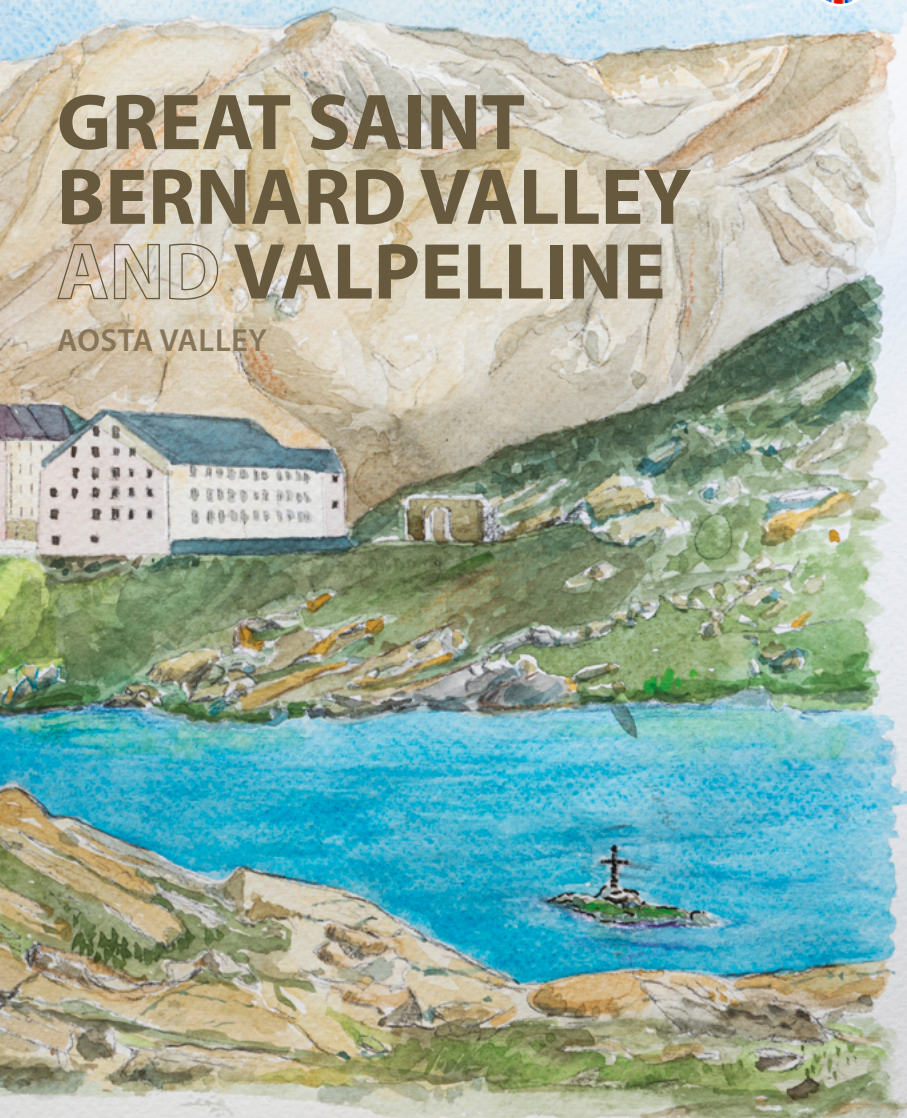





GREAT SAINT BERNARD VALLEY AND VALPELLINE

AOSTA VALLEY



A watercolor illustration of a mountainous landscape. In the foreground, a stone pillar topped with a statue of Saint Bernard stands on a rocky outcrop. A road winds through the valley, and a large white building with a dark roof is situated on a green slope. In the background, rugged mountains are visible, some with snow. A blue lake is in the lower right, with a small boat on it. Three white labels with arrows point to specific features: 'Saint Bernard' points to the statue, 'Great Saint Bernard Hospice' points to the large white building, and 'Italy-Switzerland border' points to the road.

Saint Bernard

Great Saint Bernard Hospice

Italy-Switzerland border

AOSTA VALLEY

GREAT SAINT BERNARD VALLEY AND VALPELLINE

ONCE UPON A TIME
THERE WAS A TRAVELLER...

