

#ticinomoments

Tales from Switzerland's sunny South

Routes through nature and traces of the past open our eyes to fresh perspectives. Paths have stories to tell, while every journey pens a new chapter.

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a great experience

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Angelo Trotta
presents the
new issue of
#ticinomoments
magazine and invites
you to discover Ticino
365 days of the year.



Dear reader,

There are places worth discovering in every season, and Ticino is one of them, offering fresh experiences month after month. The aim of this magazine – through its stories, people and places to explore – is to highlight the region's diversity, the richness of its traditions and its wide range of outdoor activities to suit every taste.

Because Ticino is not just a destination; it is an ongoing experience, to be enjoyed 365 days a year. That is precisely why we developed our Ticino365 strategy. In the pages that follow, as well as through numerous other initiatives, we are committed to presenting Ticino as a place offering authentic and varied experiences throughout the entire year.

Time seems to stand still in its valleys, where visitors can enjoy the truly priceless feeling of witnessing iconic events and places. In the Blenio Valley, historical militias safeguard centuries-old traditions that continue to unite entire communities. In the Bavona Valley, the splüi stand as a testament to human ingenuity and the ability to adapt to nature.

But Ticino also knows how to surprise with unforeseen experiences: from the Unexpected Classic Tour, which rediscovers the roads and landscapes of bygone days with a contemporary spirit, to the timeless charm of Vincenzo Vela's art, which speaks to the present with the power and resonance of the past.

And alongside the stories are countless experiences to enjoy: walking in the Bedretto Valley, where alpine wildlife can be observed up close; climbing the walls surrounding Lake Mognola; tackling the classic Monte Tamaro–Monte Lema crossing, which blends sport with breathtaking views, aided in part by the mountain lifts; or cycling up to Monte San Giorgio, where nature and geology recount millions of years of history.

Travelling to our destination and exploring it by public transport also contributes to this aim. For example, taking the Treno Gottardo operated by Schweizerische Südostbahn AG (SOB) from Zurich, Basel or Lucerne along the panoramic Gotthard line allows you to discover Ticino in an authentic way in every season of the year.

#ticinomoments is an invitation to delve deeper into all of this – and to do so in every season – following the paths of Ticino, the fil rouge that guides the entire magazine.

Angelo Trotta
Director of Ticino Turismo

MOBILITY IN TICINO

21%

ARRIVALS
BY TRAIN

33.7%

INTERNAL TRAN-
SFERS BY TRAIN

49%

USE OF MOUNTAIN
LIFTS

25.8%

VISIT MORE SWISS
DESTINATIONS

Swiss Tourism Monitor
2023





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By Fabio Andina



The Centovallina crosses 83 bridges
between Locarno and Domodossola.

NEXT STOP TICINO

On the tracks of discovery

From the Leventina Valley to Monte Generoso, via the Centovalli and Malcantone, Ticino offers no shortage of captivating railway lines for exploring the region. These are complemented by TILO regional trains, perfect for convenient and comfortable travel throughout the canton. go.ticino.ch/railways

Generoso all year round

The rack railway, with its distinctive blue and orange livery, slowly climbs the mountain slopes until it reaches the Fiore di pietra. From there, visitors are treated to a full 360° panorama. The magic of Monte Generoso can also be experienced in winter, with rides leading to snow-covered panoramas. For those seeking a journey back in time, vintage steam trains are occasionally available for a nostalgic ride.

Winter through the window

The Centovallina, as locals call it, is named after the valley it traverses, rich in forests, waterways and villages. It links Locarno to Domodossola, providing easy access to the towns along the route and the lively market in the Piedmontese city. Stunning in every season, winter offers an extra thrill: the train journey concludes in Locarno, home to the enchanting Winterland event that brings the city centre to life.

On the tracks of nostalgia

For the nostalgic who enjoy slow travel, the old Gotthard railway line offers a memorable journey into Ticino. The Gotthard Panorama Express, with its panoramic carriages, is a unique experience. The SOB Treno Gottardo, meanwhile, offers the chance to explore the villages of the Leventina Valley, thanks to its many stops.

A train with a smile

Between Lugano and Ponte Tresa, the trains boast a fun touch: a smile painted on the locomotive. With views over Lake Muzzano, skirting Lake Lugano, this tram-like train has been providing a comfortable way to explore the Lower Malcantone for over 100 years.





“The Bavona Valley has over 400 splüi, including 130 in the Calnègia Valley.”

TIPTOEING... ALONG STONE PATHS

The valley of resilience

Set within a landscape of singular beauty, the Bavona Valley, a side shoot of the Maggia Valley, is today more vibrant than ever, while remaining a treasured witness to the rural civilisation of the past. Its twelve villages, nestled among rocks and greenery, embody human resilience in confronting the unforeseen challenges of nature.



Writer Plinio Martini described the steepest and rockiest landscape in the Alps as “the most rugged mountains in the world”. It is an apt portrayal: on entering the Bavona Valley you are met with rocks and boulders at every turn, yet this has never deterred people from settling here. On the contrary, within the scarce cultivable land at the valley floor, they adapted with remarkable ingenuity by reclaiming plots, building beneath and around boulders and carving steep paths up to the alpine pastures. For Rachele Gadea Martini, biologist and director of the Fondazione Valle Bavona, this valley is a place of the heart and of roots. It is a vast and varied landscape that Rachele is dedicated to promoting and, above all, preserving through the foundation’s activities and initiatives. The *splüi* — constructions built beneath rocks — form an integral part of the valley’s remarkable rural, cultural and natural heritage.

THE TRANSHUMANCE ROUTE

To truly grasp the essence of the Bavona Valley, it is best explored on foot. The most emblematic path is undoubtedly the transhumance route, which offers close encounters with traces of life in the past and the many constructions under the rock. "Walking along the path, you feel like explorers discovering these structures for the first time: dozens of them, of various sizes, scattered here and there; some beautifully restored, others left to decay," explains Rachele. "It is a well-kept mountain path, clear and carefully maintained, that winds from Caveragno to Foroglio, climbs into the Calnègia Valley and ends in San Carlo." From spring to autumn, people and livestock practised transhumance here, moving gradually up the valley and reaching its most remote corners. The rhythm of those demanding days was set by crops, haymaking and the availability of pasture. "It was a steady migration of people, animals and belongings: from cauldrons to cheese, butter, hay and even mattresses!" she adds with a smile.

AMIDST SPLÜI AND HANGING MEADOWS

More than four hundred splüi have been recorded in the Bavona Valley, a remarkable number, which Rachele explains is easily accounted for: "On one hand, the landscape is shaped by large boulders formed through landslides; on the other, people sought to make the most of these spaces. The rocks were put to various uses: as cellars for storing food or materials, stables for animals and even dwellings for people. In Sab-bione, they actually installed a weaving loom." The variety of splüi is equally vast and inventive: some are underground structures excavated within spaces formed by fallen rocks, others are buildings where the rock serves as a roof and some are external dwellings leaning against the stones. Arable land was so precious that every last centimetre of rock was utilised. "On top of the boulders, cereal gardens or hanging meadows were planted to grow even a few blades of grass," Rachele reveals.

ARCHIMEDES BY NECESSITY

Climbing alongside the picturesque Foroglio waterfall, you enter the fairytale Calnègia Valley. In the Puntid area, after crossing the arched bridge and passing a cluster of mountain huts, you encounter the most famous and emblematic example of this architecture: the Splüia Bèla. A long slab of rock rests atop a smaller fragment, beneath which two separate rooms have been

created, connected by a narrow passageway: on one side, the alpine farmer's dwelling and dairy, and on the other, the cattle shed. "Through a small door, the mountain dweller could reach the goats and milk them indoors, without stepping outside and getting wet. A truly ingenious solution," explains Rachele, adding, "in these lands, human ingenuity was driven by necessity." The practicality of the buildings is evident inside as well: in the section used as a stable, the floor of the splüi is covered with pebbles to aid the drainage of animal waste.

A SIMPLE LIFE

"Walking through the Bavona Valley, you can relive a rural way of life that has now vanished and is not something to be taken for granted," says Rachele. "The landscapes, buildings, well-tended meadows and countless historic trails endure thanks to the loving care of the landowners and inhabitants." Preserving this idyll is a major undertaking, requiring coordinated effort and close collaboration among all those invested in the area. It is a delicate balance, yet one that brings rich rewards.

As a child, Rachele spent her summers with her grandmother in one of the twelve villages. She fondly recalls the absence of electricity, the frugality of the dwelling and, above all, the sweeping panoramas. A life of quiet simplicity, marked by silence and the sounds of nature, which, yesterday as today, invites us to discover it on tiptoe, with respect and gratitude.



