati, past the church dedicated to the Saints Caterina, Bernardo and l'Apostolo delle Indie, till you end up on the road that leads up to Naggio. Cross it and pick up via Milano in the direction of **Gonte**. At the end of this street you enter the historic centre of Gonte and arrive at the Piazza Guata Salici where the church S. Giovanni Battista stands. Continue on the right side of the church along via alle Vigne. The cart track runs along the Val Menaggio flanked by the Monte Crocione and Monte Galbica on the left and Monte Grona and Monte Pidaggio on the right. You continue to advance into the valley with a view of the town of Bene Lario on the slopes of Monte Galbica on the opposite side of the valley. You pass a small chapel on your right and after 500 meters you arrive at a fork where you



*Tobi waterfalls (© T. Tassoni)*

## Map 2





go left, past a farm house. As soon as you get past a barrier, turn left and descend the paved road which in a few bends leads down to the state road near the Church **La Santa**. Cross it and skirt the church on the left side. Then go down the cobblestone steps and turn left. You arrive at a crossroads where you pick up the small paved road following the indication for **Lago di Piano**. We are on the traces of the ex-railway line Menaggio – Porlezza, closed in 1939. It is now being converted into a cycle footpath and has been completed between Porlezza and Bene Lario. The continuation to Menaggio is scheduled for 2013.

After an half hour's walk you enter the nature reserve Lago di Piano. You pass behind the campsite Ranocchio and just past its entrance you continue along the lovely Lake Piano. Soon you reach the Casa della Riserva with an information office and a small ecomuseum (tel. 0344 74961). In front of the office there are some nice picnic tables with view of the lake. Next comes a short unattractive stretch among some small industrial buildings. The path becomes untarred and on the left you notice the hillock called Brione with the **Castel S. Pietro** at its top. At the end of the untarred track turn left in order to pay a visit to the old settlement with its houses clustered close to each other and with only one entrance. The stone wall, the small arched windows, the narrow passages give the idea of a fortress, which is what it used to be in the Middle Ages. You return down the sloping entrance and the walk to the main road on your right where you will find the bus stop.

If you wish you can continue the walk along the cycle – footpath and in 40 minutes reach the town **Porlezza** on Lake Lugano that is connected with bus line C12.



*Lake Piano (© J. Bents)*





The mountain shelter "Croce di Campo" is located in Val Cavargna at 1741 m, a fantastic balcony overlooking the Lepontine Alps. From the rifugio you can reach the surrounding peaks such as Pizzo di Gino (2245 m) and Cima Pianchette (2168 m). The mountain shelter is open on weekends and on bank holidays throughout the year. Open daily from July to September. Tel. 0344679943 or 3394373186.

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**ITINERARY:** San Nazzaro - Tegnivo - Tecchio - Croce di Campo

**WALKING TIME ONE WAY:** 2hrs 30min

**ASCENT:** 750 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Some stretches with a steep ascent

**TRAIL SIGNS:** Painted red signs near the ground starting from Tegnivo

**CONNECTIONS:** Bus C14 to and from S. Nazzaro

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**ROUTE:** At **San Nazzaro** you get off the bus at the stop close to the Parish church (ask the driver for the chiesa) dedicated to the Saints Nazzaro and Celso. From the bus stop ascend via Burena on the right. Follow the bend in the road, ignore via Carde, and proceed along the cement road that climbs up steeply above a small water canal that delimits Contrada Canale. Then turn right in via Cos Pumbal and after a few meters take the steps on the left. Then turn right again ignoring the path that leads to a big fountain and after 20 m, at the height of an old mountain hut, take left. The old mule track connecting San Nazzaro with Tegnivo starts. Here you ascend through the woods until you reach the beautiful hamlet of **Tegnivo**, ancient May hay and home of miners who were employed at the mines of Tecchio and Val Caldera in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Not far from a fountain you can observe a rock with a series of "cup marks", ancient rock engravings in the form of cups probably of the Neolithic Age.

Follow the level path to the left. It leads below a chapel and leaves the small village. You reach a fork on a slope. Leave the level path that continues to a little bridge, and ascend the mule track with the red trail signs to the right that quickly gains altitude. After a few bends you arrive at a little white house with a cable way. From here, on the left, a small road leads to a row of typical wooden huts in the locality called **Tecchio**. Behind the huts, steps lead up to a road that you follow to the right to **Rifugio "Croce di Campo"**, visible high up on the right. The street, initially paved, becomes a large cart track.

From the rifugio "Croce di Campo" is it possible to continue with wonderful walks on marked paths toward the peaks, from which you can enjoy exceptional views of the lakes and



*Tecchio*

the mountain ranges of Lombardy, Piemonte and Switzerland.

