

Val Tartano Nature and tradition

The series of hairpin bends that mount the panoramic slopes of Crap del Mezzodi, a natural terrace overlooking lakeside Valtellina, take you to the hamlet of Campo, gateway to Val Tartano. Here you look out onto what is considered to be one of the most unusual valleys of the entire Orobics, due to its peculiar culture and architecture. While it shares the same morphology as the neighboring valleys, with a steep gorge at its entrance, Val Tartano stands out for the distinctive nature of its charming traditional houses that are still well visible and in good state of repair, despite being set amongst more modern buildings. About forty small hamlets dot the steep slopes, cloaked in flourishing woods. A network of roads and paths link the front channel of Val Tartano to two valley that branch out from it: Val Lunga and Val Corta.

The latter then splits into two more valleys, Val Budria and Val di Lemma. One of the most appreciated destinations in Val Lunga di Tartano are without doubt the gentle crags of the Laghi di Porcile, which form a spectacular alpine environment rich in water. In the nearby Val di Lemma, you can not only see the Orobics Botanical Garden but also giant's cauldrons all along the stream, a mark of the ongoing erosive action. Val Corta, on the other hand, is filled with typical rural architecture notable for its wooden buildings made with blockbau technique, while the wide fields and pastures are divided by barek, drystone walls built to keep the livestock safe and contained. To this day farmers work the fields with passion and knowledge, taking care of their prized territory and its heritage.

GIANT'S CAULDRONS

The constant rushing of mountain streams and the debris they carry wear and scrape the rock of the riverbeds; the results of this intense erosive action can be admired all along the path that climbs up Val di Lemma. One particular cauldron stands out amongst the rest, its size a testament to centuries of erosion.

BITTO CHEESE

Val Tartano, like the neighbouring valleys of Gerola and Albaredo, is one of the traditional areas of production of this unique highly renowned cheese. It is produced in the mountain pastures 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.

SOSTILA, Val Fabiòlo

Comprising a handful of medieval buildings, some bearing dates as far back as the XVI century, with balconies and open terraces made of wood in a manner typical of the Orobics, Sostila comprises the two centres of Arèt and Era and is home to about a hundred people. As strange as it may sound, up until the 50s it even had its own elementary school! Sostila was founded on the slopes of Val Fabiolo, a crossing point adjoining Val Tartano that can be easily accessed by a mule track starting in Sirta in Valtellina. However, as it is built in a funnel valley, it is isolated from the surrounding territory and gives the impression of being remote and hidden out of time.

Park structures

Visitors Centre IL LEGNO: stuff of life in Val Tartano

INFO Associazione culturale Val Tartano legno e sviluppo
WHERE Tartano, Via Piana - in Val Lunga - www.parcorobievalt.com
OPEN Summer. Parties and school trips require booking

Built inside an old school in the area of Piana, in Val Lunga, this Visitors Centre also comprises a botanical garden, containing all the principal plant species of the Valley, and an old sawmill. Wood is the guiding thread that leads from the history of the valley to a wider realization of the importance of protecting the woodland ecosystems. The dual objective is to safeguard the local identity and culture, and to show visitors how valuable a resource wood is both in the past, the present and the future.



Giardino Botanico Orobie

INFO www.parcorobievalt.com
WHERE Val di Lemma. 30' walk from Barbera, Val Corta
OPEN May to October. Entrance is free. Parties and school trips that want a guided tour require booking

The botanical garden was built for the purpose of preserving all significant alpine flora from this area in its natural environment. In this way you can admire all the botanical peculiarities of a vast territory within the boundaries of the Garden. The most prized specimens include *Sanguisorba dodecandra*, an endemic plant native to the Orobics, and *Streptopus amplexifolius*, also known as white twisted-stalk. Other species include: gentian, common turk's cap lily, monk's hood, alpine ragwort, saxifrages, ferns, as well as sedge, sphagnum and some interesting plants from boggy habitat such as cotton grass and *Pinguicula leptoceras*, a carnivorous plant.

