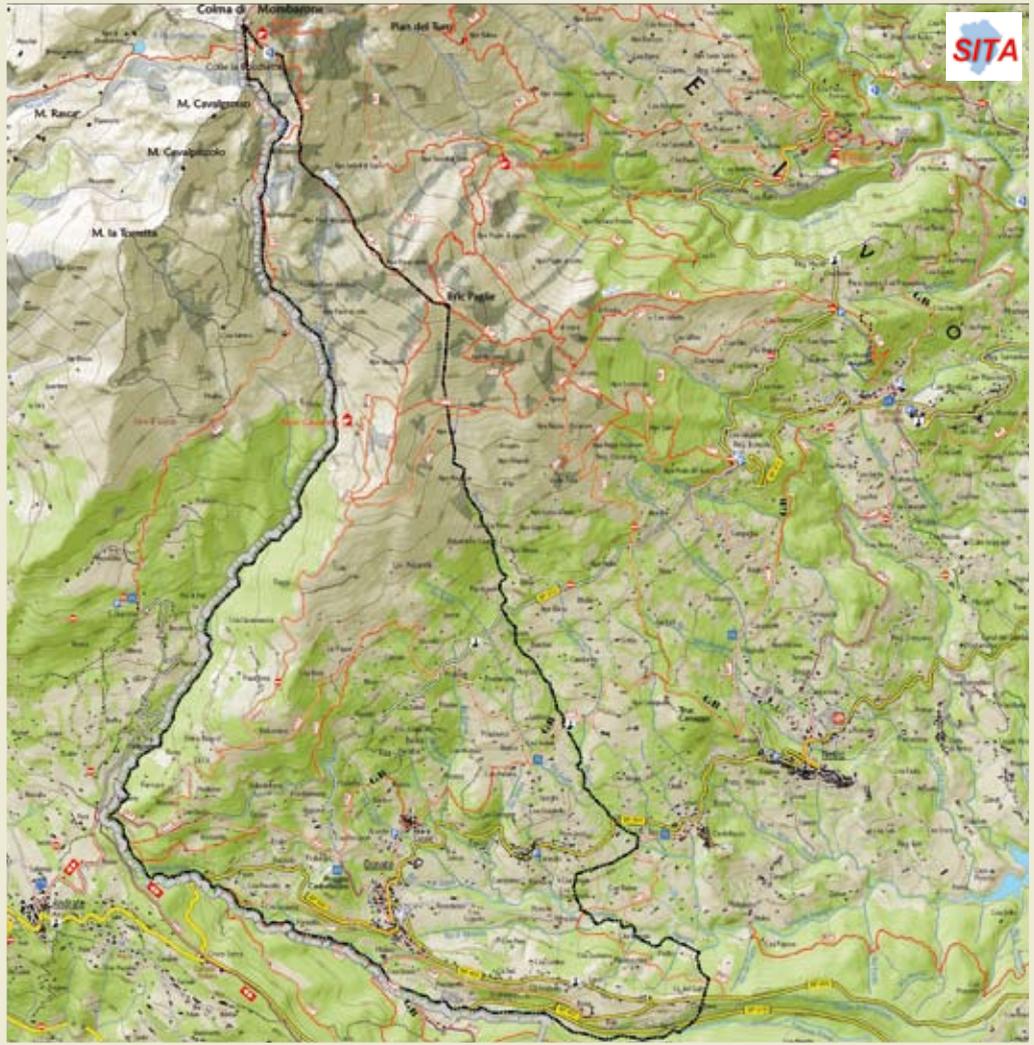




Discover and experience
DONATO





The village of **Donato** is located on the western edge of the province of Biella. The Serra Ridge, Europe's longest moraine hill, marks the boundary between the provinces of Biella and Turin.

The village and its territory cover an area of 11.82 Km², ranging from a height of 550 m to 2,371 m, corresponding to the peak of Mombarone.

The residential area is made up of the village itself, situated at 710 m, and the smaller hamlets of Lace, Casale and Ceresito.

Donato has a population of approximately 700 inhabitants.

Landscape



Approaching the village from Lacedo offers the traveller a breathtaking view: the outskirts of the village, the furthest western point of the Province of Biella and the border with the province of Turin.

The village appears, set amid green fields, with its medieval tower and the

hamlets of Casale and Ceresito.

Looking upwards, you get your first glimpse of what this area has to offer to those tourists who want to enjoy some peace and quiet and where nature still plays a leading role.

This is an area of woodland, of century-old sweet chestnut trees, beeches and

birches, which eventually make way for mountain pastures.

Mombarone, the highest point of our territory, which seems to touch the sky with its statue of Christ the Redeemer, offers the most beautiful views of the region.



The **Serra Morenica** of Ivrea is a series of morainic ridges formed by glacial deposits dating back to the Quaternary Period. It forms part of the Morainic Amphitheatre of Ivrea and the left-side lateral moraine.

It extends from the territory of Andrate (province of Turin) to the town of Cavaglià (province of Biella). It is the largest formation of this kind in Europe.

Characteristics

The Serra originates on the southern slopes of the Colma di Mombarone (2371 m) and it stretches almost 20 km in a south-western direction until it reaches the lake of Viverone.

It is made up of a series of subparallel crests, the highest crest reaching a height

of 600 m compared to the plain of the Morainic Amphitheatre in the area of Andrate.

This difference gradually decreases heading east, reaching only 250m near Zimone.

The main crest marks the boundary between the provinces of Turin and Biella. Some streams flow along the morainic ridges flanking the crest: the most important streams are the Olobbia and the Viona, both tributaries of the river Elvo.

This area is dotted with glacial lakes nestled in the moraine sediment. The most important are the lakes of Viverone and Bertagnino and the 5 lake group, the largest of which is Lake Sirio.

History

The Serra was formed during the Pleistocene (geological epoch), evidence of these glacial events can be seen clearly in the Canavese in the form of glacial and fluvial-glacial sediments.

The glacial tongue and the relative morainic ridge which moved southward was Mindelian. This is the morainic Amphitheater of Ivrea, which developed in the north east area of the formation, where we can plainly see the glacial movements which produced enormous morainic formations. Among these we have the Serra of Ivrea (left-side lateral moraine of the Aosta Valley glacier) which has its less regular counterpart in the Bairo and Agliè reliefs.

