FROM MENAGGIO TO PORLEZZA ALONG THE FORMER RAILWAY LIME

This itinerary follows the traces of the former railway line that, from 1884 until 1939, ran between Menaggio and Porlezza connecting Lake Como with Lake Lugano. The route, mainly paved, runs through the Val Menaggio and touches the Lago di Piano Nature Reserve.

• Itinerary:

Menaggio - Grandola ed Uniti - Porlezza

• Length: 13,5 km • Starting point: Menaggio 200 m Maximum altitude: Cardano 377 m

• Total ascent: 299 m • Technical difficulty: •00000 • Physical commitment: ••0000

Note: The rail way line between Menaggio and Porlezza was opened in 1884 in order to attract more tourists from northern Europe to the area. Arriving by train to Lugano the tourists were then transported by steam boat to Porlezza from where the train brought them to Menaggio. After the first World War it became a simple working class transit system that lasted till 1939. After the Second World War the train line was abandoned.

Route: The former railway station of Menaggio is in Via IV Novembre, where today the grocery store called Consorzio Agrario stands, just next to the ferry dock. This is where this itinerary starts. Continue along the side walk along the State road 340 direction Como and after 100 meters, at a small parking lot, cross it with caution and head up the steep ramp which leads to the parking lot of the Menaggio Youth Hostel. Turn left and continue along Via Privata Frattelli Castelli. After 400 meters at the fork in the bend, turn right and follow the continuation of Via Privato Frattelli Castelli that ascends steeply along the side of Monte Crocetta. Continue along Via Privata F.Ili Castelli which ends onto the main State road 340 which connects Menaggio with Lugano. Follow it to the left, uphill, for just 50m and at the next bend, on the right, pick up the cycle/footpath. The track enters the valley and passes a 90 m long tunnel. It leads onto the SP road of Grandola ed Uniti. Cross it and follow the continuation of the cycle lane that runs behind Bar Stazione. At its end turn left and at the traffic lights cross the state road 340. With caution follow the side walk along the road in the reverse direction of travel for about 50 meters. Then enter the cycle lane on the left. You end onto the Provincial road 9 which you follow to the left and after 200 m pick up the cycle footpath on the right. You skirt a plain called Binadone flanked by the woody slopes of Monte Crocione (1640 m) and Monte Galbiga. Near the village of Grona the track is interrupted. Continue to the right along Via Cascine. At the intersection, pick up the cycle track again straight ahead (sign for Lago di Piano). You enter the Nature Reserve Lago di Piano. You pass behind the campsite Ranocchio and just past its entrance you skirt the Lake Piano. Soon you reach the visitor centre La Casa della Riserva with an information office and a small eco-museum (for information tel. +39 0344 74961). In front of the office there are some nice picnic tables with view of the lake.

Further along the track, on the left you notice a drumlin called Brione with the Castel S. Pietro at its top. Cross the bridge over the river Cuccio. Follow the course of the river until you reach the main road SP14. Continue to the right for 100 m and then cross the main road and turn into Via Prati that leads to the residential complex called "Porto Letizia." On the left side of the main building take the path that skirts Lake Lugano. Follow it to the centre of Porlezza. Back the same way.

This magnificent route leads from San Siro loc. S Maria 200 m, along a small mountain road

with little traffic to Monti di Zanatta (alt. 1100 m). From here the dirt road to the vast pastures

of Alpe Rescanscia (alt. 1413 m) starts. From the farmhouse a path with a breathtaking leads

to rifugio La Canua (alt. 1520 m). La Canua shelter tel. +39 335 8097897, when open, provides

shelter and refreshments. From the mountain hut you descend along a path and then dirt road to the Monti di Piazzucco and from there along the mountain road to Cremia from where you

> Menaggio - San Siro - Alpe di Zanatta Alpe Rescanscia - Rifugio la Canua

Monti di Piazzuco - Monti Marte - Somaina - Cremia

order to reach Piamuro Where you enter the Val Sanagra Park. From the Vecchia Chioderia, an agriturismo with a trout farm, you cycle to the village Codogna. From here the road Sp 8, with beautiful views of the Val Menaggio, leads to the charming village of Naggio. The route continues into the upper part of Val Sanagra as far as Monti di Grandola 858 m, the highest point of this itinerary. You descend along a marvelous mule track, enjoying a splendid view of Lake Lugano and Lago di Piano to the village Gottro. From the Romanesque church of San Giorgio a somewhat challenging path leads to Rogolone, a huge century-old oak, a natural

you cycle back the same way you came.

