

# LE TERRE DEL CENERI

leterredelceneri.ch



## Le Terre del Ceneri PLACES TO EXPERIENCE BETWEEN HISTORY, NATURE AND TRADITION

From the shores of Lake Maggiore and the banks of the River Ticino to the slopes of Monte Tamaro, Le Terre del Ceneri weld the Sopraceneri and Sottoceneri regions together. Indeed, Monte Ceneri, which has had this name since the Middle Ages, has united the various regions of Ticino for centuries. Those making their way down from the Alps towards the Po Valley and those travelling up to northern Europe have travelled through its woods. Today, modern communication routes run through the sub-soil and means of transport are faster than ever. As a result, Le Terre del Ceneri, made up of the Municipalities of Cadenazzo, Gambarogno and Monteceneri, put themselves forward as a green heart in the centre of Ticino, steeped in history, culture and passion for the local area.

The project has received important backing from Swiss Confederation and Canton of Ticino departments. Swiss Federal Railways – SBB CFF FFS – have contributed to the development of the project through Ceneri 2020. La Via del Ceneri is also backed by numerous foundations and associations and enjoys the support of Ticino Turismo and the Regional Tourist Offices of Bellinzone and Upper Ticino, Ascona-Locarno and the Lugano region.



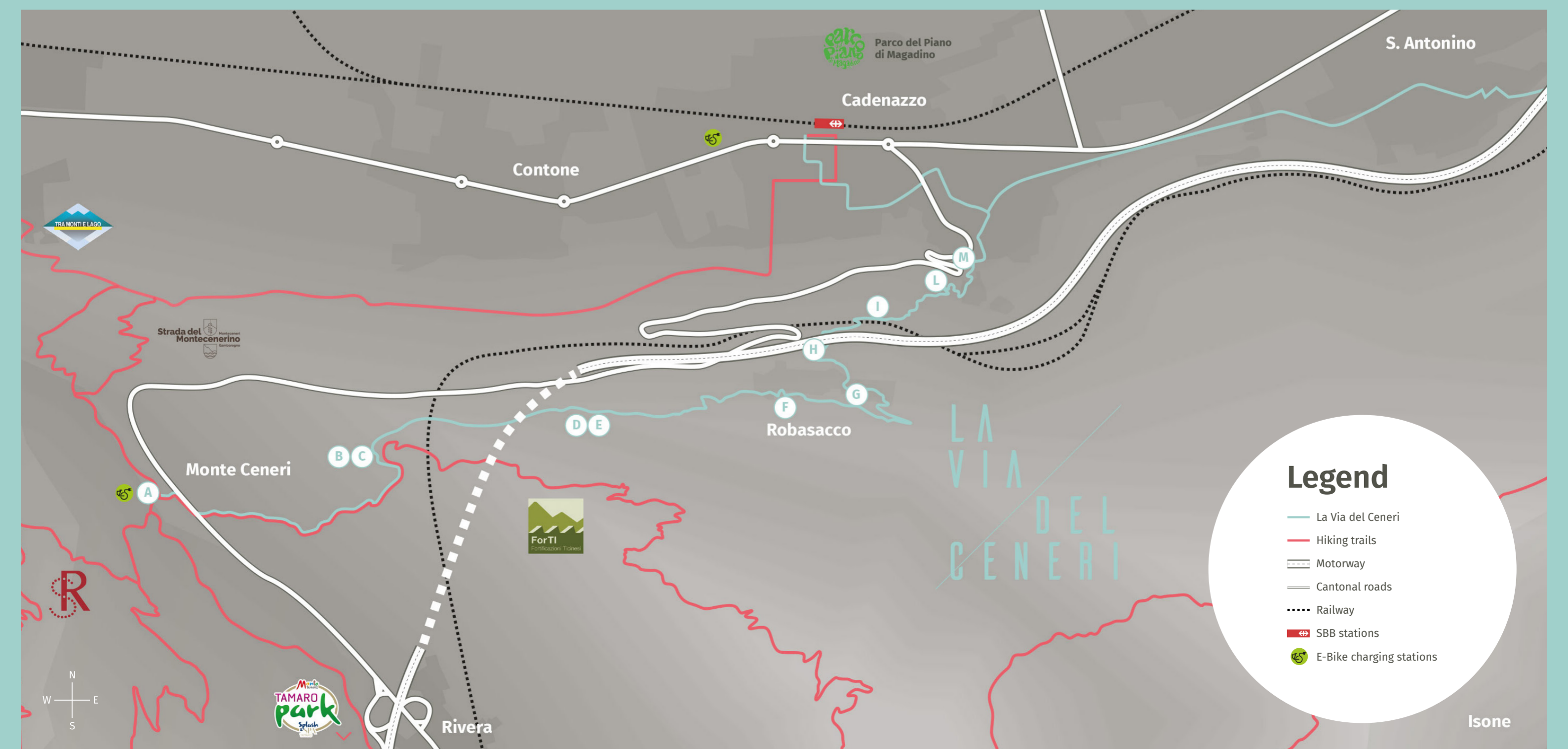
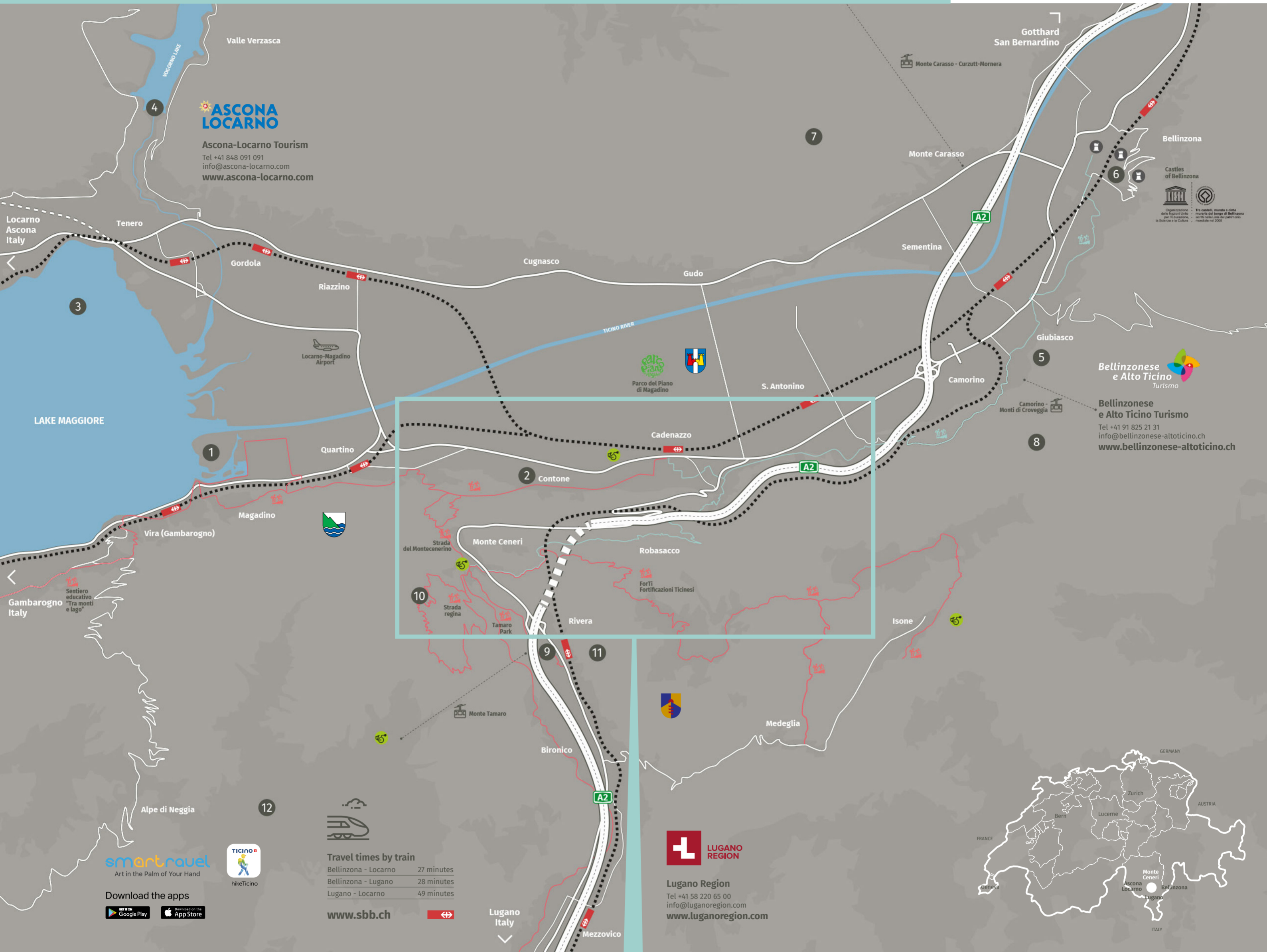
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# LE TERRE DEL CENERI