- To Pizzo di Gino at 2245 m (h 2.00)
- To Cima delle Pianchette at 2168 m (h 1.30)
- To Monte Tabor at 2080 m (h 2.00)
- To Monte Bregagno at 2107 m (h 4.30)
- To Cima Verta at 2078 m (h 3.00)

From Rifugio Croce di Campo it is possible to make wonderful long hikes:

- To Rifugio Menaggio on the Alta Via del Lario (h 6.30)
- To Rifugio Menaggio on the Sentiero dei Gauni (h 5.30)
- To Rifugio Sommafiume (h 2.00) and to Rifugio San Iorio (h 4.15) on the Sentiero dei Gauni and on the Alta Via del Lario.
- To Rifugio Garzirola (h 5.30) and San Lucio (h 6.30) on the Sentiero dei Gauni.

Note: From the town San Nazzaro you can also drive to Tecchio; at the edge of the town (direction Cavargna) take the road that ascends to the right and at the small church of San Rocco turn right again. The road winds its way up to Tecchio where you can leave the car. From Tecchio a cart track continues to the Rifugio Croce di Campo only accessible for jeeps and after paying a toll (tickets available at Bar Pinchin at San Nazzaro, € 5,00). On request jeep service to the rifugio available, call 3394373186. The route is also recommended for mountain bikers.



*Rifugio Croce di Campo*

*Val Cavargna*





A walk among pasture fields and over steep slopes to the church of San Lucio (alt. 1542 m), which stands on the border pass between the Val Colla (Switzerland) and Val Cavargna (Italy). In the past this was an important transit route. Near the church stands the Rifugio (mountain shelter) San Lucio.

**ITINERARY:** Cavargna - Monti Coloné - San Lucio

**WALKING TIME ONE WAY:** 2hrs

**ASCENT:** 471 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Steep ascent requiring a medium physical effort

**TRAIL SIGNS:** From Cavargna to Monti Coloné red-white-red with n° 3 barred as far as Monti Coloné

**CONNECTIONS:** To Cavargna by bus line C14

**RIFUGIO SAN LUCIO:** Open on Saturday and Sunday; other days on request (tel. 335476129)

**RIFUGIO GARZIOLA:** Open from May till the end of September daily; then Saturday and Sunday (tel. 0344 63253 or 3383110521)

**ROUTE:** From the bus stop at **Cavargna** (alt 1071 m), the highest comune in the province of Como, walk to the parish church; despite its old origins Cavargna doesn't preserve many traces from its past: even the parish church was rebuilt in 1967. Take the track on the left side of the church leading steeply uphill to the "Colonia" (holiday camp), a useful lodging for those who follow "Il Sentiero delle 4 Valli," a trekking tour of 50 km divided in 3 stages starting at Breglia (above Menaggio), winding through the Val Sanagra, the Val Cavargna, the Val Rezzo and the Valsolda, and ending at Dasio above Lake Lugano. The path skirts a beech wood called "Bosco Sacro" which forms a natural barrier against snow and land slides before leading into the narrow and steep Val Marda. Once you cross the bridge over the stream in the Val Molino, the trail ascends the opposite side of the valley. You arrive at a fork where you turn right and follow the track through the pastures to the top of the slope to the settlement **Monti Coloné** (alt. 1400 m, 1.30 hrs) from where the view embraces the valley of Cavargna. Behind the fountain there is a trail which leads up the steep slope over the pasture fields to the crest where the church **San Lucio** stands (alt. 1542 m), right on the Swiss - Italian border.

The church dates back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century and it has always been a cultural as well as a devotional point of reference for the people from both sides (Swiss and Italian). Inside there are paintings from the 15<sup>th</sup> up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and a wooden statue of the 15<sup>th</sup> century which represents Saint Lucio. According to the popular tradition San Lucio was a herdsman who offered the



*The church of San Lucio (© P. Ortelli)*

cheese he earned as a wage to the poor; the cheese miraculously multiplied which caused the envy of his master, who killed him. San Lucio became the patron saint of the herdsman and cheese makers. The 12<sup>th</sup> of July is the feast in honour of the saint, but he is also commemorated on the occasion of the Feast of San Rocco on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August.

The Rifugio San Lucio is a former barracks of the Customs Service (built 1903). The Customs Service patrolled the border, barred by a long metal fence to control the passage of smugglers. In the region of Val Cavargna, because of its geographical position as well as the hard life of privation that the inhabitants of the valley led, contraband was part of the local reality. The barracks were closed in the 1960's and were left abandoned until 1999 when the town government of Cavargna decided to turn it into a Rifugio. Walk back to **Cavargna** along the same route.