Physical commitment:

Menaggio - Piamuro - Codogna - Naggio • Itinerary: Monti di Grandola - Gottro - Church of San Giorgio Rogolone - Codogna - Menaggio

is the Villa Camozzi, seat of the Val Sanagra Ethnographic and Naturalistic Museum. From here

21 km Length: • Starting point: Menaggio 200 m

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Monti di Grotto 858 m • Total ascent: 812 m Technical difficulty:

From Menaggio follow the main road 340 in the direction of Lugano. After three bends turn right into via N. Sauro direction Loveno. After 500 meters take the continuation of via N. Sauro to the left. It comes out onto Largo Vittorio Veneto from where you go left into via Garovaglio.

Once at the church of San Lorenzo, go left along via Catulla Mylius Vigoni. Past the sports

center you reach the grassy plateau called Piamuro (alt. 381 m). Continue straight on along the dirt road following the sign n. 4 of the Val Sanagra Park, and you soon reach the Sanagra river. From Mulino della Valle just before the bridge, turn right and follow the narrow path along the river. You pass the Fornace Galli, an old brick factory, and reach the agriturismo the Vecchia Chioderia, once a nail factory now a trout farm with inn. Pass in front of the farm and cross the bridge over the river and follow the steep road to Codogna (alt. 455 m) Turn right and, after 50 meters, follow the provincial road of Grandola to the right. Climb up to the church of Naggio (alt. 670 m) where you turn left. After about 200 meters turn right following the signs for Val Sanagra-Monti di Gottro. Once you have reached Crotto del Merlo alt 858 m, the highest point of the itinerary, turn left and follow the sign for Crotto Mirabel. From the parking take the steep descending path. At the junction turn right. The trail comes out onto a splendid mule track that goes down to the village of Gottro (alt. 567) At the piazza where there is a fountain turn left and near a wash house you reach the paved road. Continue to the right and after about 50 meters take a left. Leave the road almost immediately and follow the sign for the church of San Giorgio. At the church take the path in the direction of the Rogolone. At the fork keep right. From the Rogolone continue straight on until you get back to Codogna on the side of the villa Camozzi. Turn left and then right into via al Mulino and return back to the Vecchia Chioderia. Back the same way.

1520 m). From the hut go down slightly to the left (looking at the lake) until you reach the

track which descends to the Monti di Piazzucco 1170 m. From here, you continue along the

dirt track to Monti Marte (alt. 800 m) from where the now paved mountain road descends

Stomaina. From here you descend down to the lake side road to Cremia. From Cremia, loc San

Vito, continue along the state road 340 for approx. 800 m and then enter via Statale Vecchia

(careful crossing) on the left side of the tunnel which leads to the hamlet of Rezzonico. From

Alternative itinerary: approach by car from Menaggio along state road 340 to Santa Maria

(commune San Siro) and as far as Alpe Zanatta (read above) to the point where the paved road

finishes. From here you follow the dirt track to Alpe Rescanscia (alt. 1413 m) and from there

continue on the track as far as Alpe Nedale (alt 1606 m) (5 km one way) with a total ascent of

here you cycle back to Menaggio.

524 m. Splendid views.

the Swiss border. The itinerary offers enchanting views and passes through charming villages. You start at Porlezza and, mostly along secondary roads, cycle up to Loggio (377 m). From here, a track leads past a beautiful waterfall formed by the river Soldo, to Puria. The ride continues into the valley to the little settlement of Camporgna 700 m the highest point of this itinerary. A path then leads to the settlement Muzzaglio, from where a splendid mule track descends to the charming village Castello from where you cycle back to Puria to complete

Itinerary: Porlezza - Loggio - Puria - Camporgna - Muzzaglio Castello - Puria - Loggio - Porlezza

• Length: 27 km

Porlezza 275 m Starting point: Maximum altitude:

