

# COGLIERE LA MONTAGNA

## ANTRONA SCHIERANCO



### Introduzione

On 15 April 1928 the two Municipalities of Antrona and Schieranco merged into a single administration under the name of ANTRONA SCHIERANCO

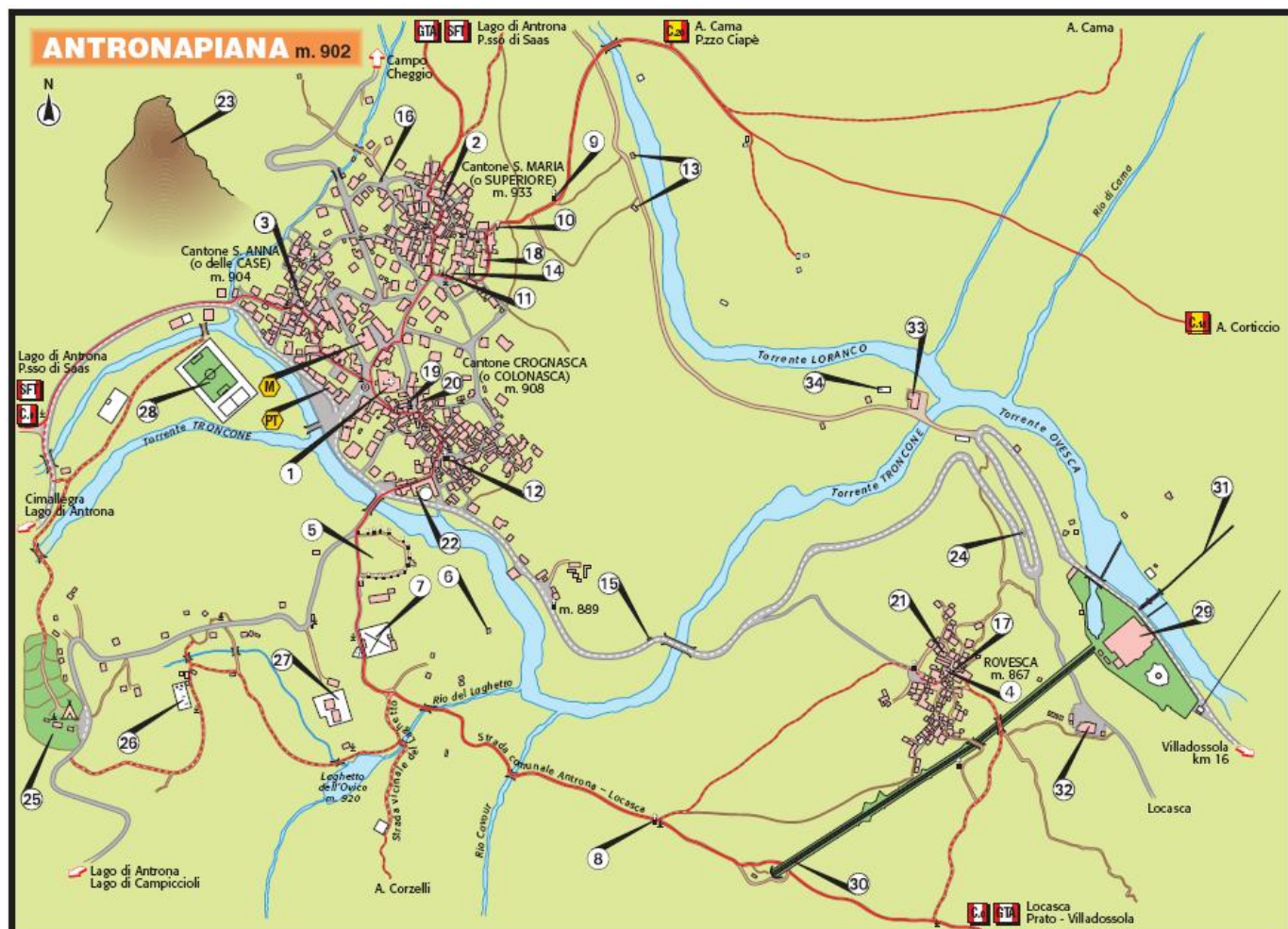
The territory of the Municipality is divided into the hamlets of: Antronapiana, Rovesca, Locasca, San Pietro, Schieranco, Cheggio, Antronalago.