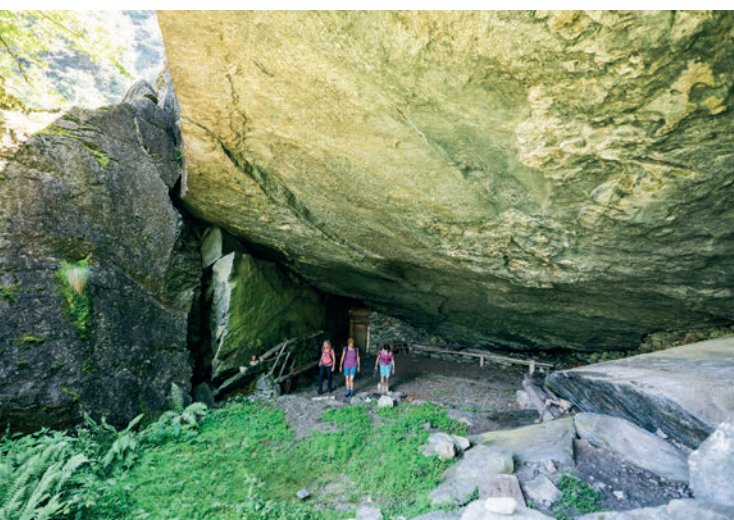
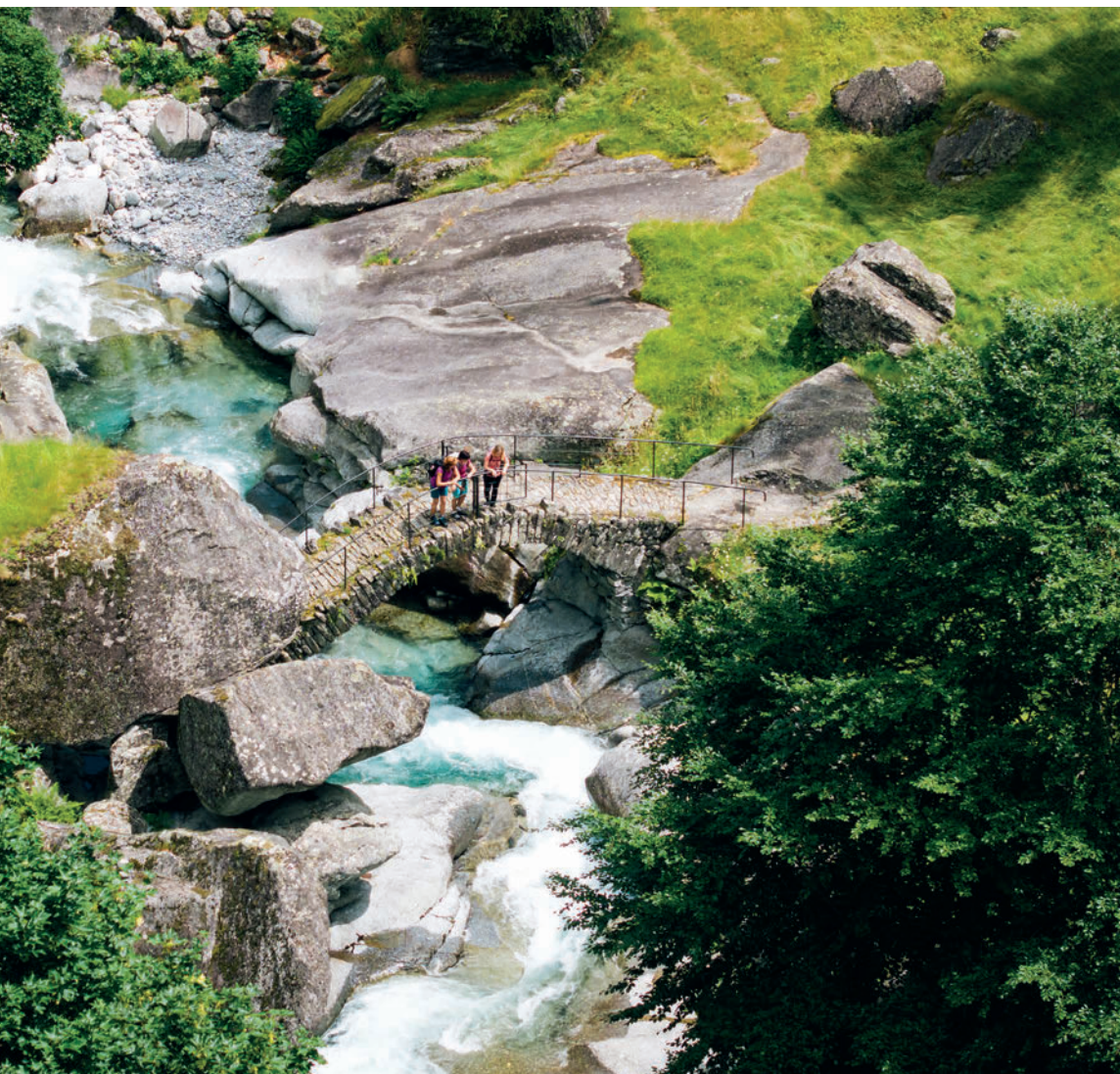
01



02

Fondazione Valle Bavona

Based in Caveragno, the foundation manages and promotes the unique heritage of the Bavona Valley in collaboration with the municipality of Cevio. It also supports significant landscape enhancement projects and offers educational and cultural activities for local residents, schools and visitors alike. go.ticino.ch/transhumance



03



01. Among the farmhouses of Puntid, the bridge over the Calnègia creek appears to rise from the very rock itself, in perfect harmony with the surrounding nature.
02. Living without electricity, by choice: the spirit of the Bavona Valley endures over time.
03. The Splüia Bèla in the Calnègia Valley is truly impressive: a striking example of perfect coexistence between humans and the mountains.
04. Map of Sabbione, one of the twelve villages in the Bavona Valley, where nature and rural architecture have coexisted for centuries.



04

RURAL GEMS

History, architecture and art are woven into the nature and landscape of Ticino. In many valleys, traces of the rural past have been preserved and enhanced, telling the story of people's relationship with the land.

The valley as a museum

Casa Cantoni in Cabbio is the perfect starting point for exploring the Mugio Valley. Visitors can enjoy exhibitions and gather useful information before setting out to discover the area's highlights: from nevère to mills, passing by bridges and other signs of local rural culture.
go.ticino.ch/mevm

The plateau of thick grass

The Pianspessa Foundation preserves the natural, scenic and cultural heritage of the Mendrisiotto region, with a focus on the Monte Generoso area. Its aim is to create activities open to the public, offering the opportunity to discover a unique area.

go.ticino.ch/pianspessa

Rural ingenuity and local history

In Malcantone, among chestnut trees and old trails, the grà of Vezio embodies rural ingenuity: from chestnut dryer to a memory of centuries-old know-how.

go.ticino.ch/chestnut-trail



TO THE
VIDEO

Tradition at the table

MILK

Cow's, goat's and sheep's milk give rise to a variety of cheeses, butter and ricotta, from more than 130 mountain pastures in Ticino. The distinguished Ticino alpine cheese PDO stands out as an excellent product that enriches the region's culinary heritage with fresh and prized flavours.



CREATIVE DAIRY PRODUCTS

UI Bleu Ticines, a blue goat's milk cheese from the Fattoria del Faggio, captivates with its bold flavour. Whey is transformed into Verzaschella, a sparkling drink from the Verzasca Valley, and Sieretto, a refreshing sorbet from the Caseificio di Rita in Chiasso.

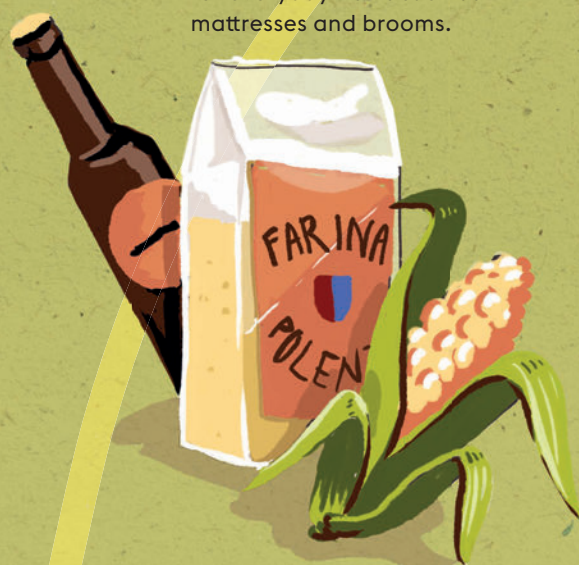
GRAPES

Viticulture runs deep in Ticino, much like the roots of its vines. Introduced in 1906, Merlot now makes up around 75% of the region's grape varieties. Today, Ticino's winemaking embodies tradition, technique, passion and a profound love for the land.



CORN

Introduced in the 17th century, corn has long been a cornerstone of Ticino's agricultural history and rural identity. Primarily used to make polenta, a symbolic local dish, it also served as fodder and provided materials for everyday items such as mattresses and brooms.



EVOLVING FLAVOURS

Golden, fragrant "farina bona" is made in Vergeletto, in the Onsernone Valley. With its popcorn-like aroma, this flour is used in recipes such as ice cream, beer and polenta. At the Bruzella Mill, in the Muggio Valley, by contrast, they grind "Rosso del Ticino", a corn variety protected by ProSpecieRara.

TRADITIONS IN A BOTTLE

One branch of this tradition is the production of grappa, a spirit celebrated for its intense aromas and artisanal craftsmanship. Several producers offer tastings, including the Cadenazzi agricultural and winery company in Corteglia, where pairings are carefully studied to enhance the flavours.

HONEY

Ticino honey is drawn from the region's rich variety of plants in its plains and valleys. Bees produce different types: intense chestnut, delicate acacia and fragrant mountain honey. Each variety reflects the local biodiversity and the rhythm of the seasons.



MUCH MORE THAN HONEY

Bees also contribute to a variety of other products, including mead, beer, sweets, candle wax, cosmetics and propolis. Increasingly, Ticino businesses, such as the Azienda Agricola Bianchi in Arogno, offer visits to their apiaries, giving visitors the chance to discover beekeeping up close.

CAMELLIA SINENSIS

In Ticino, camellias, perceived as symbols of spring, are also connected to tea cultivation. The region's mild climate and acidic soil favour the growth of *Camellia sinensis*, cultivated on Monte Verità, where nature, culture and research converge in a rare and exotic product.



TASTE OF TEA

These plants are used in Pasticceria Marnin's "Camelia" chocolates, containing tea from Monte Verità. The Casa del Tè offers a Japanese tea ceremony, a serene experience of slowness and contemplation. In Ascona, the Cantina alla Maggia transforms the tea into a distinctive digestif.

CHESTNUTS

Once known as the "bread tree", the chestnut was a staple of the Ticino diet. Traditionally dried in "grà", chestnuts were enjoyed all year round. Even today, they remain a symbol of autumn in Ticino, celebrated and served during traditional village festivals.



SYMBOL OF AUTUMN

Bissoli, traditional treats from Bellinzona, combine chestnuts, chocolate and a white snake decoration, the symbol of the city. Also worth savouring is the chestnut panettone, an autumnal twist on the Christmas classic, enriched with marrons glacés.

FLAVOURSOME EXPERIENCES

Ticino offers many other specialities, from artisanal gazzosa to local beers and herbal liqueurs. The **Ticino regio.garantie mark**, the only federally recognised certification in the canton, ensures both the Ticino origin and quality through strict controls. The region's diverse flavours can be savoured at the **Gusta Ticino** food and wine walk in Zurich on 13 June 2026, offering a chance to meet those who keep Ticino's gastronomic culture alive and discover authentic local products. ticinoate.ch, gustaticino.ch



YOUR EXPERIENCE, ENRICHED AND REFINED.

At BLU, an atmospheric ambience and fine Mediterranean cuisine merge to create a unique experience. The large and always surprising menu offers fresh and natural culinary delights, from delicious fish and meat dishes to an alluring choice of vegetarian and vegan recipes. Visit us on the shores of lake Maggiore, you will be warmly welcomed.

