

## Discovering the Via Francisca, with Cristina Menghini

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Two days of hiking, to discover places close to home that you think you know, but that will enchant you when you look at them differently.

Next Saturday and Sunday, the 13th and 14th, after hiking almost the entire length of the Via Francisca on the Italian side, **the guide Cristina Menghini** is setting off again to accompany a group on the first two stages, from Lavena Ponte Tresa to Sacro Monte.

**The average distance is 28 kilometres** in total, and does not require a great deal of preparation. It will be a real taster for anyone that wants to have a lovely experience. The walk will give those who are already hikers an opportunity to get to know another route, and those who have never hiked to discover this pastime in the company of others.

In short, our province is beginning to give real opportunities to anyone that wants to start hiking. Cristina suggests a fully organised weekend.

**For more information** (including prices), [click here](#), and to enrol: CRISTINA – [globetrotterlife76@gmail.com](mailto:globetrotterlife76@gmail.com) – 347 9924830.

**The website of the Via Francisca del Lucomagno**

SCHEDULE

## **1st day – 13 April, Saturday – PONTE TRESA – VALGANNA**

Characteristics of the hike: distance, 15 km; difference in altitude, +360 m – 170 m.

Arrival, by personal means, in Ponte Tresa and gathering at the customs house on the Italian side, at 10.45 a.m.

11.00 a.m. – The hike begins along the side of Lake Lugano. On arriving in Lavena, we follow a cycle path built along an old tramline, and enter the Argentera Park, with its majestic trees and streams. We then go past the Ghirla Forge and the beaches of the little lake of glacial origin, and come to the Ganna Abbey, with its pentagonal cloister. Supper and accommodation in a hotel.

## **2nd day – 14 April 2019 – VALGANNA – VARESE’S SACRO MONTE**

Characteristics of the hike: distance, 14 km; difference in altitude, +690 m – 340 m.

After breakfast, a wonderful hike, surrounded by the nature of the Campo dei Fiori Park, awaits us.

9.00 a.m. – From the Abbey of San Gemolo, an ancient road takes us past Monte Martica, with lovely views over Valganna and over the Pralugano peat bog. On arriving in Brinzio, there is a visit to the open-air museum of Pre-Alpine rural culture, and then we continue through the woods of its nature park. The climb up Sacro Monte, along the Way of the Chapels, will enchant us with its art, and on arriving at the village, we can enjoy the beauty of the view over Lake Varese. We cannot return home without trying the “Elixir Al Borducan”, a liqueur with a unique flavour that combines the fragrance of orange with the aromas of the natural herbs of Campo dei Fiori del Sacro Monte.

Bus ride back to Varese, and return home by personal means. **[Click here](#)** for information on how to get to Lavena Ponte Tresa and other destinations.

The videos were made by Neven Video.

**The podcasts** of the stages of the Via Francisca, told by Cristina Menghini.

di **[Translated by Prof. Rolf Cook](#)**