In this writing we will deal with the main village, the other hamlets will be described within the itineraries.

### ANTRONAPIANA

Antronapiana lies in a green basin where the Loranco and the Troncone streams flow together and originate the Ovesca stream. This not well known village is rich of history and boasts ancient traditions. Originally inhabited by shepherds coming from the near Bognanco valley, the village soon spread out, keeping some independence from the rest of the valley and from Villadossola. When in the other villages the iron ore extraction and fusion processes were at the height, the economy of Antronapiana was only based on the development of silviculture and stock rearing; these were the only sustenance forms of the dwellers until a few decades ago. The bonds of relationship with the dwellers of the neighbouring Saas valley in the Swiss Valais contributed to strengthen the village, but also to increase its isolation from the rest of the valley. Marriages between girls from the Saas-Almagell valley and young men from Antronapiana were not unfrequent. For this reason in the other villages of the Antrona valley the women from Antronapiana were usually given the nickname "Sosse". The Saas valley was in fact named Sosa, Sossa or Sausa. From the 1st half of our century up to these days, Antronapiana has become the object of a deep and considerable metamorphosis. In the place of the old alpine huts, product of a poor architecture, new houses of modern design were built, taking into account the impact on the mountain environment. The construction of some large water basins in the upper part of the valley, to feed the hydroelectric power plants, has provided most of the inhabitants with a much more profitable occupation, alternative to stock rearing. Last but not least, the mountain climbing, an activity developed thanks to some members of the C.A.I. branch of Villadossola and thanks to some locals of good will, has helped in great measure this area not well known to come out of its voluntary isolation. Nowadays Antronapiana shows its wholly renewed appearance. It's a resort equipped for winter sports with an ice skating rink, cross-country ski runs and a ski lift to the Alpe Cheggio. Summer mountain climbing is supported by the Andolla refuge with great accommodation capacity, cause of pride for the C.A.I. branch of Villadossola, and a network of bivouacs positioned in the strategic points of the valley. They can provide a useful occasional shelter and stopping place for all those who feel attracted by the mountains. To know the history of Antronapiana, see : - Bertamini T, *Antronapiana*, ed. Libreria Giovannacci, 1987. - Pianavilla M., *Antronapiana nei tempi*, ed. Il Giornale di Carrara, 1996. Tavio G., *Antrona. La leggenda di una tribù misteriosa*, ed. Grossi, 1997

## PLACES OF INTEREST



- 1 **SAN LORENZO'S CHURCH.** The old parish church dating back to 1200 stood where the Chapels of the Way of the Cross are standing now and was buried by the landslide occurred on Jul. 27th, 1642. A few days after the Antrona inhabitants charged the master builder Bartolomeo Tami from Valleggia (Montescheno) to rebuild the new church by enlarging the Oratory of S. Rocco. In 1653 the chapel dedicated to the souls in purgatory was built in front of the chapel of the Blessed Madonna del Carmine, finished in 1656. The bell tower construction begun in 1656 and finished in 1660. The portico dates back to 1685, when the church building works were finished. The church altars, of gilded wood, were all made by the local sculptor Guaglio. The first was the one dedicated to the Madonna del Carmine (1660-1670). Between 1670 and 1680 Giulio Guaglio devoted himself to the remaking of the wooden altar of S. Antonio, whose statue dates back to 1652. The high altar ciborium completed in 1686 is considered one of the most beautiful works in style of the Piedmontese baroque. The altar of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary was begun in 1686 and finished in 1690. In the same year was also finished the altar of the Souls in Purgatory. Several are the other works inherited from the Guaglio school: candelabrum, busts, statues. The christening font is one of the few objects extracted from the rubble of the old church. The pulpit of 1720-21 is work of the sculptors from the Vigizzo valley. In 1841 the proceeds of the sale of Alpe Monte Moro (montmor) were used for the construction of the revolving door of the main entrance and for the purchase of the organ. In 1887 some painters of the Vigizzo

valley, among which stands out the name of Bernardino Peretti, were assigned the decoration works. (See: Bertamini T, *Antronapiana*, ed. Libreria Giovannacci, 1987).

