### The Roman Bridge Pont-Saint-Martin

The Roman Bridge in Pont-Saint-Martin is one of the made by the Romans to facilitate transport and maintain control over their territory. This is a 23 meter high monumental bridge built over the Lys torrent. It has a single, 36 meter span. Up untill mid only way of transit to Aosta and today it is one of the most Roman bridges



# The Roman Road

Aosta became a fundamental point of transit along the way from Ivrea to Lyon. The consular road to Gaul was used until the nineteenth century and its remains are still visible today: passages cut through rocks, uneven ground flattened out, dry-stone walls built on the overhanging mountain sides and daring bridges built over torrents. It is particularly worth while visiting the Pierre Taillée (cut stone) tract in the Avise municipality and that of Donnas where the arch over the pebble road is cut out of the rock and has a finely engraved archivolt.



Stone Bridge · Aosta The Roman bridge over the Buthier torrent, dating from the Augustan age, is a round arched bridge with a 17 meter diameter made with large slabs of hewn stone. In the course of the centuries floods little by little buried the bridge and in the XI century the torrent changed its course to nearby the Arch of

Augustus, where it still flows

Arch of Augustus · Aosta

The Arch of Augustus was built

he town in 25 B.C. to celebrate

the victory of the Roman troops

over the Salassians. It has a

single supporting arch, it is made with blocks of pudding-

stones and presents a mixture

of styles. The missing attic was

replaced in 1716 by a four-sided

San Lorenzo Early

Christian Church · Aosta

The primitive church of the V

century had a Latin cross plan

arm. It was destroyed in

building dates back



Porta Prætoria · Aosta

gate into the town, is the

largest Roman door in

This door, which was the east

preserved and dates back to

the time of the foundation o

Augusta Praetoria; it is made of

a double set of pudding-stone

walls and has three arches.

### The Roman Theatre Aosta

dates back to the Augustan Age, albeit later interventions partlu modified the structure. On the lower part of the monumental facade there is a set of arcades with overarching windows of various dimensions. Quite distinctive is the cavea, place within a rectangular structure which allowed for a permanent roof to be built over the space reserved for the public.



### Villa della Consolata Aosta

The ancient Roman villa has a and an apse at the end of each compact rectangular plan with prevalence of residential rooms Carolingian times, rebuilt in the The original late republican XI-XII century and modified in late Gothic times. The existing of changes, particularly during the II century A.C.



### The Roman Cryptoportico The cryptoportico is a building

in 3 B.C. It belonged to the partly below ground level built at the time of Augustus; it has gallery and two naves Caimo and was presumablu built to supply his land with oported by imposing arches of travertine marble. Its main function was of structural suggestive and daring, made of a roofed passage and nature and it was designed o compensate the heigh an overlaying aqueduct. difference of the ground and upport the portico surrounding an still see the foundations of the two temples on the side). I an extension of the portico



# Megalithic Site in

St-Martin-de-Corléans The Megalithic site was used oximately between 3.000 and 1.900 B.C. It is a sacred ughing and the alignment of poles and other structures: round, large ornate anthropomorphic steles and a triangular platform



The aqueduct bridge was buil

and astronomic interest. The

Cromlech is now made of 46

stones placed in such a way

as to vaquely resemble a circle

and we cannot exclude there

may have been a dolmen

in the middle.

### Roman aqueduct bridge The Savoy Castle · in Pondel · Aymavilles

Gressoney-Saint-Jean King Umberto I had the castle built to pay homage to Queen Margaret. The Royal Mansion in Gressoney, designed in an eclectic style, was completed created in the park of the castle in 1990.



### The Bard Fortress The first information on a

back to the XI century. The The Little Saint Bernard Cromlech Medieval castle was razed to the ground by Napoleon's troops in to describe a great circle made of stones planted in the ground, 1800 after a resistance that lasted for days. The construction used as a place of worship and/ of the Fortress, as it stands or of observation. The exact today, was completed in 1838. dating is uncertain; the site may It was abandoned by the military was turned into a temporary in 1975 and now hosts the date back to the Bronze Age, even if some assume it to be Museum of the Alps. older than that. The large stone circle at the Little Saint Bernard pass, on the Italian-French border, is one of the few that it is therefore of great historic



## The Issogne Castle

The castle was built on a Romai site and acquired its present look as a residential building at the end of the fifteenth century. It is to Giorgio of Challant-Varey that we owe the interior decorations and the fine mural paintings. In the courtyard surrounded by a portico with frescos depicting scenes of everyday life, there is the famous wrought iron pomegranate fountain.



