



Access to the Sacred Mount is free of charge

FROM VARESE TO THE SACRED MOUNTS

By bus: City bus "C" (from the railroad station or the center of town); For more information and schedules: CPTI largo Gigli, 21100 Varese www.ctpi.it **By car:** motorway A8, exit Varese; directions for Sacro Monte along the road that goes from the town center to Campo dei Fiori passing through S. Ambrogio, Robarello, Fogliaro, Prima Cappella; By cable car from the cable car departure station of Piazzale Montanari - Hamlet of Prima Cappella reachable only by city bus or on foot. For information and schedules, go to AVT www.avtvarese.it - **By train:** FNM line (Ferrovie Nord Milano) Milano-Varese-Laveno - FF.SS. line Milano-Varese-Porto Ceresio - Railway Station of Varese. Info: www.trenitalia.com - www.trenord.it - **By plane:** Linate (MI) - tel +39 02 74852200 - Malpensa 2000 (Va) - tel +39 02 74852200 - Agno (Canton Ticino) - tel 0041 91 6101212.

INFORMATION

Sanctuary of Santa Maria del Monte - Parish of Santa Maria del Monte (E)
Via Assunzione, 21 - 21100 Varese - tel and fax +39 0332 229223 - sacromonte@chiesadimilano.it
www.sacromontedi Varese.it

Sanctuary Opening Times: solar time 7.30 a.m. - 12.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.
Legal time 7.00 a.m. - 12.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

Monastero Romite Ambrosiane - Piazzetta Monastero, 3 Varese - tel and fax +39 0332 227678

Parlour time: h. 9.30 a.m. - 12.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m., from Monday to Sunday, CLOSED every Friday

Centro Spiritualità Romite Ambrosiane - Piazza Paolo VI, Varese - tel and fax 0332 227678

Opening times: h. 7.00 a.m. - 11.50 and 3.00 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.; Celebration times: h. 7.30 a.m. Praises; h. 8.00 a.m. Holy Mass; h. 6.00 Vespers (on Friday 7 p.m.)

Parco Naturale Regionale Campo dei Fiori - Via Trieste, 40 - 21030 Brinzio (VA) - tel +39 0332 435386 - fax +39 0332 435386 - e-mail: info@parcocampodeifiori.it - web: www.parcocampodeifiori.it

Parco Campo dei Fiori Info Point - Managed by GEV - Piazzale Pogliaghi open on Sunday and holidays

First Chapel Exhibition Hall (B) - Fondazione Paolo VI per il Sacro Monte - Via al Santuario, 15 - 21100 Varese - info@fpsmvarese.it

Amici Del Sacro Monte - Cultural Association Founded in 1967 - Via del Ceppo, 5

Santa Maria del Monte - 21100 Varese - www.amicidelsacromonte.it

L'Emporio di Santa Maria del Monte - Coop. Sociale Ambiente e Sviluppo

Polyfunctional shop, traditional products, souvenirs and tourist information

Via B. Caterina Moriggi, 22 - tel 0332 1805268 - www.sacromontedi Varese.net

SERVICES Hotels and Restaurants

Hotel Ristorante Al Borducan: via Moriggi, 43 - tel +39 0332 220567 - www.hotelborducan.com

Hotel Ristorante Colonne: via Fincarà, 37 - tel +39 0332 220404 - www.albergocolonne.it

Trattoria Il Ceppo: piazza Pogliaghi, 2 - tel +39 0332 225190

Ristorante Milano: via Assunzione, 7 - tel +39 0332 227029 - www.ristorantemilanosacromonte.it

Ristorante Montorfano: via al Santuario, 74 - tel +39 0332 227027

Albergo Ristorante Sacro Monte: via Bianchi, 5 - tel +39 0332 224409 - www.ristorantesacromonte.it

B&B il parco e gli affreschi: via Fincarà, 27 - tel +39 0332 1670943 - +39 337254440 - www.ilparcoegliaffreschi.it

TOURIST OFFICE - INFORMATION AND TOURIST RECEPTION

IAT Varese - tel +39 0332 281913 - iatvarese@comune.varese.it

MUST SEE

Museo Baroffio e del Santuario del Sacro Monte sopra Varese (D) - Piazzetta Monastero - tel +39 0332 212042

www.museobaroffio.it - info@museobaroffio.it

Lodovico Pogliaghi House-Museum (C) - Via Beata Giuliana, 5 (entrance from Viale delle Cappelle)