## WALK TO MONTE GARZIROLA

From the San Lucio Pass you can reach the top of Monte Garzirola (alt. 2116 m) by continuing behind the rifugio San Lucio on the grassy ridge for about 1hr 45min. On your way you pass the mountain refuge Rifugio Garzirola which is open during the summer months (tel. 0344 63253 or 338 3110521).

**Note:** In front of the parish church at cavargna is the "Museo della Valle" which gives a good idea of how life used to be in the valley featuring local traditions and customs. The rooms dedicated to the magnani (tinkers) and to the spalloni (smugglers) are very interesting. Opening times: Saturday and Sunday 14.00 – 17.00 from Easter till the 1<sup>st</sup> of November. Other days on request. For information call tel. 0344 63261.

*Val Molino (© E. Windham)*







This circular walk leads through the Valsolda, an area situated on Lake Lugano. It starts at S. Mamete and leads up to the pastures of Rancò (alt. 710 m), touching some nice towns and offering wide views of the Valsolda and lake Lugano.

**ITINERARY:** S. Mamete - Loggio - Drano - Rancò - Dasio - Puria - Loggio - S. Mamete

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 3hrs

**ASCENT:** 430 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Medium. Steep descent from Rancò to the bridge over the stream Soldo

**TRAIL SIGNS:** From S. Mamete to Rancò path n° 2, from Rancò to Loggio path n° 1

**CONNECTIONS:** to and from S. Mamete bus line C12

**ROUTE:** At **San Mamete**, get off the bus in Piazza Roma. Before starting the walk we recommend to cross the main road and follow the picturesque via dei Portici to the lake. Back in Piazza Roma with its nice arcades, walk up the steps at its far right end; you pass the former praetorium with the archbishop's coat of arms and reach the church of SS. Mamete and Agapito. It already existed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century as the Romanesque bell tower shows, but it was modified between 1600 and 1800. Continuing on the cobbled steps, you pass, on the right, the little temple dedicated to the Nativity of S. Carlo. It was built in 1610 on the occasion of the canonization of Carlo Borromeo Archbishop of Milan and lord of the Valsolda. Go up the few steps to have a wonderful view of the lake. You then pass the cemetery of Loggio where there is another temple dedicated to Saint Carlo, and, after reaching a group of houses, you proceed on an even smaller street. After just 50 meters, before reaching Grotto Campo, you turn left into via alla Cascata, which leads to the church S. Bartolomeo in the town **Loggio**. Past the church take via Tericà to the right.

It crosses the road several times before arriving at the hamlet **Drano**. Turn right to enter the historic centre. Pass under a porch and turn left. At the fork in the road keep to the right and follow the trail sign n° 2. You ascend on a wide cobbled track which leads into the valley. You pass a little bridge over the stream of Val Canale, and after a stretch in the middle of the pastures you reach **Rancò** (alt. 710 m).

The track continues to the head of the valley that is surrounded by the limestone peaks of Pizzo Ravè, Monte Pradé and Sass di Mont. At the next intersection proceed to the left and follow the trail sign n° 1 and those of "Il Sentiero delle 4 Valli" (a trekking route of 50 km starting at Breglia



View of Castello Valsolda (© J. Bents)

and leading through 4 different valleys to Dasio in Valsolda). You then follow a steep and narrow trail through the woods which leads down to the stream Soldo, which you cross over a bridge and soon you arrive at the town Dasio.

Here you take via Garibaldi to the left. Once you reach the road near the church of S. Bernadino, cross it and at the bus stop enter into via Marisem in the direction of **Puria**. Cross a little bridge and take the road near the cemetery.

At the next bend of the road, turn into via d'Ampolla and after just 20 m turn left into via Rivo, which leads down to the beautiful church of S. Maria Assunta, built in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Pellegrino Tibaldi, famous painter and architect, born in Puria in 1527, modified parts of the church by building the dome and the eight sided lantern.

From the church turn into via Fontana Vecchia and, after having crossed the road, follow the old track until you reach a wash house, where you cross the road and continue on the track along the valley with a nice view of the village Castello. You cross the bridge over the stream Soldo near a waterfall, where a stop is a must. Then take the track called via alla Cascata, which leads back to the church at the village **Loggio** and from here return to **S. Mamete** the same way you came.

Waterfall near Loggio





The Antica Strada Regina, built by the Romans, was an important road connection along the west side of the lake, between Como and the alpine passes. At some points it follows the same route as the current lake side road but it runs mostly parallel to it. This stretch starts at Nobiallo (part of the commune of Menaggio) and leads along the slopes of "Sasso Rancio" to Rezzonico with splendid views of the lake.

