Cammino di San Michele

Category: Hiking Routes
Titolo: St. Michael's Way
Descrizione del percorso: ST. MICHAEL'S WAY IN EUROPE https://www.camminodisanmichele.org/europa/

St. Michael's Way is the Italian continuation of the French Chemin de Saint-Michel which starts in Mont-Saint Michel in Normandy and, after crossing France for more than 1500 km and reaching the Mont-Cenis Pass, enters Italy continuing from north-west to south-east as far as the Gargano Peninsula.

The route touches Rome and numerous historical and religious sites dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel: from the Sacra of San Michele in the Susa Valley to the Shrine of San Michele Arcangelo in Monte Sant'Angelo, it follows ancient pilgrimage paths travelled over the centuries by devoted followers of St. Michael.

Thousands of sites dedicated to St. Michael exist across Europe, but seven major shrines are aligned along an ideal pilgrimage route from Ireland to Israel: the so-called "St. Michael's Line", connected with the medieval tradition and symbolically associated with the sunset at the summer solstice. Tradition has it that this line represents the sword blow with which St. Michael the Archangel defeated Evil, banishing it to Hell, as narrated in the Apocalypse (12, 7-9). From north-west to south-east, the way traces this line, ideally linking seven shrines: from the Skellig Michael Monastery in Ireland to St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, from Mont Saint-Michel in Normandy to the Sacra di San Michele, to the Shrine of the Gargano, to the Symi Island in Greece and to Mount Carmel above Haifa. Continuing south-east, the line reaches the Valley of Armageddon, a symbolic site in which, according to a tradition connected with the Apocalypse, the final battle between Good and Evil is led by St. Michael the Archangel who wins and brings Peace to Earth.

https://www.camminodisanmichele.org/san-michele-mito-e-culto/

ST. MICHAEL'S WAY IN PIEDMONT

In Piedmont, the first Italian region which is reached after the French section, the Way covers 296 km across three provinces: the metropolitan City of Turin, a short section in Asti (where it meets the magnificent Abbey of Vezzolano) and another long stretch across the Province of Alessandria. The Piedmont section terminates on the ridge which separates the Curone and Staffora valleys, on the border between the Provinces of Alessandria and Pavia where it gives way to the short Lombard section of the Way to reach Bobbio in Emilia.

In Val di Susa, St. Michael's Way uses a little-known Francigena route that runs from Moncenisio to the Benedictine Abbey of Novalesa (for a long period of its history, it was connected to the Monastery of San Colombano of Bobbio always included in the Way) to reach Venaus and Susa, and finally climb to the Sacra di San Michele with views of the Po Valley. From Turin, the Way follows the "Superga-Vezzolano-Crea" hiking route (Trail 700 of the Trail Registry) mapped out by the Club Italiano Alpino through the Alto Monferrato area.

From the Shrine of Crea, the Way descends to Alessandria and passes through Tortona and Volpedo to reach the short Lombard section through the Scaparina Pass as far as Bobbio (FC).

https://www.camminodisanmichele.org/mappe/

THE PROMOTION COMMITTEE

The Promotion Committee San Michele – Cammino di Cammini ETS, registered in the National Register of the Third Sector (RUNTS), has been active since 2019 in promoting and seeking recognition of St. Michael's Way. It is also a member of the Réseau Européen des Sites et des Chemins de Saint-Michel and of the Transhumance Trail & Rural Roads and is working to obtain recognition from the European Council. The promotional work carried out by the Committee has led to the Way being included in the Catalogue of Italian Religious Walks of the Ministry for Tourism.

The President of the Promotion Committee is the journalist Sandro Vannucci, with whom the Province of Alessandria has worked closely on the implementation of this project.

https://www.camminodisanmichele.org

“St. Michael’s Way” crosses areas of outstanding historical, cultural, religious, natural, scenic and archaeological interest which extend from the border with the Province of Asti (Murisengo) to the Province of Pavia (Fabbrica Curone). Along the way, through the Province of Alessandria, the route touches a wide range of landscapes and settlements, each with its own distinct character.

