



This very interesting walk, especially from a historic, artistic point of view, starts at the Santuario della Madonna del Soccorso (400 m), situated above the town Ossuccio at the beginning of the Val Perlana. From here a path leads deep into the valley Perlana where the antique monastery San Benedetto (817 m) stands. From here along the opposite eastern side of the valley you reach the Abbazia dell'Acquafredda above the town Lenno.

**Itinerary:** Lenno – Santuario della B.V. del Soccorso - Monastero di San Benedetto - Abbazia dell'Acquafredda - Lenno

**Total walking time:** 4h,15

**Ascent:** 600 m

**Difficulty:** some steep ascents and descents

**Connections from Tremezzo to and from Lenno:** bus line C10 or boat or hydrofoil

At Lenno, from the boat landingstage, you follow the lake side to the left (Viale C. Lomazzi) in order to reach the church square called piazza XI Febbraio, where the church **St. Stefano** and the XII century **baptistry** stand. Cross the main road (there is an underpass), head north, and just past the post office (close to the bus stop) pick up the alley to the left in the direction of the Santuario della B.V. del Soccorso. It leads slightly uphill and after 300 m you pass a building with the writing "La Cooperativa" on the right. Continue another 30 m, then turn left past the church of the Santissima Trinità. After about 20 m at the intersection, ignore via Rima, and turn right into Via Don Cadenazzi. Ascend the steps in order to reach Viale Libronico, which you follow to the left. Ignore the turn off for the "**Abbazia dell'Acquafredda,**" the abbey standing slightly uphill on the right. At the next intersection turn right (sign Madonna del Soccorso). The road leads on to a cobble stone path which you follow to the right (on the left is the antique settlement of Molgisio). At the next intersection continue left ignoring the Via ai Monti.

You soon arrive at the first shrine. Popular devotion led to the construction of a one kilometer long cobble stone walkway lined with 14 **shrines** leading to the Sanctuary. The shrines depict the scenes of the Madonna's and Christ's life and are represented by frescos and natural size statues out of stucco and terracotta. They were created between 1635 and 1714 by various artists of Como and the Ticino area.

You ascend the Via Crucis to the Sanctuary. According to devotional tales, the sanctuary was built because of the discovery of a marble statue of the Virgin Mary and Child. During the 15th century a small shrine was built to protect the statue that was believed to be miraculous. The small shrine was first enlarged and then transformed into a church. The central part was completed



in 1537. The Sacro Monte has been registered since 2003 on the list of the **Humanity World Heritage**. From the church square you follow the steep track which leads to the farmhouses of Preda. Ignore the track on the left to rifugio **Boffalora** but continue straight on. The path leads uphill past the half ruined farmhouses of Garubio and Pelenden. They are of antique origin and used to belong to the property of the abbey of **San Benedetto**. You pass the stream San Benedetto and then, slightly descending, you arrive at the abbey that stands among pine- and larch trees. The monastery of San Benedetto is of the 11th century. The church is an important example of romanesque architecture. The monks left the monastery in 1298 and slowly it fell into decay. The church has been restored in the nineteen fifties, and restore works have been done also on the monastery.

The local population is still attached to the antique monastery and they meet here every year on the first of May to celebrate Mass.

To continue you pick up the trail behind the church. You cross the bridge over the stream Perlana and follow the trail which leads along the opposite side of the valley back towards the lake. After having passed some settlements, the trail continues descending with a nice view of the Madonna del Soccorso.

You arrive in the upper part of the town Lenno and follow the road steeply downhill to the **Abbazia dell'Acquafredda**.

The abbey is called Acquafredda (cold water) because of the source of fresh water on its grounds. It was founded in 1153 by the cistercensian monk Enrico of the Abbey of Morimondo. Nothing much remains of its original structure which was changed throughout the years. The church is dedicated to **S.Maria dell'Uliveto**, and was decorated with frescos by **Fiammenghino**. The church is a good example of local baroque. From the abbey take the Via Acquafredda that ends up again in Viale Libronico which you follow to the left. From here you walk back the same you came either to the bus stop or the boat landing stage.