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**ITINERARY:** Menaggio - Nobiallo - Sasso Rancio - Acquasera - Molvedo - Santa Maria - Rezzonico

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 3hrs

**ASCENT:** 150 m

**DIFFICULTY:** steep ascent over Sasso Rancio

**TRAIL SIGNS:** some wooden signs indicating "il Sentiero del Giubileo 2000"

**CONNECTIONS:** Menaggio can be reached by hydrofoil, boat or bus line C10, C12  
Rezzonico is connected by bus line C10

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**ROUTE:** In **Menaggio** from Piazza Garibaldi follow the lake promenade "Lungo Lago Castelli" and pass by the Lido of Menaggio. Then follow via Roma and turn right into via Cipressi. Just past the campsite Europa you end up on the main road. Follow the sidewalk to the right till you reach the entrance of a tunnel where you pick up the pedestrian road on the right side of it. It passes the rock-climbing face and ends on the main road again. Cross the road in order to follow the side walk. After 100 m leave it and take the street to the left that leads uphill to the Carabinieri station. You enter the centre of **Nobiallo** which used to be a fishermen's village and pass the church of S.Bartolomeo and Nicolao with its leaning bell-tower of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

At the end of the village there is the Sanctuary "Madonna della Pace" built in 1660. From here the "Vecchia Strada Regina" starts to climb up the slopes of **Sasso Rancio** where in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century there were iron mines.

You see the famous "Villa La Gaeta", built in the twenties and used as location in the James Bond film "Casino Royale", below you.

Past a "modern residence", you continue straight on and then the track eventually leads down steeply to the former lakeside road used before the tunnels were built. Go left and you arrive on the main road in between two tunnels. Paying attention to the traffic, follow it to the entrance of the next tunnel where you take



*The castle of Rezzonico*

the former lakeside road on the right of the entrance. After 30 m there is a track on the left which leads above the entrance of the tunnel. The track conducts through the woods to the first houses of the town **Acquaseria**. Cross the bridge over the river Serio and enter the centre of the town. When you reach the church of S. Abbondio take the street on the right side of it. Follow via Regina Margherita and at the end of the town, at a fork, take to the right (left the road leads up to Pezzo). The street eventually becomes a cobble stone track that leads to the village of **Molvedo**. In Molvedo, the Antica Strada Regina is interrupted by the park of Villa Camilla. To bypass the park you ascend to the hamlet **Mastena**. At the end of the cobble stone street connecting Acquaseria with Molvedo, near an old cabin of the electricity works, take the mule track to the left. Once at the hamlet turn right, cross the centre of the village, and at the stream called Cellino take the mule track that descends to the right. It leads to a road which you cross twice. At the end of the small street, go left and you arrive at an oratory.



*The harbour of Rezzonico (© E. Windham)*



We recommend a small detour to the lake to admire the church of Santa Maria (1464) next to the ruins of an old roman fortress. Turn back to the little church and then cross the road leading up to the various hamlets of San Siro. Continue on the Antica Strada Regina among small kitchen gardens and between stone border walls in the direction of Rezzonico. Just before arriving at **Rezzonico**, on the right, you pass the "Castellaccio" which is what remains of a medieval watch tower. Around its remains there is a picnic area with fountain. The cobble stone path ascends to the ex-lakeside road which you cross to enter the centre of Rezzonico. We highly recommend you go down to the lake side to the little picturesque harbour. Then pass under the portico and go up one of the cobble stone steps that lead up to the castle of Rezzonico with a 14<sup>th</sup> century tower. From here you go to the main road where you find the bus stop.





This walk runs along the foot of Monte Bregagno at an average altitude of 300 m and touches a series of villages that are part of the towns of Crema, Pianello del Lario and Musso. Before descending to Dongo, you pass the church of S. Eufemia that is located on a rocky spur of the Sasso di Musso from where you have a splendid view of the lake.

**ITINERARY:** Rezzonico, Vezzedo, Cheis, Semurano, Vignola, Camlago, Muggiana, Coscia, Bresciana, Campagnano, Genico, Barbignano, Dongo

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 4hrs

**ASCENT:** 350 m

**DIFFICULTY:** two brief but steep ascent

**TRAIL SIGNS:** some wooden signs indicating "Sentiero del Giubileo 2000"

**CONNECTIONS:** To Rezzonico: bus line - C10  
From Dongo bus line - C10

**ROUTE:** You get off the bus at **Rezzonico**, near the castle. Before starting this walk we highly recommend a visit of Rezzonico itself, dominated by its castle built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by De la Torre family. The long flights of cobblestone steps, the beautiful harbour where the houses face the lake, make Rezzonico one of the few lakeside villages that have maintained its original village structure.