From the vine-covered hills of the Casale Monferrato area, the landscape gradually descends eastward and southward towards the ancient alluvial terraces of the River Tanaro. It then reaches the low-lying area of Alessandria, traditionally devoted to agriculture. The route continues through the interfluve between the River Tanaro and the River Scrivia, before climbing the hills of Tortona which merge into the Apennines south of San Sebastiano Curone. The way passes through 30 municipalities across three diverse and distinctive landscapes.

IN THE PROVINCE OF ALESSANDRIA

“St. Michael's Way” covers 190 km and crosses an extensive area characterised by hills, mountains and lowland environments, with altitudes ranging from 455 m a.s.l. of Sacro Monte di Crea (Serralunga di Crea) to 768 m a.s.l. of Selvapiana (Fabbrica Curone) to the 1090 m a.s.l. of Bric Alvaia, on the border with Pavia, distinguished by its varied and abundant vegetation. With 8 stages, 10 alternative routes and 30 municipalities crossed, the way follows existing nature trails, mule tracks, farm roads and unpaved country tracks with more developed areas where asphalt roads, municipal roads, provincial roads and state highways are used. Within this network of routes, particular importance is given to the villages crossed; in addition to representing the historical and cultural significance of the way, they bear witness to its religious importance thanks to the presence of numerous churches and chapels dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, which have become key reference points along the way for pilgrims and cycle-tourists.

Exceptional food and wine experiences, coupled with a tradition of sincere hospitality, contributes to the unique charm of this religious way.

The route also crosses the “Riserva Speciale del Sacro Monte di Crea” reaching the Shrine of the same name in Serralunga di Crea. The Sacro Monte occupies one of the highest points on the eastern side of Basso Monferrato. It stands on a hill with steep slopes formed by easily erodible sedimentary rocks, at an altitude between 355 and 455 meters a.s.l. and covers an area of 47 hectares. The protected area is managed by the Ente di Gestione dei Sacri Monti del Piemonte which has its registered office at the Sacro Monte di Crea.

Tappe del percorso e punti di interesse: STAGE 1 “MURISENGO – SACRO MONTE DI CREA” stretches for 19 km. It starts at Bric Mestiola, on the border with the Province of Asti, at the starting point of Trail 700. The arrival point is the square of the Shrine of Sacro Monte di Crea. The route, which can be accessed all year, offers breathtaking views of the town of Murisengo, passing in front of the votive chapel of Sant’Antonio Abate, crossing the village of Villadeati and reaching the Castle of Pessine passing along the ridge of Odalengo Piccolo. Trail 700, is stabilized here using a blend of ecological resins known as “Green Stab”, making it accessible to people with low vision or blindness. Close to the Astronomical Observatory of Odalengo Piccolo is a recreational area with a large stone on which the CAI of Casale has placed the plaque marking the inauguration of the Superga-Crea trail dedicating it to Cesare Triveri. Stage 1 continues along the ridge crossing the area of Castelletto Merli and the town of Ponzano Monferrato to reach the Shrine of Crea, located in a protected area and has a hostel. At the junction with SP22, stage 1 meets stage 1A, an alternative route designed for cycle tourists; the staircase in front of the Shrine (start of Stage 2) is difficult to use due to the steep slope and steps.

Difficulty: E-Hiking / MC-Moderate

Distance: 19 km

Travel Time: 4 h 30 min

Highest Point: 419 m

Elevation gain: 372 m

Elevation loss: 264 m

Trail Marker: 700 SVC

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 1A

Difficulty: T-Tourist / TC-Tourist

Distance: 0.9 km

Travel Time: 0 h 15 min

Highest Point: 376 m

Elevation gain: 3 m

Elevation loss: 74 m

STAGE 2 “SACRO MONTE DI CREA – FRASSINELLO MONFERRATO” alternates between valley-bottom sections and hilly stretches, crossing several beautiful villages of “Monferrato degli Infernot” for 18 km, to reach the parish Church of the Assumption of Frassinello Monferrato. The village offers a range of services to support travellers. The area of this stage offers breathtaking views of winemaking landscapes, recognised as part of the Italian UNESCO World Heritage sites, as it occurs near the Church of San Michele of Moleto, in Ottiglio. The route continues along a combination of trails and low-traffic paved roads, including the hiking trails 727, 746 and 727A of the Regional Hiking Trail Register. It was chosen to include paved roads in the route because they run along ridge lines and are more scenic than the trails which sometimes run through the valley, such as in the municipal territories of Cereseto and Cella Monte. The centre of Cereseto and the Coppi district of Cella Monte are connected to stage 2 by short alternative connection routes, stage 2A and 2B respectively. To continue along the route and avoid the centre of Frassinello Monferrato, it is possible to follow Trail 727, starting from the junction with SP45, using the alternative route 2C.

