



VAL GRANDE TREKKING

Four-days sustainable
trekking in the Val
Grande National Park

Cooperativa Valgrande
Opere, Studi e Servizi per l'Ambiente



Val Grande trekking

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The **Valgrande Cooperative** works with Nature Guides, the group of the Official Guides of the Val Grande National Park, Mountain Guides and Touristic Guides; it plans, organizes and offers naturalistic excursions, sightseeing, “wilderness camps” and hiking in the valuable natural environment of Verbano Cusio Ossola.

The VCO province is located in northern Piedmont between Lake Maggiore and the Pennine and Lepontine Alps; the difference in altitude between the lake and the mountainous area, which peaks with Monte Rosa at 4634 m, creates an incredible variety of environments, habitats and living organisms.

Parks and Reserves – Val Grande National Park, Ossola’s Protected Areas, Fondotoce Reserve and the Sacred Mounts Reserves – safeguard more than 30% of the area, offering visitors and hikers a wide variety of routes and places to discover.

The Cooperative provides visitors the necessary technical assistance, anthropological interpretation of the environmental characteristics of the area and performs consultation services and teaching in the context of professional courses (for Nature Guides, Environmental Operators, Tourist Guides).



Day 1

Duration: 5 h 30

Finero – Bocchetta di Terza – Pian di Boit

Length of the hike: 11,7 km

Difference in height: ascent 1080 m – descent 810 m

Meeting point: 8h00 by the railway station SSIF (Vigezzina railway) in Domodossola (VB) in Matteotti square

By the “Vigezzina” train you reach the station of Malesco where you continue by a local bus to the village of Finero, situated between the Vigezzo and the Cannobina Valley.

The trekking begins from the old village of Provola and goes up along the torrent “Il Fiume” among a shady beech-wood. After one and a half-hour walk you ascend the steep slope up to the panoramic pass Bocchetta di Terza from where you can have a spectacular view over the mountains and the valleys of the area of the Park. If you are lucky, you will see chamois and birds of prey. After a short stop to eat your prepared packed lunch, the path goes down the grass-slope till the alp “Alpe Terza” and continues through a thick beech-wood to the destination site: the alp “Alpe Pian di Boit”.

Dinner and overnight at the hut of the Valgrande Cooperative at the Alpe Pian di Boit. The hut for the hikers is a bivouak and has a simple sleeping room with mattresses put on a wooden floor and a big kitchen/dining room with a fireplace. No toilets in the hut. A good sense of adaptation and of collaboration is required. The dinner will be cooked together with a vegetarian menu based on organic food. The sources of energy used during the stay are mainly renewable ones. In fact the hut is heated by a wood-stove and has a solar panel for the small amount of energetic supply.



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Day 2

Duration: 5 h 30

Alpe Pian di Boit - Pogallo - Cicogna - Alpe Velina

Length of the hike: 14,2 km

Difference in height: ascent 650 m – descent 1000 m

After a rich breakfast in the hut you will descend along the Rio Pianezzoli and you will reach the historical alp of Pogallo full of stories of mountain dwellers, wood-cutters and partisans. From Pogallo along the historical “via Sutermeister” bordering the gorge of the torrent “Rio Pogallo” you will reach the village of Cicogna, the “capital” of the Val Grande National Park. If the weather is good and hot you can dive into the emerald-colored waters and take the advantage of stopping to have your packed lunch. After a short visit of Cicogna you will continue the exploration of the Val Grande in the valley of the torrent “Val Grande” passing old abandoned alps, once rich in vineyards and orchards. As soon as you have reached the Alps of Velina in Baserga locality, Piero will welcome you in the hut of the Association “Tre Veline” and he will tell stories about his life in strict contact with nature. Dinner and overnight at the huts of Baserga (website: <http://www.valgrande-velina-baserga.it/>)



Day 3

Duration: 5 h 00

Alpe Velina - Corte Bué - Alpe Ompio

Length of the hike: 8 km

Difference in height: ascent 960 m – descent 600 m

After breakfast you will leave Piero and the alp Velina and you will descend to the bridge which crosses over the torrent “Val Grande”. After some pictures to the spectacular torrent you will ascend the steep slope with the forest once exploited by the Society of the quarry of the Cathedral of Milan which makes use of it even today. The Society has existed since 1387 and it was founded to extract the marble from the quarry of Candoglia. The steep slope leads you to the alp Corte Bué where you will stop and enjoy your packed lunch in front of the magnificent view of the Monte Pedum in the very protected area of the Park. You will have a glance of the ruins of the huts which speak about the history of this alp, where nowadays there are the bivouaks of the Association “Gruppo escursionistico Val Grande”. You will continue the hike bordering the north slope of the Pizzo Faié until you will reach the hut of CAI Fantoli situated at the Alpe Ompio. The dinner with local food will be served while admiring the sunset on Lake Maggiore.



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Day 4

Duration: 4 h 00

Alpe Ompio - Bracchio - Mergozzo - Fondotoce (railway station FS Verbania-Pallanza)

Length of the hike: 9 km

Difference in height: ascent 430 m – descent 670 m

After a coffee with a nice view over Lake Maggiore you will go down to the village of Bracchio through a vegetation of chestnut trees while enjoying some glances over the small lake of Mergozzo.

Leaving the wild nature of the Park behind, the lively sounds of the village of Mergozzo, which is one of the most appreciated destinations of lake tourists, remind you of civilization.

After a refreshing stop with the possibility of swimming in the waters of the small lake and of enjoying a pizza or sandwich in one of the lively pizzeria / café of the village, you will continue the hike along the “sentiero azzurro” to the railway station of Fondotoce. The arrival is foreseen around 16h00.



Transportation

The offer begins with the choice of the transport used to reach the Val Grande National Park; meeting point at the railway station SSIF (Vigezzina Railway) of Domodossola which is linked with the most Italian and European towns and transfer from Malesco by local bus to Finero, all of which make it even more interesting.

Clothing and Equipment

Obligatory

high ankle hiking boots with soles in good conditions

rucksack, big enough to contain personal belongings and clothes to change for four days (no trolleys)

waterproof jacket or k-way and a small umbrella

silk sleeping bag or bed sheet

water bottle

flash-lamp

tupperware

Suggested

mountain clothing (fleece or warm sweater)

some clothes to change (long trouser)

wool / fleece hat

sun hat

sunglasses

towel

bathing-costume

kit for personal hygiene

knife

trekking sticks

comfortable light shoes for the hut

binoculars

photocamera

personal medicines (in case of particular pathologies)