

COGLIERE LA MONTAGNA

BORGOMEZZAVALLE



ntroduction

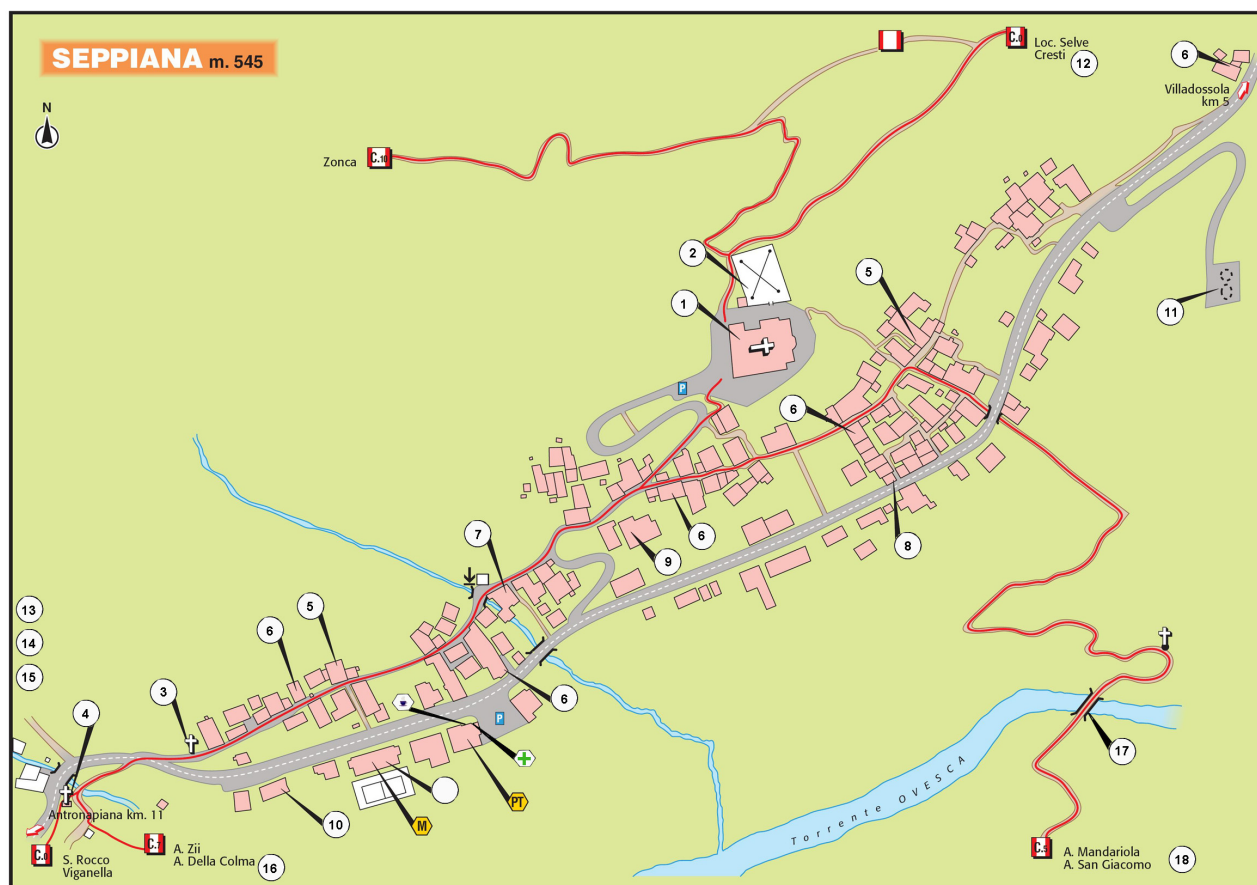
In 2016 the two small municipalities of Seppiana and Viganella merged into a single administration under the name of BORGOMEZZAVALLE.

Here we take this reality into consideration still keeping it separate.