Town of Santa Maria del Monte - tel +39 328 8377206 - www.casamuseopogliaghi.it - info@casamuseopogliaghi.it

First Chapel Exhibition Hall - Fondazione Paolo VI per il Sacro Monte (B)

Via al Santuario, 15 - 21100 Varese - info@fpsmvarese.it

OSSERVATORIO DEL CAMPO DEI FIORI - Società Astronomica "G.V. Schiaparelli" - Natural Sciences Popular

Centre - Astronomic Observatory - Prealpine Geophysical Centre

Visits on reservation: Observatory Secretary's Office: tel +39 0332 235491 - fax +39 0332 237143

Weather information: Operational Secretary's Office

Via A. Del Sarto, 3 - 21100 Varese - tel +39 0332 237021 - fax +39 0332 237143



Ente di gestione dei Sacri Monti (legal seat)

Documentation Centre of the European Sacred Mounts, Calvaries and Devotional Complexes

Cascina Valperone, 1 - 15020 Ponzano Monferrato (AL)

tel +39 0141 927120 - fax +39 0141 927800

info@sacri-monti.com - www.sacri-monti.com - www.sacrimonti.net



Sacri Monti - Official #sacrimontisocial

SACRI MONTI DI PIEMONTE E LOMBARDIA - UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE



Sacro Monte di Varese



HISTORY

The Sacro Monte is located above Varese at 883 m. a.s.l. The devotional path extends along the slopes of Monte Velate, in a splendid, panoramic position that looks down on a beautiful setting of pre-alpine lakes and the plain below. Construction on the Via Sacra – Sacred Way - began in 1604, on the initiative of the Capuchin Friar Giovanni Battista Aguggiari, who planned the construction of fourteen chapels dedicated to the Mysteries of the Rosary. The last, with the celestial vision of the Virgin received and crowned in Paradise, was to have the place of honour in the sanctuary at the end of the devotional route, founded, it is said, by Saint Ambrose. Father Aguggiari's design soon became a reality thanks to the support of the local communities and wealthy families. The work continued, especially on the chapel furnishings, until the XVIII century. The Sacred Mount of Varese is the most uniform and homogeneous of all the Sacri Monti of Piedmont and Lombardy; all the structures (the chapels, the three fountains and the three arches that introduce the Mysteries) were designed by a single architect: Giuseppe Bernascone known as "Il Mancino" ["The Southpaw"]. The chapels all have porticos with elaborate and different shapes; through openings once grated on the doors and windows (and today glassed), visitors can see the groups of scenic figures inside. Many important architects of the Lombard cultural scene worked on the Sacro Monte di Varese, including Giovan Mauro della Rovere (one of the Fiammenghini), Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli (known as Morazzone), Francesco Silva, the Recchi Brothers, Dionigi Bussola, Antonio Busca and Stefano Maria Legnani (called il Legnanino). In 1983, Renato Guttuso was invited by Mons. Pasquale Macchi to paint an acrylic with a contemporary version of the Flight to Egypt on the outside wall of the chapel dedicated to the Nativity.



THE NATURALISTIC SETTING

The Sacro Monte di Varese is a spot devoted to the Marian faith and its religion. It is situated within the confines of the Campo dei Fiori Regional National Park. The 14 chapels unwind along a cobbled path roughly 2 km long leading to the hamlet of Santa Maria del Monte (at 883 m.), on a road on which art, faith and nature meet. The Natural Park is just a few kilometers north of Varese. Founded in 1984, the headquarters is in Brinzio and covers about 6.300 hectares over a territory of 17 towns and 2 mountain townships. The Park encompasses two massifs: Campo dei Fiori and the Martica-Chiusarella. The former occupies the western section of the Park and faces the Lake of Varese. Its highest peak is Punta Paradiso (1227 m.). The latter massif is in the east and has two peaks: Mount Chiusarella (912 m.) and Mount Martica (1025 m.). The two are separated from the Valle Rasa which joins the Valcuvia to the valley of the Olona River. Inside the park are 6 Reserves which are home to very special environments. There are twenty trails by which visitors can access the park on foot. The area is crossed by the European path E1, the Jubilee path, the Via Verde Varesina, and the Anulare Valcuviano.