3 VALSOLDA

take the former state road which after one kilometer ends onto the state road 340 again. Follow it for 1.5 km until you reach Cima where from Piazza Peppino e Angelo Selva, you turn right into via Remo Gozzo. At the end of the street turn left and continue along via 6 Caduti. At the junction, keep to the right continue along via Caravina, which after 400 m arrives at the Sanctuary of the Caravina which deserves a visit. Once at the cemetery, follow via Santuario to the village Cresogno. From here continue along via G. Finali which at the end of the village becomes a steep track. After dealing with some steps the track leads onto the road via Sasso Rosso Dasio, You soon arrive at the village Loggio (alt 377 m). At the height of the bus stop, you turn left and enter the historical center along Via Lucia and Via Galbiati. A flight of steps lead to the church of San Bartolomeo. Here you take via della Cascata that leads down to a waterfall. The cobble stone track ascends to the village Puria. Cross the road and continue uphill along via S. Rocco. After having dealt with some steps you continue along a cobble stone track that offers a nice view of the valley and the village Castello. The track ends onto a parking space where you continue straight on along the dirt track. Cross Ponte Bizzo, and after 50 meters, just before a next small bridge, turn right and follow track n° 7. At a junction where there is a little chapel continue straight on. Once at Camporgna (alt. 700 m) you leave track no 7 and go left along track no 16. It leads onto a dirt track which you follow to the right. After 500 meters, at the height of a wooden sign with an orange arrow, enter the trail to the left. Follow the signs that lead to Muzzaglio. Just past the church, at the crossing, continue right in the direction of Castello. Cross the bridge over the river and follow the splendid mule track to Castello. Once at the cemetery of Castello follow the road back to Puria. From here back the way you came.

Note: We highly recommend a visit of the beautiful village Castello. It takes its name from the ancient fortifications, which in mediaeval times were known as "Castello Albogasio". The village retains the semi-circular layout of the old defensive walls. Not to be missed is the S.Martino church with beautiful frescos in the vault painted in 1697 by Paolo Pagani, born at Castello. In his old mansion a museum has been created with a collection of works of local artists between the XIV and XIX century. The church and the museum are usually open on Saturday and Sunday from 10.00 till 18.00.

to Carlazzo.

IN THE HEART

• Itinerary:

Length:

• Starting point:

Total ascent:

Maximum altitude:

Technical difficulty:

Physical commitment:

the church of San Bartolomeo, turn left into via Sora.

OF THE VAL CAVARGNA

This itinerary allows you to discover the remote Val Cavargna, a valley that is geographical-

ly located between the alpine and pre-alpine mountain ranges and offers uncontaminated

landscapes. From Carlazzo (alt. 463 m) you follow the provincial road Sp 10 to the town San

Nazzaro, a small village clinging to the southern slopes of Pizzo di Gino (2245 m). From San

Nazzaro you ascend to the pinewood of Tecchio (alt. 1280 m) and from there to Rifugio Croce

di Campo 1741 m. Back at San Bartolomeo you follow a stretch of the Via del Ferro, a historical

route that linked the Cavargna and Albano valleys and their mining and iron and steel sites.

You cross the bucolic village Sora and descend along the cobble stone track to Ponte Dovia. In

this area, in the first decade of the nineteenth century, there was a small built-up area, which

housed the Austro-Hungarian customs (now a house), a melting furnace, a forge with a mallet

and a lime pit. At Ponte Dovia the two rivers Cuccio di Cavargna and the Cuccio di San Bar-

tolomeo meet. From Ponte Dovia, you continue on the cobble stone track, back to Carlazzo.

Approach by car: from Menaggio follow the highway 340 towards Lugano for 8 km. At the

roundabout, turn right in the direction of Carlazzo. At Carlazzo you park your car near the

Ponte Dovia - Carlazzo

Carlazzo 463 m

1436 m

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Carlazzo - San Nazzaro - Tecchio - Croce di Campo

San Nazzaro - San Bartolomeo - Sora

Rifugio Croce di Campo 1741 m

Route: From Carlazzo, take the road in the direction of Val Cavargna, you pass the town

Cusino (alt 786 m), and after a short descent, you continue to climb to S. Bartolomeo (alt. 843

m), pass through the village and continue towards S. Nazzaro. Once at S. Nazzaro (alt. 953 m),

at the end of the village turn right in the direction of Regolè, rifugio Croce di Campo. At the

small church of San Rocco turn right again and follow the road that climbs up in hairpin bends

to the pinewood of Tecchio (alt. 1280 m). Take the road to the left to rifugio Croce di Campo.