# La Via del Ceneri

## WANDERERS, PILGRIMS, BANDITS AND ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE

La Via del Ceneri is an educational and cultural trail. This segment of the historic Via Gottardo crosses Le Terre del Ceneri, welcoming visitors and guiding them through the rediscovery of a landscape able to highlight Ticino's new central role.

The itinerary has been developed by the Municipality of Cadenazzo and extends from the Ceneri Pass (Piazza Ticino) all the way to Cadenazzo railway station. La Via del Ceneri seeks to promote sustainable, knowledgeable and high-quality environmental and cultural tourism. The route is lined with tourist information boards and other educational panels for learning about and discovering the stories of the towns and woods on Monte Ceneri. It also links up with other itineraries, such as the historical Montecenerio trail and the Strada Regina, thereby creating a network of routes able to unite the Bellinzona, Locarno and Lugano regions and the municipalities of Le Terre del Ceneri: Cadenazzo, Gambarogno and Monteceneri.

### Suitable for



### Features of the route



[www.laviadelceneri.ch](http://www.laviadelceneri.ch)

A

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Piazza and Totem Ticino

Piazza Ticino is situated on the Ceneri Pass, in the spot where the nineteenth-century politician Stefano Francini proposed building Concordia, the new capital of Canton Ticino, in the hope that it could overcome the divisions between Bellinzona, Lugano and Locarno. With its totem and its elliptical shape, it symbolises the unity of the canton. This union has been strengthened by the AlpTransit tunnels (Gottard and Ceneri), which have speeded up connections between the canton's main cities and towards the other side of the Alps and other countries. The totem was created using rock extracted from the heart of Ticino during the AlpTransit construction process. There is also a photographic display of the Grand Tour of Switzerland.

D

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Robasacco Chestnut Woods

The chestnut was once the "poor man's bread". It only began to decline with the spread of corn and other cereal crops in the nineteenth century. Prior to that, it had been a fundamental food staple for Ticino's rural communities since Roman times, and particularly in the Middle Ages. This is why the chestnut woods became a source of wealth and pride for the various patriciates. The woods in Robasacco are among the finest in Ticino and have been restored and regenerated. Furthermore, the presence of chestnut trees, some of which are many years old, in the middle of a meadow set aside for pasture helps to create great biodiversity within the ecosystem.

E

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### A Route Plagued by Brigands

Ever since the Middle Ages, there have been records of merchants complaining about brigand attacks while travelling through Monte Ceneri's woods. The area was subject to brigandage for many years. The bandits had evocative names and were often supported by the local population, as they primarily attacked people passing through along the Via Francesca. The authorities often sent in military garrisons to try to stop the attacks. The last recorded episode of brigandage dates to 1864, when the gang led by Costantino Genotti from the Leventina Valley held up the mail coach in the woods near Robasacco. However, although the investigations were very thorough and the guilty parties were arrested, the leader escaped death as his sentence was never carried out.



H

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Narrative Tunnel for Contemporary Travellers

The section of La Via del Ceneri between Robasacco and Cadenazzo passes beneath the A2 motorway. This underpass has been transformed into a narrative tunnel, which takes an educational and informative look at developments in transport and communication routes over the last three centuries. It illustrates how these transformations have changed society and left their mark on the Ticino area. Meanwhile, not far from the Robasacco rest area on the A2 motorway, a recreation and relaxation zone has been created for contemporary travellers along La Via del Ceneri.

I

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Precassino Mill and Press

A historic mill, which was abandoned and left to fall into semi-ruin for over a century, has been restored to life thanks to a regeneration project supported by the Associazione dell'Antico Mulino del Precassino. Based on discoveries made on site, a press has been developed for demonstration purposes. In fact, before the installation of the grindstone used to transform corn into flour, the mill was used for husking barley. This cereal was the most widespread in the Ticino region before corn began to be grown here. The project has also enhanced the surrounding area by creating an attractive rural scene.