My long wanderings took me to the summit of a mountain swept by winter blizzards and ice, blanketed in snow and buffeted by the wind. I saw it in the warm summer light, surrounded by high peaks with their proud rocky gaze turned towards the sky. In their freezing embrace lay a still, calm lake on whose banks strolled pious men in the company of their loyal giants with spotless fur.

So, as I trod the thousand-year-old road down the valley, my eyes filled with true beauty and pure nature, and I was lulled by an infinite chanting of water...



Find full updated information on sites of interest (opening times, details, initiatives...) by visiting www.lovevda.it »

WHERE A THOUSAND STRIDES CONVERGE

Few lands can boast such fame as the Great Saint Bernard Valley and Valpelline: over the centuries these steep mountains, harsh rugged landscapes and indomitable peaks have witnessed the passage of military leaders, powerful emperors, army legions, caravans of merchants, pious pilgrims and adventurous wayfarers.

Where hare and stoats skip in the shade of rocks, larches and firs unfurl ancient roads etched by time, the same thoroughfares as those trodden by mules and horses along the Via Francigena towards the Holy City.

Although these valleys have been important and busy in the past, you'll find that they conceal a quiet and rugged nature where silence and solitude reign supreme, giving visitors the chance to enjoy rejuvenating excursions and to come intimately in touch with the wonders of our earth.

It's a small unspoilt world where forests extend their verdant foliage, the clear sky lights up in sparkling stars and where water has made this its undisputed kingdom composed of glaciers, Alpine lakes, roaring waterfalls and gushing streams, channels cut out of the rock and a colossal dam.

It's a kingdom defined by flowing liquids and frothy swells in which chasms and deep gorges open up – the ones that in folktales fearless men crossed to win their beloveds' heart.

You'll find all this and much more in the Saint Bernard Valleys: sites of overwhelming beauty that resonate with towers and Saracen invasions, medieval villages converted into open-air museums where paintings and sculptures shine, old ovens bake rye bread and village festivities originating in ancient times.

This is an unspoilt corner of the world that will find a place in your heart on account of its secular traditions, local delicacies exported throughout Europe, masks recounting prodigious events and huge dogs that rescue the injured with barrels of spirit ... If this isn't pure mountainside, then tell me what it is.

Bonjour, I'm Sophie, your guide!

Can you hear that joyful music? The tinkling of bells, the accordion's happy notes, the low sound of saxophones?

Look down there, the Devil's running amok! There are also guides and madmen, a Harlequin...

What? Who am I and why am I wearing this cardboard mask?

Oh, how forgetful of me!

I forgot to introduce myself: I'm Sophie and I'm a landzetta, that's what the people are called who wear traditional Coumba Freida Carnival costumes, covered in sequins, beads and bright decorations!

Follow me, please: between a dance and a twirl I'll take you to see the wonders treasured by my native land!



Not only is Coumba Freida Carnival one of the oldest in the Aosta Valley but it's also an astonishing and eccentric event. The sumptuous masks worn celebrate the wakening of spring, recall superstitions about evil spirits and re-enact the passage of Napoleon's troops in 1800.



MEISON DI
CARNAVAL



Sophie
your guide



Place Moulin Lake



NOT TO BE MISSED

GREAT SAINT BERNARD PASS,
CARNIVAL AND MEISON DI CARNAVAL,
FOOD FESTIVALS, PLACE MOULIN
DAM, VILLAGE OF ÉTROUBLES



NOT TO BE MISSED



GREAT SAINT BERNARD PASS

A LITTLE TELETRANSPORTATION, A LITTLE TIME MACHINE

Undoubtedly Great Saint Bernard Pass is an Alpine crossing full of charm but it's also a legendary crossroads of peoples, merchants, warriors and fugitives. Known for being a mountain pass that connects Italy and Switzerland, this crossing wends its way along the Via Francigena, creating an ancient bridge between England, Rome and Jerusalem.

Up here you'll find windswept meadows, still lakes rippling in the silence and a thousand-year-old hospice which houses museum treasures and a crypt, where the festive barking of dogs mingles with centuries of history that recount Roman worship, wandering pilgrims and warmongering emperors.



« Aosta - Great Saint Bernard
Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses

CARNIVAL AND MEISON DI CARNAVAL AT ALLEIN

WHEN THE BEAR AWAKENS...



Multicoloured flowers, silver mirrors, glittering sequins: the magnificent costumes of Coumba Freida Carnival are an explosion of colour. One of the oldest in the Aosta Valley, this carnival celebration evokes memories of evil spirits and spring rebirth, and features human-like face masks that are deeply rooted in history.