BORGOMEZZAVALLE – FRAZIONE SEPPIANA

Seppiana, formerly called "Silva plana", indicates forest or flat forest, even if the only flat part of its territory is represented by the terraces obtained by its inhabitants on the sides of the mountain. During the period of exploitation of the iron mines, the wealthiest masters who worked outside their own municipal area lived there. Its mountain pastures, still well preserved, almost all arise on the northern slope, beyond the Ovesca torrent. In memory of the struggles sustained in the past by the small town against Villadossola, for the possession of the Alpe di San Giacomo, the procession known as "l'Autani di Seppiana" takes place every year. Around 1200 it acquired the right to erect an autonomous parish, later becoming the matrix of all the other churches in the Antrona Valley. The parchment sent by Pope Innocent II in 1133 to Litifredo (Bishop of Novara) listed the three Pieve dell'Ossola (Domodossola, Pievevergente and Mergozzo), and established that the Pieve di Oxilia (Domodossola) extended to all of Ossola above starting from the left bank of the Ovesca. The Ovesca torrent divided the two parishes of Oxilia and Vergente, even if some fractions of the Villa that stood on the right bank were under the jurisdiction of the parish of Vergente. Thus it was that this area, after the separation from Oxilia, was included in the new parish of Valle Antrona. In Seppiana, located in a central position with respect to the other communities in the area, a church was erected capable of welcoming all the faithful of the valley. The first construction of the church seems to date back to the 11th century. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the remains of the Romanesque arches emerge from the architectural structure of its perimeter walls. Originally the church consisted of a solid nave with a rectangular plan which ended in a semicircular apse. Its strategic position along the Strada Antronesca allowed easy access to all the communities of the hamlets of Montescheno, Seppiana, Viganella, Schieranco and Antrona.

PLACES OF INTEREST



1 THE CHURCH OF S.AMBROGIO - The parchment paper sent from Pope Innocenzo II to Litifredo (bishop of Novara) in 1133, was listing the three Parishes of the Ossola (Domodossola, Pieve Vergonte, Mergozzo) and established that the parish of Oxilia (Domodossola) was extended to all the higher Ossola starting from the left bank of the Ovesca stream.

The Ovesca divided the two parishes of Oxilia and Vergonte, though some neighbourhoods of Villadossola, situated on the right bank, fell within the competence of the Vergonte parish.

This is why after the separation from Oxilia this area was included in the new parish of the Antrona valley. At Seppiana, centrally located with respect to the other communities of the area, a large church was erected to welcome all the faithful of the valley. Apparently the church was first built in the C11. This assumption is strengthened by the evidence that the remains of the Romanesque arcade are rising from the architectural structure of the external walls. Originally the church was formed by a solid nave with a rectangular plan that ended with a semicircular apse. Its strategic position along the Antrona route allowed an easy access to all the communities of the hamlets of Montescheno, Seppiana, Viganella, Schieranco and Antrona. The first enlargement of the church begun between C12 and C13. In 1592 after the separation of Antrona (in 1449) and Schieranco (1571), the communities of Montescheno, Seppiana and Mezzavalle (Viganella) kept their bonds to the mother church of Seppiana. Between 1601 and 1621 some repairs were made with the help of the parish priest Antonio Giavinelli. In 1618 the new parish of Viganella was cut off from the parish of S. Ambrogio since, shortly before, its community had built on its own land the church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Between 1622 and 1624 its height was increased and later on, from 1643 and 1681, care was given to the amelioration of its interior. The construction of the ancona of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Rosary dating back to this period (1645) was made by the carver master and sculptor Giorgio de Bernardis from Buttogno, who in the following years

carried out other considerable works. In the workshop of master De Bernardis, in Briona Street Domodossola, used to practice as a sculptor a young and promising man from Antrona, named Giulio Gualio. Remarkable is his sacristy wardrobe and his altar of the Holy Name of Jesus dating 1685. After the restorations made in the C17, the church didn't undergo other interventions until 1925, when its interior was decorated by the painters Vagliani and Baranzelli. Afterwards, in 1994 the roof was rebuilt and the outside area re-arranged.

2 CEMETERY

3 HOLY CROSS - It was carved in the Crevola marble probably in the C 12. It was found on the banks of the Ovesca stream and stood along the "Antrona route". Most likely it made part of the decoration of the portal, made in C12, belonging to the facade of the parish church.

4 CHAPEL - It is the starting point of the "Autani di San Jacam" (holy procession).

5 HOUSE OF ARCHITECTONIC INTEREST, with a fresco.

6 HOUSE OF ARCHITECTONIC INTEREST of 1500.

7 HOUSE OF ARCHITECTONIC INTEREST - Well visible is the door of the only workshop along the "Antrona route".

8 ANCIENT WORKSHOP

9 NURSERY SCHOOL

10 PRIMARY SCHOOL

11 SEAT OF THE WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION

12 WASTE WATERS CONDITIONING PLANT

13 "D'ARVINA" CHAPEL- It shows some interesting paintings of Giovanni Zanolo. It stands at the junction of the road to the "Selve" place.