B

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Radio Museum and Sheepback Rocks

Monte Ceneri became a household name across Europe because of its association with the national medium-wave radio station that was active between 1933 and 2008. During the Second World War, it was the only free voice to broadcast in Italian. The building currently houses the Radio Museum, run by the Associazione Museo della Radio (AMRA). Inaugurated in 2001, the museum preserves devices that have gone down in the history of telecommunications. Nearby, it is also worth taking a look at the sheepback rocks (eroded by a glacier several thousand years ago), which significantly predate the formation of the Alps. They are estimated to be more than 2.3 billion years old.

C

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Roccolo

Monte Ceneri is still home to a roccolo (bird snare). It has not been used for catching birds for around 150 years, as this type of hunting is now legally prohibited across Switzerland. The tall construction called the "casallo", where the bird hunter hid while awaiting his prey, stands out at the back of the clearing adjacent to La Via del Ceneri. It is surrounded by various different tree species, which once formed the colonnade where the nets were concealed. The migratory birds stopped in the clearing, attracted by the song of caged birds. Then the hunter launched the bird scarer and the birds were captured in the mesh of the net as they tried to escape.



#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Church of San Leonardo

Before becoming known as Robasacco, this area was called San Leonardo, indicating that a religious building had been present here for many years. The first historical records of its existence date to the early thirteenth century. The building was reconstructed with the addition of a bell gable in the late sixteenth century, during the Counter-Reformation championed by St Charles Borromeo, who was bishop of Ticino and made various pastoral visits here. The church houses a fine wooden crucifix that is unusual in the fact that it features a bald Jesus Christ. The oil on canvas of the Madonna and Child, St John the Baptist and St Leonard is also worthy of note.

G

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Chapel of the Madonna di Lourdes

Popular religion characterised the life of rural communities for centuries. Walls in people's homes were often decorated with frescoes or small votive niches, while wayside chapels commemorate Jesus, the Madonna and various patron saints. They bear witness to a close, everyday relationship between the local people and religion. The chapel of the Madonna di Lourdes in Robasacco is an example of popular devotion that has succeeded in renewing itself over the decades. Situated alongside the ancient route to Cadenazzo, it was built in 1851 at the behest of Father Francesco Rizzoli and was restored in 1933 and again in the 1970s.

L

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### Cassinelli

Cassinelli, which were used to store milk, were once widespread and numerous throughout the Cadenazzo area. These stone structures are able to ensure a low temperature thanks to the water of a stream that is channelled through the middle of them, so that the milk containers can be placed in the water. The copper bowls floated in the cool interior while waiting for the "fatty" part (the cream) to be removed. The cream was then used to make butter while the rest of the milk was transformed into other dairy products. Some of these constructions have survived and bear witness to a form of building typical of the peasant culture of the past.

M

#### LA VIA DEL CENERI

### A Crossroads of People: road and railway

Cadenazzo has always been situated at a crossroads between communication routes across Canton Ticino and towards northern and southern Europe. Before the reclamation work carried out last century, the Magadino Plain was an unhealthy marshy area. People would travel along the River Ticino by boat and the quickest way to get to Lombardy was across Lake Maggiore. Those unable to travel by water would follow the Via Francesca. The nineteenth century saw the arrival of the canton road, surfaced roads, mail coaches and the railway. The town's development has therefore always depended on the fact that it is a crossroads of people.



1

#### HIGHLIGHTS ASCONA-LOCARNO

### Bolle di Magadino

This wetland area situated at the mouth of both the Ticino and Verzasca rivers is an important natural reserve in Switzerland. The vegetation and fauna you'll find here are typical in this area of transition between water and land; the "Bolle" are a haven for numerous protected animal and plant species, including about 300 bird species. The ideal period for observing the wildlife is from April to May. Thanks to various educational trails, you can walk around the protected area, on your own or accompanied by a guide (April to October, upon request).

[www.ascona-locarno.com/parks](http://www.ascona-locarno.com/parks)

2

#### HIGHLIGHTS ASCONA-LOCARNO

### "Between mountains and lake" educational trail

This walking trail stretching over 22 km, which you can walk in stages, connects the Cadenazzo railway station to Dinella, a village overlooking Lake Maggiore on the border with Italy. The route goes through woods, meadows and traditional villages, and is dotted with panoramic viewpoints. About 40 information boards offer a complete overview of the region's cultural-historical and natural heritage, illustrating its development over the course of the last 150 years, including the channelling of the Ticino river and the subsequent reclamation of the Magadino Plain from marshlands to agricultural land.