At Allein's museum dedicated to the Coumba Freida (Cold Valley) Carnival, you can fully immerse yourself in this event's evocative and mysterious atmosphere by viewing historical photographs, ornate fabrics and valuable testimonies of folklore.

Carnival mask »
Great Saint Bernard Valley





NOT TO BE MISSED

19

FOOD FESTIVALS

A BELLYFUL OF... MOUNTAINS

If you enjoy your food, then here's some good news for you: the Great Saint Bernard Valley and Valpelline boast a feast of traditional dishes and local specialities, wherever you go



you'll come across fairs selling and serving local food and wine products, such as: the Polenta Festival at Doues, Fontina Festival in Oyace, Seupa à la Vapelenentse Festival, and cooked ham in Saint-Oyen, Fëta di Trifolle at Allein (where potatoes play the leading role), not to mention more uncommon festivals such as the Fëta di Teteun in

Gignod and Jambon Day in Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses. These are an absolute must if you don't want to miss savouring excellent mountain cuisine while discovering rich traditions.

« Red route
Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses

PLACE MOULIN DAM

AN OCEAN AMONG THE PEAKS

Place Moulin is an immense cement dam measuring 678 metres in length, 155 in height and holds back 105 million cubic metres of water.

On visiting Aosta Valley's largest reservoir, which is one of the greatest in all Europe, you quickly forget it is a human creation. Before you lies an immense lake of turquoise water, flecked with coloured flowers and surrounded by snow white mountains, flanked by an undemanding pathway that meanders through verdant woodlands and frothy waterfalls towards Prarayer pastures and its Alpine hut.



Footpath flanking the reservoir »
Bionaz





NOT TO BE MISSED

VILLAGE OF ÉTROUBLES, OPEN-AIR MUSEUM, BERTIN HYDROELECTRIC PLANT AND CO-OPERATIVE DAIRY

WHERE ART IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK

As soon as you begin strolling through the village streets of Étroubles, it's likely you'll be left speechless. Not only because of the picturesque water troughs, graceful bell tower and delightful rural dwellings that include a secular co-operative dairy and old hydroelectric power station now converted into an engaging exhibition centre...



And, wonder of wonders, an open-air museum has been set up in this charming medieval village! So, along its cobbled alleyways you'll find yourself admiring surprising eclectic works of art which are the mastery of some of Europe's most famous artists.

« Aerial view of village centre
Étroubles



Ocean of clouds over Becca di Viou

A DAY, A WEEKEND, A WEEK

HOW TO ORGANISE YOUR VISIT

With so much to see and do in the Great Saint Bernard valley and Valpelline the temptation to stay a few days longer is almost irresistible.

Where to go? What to see? Here's some advice on how to get the most out of your holiday and turn it into a genuine travel itinerary. You can customize the recommended itineraries - feel free to include or remove any visits according to your time schedule, interests and spur-of-the-moment decisions!

24
HOURS

1 day

48
HOURS

2 days

168
HOURS

1 week

Spring blooming »
Saint-Oyen



RECOMMENDED VISITS

GREAT SAINT BERNARD VALLEY AND VALPELLINE IN ONE DAY

DAY ONE

1 Church of Sant'Ilario in Gignod

Begin the day with a visit to this enchanting church and its marvellous 15th century frescoes.

2 Village of Étroubles

Continue your outing to Étroubles, where you'll find an open air museum, a co-operative dairy and Bertin hydroelectric plant.

3 Traditional lunch

It's time to taste some delicious local products: Jambon de Bosses DOP, Jambon à la braise, Teteun and Fontina DOP.

4 Village of Saint-Rhémy

After lunch, stop by at Saint-Rhémy and retrace the footsteps of pilgrims, merchants and *marronniers*.

5 Great Saint Bernard Pass (in summer)

Spend an afternoon at the heart of history among Roman remains, a thousand-year-old hospice and Saint Bernard dogs.

6 Snowshoeing at Crévacol (in winter)

Don't miss an enchanting snowshoeing excursion on the snow-white expanses of Crévacol ski area.