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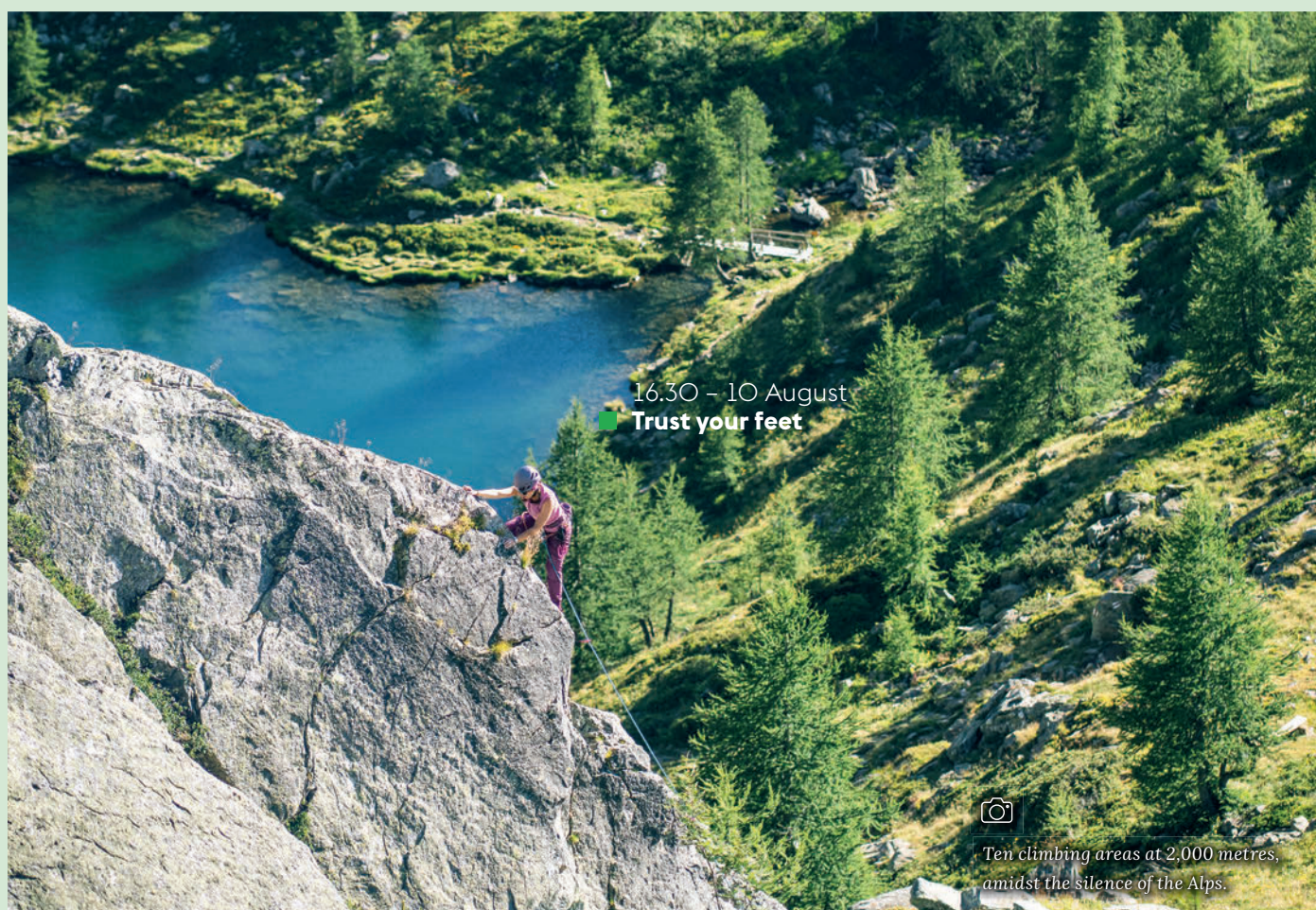
[GO.TICINO.CH/MOGNOLA](https://go.ticino.ch/mognola)

Vertical Mognola: beyond the wall

LAKE MOGNOLA

Your hands are still dusty white with chalk. The wall now feels almost familiar, conquered hold by hold, accompanied only by the rhythm of your breath and the pounding of your heart. And now you're here, feet dipped in the waters of Lake Mognola, drawing breath and savouring the extraordinary beauty before you. You glance around, poised between weariness and wonder, with a smile on your face.

 87 routes |  25° |  energetic



From Fusio, a woodland path leads you up to Lake Mognola. Here, in this remarkable natural setting, you can put your skills to the test on one of the many equipped climbing routes.

ALONG THE MAGGIA

Crossing the Maggia Valley already feels like an adventure in itself. The river accompanies us with its crystal-clear pools, the meadows are sprinkled with wildflowers and rustic stone buildings tell the story of Ticino. We make our way north to Peccia, where stone reigns supreme. Even in passing, one can almost hear the rhythmic tap of chisels as human hands shape raw rock into art. From there, we continue to Fusio, in the Lavizzara Valley, where the path to Lake Mognola begins, taking us on a journey of just over two hours. The trail winds upwards beneath larches, steeped in the scent of resin and moss. It is a high-altitude path, with the cheerful chorus of birds providing the soundtrack.

AN ALPINE EMERALD

Nestled among grassy expanses and solitary larches, Lake Mognola comes into view. Its waters are cold and vividly hued, the reflections shifting with the light and the breeze. Around it rise walls of solid rock: natural cliffs that irresistibly draw climbers and boulderers alike. For a moment, the body relaxes and the mind clears. I feel exactly where I'm meant to be, ready for the climb ahead. This is a corner of Ticino where nature reveals itself in its purest, most authentic form. A place where one can truly connect with the mountains.

GRIPPING THE ROCK

Climbing here is tangible, physical and demanding. The walls offer well-equipped routes on solid rock, with grades suited both to beginners and to those seeking a greater challenge. Every movement demands attention, balance and strength: fingers gripping natural holds, feet pressing against the rock, sweat running down your forehead and your mind focused entirely on the next move. Then, at the belay, I pause and turn to take in the full sweep of the Lavizzara Valley stretching out before me. I had set out to conquer the mountain, yet in its vastness I suddenly feel small. The wall lies behind me, but I can still feel the rock beneath my fingers.

LIVING THE MOMENT

We put away the ropes and harnesses. I slip off my shoes, dip my feet into the cold lake and let the silence work its magic. Surrounded by nature, a simple meal brought from home feels like everything one could wish for. As I catch my reflection in the water, my mind drifts back to the climb: that uncertain step, the intense concentration and the deep satisfaction of having succeeded. Reaching this place is more than an achievement, it's growth. The sky turns a warm orange as the air cools. Night descends, bringing calm and introspection, and I lift my gaze to the stars. Tonight is the night of San Lorenzo. Maybe we'll see a shooting star!

ON THE WAY HOME

The grass glistens in the first rays of the sun, and the crisp air invigorates me. We set off once more on foot, backpacks on our shoulders and minds unburdened, following the circular route that runs alongside the ancient aqueducts of Canà. Carved into the rock, they tell stories of ingenuity and alpine adaptation. The path winds down through silent woods and sunlit glades. Then Fusio comes back into view: ancient houses roofed with stone piode, a silhouette familiar even from afar. We retrace our steps, passing once more through the landscapes that had enchanted us. Now, I see them with new eyes: the flowing river, the sculpted stone, the historic villages. Everything seems transformed.

Protip

Mognola Rock Climbing has ten sectors, offering routes of varying difficulty, with the option to hire equipment on site. The lake is also a great starting point for mountaineering excursions to the surrounding peaks.

go.ticino.ch/mognola-rock-climbing

5 REASONS WHY IT'S WORTH IT

Put technique and strength to the test in different areas of varying difficulty.



Lie under a clear sky and watch for shooting stars on the night of San Lorenzo.



Travel light and make use of all the equipment available on site.



Climb rock in all its forms, choosing between climbing and bouldering.



Go on a digital detox. There's no phone signal up there.





Ticino offers climbing routes
for every ability.



Twilight envelops the base camp,
while the night holds the promise
of shooting stars.

THEATRICAL WALKS

Strolling through plot twists

Discovering downtown Lugano on a theatrical walk – Unexpected Classic Tour. An original guided tour in the company of actors and actresses, who re-enact the past history of the main town of Italian-speaking Switzerland along the way.





Following Via Nassa,
the eye is drawn
upwards, revealing
hidden details and the
history that brings
the city centre to life.



“Our work sometimes
requires us to resolve
situations with
improvisation and
humour.”

Every Monday from late April to mid-October, weather permitting, the meeting time is 10 a.m. outside the Lugano Region offices. This marks the start of the free city tour: the Unexpected Classic Tour. The stroll through the central streets is enlivened by surprising and entertaining theatrical interludes. The walk, suitable for all, lasts about two hours and includes several stops.

We spoke with Davide Gagliardi, actor and creator of this format, which takes his performances beyond the theatre walls and into the heart of the city. A tip: be sure to reserve your place, as these theatrical walks are in high demand.

Davide, when and how did the Unexpected Classic Tour of Lugano come about?

It all began around thirteen years ago. I'm a very receptive person, with my feelers always out. I had noticed that Solothurn and Basel were offering city tours accompanied by actors, and I was immediately drawn to the idea of taking theatre beyond the traditional stage. That inspired me to propose something similar here in Ticino. I drafted a plan and first presented it to the Ticino guides' association, GuideSI. Given their interest, we refined the concept together before taking it to Lugano Region. The tour officially premiered in May 2012.

How did you choose the main stops on the tour?

Together with the GuideSI association, we began by focusing on Lugano's most characteristic locations, then selected those rich in anecdotes and connections to local personalities. With the support of a director, we transformed these into fully developed scenes, resulting in three distinct theatrical moments.

Has the tour undergone any changes over the years?

Naturally, a desire for change always arises after a time. Even for us actors, it's refreshing to find new sources of inspiration. Until two years ago, the tour's third scene was set in Via Nassa, where two fishermen from the early 1900s recounted its story. Then, once again with the invaluable support of the GuideSI association, we discovered a new location – Palazzo Riva. The venue is truly remarkable and leaves visitors literally speechless, so we immediately incorporated it into our itinerary.

This is a building that's not usually open to the public...

No, it's not. This tour offers exclusive access. It's a kind of special treat for participants, allowing them to explore a location that is normally closed and off limits for the usual tourist trails.

A nice bonus compared to other more traditional visits.

I would say so. This tour combines information, entertainment, culture and the "wow effect". Tourists often tell me the "unexpected" theatrical scenes – the very concept that gives the tour its name – are what help them retain the information far more vividly.



01

The tour is offered in several languages.

How do you manage that?