The flowering period reaches its height in July.
For more information: www.parcorobievalt.com

Traditional architecture can be found near IL LEGNO visitors centre



Hamlets and traditional houses

The nature of the settlements in Val Tartano and its adjoining valleys is tied in with the use of natural resources that has been made since the earliest days of its colonization, at the beginning of the second millenium AD. Agriculture, herding, use of the woods and extraction of iron ore have touched every corner of this area. Over the course of time this has led to the construction of about 40 hamlets, not including the many fallow fields and pastures, some of which are still in use over the summer months. One of the most interesting architectural elements of the valley is the blockbau technique: houses, barns and stables were built by locking together trunks of wood, these buildings could either have a stone base or be constructed directly on the bare ground. This type of building is almost entirely absent from the Raethian Alps of Valtellina, and the only other place it can be found in the Orobics is the area of Corteno Golgi.

Orobie Botanical Garden



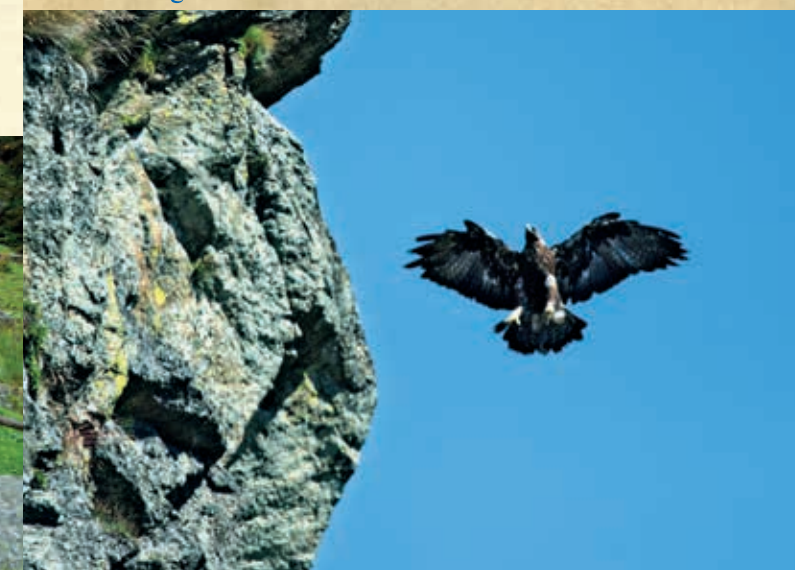
Majestic winged predators

Elusive diurnal birds of prey are a recurrent presence in Val Tartano. Up to three pairs of golden eagle will often nest in this vast territory, rich in alpine pastures filled with their main prey, alpine marmot. The inaccessible cliffs of this valley are an ideal nesting place for these birds, as well as for buzzards and kestrel. The latter can be seen hovering over fields and pastures, ready to catch insects and micro-mammals in the grass. The wide spread of forest, on the other hand, is the ideal nesting place for sparrowhawk and for the larger goshawk. These species are perfectly adapted to moving through dense woods thanks to their highly acrobatic flying skills, used mainly to catch birds as well as small to medium sized mammals.



Sparrowhawk

Golden eagle



Giants cauldron in Val di Lemma.
ABOVE Hamlet of Campo seen from Alpe Torrenzuolo

Typical barn around the hamlet of Fraccia



Hamlet of Sostila

RECOMMENDED ROUTES

1 - Laghi di Porcile - Passo di Tartano

DIFFICULTY Average
 ALTITUDE GAIN 608 m
 TIME OF ASCENT 2,30 h

This outing takes you to one of the most beautiful natural landscapes of the entire Orobie. You drive to the end of the road in Val Lunga and take a path through conifer woods spotted with patches of alder, streams and meadows home to alpine marmots. As you climb, you cross the Casera di Porcile pasture, here you can find the typical drystone walls called *barek*. Further on you reach the alpine pastures that open on to wide plateaus where the Laghi di Porcile are to be found. From this point you can go on to Passo di Tartano.