- 2 **ORATORY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN OF THE SNOW** - It's standing in the higher Cantone once called "Arredo" and till 1638 named "Pasquè". (All over the Ossola the term "pasquè" meant the enclosure where the livestock in transit was gathered). The Oratory was built between 1618 and 1638 and was rebuilt between 1700 and 1707 and enlarged and decorated by the painter C. Baranzelli in 1926.
- 3 **S. ANNA'S ORATORY** - Is standing in the Cantone delle Case (= of the houses, meaning that in bygone days some houses were standing in that area). The Oratory was built between 1653 and 1689. In 1724 was built the small portico that in 1927 was restored and decorated by the painter C. Baranzelli.
- 4 **S. GOTTARDO'S ORATORY** - It stands in the hamlet of Rovesca, the most ancient core of houses in Antrona. (The name Rovesca comes from Latin "rubus" (= brier) followed by the ending "esca" typical of the Leponti dialect). The Oratory was built in 1627 (it should be the oldest of Antrona). The gigantic figure of S. Cristoforo on the facade dating back to 1669 is one of the best kept in the Ossola. The altar of 1740 was made by the sculptor G. M. Albasino from Vanzone. In 1836 some parts of the Oratory were restored and in 1838 the decorations of the interior were painted. These decorations were restored in 1926 by the painter C. Baranzelli.
- 5 **CHAPELS OF THE WAY OF THE CROSS** - They were built in the C17 by the Antrona inhabitants to mark the holy place where the old parish church stood, before being destroyed by the big landslide of Pozzuoli in 1642. They were frescoed by different painters, the 1st and the 6th reveal the Peracini school, the 7th and the 8th the school of Peretti and Cotti from the Vigezzo valley, the 14th contains a remarkable fresco of the painter G. M. Borgnis from the Vigezzo valley.
- 6 **EX LAZARETTO** - Area where a lazaretto stood in 1630.
- 7 **CEMETERY**
- 8 **CHAPEL OF THE MADONNA F THE GRACES**
- 9 **CHAPEL OF THE DEPOSITION** - Built in 1760 at Cimariva, was restored in 1960. The cross dates 1965.
- 10 **CHAPEL OF S. GIUSEPPE** - Built in 1705 and restored in 1994.
- 11 **CHAPEL OF THE PILGRIM MADONNA** - Built in 1849.
- 12 **CHAPEL**
- 13 **EX MILLS**
- 14 **PARISH HOUSE**
- 15 **MEMORIAL STONE** - Dedicated to Baccaglio and Seminari, killed there on Nov. 8th, 1943.

**16 STONE FOUNTAIN**

**17 STONE FOUNTAIN**

**18 HOUSES OF ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST**

**19 HOUSE OF HIGH ARCHITECTURAL VALUE**

**20 HOUSE with the inscription of an old cellar.**

**21 HOUSE WITH OVEN**

**22 EX RAFFINI HOTEL-EX HOLIDAY HOME** -In 1913 the hotel was provided with full facilities, had 52 beds and big rooms, as reported by Angelo Grossetti in his book *La valle Antrona* of 1913.

**23 ANTRONA GREEN ROCKS** - (See: De Maurizi G. and the mineralogical notes of Roggiani A., *L'Ossola e le sue valli*, ed. Grossi, 1977, pp 169-170).

**24 PREIA DUL BIFF** (Biff's Rock)

**25 CAMPING SITE**

**26 RIDING GROUND**

**27 STABLE**

**28 SPORTS CENTRE**

**29 ROVESCA HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT**

**30 PRESSURE WATER PIPE** (Campliccioli/Antrona lago)

**31 PRESSURE WATER PIPE** (Alpe Cavalli)

**32 EX "ENEL" RESIDENTIAL BUILDING**

**33 CIMARIVA HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT**

**34 EX ARRIVAL POINT OF THE ROPEWAY OF THE CAMA GOLD MINES**

**35 "MERLER'S" ROCK** - In 1986 Mr. Pavesi B. reported of a laugera rock at the Alpe di Cama bearing some different types of carvings: small cupels, hones, magic squares, simple disks, cruciforms, star shaped, writings, triads and threads. (See: De Giuli A. and Copiatti E, *Sentieri Antichi*, ed. Grossi, 1997).