Castles, Towers and dwellings open to the public

he most beautiful in the Aosta

The Ussel Castle

its original structure, was built

in 1343. In the XIX century the

ownership of the estate was

transferred fom the Passerin

d'Entrèves family to the Bich

rehabilitation works, the castle

family. After the latest

The Fénis Castle

The castle is famous for its

particularly for the evocative

today is the result of many

the most important one was

power of its crenellated walls and

noted by Aimone of Challant

owers. The appearance it has

transformations along the time

in the mid XIV century. Notable

are the frescoes in the courtyard

and in the chapel made in the

first decades of the fifteenth

century. The castle hosts the Aosta Valley Furniture Museum

# The Verrès Castle

The Sarre Castle From its position on a hillock 1390 by Ibleto of Challant. The nearby the town of Aosta, the castle dominates the entrance structure is an imposing cube made of stone, made more attractive thanks to mullioned windows with two lights and arch shaped doors. Inside there is a numental staircase and a few large fireplaces which are among





## The Sarriod de La Tour

Castle · Saint-Pierre The castle, protected by a tall surrounding wall, was erected in the municipality of Saint-Pierre. Until the beginning of the XX Sarriod de La Tour family; it has complex architecture. It is and is the outcome of extension and transformations made at frescoes dating mid XIII century, whilst the main hall is famous supported by 171 carved corbels.



The Introd Castle

The castle's existence is

composed of a number of

plan, encompasses a tower

older than the other buildings

fires destroyed the buildings,

the archives and the precious

rehabilitation in 1910.

The Gamba Castle -

take a walk.

The Nus Castle

The most ancient part of the

history, gained its present

in 1505, which is the date

engraved in the architrave

in the entrance

building dates back to the XIV

century. The structure, modified

manu times in the course of its

aspect after rehabilitation works

Baron Maurice Gamba ordered

the castle which was designed

by Carlo Saroldi and completed

in 1911. It is an imposing building

characterised by a central tower

It is surrounded by a vast park

with secular trees where one can

# The Quart Castle mentioned in XIII century

The castle is composed of a number of buildings surrounded by a fortified wall. Of these, we official documents. Its structure. wish to point out the old donjon dwellings on a polygonal-shaped erected on the highest tip of the rock, with fragments of XIV century frescoes and the chapel with a square plan, presumably which was rebuilt at the In the XIX century a number of beginning of the XVII century and ornamented with fine stuccoworks. The castle is furnishing. The castle underwent surrounded by a wood where monumental trees are to be seer



### The Aymavilles Castle he archaeological diggings o

late years have brought to light the remains of a primitive donjon. Four corner towers were added at the beginning of the XV century to what had already been important works in the XIV century. At the beginning of the 18th century the ancient castle dwelling. The castle is



The Châtel Argent Castle

Villeneuve The castle was built on a smal Roman fort in a particularly strategic position. It features Romanesque design



# The San Giacomo Church

The existing building was totally rebuilt at the end of the XVII century, the time when the frescoes representing the Universal Judgement were randiose high altar was made at the end of the XVII century. Sacred Art Museum

Churches and Sanctuaries



### The Machaby Sanctuary Arnad



(Museum) · Arnad The church was brought back to its original Romanesque architecture in the 1950's and it is then that the typical ornate tuff portal and the stone walls preserves interesting frescoes

of the XV century.



## The San Martino (Museum) · Antagnod

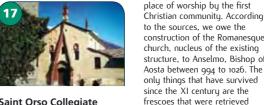
The existing building with three naves separated by monolithic columns is the result of a remake in the nineteenth century. Inside there is one altars in the Valley, consecrated in 1716 and ornamented with different periods. In the cemetery chapel there is



This Holy Mary's Sanctuaru is located in the middle of a chestnut wood; you can reach it on foot by walking along a mule century. At the end of the XVIII century the building was of the naves on the sides. The "The Holy Lady of the Snow" is celebrated on 5th August.







### Saint Orso Collegiate Church and Priory · Aosta

The Collegiate church, a building in the town of Aosta, was built in the first decades of the XI century on the remains of an Early Christian building transformed in Carolingia times. All that remains of the Romanesque church is the crypt and a few fragments of frescoes. following century; it has beautiful capitals decorated ith historical scenes dated 1133. From the same period in the hoir a pavement mosaic on while the kills the lion. The late Gothic aspect derives from the reconstruction at the end of the XV century, the time when the adjacent Prior's Lodge was built and which is adorned with fine brick decorations. The Collegiate Church hosts a wealth of works of art and furnishings, as the beautiful wooden altar and

the choir stalls



Cathedral · Aosta

Roman times to the XIX

of a pre-existing Roman

building to the East of the

criptoportico, later used as a

below the roof. The monumenta

façade was built in the third

decade of the XVI century

and was dedicated to the

Assumption of the Virgin.

transformations in neoclassical

stule. In the ambulatory there is

the Cathedral's Treasure which

exhibits important works

Santa Maria Church

The church rises nearbi

the Châtel-Argent castle

of Romanesque design, there

are traces of the numerous

n the existing building

Villeneuve

During the XIX century

it underwent further

of sacred art

various construction phases.