Turn back to the bus stop near the castle and cross the main road with much attention to traffic (you can also avoid crossing the main road by passing over the entrance of the tunnel). Walk up some steps and reach a shrine where you take the **Antica Strada Regina**, the ancient connection road built by the Romans, to the right. It leads around the point S. Nicolao and enters the commune of Crema. On the left side of the track you can notice a block with engraving indicating the border between Rezzonico and Crema.

You cross the bridge over the Valle delle Vacche and then you immediately go left up the steep flight of steps that leads along fields and vineyards to the village of **Vezzedo** (327 m). At the beginning of the village there is a shrine where you descend the steps to the right. You skirt the valley of the rio Vezzedo and cross the bridge. You end out on the paved road that leads to the village **Cheis** (345 m). Just past the Valle Boggia you arrive at a fork where you take the dirt track on the right (ignore the road to the left that ascends to the Cappella degli Alpini).



Vezzedo

The track skirts the valley, runs under a porch, and enters the village **Semurano** (359 m). Follow the small alley that crosses the whole village until you come out on the paved road from where you can see the close-by village of **Vignola** (335 m). In the piazza stand the town hall and the parish church of San Michele with a magnificent polyptych of the Borgognone school of the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.



*Vignola*

At the far end of the piazza follow the small alley to the left that passes by the post office and at the end turn right into via Galetti.

Past a crossroads, proceed in the middle of two rows of pine trees and enter the village of **Cantone** (319 m) with its houses built along the steep valley of Quadrella. Cross the stone bridge (above on the left you can see what remains of a former silk mill) and continue on the cobblestone path. When you reach the paved road just before reaching the village **Motta**, immediately take the dirt track to the left. At the next fork ignore the deviation to the right. At the second fork keep left (on the right there is a little wooden foot bridge) and continue along the course of the water.

The track becomes a path that descends into a small narrow valley that crosses the rio Campello over a small stone bridge. Past a small shrine, from which you have a magnificent view of the lake, you continue on the track between two stone walls. It ends out on the road right in front of the village **Camlago** that is part of the commune Pianello del Lario. You proceed on the road that finishes at **Maggiana**. Enter the village, and

then, 10 m after you have passed a fountain, pick up the steps to the left marked with red signs. You end in via Dell'Era, a track that winds up in the middle of the fields. After 300 m, at the first fork, you leave the track and turn down to the right. You enter a valley and cross a foot bridge. Ascend the opposite side of the valley and then follow the small trail that leads down to the paved road. You follow it to the right and you skirt the village of **Coscia** (307 m) and pass above the church



*Church of S. Eufemia*



*View of Montecchio*

Madonna della Neve. Continue around the curve in the road and just past a small parking turn left in order to take the small path. It ends out on the paved road and you cross the village of **Bresciana**. You cross the bridge over the valley of Musso in order to enter the village **Campagnana**, where the 17<sup>th</sup> century church of San Rocco stands. Pass in front of the church but then turn left in via Lancedo. At the end of the street, just past a little bridge, go up the steps on the left and then turn right. You follow the paved road until you reach the road sign S. Eufemia / Genico. Proceed along via al Castello. Slightly further you cross through **Genico**, the last village of the commune of Musso. Here starts the ascent to the church of S. Eufemia.

The church was built in 1662 and stands on a rocky spur of the Sasso di Musso from where the view covers the whole northern part of the lake. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century the whole region was dominated by the condottiero Gian Giacomo Medici who lived in a castle that stood on the Sasso above the church, from where he controlled the whole area. Above the ruins of the castle there are the smooth faces of the former marble groves, exploited since the Roman Age. At the foot of the castle in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Giovanni Manzi constructed a park called Giardini del Merlo, inspired by the Ligurian gardens built on steep terrains. The park is being restored at the moment.

In order to start the descent towards **Dongo**, take the track on the left side of the church. After a short ascent the track leads down to the village **Barbignano**. Once in Largo Antonio da Desio, turn right into via Antica Regina and then again right into via Interna a Martinico that leads to the Romanesque church of S. Maria Martinico. Then proceed along via Lamberzoni and via Torazza and, at the end, just before the arch, take a left. You reach Piazza Rubini and then Piazza Parrachini dominated by Palazzo Manzi. Here you find the bus stop.









This short walk leaves Gravedona over cobblestone tracks and urban streets to the town of Domaso. From the village Segna (390 m) you have a magnificent view of the whole northern lake area.