RECOMMENDED VISITS

GREAT SAINT BERNARD VALLEY AND VALPELLINE IN A WEEKEND

DAY TWO



- 1** Fontina DOP Visitor Centre

Your second days begins with a tour of Valpelline Fontina DOP Visitor Centre, where you can not only learn all there is to know about this famous cheese, but also taste some and visit the mines where the wheels are stored to mature.
- 2** Vapelenentse lunch

For lunch enjoy the Aosta Valley's most famous and mouth-watering dish - a thick tasty soup made of dry white bread, Fontina DOP and Savoy cabbage stock.
- 3** Tornalla Tower in Oyace and Betenda Bridge

Treat yourself to a walk to Tornalla, one of the region's oldest castles. Then carry on towards the legendary bridge of Betenda. If you feel like walking further, continue around the two-hour loop.
- 4** Place Moulin Lake and Prarayer Hut

Devote an afternoon to a pleasant excursion beside immense Place Moulin lake: start from the dam - one of the biggest in Europe - and continue as far as Prarayer Hut, which is open until the beginning of November

GREAT SAINT BERNARD VALLEY AND VALPELLINE IN A WEEK

5 MORE DAYS

1

Nature

Wondrous sights and marvels

Montagnayes Nature Reserve (1A).

2

Outdoors / summer

The proud beauty of the mountains

Frassati Hut (2A), Chaligne Hut (2B), Champillon Hut (2C), itinerary Ollomont - Conca di By (2D), Via Francigena (2E).

3

Culture and traditions

A glimpse of bygone life

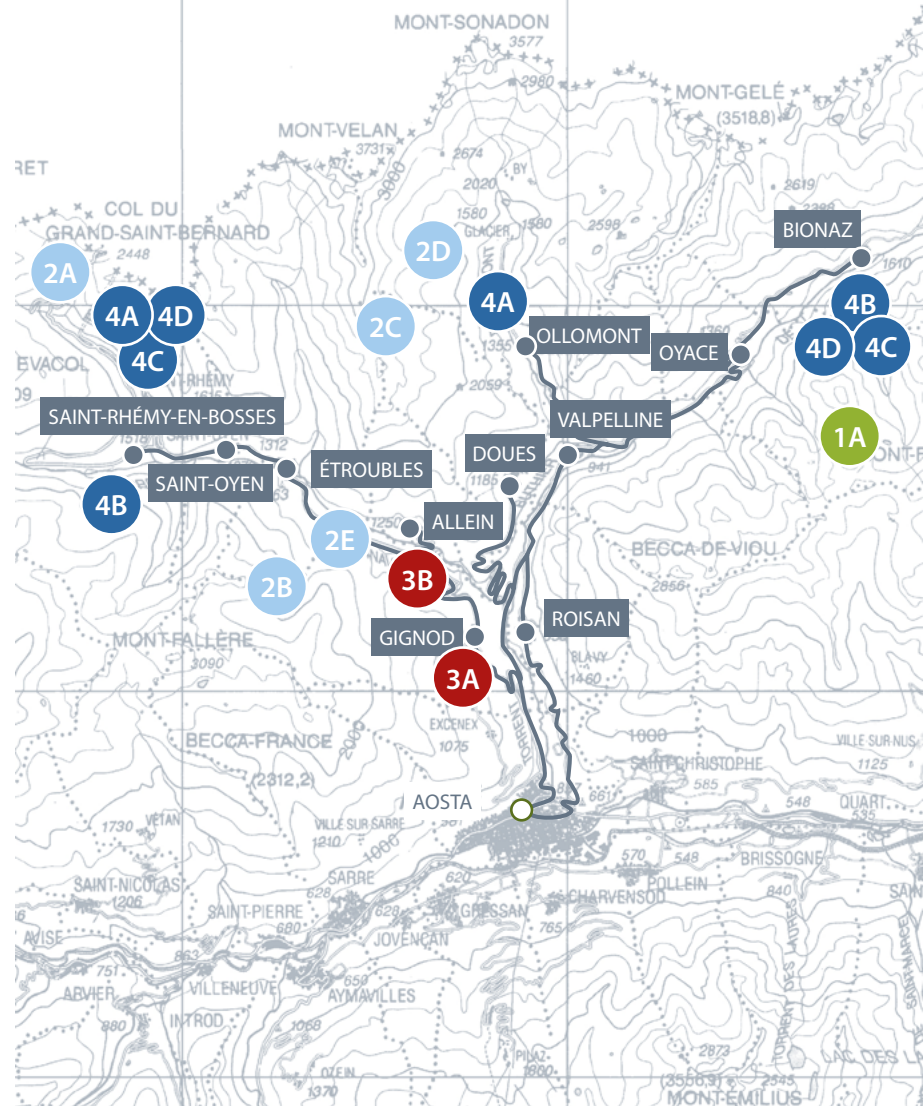
Main Museum (3A), Meison di Carnaval (3B).