The architectural and artistic history of the Cathedral

Santa Maria Assunta Church · Morgex This is one of the most ancient has played a very important embraces a long period: from role in the Valdigne area as is century. Archaeological diggings allowed to retrace the church's works of art to be found in it The Romanesque design of the starting from the first at the end church underwent many radical changes along in time; the of the IV century. The primitive changes made in the XVII building of imposing dimensions was erected on the foundations

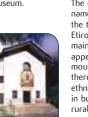


ablets and votive offerings

levotion to the Virgin who

worshipped here.

which testify the century-long



rural architecture. Notre-Dame de Guérison Sanctuary · Courmayeur Located in Berrier, in the beautiful surroundings of Mont Blanc, this sanctuary

is one of the best known and most frequently visited in the Aosta Valley. It was consecrate ou Bishoo Jans in 1868. The valls are covered with pictures The Etroubles Hamlet

### n Roman times, this was very ikely the winter camp of the garrison stationed at the Pass Japoleon stopped here when he descended to Italy. In 1317 the hospice was founded and was still being used in the XIX century. The hamlet hosts an nteresting contemporary arts open air museum.





historic value.

The La Ola Farm House Mascognaz Village · Ayas This is a typical high altitud village built in the first half of the XVII century. The buildings

The La Ola farm house was built south of the wall are of great architectural and surrounding the castle, back in the XV and XVI century. The main building characterise bu arch doors hosted the stables and two barns. A ond building included the







rnal courtyard covered by a roof. The present structure is the result of an articulated etween 1680 and 1856. The Alpine Nutrition Museum has en set up inside (open in th



Maison de Mosse · Avise The D'Avise family built this fortified house in the Runaz village, nearby the Roman road to Gaul. Towards the end of the XV centuru the fortified house was turned into a dwelling. The beautiful windows in late gothic style date back to the XVI

century. It hosts temporary

exhibitions.

## A Valley full of castles, towers and fortified houses



**During the XI century,** some of the most important Aosta families built their homes on the remains of ancient Roman buildings in Aosta for purposes of defence and control, and they sometimes used the original Roman building materials. Hence the Town became enriched with towers and fortified houses, as the Tourneuve, the Torre dei Signori di Sant'Orso, the Tour Fromage, the Torre dei Balivi and the Torre di Bramafan. The success of local seignories gave rise to the many fortified buildings which are to be seen all along the way up the Aosta Valley. In the XII century important local families migrated to rural areas and there they built or renovated fortresses which were mainly located in strategic positions. The Graines (Brusson), Cly (Saint-Denis) and Châtel-Argent (Villeneuve) castles are ust a few examples of the most ancient kind of castle architecture. Around the XIV century, buildings evolve into a monobloc with the reduction of defensive elements: an example is offered by the Ussel and Verrès castles. And it is precisely the castle of Verrès despite its imposing appearance, which marks the step towards the more residential type of buildings as is demonstrated by the many decorative details of exceptionally good quality. One of the most significant examples of late Gothic architecture is the Fénis Castle which underwent thorough reconstruction and redecoration between mid fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century in order to adapt the austere fortified building to the needs of courtly life. The Issogne Castle at the eve of the XVI century is the last phase in the evolution towards the urban lordly palace. The castle's present architecture is attributable to Giorgio of Challant, a fine patron of the arts to whom we owe the extraordinary flourishing of the arts in the late Gothic period in