which you can already see high up on the slope. The road rises in hairpin bends, which at some

points are very steep and strenuous. From rifugio Croce di Campo (alt 1741 m), you can enjoy a

magnificent view. On the left you can see a strip of Lake Como where the Grigne towers 2410

m, as a frontal mirror Monte Crocione 1640 m, Monte Galbiga 1698 m and Sighignola and to

the right Cima Fiorina and Monte Garzirola 2103 m. Return the same way you came as far as

San Bartolomeo. In the vicinity of the pharmacy, you make a sharp right into via Fontana. Near

It descends in hairpin bends and taking advantage of the cobble stone streets, leads down

to the village of Sora (alt. 749 m). Cross the small village and pick up the coble stone track

down to Ponte Dovia at the bottom of the valley (alt. 582 m). From here ascend the track to a

small chapel, then descend to Maggione, a hamlet of Carlazzo. Follow via Antonio to return









TOUR AROUND MONTE GARZIROLA

From Buggiolo in Val Rezzo you ascend the dirt road to the church of San Lucio, located on the border crossing between Val Colla (Switzerland) and Val Cavargna (Italy) at an altitude of 1542 m. You can enjoy splendid views of the Alpi Lepontine, Val Cavargna, Val Colla and the Alps. Close to the church you find the San Lucio refuge, a former barracks of the Guardia di Finanza, where you can get refreshments. The itineray continues to Alpe di Talbano, an alpine farm where during the summer months excellent cheese is made. From here the dirt track continues into the Valle Segur. Before you reach the head of the valley, a trail leads in the direction of the Garzirola refuge (alt. 1974 m) that stands slightly below the top of Monte Garzirola. You descend along the grassy ridge of Mount Garzirola in order to reach return to the San Lucio Refuge. Tel. +39 375 6083460

Buggiolo - San Lucio - Alpe Tabano • Itinerary: Rifugio Garzirola - San Lucio

Length Buggiolo loc. Dasio 1100 m Starting point:

 Maximum altitude: 1720 m Total ascent: 1114 m

• Technical difficulty: • Physical commitment:

Approach by car: from Menaggio follow the main road 340 in the direction of Lugano as far as Porlezza. At the traffic light turn right in the direction of Val Rezzo. When you reach the town Corrido 451 m, at the crossing, go straight on in the direction of Val Rezzo. You follow the narrow road to the village Buggiolo 1044 m where, at the beginning of the village, you turn right in the direction of Cavargna / passo della Cava pass. After 500 m you arrive at the Monti di Dasio 1100 m, where you park the car near the former Guardia di Finanza barracks.

Route: At Buggiolo loc. Dasio leave the road and, on the left, enter the track (trail sign for rifugio Garzirola) Climb up the ridge (the first 800 m you have to deal with a steep ascent) that separates Val Rezzo from Val Cavargna. After 1,5 km you reach a small chapel called "Madonna del Cepp" from where you can enjoy a beautiful view of the Val Rezzo (fountain - picnic area). Continue along the track that here follows a short section of the 4 Valley Trail. After 500 m at the fork this trail continues to the right to Coloné, you go straight on.

At the next junction, turn right (on the left, the track leads to L'Alpe Colmine) and in a short time you reach the San Lucio Pass (alt. 1541 m). From the pass, follow the dirt track that after 1.8 km arrives at Alpe Tabano (alt. 1669 m). Follow it around the Val Tabano and the enter the Val Segur. Just before arriving at the Alpe Segur at 1.7 km from Alpe Tabano, leave the dirt road and take the path to the left that goes uphill and passes slightly below the Garzirola refuge (alt. 1974 m) that stands on the slopes of the homonymous peak. Follow the grassy ridge back to the church of San Lucio. Return to Buggiolo the same way you came.