4

Outdoor / winter

The irresistible appeal of snow

Downhill skiing (4A), cross-country skiing (4B), snowshoe outings (4C), ski touring (4D).





Old village of Saint-Rhémy

THEMATIC FOCUS

NATURE, OUTDOOR, FOOD AND WINE,
CULTURE AND TRADITIONS,
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



UNSPOILT SITES

WILD GENTLENESS

The nature awaiting you in the Great Saint Bernard Valley and Valpelline is overwhelming. It's a fanfare of delicate bodies of water and colossal works of water engineering, high jagged mountains of ice and still meadows, where the scent of flowers and Alpine milk mingle. It's a place of joyful beauty that has remained untouched despite being a place of transit, where pleasant docile slopes unite with bold, perilous dizzying gorges.

Like the wayfarers who have passed this way over the course of centuries, this spectacle will conquer your heart, drawing you back to it over and over again...

Deer on the snow »
Allein



THE VIA FRANCIGENA

Treat yourself to a journey back in time along the Via Francigena: retrace the steps of pilgrims and discover some of the most characteristic places in the Alps.

G.S.B.VALLEY



CITRIN FERRUGINOUS SPRING

Discover this strangely coloured water with its curative properties, then take a sip of some outside Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses Town Hall.

SAINT-RHÉMY-EN-BOSSÉS



LAKE LEXERT

The surface is so clear that everything is reflected in it: emerging from the water we find snowy peaks, sparkling lights and lush woodlands ...

BIONAZ

CONCA DI BY AND CONCA DI CHAMPILLON

An enchanting excursion through sunny, flower-strewn basins, grassy meadows and gentle slopes to indescribably magnificent vistas.

OLLOMONT

TOWER, BRIDGE AND BETENDA RAVINE

A swirling precipice crossed by an old bridge and a tower steeped in legend: the features you encounter on the excursion around Oyace seem to come straight out of a fairytale!

OYACE

GRAND COMBIN MOUNTAIN

4,314 metres of icy splendour rises from the earth to touch the infinite sky: if you're looking for an ascent to tackle, here you'll encounter rugged, solitary rock faces.

G.S.B.VALLEY



PURE ENERGY

WONDER TRAINING

Have you ever seen a gym where the running mats are bright green patches of grass and expanses of soft snow? Or where infinite treadmills wind through woodlands, the hurdles to cross rise to almost 4,000 metres and the only thing to lift is your gaze in wonder at a breathtakingly blue sky?

If you want to try the firsthand experience of getting up in the morning and savouring a sense of freedom on horseback, or at the mercy of your own legs... then you definitely must come to Great Saint Bernard Valley and Valpelline for a sport-packed holiday!

Arrival at Great
Saint Bernard Pass »
Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses



SKITOURING

Col Serena, Punta Chaligne, Col Fenêtre Durand, not forgetting Champillon: take note of these itineraries then get out your skins because ski touring is the order of the day in Great Saint Bernard's powdery expanses!

G.S.B. & VALP.



SNOWSHOEING

Imagine walking in the midst of the purest whiteness, surrounded by spotless forests and glacial landscapes. Imagine hearing the soft crackling of snow beneath your feet as you follow a thousand boundless natural itineraries...

G.S.B. & VALP.



CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

G.S.B. & VALP.

Explore the 18 km cross-country trails that traverse muffled villages and fairytale woodlands between Étroubles and Saint-Rhémy, or circuits looping around Ollomont and Bionaz.

CLIMBING (OUTDOORS AND INDOORS)

G.S.B. & VALP.

If you enjoy climbing then you'll have plenty of choice: Maison Grimpe at Ollomont offers 30 routes, not to mention the small wall at Saint-Rhémy and a rock wall at Vaud!



HORSE RIDING

G.S.B. & VALP.

Pony treks through the woodlands, galloping rides through meadows, outings on horse-back along rugged trails: Valpelline, Ollomont and Bionaz riding schools await your visit!

