



MENAGGIO – PATH 1 – A VILLAGE AND A CASTLE, UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE MAGI

STAGE 3 – FROM VIA STRECIOUN TO THE JETTY

INFORMATION

Point of departure Menaggio, via *Streciou*

Point of arrival Menaggio, jetty

Path type urban-excursion mixed route

Total length approx. 1750 m

Travel time on foot 45 min

Difficulty Tourist-Excursionist

Rise 15 m

Maximum height 235 m asl

Paving asphalt, cobbles, porphyry setts, stone slabs

Public transport to the point of departure: bus service nearby

Public transport from the point of arrival: bus service nearby boat, ferry, hydrofoil

Parking at the point of departure no

DESCRIPTION

At the crossroads, turn immediately to your right taking via *Streciou*, which in local dialect means “Long bottleneck”; on a municipal map of the beginning of the past century it was shown as “Via Ponte Vecchio” and its layout presumably coincides with a section of the old “Via Regina”, an important road axis of Roman origin connecting Como with Germany. This road starts with four cobbled steps, bordered on the right by a chute paved with stone slabs; after a further 2 metres four barriers – approx. one metre high and arranged on three non parallel lines – have been placed, to prevent motorbike access. The base is cobbled on the sides, with a stone slab strip at the centre, approximately 35 centimetres wide. As the name infers, this road is 1.20 metres wide at the beginning, then, after about 20 metres, following a slight bend, it narrows to one metre, winding between private property enclosures and walls; in its last section, for approx. 10 metres, the road widens again, bordered on the left by a jutting rock. After about 150 metres (mind the holes and the uneven asphalt at the entrance of the road), you cross via per Loveno, the old road, now asphalted, which led to this hamlet, that became part of the Municipality of Menaggio in 1929. After approx. 15 metres, in the wall of the building on the right, you will find a niche with an 18th century devotional painting with *Christ Crucified, the Mourning Virgin* on the left and *Saint John and Mary Magdalene* on the right. A little further down the road you reach one of the old bridges on the Sanagra known as the Bridge “of Our Lady of Caravaggio” or “Old” Bridge, with a stone parapet on both sides, bordered by an iron railing, the overall height of which is 1.5 metres. When crossing the cobbled bridge: about two thirds of the way, after 10 metres, you come to an aedicule on the left parapet decorated with a chipboard panel carrying a high relief by Enrico Vannuccini (1965), depicting *Saint John Nepomucene*, invoked to protect people from drowning. At the end of the bridge, on the right, stands the small oratory of Our Lady of Caravaggio built in 1923 in gratitude for grace received. Continue uphill for further 60 metres along via per Loveno, cobbled and bordered on the right by a series of low steps, past the large building which used to be the “Bellavista Hotel”. In front of number 27 (after 37 steps if using the stairs) you will find the “*Tri schignei (scagni)*” of the Three Kings, i.e. three seats of stone and concrete, built against the rock and stone wall on the right edge of the road, yet another reference to the local devotion to the Magi. Turn back, cross the bridge and follow the asphalted via per Loveno, bordering the factory of Venini Costruzioni Metalliche, a company which has continued the Menaggio ironworking tradition since the first half of the past century. Tradition has it that a convent initially stood in this area, followed up by a brick factory until the beginning of the past century. After approx. 60 metres you reach the crossing with via Leoni, keeping to the left. At the crossroads there is a temple shaped shrine in pebble dash, surmounted by a cross, containing a painting of *The Madonna and Child*, known as “Our Lady of Flames”, protected in its lower section

