

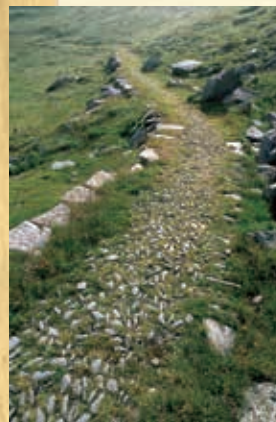
# Valle del Bitto di Albaredo Along the Priula Road

This valley has been known since ancient times as a crossroad of trade between the Canton of Grisons and the Venetian Republic; to this day it holds the old Priula Road, an imposing work of engineering for when it was built and still in excellent state of repair. Its highest point reaches 1992 m at Passo San Marco, boundary line between the provinces of Sondrio and Bergamo. Rich in history, tradition and rural culture, the Valle d'Albaredo is deeply carved by the eastern branch of the Bitto stream, that comes down from Passo San Marco. The thickly wooded mountainsides are broken by fields and pastures, dotted with buildings and rural villages. Around the treeline, sunlit meadows and fallow fields compete for space with larches and firs. This is where the famously renowned Bitto is traditionally

produced. Cheesemaking and many other silvo-pastoral activities are still being carried out in full accordance with traditional practices. The lie of the land and the wild look of some of its corners have triggered the imagination of its inhabitants of old, who have passed down through the generations thrilling stories of witchcraft. One of the best known is about Sassello the herdsman, that has been turned into a nighttime thematic outing, the sentiero dei mister, that is brought to life during the summer by an expert storyteller. To recount Sassello's adventures, he guides the visitors through the woods of Albaredo lighting the way with torches. The thick woods of beech and pine, checkered with fields, that are the backdrop to the local legends, are also home to many species of wild animals.

## THE PRIULA ROAD

The entire Valle di Albaredo is marked by the historic Priula Road, an ancient link between Morbegno and Bergamo. It was built in 1590 by Alvise Priuli, then governor of Bergamo, with the aim of enabling trade between the Venetian Republic and Northern Europe. Still in a good state of repair to this day, it is possible to walk along its 18km from Morbegno to Passo San Marco. When you reach the mountain pass, having crossed you get to the province of Bergamo. From here the city of Bergamo is about 60 km away.



## Park structures

### LA PORTA DEL PARCO - Visitors centre

WHERE Albaredo per San Marco (next to the parish church), via Brasa, 1 – tel 389 2015718  
OPEN Summer, entrance for groups on request

The building is situated at the center of the village and its balconies offer a wide panoramic view over the valley of Albaredo and the Rhaetian Alps. It is the center of all environmental, didactic and recreational activities, where all the Park's events and activities are organized and is also the principal information center. It contains a small museum dedicated to local activities and traditions, as well as information panels indicating all natural and non-natural environments in the Valtellina Orobic Alps. It is also the starting point for visiting the Ecomuseo della Valle del Bitto di Albaredo.



Albaredo per San Marco



## Bitto cheese



## Bitto cheese

This cheese is the symbol of all artisanal food production in these valleys. It is produced in the mountain pastures at a height between 1400 and 2000 meters, in full respect of the traditions that give it its worth. It is a fat cheese made with milk fresh from the cow and often includes goat milk.

The grass of these pastures and the traditional cheese making techniques, that allow for over five years seasoning, make this a unique and highly valued product.

In Albaredo per San Marco you'll find the "Alpe Bitto" Dairy, where high quality produce is obtained from locally sourced raw milk by avoiding pasteurization.

The dairy also allows school field trips to see the various stages of production.

## Matusc cheese

A cheese typical of Albaredo, in 2006 it was given the name "Matusc San Marco" in honor of the ancient road that connects the Valley to La Serenissima. Produced in the meadows of Albaredo and lower Valtellina processing skimmed milk from different milkings, the Matusc is a type of home cheese linked to the traditions and hardworking life of farmers and originally was only intended for their own consumption.

Various studies suggest that the word matusc comes from the latin mat, 'cloth', referring to the way the curds are removed from the vat.

## Ecomuseum of the Valle del Bitto di Albaredo

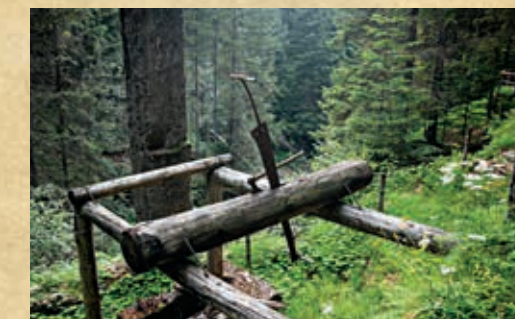
The community of Albaredo per San Marco, having realized the historical and environmental importance of its territories, has decided to turn it into an Ecomuseum. In this open-air museum, located inside the natural environment of the Park, you can see what remains of the ancient activities belonging to this area thanks to the restoration and reconstruction of the traditional infrastructure. The museum develops over a 3.5km route that takes in the old sawmill, the coal pit, the bothy used to store milk and the melting forge. The tour starts from the Porta del Parco visitors center in Albaredo per San Marco.