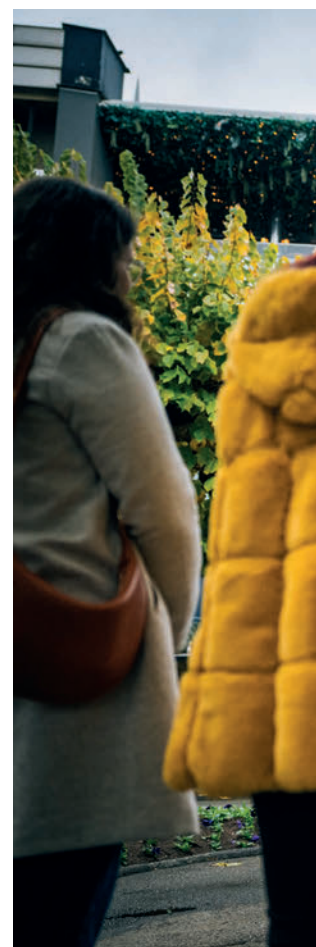
Performing in multiple languages, Italian and German was initially a challenge. We wanted to keep the tour engaging and not too long. In the end, we found a way to blend the two languages: some lines are in Italian, others in German. This approach ensures everyone can follow the general discussion, while those who understand languages remain engaged. Occasionally, English or French is also incorporated, depending on the audience.

So, depending on the audience, is there also room for theatrical improvisation?

Of course! We enjoy improvising. Some scenes are structured and create a kind of "theatrical bubble" for the audience, while others allow us to interact with participants and draw them into the action. Sometimes unexpected situations call for humour and improvisation. Once in Bellinzona, for instance, a car drove through the alley during a performance, and we joked it was a rare, very noisy horse. Everyone laughed.



01. A unique opportunity to see inside the historic Palazzo Riva, an elegant 18th-century residence in the heart of Lugano.
02. The meticulously restored cloister of Santa Maria degli Angeli is home to frescoes illustrating the stories of St Francis, alongside the coats of arms of the Catholic cantons.
03. In Rivetta Tell, the Swiss hero lives on in Vincenzo Vela's 1856 statue.



03



Lugano Unexpected Classic Tour

This free walking tour of the city centre reveals the many faces of Lugano. Accompanied by friendly actors, you will discover the heart of the city among historic buildings and contemporary architecture. Booking is essential.

go.ticino.ch/unexpected-classic-tour



02



A SHORT STROLL... WITH A GUIDE

There are many ways to discover a region. Guided tours offer an excellent opportunity to learn about its history, unique features and fascinating stories. Are you ready to prick up your ears?

Saturday at the market

On Saturday mornings in Bellinzona, the market is the place to be. What better way to explore the city centre than by joining a guided tour? The route winds through the streets of the historic centre all the way to Castel Grande.

go.ticino.ch/bellinzona-city-tour

The Bellinzona Car

Inspired by the Bubble Cars of the 1950s, this electric vehicle lets you explore Bellinzona while enjoying a unique, eco-friendly experience. Its integrated audio guide provides insights into the history and cultural highlights of Ticino's capital.

go.ticino.ch/bellinzona-car

Exploring as a family

A walking tour of the Magnifico Borgo of Mendrisio, specially designed for children and families. Discover the town's history and hidden secrets while having fun.

go.ticino.ch/family-tour-mendrisio



TO THE
VIDEO

The Ticino that doesn't hibernate

Sunny days, mild temperatures and lakeside strolls are just a few of the pleasures that make Ticino a year-round destination. From November to February, the region invites you to discover it at a slower pace and with a fresh perspective: although nature may grow quieter, it never fails to surprise.

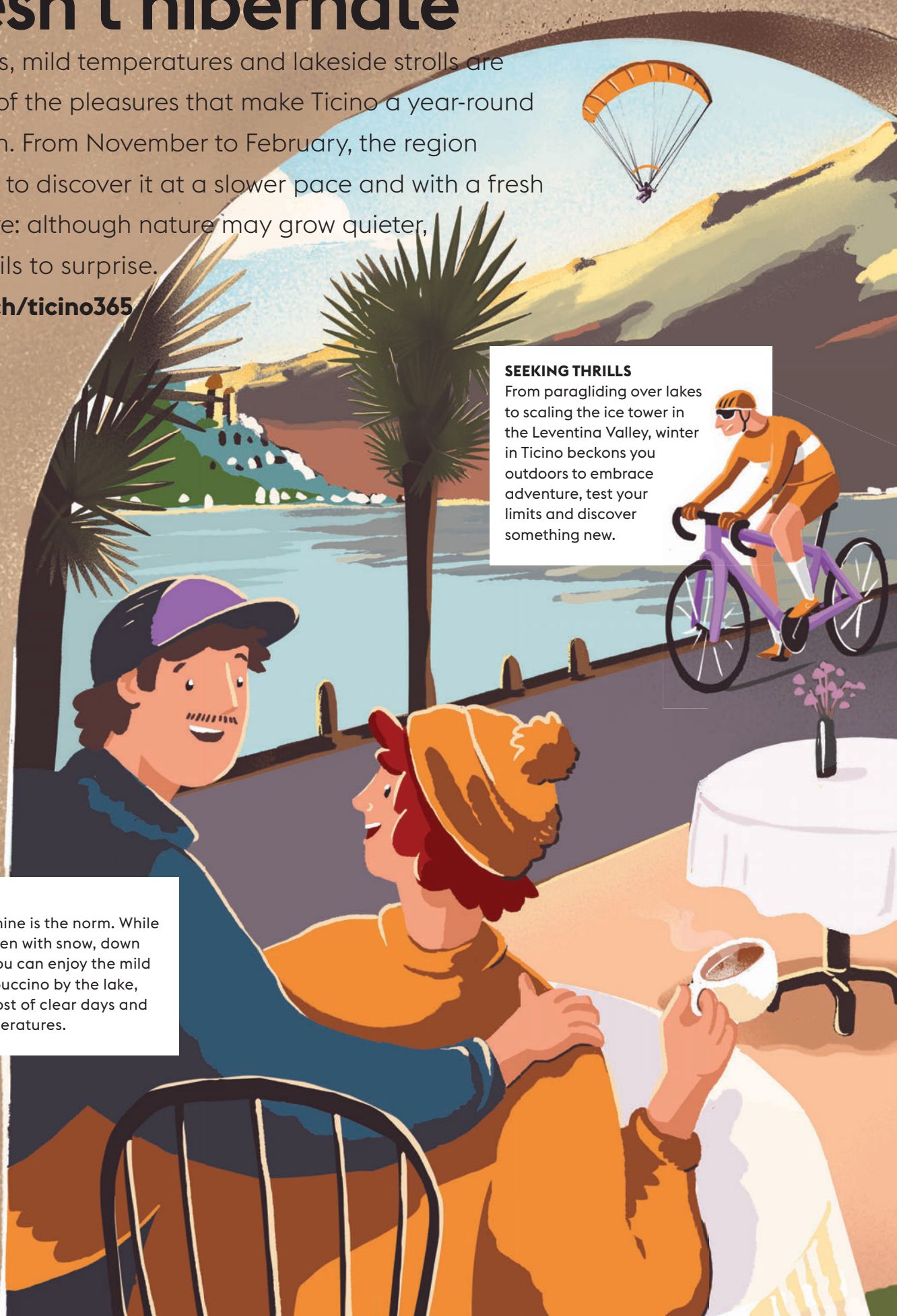
go.ticino.ch/ticino365

SEEKING THRILLS

From paragliding over lakes to scaling the ice tower in the Leventina Valley, winter in Ticino beckons you outdoors to embrace adventure, test your limits and discover something new.

MILD WINTER

In Ticino, sunshine is the norm. While the peaks glisten with snow, down in the plains you can enjoy the mild air and a cappuccino by the lake, making the most of clear days and pleasant temperatures.



ALWAYS ON THE MOVE

Cresciano, Chironico and Brione Verzasca are among Ticino's top bouldering locations, offering challenges to enjoy all year. Trail runners will also find plenty to do, with a mild climate and routes that are always accessible, leaving them spoilt for choice.

TICINO TICKET ALL YEAR ROUND

In Ticino, numerous attractions and services stay open throughout the year. The Ticino Ticket, obtained from partner accommodations, offers exclusive discounts available in the my.ticino.ch Travel Companion on your smartphone.

WINTER FUN

Alpine skiing, snowboarding, sledging, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing: even in Switzerland's southernmost region, there are plenty of snow-based activities to enjoy in the mountains.

ASPECTS OF CULTURE

Carnival fills the streets with colour, as music and parades bring cheer to the winter months. Concerts and festivals enliven the season and spill back outdoors with the arrival of spring. Throughout the year, Ticino's museums safeguard art, history and tradition.

HIKE & BIKE

Each season in Ticino brings its own emotions: the golden hues of autumn, the crisp freshness of winter and the pleasure of exploring trails that remain open even in the coldest months. There is never a dull moment. Every season is the perfect time to embark on an adventure.

[GO.TICINO.CH/TAMARO-LEMA](https://go.ticino.ch/tamaro-lemma)

Balancing on the ridge

MONTE TAMARO – MONTE LEMA

Monte Lema rises up before you. You pause for a moment, the wind brushing your face, surrounded by silence. Turning, you see the path you have travelled stretching behind you. Your breath comes steady, your legs still strong. Ahead lies the final climb. Without overthinking, you set off once more, moving towards the conclusion of this adventure.

 13.1 km |  21° |  satisfied



15.30 – 12 September

 **Boundless peace**



In the final stretch of the crossing, Poncione di Breno reveals sweeping views over Malcantone.



From the top of Monte Tamaro, the view ranges over the Alps all the way to Monte Rosa.



*On the sunny ridges of the crossing:
13 km of scenic trail.*



*The recommended period is
from June to October.*

The Monte Tamaro–Monte Lema crossing is one of Ticino's most spectacular and iconic hikes. This scenic trail links two peaks, offering breathtaking views over Lake Maggiore and Lake Lugano. It is an experience to be savoured step by step, fully immersed in the splendour of Ticino's landscapes.

THE CALL OF THE MOUNTAIN

From Rivera, the cable car makes its way up the mountain, carrying us hikers to the starting point of today's trail. When our turn comes, we step on board, leaving behind the noise of traffic, phone notifications and everyday worries. I've been anticipating this moment for days, planning every detail. Ten minutes later, we arrive at the Alpe Foppa, where the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, designed by architect Mario Botta, grows ever larger as we approach. The doors open, I set foot on the ground and our hike begins. Ahead, the ridge stretches in a clear line towards the horizon. For the next five hours, we will walk a path suspended between the earth and sky.