**ITINERARY:** Gravedona - Segna - Pozzolo - Domaso

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 1hrs 30min

**ASCENT:** 200 m

**DIFFICULTY:** brief steep descent beyond Segna

**TRAIL SIGNS:** absent

**CONNECTIONS:** To Gravedona hydrofoil, boat or bus line C10  
From Domaso hydrofoil, boat or bus line C10

**ROUTE:** Before starting the walk, which begins from the boat dock at **Gravedona** and leads to the right, we suggest that you visit the church of Santa Maria del Tiglio, which is situated in the opposite direction: so follow the lakeside to the left for about 300 m. The church, made out of black and white stones, was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century on a previous building of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Inside, there are traces of mosaics on the floor (5<sup>th</sup> century) and frescoes of the 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> century. The church is generally open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m..

Head back to the boat dock and continue along the lake side as far as Piazza Mazzini, where you follow the indication for "**Castello**". Take via Castello, which leads to a nice viewpoint of the lake and Palazzo Gallio, an impressive palace with its towers and loggia. It was built in 1582 as the residence of the Cardinal Tolomeo Gallio, count of the three parishes Gravedona, Dongo and Sorico. Today it is the seat of the "Comunità Montana". The castello area is probably the oldest part of Gravedona.

Now turn left to reach via Volta, then left again, then right into via San Rocco. You reach the main road in front of the town hall. Follow it to the right for just 20 m (mind the traffic), then cross the road and take via Dosi and Segna to the left. Follow it uphill as far as the fork where you see the sign indicating Sentiero del Giubileo 2000 / Via Pessina.

Before continuing, we suggest a short detour to the left to have a look at the church Santa Maria delle Grazie, founded in 1467 and also called "il Convento." The church - generally closed - has frescos of the early 16<sup>th</sup> century which are considered the most significant example of the early 16<sup>th</sup> century Lombardian picturing art. Not far from this church stands the beautiful Romanesque church of S. Gusmeo and S. Matteo.

Follow your footsteps back to the previous fork and follow via Pessina. At the next fork take the old track to the left leading up to **Segna**. After the first bend you pass under the road leading from Gravedona to Peglio and Dosso del Liro. Continue steeply uphill to the right and pass under the road a second time. After a flight of steps turn right



*View from Pozzolo*



*Vineyards around Pozzolo*

and when you arrive at the hamlet **Moglio**, just past a small chapel, a flight of steps leads on to the road. Follow it to the right and after a few bends you enter the small hamlet of **Segna** (390 m).

Along the road stands the simple oratory of S. Lorenzo. Here the climb finishes and you continue your way through the hamlet till you reach the last houses near a wash place. You continue on a wide cart track for about 100 m, then just past the last house of the village, you leave this track and take a small and not very evident trail to the right which leads downhill among vineyards towards the lake. You have a

superb view of the lake and its surrounding mountains.

The track, at some points quite steep (slippery if wet), leads down to the hamlet **Pozzolo** (310 m). At the beginning of the hamlet on the right there is a small church with a portico, fountain and view point. The itinerary continues to the left and enters the hamlet which has conserved its ancient urban structure. Go down to the piazza Acone where you meet the road which leads up from Domaso. Follow it for approximately 100 m and, in front of the Villa Garovet, take the cobblestone track on the right which leads in the direction of **Domaso**. At the fork continue the descent to the right on the old track. At the end of the descent go left and then right and you arrive in Piazza Leonardo Feloy. From here follow the indication for "ristorante la Contrada." Continue straight on and you reach the main road where you turn right in order to reach the boat landing. Domaso, built on the delta of the river Livo, was an ancient fishing village which has now changed into a modern tourist centre.

**Note:** the Cooperativa Turistica Imago organizes guided visits of the churches of Gravedona and other towns on the Northern end of the lake (tel. 0344 82572).





This walk, mainly on paths and cobblestone tracks, offers a splendid view of the northern lake area. You cross through some hamlets which have maintained their antique village structure.

**ITINERARY:** Domaso - Arbosto - Aurogna - Gera Lario

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 2hrs 15min

**ASCENT:** 220 m

**DIFFICULTY:** Somewhat difficult passage in the valley of Vercana

**TRAIL SIGNS:** almost absent

**CONNECTIONS:** To Domaso hydrofoil, boat or bus line C10  
From Gera Lario bus line C10

**ROUTE:** From the boat dock at **Domaso**, turn right and follow the lakeside road about 50 m, past the bus stop in Piazza Ghislanzoni. Cross the main road, follow the indications for the church San Bartolomeo and walk along via Regina. After 200m you reach the church reconstructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century on a previous, more ancient building. Pass in front of the church and follow the sign for **Gaggio**. After 50 m, at the fork, take the little road to the right which leads over a stone bridge over the river Livo. Walk up the cobblestone steps on the left and pass by the small oratory of San Silvestro (note the fresco on the facade). Keep left and continue uphill to a bend on the road, where you follow the indication for the Sanctuary of "**Madonna delle Nevi**". The track leads to the church, dated 1630, and then passes under a portico between the rock face and the left side of the church.