5 BOCCHETTA DI NAVA

This itinerary starts at Menaggio and leads along a paved cart track through the woods, affording some nice views of the Val Menaggio, to Bocchetta di Nava 848 m. From here a trail. for the first part very technical and exposed, leads down with a splendid view of the Central

Itinerary: Menaggio - Croce - Bocchetta di Nava Griante - Menaggio

13.5 km • Length: • Starting point: Menaggio 200 m

 Maximum altitude: Bocchetta di Nava 848 m • Total ascent:

• Technical difficulty: Physical commitment: ••••

In order to reach Croce, from Menaggio follow itinerary 1 "From Menaggio to Porlezza along

the former railway line". At the exit of the 90 meters long tunnel, turn left and ascend the cycle lane leading to Croce. At the traffic lights cross the main road 340 and take via Wyatt, following the signs for the Golf Course. After passing the entrance of the golf course, continue for a few hundred meters, until you see a cart track on your left. Turn onto the track that passes the church of the Madonna di Paullo. This track, with red and white red signs n° 2, is part of the Via dei Monti Lariani, a trekking route of 125 km. Continue along the cart track which leads with some very sustained inclinations to Bocchetta di Nava (alt. 848 m), the heighest point of this itinerary.

Almost immediately, at the height of a small chapel, you leave the track, and turn left and follow the path along the Dossone until you reach the beginning of the descent. The rocky trail leads down in bends with a breathtaking view... but it is "forbidden" "to get distracted because, especially in the first part, the path is very technical and exposed. The second part of the descent is more fluid and after passing a series of steps you continue for a short stretch in the woods. You end on the paved road which you follow to the left down to Griante and from here along the lake side road you return to Menaggio.





Notes: The fifteenth-century oratory of San Lucio has always been a cultural reference point for the people of both sides of the pass. Inside there are paintings ranging from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century and a wooden statue of the fifteenth century depicting the saint, patron of herdsmen and cheesemakers. The nearby San Lucio shelter was a former Guardia icks in operation since 1903: the military quarded the border, barred by long metal fence called ramina, to identify any smuggling actions. This activity consisted in smuggling the border with various goods such as cigarettes, in order to avoid customs duties. In the Val Cavargna area, both for its geographical position and for the fact that in the past the villagers led a hard life of deprivation, smuggling was the protagonist of the local reality. The detachment of San Lucio was suppressed in the 60s, the barracks, abandoned, went into degradation, but in 1999 work began to be used as a shelter.





N FROM MENACCIO **6** FROM MEMACCIO TO THE MORTH TIP OF THE LAKE

This itinerary runs along Lake Como's north-western shore through lovely mountain scenery, small fishing villages and along sites of historical and artistic interest. The route follows sections of the former state road 340, now closed to traffic, and some of the new cycle/pedestrian lanes along the lake; but it also only follows few sections along the current main road where bikers must pay attention to the heavy traffic.

Itinerary

Menaggio - San Siro - Cremia Pianello del Lario - Dongo - Gravedona ed Uniti Domaso - Vercana - Gera Lario - Sorico

25 km (one way) Starting point:

Menaggio, Piazza Garibaldi 300 m Total ascent:

•00000 Technical difficulty: Physical commitment:

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Route: From Menaggio's central square, Piazza Garibaldi, follow the long lake side road Via B. Castelli to the Lido, and then continue left along Via Roma which comes out onto Via Diaz. Continue to the right and at the entrance of the tunnel, take the cycle/pedestrian lane to the right. It leads to It ends up onto Via Diaz at to Nobiallo, a typical fishermen's village with its narrow alleyways leading down to the lake. Taking advantage of other three segments of the former state road you reach the commune of San Siro. On your way you pass villa la Gaeta. dominated by the Sasso Rancio cliff. Here some scenes from the 007 James Bond "Casino Royale" were filmed. Then follow the main road for approx. 2.5 km passing through the villages of Acquaseria and S. Maria where the beautiful church of Santa Maria stands. It was built between 1464 and 1474 to house the Dominicans. Next to the church you can see the ruins of an ancient Roman fortress

Past the village Molvedo take the road (also open to local traffic!) on the right of the tunnel which enters the village of Rezzonico. We highly recommend a visit of this charming village with its little picturesque harbor, its arcades and 13th century castle. From the parking lot just past the castle, enter Via Statale Vecchia. After 1.5 km you come out onto the state road which you follow for 800 m. Once at San Vito in the commune of Cremia, head towards the church S. Vito, characterized by two bell towers, and enter the marvelous lake side trail without traffic but shared with pedestrians. You have a marvelous view of Monte Legnone (2610 m), the highest peak of the lake, on the other side of the lake.