For further information: [www.vallidelbitto.it](http://www.vallidelbitto.it)



Madonna delle Grazie church and Dosso Chierico

Old sawmill



## RECOMMENDED ROUTES

### 3 - Ancient Priula Road - from Albaredo per San Marco

DIFFICULTY Challenging	STARTING POINT Albaredo per San Marco, 898 m
ALTITUDE GAIN 1000 m	RECOMMENDED SEASON June – October
TIME OF ASCENT 3 h	

This route follows a stretch of the ancient Priula Road. Still in a good state of repair, this road enabled trade between Bergamo, Valtellina and the Canton of Grisons. You start in Albaredo, where you find the ancient track as it splits from the road to San Marco and crosses Val Viaga, that according to legend is filled with powerful witches. One of the prime points of interest along the Road is the lovely little church of Madonna delle Grazie, where you can enjoy one of the most memorable views of the entire route. At the end of the trek, once you reach the wide saddle of the San Marco pass, 1992m in altitude, you can look out onto the views of Val Brembana. If you walk a short way down on the Bergamo side of the Priula Road you reach two shelters, one of which is Ca' San Marco, built in 1593: it is one of the most ancient shelters throughout the entire Alps.



Educational activities - ABOVE Top of Valle di Albaredo seen from the Bema side

Fields and high pastures between Baitridana and Alpe Piazza



## RECOMMENDED ROUTES

### 1 - Sentiero della transumanza - from Albaredo

DIFFICULTY Average	STARTING POINT Albaredo per San Marco, 898 m
ALTITUDE GAIN 937 m	RECOMMENDED SEASON June – October
TIME OF ASCENT 2.40 h	

From Case di Sopra to Albaredo per San Marco, you climb up the steep fields of the village and through a fine beech wood until you reach the fallow fields of Edolo, where Matusc is produced. As you carry on, you get to Alpe Piazza and its namesake shelter, an area in which Bitto is made. You proceed towards Baitridana, then go down to Corte Grande and from there you take the mule track that cuts across the single carriageway road and go to Prati Nuovi. In the last stretch, you return to Albaredo by walking along a stretch of the Priula Road.

### 2 - Pizzo Berro circular walk - from Bema

DIFFICULTY Average	STARTING POINT Località Ronchi - Bema
ALTITUDE GAIN 677 m	RECOMMENDED SEASON June – October
TIME OF ASCENT 2.00 h	

From the parking lot in Ronchi, just above Bema, you follow the dirt road that takes you to Fracino. From here you climb through a beautiful spruce wood up to Pizzo Berro, where you can admire the wide view over the Rhaetian Alps and the Bitto valleys. You proceed along the ridge to Baita Agucc and then on to Alpe Vesenda. You then climb down through the pastures and, once you reach the woods, you go to Bema taking the mule track that later turns to a dirt road. You can shorten the route at Baitone, at the Baita delle Foppe, by taking a path that links to the track you walked up.



- GYO** Gran Via delle Orobie, some sections only for mountaineering experts
- 1** Recommended routes
- 2** Main routes
- 3** Routes for expert mountaineers
- 4** Main roads
- 5** Secondary roads/byroads

#### MOUNTAIN HUTS

• **Locanda Ca' Priula**  
(Comune di Albaredo per San Marco)  
tel 0342 014688 tel 393 9295314

• **Rifugio Alpe Piazza**  
(Comune di Albaredo per San Marco)  
loc. Casera Alpe Piazza  
Tel 338 4647620

• **Rifugio Ronchi**  
(Comune di Bema)  
Bema, loc. Ronchi  
tel 333 6719038

• **Rifugio Salmurano**  
Foppe di Pescegallo  
tel 333 3839040

• **Rifugio Cesare Benigni**  
(CAI Piazza Brembana - BG)  
Lago dei Piazzotti -  
tel 0345 89033 tel 340 7714820

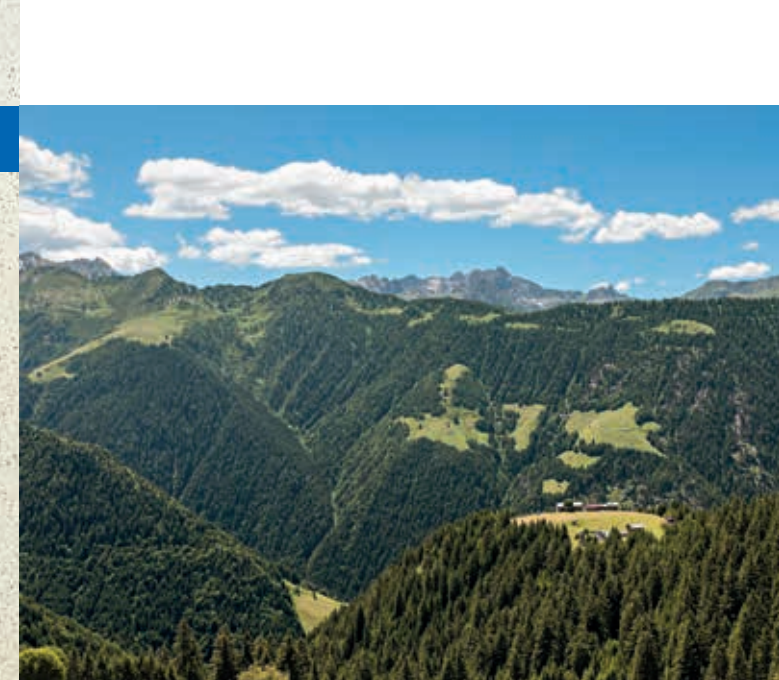
• **Rifugio Ca' San Marco**  
below Passo San Marco - BG  
tel 0345 86222