[www.ascona-locarno.com/gambarogno](http://www.ascona-locarno.com/gambarogno)



3

#### HIGHLIGHTS ASCONA-LOCARNO

### Boat trips on Lake Maggiore

From April to October, the scheduled boats cut through the water of Lake Maggiore connecting various locations steeped in history and tradition, and bursting with tourist attractions: the elegant village of Ascona, the lively town of Locarno with its many events, the flower villages of Gambarogno and the Brissago Islands, a little paradise that is home to the only botanical garden on an island in the whole of Switzerland. A relaxing way to explore this part of Ticino in its Mediterranean setting; let yourself be lulled by the waves and admire the spectacle that nature has shaped.

[www.ascona-locarno.com/boat](http://www.ascona-locarno.com/boat)

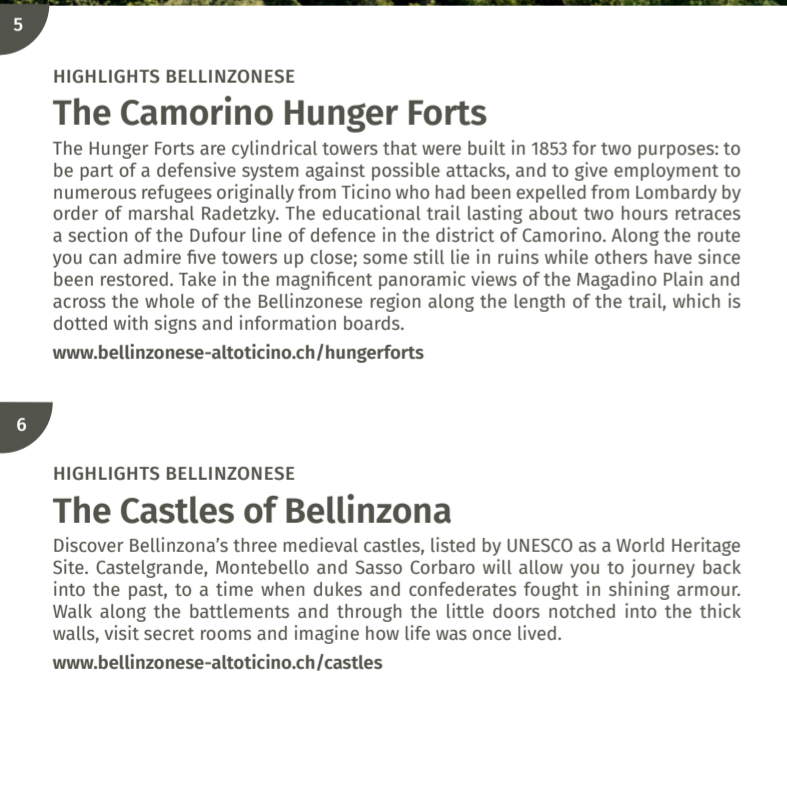
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#### HIGHLIGHTS ASCONA-LOCARNO

### Bungee jumping / Valle Verzasca

Built in the '60s, the Verzasca Dam is one of the highest in Europe (220m / 721ft.). From April to October the most courageous, just like James Bond in the movie "GoldenEye", can experience the craziest bungee jumping in the world: a jump with an elastic rope surrounded by the narrow rocky walls of the mouth of the Verzasca Valley. A unique experience full of adrenaline! Going further upstream, you can admire the famous "Ponte dei Salti" stone bridge in Lavertezzo and the spectacle of the emerald waters of the Verzasca river, a popular destination for many bathers and nature lovers.

[www.ascona-locarno.com/valle-verzasca](http://www.ascona-locarno.com/valle-verzasca)



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#### HIGHLIGHTS BELLINZONESE

### The Camorino Hunger Forts

The Hunger Forts are cylindrical towers that were built in 1853 for two purposes: to be part of a defensive system against possible attacks, and to give employment to numerous refugees originally from Ticino who had been expelled from Lombardy by order of marshal Radetzky. The educational trail lasting about two hours retraces a section of the Dufour line of defence in the district of Camorino. Along the route you can admire five towers up close; some still lie in ruins while others have since been restored. Take in the magnificent panoramic views of the Magadino Plain and across the whole of the Bellinzonese region along the length of the trail, which is dotted with signs and information boards.

