



The Antica Strada Regina, that ran along the west side of the lake, was built during the late period of the Roman Empire. For centuries it was an important connection between the south and the north sides of the Alps, between the territory of Milan and the Transalpine regions. This well-conserved stretch of the antique road starts at Nobiallo and leads along the slopes of "Sasso Rancio" to the splendid village of Rezzonico.

ITINERARY: Menaggio - Nobiallo - Sasso Rancio - Acquaseria - Molvedo - Masteda - Rezzonico

WALKING TIME: 3 h

ASCENT: 150 m

DIFFICULTY: steep ascent over Sasso Rancio

TRAIL SIGNS: red - white- red aluminum signposts and stickers indicating
"I Cammini della Regina"

CONNECTIONS: Menaggio can be reached by hydrofoil, boat or bus line C10 (Como-Menaggio-Colico), C12 (Menaggio-Porlezza-Lugano)
Rezzonico is connected by bus line C10 (Como-Menaggio-Colico)



ROUTE: In **Menaggio** follow the lake promenade "Lungo Lago Castelli" and pass by the Lido. Then continue along via Roma and turn right into via Cipressi. Just past the campsite Europa you end up on the main road. Follow via Diaz to the right till you reach the entrance of a tunnel where you pick up the cycle/pedestrian lane on the right hand side. The path goes past a sport climbing rockface. Back on the road again, follow the side walk on the opposite side. After 100 m, turn left and go straight uphill to the Carabinieri Police station. From here follow the signs "Vecchia Strada Regina".

You pass the **church of S. Bartolomeo and Nicola** with its leaning Romanesque 13th century bell-tower before arriving at the centre of **Nobiallo**, once a fishermen's village with small alleyways leading down to the water. At the end of the village you cross a beautiful, old bridge, called "Ponte della Madonna" in honour of the close-by **Sanctuary of the "Madonna della Pace"**, whose name reminds of the "Peace of the Pyrenees Treaty" signed in 1659. From the Sanctuary take the steep ascent of **Sasso Rancio**, a rough and arid rock overlooking the lake, which forced travelers to a difficult climb not without danger. It was however used until 1902, when a new lakeside road was built. Below you can spot the beautiful **Villa la Gaeta**.

The Villa - in the form of a medieval Renaissance castle - was commissioned by the Ambrosoli family to the famous eclectic architects Adolfo and Gino Coppedè in 1921. The Villa la Gaeta featured as a film location for James Bond in "Casino Royale".

Past a "modern building", continue straight on. The track heads steeply downhill to join the lakeside road used before a series of new tunnels were built. Go left to reach the main road and follow



Rezzonico

it for 100 meters. At the entrance of the tunnel (pay attention to the traffic!) take the trail on the right. After 30 m a track on your left leads above the entrance of the tunnel heading - through the woods - to Acquaseria. Cross the bridge over the river Serio and enter the village. At the church of S. Abbondio, take via Regina Margherita. At the end of the village, fork right (ignore the road to Pezzo). The street eventually becomes a cobblestone track that leads to the village of Molvedo. In Molvedo the Antica Strada Regina is interrupted by the park of Villa Camilla. To bypass the park, pick up the left hand side path (via del Murel) heading to **Mastena** (50 meters before the wall of the park).



The Castle of Rezzonico

Once in Mastena turn right, walk through the centre of the village, cross the small bridge over the stream Cellino and take the track down to the right. After crossing the road twice, go left along via del Piano that leads to an **oratory**.

We recommend a small detour to the lake so as to admire the 15th century Dominican **church of Santa Maria** featuring a fine white marble portal and rich interior decorations. Next to the church you can see the ruins of an ancient **Roman fortress**. It was probably used to control traffic over land and water. Back to the **oratory** continue along the old "Antica Strada Regina". Cross the road leading up to the upper hamlets of San Siro, scattered along the slope. Cross a bridge and continue along the "Strada" passing by kitchen gardens and stone border walls.



Just before arriving at **Rezzonico**, on the right, you pass the "Castellaccio" which is what remains of a medieval watch tower. Around its remains, there is a picnic area with fountain. The cobblestone path leads down to join the old lakeside road which you cross to enter the centre of Rezzonico. We highly recommend you go down to the lake side and visit the little picturesque harbour. Then pass under the arcades and walk up the cobblestone steps that lead to the castle of Rezzonico with its 14th century tower. The castle was built by the local noble Della Torre family. It is one of the rare well-preserved fortifications of the lake. At present it is a private residence. From here walk to the main road where you find the bus stop.