

A mountain pastures area known as far back as the late 18th century, and at the foot of the imposing peak of the Matterhorn (4478 m). A mountain climber was born at the beginning of the 20th century.

The Matterhorn (4478 m) with the Grandes Rousses above it, and Chamonix. A few kilometres away are two cross-country skiing circuits at Méan.

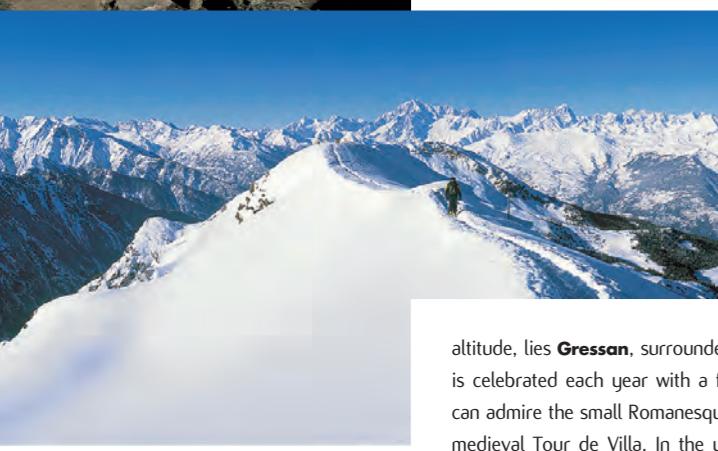


The Matterhorn

Aosta and the surrounding area



Roman Theatre, Aosta
View from 'Couviss', Pilat



altitude, lies **Gressoney**, surrounded by vast orchards whose apple production is celebrated each year with a festival on the first Sunday in October. You can admire the small Romanesque church of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine and the medieval Tour de Villa. In the upper part of the village there is the "Göte de Gargantua" nature reserve bearing witness to the deposits of quaternary glaciators at the bottom of the valley, which conserves an environment adapted to the rare plants of the steppes and the Mediterranean.

Only 18 kilometres from Aosta south is the road to **Pila** (3041 m), also easily reached in 20 minutes thanks to a comfortable cable car. Pila is a natural balcony with a 180° view over the whole chain of the Alps, from Mont Blanc to Gran Combin, from the Matterhorn to Monte Rosa. This skiing resort boasts excellent modern accommodation and up-to-date ski lift facilities. In the summer Pila is also a centre for excursions with a dense network of paths of all levels of difficulty and a paradise for mountain bikers, with various itineraries as well as a Downhill track where World Cup competitions are held every year.

The Great Saint Bernard



Roisan • Valpelline
Ollomont • Oyace
Bionaz • Doues
Allein • Gignod
Étroubles • Saint-Oyen
Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses



"Bataille de reines"

Aosta and the surrounding area

on archaeological subjects, whilst at the first floor prestigious art exhibitions usually take place.

At Aosta, every 30th and 31st January there is the traditional millenary **Sant'Orso Fair**, where traditional craft creations are presented: wood carvings and sculptures, pot stone articles, wrought iron and leather, "drap" - woollen cloth woven on old wooden looms, and then lacework, baskets, household articles, wooden ladders, barrels and much more. For some years now, given the success of the event, there is also a summer version of the Fair traditionally held just before 15th August. Still in January, for some years now, there has been an event which is a blend of tradition, festivity and folklore linked to Carnival. A parade of masked groups from all over the Region and the nearby alpine towns brings liveliness and colour to the historical centre. At the end of the summer, in alternate years, there are two important events: "The international competition of mountain wines", the last weekend in August in odd-numbered years, and the "**Desparza**", the celebration of the return of the cows from the high mountain pastures towards the end of September, in even-numbered years. In October, on the other hand, an immense number of spectators are attracted to the "Bataille de reines", an unusual battle between cows, usually held on the penultimate Sunday of October, and which concludes a series of eliminatory contests which have taken place in Spring and late Summer in various villages in the Valley. On the orographic right of the Dora, almost opposite Aosta, at 262 metres

years. In October, on the other hand, an immense number of spectators are attracted to the "Bataille de reines", an unusual battle between cows, usually held on the penultimate Sunday of October, and which concludes a series of eliminatory contests which have taken place in Spring and late Summer in various villages in the Valley. On the orographic right of the Dora, almost opposite Aosta, at 262 metres

In the 17th century castle, **Peltierly** (now owned by the commune) where the **Mavrofide** Semitic ruler settled, the **Chamberlaine** (now a semicircular staircase) release the central tower, the **century castle**. **Peltierly** (now owned by the commune) where the **Mavrofide** Semitic ruler settled, the **Chamberlaine** (now a semicircular staircase) release the central tower, the **century castle**.

From Roman times to the Present, nature, culture and folklore

Aosta and the surrounding area

a splendid view of Monte Rutor to the north the ancient castle rising on its hillside, the town of **Quart** (530 m) with the castle walls, the town of **Tsan** and a sports area with a three-hole golf course. On the opposite side where there is a playing field for children, fields, roads and mountain paths leading to **Nibbio** (547 m) of many species of migratory birds, is in common with **Brossogno** (527 m)

wards Aosta you reach **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

and sculptures are on display to which is worth stopping for a visit continuing to the **Doues** (521 m) and **Allein** (486 m) centuries, the **Altein** (521 m) and **Saint-Marcet** (525 m) with its interesting Medieval