by a wrought iron grate. It was originally an isolated chapel, later incorporated in Venini Costruzioni Metalliche's surrounding wall. The painting, made by a certain Petazzi from Plesio at the beginning of the past century, takes its name from its lower part, depicting the souls in Purgatory invoking the help of Mary while amongst the flames. Apparently, in the past, the mothers of Menaggio used to take their rascal children to this chapel, so that the fear of eternal flames might warn them to behave. You then take via Leone Leoni, named after a 16th century sculptor who was probably born in Menaggio from a family originally from Arezzo, who created the funeral monument to Gian Giacomo Medici (aka the Medeghino) in Milan Cathedral. Keep to your left: the pedestrian route is separated from the road by 6 metal barriers distanced at approx. 2 metres from each other. After 20 metres you enter another humpback bridge over the Sanagra stream; attention must be paid to the two one metre high barriers placed at the beginning of the bridge to prevent motorbike access, immediately before a 80 cm high small granite square pillar at the centre of the footway, and a hydrant on the left. As you enter the bridge, on the left, there is a temple shaped shrine in pebble dash with a small painting of *Our Lady of Sorrows*, this, too, later incorporated into the last section of Venini's wall. Cross the bridge, the width of which is gradually reduced to 2 metres from the initial 3 metres; the stone and concrete parapet on both sides is approx. 60 centimetres high. The base is cobbled on the sides, with a stone slab strip at the centre, approximately 30 centimetres wide. At the end of the road on the bridge, after 40 metres, one must again be careful as at the centre there is yet another 80 cm. high small granite square pillar. You then cross via Cheglino, continuing straight on along via Leoni (please mind the rather uneven asphalt), leaving a building with a brick chimney behind. After further 35 metres, you reach via Lusardi. Turn right for a short section and cross on the pedestrian crossing. Then turn left, following via Lusardi on the porphyry pavement, separated from the street by pairs of iron barriers and turn right into via Roma while keeping on the pavement, going past the ASF bus depot, near the small church of St. Roch, at the edge of the square near the cemetery. This single nave church, the façade of which is preceded by a portico shaped like a small classical temple, and which has a small belfry on the left, was built in 1772, probably in the vicinity of an ancient oratory dedicated to St. Michael, which was destroyed in the 16th century. The small church was restored in 1836 as a result of a vow made by the Menaggio community during a cholera epidemic; it was embellished and refurbished several times in the past century. It witnesses the heartfelt devotion in the area, especially in times of sickness and plague. From here, keeping on via Roma's porphyry tile pavement separated from the street by iron barriers, you walk through the sports and recreational area of Menaggio, initially bordering the football pitch. After about 200 metres, leave the pavement, cross via Roma on the zebra crossing and continue on the opposite porphyry based pavement skirting the area of the Lido of Menaggio, a rationalist building worthy of interest, the result of the collaboration between Benedetto Castelli and Carlo Mantegazza. The structure, inaugurated in 1934, was used for a casino in 1946. In correspondence with the entrance to the Lido, for approx. 10 metres before and after it, the pavement stops, and is replaced by a narrow pedestrian strip limited by a white line on the asphalt; after a small step you reach the modern bridge over the Sanagra, approx. 20 metres long and 60 centimetres wide, with a porphyry tile base and protected by 1.20 metres high iron railings. Past the bridge, border the white line limiting the roadway for approx. 5 metres, then turn left, in correspondence with the entrance of the miniature golf entrance (please mind the row of plane trees). On the right hand-side of via Benedetto Castelli, in Vittorio Emanuele II square, you may see a fountain surmounted by a soaring granite column, donated by Evelyn Mylius De Neufville to the community at the end of the 19th century. Originally placed in Largo Cavour, the fountain was moved here after the Second World War. Continue walking the on asphalted pavement while bordering the miniature golf enclosure for about 30 metres: in the final section please mind a waste basket and a plane tree on the right, and two small stone square pillars on the right. After a very short concrete stretch, which is not completely even, you enter the lake promenade, keeping on the porphyry sett section, limited on the right by a 1.5 metres wide flowerbed (separating it from the adjacent via Benedetto Castelli), and on the left by another flowerbed, this time approx. 8 metres wide. After about 200 metres you find the high soaring **Monument to the Weaver**, made in Carrara marble and bronze in 1990 by sculptor Francesco Somaini and commissioned by the Mantero family, owner of one of the major silk factories of the area, as a tribute to the workers, especially women, who helped make Como's silk industry world-renowned. By continuing on the lake promenade, after approx. 15 metres you find the Monument to the Dead at Sea, placed by the A.N.M.I. (National Association of Italian Seamen) of Menaggio in 1979; the monument is a metal anchor on a stone block, at the centre of a flowerbed which has a diameter of approx. 4 metres, surrounded by a chain supported by approx. 30 centimetres high posts. The way along the lakeside is interrupted after about 20 metres by an asphalted parking area; it then continues along a narrow lane in porphyry setts which flanks a private property on the right for approx. 70 metres. After this, if you keep left, you meet the lake promenade once again (there is a clump of lime trees on the right and a series of flowerbeds on the left of the recommended path). A pleasant lakeside stroll of about 400 metres brings you back to the starting point, along Via Mazzini and via IV Novembre.