**36 ALPE CORZELLI** - In 1991 Mr. Pavesi B. reported of a rock "of the fertility" bearing some carvings representing phallic and vulvar symbols. (See: De Giuli A., *La roccia della fertilità ed altro in Valle Antrona*, ed. Oscellana, 1992, pp. 157-158).

## THE "ANTRONA ROUTE" AND THE VALAIS

Since ancient times the Antrona route was frequented by travellers passing from the Antrona to the Saas valley, through the Antrona or the Saas pass, therefore for travelling from the Ossola to the Valais, linking up Villadossola to Visp.

- **5a** Of high importance is the finding of a Roman age coin in a stopping place right below the pass. This route never reached in importance the one of the Sempione pass, protected by the governments of the State of Milan and of the Valais. Nevertheless many attempts were made to keep the Antrona route practicable and to increase the transit of goods. The main problem was obviously that of the maintenance, as reported in a document of 1454 telling about a meeting of the delegates from the Antrona and the Saas valleys that had been called close to the S.Bartolomeo church of Saas Grund. During the C16 the yearly cattle fair was moved to Villadossola. This fact presumably implies that in the C15 and the C16 this route had been kept practicable. From the Valais mostly cattle and woollen clothware was imported, while the Ossola exported wine, ironware and handicrafts. Moreover, there was the export trade of salt. But the Sempione route was important especially because it linked Lombardy to Burgundy, therefore favouring the big international trades. Domodossola, having stopping places, food supply facilities and toll houses, made considerable profits out of this commerce. A detour of the trading stream toward the Antrona valley would have seriously affected the economy of Domodossola to the advantage of Vogogna and Villadossola. The landslide of 1642 blocked the trade and only after 1700, the Antrona people together with Vogogna planned to resume the trading activity along the Antrona route. But in 1719 the supremacy of Domodossola caused the final stop, decided by Senator Paolo Silva, of the maintenance works on this route and consequently even more impoverished this valley. Only in 1878 a consortium was formed by royal decree with the aim to build the new road of the Antrona valley. The road was opened in 1883. Some stretches of the old layout are still visible.

- **5b** the best kept stretch runs from the Cingino lake up to the pass. Some stopping places are visible.
- **5c** like the one at the pass
- **5d** and the one at the Alpe Saler.

### Manifestazioni ricorrenti

1. San Pietro, un tempo a giugno festa patronale.
2. Schieranco, il 16 agosto festa di S.Rocco
3. Madonna, a giugno festa della Madonna del Carmine
4. Locasca, prima domenica di agosto festa della Madonna degli angeli
5. Rovesca, la prima domenica di maggio festa di S.Gottardo
6. All'inizio dell'estate Sagra della pesca al Lago di Antrona
7. In tarda primavera/inizio estate, festa della croce di Granarioli
8. La prima domenica di agosto, ogni 5 anni, festa della Croce del San Martino.
9. Antronapiana, il 10 agosto festa patronale di S.Lorenzo
10. Antronapiana, nel mese di agosto feste dei gruppi
11. Antronapiana, a metà settembre "Sagra della Noce"
12. A fine giugno, ogni due anni, "Incontro delle genti al Fornalino" tradizionale incontro con gli abitanti della Val Bognanco.
13. Prima domenica di luglio festa della Cappella di Piana Ronchelli, tradizionale festa con il Coro Valdossola.
14. Seconda domenica di settembre festa al Rifugio Andolla
15. Ultima notte dell'anno fiaccolata sugli sci a Cheggio.

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26. "Antrona, la leggenda di una tribù misteriosa", Tavio, Grossi, 1997
27. "Il cammino della mia valle", Virgilio A., Stampart (TO), 1987
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## TOOLS FOR VISITING THE TERRITORY

The morphology of the area requires good training to tackle the walks along marked but demanding routes.