HIGH-ALTITUDE AIR

The first stretch of the trail ascends towards the summit of Monte Tamaro. The laughter of children having fun on the coaster bob and setting off at full speed on the zip line gradually fades behind us. The path is wide and well marked, with the view becoming more expansive the higher we climb. I spot the church again, the newly renovated cable car station and the lake reflecting the drifting clouds. A little further on, the Capanna Tamaro comes into view. Upon reaching the hut, the panorama opens over the Bellinzona region: the valley floor stretches out, dotted with fields and villages. I pause for a moment, and in the distance, a familiar silhouette catches my eye. It must surely be the Fortress of Bellinzona. Just above, the cross atop Monte Tamaro marks the summit.

WALKING THE CREST

This is where the walk along the ridge begins. The path winds through rhododendrons and wide grassy slopes. All around, the mountains define the horizon, while clouds cast shifting shadows across the valleys. I glance from side to side, unwilling to miss any of the surrounding beauty. To the left stretches Lake Lugano; on the right, Lake Maggiore seems to unfurl endlessly. The 13-kilometre crossing passes Monte Gradiccioli and offers a breathtaking view of Monte Rosa. The light slowly changes as we walk, and our steps are accompanied by spontaneous, cheerful chatter. Walking here evokes a sensation that is hard to describe: it feels as though we are suspended between two worlds.

ARRIVING AT MONTE LEMA

Like a long zip, the trail links the two mountains. After nearly five hours of walking, we reach Monte Lema, where the hut welcomes us like a haven after the crossing. Other hikers linger, savouring the view and a well-earned rest. The first travellers descend to the valley by cable car and we wait for the next one so that we can enjoy the moment together for a little longer.

SLOW TRAVELLING

From the cable car descending towards Migliaglia, I watch the changing landscape. The ridges give way to rolling hills and dense forests. Here and there, the villages of the Malcantone emerge, clustered together in quiet stillness. These are places where life moves at a gentler pace, shaped by daily routines and authentic human connections.

In Migliaglia, a comfortable bus awaits us hikers to take us back to Rivera. I bid farewell to the friends I met along the way and cast one last glance at the mountain, my silent companion throughout this adventure. Until next time!

Protip

The Monte Tamaro–Monte Lema crossing is a scenic hike featuring a 776-m ascent and a 716-m descent along a 13 km route, which can be tackled in either direction from around June to October. In autumn, the crisp air heightens the contrast of colours, making the hike even more striking.

go.ticino.ch/tamaro-lema-hike

5 REASONS WHY IT'S WORTH IT

Walking around
13 km along
a panoramic crest.



Admiring Lake
Lugano and
Lake Maggiore
from above.



Breathing in pure
air and getting
completely away
from the daily grind.



Using the convenient
shuttle service
to take you back to
your starting point.

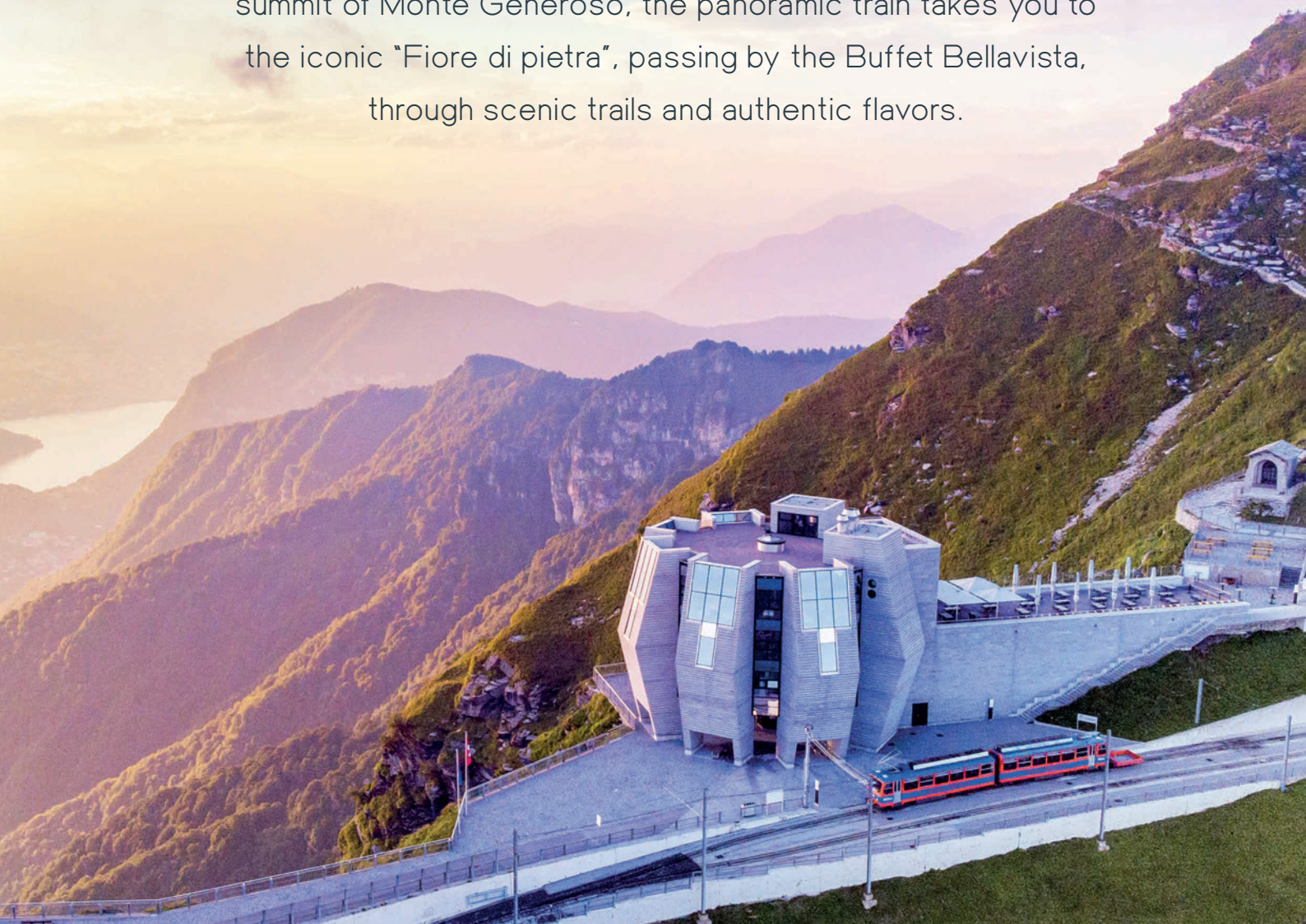


Ending the day with
some relaxation at
Splash & SPA Tamaro.



Explore, live, savor

From the campsite on the shores of Lake Lugano to the summit of Monte Generoso, the panoramic train takes you to the iconic "Fiore di pietra", passing by the Buffet Bellavista, through scenic trails and authentic flavors.





01



02



03



04

Ticino's routes

Every itinerary follows a route imbued with stories and emotions.

Walking offers a way to truly get to know a place and its people, sharing genuine moments while leaving space for surprise along the way. The routes that crisscross Ticino invite you to savour the journey itself, not merely the destination.

Since the days of the Grand Tour, Ticino has captivated those travelling on foot, horseback or by carriage, along roads that linked landscapes, cultures and people. That spirit can still be experienced today by following some of the region's most iconic routes that reveal the many facets of its identity. Four trails await, each with its own distinctive character: urban elegance, living history, authentic flavours and enduring traditions.

1 THE LONG VALLEY ROAD

Once a vital route connecting Alpine villages, the Strada Alta della Leventina is now a hiking trail stretching 45 km from Airolo to Biasca along historic paths. The scenery shifts gradually: wooden houses give way to stone dwellings, with conifers in the north and chestnuts in the south. It passes through charming villages such as Osco and Anzonico, with frescoed chapels and valley views. This three-stage route of medium difficulty blends nature and history, tracing ancient mule tracks and rural life.

go.ticino.ch/strada-alta-leventina

2 ELEGANT LUGANO

The vibrant and refined Via Nassa is Lugano's most celebrated street. Its name derives from "nasse", the fishing baskets formerly used on the lake. Once home to fishermen and artisans, it gradually became one of the city's most central meeting places. Today, it invites you to wander beneath its historic arcades, explore refined boutiques and pause to admire views of Lake Lugano. Stretching from Piazza della Riforma to the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, Via Nassa embodies an urban lifestyle where history, vitality and modernity meet.

go.ticino.ch/via-nassa

3 WINE CELLAR TRADITIONS

Mendrisio's Viale alle Cantine tells the story of a region deeply rooted in wine and gastronomy. Its uniqueness lies in the natural airflow from the cavities of Monte Generoso, which keeps the cellars cool and perfectly suited for preserving wine. Today, with their stone walls and wooden ceilings, these historic spaces have been transformed into welcoming grottos, where visitors can savour local wines and experience the authentic convivial spirit of the Momò tradition – the nickname for the people of the Mendrisiotto.

go.ticino.ch/cantine-mendrisio

4 MERCHANTS PATH

In the heart of Centovalli, the Via del Mercato traces an ancient route from Camedo to Locarno, once trodden by merchants and farmers. This wild and captivating valley, with its stone bridges and historic villages, offers a journey deep into local memory. Along the way, you will discover Borgnone, Lionza, Verdasio and Intragna, with their mills, chapels and houses roofed with stone piode. The well-marked trail is suitable for families and runs parallel to the scenic Vigezzina-Centovalli Railway.

go.ticino.ch/via-del-mercato

“The Blenio tradition is
one of resilience and vitality.”



A CHAT WITH DAMIANO ROBBIANI

Custodians of memory

In summer, the villages of Aquila, Leontica and Ponto Valentino, in the Blenio Valley, dress up to celebrate the Napoleonic militias. A unique chance to discover the history, traditions and identity of the valley by engaging with the local community.



The origins of the Blenio Valley's three military formations can be traced back to a specific historical event: the Battle of Berezina in 1812. Some soldiers from the valley, enlisted in Napoleon's army, vowed to honour the Madonna and the patron saint of their villages if they survived the harsh Russian campaign and returned home. This promise, made as an act of gratitude, intertwines religious devotion with military ritual and, above all, reflects a deep sense of belonging to the local community.