Difficulty: E-Hiking / MC-Moderate

Distance: 18 km

Travel Time: 5 h 05 min

Highest Point: 396 m

Elevation Gain: 414 m

Elevation Loss: 561 m

Trail Marker: 727 MPC, 727A, 746

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 2A

Difficulty: T-Tourist / MC-Moderate

Distance: 1 km

Travel Time: 0 h 20 min

Elevation Gain: 228 m

Elevation Loss: 68 m

Total Descent: 7 m

Trail Marker: 747 p.p.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 2B

Difficulty: T-Tourist / MC-Moderate

Distance: 1.6 km

Travel Time: 0 h 30 min

Highest Point: 206 m

Elevation Gain: 43 m

Elevation Loss: 9 m

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 2C

Difficulty: E-Hiking / MC-Moderate

Distance: 1.8 km

Travel Time: 0 h 30 min

Highest Point: 191 m

Elevation Gain: 54 m

Elevation Loss: 10 m

Trail Marker: 727 MPC

STAGE 3 “FRASSINELLO MONFERRATO – MIRABELLO MONFERRATO” takes the pilgrim to the Church of San Michele in Mirabello Monferrato, arrival point of the route after 15 km through hills, scenic viewpoints, churches, and votive chapels, including the beautiful Church of San Giovanni in Mediliano. The route follows the hiking trails 727, 727A, 614 and 614A of the Regional Hiking Trail Register. The Church of San Michele of Mirabello Monferrato is worth a visit; situated in an elevated position overlooking the town centre, it was built on a tower belonging to the ricetto's fortified walls. The church, now deconsecrated, houses a cultural centre. The historic centre of Camagna Monferrato is connected to stage 3 by the alternative route 3A which rejoins the main route at the rural Chapel of the Blessed Assumption. From here, the alternative route 3B starts, connecting all the area of Conzano up to the junction with the alternative connecting route 3C at the intersection between Trail 727 and SP46. The alternative route 3C connects the scenic Civic Tower of the charming village of Lu Monferrato with stage 3 of the route.

Difficulty: E-Hiking / MC-Moderate

Distance: 15 km

Travel Time: 3 h 40 min

Highest Point: 251 m

Elevation Gain: 74 m

Elevation Loss: 206 m

Trail Marker: 727A, 727 MPC, 614A, 614

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 3A

Difficulty: T-Tourist / TC-Tourist

Distance: 0.9 km

Travel Time: 0 h 15 min

Highest Point: 264 m

Elevation Gain: 7 m

Elevation Loss: 58 m

Trail Marker: 727C

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 3B

Difficulty: T-Tourist / TC-Tourist

Duration: 3.1 km

Travel Time: 0 h 45 min

Highest Point: 243 m

Elevation Gain: 39 m

Elevation Loss: 108 m

Trail Marker: 735

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 3C

Difficulty: T-Tourist / TC-Tourist

Duration: 3.3 km

Travel Time: 1 h 00 min

Highest Point: 301 m

Elevation Gain: 173 m

Elevation Loss: 6 m

Trail marker: 66

STAGE 4 MIRABELLO MONFERRATO – ALESSANDRIA: from Mirabello Monferrato continue south to the Civic Tower of San Salvatore Monferrato. The park around the tower of San Salvatore is equipped with a playground and offers breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape.

From San Salvatore, Stage 4 continues south to Castelletto Monferrato where it winds around the Castle park to the parish church dedicated to San Siro and the belvedere which offers a scenic view of the Monferrato hills. After 27 km you reach Alessandria, passing in front of the Church of San Michele, in the hamlet of the same name, before entering the city following the perimeter of the Citadel in a clockwise direction and the Meier bridge. The stage ends in piazza della Libertà which overlooks the Town Hall and the magnificent Palazzo Ghilini, seat of the Provincial administration.