To tackle these paths, tools that help with orientation are indispensable, such as:

1. CARTOGRAPHY - The Italian Alpine Club of Villadossola has drawn up map 107 (formerly 7) of the Antrona Valley, where the various routes have been reported, highlighting those marked (or marked with difficulty) from those not marked. See the link <https://www.estmonterosa.it/carte-escursionistiche-25000.html>
2. INFORMATION TABLE OF THE NUMBERED ROUTES – Some basic information about the routes is given on the back of the card.
3. ON THE WEBSITE [www.estmonterosa.it](http://www.estmonterosa.it) you can get further information by consulting the "Territory" page or by going directly to the link <https://www.estmonterosa.it/catasto-percorsi-vco-valle-antrona-settore-c.html>
4. gpx TRACKS - At the link above, by opening the folders of the various types of routes and itineraries, the gpx tracks are being prepared, which can help in orientation.

Thematic itineraries have been prepared to view the territory from an anthropic, historical and naturalistic point of view.



### **Itineraries in the territory of Antrona Schieranco**

Each itinerary has an "identification code" (for example IC11) which allows you to consult the website [www.estmonterosa.it](http://www.estmonterosa.it) - Sector C on the "itineraries" page for further information. The choice of the itinerary can be made on the basis of the travel time and the height difference, and therefore gradually prepare for the more demanding routes, or it can be chosen on the basis of the seasonal period.

#### **List :**

##### **Itinerario IC11** (Locasca e le miniere di Trivera e Mottone)

The itinerary follows the old mule track to the miners' village and the mines of Trivera and Mottone to then go back along the mule track and see the place where the gold processing industrial plant used to be

##### **Itinerario IC12** (Giro panoramico di Cama – Le ofiliti della Valle Antrona)

The itinerary follows a new path marked out and inaugurated in 2009 and crosses alpine pastures from where you can enjoy views over the two valleys of Loranco and Troncone.

##### **Itinerario IC13** (Giro di Cavallo di Ro)

The itinerary proposes a small tour on the promontory of Cavallo di Ro, a panoramic point over the Val Loranco and Cheggio

##### **Itinerario IC14** (Giro della Forcola)

The itinerary runs through a side valley of the Valle del Troncone which leads to the Forcola pass, a remarkable panoramic point over a large part of the Antrona Valley.

##### **Itinerario IC16** (Giro dei laghi delle valli del Troncone e Loranco)

The itinerary introduces the lakes of the two summit valleys of Valle Antrona. This is a demanding route that takes place in the high mountains with the resulting difficulties, but it is very satisfying for the environments crossed.

##### **Itinerario IC17** (Giro del lago di Cheggio)

The itinerary introduces the two shores of Lago dei Cavalli (or Cheggio)

##### **Itinerario IC18** (Giro dei 5 passi)

The itinerary represents a ride on the border passes between the Loranco Valley and the Zswisberghen valley, ancient passes traveled by the "Smugglers".

##### **Itinerario IC19** (Giro dei laghi di Pozzoli)

The itinerary offers the knowledge of the lakes under the Pozzoli crest.

##### **Itinerario IC20**

It is the tour of the highest mountain pastures of the Antrona Valley

##### **Itinerario IC21** (Giro del Rifugio Andolla)

This itinerary allows you to get to know the middle part of the Loranco valley pastures and the alternative ascent to the Andolla refuge, with the descent along the normal route to the refuge.

##### **Itinerario IC22** (Giro di Larticcio)

The itinerary proposes a visit to characteristic mountain pastures under the foothills of Pizzo del Ton.

**Itinerario IC23 (Giro di Larecchio e il Lago delle Lonze – Il Grande Nord)**

The pasture of Larecchio represents the place that best lends itself to represent the large alpine pastures.

**Itinerario IC24 (Giro del Lago di Antrona)**

The itinerary offers the knowledge of Lake Antrona, from its origins to its current beauties.

**Itinerario IC28 (Giro di Rovesca)**

The itinerary offers the knowledge of the lower part of Antronapiana and the hamlet of Rovesca.

N.B. – The tables of each itinerary show the values (with different colours) divided as follows:



(blue) Traditional value and peasant life. – ANTHROPIC



(brown) Historical, artistic, cultural value. – HISTORICAL



(green) naturalistic value. – NATURALISTIC