SACRO MONTE DI VARESE
Surfaces: 6300 hectares
Elevation: 883 metres
Environment: Hilly

SACRI MONTI UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

"The nine *Sacri Monti* of Northern Italy are groups of chapels and other architectural handmade works built between the XVI and XVII century dedicated to different aspects of the Christian faith. Besides their symbolic and spiritual meaning, they feature notable characteristics of beauty, virtue and charm as they blend in with natural and scenic environments of hills, woods and lakes. They also contain very important artistic remains (frescoes and statues)". This is the motivation according to which in 2003 UNESCO included the "Sacri Monti di Piemonte e Lombardia" site in its World Heritage List. This prestigious acknowledgement confers universal value to seven *Sacri Monti* of Piedmont (Belmonte, Crea, Domodossola, Ghiffa, Oropa, Orta and Varallo) and two of Lombardy (Ossuccio and Varese), highlighting the extraordinary richness, qualities and values of these historical, artistic and nature gems. The chapels series depicts episodes and mysteries of sacred life through statues, paintings and frescos while blending in with the embracing environment and contributing in defining the features of each monumental complex. *Valuable examples of landscape architecture, the Sacri Monti represent an important meeting point for believers and lovers of art.* First arising on the western Alps, where this phenomenon originated more than five hundred years ago, the *Sacri Monti* then inspired similar models in many parts of Catholic Europe. The seven *Sacri Monti* of Piedmont are part of the protected area system of Regione Piemonte which provides for historical and artistic preservation, maintenance and protection of the surrounding environment.





Cartography by University of Genoa - Polytecnic School - D.S.A. Department.

LEGEND

- A** Church of the Immacolata
- B** Exhibit Hall - Fondazione Paolo VI
- C** Lodovico Pogliaghi House
- D** Baroffio Museum
- E** Sanctuary

- Toilet
- Toilets equipped for disabled people
- Viewpoint
- Parking
- Restaurant



THE CHAPELS

The Church of the Immaculate (A) - Located on the climb that leads to the first arch, it is the introductory structure on the Via Sacra and was built between 1604 and 1609. The statues of Mary and the "Doctors of the Church" are by Marco Antonio Prestinari and Francesco Silva while the frescoes are by the Lampugnani brothers.

The Arch of the Rosary - Built between 1607 and 1623, introduces the Joyful Mysteries with a statue of the Madonna and Child offering the rosary to pilgrims. The statues represent of Saint Domenic and Saint Francis. To one side is the Samaritan fountain.

CHAPELS OF THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

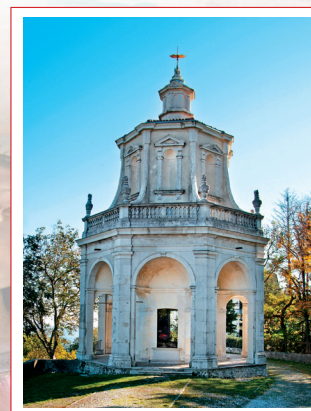
Chapel 1 - Annunciazione (The Annunciation) - Was built between 1605 and 1609, and is a reproduction of a patrician home of the 1600s. The statues of Mary and the archangel Gabriel are by Prestinari and were a gift by the Orta Sacred Mount community.

Chapel 2 - Visitazione (The Visitation) - Built between 1605 and 1697, it contains twelve statues by Francesco Silva; the frescoes are the work of Giovanni Paolo Ghianda.

Chapel 3 - Natività (The Nativity) - Completed in 1623, it contains a classic crèche composed of fourteen terracotta statues by Martino Retti. The frescoes are by Nuvolone. In 1983 Renato Guttuso painted the large "Flight to Egypt" on the exterior.

Chapel 4 - Presentazione di Gesù al Tempio (The Presentation of Jesus to the Temple) - Executed between 1618 and 1621, shows Jesus being presented to the Temple, with twenty terracotta statues by Francesco Silva. The frescoes are by Ghisolfi.

Chapel 5 - Disputa coi Dottori (The Disputation with the Scholars) - Created between 1607 and 1654, the chapel contains twenty-two statues sculpted by Silva and painted by Nuvolone, the same artist who frescoed all the interiors including the "Vision of the Apocalypse" ["Visione dell'Apocalisse"] and "The Arch of the Alliance" ["l'Arca dell'Alleanza"].



The Arch of Saint Charles, in Brenna Useria stone, introduces the Joyful Mysteries. At the top of the chapel is a statue of the Cardinal Saint, a 1651 work by Carlo Antonio Buono. Just before the Arch is the second Fountain on the Via Sacra.