ANGLING

Have fun fishing for trout that wriggle along roaring Artanavaz and Buthier streams and in the lake basin of Valpelline nature reserve.

G.S.B. & VALP.



NORDIC WALKING

Arm yourself with poles and enjoy the rejuvenating circular itinerary through shady trees and murmuring streams that connects Étroubles to Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses.

G.S.B VALLEY



DOWNHILL SKIING

You'll find 22 km of sunny, uncrowded runs in Crévacol ski area, while Ollomont has a small resort that's perfect for beginners.

G.S.B. & VALP.



OTHER SPORTS ACTIVITIES

If you like to get fit or try new sports while on holiday, then you'll find an infinite number of sports activities to try out in the Great Saint Bernard Valley.

G.S.B. & VALP.



DELICIOUS INSPIRATION

DELICIOUS INSPIRATION

It's absolutely true to say that the food in the Great Saint Bernard Valley and Valpelline is good – actually very good!

Traditional food and wine are at their best in this area abounding in meadows and pasturelands, in fact, numerous local dishes can trace their origins back to ancient times. Here you can taste the charm of the olden days in hand-cured meats, hams flavoured with mountain herbs, polenta slowly stirred in bubbling copper pans, and discover the most genuine ingredients of Alpine cuisine: the tinkling of fresh milk, the sweet smell of meadow flowers, the clanking of bells in the cowshed...

Local products »
Great Saint Bernard Valley



JAMBON DE BOSSES

You can taste the salt, smell the mountain herbs and fragrance of the hay it's laid on to mature: if you should stop by at Saint-Rhémy-En-Bosses don't forget to taste this flavoursome DOP ham, which is celebrated on well-known "Jambon Day".

SAINT-RHÉMY-EN-BOSSES



FONTINA

This delicious DOP cheese made according to ancient methods is one of the Aosta Valley's institutions par excellence. In your mouth it releases all the flavour of fresh milk and fragrance of unspoilt meadows.

G.S.B VALLEY



ALLEIN-GROWN POTATOES

ALLEIN

You can't say you've been to Allein if you haven't tasted at least one potato-based dish (*trifolla*), particularly the traditional soup!



TETEUN

GIGNOD

Sage, rosemary and juniper berries on a bed of sweet jam or garlic sauce: this is how you'll be served this particular appetising Valdostan delicacy.



JAMBON À LA BRAISE

SAINT-OYEN

This excellent ham basted with wine and sprinkled with herbs is slowly spit-cooked until it turns a distinctive golden colour and tastes lightly smoked.



HISTORY ROLLS ON

BORDER COUNTRY

It would be impossible not to find traces of the past in a place of transit like the Great Saint Bernard Pass. The past has left a glorious heritage that has fatally dictated the fate of the present, transforming the passage of a great leader into inspiration for Carnival masks, while a traditional ancient recipe created by the Hospice canons has become one of the Aosta Valley's most acclaimed specialities.

The past has left countless legacies: that's why you'll lose count of towers and castles, temples and churches, fortified houses and chapels...

Bonfire on Mont Saron celebrates
Saints Peter and Paul »
Allein



MAIN MUSEUM

Thematic exhibitions, events and workshops organised at this historical fortified house in Gignod have made it an incredible source of inspiration. Both Valdostan and international handicraft are exhibited in an exchange of art, manual skills and culture.

GIGNOD



CHURCHES AND PARISHES

G.S.B VALLEY

The numerous religious buildings within the area will not fail to surprise you: from the unusual height of lofty Ollomont church to the one in Valpelline, whose bells Napoleon cast into canons!

CASTLE OF THE LORDS OF BOSSES

This elegant manor house with a troubled past has survived battles, revolts and even severe damage. Exhibitions and conferences celebrating the history and culture of the Great Saint Bernard valleys are held here.

SAINT-RHÉMY-EN-BOSSES



SAINT-RHÉMY VILLAGE

SAINT-RHÉMY-EN-BOSSES

Italy's last village before entering Switzerland, Saint-Rhémy is a village sprinkled with quiet drinking troughs, wooden statues, silent alleyways and stone buildings.

VISITOR CENTRE AND FONTINA AGEING WAREHOUSE

Once upon a time there was an old copper mine in Valpelline that has now been converted into a warehouse where wheels of cheese rest to age in the shade: a visit to this extraordinary place, along with its Fontina museum is a must!