You reach the harbour of Pianello del Lario where there is a restaurant and a few cafés. At Pianello del Lario you can visit the interesting boat museum called Il Museo della Barca Lariana (for opening times see www.museobarcalariana.it). Once you have reached the public boat landing stage of Musso, you leave the lake path and head up the steep ramp to the left that ends onto the former state road at the traffic lights. Continue on the former state road (open to local traffic!) and after 600 m at the entrance of the tunnel you turn right to take the passage outside of the tunnel in order to reach Dongo.

At Dongo you can visit the 'End of the War' museum that is located in Palazzo Manzi in Piazza Paracchini, It is connected to the events of April 27, 1945, when Benito Mussolini and some of his ministers were captured on the road between Musso and Dongo by local partisans.

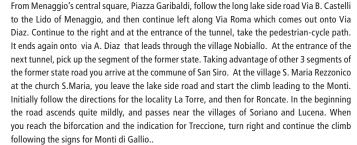
Continue on the state road and just after crossing the bridge over the Albano river, turn right into via Cimitero and, slightly further, turn left in order to reach the parish church of S. Stefano. Behind the church pick up the cycle/pedestrian lane to Gravedona. Just past the lido of Gravedona, turn left and cycle along the Liro river. Cross the bridge and continue along via Roma to the Parish Church of San Vincenzo and the church of S. Maria del Tiglio. It is one of the most important Romanesque buildings of the province. Built in the 12th century it preserves precious frescoes and a wooden crucifix, a unique example of carved wood from the local Romanesque period. Follow Gravedona's lake side promenade lined with cafes and restaurants. Head towards Palazzo Gallio, a majestic palace with towers and loggia, built in 1582 for Cardinal Tolomeo Gallio. The lake side road ends onto the state road and immediately past the power plant you turn right in order to pick up the continuation of the cycle/pedestrian lane that leads to Domaso. Domaso is an ancient village of Roman origins. For a long time it maintained an economy based primarily on fishing before becoming a tourist resort.

Proceed with caution along the State road 340. After crossing the bridge over the river Livo, turn right into Via Case Sparse, which leads to the beach. The cycle-pedestrian lane that connects Domaso with Gera Lario and Sorico begins here. You reach the marina of Domaso where the track continues for a short distance next to the state road. You cross the San Vincenzo river and enter the municipality of Gera Lario with its nice marina. Continue along the long lake towards the northern tip of Lake Como, near the mouth of the river Mera. From here you have a beautiful view of the Pian di Spagna, a vast wetland and nature reserve, ideal refuge for local birds and numerous species of migratory birds, another ideal place or cycling and birdwatching. You soon reach Sorico where the route ends

Possible continuations: cycle paths in Pian di Spagna (various routes in the northern and southern parts), connection with the paths "Sentiero Valtellina" and "Ciclabile Valchiavenna"







27 km

744 m

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Menaggio 200 m

Rifugio la Canua 1520 m

ALPINE PASTURES

cycle back to Menaggio

Length:

Starting point:

• Total ascent:

• Maximum altitude:

• Technical difficulty:

• Physical commitment:

Without ever taking other detours you proceed uphill, with very sustained inclinations, until you reach the houses of Zanatta (alt. 1100 m) (about 9 km) a large open space. From Alpe di Zanatta, you proceed on the paved road towards the last buildings where the paved road finishes and the dirt road starts. The whole second part of the climb develops along a wide cart track, with a compact surface. You arrive at the Alpe Rescascia 1413 m. Pick up the trail that starts above the farmhouse in the direction of rifugio la Canua. After a brief ascending stretch where you have to push your bike, the view opens onto the "Alto Lario", the northern end of the lake. You can see the Bay of Piona with Monte Legnone (alt. 2609 m) towering above on the eastern shore and towards the north the range of the Rhaetian Alps, the small lake of Mezzola, and the mouth of the river Mera

The well-defined path leads along the slope of Monte Bregagno to rifugio la Canua (alt.

2 THE ROGOLOME, THE BIG OAK TREE This itinerary takes you through the beautiful Val Sanagra Park, a territory rich in flora, fauna and ancient rural settlements. From Menaggio you make your way to the village Loveno in

This route allows you to discover Valsolda, an area that spans from Porlezza on lake Lugano to the circle. monument and symbol of the Val Sanagra Park. From here you return to Codogna where there

Camporgna 700 m

Total ascent: 750 m • Technical difficulty:

•••• Physical commitment:

From Porlezza follow the State road 340 in the direction Lugano and at the entrance of the tunnel