2 - Val Corta - Val di Lemma - Cima di Lemma

DIFFICULTY Average
 ALTITUDE GAIN 1196 m
 TIME OF ASCENT 3.30 h

From Val Corta, filled with fine examples of the local barns and wooden houses, you reach Val di Lemma, an area marked by giant's cauldrons, the "Orobie" Botanical Garden and wide alpine pastures. If you climb to the top of the valley and reach the peak of Cima di Lemma, you can admire a panoramic view of the western Orobie and the nearby Laghi di Porcile.



Typical barn with hayloft in Val Corta

Holiday farm

- Restaurant or rest stop
- Rooms

* Access to all roads closed to regular traffic is regulated/controlled by local authorities. For further information/Further updates: Comune di Tartano 0342 645004
 Comune di Fusine.0342 492141
 Comune di Colorina.0342 492113

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

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



- GVO** Gran Via delle Orobie, some sections only for mountaineering experts
- Recommended routes
- Main routes
- Routes for expert mountaineers
- Main roads
- Secondary roads/Byroads

MOUNTAIN HUTS/BIVOUACS

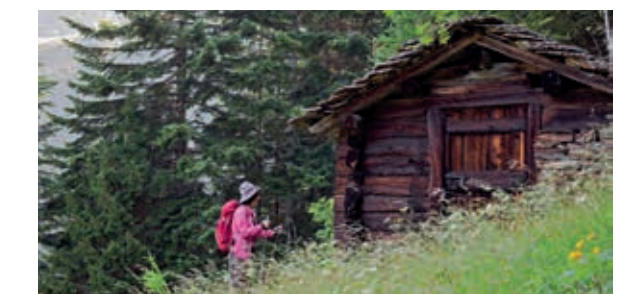
- **Rifugio Beniamino** (private) località Arale – Val Lunga June/September tel 0342 645024 - cell 329 0682906
- **Rifugio il Pirata** (private) località Arale – Val Lunga June/September tel 0342 645086 - cell 347 9327633 www.rifugioilpirata.it
- **Bivacco A. e S. Gusmeroli** (private) località Mont Còch - Alpe Torrenzuolo left open – cell. 328 7689785 www.comeunagoccia.org
- **Bivacco Frasnii** (private) località Frasnino (Campo Tartano) left open, not catered
- **Rifugio di Sostila** (private) loc. Sostila – Forcola (Val Fabiolo) Opens for pre-booked groups during the summer months, booking at Associazione Amici della Val Fabiolo cell 392 3447077
- **Bivacco Baita Tacher** Dosso Tacher (Val Tartano) left open
- **Bivacco Rovedatti** (self-catering) località Biorca - Alpe Pustaresc (Campo Tartano) – please declare the date of your stay on bivaccorovedatti.org
- **Rifugio Bernasca** (Comune di Colorina) Alpe Bernasca – left open Com. di Colorina tel 0342 492113
- **Rifugio Dordona** (private) Alpe Dordona – Val Madre Fusine – Jessica Ruffinoni tel 349 6148236

RECOMMENDED ROUTES

3 - Tartano - Alpe Torrenzuolo

DIFFICULTY Average
 ALTITUDE GAIN 671 m
 TIME OF ASCENT 2 h

If you start out from the village of Tartano and go along a panoramic road that crosses the meadows, after leaving the hamlet of Gavazzi behind you get to the hamlet of Fraccia. You then proceed through a pleasant conifer wood that leads to the pastures of Alpe Torrenzuolo; this area has a magnificent panoramic view over the valleys of Tartano. Here, at 1881m of altitude, you can also find the Aldo and Sergio Gusmeroli bivouac. If you head north along the plateau from Torrenzuolo, you reach the fallows of Barghetto; from here you climb down to Dassola and then carry on until you find the single carriageway road that you can follow back to Tartano.