• **Rifugio Passo San Marco 2000**  
loc. La Cola - BG -  
tel 0345 86020, tel 349 8048505

• **Rifugio Trona Soliva**  
(Comune di Gerola Alta)  
loc. Alpe Trona Soliva  
cell 351 5907013

• **Rifugio della Corte**  
loc. La Corte - cell 340 3433090

• **Rifugio F.A.L.C.**  
(CAI Milano)  
loc. Bocchetta del Varrone - LC  
cell 331 7884452  
cell 328 3432751



Cortes Grande and Valle del Bitto di Albaredo seen from Baitridana

#### HOLIDAY FARMS

- 1. Agriturismo La Selva.** – Morbegno – loc. Arzo – tel 338 3285085
- 2. Agriturismo Ortesida.** – Morbegno – Strada prov. per San Marco 34 tel 331 8558457
- 3. Agriturismo Sciaresöla.** – Talamona – via Roncaiola 61 tel 338 8701592
- 4. Camilla Colombini.** – Talamona – loc. Murada – tel 338 5756061
- 5. L'Isola del Cavallo.** – Talamona – loc. Isola – tel 392 3295853

#### Useful contacts

- **Porta del Parco Orobie Valtellinesi di Albaredo** – via Brasca 15 - Albaredo per San Marco - Person in charge: Loredana Senna, tel 389 2015718 – [visitalbaredopersanmarco@vallidelbitto.it](mailto:visitalbaredopersanmarco@vallidelbitto.it)
- **Ecomuseo Valle del Bitto** – Albaredo per San Marco – tel 0342 601140 - tel 0345 89033 - [ecomuseo@vallidelbitto.it](mailto:ecomuseo@vallidelbitto.it)
- **Museo civico di Storia naturale di Morbegno** – via Cortivacci 2 - Morbegno - tel 0342 612451 - [www.comune.morbegno.so.it/museo](http://www.comune.morbegno.so.it/museo)
- **Consorzio Turistico Porte di Valtellina** – piazza Bossi 7/8 - Morbegno tel 0342 601140 - [infopoint@portediavaltellina.it](mailto:infopoint@portediavaltellina.it), [www.portediavaltellina.it](http://www.portediavaltellina.it)

For further and more detailed information we recommend you read "Guida al Parco Regionale delle Orobie Valtellinesi" by Mario Vannuccini, Lysis publishers; "Alpi Orobie Valtellinesi", curated by Guido Combi, Fondazione L. Bombardieri (books only in Italian); Parco delle Orobie Valtellinesi, coffee-table book curated by Elio Della Ferrera, Bonazzi Grafica (Italian/English).

#### GUIDED TOURS WITHIN THE PARK

- **Alpine guides and medium mountain Guides.** Are official Guides of the Parco delle Orobie Valtellinesi. Groups and individuals wishing for guided tours and hikes may contact the Park Center at 0342 211236. Web page: [www.parcorobievalt.com](http://www.parcorobievalt.com)
- **Environmental Education.** The local authorities of Albaredo, with the help of the Park, Provincia di Sondrio and Servizio Cultura, organize educational programs to increase knowledge of the nature, environment and culture of the area, specifically of the Ecomuseum. These programs are principally for schools at any age group and generally span multiple lessons both in the visitors center and the paths of the Ecomuseum. For further information contact Ileana Romina Negri Ph.D [info@gards.it](mailto:info@gards.it) – cell 349 28 62 437



A view of the Valtellina Orobie Alps

[www.parcorobievalt.com](http://www.parcorobievalt.com)

The ancient Priula Road

Parco delle Orobie Valtellinesi  
via Moia 4, 23010 Albosaggia (SO)  
tel 0342 211236  
[info@parcorobievalt.com](mailto:info@parcorobievalt.com)

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Parco delle Orobie Valtellinesi



Valle del Bitto di Albaredo

#### Holiday farm

- Restaurant or rest stop
- Rooms

\* Access to all roads closed to regular traffic is regulated by local authorities. For further information and updates: Com. di Albaredo p. San Marco 0342 616288; Comune di Bema 0342 618000; Comune di Talamona 0342 670703; Comune di Gerola Alta 0342 690024; Comune di Pedesina 0342 651767; Comune di Rasura 0342 616006; Comune di Cosio Valtellino 0342 634111

- Visitors center
- Information
- Museum
- Restaurant or rest stop
- Stable
- Rooms
- Parking
- Only authorized parking\*

\* These roads are generally dirt tracks and a 4x4 vehicle is recommended.