[www.bellinzonese-altoticino.ch/hungerforts](http://www.bellinzonese-altoticino.ch/hungerforts)



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#### HIGHLIGHTS BELLINZONESE

### Tibetan Bridge

The 270 m long Tibetan bridge allows the passage of the rugged valley that separates the communities of Sementina and Monte Carasso, two towns located in front of Bellinzona. The bridge joins the stone made village of Curzitt to the hiking path of "Via delle Vigne", allowing you to make excursions in an area characterized by a landscape rich in cultural heritages.

[www.bellinzonese-altoticino.ch/tibetanbridge](http://www.bellinzonese-altoticino.ch/tibetanbridge)

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#### HIGHLIGHTS BELLINZONESE

### Monti di Croveggia Cable Car

Built in the 70s, in just ten minutes this little vintage-look cable car with its single cabin will take you from Camorino to Monti di Croveggia, an ideal starting point for numerous walks. From here, thanks to the roughly 600 metre ascent travelled by cable car, it is easier to reach such fascinating peaks as the Pizzo di Corbella and the Camoghè.

[www.bellinzonese-altoticino.ch/croveggia](http://www.bellinzonese-altoticino.ch/croveggia)



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#### HIGHLIGHTS LUGANESE

### Splash & Spa & Tamaro Park

A perfect trip for anyone looking for a fun-filled day among water pools and unspoilt nature. The SPA area has a lot to offer, including Turkish baths, saunas and saltwater pools, while the SPLASH area is ideal for fun lovers with a variety of pools including one with panoramic views and one with waves and even slides suitable for both adults and children. For those who wish to do so, it is possible to experience the magic of the Splash & SPA either individually or with others - through different combined packages - with Tamaro Park. At the top of Monte Tamaro, fun is the real star. Thanks to a playground and an adventure park with tobogganing, a zipline and a jumping platform, it is possible for older and more daring visitors to experience a day of pure adrenalin.

[www.luganoregion.com/tdc-tamaro](http://www.luganoregion.com/tdc-tamaro)

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#### HIGHLIGHTS LUGANESE

### Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli

Designed by the world famous architect Mario Botta, you really can't go without visiting this church. As well as offering a space for meditation, this mighty fortress on the spur of the mountain can also be the medium for gaining a new perspective on the landscape. The church is dedicated to Santa Maria degli Angeli (Saint Mary of the Angels). Built between 1992 and 1996, its innovative design represents a new take on religious architecture. Built from porphyry, it is situated on the edge of a hillside, beyond which you enjoy extraordinary panoramic views opening out before you.

[www.luganoregion.com/tdc-santamariadegliangeli](http://www.luganoregion.com/tdc-santamariadegliangeli)



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#### HIGHLIGHTS LUGANESE

### Lugano Bike 66, stage 3 (Rivera – Miglieglia)

Stage 3 of the Lugano Bike 66 trail really is a must for any lover of mountain biking. The trail, largely unopened, is part of one of the most beautiful single-track trails in Ticino, winding its way around the Val Colla above Lugano, through the woods and hills of the Malcantone and then on to the majestic Monte Tamaro. From its top, you can enjoy spectacular 360 degree views across much of the Ticino region, including two lakes (Lake Ceresio and Lake Verano) and the surrounding valleys, the Bellinzonese and Malcantone areas and their mountains. For those who want to avoid the part-dirt track, the trail also includes an ascent by cable car to the top of Monte Tamaro.

[www.luganoregion.com/tdc-luganobike66](http://www.luganoregion.com/tdc-luganobike66)

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#### HIGHLIGHTS LUGANESE

### Tamaro – Lema Traverse

The Tamaro-Lema has over recent years carved out a step on the podium of the most beautiful and renowned traverses of the Swiss Alpine foothills. The trip takes place almost entirely on the ridge, and having evolved straddling both Switzerland and Italy, it offers an angel-like view of the insubric region, comprising Lombardy, Piedmont, Ticino and Valais. The difference in altitude is moderate, except for the first part leading to the top of Monte Tamaro. Both Monte Tamaro, with its wealth of attractions, and Monte Lema can be reached by cable car from the end of March to the start of November.

[www.luganoregion.com/tdc-tamaro-lem](http://www.luganoregion.com/tdc-tamaro-lem)