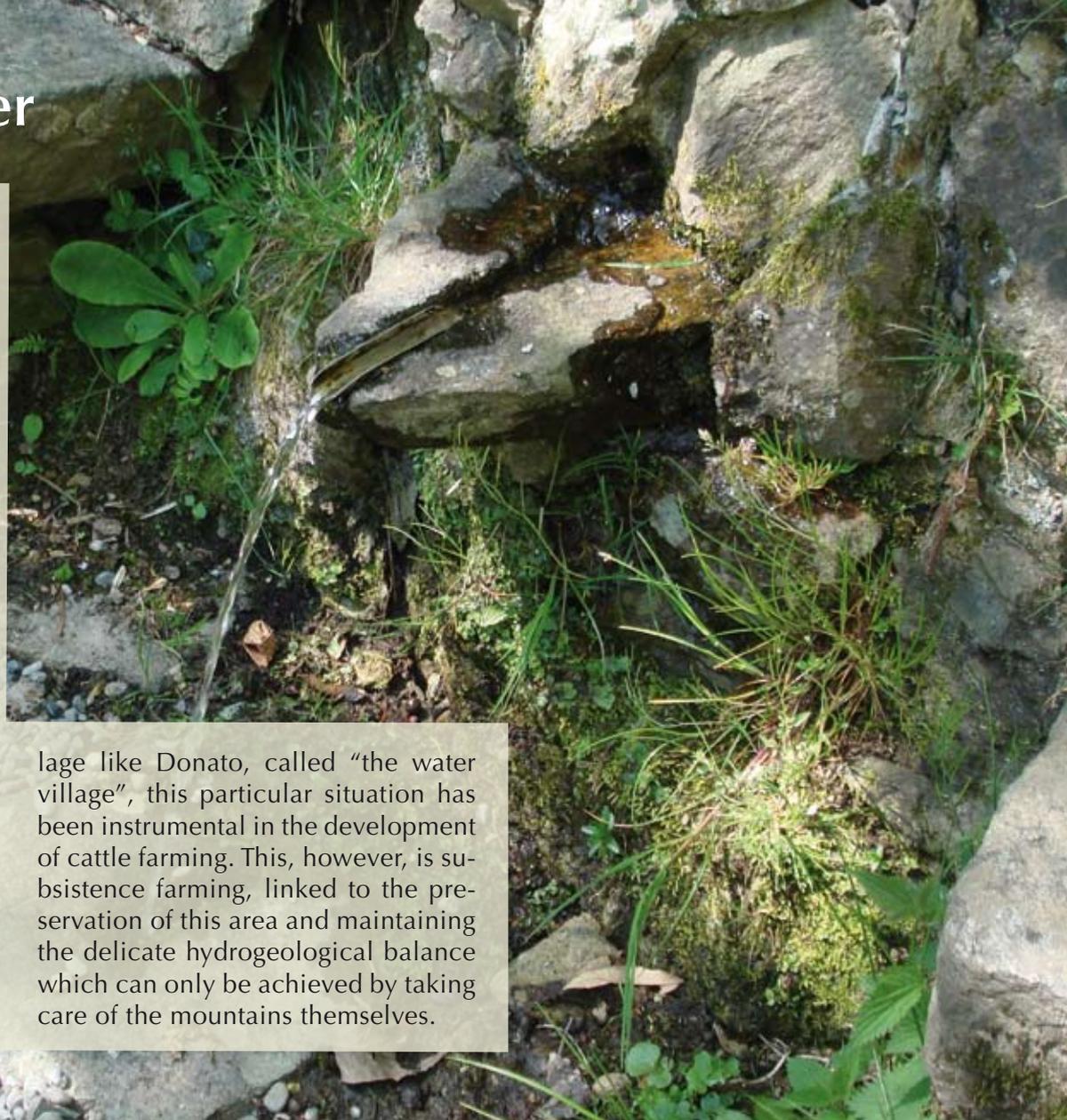
Donato and Water

Water in the village of Donato flows from a wild and unspoilt area at an altitude of more than 1,000 m, in the north of Piedmont, safeguarded by the Biellese Alps, a natural, protected and uncontaminated environment, far from industrial plants.

The water springs from the hydrogeological area of the Monte Rosa glacier which overlooks the border between Italy and Switzerland from an altitude of 4,600 m. The water flows underground, thus preserving its organoleptic qualities and eliminating the risk of contamination.

This miracle is due to the granite waterbed, an ancient crystalline rock that filters and protects water from impurities, keeping it microbiologically pure and issuing a low percentage of minerals. These factors create water that is particularly light, odourless and flavourless.

The artesian source flows directly onto the surface and there are several catchment areas. In a mountain vil-



lage like Donato, called “the water village”, this particular situation has been instrumental in the development of cattle farming. This, however, is subsistence farming, linked to the preservation of this area and maintaining the delicate hydrogeological balance which can only be achieved by taking care of the mountains themselves.

Tourism in Donato dates back to the early 1900s, when the middle classes of Turin were attracted to the well “Fonte Lunga Vita” (Well of Long Life), a natural spring of very light and diuretic water.

Testimony to this are the photographs of the guests at the two main hotels, “San Pietro” and the “Grande Albergo” of Ceresito, standing by the well. Rio Gre, Ingagna e Viona are streams that descend from the mountains.

The Viona originates at the foot of the Mombarone and create a little alpine lake called Pasci (2119 m), situated for the most part in the territory of Donato.

A mineral water plant (Alpe Guizza – Fonte Caudana) was established in the Valbina area of the village to capitalize on the excellent qualities of this water.



The History

The history of Donato, from the middle ages to modern times, has always been linked to its geographical position: on the boundary between the Biellese and the Canavese.

Even though it was a small village, Donato was a strategic site which required a fortification system, of which remnants are still visible today.

At the end of the 11th century, Donatus or Donatium, according to medieval documents, was part of the property of the bishops of Vercelli, who initially instated Recagno, Lord of Montalto, and then in 1165, Avogadro of Cerrione.

The construction of a fortified castle, of which the entrance tower is the only remaining element, dates back to this period. It is positioned at the highest point of the village, directly opposite the Serra

There are some remnants of another, probably more ancient, fortification on the hill of Castellazzo, which dominates the village.

In 1296, Simone Avogadro of Collobiano erected the Bastia tower on the Ser-



ra near Donato. Only the foundations remained until recently, when a similar wooden structure was built on the original foundations.



The inhabitants of Andrate and Chia-verano were sure that the Bastia tower was in their territory and decided to destroy it in 1309, burning down parts of the village and ransacking it. During the French invasion of 1703, the village was plundered and badly damaged by fire. Most of the council and parish archives were destroyed on that occasion, as they were kept in a

private house in the Castello district. In 1732, King Victor Amadeus II invested Donato as feudal estate to the chamber auditor Stefano Francesco di Carlo De Rege da Tronzano with the title of count. In 19th century, the strong worker migration flow to France brought new ideas that led to the establishment of the Società Operaia di Mutuo Soccorso



(Workers' Mutual Aid Association) in 1868.

During the Resistance, Donato was the command headquarters of the VII Garibaldi Division

On the night of 29th January 1945, the division was attacked by Nazi Fascist Forces from the Canavese. Thirteen members of the division, among them the commander Walter Fillak, were captured and made prisoners. They were executed soon afterwards in Ivrea and Cuornè.

Monuments

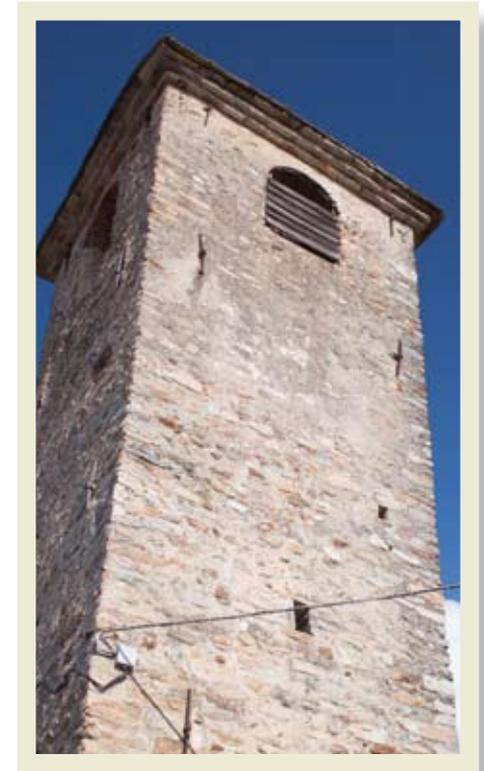


The Tower

The 12th century tower is the symbol of the village. It was the entry tower of a fortified castle, around which the village was established.

Perfectly preserved, it has been used as belfry for centuries.

The weights of the ancient clock are particularly interesting, constructed with stones from the Viona.



