



SOUTHERN WALLS*

* structures partially disappeared

You can find this point of interest in Como – Path 7 - Stage 1

INFORMATION

Location: the southern walls of the Roman city developed parallel to the current Viale Cattaneo, Viale Spallino and Viale Battisti, but only some sections remain visible today (see description)

Services: car park in via Auguadri (800 parking spaces); urban and extra-urban bus stops available in the area outside the walled city; ATMs in via Giulini, via Milano-corner of Piazza Vittoria; public toilets in the Viale Spallino underpass; pharmacy in via Cesare Cantù; Como Municipal Library in Piazzetta Venosto Lucati

Leisure and Catering: bars, cafes and shops of various kinds in the area; small public garden between Viale Spallino and via Milano

Other information: Nowadays (2024) none of the southern walls are accessible to the public.

For information: Museo Archeologico “Paolo Giovio”, Piazza Medaglie d’Oro 1, Como; Tel. 031.252550; musei.civici@comune.como.it

DESCRIPTION

Longer sections of the southern Roman wall, whose route developed east-west within the medieval walls, have been preserved and are clearly visible in the basements of some buildings, although unfortunately they cannot be visited at the moment.

A stretch of walls came to light between via Diaz and via Parini, in the complex between via Diaz and via Parini (via Diaz 100).

From the door at Largo Miglio 8 (from which you can also access the remains of Porta Pretoria), you enter the courtyard of the building now belonging to the “Teresa Ciceri” high school. In this courtyard, a section of wall is visible with the outlet of a sewer canal and a rectangular base probably belonging to one of the towers that marked the boundary wall. Today the walls of the southern side of the “Alessandro Volta” high school are grafted onto this stretch. Close to these walls, from the 1st century AD, private homes were built, overlooking a gravelled street which passed right around the walls.

Continuing east, we point out a stretch of walls still well preserved in the boiler room under the gym of the “Teresa Ciceri” high school (with access from Via Carducci 9), with the base made up of 6 steps and with the remains of an internally empty square tower, protruding out both to the exterior side and the interior side of the walls. The findings are completed by a further section of masonry which came to light in the garden of the adjacent Institute of the Canossian Sisters.

The excavations carried out over the years have also made it possible to identify the bases of towers added to the republican walls of Como, especially those on the southern side. These are towers applied at a time when the lack of security made it necessary to strengthen the existing walls, in two successive moments: in the 4th century, towers with a circular base were added, always secured to the boundary wall, like the one found inside a building in via Parini 1. Finally, after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the continuous barbarian incursions led to the construction of further square-plan towers, often built using the material sourced from the plunder of previous buildings and used to fill the spaces between the existing towers.