From here, the alternative route 4A branches off toward the railway station of Alessandria to avoid the paved section of SS10, continuing directly towards Spinetta Marengo or Tortona.

Difficulty: E-Hiking / MC-Moderate

Duration: 27 km

Travel Time: 6 h 40 min

Highest Point: 250 m

Elevation Gain: 152 m

Elevation Loss: 170 m

Trail Marker: 602, 610, 610A, 612

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 4A

Difficulty: T-Tourist / TC-Tourist

Distance: 1.06 km

Travel time: 0 h 5 min

Highest Point: 95 m

Elevation Gain: 3 m

Elevation loss: 1 m

STAGE 5 ALESSANDRIA - TORTONA: crossed the city centre of Alessandria, proceed along state road 10 to Spinetta Marengo, where the route opens onto farmland. With a long but easy route that alternates between farm roads, cultivated fields and long sections of paved roads, passing by the Railway Station of Rivalta Scrivia, you reach the Cistercian Abbey, which dates back to 1180. After walking along the boundary walls, you reach a large courtyard at the edge of which stands the magnificent Abbey of Rivalta Scrivia. After passing beneath motorway A7 via a safe underpass, continue north along country roads, gradually approaching the Scrivia riverbed thanks to hiking trail 146 of the Regional Trail Hiking Register. Following a short stretch of paved road in the suburbs of Tortona, you enter the old city to reach the Church dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel after almost 31 km.

It is possible to reach Tortona directly by train, reconnecting to stage 5 via the alternative route 5A, which runs along the city's railway station.

Difficulty: T-Tourist / TC-Tourist

Distance: 31 km

Travel time: 7 h 25 min

Highest Point: 141 m

Elevation Gain: 73 m

Elevation Loss: 42 m

Trail Marker: 146

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 5A

Difficulty: T-Tourist / TC-Tourist

Distance: 2.6 km

Travel Time: 0 h 35 min

Highest Point: 123 m

Elevation Gain: 2 m

Elevation Loss: 8 m

STAGE 6 TORTONA - VOLPEDO: through the small gem represented by the historic centre of Tortona, stage 6 follows the cycle route to the centre of Viguzzolo. From here, Trail 101 leads into Val Curone, a historic corridor linking Genoa with its Mediterranean ports, Milan, Turin and the Alps, with their passes extending toward Central Europe. After a few kilometres, following the trail markers for hiking trail 101, you begin a gentle climb up the Colli Tortonesi, a particularly fertile land and devoted to vine cultivation, with vineyards draping the hills of Castellar Guidobono, Volpeglino and Monleale. Crossed the bridge over the Curone, you reach Volpedo, one of the most beautiful villages in Italy, famous for being the birthplace of the painter Giuseppe Pellizza and for fruit growing, especially for peach cultivation. Stage 6 ends here, after 14 km, in front of the romanesque Church of San Pietro. Shortly after, is the new Hub of Volpedo, which also houses a hostel.

Difficulty: E-Hiking / MC-Moderate

Distance: 14 km

Travel Time: 3 h 40 min

Highest Point: 302 m

Elevation Gain: 261 m

Elevation Loss: 200 m

Trail Marker: 101, 152 p.p.

STAGE 7 VOLPEDO – SAN SEBASTIANO CURONE: following hiking route 102 in the Regional Hiking Trail Register, stage 7 ascends the Val Curone mainly along trails, with short paved sections connecting the farms and villages on the right side of the Curone valley. Arriving in Zebedassi in Montemarzino, descend until you reach the Curone stream, near the hamlets of Torrino di Pozzol Groppo and San Vittore di Momperone. From the junction near the Val Curone Golf Club, follow the paved road to the parish Church of Brignano Frascata.
The hang-gliding landing area is a short distance ahead; pilots take off from Monte Penola. After passing the hamlets of Frascata and Selva Superiore, cross the Curone stream once again on the valley floor to reach the enchanting historical crossroads of San Sebastiano Curone, 16.4 km from the starting point of Stage 7.