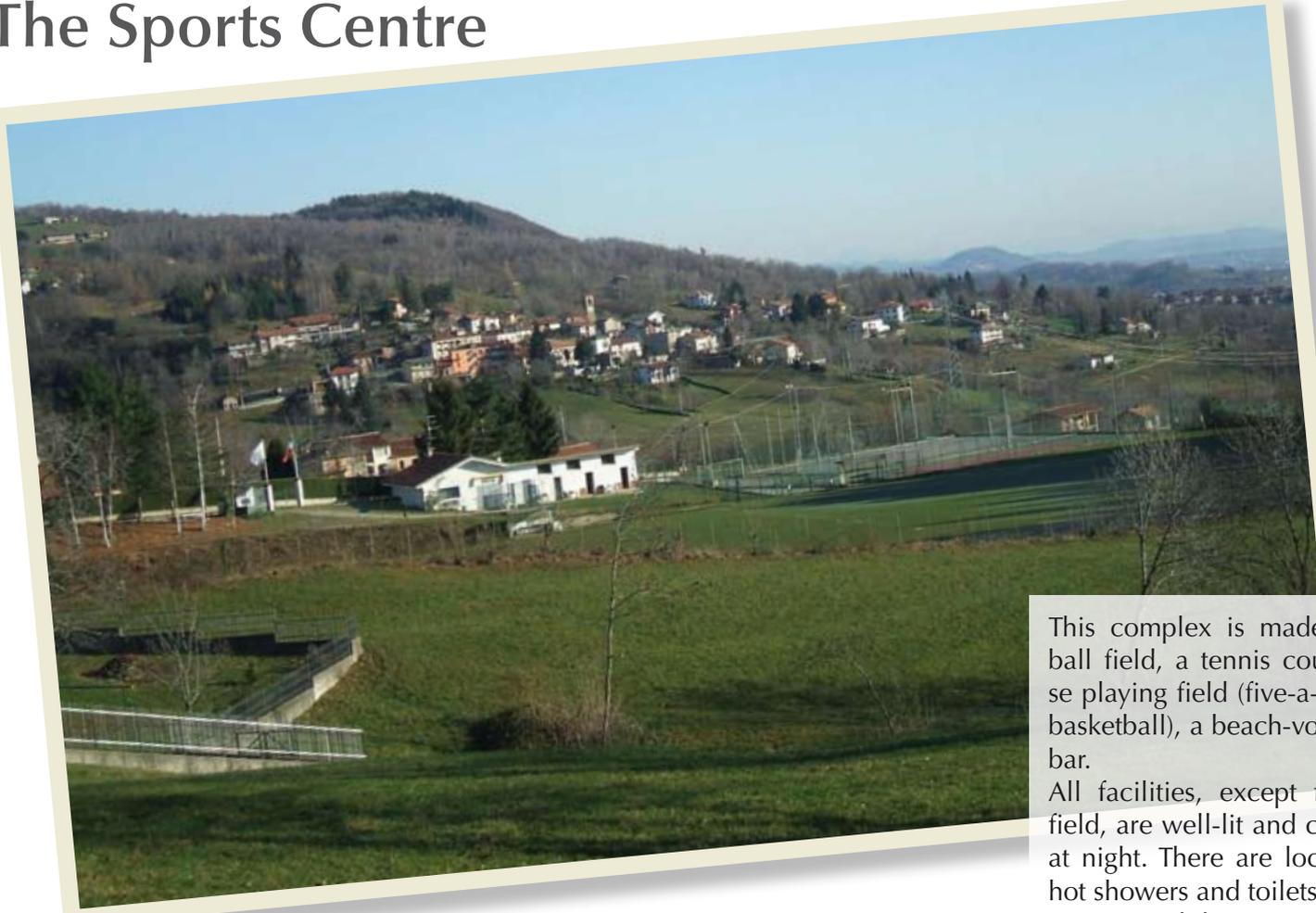
San Grato Church

Known also as Chiesa del Carmine. The first documents concerning the chapel date back to the 17th century. At the beginning of the following century the church was rebuilt from its foundations and became home to the confraternity of the Beata Vergine del Carmine.

The statue of the Madonna del Carmine, a gilded wooden statue, dates back to the same period.

The eighteenth-century façade is of particular interest, a fine example of Piedmontese Baroque, made of earthenware tiles and adorned with niches and pillars.

The Sports Centre



This complex is made up of a football field, a tennis court, an all-purpose playing field (five-a-side, volleyball, basketball), a beach-volley court and a bar.

All facilities, except for the football field, are well-lit and can also be used at night. There are locker rooms with hot showers and toilets.

Mountain bikers can use the sports centre locker rooms and can also wash their bikes.

The Village Hall Square

The two most emblematic buildings were built at the end of the eighteenth century. The town hall building which hosts the primary school on the ground floor, and the headquarters of the Società Operaia (Mutual Aid Association, founded in 1868).

The Società Operaia was built thanks to the free labour of the bricklayers of Donato, who would migrate to work in France during the spring and summer.

Thanks to the theatre and the consumer co-operative, the structure has become a meeting place and a social service centre for the population.

Nowadays, after the recent refurbishment, it is a place where the people of Donato, the valley and the nearby Canavese come to celebrate their history and enjoy social events.

The building houses the library, the theatre, the Eco Museum Emigration Document and Research Headquarters, a small café and a well-equipped reception area for festive occasions.

There is a fountain opposite the town hall building, an example of the skills of the local cement workers. This fountain is one of the 40 fountains of Donato, and is considered one of the treasures of the village, along with the 10 wash troughs.



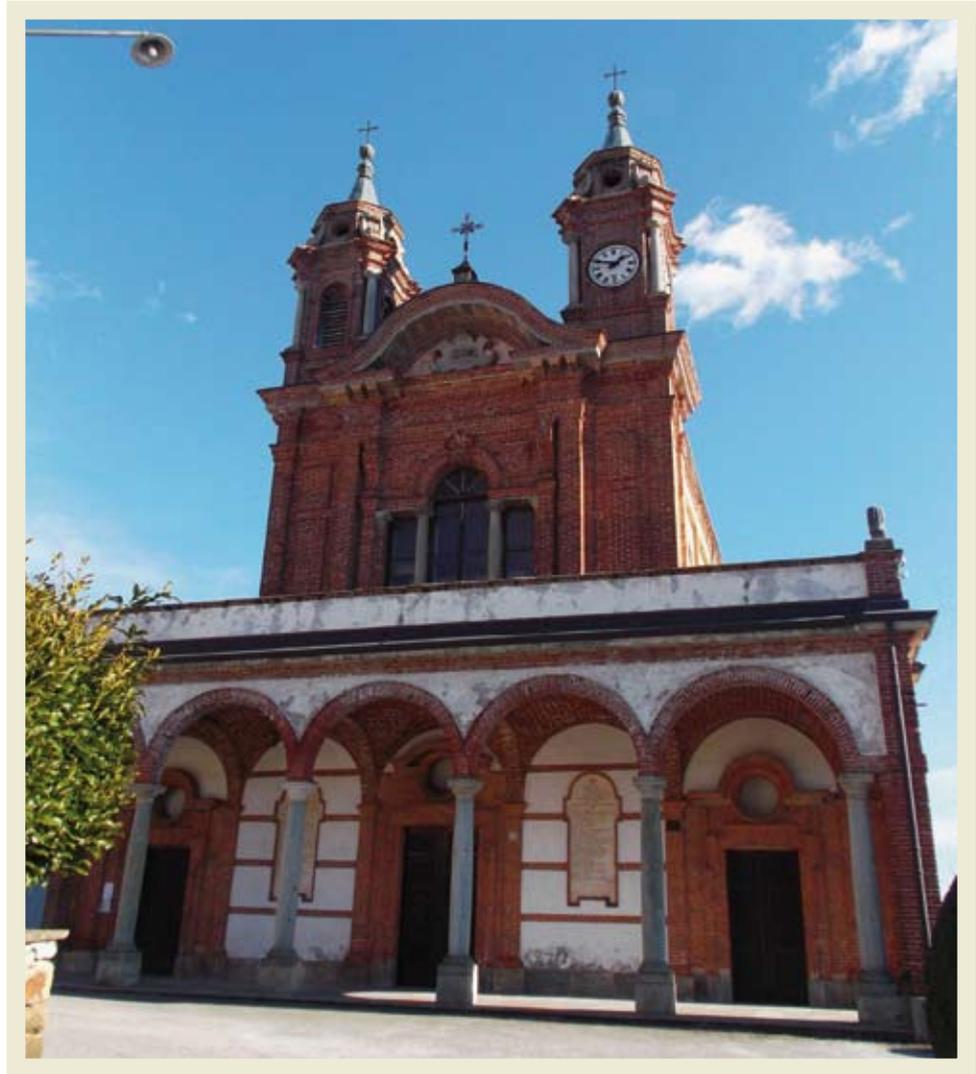
The Parish Church

It is dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul. It is situated on a small hill overlooking the valley. It has a brickwork façade, two lateral bell towers and a large portico.

The stone columns of the portico were part of the pre-existing medieval church, as we can read in a sealed document of Pope Innocent III in 1207 (even though the church was probably older).