Flavours of yesteryear and folklore events

From Aosta there are interesting outings around **Valpelline** and the **Great St. Bernard Valley**, which rises up to the 2473 metres of the Pass of the same name, easily reached by car from June to mid-October. Taking State Road 27 towards north, after about 3 kilometres there is the crossroads for Valpelline. To your right, there is a view of the picturesque village of **Roisan** (866 m). After about 10 kilometres you reach **Valpelline** (954 m) a tranquil village popular with those who like holidays at a medium altitude. On the last Sunday in July the "Seppa à la Vapelementse" is held, a festival featuring a gastronomic speciality made with stale bread, consmone and Fontina cheese. If you want to know more about the history and production of this DOP cheese make your way to the Visitors' Centre and the seasoning warehouse which is inside old disused copper mines. From the village you can reach **Ollomont** (1356 m), at the heart of a green and sunny lateral basin, full of mountain pastures, small lakes and glaciers. Ollomont Valley has been a transit point since the age of the Salassi tribes, who communicated with the populations of Valais across Fenêtre Durand. It is said Calvin crossed Fenêtre Durand when seeking refuge in Switzerland after the Valdaostans in 1536 decided to remain faithful to the Catholic faith and sent away all the Protestants. Luigi Einaudi, future president of the Italian Republic, wanted by the Nazi-Fascist police, also emigrated clandestinely over the Col. Ollomont is the starting point for important mountain climbs, such as to Gran Combin or Mont Vélan, or for attractive walks in the grassy basin of By; here every year on the last Sunday in August there is the eliminatory contest of the "Bataille de reines" (harmless combats between cows). In July there is the "Fête à l'Ano" (Donkey festival) where as well as tasting numerous dishes based on donkey meat there is a traditional donkey race.

Beyond Valpelline the road continues along the narrow main valley among dense woods and characteristic villages, to reach the small village of **Oyace** (1377 m). Visit the octagonal tower dominating the main village and the small centuries-old bridge over the Bettenda gorge. Continuing along the road, on your right, there is the small lake of Lexert around a picnic area with facilities. The last village on your way is **Bionaz** (1606 m). The road finishes at the Place Moulin dam, one of the largest in Europe, but the valley continues with a network of country lanes and paths, well beyond the artificial lake. Following the edge of the lake there is an easy, very attractive 4-kilometre path, in an alpine setting. The background of the rocky peaks culminating in Dent d'Hérens (4711 m), is perfect for several excursions, crossings and mountain climbs thanks to the many mountain

Chamois



The Matterhorn

sports facilities, an adventure park with aerial sportive-pleasure courses for children and adults and a modern climbing practice wall. You mustn't miss the Handicrafts Fair in August where students of carving and sculpture courses display their creations, and the apple festival in October. In winter you can go cross-country skiing, there are tracks for all levels. From Antey there are 2 roads, La Magdeleine on the right and Torgnon on the left.

La Magdeleine (1644 m) is a tranquil village made up of various hamlets scattered among the green meadows. The characteristic "Sentiero dei mulini" links eight mills, some still working and recently restored; all lined along the same watercourse, they were used to grind the cereals (barley, oats, wheat) which used to grow on this village's sunny slopes.

There are several relatively easy tracks for walks and mountain bike excursions in the surrounding woods. The attractive panoramic path linking the village with Chamois in winter becomes a track for cross-country skiing excursions.

La Magdeleine is a small skiing resort on the hillside of Monte Tantané, with easy downhill runs and cross-country tracks. Ski touring enthusiasts enjoy various excursions, also popular in the summer, such as the one to Monte Zerbion or to Col Portola.

Torgnon (1489 m) is an old village divided into numerous hamlets which conserve the characteristic alpine architecture. The village is in a sunny position, between meadows and dense woods, with a splendid view of the Matterhorn. The parish church of San Martino with its Romanesque bell-tower has an interesting carved wooden pulpit and a valuable wooden cross. Of interest is the "Petit monde" ethnographic museum at Triatel. Easily reached in a pleasant half-hour's walk, this architectural complex is made up of three rural buildings, the "raccard", "grange" and "grenier", representing a slice of life lived by the inhabitants of this village.

During the summer there are several interesting excursions available, mountain bike trails, horse rides in the meadows and conifer woods. In winter the vast skiing area offers attractive downhill runs, ideal

for all levels. For children there is a fully-equipped playground and for cross-country skiers there are tracks of all lengths including the panoramic "Grandes Montagnes" circuit which winds between woods and clearings. From Torgnon you can also reach the central Valley, across the Col of Saint-Pantaleon (1650 m), a striking scenic area facing the Matterhorn.

You mustn't forget "Lo martéz di Torgnol", a characteristic handicrafts market in the historical centre and the horse-riding events which at the beginning of July open the summer season.

Returning to Antey-Saint-André, just after the village of Buisson, there is the departure point for the cableway linking the bottom of the valley with **Chamois** (1815 m), the only village to be reached exclusively on foot or by cable car.

An ideal starting points for walks towards the basin of Cheneil, the Sanctuary of Clavalité or the lake of Lod where you can go sportfishing or take advantage of the picnic area.



Chamois

But there is also the modern alongside the traditional: Chamois in fact has the first Italian mountain airfield for light planes. In winter the atmosphere is particularly vivid, there is the sensation of having gone back in time. The skiing area offers various downhill runs ideal for all skiing levels. But lovers of ski touring and snow shoing too have a wide choice of itineraries. You mustn't miss the traditional torchlight procession with midnight bonfire on 31st December.

After Buisson, the road takes you to Maen, whose lake is a regional tourist fishing reserve and then you enter Paquier, the main village of



12 amazing views