14 CAMBLIONE - **14a** CHAPEL dated 1867. - **14b** HOUSE with a portal of 1605 and a painting of 1682. - **14c** PRESS of 1750.

15 SAN ROCCO'S ORATORY - When the plague hit the Ossola in 1513 as reminded by the historian Capis, there stood already a chapel, dedicated to S.Rocco. In the Antrona valley, like in other areas, a great number of infected persons died and others escaped the plague finding a previous isolation in the huts of the Ovigo pastures, on the right bank of the Ovesca stream, where in summer the air is fresher and healthier. Some wealthy persons, iron traders, made a vow and legacies for the construction of this chapel. The next plague of 1630 gave once again the great opportunity for the restoration of the S. Rocco's Oratory. On this occasion the community added also S. Bonaventura to the traditional patron saint S. Rocco. The enlargement works were begun in 1631 and continued until the façade was completed, in 1641. In 1659 the walls had not been plastered yet and there was no floor. Only in the inventory of 1681 the Oratory was described with its present dimensions and shape. In 1732 the embellishment of the altar was entrusted to the sculptor Lanti from Macugnaga. In 1759 the altar's ancona consisted of a large portion representing the portrait of S. Rocco, cardinal Borromeo and the Blessed Virgin Mary. In 1822 the ancona was substituted by the existing one, painted by the painter Giovan Pietro Tosi from Villadossola. In 1840 the Oratory was restored and decorated by the painter Lamberto Daniele. (See: Bertamini T. *L'Oratorio di S. Rocco di Camblione di Seppiana* - Ed. Oscellana - 1992, pp. 129-152).

16 GALLIANO - **16a** WASH-HOUSE - **16b** HOUSES of architectural interest.

17 ALPE CASCINA SOTTO - Inscription on the laugera stone in memory of a battle engaged for the possession of the pastures.

18 ALPE DELLA COLMA "IL LAGHETTO" (the pond) - **18a** The pond has always been the symbol of the Colma. Over the years the pond got silted up and only in 1995 it was filled up again with the waste waters of the Erbalunga fountains. In this way the return of frogs into the pond is expected, since once it housed these amphibians. - **18b** Steel Cross, used for the prayers of the "Autani di Seppiana".

19 REFUGE AT THE ALPE S. GIACOMO - **19a** S. Giacomo's Oratory, built in the C17 (see Bertamini T., *Storia di Villadossola* - Ed. Oscellana - 1976, pp. 222 -223). - **19b** FOUNTAIN inaugurated on July 31st, 1932 (see: Autori Vari, *Cinquant 'anni di storia e passione* -Ed. C.A.I.,

Sez. di Villadossola - 1996, pp. 9 - 12). -19c The REFUGE originally belonged to the Luigi Rondolini family, whose sons, in the seventies, granted its use to the C. A.I. branch of Villadossola and afterwards assigned it without payment to this Association in 1994. (See: Autori vari, *Guida di Villadossola* - Ed. C.A.I. di Villadossola- 1996, p. 84).

recurring manifestations

1. Ultima domenica di Luglio "Autani di San Giacomo"
2. Il 7 dicembre festa Patronale di Sant'Ambrogio
3. Il 6 gennaio, all'interno della chiesa Parrocchiale, il "Gelindo" rappresentazione in dialetto dell'Epifania.
4. A San Rocco, la domenica dopo il 15 di agosto, festa di San Rocco
5. A Zonca (anche se è nel comune di Montescheno) il 13 dicembre festa di S.Lucia e alla seconda metà di agosto "Festa della Madonna Addolorata"
6. In autunno "Sagra della castagna"