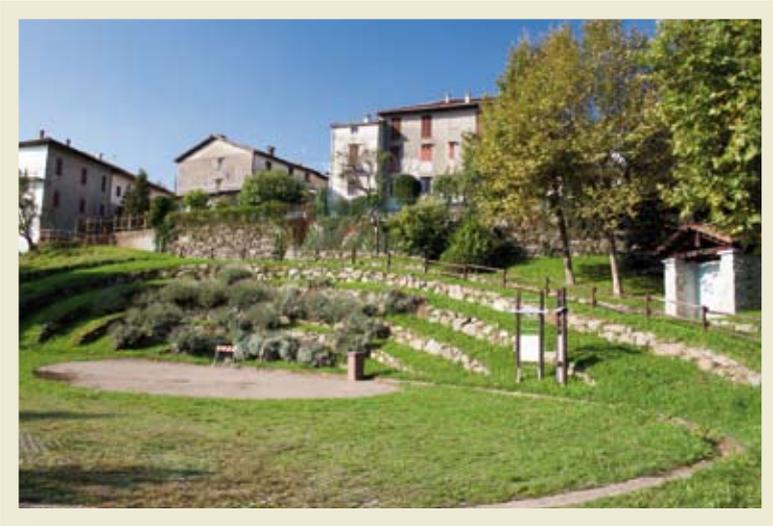
The present church was built in two stages. In 1796, the choir and the presbytery were built. In 1889, the construction of the three naves began on the pre-existing Romanic church. These were demolished two years later, when the new church was finished.

Since 1893, the church boasts a pipe organ built by Carlo Vigezzi Bossi in 1891. This experimental instrument is displayed at important events and marked a turning point in the art of pipe organs.



“Fabrizio de Andrè” Camper Area

The camper area of Donato, completed in November 2000 and named after Fabrizio de Andrè, is located in via Sandro Pertini, not far from the village centre. It boasts a wonderful view of the valley.



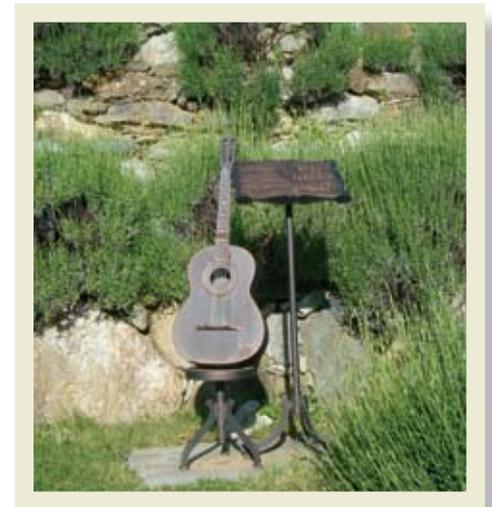
The area is shaped like an arena, with self-locking paving blocks. The area is illuminated and equipped with toilets, a drain sump and drinking water and electric sockets.

The village council is directly responsible for the management of the camper area. There is free parking from 8 am to 8 pm, overnight parking costs.

This fee can be paid in the nearby tobacconist's (beside the petrol station) where a display coupon can be purchased to place on the camper windscreen.

During the cold season, the toilets and drinking water are closed to avoid water pipe freezing. In this period water can be taken from the many fountains in the village.

The area was built with the grant from GAL (Local Action Group) and it is part of the “Eco-museo Valle Elvo e Serra” project.



The hamlets

CERESITO

A sunlit hamlet where you can find the S. Giovanni Battista Church, the building dates back to the beginning of the 17th century and has subsequently been reconstructed and enlarged. It is lovely to walk along the narrow streets near the church, follow them and you will reach the picnic area with grilling facilities and tables.



CASALE

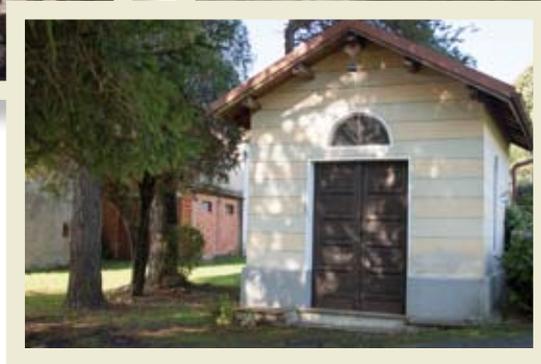
The pleasant, narrow streets of the old part of the hamlet reveal charming nooks and crannies.

In the square we find the S. Rocco Chapel, whose façade is embellished with a large portico.



LACE

This small hamlet was once formed by a line of houses along the road, flanked by a row of laburnum trees. Nowadays, it is the new residential area built on the road that connects the village to the valley. There is a charming view of the mountains all year round and looking southwards through the houses and trees you can see the plains.



Traditional Products



The abundant flora of our pastures favours the production of different types of cheese, a source of pride for our territory.

The most traditional product is the “toma”, in particular mountain pasture toma, a medium matured cheese with varied fat content, it is very tasty.

The “tumin ‘d Dunà” (Donato Toma) is a delicious, fresh cheese produced with whole milk.

Local butter is a culinary delight that is becoming more and more famous beyond the Valle Elvo.



Traditional Cuisine



Traditional dishes are cooked with locally-produced ingredients such as “toma” and butter.

Herbs play an important part in our traditional dishes too, their use is handed down from generation to generation.

The most typical dish, essential for any town celebrations, is the “pulenta grassa”, a mix of corn flour, cooked in a pot for a long time, a lot of “toma” and fried butter. This is added at the final stage of the cooking.

The “I fricc dal marghè” (cattleman’s fry-up) is simple but rich and tasty: eggs and toma are fried in abundant butter in an earthenware pan.

“L ris a la cagnun-a” (cheese risotto) is a delicious first course, often served in restaurants. This dish combines the resources of the pastures, i.e. toma and butter, with a traditional product of the plains: rice. This rice was once bartered with our excellent sweet chestnuts.

Spring celebrates the herbs, many of these are excellent when eaten as a salad, such as watercress, chives and dandelion, usually cooked in omelettes and with boiled chicken at carnival suppers.

Many of these herbs are used to flavour omelettes, risotti and soups. the soup cooked with “fior dal buro” (*trifolium alpinum*) picked in mountain pastures, is delicious.



The delicate “er-bette” (wild herbs) or “aiuche” are the stars of soups, cooked in the oven with bread fried in butter, broth and cheese, the “bia-veta” (*polygnum bistorta*) cooked in the broth of “salam dl’ula” (salami preserved in lard).

Honey

The local production is of high quality. There are many varieties, from the classic “millefiori” (wildflower) and acacia honey to the mountain flowers honey (rhododendron included) and the sweet chestnut honey.

Sweet Chestnuts

For centuries sweet chestnuts (with milk) were the mainstay of our valleys. Dried in the “gra” (small outbuildings with grills that allow the chimney heat to pass among the sweet chestnuts), they can be eaten all year round.

The most sought-after dish was “vianda”, a soup made with sweet chestnuts and rice boiled in milk. Nowadays “dla gra” (from the gra) chestnuts, caramelized in honey, are served with butter curls as an excellent hot antipasto.



Themed Trails

The Resistance

Donato played an active part in the partisan resistance fight, in the village there are a lot of places where important events took place.

The route starts from the centre of the village, crosses the “Palàs” district (the road that heads downhill at the left of the Carmine Church), enters the “passeggiata delle coste” and after 2 km it reaches the little Church of Bose, tiny but full of character.

At the main road, turn left and go straight on for about 100 m, here you will reach the **Memorial of Lace**. This was built on the recently restored ruins of the command headquarters of the VII Garibaldi Division, destroyed by the Nazi Fascists in 1945.

This memorial site of the Resistance war is visited by many students throughout the year and is a meeting place for ex partisans. Information panels tell of the events of the night of 29th January 1945.

Another symbolic site of the resistance is the partisan hospital situated in Losana near the Viona, where from 2nd October 1944 to 25th April 1945, a brave inhabitant of Donato, Carla Valè, managed a little hospital where wounded partisans were treated. It can be reached by taking the main road towards Andrate and following the directions for Regione Losana (or the coloured arrows of the blue, yellow and fuchsia signposts for mountain bike).

More information about the events of Lace and the partisan hospital can be found in manuscripts such as: “Quei miei ragazzi” by Carla Valè and “Sala nella Resistenza” by Roberto Blotto and Bruno Pozzato available in the public library.



Themed Trails



Fountains and Wash Troughs

At the end of the nineteenth century, a reliable water supply was essential for everyday activities.