VALPELLINE



CHÂTEAU VERDUN

Once a hospice offering shelter to wayfarers venturing towards the Great Saint Bernard Pass, it was also the home of canons, scholars and those seeking spiritual retreat and quiet reflection.

SAINT-OYEN



MEDIEVAL TOWER

GIGNOD

If enemy soldiers had dared to advance on Gignod's ruined castle, they would have been spotted by this massive stone tower: a silent lookout perched on a jade-tinted outcrop.



PLAN DE JUPITER ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA

GREAT SAINT BERNARD PASS

While exploring the archaeological site at the summit of the Great Saint Bernard Pass, you'll encounter the remains of an ancient temple dedicated to Jupiter, in addition to two Roman post-stages serving officers and dignitaries.



NO ADULTS ALLOWED

BOUNDLESS FUN ON THE BORDER!

Whoever says that the winter is not fun because you have to stay indoors has never been to the Great Saint Bernard Pass and Valpelline!

Here, the snowpark on the ski slopes provides countless fun activities, even when the roads are buried beneath the snow, (don't worry, there's a cosy warm place where Mum can wait while you play!) And what about the summer? Get ready for breathtaking adventures on amazing platforms in the treetops adventure park, or at craft workshops where you can put your manual skills to the test, as well as unforgettable encounters with those fluffy gentle giants that live on the border with Switzerland...

Sledging »
Bionaz



FLASSIN SNOWPARK

Magic carpets, huge puppets, inflatable slides and toy cars, but also inner tubes, sledges and snow bikes: can you picture anything better for having crazy fun on the snow?

SAINT-OYEN



DOGS OF THE GREAT PASS

Admit it, you've always wanted one too: huge, fluffy, dribbling but with a good-natured, dreamy air... Yes, we're talking about them –Saint Bernard dogs! You'll see loads at the Barry Foundation breeding kennels!

GREAT SAINT BERNARD PASS



MAIN WORKSHOPS

GIGNOD

If you want to put your creativity and manual skills to the test, but also see the displays from an entertaining perspective, then the workshops will be perfect for you!

TREE ADVENTURE PARK

BIONAZ

Are you super brave? Then stop off at Bionaz, where you can explore a treetop adventure park with rope bridges, aerial platforms and zip lines that launch you into the void!



FONTINA VISITOR CENTRE WORKSHOPS

VALPELLINE

This kingdom of cheeses offers a range of delicious activities allowing you to discover the secrets of Fontina, the tricks of milk processing and an array of scrumptious tastings!





Deer in Saint-Oyen woods

IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME

Get ready to make an extraordinary holiday even more out of the ordinary...



SEUPA À LA VAPELENTSE FESTIVAL

While savouring the delicious flavour of Valpelline's characteristic "soup" you'll be entertained by music and folk dancing at this traditional festival that has been staged yearly for the past fifty years.

JULY

ÉTROUBLES VEILLA

Learn how people lived in the past through re-enactments of ancient trades, traditional handicraft, masked parades and good food.

AUGUST



RED ROUTE

A red itinerary winding through the streets of Saint-Rhémy-En-Bosses unveils local recipes, old traditions and interesting sites opened ad hoc to the public.

AUGUST



OYACE FONTINA FESTIVAL

Each year food and wine, concerts, shows and sporting events enliven the village of Oyace in honour of Fontina, the queen of Valdostan cheeses.

AUGUST

Valle d'Aosta
EVENTS

Download the app!



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E. Romanzi, S. Torrione, R. Vallet,
S. Venturini, L. Vicquéry,
C. Vuillemoz, M. Xausa



ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL AOSTA

The pulsing heart of the Aosta Valley enraptures with its remains steeped in timeless charm: imposing stone walls, thousand-year-old theatres, medieval towers...



PILA: FROM THE CITY CENTRE TO THE SKI RUNS

Just 5 km from Aosta rise 1,790 metres of pure fun: a cableway connecting the city to Pila ski runs – a renown winter ski resort and gripping summer bike park.



MAGIC CASTLE OF FÉNIS

With its crenellated walls, guards' walkways, soaring towers and frescos that tell tales of dragons and princesses, this is the most visited castle in the Aosta Valley: a genuine fairytale.

FÉNIS



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