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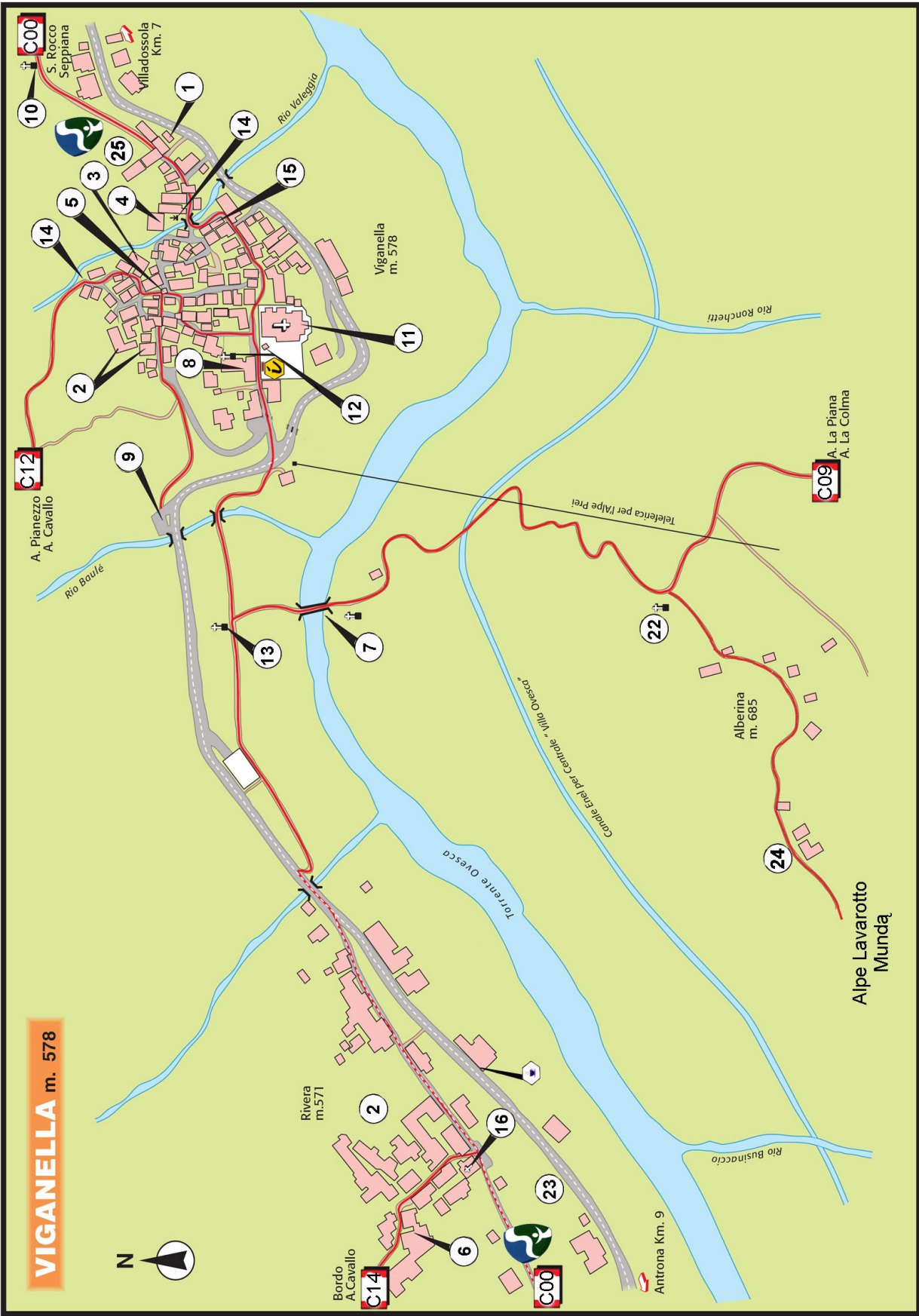
BORGOMEZZAVALLE – FRAZIONE VIGANELLA

Introduzione

Viganella, once "Ulcanella", for many years was the centre of processing of the iron ore extracted from the Ogaggia mines. Its hamlets Bordo, Cheggio and Ruginenta, immersed in the green woods have now become a place of meditation for a group of buddhist members. Up to the beginning of our century this area was simply called "the middle valley". Only recently it was named the Viganella municipality. Viganella is a toponym indicating the "nearby pasture". Traces of an ancient civilization are visible: some building structures undoubtedly of megalithic origin. In their interior some niches and false dome-shaped caves were found, similar to those at Varchignoli. Similarly, at Rivera a Roman age tomb was found.

Presumably, the iron ore extraction and fusion activity was always present over the centuries, together with agriculture and stock rearing. Even the houses of Viganella seem to be more suitable to miners and blacksmiths than to farmers. In 1569 Viganella obtained its own statutes.