The building of fountains and wash troughs improved and modernised life, fountains became useful, not only in the village centre and in the hamlets but also in the mountain pastures.



This is reason why there are more than 40 fountains and about ten wash troughs in Donato and its hamlets.

Wash troughs, in particular, were managed with precise and strict rules, this way all authorized women (i.e. members) could use them for daily activities.

Nowadays, fountains and wash troughs are not as useful as in the past, even though they are precious for farmers who work on the territory and a landmark for our visitors, such as bikers and excursionists.

For Donato they are a real calling card, a souvenir of the industrious, difficult life of the past which has left a permanent mark on our village.

The loop trail proposed here includes about 23 fountains, but it could be fun to travel along alternative routes or follow some detours to discover other fountains located not so far from the suggested itinerary, you can find more than 50!

The starting point is from the village hall square, where you can find the first fountain in a very evocative grotto. Continue towards the Carmine church, in Palàs, turn left onto the downhill road and you will reach the brickwork fountain.

Turn right onto the uphill road to rejoin the street in La Rusa district under the bell tower.



Travel along the main road for a few kilometres until the “Cà da Pusà” wash trough and from here come back to the narrow village streets in search of other fountains.

Go down to the left until Piazza Rì, go up to “Fonte Lunga Vita”, then down again from Borgo Fontana to come back to the village centre. Starting from “La Cros” district, follow the main road toward Casale for a while.

Along this stretch you can admire the majestic parish church dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul.



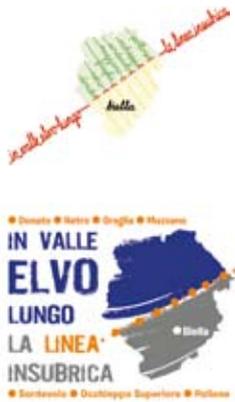
In Casale, you will find the fountains indicated on the map and from the hamlet centre you can decide to reach the main road from the Gran Dama district or to continue on the route towards Ceresito along a signposted path that passes through the wood and reaches the high part of the hamlet near the picnic area in Grial, passing through Puneira.

In the centre of Ceresito, near the church of San Giovanni Battista, you can admire the fountain and the wash trough. Further along the narrow street at the back of the church, there is another beautiful fountain, surrounded by enchanting flowers in spring and summer. At this point of our walk you can return along a minor country road just outside Ceresito, in the direction of the village cemetery. This road will take you back to the centre of Donato, to the village hall square, where this walk started, passing the Lusart fountain and finally, the Riundàs fountain.





 Fountains



The Insubric Line (Periadriatic Seam)



From the hill of Castellazzo to Burcina, where Europe and Africa meet.

The “sentiero dei colli” (The Hills Path), is the leading idea of the Valle Elvo Project along the insubric line and connects the communities of Donato, Netro, Graglia, Muzzano, Sordevolo, Occhieppo Superiore and Pollone. It is a walk of great naturalistic and anthropological interest, geologically marked by the collision of two ancient geological worlds - paleo-europe and paleo-africa - which created the Alps.

The project, coordinated by the Ecomuseo Valle Elvo e Serra, involves schools as well as the local population in the rediscovery of their own environment. It is identified through explorations and subsequent shared maps and promoted by co-ordinated maintenance and markings, called “piles of stones” that indicate knolls along the itinerary.

This way the knowledge of what used to be can once again be intertwined with what will be, reevaluating the resources, the handiwork and the know-how that defined the features of this territory and represent its past and future.



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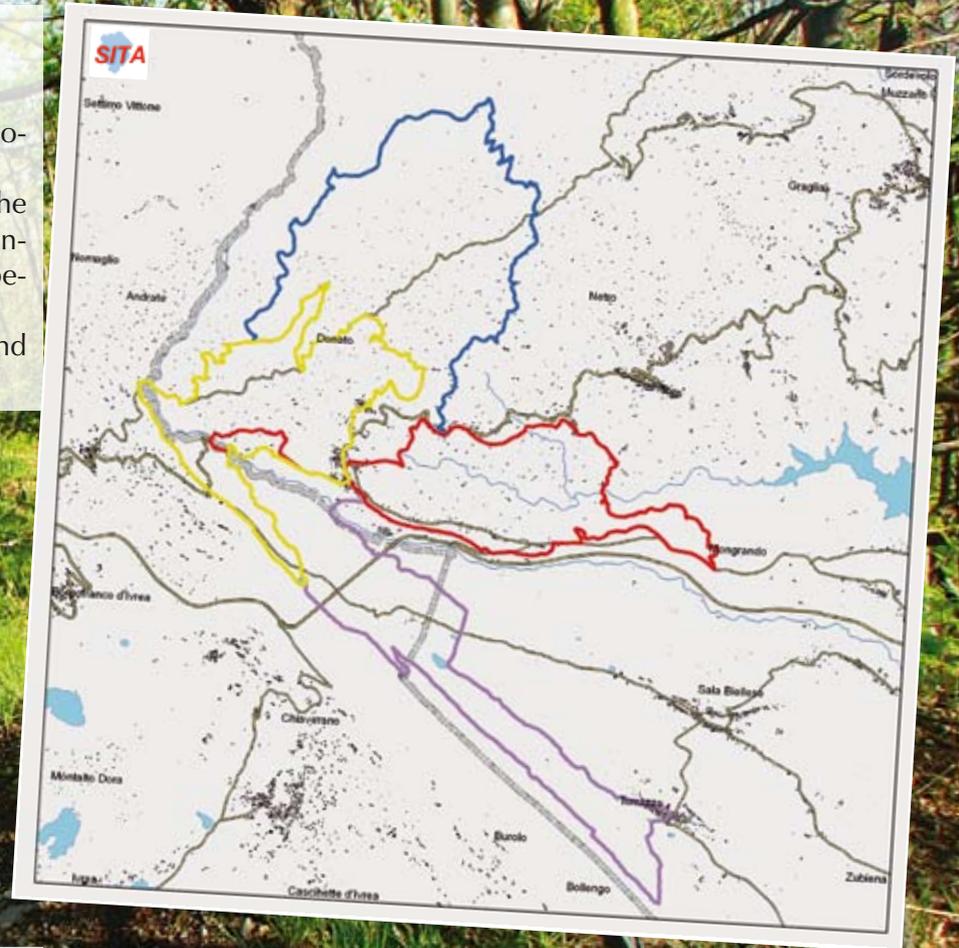
The Ecomuseo Valle Elvo e Serra is part of the Ecomuseo del Biellese, recognised by the Regione Piemonte in 2000. Since 2012, it has coordinated the Rete Museale Biellese which includes the Centro di Documentazione sull'Emigrazione of Donato (Donato Emigration Documentation Centre). The Ecomuseo is a project aimed primarily at the local inhabitants with whom it follows the path of rediscovery of their historical and cultural identity; designed to identify new procedures of sustainable and responsible development.



Mountain Bike Trails

The geographical features found in the territory of Donato make it extremely suitable for mountain biking. In the space of a few kilometres, you can go from the wooded Serra ridge to the gentle slopes of our mountains, which provide spectacular views of the plain below, from Turin as far as Novara. The trails that we suggest here are well sign-posted and easy to follow.

Donato-Lace-Castellazzo-Ceresito-Donato
Donato-Torrazzo-Donato
Donato-Piane-Casale-Donato
Donato-Piane-Gre-Ceresito-Donato
Donato-Oropa



Mountain bikers can use the sports centre locker rooms and they can also wash their bike at the village sports centre "Piero Grosso".