The track continues uphill among some vineyards and reaches the road again, which you cross. Follow the ascending steps on the right and then, again on the right, cross a small footbridge over a stream. You reach **Arbosto** (alt. 354 m)

near the baroque church of San Salvatore. Continue on the paved road and pass the restaurant Bellavista. After 100 m, in front of a school building (scuola materna), between two small apartment blocks, you take the track to the left. It leads steeply uphill in the middle of vineyards. Continue straight on, ignoring the various forks. Past a small chapel (ignore the forks to the right) follow a stretch of a path that can get overgrown during the summer months. You end out on a road where you turn right. After a brief stretch through the



*Church of San Vincenzo in Gera Lario*

woods you end onto the pastures with a wide view on the end of the lake where the two rivers Mera and Adda flow in.

You enter the chestnut woods, and pass by the ruins of some farmhouses. The cart track finishes and becomes a path that reaches the valley of Vercana, the border between the communes of Vercana and Trezzone. Cross the valley with care and then ascend the other side of the valley, where you will reach the pastures of **Aurogna** (alt. 420 m) where the path again becomes a cart track. Follow it 20 m and then take the path on the left that passes an ancient house.

Cross the bridge over the Val Vegia in order to enter the old hamlet. Walk through it till you find yourself in front of house number 7 (note the fresco of the Madonna) where you take a right; take the alley that forms the corner with house n° 5, and follow it out of Aurogna. When you reach the road continue to the right in order to reach a little chapel. Continue left in the middle of pastures and vineyards with the parish church of **Trezzone** dedicated to the Madonna delle Grazie already in sight. Just past the church you reach the road. Continue about 100 m and then take the underpass on the left which leads to the old track, which you follow left. You again reach the road which ends on the main road at **Gera Lario** near the church of San Vincenzo of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Just past the bridge over the stream called San Vincenzo is the bus stop.







This walk leads through one of the most scenic areas of Bellagio. Apart from being immersed in nature, you will also have the possibility of tasting the local products.

**ITINERARY:** Visgnola - Belvedere Makallé - Chevrio - Brogno - Mulini del Perlo - Guggiate - Suira - Visgnola

**TOTAL WALKING TIME:** 2hrs 30min

**ASCENT:** 409 m

**DIFFICULTY:** easy to medium

**TRAIL SIGNS:** white-red

**CONNECTIONS:** Visgnola can be reached from Bellagio with bus line C36

**ROUTE:** from the bus stop at **Visgnola** opposite the church square (piazza della Chiesa), walk up to the right in **via Valassina** direction Erba-Milano and, after about 80 m go up the flight of steps on the left (trail sign n° 3). The trail (white-red trail signs) leads steeply uphill among the meadows and the woods. You emerge from the woods and, once you have reached the farm house Cascina Elisa, pay attention to the path that deviates level to the left; after about 100 m turn right and go up the meadow following the sign Chevrio. Climb over some easy rocks, in order to arrive at a cart track which you follow uphill. Continue alongside the green fencing to the left; after about 400 m, on the right, make a stop at the **Belvedere Makallé** and enjoy the wonderful view of the Bellagio promontory, the lake and the surrounding mountains.

Continue on the cart track, pass the Trattoria Belvedere (great view and local cuisine) and go down towards the small village of **Chevrio** (80 m before reaching Chevrio, on your left: "I Drenn" a farm selling cheese, butter, yogurt, berries and jams). Take the paved road to the right, and at the little chapel turn right and follow trail 5 down to the main road. Once on the main road turn left and, after 100 m walk up the level road between the two pillars. Continue on trail n° 5 and cross the bridge over the river Perlo. Once you reach the houses of **Brogno**, continue on the dirt road that skirts the park of Villa Mariani and start the descent towards Bellagio – trail n° 1. After passing the farms of **Begola**, the trail

descends into the forest and, after a flight of steps, you arrive at the village **Mulini del Perlo** (Mills of Perlo)

**DETOUR:** by turning right, you cross the river Perlo over an ancient arched bridge; here you can admire the Perlo gorge where the water flows through deep potholes dug into the boulders by the force of the water. Until a few decades ago, the water of the river Perlo was used to run the mills. The Perlo stream has recently become a location for canyoning. (If you walk up to the Hotel Il Perlo Panorama you



*View of the promontory of Bellagio*

reach the main road that leads down to Visgnola in 10 min).