PLACES OF INTEREST



1 - CASAFORTE - Transformed in the 18th century into a multi-family residence by adding a very elongated body, close to the primitive nucleus. The contrast between the way of living of the two eras appears more evident here than elsewhere. The iron museum and the Viganella Territory Consultation Center have been created in the old tower (which can be consulted at the link or by asking Seppiana in order to be able to visit it)

2 - CASE DI INTERESSE ARCHITETTONICO

3 - CASE CON COLONNATO DEL 1600

4 - CASA CON COLONNATO (Ca' dul van) beautiful and important house in Viganella, which was the residence of a prestigious family of notaries from which it takes its name, and which is distinguished by a vast loggia front with arches and stone columns. Renovated in 2004 and a subsequent recovery that led in 2008 to also be a point of receptivity with bedrooms and kitchen. Inside, in addition to a room for conferences and projections, there is a cellar used as a wine museum, a small museum dedicated to the important figure of the sculptor and gilder Giovan Pietro Vanni (1744/1813) who created numerous works as evidenced by his rich archive of drawings; this house has also become a small meditation corner with its open loggias and a small library.

Giovan Pietro Vanni (1744/1813) To see some of his studies go to the link

To observe the studies and some of his works, visit the museum located on the top floor of "Casa Vanni"

NOTE – Inside the building, in the part of the cellars there is also the "Museum of wine"

5 - ANTICO FORNO comunale adoperato fino al 2010 in occasione delle feste.

6 - FORNO di Rivera

7 - EX MULINO ruins can still be seen near the bridge. Nearby there is the chapel of the Madonna di Oropa.

8 - ASILO founded in 1954 under the guidance of don Vincenzo Annighini and at the behest of benefactors rag. Banchini and Canova sisters, has now been transformed into a cultural center and meeting point for the people of Viganella and Valle Antrona.

9 - GIARDINI PUBBLICI oltre al parco giochi spicca la bella cascata che è stata illuminata nel 2003

10 - CAPPELLE all'entrata del paese sulla vecchia via della valle, restaurate nel 2003.

11 - PARROCCHIA of the nativity of Mary, separated from Seppiana on 11 November 1618. The first church of Viganella was erected in 1614 and blessed on 30 December 1617. The need, strongly felt in that period, to detach from the mother parish of Seppiana, favored the establishment of the new Parish to be dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary. The founding act bears the date of 11 November 1618. The church, however, hastily built on the remains of an ancient sacellum dedicated to the SS. Trinità, immediately showed a certain instability in the foundations of the perimeter walls. Thus a partial

rebuilding and subsequent expansion became necessary. The restoration, completed in 1657, gave the church its current characteristics. The building was solemnly consecrated on 30 June 1895 by the Archbishop of Modena Carlo Maria Borgognoni.

Inside, the church preserves works of art of exquisite workmanship and considerable value. Noteworthy are the six paintings, hanging above the columns of the central nave, illustrating the "mysteries" of the Blessed Virgin Mary, painted by Giuseppe Mattia Borgnis in 1747; the pulpit, a confessional and the beautiful 17th century wooden baptistery; the altars of the SS. Trinity and San Carlo whose statues were sculpted by the sculptor Giacomo Del Zoppo di Albo.

the altarpieces of those of the Madonna del Carmine and of the Saints Andrea and Giovanni (now the altar of S. Rita) attributed to Paolo Lorenzo Gualio. By the sculptor Giulio Gualio are the four bust reliquaries, the two gilded wooden crucifixes and the statue of the Madonna del Carmelo, from the oratory of S. Domenico di Cheggio, kept in a niche to the side of the presbytery.

The polychrome stained glass windows were placed in 1994. The statue kept in the niche of the altar of the Madonna del Carmine, the one carried in procession during the patronal feast, was sculpted in 1891 by the Salesians of Turin.**12 - CAPPELLA** a ricordo dei caduti nella guerra 1915-18.

13 - CAPPELLA of the "Madonna del Bisan" by Borgnis of Craveggia, along the old valley road and at the crossroads of the path to Alpe la Piana.

14 - FONTANE con vasconi in sasso lavorato a mano.

15 - MACINE/FRANTOI usati un tempo per la schiacciatura delle noci. Resti di un torchio per la spremitura delle noci.

16 - ORATORIO dedicated to the Beata Vergine del Carmelo and San Giulio from the 17th century, recently restored. Built on land that the notary Chiolino, born Antonio Liga, donated to the parish, the oratory whose construction began in 1626, was dedicated by the will of the donor to San Carlo Borromeo. The plague epidemic of 1630 convinced the residents to support the ownership of the building also in San Rocco. However, since an altar dedicated to San Carlo had existed for several years in the parish church of Viganella, in order not to create duplication, in 1643 on the occasion of his solemn blessing, the oratory was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin of Carmel whose devotion was gaining ground at that time . The ownership of the Virgin was then joined in 1885 by that of San Giulio.

The altarpiece containing the statues of S. Giulio and S Francesco Saverio was sculpted by Paolo Gualio, son of the master Giulio di Antronapiana.