For more than two hundred years, the inhabitants of the three villages have proudly commemorated and renewed the promise of their ancestors during their patron saint festivals. In the processions, the vivid colours of the uniforms, the towering fur hats, the bayonets and sabres of the marching soldiers, the roll of the drums and the performance of ancient military and liturgical gestures take centre stage, embodying this long-standing alpine tradition. We explored this with historian Damiano Robbiani, co-author of *Milizie della Val di Blenio - tra storia e memoria*. Are you ready to take a journey down memory lane?

Why have only the historic troops of the Blenio Valley endured over time?

Historical research shows that the militias of Aquila, Leontica and Ponto Valentino were not the only ones in Ticino. Over the years, however, it was primarily those from the Blenio Valley that endured. This can be traced to the strong connection between the local inhabitants and the historical events of the Battle of Berezina.

In what sense?

The historic militias stemmed from a desire to embellish religious ceremonies, making them more majestic. The military aspect was reinforced through migration. Emigrants from the Blenio Valley who had settled in England, northern Italy and France retained a strong attachment to the main festivities of their home villages, and when they returned, they sought to celebrate these occasions in a dignified and ceremonial manner.

What is the most interesting aspect of these Blenio Valley traditions?

The historic militias of the Blenio Valley are unique. In 2012, they were recognised as part of Switzerland's living traditions, celebrated for preserving an ancient heritage and commemorating significant historical events. Their continued presence today makes these traditions especially meaningful, offering a direct link to the valley's past.

What is there to interest tourists?

It is a thrilling experience: watching the processions and witnessing the deep attachment of the community – adults, young people and children alike – to a tradition over two hundred years old and kept alive through rituals passed down through generations. This shared participation creates a powerful atmosphere and offers visitors a genuine insight into valley life.



01

Can people join the historic militias?

The militias are always on the lookout for new members to help carry this tradition forward. Naturally, it is primarily the local inhabitants who are eager to preserve the mission and practices of the historic troops. Year after year, the same faces and families come together. Their dedication helps keep the memory of their ancestors alive.

The solemnity and ritual of these militias is striking. Their roles and movements are clearly choreographed and well rehearsed.

That's true. The rituals of the militias have been firmly established over the decades, particularly in the second half of the 20th century. Some actions vary slightly from one militia to another. It is the officers who pass down all the knowledge. Certain roles undoubtedly demand greater skill. For

instance, the drummers, who require a specific level of expertise.

Are there any significant differences between the Blenio Valley militias?

Of course. The most obvious difference today lies in the uniforms. The militias of Aquila and Leontica wear attire reminiscent of the Napoleonic era, making their dress a careful historical reconstruction. The militia of Ponto Valentino, by contrast, has retained the traditional uniform of the 19th-century Swiss army, with a few embellishments added by returning emigrants.

Have you come across any interesting stories during your research?

In Aquila's archives we discovered letters from emigrants describing their deep attachment to the celebrations. Above all, they expressed a longing to return home and honour

the Madonna with gunfire and military uniforms.

What makes these traditions unique is that they foster a cohesive community, united by a shared purpose.

The historic militias have survived despite changes in society.

That's true. Over the centuries, they have endured various political and religious conflicts and are still celebrated with unwavering commitment today. For the communities of the Blenio Valley, the historic militias are an unmissable event and a time of coming together that withstands the pressures of social change.

Will this success story continue in the future?

I believe so. These celebrations have been around for so long that renewed interest in their origins will surely ensure their survival for decades to come.



Blenio Valley Museum, Lottigna

In a 16th-century building, the historical and ethnographic museum showcases rural crafts, agriculture, winemaking, cheese-making and beekeeping, highlighting the heritage of the Blenio Valley. A multimedia archive tells the story of emigration from the area, with notable ice-cream makers, chestnut roasters, chocolatiers and restaurateurs. The museum also manages the historic Cà da Rivöi in Olivone, renowned for its sacred art.

go.ticino.ch/museum-blenio-valley



02



03



01. Faith, history and community come together each June during the march of the Historical Militia of Leontica in honour of St John the Baptist.
02. Among the militia's various roles, the drummers set the beat for the parade.
03. At the Town Hall, the starting point for the festivities, the Leontica Historical Militia dons its traditional attire.

THE MANY PATHS OF HISTORY

Historic routes, winding paths between bell towers and Romanesque buildings, and re-enactment events: Canton Ticino preserves a rich cultural heritage. Ready to explore its roots?

Journey into the depths of the mountain

Once a top-secret site, the Gotthard Fortress now hosts the Sasso San Gottardo Museum. Inside its tunnels and chambers, multimedia and sensory exhibitions recount the history of this strategic Swiss stronghold.

go.ticino.ch/sasso-san-gottardo

On the pilgrims' path

The Via Francisca is an ancient route linking Constance and Pavia, stretching 510 kilometres, with 360 of them in Switzerland. Several stages pass through Canton Ticino, winding from the Lukmanier Pass to Biasca, through Bellinzona and onward to Ponte Tresa.

go.ticino.ch/via-francisca

Stories of passage

In Cantine di Gandria, the Swiss Customs Museum tells the story of life along historic borders, where paths and waterways fostered trade and encounters. Objects and testimonies reveal a past of trade, smuggling and traditions that shaped the region.

go.ticino.ch/swiss-custom-museum



TO THE VIDEO

A TANGIBLE COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE

Routes to sustainability

Ticino Turismo places sustainability at the heart of its mission: a tangible commitment today and a compass for the future. Its membership of Swisstable, a programme managed by the Swiss Tourism Federation, underscores its dedication to fostering sustainable tourism with local partners. In the project's first year, five partners attained Level III – leading: Golf Gerre Losone, Castello del Sole Beach Resort & SPA and the three Youth Hostels in Bellinzona, Locarno and Lugano.

1 CLIMATE & NATURE

Nature is a treasure to be cherished and enjoyed responsibly. The four Reka facilities in Ticino, recognised as Level II – engaged within the Swisstable programme, exemplify careful resource management in the fight against climate change. At Lugano-Albonago, the recently renovated Reka village remains open throughout the winter, a deliberate choice that eases seasonal peaks and encourages a more balanced and considerate approach to tourism.

2 MOBILITY

The “Accessible Tour of Switzerland” project, promoted by the Claire & George Foundation, which is also recognised by Swisstable, champions more inclusive tourism mobility. The Ticino stage, the “Palm Trees and Panorama Tour”, offers a barrier-free itinerary with transport and facilities suitable for all. It is a shining example of how inclusive mobility can truly open the region's doors to everyone.

SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION

Ticino is steadily establishing itself as a sustainable destination in Switzerland. Ticino Turismo, together with the four Regional Tourism Organisations, is committed to implementing the national Swisstable programme, advancing the region's journey towards responsible and environmentally conscious tourism. ticino.ch/green

3 PEOPLE

Tourism is all about people: when it is inclusive, it generates value for everyone. The Locarno Film Festival, Swisstable Level II – engaged, exemplifies this through its partnerships with Pro Infirmis and its Inclusive Culture certification. With audio-described screenings, subtitles, relaxed sessions, simplified language and Italian sign language translation, this international event seeks to make culture welcoming and accessible to all.

4 TERRITORY & IDENTITY

Promoting culture means uniting tradition with authenticity. The Fortress of Bellinzona, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2000, Swisstable Level II – engaged, illustrates how history and identity intertwine to tell Ticino's story. The two restaurants at Castel Grande form part of Ticino a Tavola (Swisstable Level II), an initiative promoted by GastroTicino that brings together restaurants and grottos committed to showcasing Ticino's produce in their cuisine.



Alpine safari in the Bedretto Valley

BEDRETTO VALLEY

Your backpack is ready for a day in the mountains: a water bottle, binoculars, sunglasses and a notebook to capture your thoughts.

You can hardly wait to get out walking again. Looking up, elegant birds of prey soar high above. You allow yourself to be guided by the sounds of nature, aware that the true magic lies in the art of observation.



10.45 – 28 July

Breaths of freedom



Capanna Corno Gries sits among the meadows of the Bedretto Valley.

From marmots and ibex to birds of prey, the Bedretto Valley is a sanctuary for alpine wildlife. With its open pastures and quiet woods, watching wildlife in its natural habitat is a precious experience for nature lovers.

THE FAR NORTH OF TICINO

The wild and authentic Bedretto Valley is situated at the northern edge of the canton. In winter, it is cloaked in soft snow; in summer, the meadows burst into colour with an abundance of wildflowers. Ibex move nimbly among the rocks, while marmots whistle from their burrows. Golden eagles and buzzards wheel gracefully overhead, and with a touch of luck, you might even glimpse the bearded vulture, recently returned to soar above the peaks of Ticino. Exploring this alpine valley is an invitation to slow down, to observe the mountains and to feel part of a delicate balance that is as precious as it is fragile.

CARRYING A BACKPACK

Careful preparation is essential for this type of excursion. Bring comfortable, layered clothing, as mountain weather can change in an instant. A jacket, hat and sunglasses are indispensable, along with binoculars to spot every detail and a camera to capture unique moments. Don't forget some snacks, a water bottle and a pocket guide to alpine wildlife to help identify any creatures you encounter. With everything ready, we set off. We board the Treno Gottardo to Airolo, then continue by bus to Cruina. The mountains draw ever closer, standing like silent guardians over a secluded world.

THE MOUNTAIN REVEALS ITS TREASURES

We alight from the bus and begin walking along the path, the crisp mountain air filling our lungs. The distant sound of a horn, with its typical melody, greets us hikers venturing into the Alps for the day. We cross a sparkling stream and follow the trail that will lead us to Capanna Corno Gries in about an hour. Along the way, white quartz crystals glitter in the sunlight, catching our eye. Further on, we discover bushes heavy with blueberries, small yet bursting with sweetness.

UNIQUE SIGHTINGS

We crouch behind a small hill, careful not to make a sound. Phones switched off to avoid distractions, we remain perfectly still, almost holding our breath. The babble of a brook blends with the chirping of birds, while in the distance, the gentle ringing of cowbells echoes across the valley. We don't have to wait long before movement stirs on the far side, although we

can't make out the shapes among the rocks. Binoculars in hand, and there he is. A proud and majestic ibex with long, sweeping horns. He pauses, as if he's seen us, then calmly resumes grazing on the grassy slopes. A little further down, a marmot emerges from its burrow, eyes alert and scanning its surroundings. Suddenly, a shadow crosses the sky. Instinctively, the marmots vanish into their burrows. I look up and see it: the bearded vulture. With a wingspan of over two metres, it glides high above the rocky peaks, slow and imposing.

