



CHURCH OF S. AGATA (ST. AGATHA), FORMERLY OF S. SISINNIO (ST. SISINNIUS)

You can find this point of interest in Ossuccio - Path 1 - Stage 6

INFORMATION

Location: the church overlooks a churchyard of approx. 5m x 5m onto via Cesare Giovio, at the heart of the historic centre of Ossuccio.

Paving: via Giovio is cobbled, as is the churchyard; the church interior is paved with stone slabs.

Architectural barriers: access to the church is through the entrance on the façade by crossing a low threshold, or through the right entrance after climbing three steps.

Services: free parking available in the area.

Leisure and food: there are bars and restaurants in the surroundings.

DESCRIPTION

(drawn from the following website: <http://www.acisolacomacina.it>)

The church of S. Agata (previously dedicated to St. Sisinnius) stands in the historic centre of Ossuccio. It has a simple gabled façade overlooking the small churchyard; the single nave interior has a chapel on the right dedicated to St. Agatha and a large space beside the presbytery, again on the right handside.

«The oldest document referring to the church is dated 1299; it mentions its dedication to the sole St. Sisinnius, as does the report on the pastoral visit of Bishop Ninguarda in 1593; only at the time of the pastoral visit of Bishop Carafino in 1644 does the dedication to St. Agatha finally appear.

The restoration work carried out between 1993 and 1995 enabled to reconstruct the various historical stages regarding the building: from a primitive cemetery chapel, to which an apse is added (beginning of the 6th century) to an Early Middle Ages church (between the 8th and 10th century) and, lastly, the Roman rebuilding (presumably in the 12th century), partially well preserved to this day with its original altar, a splendid holy water font decorated in high-relief with fantasy animals, remains of frescoes, some of which undressed, others hidden in the attic, the gracefully splayed window openings.

Starting from the end of the 17th century the church underwent substantial interventions, eventually leading to the appearance it has today.

The belfry, after the plaster was stripped off in 1989, is now one of the nicest bell towers in the Como area.

The church hosts – at the side of the presbytery – a Roman votive altar, probably dating back to the 2nd or 3rd century AD, which, in addition to being a memento of the ancient pagan cult, has the great merit of having handed down the place name of the old Roman pagus and its inhabitants: the *Ausuciates*».

Of interest is the altarpiece depicting *Our Lady with the Child between Saints Sisinnius* (dressed as a bishop, although according to tradition he was a deacon) and *Agatha*, inside a splendid gilt wood frame, dated 1577 and signed by Giulio De Grassi. On the altar-step Scenes from the *Martyrdom of Saints Vincent and Euphemia* before their judges and two figures with tables carrying warnings on the respect that is due when entering a sacred place.