Red Trail:

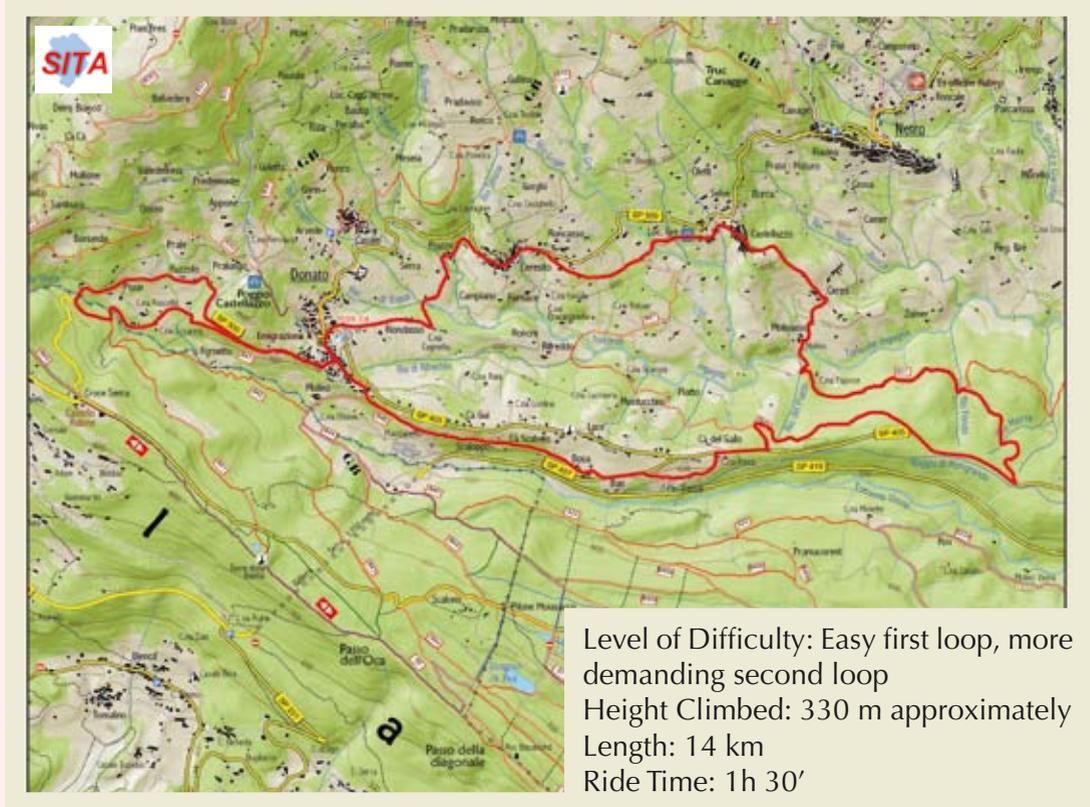
Donato-Lace-Castellazzo-Ceresito-Donato

This route is marked with wooden poles and red arrows. It is relatively easy and would be suitable for the less experienced.

This route is different from the others because not only does it travel on dirt roads through woods and across mountains but also through groups of houses, so that people can get to know not only the countryside, but the hamlets and village as well.

Starting from the village hall square, take the main road to Andrate, until you reach the Viona bridge (the new bridge - 1.8 km, 15 mins).

Cross the river, after the hairpin turn, turn left onto the dirt road (a chain blocks vehicle access to the road, you have to climb over it) and proceed until the crossroads (3km, 20mins). Turn left, cross the "old bridge" and reach the main road (4.5 km, 25 mins). Turn right and return to Donato, retracing the small stretch travelled in the opposite direction when setting off, after a sharp left-hand curve, turn right onto a small tarmacked street.



Level of Difficulty: Easy first loop, more demanding second loop
Height Climbed: 330 m approximately
Length: 14 km
Ride Time: 1h 30'

Go straight on along the tarmacked street, past the houses, following the signs along the route and take "Strada delle coste". Continue until you reach the main road.

Cross the main road, turn left and take the first dirt road on the right (Regione Bose, 7 km, 35 mins).

Go straight on until a new crossroads with another main road, turn right and after a few metres, turn left following the signs towards Regione Grangia (7.8 km, 40 mins).

Go straight on towards Regione Grangia and after a little descent, turn right. A further 200 m and you arrive at a

fork in the road (8 km, 40 mins). Keep right.

After a narrow path through the trees (9 km, 45 mins), turn left and you'll reach a tarmacked road (9.5 km, 50 mins).

Turn left and go on along the main road up to a water mains building; turn right onto the dirt road that starts opposite the building (10 km, 50 mins).

Continue along the dirt road up to a fork (10.9 km, 55 mins), turn left and go straight on until you reach another fork, turn right here (12 km, 55 mins) and go down a steep slope that leads to the Ingagna bridge (12,2 km, 55 mins).

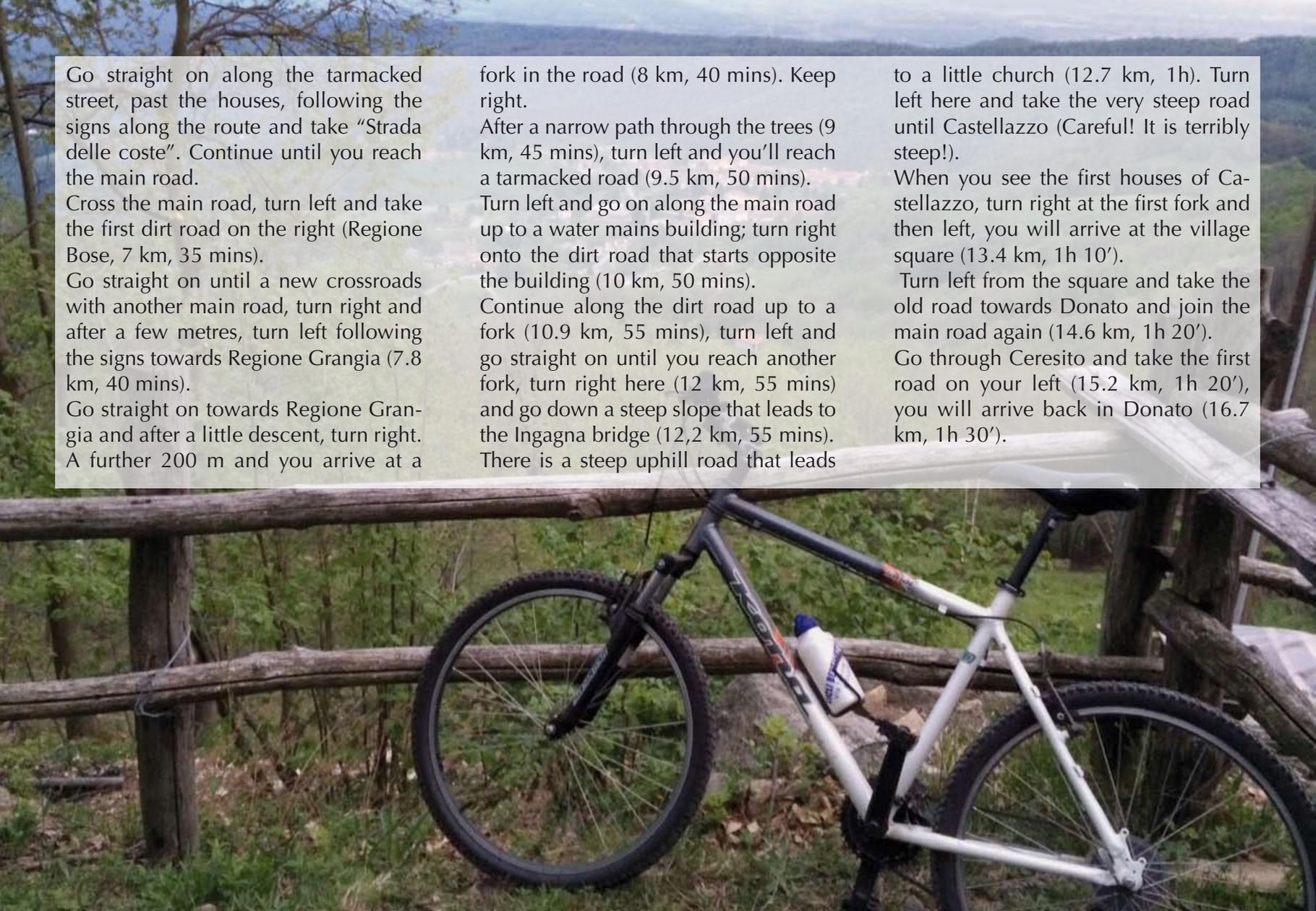
There is a steep uphill road that leads

to a little church (12.7 km, 1h). Turn left here and take the very steep road until Castellazzo (Careful! It is terribly steep!).

When you see the first houses of Castellazzo, turn right at the first fork and then left, you will arrive at the village square (13.4 km, 1h 10').

Turn left from the square and take the old road towards Donato and join the main road again (14.6 km, 1h 20').