On the way to Alpe Torrenzuolo

HOLIDAY FARM

- 1. **La Bedula** – loc. La Bedula - Campo Tartano – tel 328 7397771

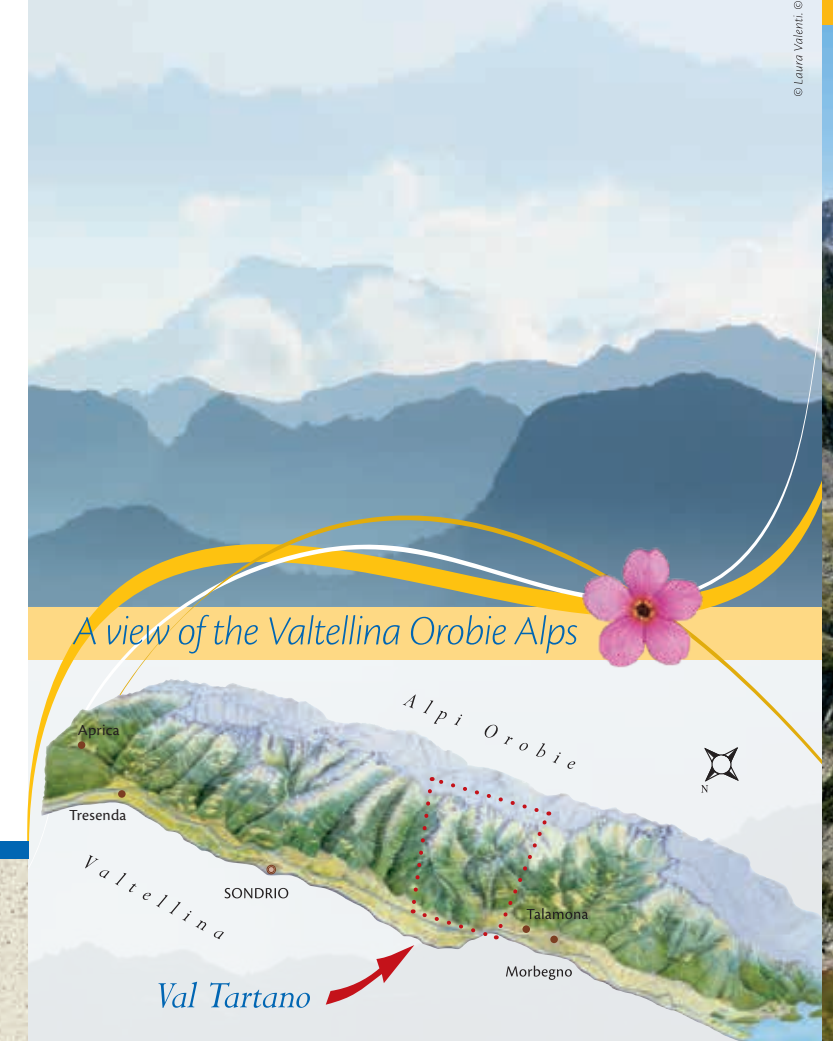
Useful contacts

- **Consorzio Turistico Porte di Valtellina** – piazza Bossi 7/8 - Morbegno tel 0342 601140 - infopoint@portedivaltellina.it, www.portedivaltellina.it
- **Associazione culturale Val Tartano legno e sviluppo** via Piana - Tartano – tel 338 9904739
- **Museo civico di Storia naturale di Morbegno** – via Cortivacchi 2 - Morbegno - tel 0342 612451 - www.comune.morbegno.so.it/museo

For further and more detailed information we recommend you read "Guida al Parco Regionale delle Orobie Valtellinesi" by Mario Vannuccini, Lyasis 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



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