



OSSUCCIO – PATH 1 – A SMALL ISLAND AMIDST GREAT HISTORY AND OLD WALKWAYS

STAGE 6 – THE OLD VIA REGINA AND THE CHURCH OF S. GIACOMO

INFORMATION

Point of departure Ossuccio, Antiquarium pier

Point of arrival Ossuccio, church of S. Giacomo

Path type urban route

Total length approx. 1400m

Travel time (on foot) 40 min

Difficulty tourist

Rise 80m

Maximum height 280m

Paving asphalt, cobbles, stone setts

Public transport to the point of departure bus service; boat in the hamlet of Campo

Public transport from the point of arrival bus service nearby; boat in the hamlet of Campo

Parking at the point of departure yes

Points of interest The old Via Regina in Ossuccio; Church of S. Agata (St. Agatha), formerly of S. Sisinnio (St. Sisinnius); Church of S. Giacomo (St. James)

DESCRIPTION

Once on the paved quay beyond the jetty's gate back on mainland, turn left onto the 12 cobblestone step stairs; cross the gravel driveway and climb another flight of 11 stone steps, turning left to follow the old Via Regina, this stretch being cobbled and now called via Giuseppe Somalvico. After about 40 metres, on the right, there is a fountain in a wall niche. After a further 20 metres, turn right, past a porticoed passageway; soon after you will find a terraced mule-track of 35 low irregular steps, with a very variable tread, in some cases reaching a few meters. At the end, overcoming a last difference in height, you will join the asphalted Strada Statale Regina 340. Cross at the pedestrian crossing and take the cobbled stairs (40 steps) on the left going uphill, followed by a 90-metre stretch of cobblestones bordering the public park, which hosts a bar, a bowling ground and a tennis court. You will then reach the asphalted via Andrea Castelli; cross it and continue along the asphalted via Antonio Samuele Vanini for about 70 meters; climb the 9 cobbled steps and enter via Provinciale, which you are to follow while keeping to the left (free parking available in the area). After approx. 120 metres turn left into a cobbled shortcut, consisting of three initial steps, a stretch of about 30 metres, and then another 11 steps, which allows you to "cut the bend". Back on via Provinciale, continue keeping to the left for another 75 metres. Turn left in Via Cesare Giovio (small cast iron fountain) that begins with 11 low cobbled steps and borders the right side of the **church of S. Agata**, formerly dedicated to St. Sisinnius. The church, with a simple gabled façade, overlooks a small cobbled square and hosts a Roman votive altar, probably dating back to the 2nd or 3rd century AD, which makes reference to the old inhabitants of Ossuccio, the *Ausuciates*; it also has an interesting Romanesque belfry. Continue along Via Giovio for about 70 metres and then enter the historic centre of Ossuccio, overcoming a few terraced stretches going slightly uphill and reaching a crossroads, where there is a fountain in wall niche. Turn left and continue downhill, along via Santuario, which is cobbled and terraced, and from where you can enjoy a beautiful view of the Comacina Island.

After 420 metres you once again cross via Castelli; continue along Via Santuario for 80 metres until you meet the Strada Statale Regina (please mind the last 3 stone steps) at the point where you see the "Trattoria San Giovanni" restaurant and the bar-convenience store. Turn right to cross the pedestrian crossing and immediately enter via Gioachino Leoni, a cobbled passageway, which probably coincides with another stretch of the old Via Regina, squeezed between the wall of the State Road and the old houses of the hamlet of Spurano. After about 140 metres, in a clearing overlooking the lake, on the left you will see the apse of the **church of S. Giacomo** of Spurano. On the right there is a

bench - should you need to rest - and a sign of the “Lake Como Greenway” (www.greenwaydellago.it), a walkway created in 2007 by the Unione dei Comuni della Tremezzina (*Union of Municipalities of the Tremezzo area*), which runs for more than 10 kilometres (divided into 5 sections) through the towns of Colonno, Sala Comacina, Ossuccio, Lenno, Mezzegra, Tremezzo and Griante, partly just above the inhabited areas and partly along the lake. By walking the Greenway one can discover this territory’s multiple features: historic towns, views of rural areas, lake landscapes, buildings, and gardens.

By bordering the side of the church of S. Giacomo one finds that it is interrupted almost halfway through by a large opening, now cladded, which in origin was probably the main entrance, right alongside the Via Regina. This opening is surmounted by a 17th century fresco on a red background, depicting *Saint James the Greater* who, with his pilgrim’s staff, seems to be still watching over travellers.

After about 20 metres from the apse bend slightly to the left, down 4 irregular stone steps, followed by a grassy plateau with a small outcropping rock, then another 2 steps allow you to reach the small paved square in front of the entrance to the church, limited on the part facing the lake by a stone wall, about one metre high. On the west side of the small square, a fountain with a granite basin leans onto the enclosure wall. With the visit to the church, a small Romanesque gem made in undressed Moltrasio stone located alongside the old Via Regina our journey comes to an end.