Go through Ceresito and take the first road on your left (15.2 km, 1h 20'), you will arrive back in Donato (16.7 km, 1h 30').

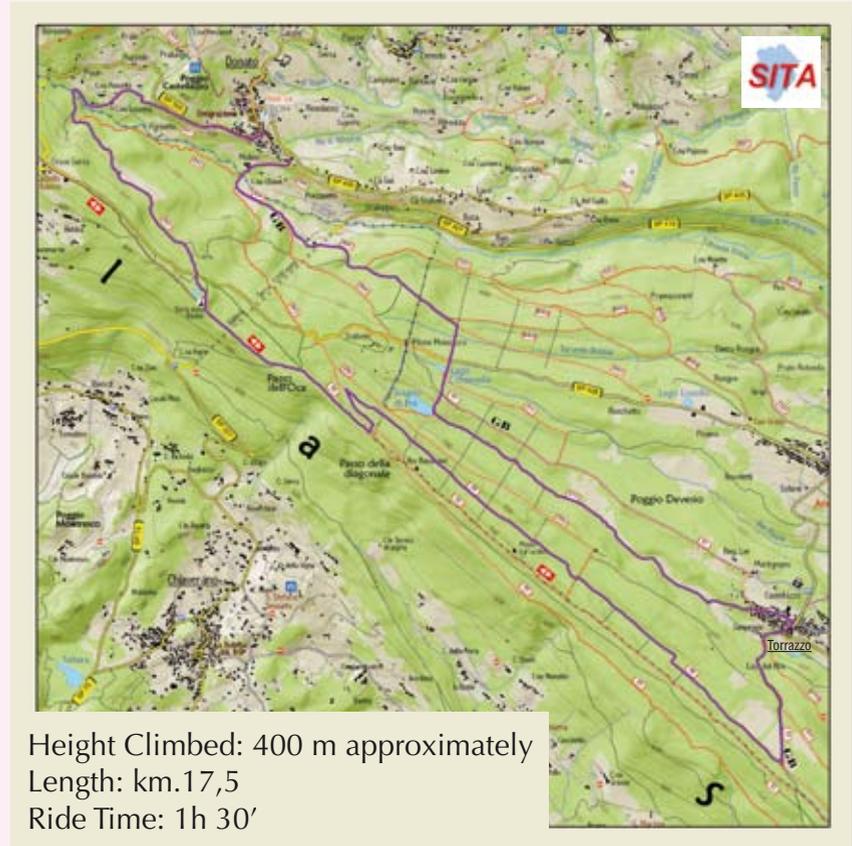


Pink Trail: Donato-Torrazzo-Donato

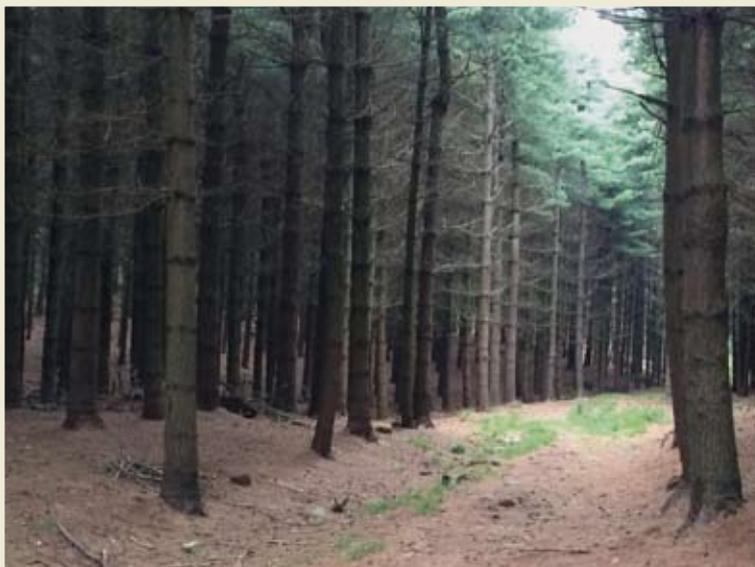
The following route is marked with wooden poles and pink arrows.

The route presents technical and athletic difficulties and so it best suited to skilled and expert bikers.

Starting from the village hall square take the main road to Andrate. After about 800 m, take the small tarmacked road on your left leading to Ruscello. The road becomes a dirt road after a while. Ride along the Viona and cross it using the old bridge. Go upwards along the dirt road, where you reach a fork beside an abandoned house (2.5 km, 15 mins) and turn left. Pass a farm and cross the field (one of the few remaining in the Serra). Pass through the woods up to the tarmacked road that connects Croce Serra to Sala Biellese (3.5 km, 20 mins). Cross the road and take the path leading to the Serra crest, turn left down the path. At the end of the path, take a dirt road for a few metres up to the top of a hill. Here you have to get off the bike and face an escarpment for about 5 or 6 metres with your bike on your shoulder (4.3 km, 25 mins). On the top of the escarpment, take the path again and carry on up to a dirt road. Turn left here (5.3 km, 30 mins). Continue straight to a deviation on the right (6.1 km, 30 mins), turn right and continue straight on up to a wide firebreak (6.5 km, 35 mins). Here, take the first path downwards on the right and at the end of this small slope, turn left and enter a pine grove. Pass through the pine grove along the path up to a dirt little road and then turn left (11.5 km, 50 mins).



Height Climbed: 400 m approximately
Length: km.17,5
Ride Time: 1h 30'



Moving upwards the road becomes tarmacked and you reach the village of Torrazzo. Turn left here and turn left again at the church (13 km, 50 mins) through the village.

Continuing downwards from Torrazzo towards the woods, the road becomes dirt again. When you arrive at a fork (near a bulk gas tank) turn right and go upwards (13.5 km). Follow the path, af-



ter a steep climb you reach a little lake. Turn right and go straight on until the Serra ridge (14.1 km, 1h 10'). Continue downwards along a steep firebreak and turn left along a dirt road that connects Sala to Donato (14.9 km, 1h 10'). Go straight on along the street until you reach the Donato mill and after the last ascent along a cobbled road, you arrive at Donato (17.5 km, 1h 30').

Yellow Trail: Donato-Piane-Casale-Donato

Level of Difficulty: medium-high
Height Climbed: 500 m
Length: 15.5 km
Ride Time: 1h 45'

This route is marked with wooden poles and yellow arrows. The route presents technical and athletic difficulties and so it is best suited to skilled and expert bikers. Starting from the village hall square, take the main road to Andrate. After about 800 m, take the small tarmacked road on your left that goes to Ruscello, after a while the road becomes a dirt road. Continue along the Viona and cross over the old bridge. Go up along the dirt road, to a fork in the road beside an abandoned house (2.5 km, 15 mins) and turn left. Go past a farm and cross the field (one of the few remaining in the Serra). Continue into the woods up to the paved street that connects Croce Serra to Sala Biellese (3.5 km, 20 mins). Cross the road and take the path to the Serra crest. Go straight on for a hundred metres and return to the tarmacked road, turn left and continue until you reach the Croce Serra castle (5 km, 30 mins).

Cross the main road from Donato to Andrate and take the path that ascends opposite. Continue through the wood until the repeater antennae. Go past the antennae and, after about 50m, take the path that goes up to the right. You will reach the tarmacked road to San Giacomo, take the first dirt road on the right, the "Tracciolino"(6.5 km, 45 mins).





Take the Tracciolino and continue until you meet a tarmacked road ascending on your left (7 km, 45 mins). Take it and continue until the fork with the Piane road (8 km, 1h 05').

Follow the road until a votive chapel (10 km, 1h 10'), leave the dirt road and take the path to the left that goes down

through the fields and back to the Tracciolino (11.2 km, 1h 20').

Take the Tracciolino again to the left and continue until the Zubino area (12.3 km, 1h 20')

Take the dirt road heading down on your right and continue until the first fork, turn left downwards until the se-

cond fork, turn left and continue until some farms. When you reach the second farm, turn right and cross the field towards the wood. Here you can find the path that goes to Casale (14.5 km, 1h 40') and to the tarmacked road back to Donato.