The statue of the Madonna is attributed to the sculptor Giacomo Filippo Tiberino of Arona. In recent years, the oratory has been renovated. Above the entrance door, in 1997 the painter Celerino Poletti from Vanzone painted the image of the Madonna del Carmine with San Rocco and San Giulio.

17 - TOMBA DELL'EPOCA ROMANA - In 1968 an important archaeological find took place in the Antrona Valley, a group of objects certainly belonging to the grave goods dating back to the end of the first century BC.

18 – FIGURA ANTROPOMORFA on a house in the historical centre. To find out more about the prehistoric finds in Valle Antrona see: "Beyond the unknown", Midali P.F., ed. A.C.G.P.V., 2015

19 – CAPPELLA DELL'ALPE ALBERINA – On the back there is a fresco of the Madonna delle Grazie with the child in her arms, enthroned, and on the side walls S.Giuseppe and S.Antonio. The chapel is due to the devotion of Antonio Grossi who had it built (FF) in 1922

20 – PUNTO PANORAMICO

21 - PAESAGGIO TERRAZZATO –

recurring manifestations

7. La domenica vicina al 2 febbraio, festa della Candelora “La Pescia”(si celebra il ritorno del sole a Viganella)
8. La domenica vicina al 22 maggio, festa di S.Rita
9. La terza domenica di luglio, festa all'Alpe La Colma
10. Prima domenica di luglio, “Festa dei pescatori”
11. Prima domenica di agosto, processione dell'Alpe Cavallo (l'Autani)
12. Prima o seconda domenica di settembre, festa Patronale di Santa Maria
13. A Rivera : Ultima domenica di gennaio, festa di S.Giulio
 - a. La domenica vicino al 13 luglio, festa della Madonna del Carmine
 - b. La domenica vicina al 15 agosto, festa dei villeggianti.

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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 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 Seppiana

Each itinerary has an "identification code" (for example IC05) which allows you to consult the website 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 IC05 (Giro delle cappelle di Seppiana)

The itinerary offers a visit to the "ovigo" pastures of Seppiana passing by the recently renovated chapels, two beautifully crafted arched bridges and crossing the woods you can still see the old workings of the chestnut trees the "Arbul" such as they are called in dialect.

Itinerario IC06 (Giro "Autani di San Giacomo")

The itinerary goes around the famous "Autani di San Jacam" votive procession that is lost in time (it seems that it was already done at the end of the 1600s). Although it partly follows the route of the IC05 itinerary, it climbs up to the top of Alpe la Colma (the little lake) and then descends to Alpe San Giacomo where there is the oratory of the same name, to then descend to the Alpeggi di Mandariola and return to the Seppiana Church.

Itinerario IC29 (Zonca e Viganella)

The itinerary proposes the connection between the village of Zonca and that of Viganella through a path that cuts the slopes of the mountain passing between ancient terraces and a "strong house".

Itineraries in the territory of Viganella.

List :

Itinerario IC07 (Le frazioni di Viganella e la "Via del ferro")

The itinerary offers a visit to the terraces where vines were once grown, to the old villages of Bordo and Cheggio which have been restored by the Buddhist community since 1980. We will go through places such as Ruginenta, Porta, Isella where once there was the processing of iron ore and from where Ceretti gave life to the Villadossola iron and steel industry. We will move to Lavarotto where a farmhouse called "Alberobello" has been created and we will rise in the Alberina area where we can admire the territory of Viganella and the traces of old chestnuts and walnuts. You will descend to cross the beautiful arched bridge, where there are remains of the ancient mill of the 1600s, to then arrive at the Bisan chapel, a valuable work by Borgnis of Craveggia (Val Vigezzo).

Itinerario IC08 (Giro "Autani di Cavallo")

The itinerary goes around the Autani di Cavallo which, although very recent, is similar to those of Montescheno and Seppiana

Itinerario IC09 (Giro della Colma)

The itinerary follows the two classic routes C09 and C96 which lead to the watershed crest between the Antrona and Anzasca valleys, to learn about the agricultural history between the two valleys.

Itinerario IC26 (Sentiero dei Partigiani “Ugo Miazza”)

The itinerary is named after "Ugo Miazza" a partisan of Viganella. The route is similar to the IC07 itinerary with some variations and makes known the place of the events for the liberation of Ossola.

Itinerario “Tra i ciottoli della fede”

Itinerary created in 2021 by Pier Franco Midali, president of the cultural association Giovan Pietro Vanni.

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