MOUNTAIN FLAVOURS

With smiles on our faces and cameras full of new shots, we continue along the path marked in red and white on the rocks. We pass through meadows and rocky terrain as the landscape gradually unfolds before us. Rounding a small promontory, we arrive at the Capanna Corno Gries. Nestled amid the greenery, its unusual shape stands out against the mountains, as if it came from another world, hence its nickname "the alpine spaceship". We settle outside, the air cool yet pleasant, giving us a chance to recover after the last stretch. A slice of cake and a coffee offer simple, authentic flavours. All around, there are only mountains, wind and tranquillity. Nothing happens, and that's perfectly fine.

Protip

In summer, the hut can be reached from Cruina in around an hour. Occasionally staffed during winter, it is accessible to experienced skiers or snowshoers in approximately three hours from All'Acqua.
go.ticino.ch/corno-gries-hut



5 REASONS WHY IT'S WORTH IT

Rediscovering
a connection
with nature and
its inhabitants.



Being enchanted by
natural concerts.



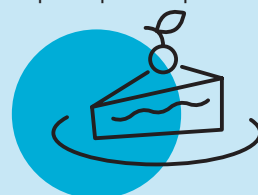
Playing the role of
an explorer on the
hunt for tracks.



Picking sweet
blueberries
along the way.



Enjoying a break
at the Capanna
Corno Gries, the
alpine spaceship.



Between Airolo and the Nufenen Pass, the Bedretto Valley is home to the source of the River Ticino and offers excursions to mountain huts and panoramic high-altitude views.

A LIVING AND INCLUSIVE ART SPACE

The artist's house open to the world

In Lignet, among the picturesque hills of the Mendrisiotto, stands one of the foremost house-museums of 19th-century Europe: the Vincenzo Vela Museum. A remarkable genius loci, it preserves a precious artistic legacy while embracing a contemporary outlook that promotes cultural exchange and dialogue between past and present.

A photograph showing three women in a museum gallery. One woman in a teal shirt is gesturing towards a painting on the wall. Another woman in a red shirt is looking at the painting. A third woman, seen from the back, is wearing a floral dress and a brown backpack. The gallery has grey walls and white pedestals. The image is framed by a large, out-of-focus foreground object.

“The Vela Museum is
a space inhabited by stories
that still resonate today.”



01. A dialogue with the director Antonia Nessi, surrounded by the sculptures of the Vincenzo Vela Museum.
02. The imposing statues dominate the museum halls.
03. A simple snapshot bridges the gap between eras.



02



03



01

Peace and enchantment greet people as they step into the Vincenzo Vela Museum. A sacred air permeates the lush park and villa interior. Visitors are struck by the majestic statue of the Duke of Brunswick, commanding the monumental plaster cast gallery on the ground floor from its pedestal. This artist's house, desired by Vincenzo Vela, stands as a symbol of 19th-century realist sculpture, but is far from a place frozen in time. Today, the museum is above all a window open to the world. Temporary exhibitions, events and complementary initiatives enrich its permanent collections. The bright rooms, the park and the artworks engage in a harmonious dialogue, offering visitors an immersive and ever-changing experience. The museum is a

place where art, nature and thought meet, inviting contemplation in every detail. Since 2023, under the direction of Antonia Nessi, an anthropologist and art historian with experience abroad and in French-speaking Switzerland, the museum and its team have been forging connections between artistic heritage and the realities of the present. Born in Mendrisio and raised in a culturally stimulating environment, Antonia visited the Vela Museum as a child together with her father. After twenty-five years spent away from her homeland, returning to work for the museum in Ligornetto has been a return to her roots.

ONE MUSEUM, MANY PERSPECTIVES

“This museum has always held a special fascination for me,” Antonia recalls. “When I first arrived, the custodian showed me around the entire building; we even climbed onto the roof. From there, I was deeply moved by the surrounding landscape, and I realised just how visionary Vela had been.”

For the charismatic director, the museum is above all a place where stories are told through images. Learning to decipher their meanings enables us to gain a deeper understanding of society. “What interests me most is how 19th-century sculpture can forge a connection with contemporary life,” Antonia explains. “That is why we strive to bring new voices and fresh perspectives into the house-museum.”

INCLUSION IS SECOND NATURE

This approach aligns with the cultural mediation pioneered in Ticino by the Vela Museum through the vision of its former director, Gianna A. Mina. One of its aims is to engage diverse audiences, especially the most vulnerable or marginalised. “Every week we welcome schools, young people and adults, as well as many other communities,” Antonia explains. “In recent years, we have developed a project specifically for people living with Alzheimer’s disease. Sculpture has a narrative power, able to evoke and reawaken sensations and emotions long thought forgotten.” Considerable work has also been done with local migrant communities. The pieces on display are universal, transcending time and speaking across cultures. “We are developing a podcast featuring the voices of some asylum seekers, who will offer their reflections on Spartacus, Vela’s most famous statue,” explains Antonia. This sensitive and socially engaged initiative earned the Vela Museum the prestigious Pro Infirmis Inclusive Culture label in 2019.

NOT JUST EXHIBITIONS

Temporary exhibitions are regularly staged on the first floor of the house-museum, often in collaboration with contemporary artists. “Of course,” Antonia explains, “there is always a connection with Vela’s work, which has the power to provoke reflection. Exhibitions should be able to build bridges.”

Musei d’Arte del Mendrisiotto (MAM)

Five museums, one region and a single network dedicated to fostering public awareness and appreciation of the rich artistic and cultural diversity of the Mendrisio district: this is MAM – Mendrisiotto Art Museums. The network encourages collaboration and synergy among its five institutions, including the Vincenzo Vela Museum in Ligornetto.

go.ticino.ch/mam

A full programme of fringe events, including dance, music and performances, also helps to bring them to the public’s attention. They all foster dialogue, in keeping with the spirit of the place.

What makes this place truly unique is undoubtedly the extraordinary park surrounding the residence, which Vela conceived as an integral part of his total work of art. Divided into two areas – the formal Italian section and the English landscape section – the garden features medicinal plants, a vineyard and a rich collection of citrus trees. A space that radiates positive energy and encourages visitors to linger, while also accommodating the museum’s many activities. “This year, alongside the exhibitions, we launched the Wellness at the Museum programme: Pilates, yoga and sound meditation sessions were held both in the halls and throughout the park,” explains Antonia.

FUTURE PROJECTS

One of the museum’s future challenges is to draw people closer, particularly young teenagers. “Not everyone dares to cross the threshold of a museum; many feel intimidated by it. We need to modernise and find effective ways to engage this age group through cultural mediation and events. I am convinced that art should be able to speak to every generation,” concludes the director.

The Vincenzo Vela Museum has been a home, a studio and a museum, inhabited by stories that still resonate within its walls today. It is a space of freedom, where everyone can express themselves, and one that continues to live and breathe. Its creator would surely have approved.



01



02



ON THE ROAD TO INCLUSION

Not only are accommodation, restaurants and transport readily accessible thanks to a growing range of services that cater to every need, but leisure activities in Ticino are also becoming increasingly inclusive.

Playing outdoors

The inclusive playground in Cardada, at the base of the chairlift to Cimetta, is an accessible and colourful space designed to encourage play, creativity and social interaction for all children.

go.ticino.ch/inclusive-playground

Accessible trails

SwitzerlandMobility's obstacle-free routes offer great excursions for people with disabilities. The website provides detailed route information as well as practical guidance on public transport, parking and toilet facilities. Several circuits are available in Ticino.

go.ticino.ch/accessible-trails

Reawakening the five senses

On the Brissago Islands, guided tours engage all the senses, offering an experience that even visually impaired or blind visitors can fully enjoy. It is a journey around the world in miniature, through stories, scents and atmospheres.

go.ticino.ch/inclusive-brissago-tours



03



01. Designed by Vincenzo Vela in 1865, the villa that now serves as a museum is set within a spacious park, which hosts a variety of events throughout the year.
02. The park becomes an extension of the museum, an open-air gallery immersed in greenery.
03. In addition to its permanent collection, the museum hosts temporary exhibitions that showcase the work of contemporary artists.



[GO.TICINO.CH/SAN-GIORGIO-BIKE](https://go.ticino.ch/san-giorgio-bike)

Savour the ride

MONTE SAN GIORGIO

The stone tables, nestled beneath the shade of beech trees, tell the tale of a simple, authentic tradition: the grottos. You leave your bicycle for a moment, drawn by the aroma of polenta freshly cooked over an open fire. After a leisurely ride along the lake, a cable car journey and winding through shady woodland paths and narrow streets of historic villages, a gazzosa is exactly what you need.



09.30 – 27 May

■ Framed landscapes



On the shores
of Brusino Arsizio.



*Vineyards and hills of the
Mendrisiotto area embrace Meride.*

The Monte San Giorgio cycle route is suitable for all and offers the chance to explore the Mendrisiotto in all its diversity, from pristine natural landscapes to cultural landmarks and inviting stops for a bite to eat.

CYCLING TOWARDS THE LAKE

Beside us, the orange-and-blue rack railway train readies itself to climb Monte Generoso, where the Fiore di pietra blossomed in 2017. We get on our bikes, ready to set off, pedalling through the tranquil streets of Capolago. The metallic clatter of the rails slowly fades as we ride away. The air is crisp, our pace unhurried, and the vast blue horizon of the lake unfurls before us. The road winds quietly between houses with brightly painted doors. To our right we see the baptistery of San Giovanni, the oldest Christian monument in Switzerland. It's time for our first cultural stop, tucked away in a peaceful corner of Riva San Vitale.

A SLOW START

We resume cycling around the contours of the lake, a gentle breeze rippling the water. A duck, resting on the pier, warms itself in the sunlight. A kayak glides alongside us, stroke after steady stroke. Today, there's no rush; we've chosen to take our time, to look around and savour every moment of the ride. After about twenty minutes, we arrive at the village of Brusino Arsizio. Colourful houses line the road, just steps from the water. Across the way, the bell tower of the Church of Santa Maria del Sasso rises prominently, unmistakable above the rooftops of Morcote.

FROM THE WATER TO THE SKY

From Brusino Arsizio, we take the cable car to Serpiano. In just a few minutes, it effortlessly carries us up to Monte San Giorgio, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its significant Middle Triassic fossil deposits. As we ascend, the landscape transforms: the deep blue of the lake yields to the rich green of the woods, and then to the sky's brilliant blue, dotted with wisps of cloud. On this warm spring day, all the colours seem more intense. Within five minutes, we reach the mountain station, where the view unfolds in all its splendour towards the city of Lugano and the distant Alps.