THE CHAPELS OF THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

Chapel 6 - Orazione nell'Orto degli Ulivi (The Prayer in the Olive Grove) - Work on the chapel was begun in 1606. It contains nine statues by Francesco Silva and wall frescoes by Bartolomeo Ghiandone. The chapel faces north and light enters sideways, creating a nocturnal effect in which the statue of Judas is shrouded in shadow.

La grotta delle beate (The grotto of the blessed Virgins) - The grotto depicts the place where Caterina Moriggi and Giuliana Puricelli, hermit sisters of Santa Maria del Monte, often prayed. All the statues are by Silva.

Chapel 7 - Flagellazione (The Flagellation) - Built between 1606 and 1609, it is located on land that stands above the road, offering a panoramic view of the plain. The heartbreaking scene is composed of eight statues by Retti and three large frescoes by Morazzone: "Cristo davanti a Caifa", "Cristo e Barabba mostrati al popolo" and "Cristo spogliato e trascinato alla flagellazione" ("Christ before Caifa", "Christ and Barabba shown to the people" and "Christ undressed and dragged to flagellation").

Chapel 8 - La Coronazione di Spine (The Crown of Thorns) - Completed in 1623, is made up of ten statues in cotto by Francesco Silva. The frescoes on the walls and on the vault, created using optical illusions, are by Gianbattista and Gianpaolo Recchi, students of Morazzone.

Chapel 9 - Salita al Calvario (The Climb to Calvary) - Completed in 1623, shows the Passion of Christ in three views through its three windows. There are twenty statues by Francesco Silva and frescoes by Gianpaolo Recchi. On the outside wall is a deteriorated fresco by Stefano Legnani: the Ecce Homo.

Chapel 10 - Crocifissione (The Crucifixion) - Is the last of the Sorrowful Mysteries presented in fifty cotto statues by Dionigi Bussola. At the top is the Cross, while the Three Marys form a separate group. The frescoes are by Busca. At 3:00 in the afternoon on every Good Friday, the hour of Christ's death, a ray of sunlight illuminates Jesus's forehead.



The Arch of Saint Ambrose was built between 1623 and 1699 and introduces the Glorious Mysteries. At the top is the Blessing Saint and next to it a fountain for pilgrims.

THE CHAPELS OF THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

Chapel 11 - Resurrezione (Resurrection) - Was completed in 1622 and houses nine statues by Francesco Silva on the theme of the Resurrection, embellished by frescoed backgrounds by Isidoro Bianchi. Some scholars believe that the chapel was built on the foundations of an ancient tower.

Chapel 12 - Ascensione (The Ascension) - Was built between 1624 and 1633, and houses sixteen large statues, seventeen angels, and thirty-three cherubs in high relief by the artist Silva. The building is raised to evoke the concept of an "ascension" and frontally it is decorated with statues of Saints Anthony and Peter.

Chapter 13 - Discesa dello Spirito Santo (The Descent of the Holy Spirit) Completed between 1623 and 1684. For this scene, Silva created fifteen terracotta statues; the frescoes are the work of Federico Bianchi. The large prospective cornice is the work of the Grandi brothers.

Chapel 14 - Assunzione (The Assumption) - Was completed in 1610. There are thirteen statues by Francesco Silva; the fresco paintings were begun in 1717 by Stefano Legnani and completed by Pietro Gilardi.

The Moses Fountain - was created between 1803 and 1834; it is located on the path leading to the last chapel and it is located within the Sanctuary. The designer was Francesco Argenti di Viggù. At the center is a statue by Gaetano Monti di Ravenna.

The Sanctuary (E) - The Coronation of the Virgin - The Sanctuary, of ancient origin, contains the 15th Mystery. Above the altar is a wooden statue of the Madonna seated on a throne with child. The statue is covered by a precious drape; two silver angels of the 1400s crown the Madonna. Legend attributes the work to Saint Luke the Evangelist.



LINKS

- Parish of Santa Maria del Monte - www.sacromontedivarese.it
- Parco Naturale Regionale Campo dei Fiori - www.parcocampodeifiori.it
- Town of Varese - www.comune.varese.it/il-sacro-monte-di-varese
- Museo Baroffio e del Santuario del Sacro Monte sopra Varese www.museobaroffio.it
- Cooperativa Sociale Ambiente e Sviluppo di Santa Maria del Monte www.sacromontevarese.net
- Cultural-Museum Lodovico Pogliaghi - www.casamuseopogliaghi.it
- Cultural web site of Regione Lombardia - www.lombardia.it
- Unesco Italy - www.unesco.it

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