Blue Trail: Donato-Piane-Gre-Ceresito-Donato

Difficulty Level: high
Height Climbed: 800 m approximately
Length: 19.7 km
Ride Time: 12h 30'

This route is marked with wooden poles and blue arrows and runs parallel to the yellow route for a long stretch, starting from the village hall square, take the main road to Andrate. After about 800 m, take the small tarmacked road on your left that goes to Ruscello. After a while, the road becomes a dirt road. Continue along the Viona and cross over the old bridge. Go up along the dirt road, to a fork in the road beside an abandoned house (2.5 km, 15 mins) and turn left. Go past a farm and cross the field (one of the few remaining in the Serra). Continue into the woods up to the tarmacked road that connects Croce Serra to Sala Biellese (3.5 km, 20 mins). Cross the road and take the path to the Serra crest. Go straight on for a hundred metres and return to the tarmacked road, turn left and continue until you reach the Croce Serra castle (5 km, 30 mins).

Cross the main road from Donato to Andrate and take the ascending path opposite. Continue through the wood until you reach the repeater antennae. Go past the antennae and, after about 50 m, take the path that goes up to the right. You will reach the tarmacked road to San Giacomo, take the first dirt road on the right, the "Tracciolino"(6.5 km, 45 mins).

Take the "Tracciolino" and continue until you find a tarmacked road on your left (7 km, 45 mins). Take it and follow it until the fork with the "strada delle piane" (8 km, 1h 05').

Turn left and follow on the tarmacked road, leaving the yellow trail.





Go along the dirt road (with short tar-macked stretches) and after a rather long and demanding climb, you reach the Alpe Gre fork (10.7 km, 1h 40'). Take the road on the right and continue along a descent (finally!) towards the Gre pasture, a scenic road at about 1,500 m. When you arrive at the pasture, cross the cobbled area and continue for a few hundred metres over stony ground, covered with small paths. Here you have to carry your bike

on your shoulder and head to the Alpone farm (11.8 km, 1h 55') and towards a water collection tank (12.5 km, 2h) where the descent begins.

The descent is demanding and dangerous (with loose stones and a steep slope) but after the first stretch, the terrain improves and you can make quick progress.

After a while the path becomes tar-macked and continues until joining the "Tracciolino" (15 km, 2h 10').

Here you cross the Tracciolino and proceed down towards Netro and Ceresito.

You arrive at the Ceresito picnic area (17.4 km, 2h 20'). After 300 m, turn right (17.7 km, 2h 20') onto a road initially dirt and then paved with stones, that arrives at Ceresito church (18.2 km, 2h 20'). Now take the main road to Donato and after about 300 m turn left onto the road (as in the Red Trail) that leads to Donato (19.7 km, 2h 30').

Donato - Oropa Trail:

Another very interesting route from the landscape point of view is from Donato to Oropa Sanctuary along the road that connects Andrate to Oropa, called the "Tracciolino". This route is not marked on the territory because you can follow the Tracciolino, a partly dirt and partly tarmacked road that offers marvelous views of the valleys it runs through.

To reach the "Tracciolino" from Donato, simply follow the route of the blue/yellow trail.

The road is not particularly difficult but there are many ascents and the distance to cover is quite long (25 km) because you have to retrace your route to return to Donato.

Difficulty Level: medium
Length: 25 km + return
Ride Time: 2 h

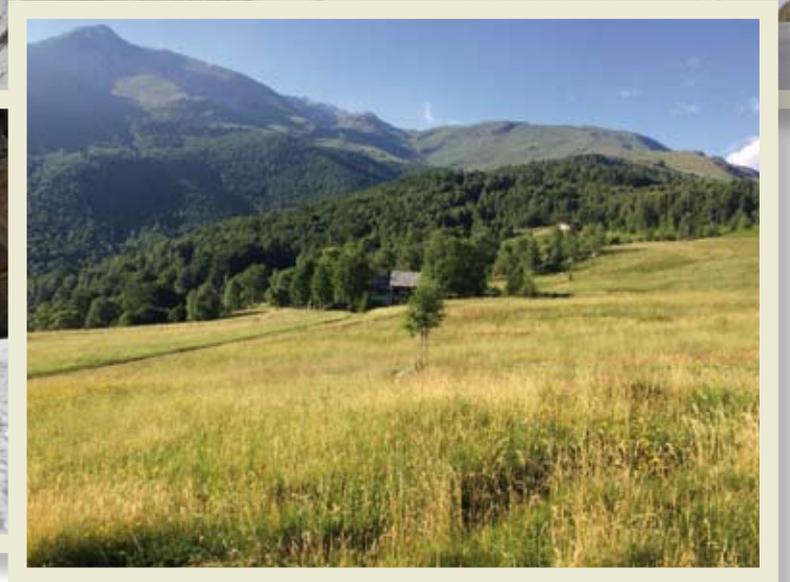


Trekking Trails: Pian Bres-Alpe Cavanna

Pian-Bres can be reached by foot from Donato following path signs, by car along the dirt road B32 that starts from the Tracciolino at 500 m from Pontije where the Tracciolino links with the Andrate - S.Giacomo road. Cars are not permitted beyond Pian Bres.

The track continues through a wood of beeches and birches before arriving at the Alpe Cavanna pastures.

This is a track with a steady ascent and takes about an hour to arrive at Alpe Cavanna.



Alpe Cavanna - Colma di Mombarone

Height Climbed 1,191 m, signal B32, start altitude 1,180 m, arrival altitude 2,371 m.

From the Cavanna mountain refuge (previous itinerary) follow the track until Giassit 1,627 m, Bric Paglie, path B7. Continue along the ridge through gentianellas and daffodils in spring, passing Pasei lake.



A special word of thanks to all the people who have contributed to the making of this brochure, with information, events and images. It was created by this administration to promote the natural beauty of our marvellous village and its territory.

May 2016

Il Sindaco
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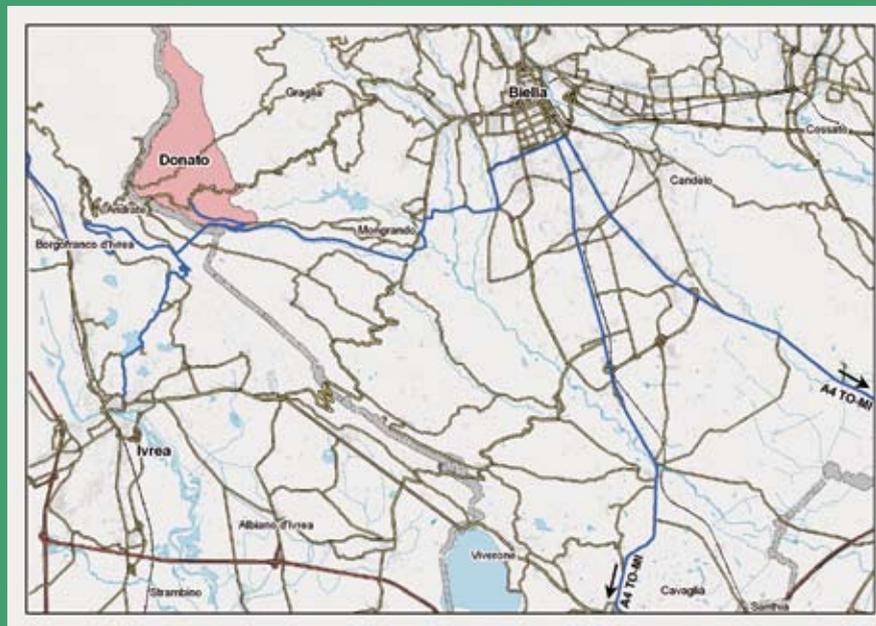
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www.comune.donato.bi.it

This brochure can be downloaded from this website.



Maps provided by:
*Local Enviromental
Information System
of the Province of Biella*



How to reach Donato:

from Milan:

A4 To-Mi, exit at Carisio, Sp 230 to Biella, Sp 400/A western ringroad then Sp 402 to Mongrando, Sp 419 - right turnoff for Donato

from Turin:

A4 To-Mi, exit at Santhià, Sp 143 to Biella, Sp 400/A western ringroad then Sp 402 to Mongrando, Sp 419 - right turnoff for Donato

from Aosta:

A5 Ao-To exit to Quincinetto, Sp 338 to Mongrando then Sp 419 for Biella - left turnoff for Donato