SAVOUR THE RIDE

We set off once more, everyone on their bikes, ready to glide down the shady road. Tree branches arch overhead, shielding us from the sun. The unmistakable scent of spring hangs in the air, hard to describe, yet instantly recognisable. After a few bends, we pause, leave our bikes behind and continue on foot along a path where

we can look for the fossils found in the area. And why not? We also treat ourselves to a refreshing pause at a small natural spring. Hunger soon makes itself known, and a glance at our watches confirms that it's lunchtime. We get back on our bikes and head towards Meride. Passing through an ancient gate, we find ourselves in the courtyard of a traditional local tavern, with a breathtaking view of the surrounding hills, framed by terracotta rooftops.

A SPARKLING FINALE

Lunch has left its mark: simple, local flavours, served with care. After a few minutes, we're back on our bikes, riding through the rows of vines that climb the hills at the foot of Monte San Giorgio. The air is light, the sun high. As we continue, a small grotto appears among the trees: stone tables, polenta slowly cooking over the fire, a group of friends laughing and chatting. It's the perfect moment for a cool gazzosa. As I lift the cap, a sharp pop! rings out, and a shower of bubbles bursts forth, tickling my face like a sparkling spring breeze. One last push and we arrive. A few more bends and we're back at the starting point. We've cycled, tasted and discovered. It's been a day full to the brim with nature, tradition and the authentic spirit of Ticino. The little train rests at the station, while the lake glistens just a little further on.

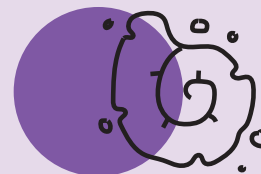
Protip

A 28-km circular route, entirely on surfaced roads and suitable for all types of bicycle, combining lake and mountain scenery. The convenient cable car makes it easy to discover some of the most iconic views in Ticino's southernmost region.

go.ticino.ch/monte-san-giorgio-bike

5 REASONS WHY IT'S WORTH IT

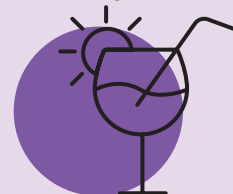
Cycling on the slopes of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Travelling up to Serpiano with ease in the cable car.



Stopping at a grotto and drinking an ice-cold gazzosa.



Visiting authentic villages where time seems to have stood still.



Soaking up Riva San Vitale's spirit, between Santa Croce Temple and the baptistery.





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Welcome to TICINO



Unmissable Ticino

Some experiences really make an impression during a journey. These are moments that you can't wait to share, that make you say, "I was actually there". Ticino is full of them. Instants to be enjoyed at least once in a lifetime, to be included on a personal bucket list overflowing with nature, culture and discovery.

1. **Bellinzona Fortress UNESCO**
2. **Saturday market**
3. **Canyoning**
4. **Carasc Tibetan Bridge**
5. **Ritom-Piora region**
6. **Centovalli train**
7. **Ponte dei Salti, Verzasca Valley**
8. **Brissago Islands**
9. **Cardada-Cimetta**
10. **Locarno Film Festival**
11. **Monte Tamaro and Splash & SPA**
12. **Swissminiatur**
13. **Morcote**
14. **Gandria**
15. **LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura**
16. **Monte Generoso**
17. **FoxTown Factory Stores**
18. **Monte San Giorgio UNESCO**
19. **Breggia Gorge Natural Park**
20. **Holy Week Processions UNESCO**

1 TIMELESS JOURNEY

A journey through time? The historic Tremola road, with its cobbled hairpin bends, lets you reach Ticino as people once did — travelling on stones that have made history. But for the past 10 years, there's also been a more modern way to get there: a comfortable train ride through the Gotthard Base Tunnel. Opened in 2016, it stretches for 57 km and is the longest railway tunnel in the world. An anniversary that coincides with that of the Grand Train Tour of Switzerland, which is also celebrating its 10th year.

2 MADE FOR LIVE

In Ticino, excitement is always on the agenda, with plenty of fun cultural and sporting events. From the delicate colours and blooms of the Locarno Camellia Exhibition to the urban energy of Lugano's LongLake Festival, packed with concerts and open-air shows. In 2026, highlights include the 30th anniversary of Ticino Musica, an international festival bringing together masters and young classical talents, and the 10th La Belvedere Mendrisio, a cycling event celebrating a passion for sport and vintage bicycles.

3 RELAXING ART

Ticino is the realm of dolce far niente. Begin with a stroll through Bellinzona's market, immersed in scents and colours, then let the gentle waves lull you on a boat trip across Lake Lugano. In Mendrisiotto, a pause among the vineyards is the perfect opportunity for a wine tasting, while in Ascona, voted Swiss Village of the Year 2025, an evening walk along the lakefront offers unforgettable views, with house lights shimmering on the water.

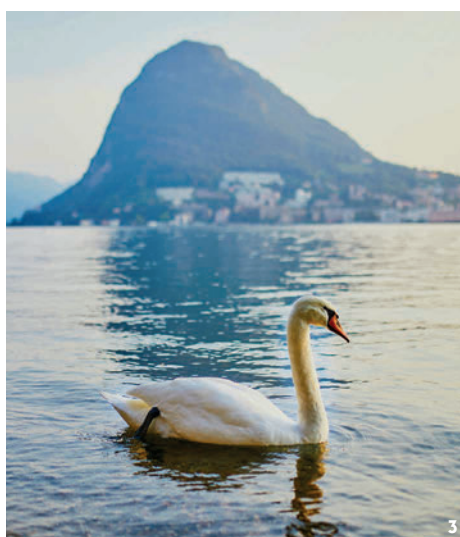
4 FAMILY OUTDOORS

Who says adventure and family can't go hand in hand? In Ticino, you can explore and play at the same time, following the lively BoBosco trail in the Verzasca Valley. In Tremona, an immersive visit to the Archaeological Park brings the Middle Ages back to life. At Swissminiatur in Melide, discover the whole of Switzerland on a smaller scale, while bouldering on large rocks offers an exciting challenge for all ages. Every day can become an experience to be enjoyed together.



YOU MUST HAVE MET THEM

In Ticino, animals take centre stage in unforgettable experiences. Cycle through the Verzasca Valley and meet its black goats, walk with the Ca.Stella alpacas in the Meride hills, admire swans on Lake Lugano as you stroll through Parco Ciani or watch cats on the sunny terraces of the Maggia Valley. A horse ride in the Leventina Valley will make you feel as though you're in the Wild West. How many of Ticino's animals have you encountered on your holidays? Share your moments with #ticinomoments.



HOW MANY ANIMALS HAVE YOU SEEN?

- ☐ **1 - ALPACAS**
walking around Meride
- ☐ **2 - HORSES**
in the mountains of the Leventina Valley
- ☐ **3 - SWANS**
swimming elegantly on Lake Lugano
- ☐ **4 - CATS**
on rustic terraces in the Maggia Valley
- ☐ **5 - GOATS**
that bear the name Nera Verzasca

A black goat with large, curved, light-colored horns is drinking from a stream. The goat has a yellow bell around its neck. The background shows a rocky mountain with green vegetation and a clear blue sky. The foreground shows the water and rocks of the stream.

5

FURRY,
FEATHERED,
AND CURIOUS
ENCOUNTERS

The Beat

An unpublished story by Fabio Andina enriches the ninth edition of #ticinomoments magazine, where the streets of Ticino intertwine with everyday life and the echoes of the Blenio Valley's traditions.

The cabin stood solitary on the hillside. A wooden sentinel overlooking the village, worn and weathered by the elements. From its perch, the valley unfolded in serene quietude on that summer morning. Spruce trees, scattered like an army in formation, stretched skywards. Still. Solemn. Inside the cabin was a couple, a man and a woman who had sat in silence since they had woken. The air was already warm, carrying the faint scent of cold ashes and worn furniture. The windows, bare of curtains, were thrown open.

The woman lay on the sofa, one arm draped across her eyes, her hair tumbling over sunburnt shoulders. The man sat by the window in the compact living room, his back straight and sturdy, gazing outside. The dry, repetitive beat of drums rose up from the town. A military march. She traced a finger across the cushion. They've begun the procession, she said. Yes.

She turned onto her side, stretching out one leg. He watched her, his eyes heavy with the nostalgia of days gone by. I miss people, she said slowly. I miss company.

He nodded, then turned his gaze to the far side of the valley. The gullies with patches of old snow. The bare rocks of the peaks stark against the blue sky.

Do you miss the festival? Perhaps. Or perhaps I miss what it represents. He remained motionless.

There are days when I wake and look at you without recognising you. And yet you're the only man I've ever had. A fly landed on the windowsill. He leaned forward. The insect rubbed its front legs together. This is what love is like after such a long time, he said. Are you afraid of losing me?

It's my biggest fear. The only thing that still keeps us together.

He went into the kitchen. Took a beer from the fridge. Drank it while still standing.

We should go down, she said. Really? Silence fell between them once more. As thick as the air before a storm. The drum rolls persisted. Rapid. Precise.

The woman gave a hint of a smile. What if we pretended to be two strangers meeting each other today, down at the festival? The man pursed his lips. Do you want to relive the thrill of the first time? She sat down. The wood of the sofa creaked. Deep down, I think we still love each other, she said, staring at him.

He ran his eyes over the curves of her hips. Love, he thought, is like the wind: you can't see it, but you can feel it when it moves the trees, when it makes the leaves tremble. Yes, he said, in a low voice. We still love each other. He placed the bottle on the table. She took his hand. Their fingers intertwined. Sometimes I feel like I've forgotten how to be with someone.

He squeezed her hand. With his other hand, he tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. It's not easy, he said. But it's worth it. She rested her head on his warm chest. She could feel his heart beating fast. That's what matters, she said. She hugged him. They stayed like that, in silence, united. Down there was another world. The celebration continued, guided by the beat of the drums. And their breaths, unhurried, followed the same rhythm.



Fabio Andina (Lugano, 1972) is a Swiss writer who graduated in cinema in San Francisco. He divides his time between Madonna del Piano and Leontica. With his minimalistic, pared-down style, he recounts the everyday lives of ordinary people. He is the author of novels, short stories, poems and screenplays. His award-winning books, translated into several languages, include *Sedici mesi* (Rubbettino Editore, 2024), which won the Swiss Literature Prize. He also works in cinema, collaborating with director Villi Hermann on films and documentaries inspired by his works. More information at fabioandina.com

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