From the junction near the Valcurone Golf Club it is possible to continue along Trail 102 in the direction of Valle Staffora, along alternative route 7A, which climbs the Apennine ridge on the border with Lombardy. Beyond the hamlet of Ramella, continue along the hillside to the hamlet of Serra del Monte and the Astronomical Observatory of Ca' del Monte, which is home to a resort. On the slopes of Monte Vallassa, it is possible to leave the route to visit the archaeological area of Guardamonte. From Serra del Monte you can continue along the ridge until you join Stage 8 of the route, following the Trail 103 (103 AL and 103 PV) markers. The alternative route 7A is suitable only for experienced walkers and cyclists, featuring steep uphill and downhill sections with deep erosion gullies carved by streams in marly clay soils. The difficulty of the route is rewarded by the breathtaking views of the Apennine range and the feeling of walking along an ancient medieval route which once led muleteers from the Ligurian Sea to the Po Valley.

Difficulty: E-Hiking / BC-Difficult

Distance: 16.4 km

Travel Time: 4 h 25 min

Highest Point: 414 m

Elevation Gain: 363 m

Elevation Loss: 215 m

Trail Marker: 153, 102 p.p.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 7A

Difficulty: E-Hiking / OC- Very difficult

Distance: 10.5 km

Travel Time: 3 h 25 min

Highest Point: 708 m

Elevation Gain: 518 m

Elevation Loss: 204 m

Trail Marker: 102

STAGE 8 SAN SEBASTIANO CURONE – SELVAPIANA: crossed the stream once again, the route ideally re-joins “St. Michael’s Way” in Val Curone. Continue alongside it, over flat terrain or gentle uphill and downhill sections, to reach Gremiasco, the village historically connected to the Imperial Fiefs of the noble Genoese families. From here, a steep climb leads to the ridge on the border with the Province of Paiva (junction with the alternative route 7A) and you continue along Trail 103, following the watershed between Valle Staffora and Val Curone. From Caiella Pass to the centre of Fabbrica Curone, and then Selvapiana, the route continues, alternating between sections in the Province of Pavia and sections in the Province of Alessandria. Along the downhill section towards Fabbrica Curone, Trail 103 offers very scenic views, but it is necessary to be careful in several sections with steep slopes over gullies. Arrived at the thousand-year-old Church of Santa Maria, take Trail 104 which climbs uphill to Pareto and then to Cella di Varzi in Valle Staffora, to return to Val Curone at Selvapiana, home to a farmhouse offering overnight accommodation. In a mountainous setting, among dense larch and redwood forests, stage 8 connects to the Lombard section of “St. Michael’s Way”, returning to Pareto and following hiking route 104PV for Cella of Varzi (https://www.camminodisanmichele.org/lombardia/).

Difficulty: E-Hiking / OC/EC-Very difficult/Extreme

Distance: 21 km

Travel Time: 6 h 35 min

Highest Point: 783

Elevation Gain: 901

Elevation Loss: 472

Trail Marker: 103 (AL), 103 (PV), 104 (AL), 104 (PV)

MONFERRATO ON TOUR
www.monferratontour.it

Dati di riepilogo

Rating : Hiking trail
distance KM: 190.00
Maximum altitude: 783
Arrival altitude: 770
Departure altitude: 290

Arrival point address

Address: frazione Selvapiana - 15054 - Fabbrica Curone
Web Site: https://www.camminodisanmichele.org
Services for the disabled: Yes
Historical interest:
Devotional interest:

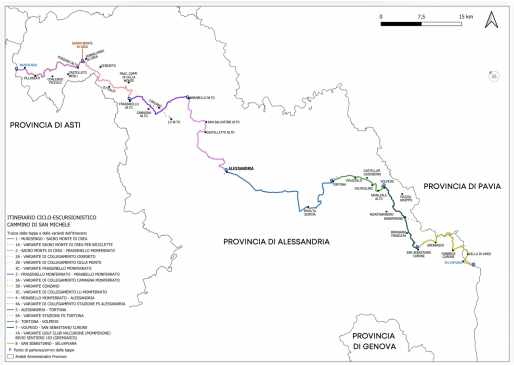
Links

https://www.camminodisanmichele.org

Photos

MONFERRATO ON TOUR

www.monferratontour.it

















ATL alexala
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