### Faith and Art

Cloister, Collegiate Church of Saint Orso, Aosta The Nativity, Cathedral, Aosta

Christ crucified, Castle chapel,



The early diffusion of Christianity in Aosta is attested by the remains of early Christian buildings of considerable interest. One can visit the foundations of the San Lorenzo church and of the primitive cathedral. At the beginning of the XI century it is to the Burgundian priests, Anselmo and Burcardo that we owe the architectural renovation of the most important urban churches, the Cathedral and the Saint Orso Collegiate Church where, below the roof, one can see parts of frescoes of the period. Dating back to the XII century are the Cathedral choir mosaics, the mosaic pavement and in the cloister of Saint Orso there are capitals decorated with historical scenes; this is one of the most remarkable examples of Romanesque sculpture in the world, bearing witness to top quality artistic production with transalpine influences. In Romanesque and Gothic times we see not only the Church organising the territory, but also building many churches, bell towers and rural chapels. In correspondence with this building phase, there is a significant production of objects made of silver and gold by goldsmiths, of wood carvings and furniture. These objects are mainly made by local craftsmen and together with them come a considerable number of important objects from the other side of the Alps. In the XV century, the Aosta Valley artistic production reaches high levels of quality: lay and ecclesiastic patrons contributed to the fine arts associating their names to important works which are part of the Gothic courtly production spread throughout the Savoy Dukedom. In the centuries that followed, the Baroque season represents another particularly lively moment. Between the end of the XVII and the beginning of the XVIII century it is marked by the appearance of the Valsesia master wood carvers, who richly sculptured and engraved grandiose wooden altars; this was the typical expression of the figurative culture of this period in the Alps. In the many Sacred Art Museums, approximately thirty inside the major Aosta Valley Parish Churches, one can admire this outstanding artistic heritage.

## The first traces of Mankind

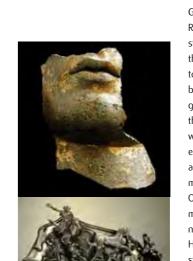


· A Cromlech at the Little Saint Bernard Pass Anthropomorphic stele n. 30



Cave art, barrows and necropolis: in the Aosta Valley there are dozens of prehistoric sites hosting important archaeological remains which tell about the pre-Roman inhabitants of the area. One of the most important is no doubt the Megalithic site of Saint-Martin-de-Corléans in Aosta which since the III millennium B.C. was first a place of worship and then a burial-ground, as the findings of anthropomorphic steles, tombs and menhir tell us. In the Aosta Valley, prehistoric settlements as the one in Châtelet (Saint-Pierre) have been brought to light and also Copper Age Necropolises, as the ones in Villeneuve and in Vollein (Quart). And manu are the sites where cave art is visible, as in Bard, in Chenal (Montjovet) and in Barmasse (Valtournenche). The Salassians, a population of Celtic-Ligurian origin, built a number of settlements and fortresse: on the hilltops, the so-called "castellieri", as that of Lignan in Saint-Barthélemu. These proud, courageous warriors kept control of the land until the arrival of the Romans; they fought for sixty years until they were finally defeated and then Augusta Prætoria was founded in 25 B.C.

## The Roman Colony



Fragment of a man's face, MAR, Aosta Bronze sword-belt, MAR, Aosta



dominated the region for five centuries, leaving behind impressive traces and tokens of their presence. Augusta Prætoria Salassorum was the symbol of Roman colonisation: a centre of strategic importance for control over the territories that had been conquered and the way of access to the Little and Great Saint Bernard Alpine passes. Still today the town reveals the classic Roman rectangular town plan, with house blocks and streets laid out in neat straight lines, like on a chessboard, called insulae and with two main streets, the Decumanus maximus and the Cardo maximus. The outline of what used to be the Roman town is still visible and you can also see it in many significant buildings. The Arch of Augustus, the monument which is the symbol of the greatness of Augustus, was probably built the same year as the victory over the Salassians. Aosta's strategic military function is emphasised by the fortified walls surrounding it; they are among the best preserved Roman walls in existence. Quadrangular towers were erected at the corners of the walls and all along their perimeter, at regular intervals. The ones which still today preserve most of their original features are Tour du Pailleron and the Lebbroso Towers. Of the four entry-ways to town, the western one is still clearly visible: the monumental Porta Prætoria, which used to be the main entrance. The area nearby this gate used to be devoted to the buldings for public entertainment. Here the grandiose theatre was built — the imposing southern façade is still standing — and the amphitheatre, which is partially visible because it is now part of the Santa Caterina Convent. One of the most suggestive and intact place in the Aosta of Roman times is the Cryptoportico: a semi- underground gallery supported by powerful travertine marble arcades and which used to be part of the greater structure of the Roman Forum. Another grandiose construction is the road to Gaul which turned the region into one of the great international waus of transit. It led to Aosta and then branched off towards the two Alpine passes. The consular road was used up untill the nineteenth century. Among the bridges built along the way, we remind you of the

ones in Pont-Saint-Martin, in Saint-Vincent and in Châtillon.



Verrès Castle The market, fresco in a lunette, Issogne Castle