*Bridge over the river Perlo*

From the village **Mulini del Perlo** descend along the dirt road that runs among the meadows of Cagnanica; then take a paved road until you arrive at a parking space. Be sure to take the trail on the right, between two houses, which leads down along a flight of steps to the bridge that crosses the river Perlo (on your right: remains of trout farms and an old spinning mill). Continue on the road through the village of **Guggiate** (good water gushing from the rock) in order to arrive at the Piazza della Chiesa di S. Andrea where you can admire a spectacular portal that leads into the private park of Villa Ciceri.

On the right side of the church take via "La Derta" that ascends to Suira, quaint village once the site of a convent.

At the shrine depicting St. Peter, turn right in order to reach the paved road and leave Suira behind you. You continue among houses and villas and reach **Casate** where, next to the little church of S. Antonio (16<sup>th</sup> century), you can refresh yourself at a fountain, then continue until you arrive at the church square of **Visgnola**.





This itinerary follows part of the two day trekking route called “La Dorsale del Triangolo Lariano” that starts in Brunate and finishes in Bellagio. The walk described here below starts at Bellagio and follows “La Dorsale” in the opposite direction as far as Bocchetta di Terrabiotta (1,426m), from where you can enjoy one of the best views of the Triangolo Lariano area.

**ITINERARY:** Bellagio - Guggiate - Brogno - Rovenza - Parco Monte San Primo - Bocchetta Terrabiotta

**WALKING TIME ONE WAY:** 4hrs

**ASCENT:** 1171 m

**DIFFICULTY:** walk for trained hikers

**TRAIL SIGNS:** red – white – red n°1

**CONNECTIONS:** Bellagio is connected to Guggiate with bus line C30

**ROUTE:** From the centre of **Bellagio** walk for 1.5 km along the lakeside road towards Como until you reach the village of **Guggiate** (also reachable by bus line C30), where the trail n° 1 begins.

From the square of the church S. Andrea (opposite the bus stop) take via Ciceri on the right of the scenic portal of Villa Ciceri. It leads through the village and then crosses the river Perlo (on your left: note the remains of a trout farm and old spinning mill).

Past the bridge, go up a flight of steps which leads onto a paved road, turn left and continue uphill until you pass the landing area of the helicopter rescue and a farmhouse overlooking the pastures and the orchards of Cagnanica.

The road ends and a trail begins that climbs up between low walls covered with ivy; at the end of the climb, turn left towards **Perlo** (the deviation to the right takes you in 15 min to the hamlet Vergonese). After about 200 m turn right and take the ascending trail that passes some houses, a farmhouse and, after a few curves, enters a thick chestnut wood. You then reach **Begola**, where there are two farmhouses which stand in a clearing.

The path now widens into a cart track that climbs up gently between meadows and woods passing the park of Villa Mariani to arrive at **Brogno**.

From here follow trail sign 1 as you head to the right along a cart track that ascends in the direction of Rovenza. At the end of the climb you emerge into a clearing with an unusual chapel, then continue straight on among clearings and terraced meadows all the way to the village of **Rovenza**.

Now take the paved road on the right that goes uphill and ends after about 2.5 km in the locality called **Paum**.

You pass a gate and continue along the path that ascends through a beech wood until it comes out in the pastures of **Alpe delle Ville**. The



View from Monte San Primo (© L. Siclari)

trail, after crossing some meadows, arrives at a gate and onto a dirt road.

Turn left and pass the building of the closed down Colonia Bonomelli (ex summer camp for children) and continue on the level track until you reach the paved road and the car park of **Parco San Primo**. Here you follow the paved road (trail sign n° 1) to the right that leads to **Alpe del Borgo**, among the fields that in winter compose the ski slope of the Forcella. Continue the ascent while keeping to the



Bellagio (© P. Ortelli)



right side of the pasture, on the path that leads behind the farm house, then turn onto a cart track to the right that enters a beech wood. Within a few minute walk you will reach a saddle. From here take the path to the right that ascends the pastures along the crest of the mountain. At the end of the pasture, follow the track diagonally halfway up the slope to the saddle called **Bocchetta di Terrabiotta** (1,426 m)..

#### **Suggestion for the return:**

From the saddle and continuing on the Dorsale trail (trail sign n°1), you can walk along the Val di Torno and descend in 1h15 to Pian del Tivano where you can return by bus line C32 via Nesso to Como or to Bellagio (note that the bus Pian del Tivano – Nesso does not operate all year round). From the Bocchetta di Terrabiotta (trail sign n° 39) you can reach the top of Monte San Primo 1681 m in approx. 0.50 min. From the top you can descend to Alpe dei Picètt where Rifugio Martina stands, and from there to Alpe delle Ville. From here you return to Bellagio the same way you came.