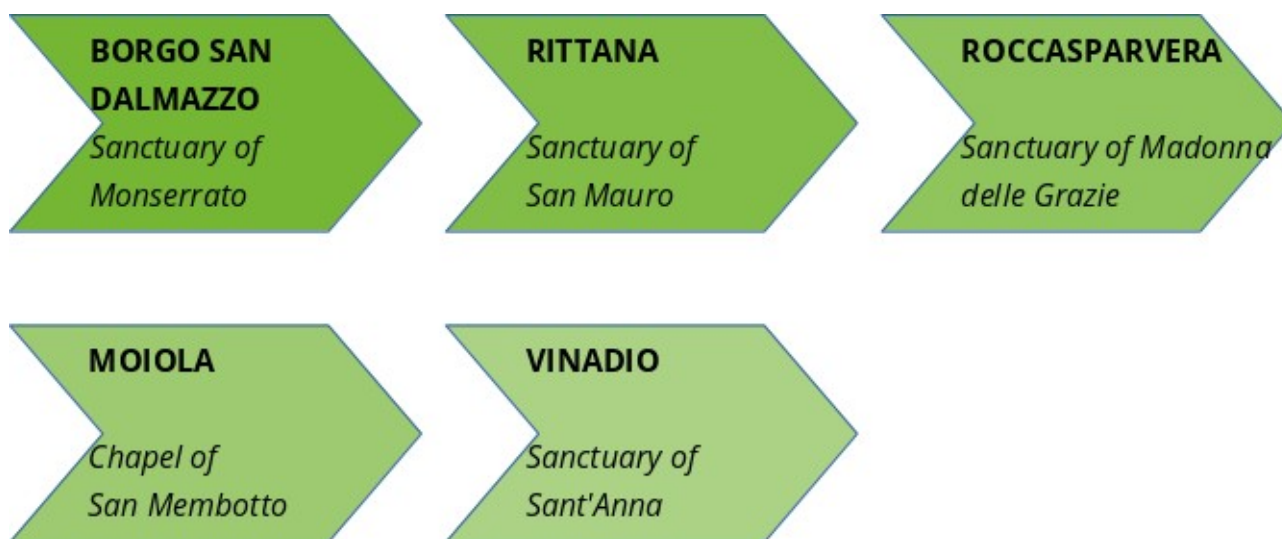


## ITINERARIES IN VALLE STURA

### SANCTUARIES

#### ROUTE



#### INTRODUCTION

The signs of devotion in the territory pass through the many churches that surround Stura valley; among all, the sanctuaries are the places of particular intensity, often reached on foot or through tortuous paths, where the faithful have left prayers, memories, and votive offerings. Many of these buildings have been rebuilt or adapted in recent times, but they rise in sites of ancient attendance.

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## THE STOPOVERS

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### 1. BORGIO SAN DALMAZZO. Sanctuary of Monserrato

The village of Borgo San Dalmazzo dominates from above with its incomparable and reassuring contour. Documented since the 17th Century, it stands on a hill dominated since the Middle Ages by the presence of a cross. Many documents evidence to the attachment to this place of the confraternities in the surrounding area, who frequently went there on pilgrimage, by foot, to ask for graces. Little by little, the devotion to the Holy Cross was joined by that Marian devotion. The decorations of the church refer to these two devotions: the large fresco with the Crucifixion on the façade and the scenes of the life of the Virgin inside the nave. On the sides of the high altar, monochrome figures of San Dalmazzo and San Benedict are painted in relation to the Abbey of Pedona.

### 2. RITTANA. Sanctuary of San Mauro

Already documented in the Middle Ages as a chapel dependent on Roccasparvera, the small church of San Mauro was built in close proximity to the parish church of San Giovanni Battista. The two entities remained separate until 1622 when they were unified by decree of the Archbishop of Turin, but 100 years had to pass for the unification of the two structures. It dates back to 1720, in exchange for the orientation of the parish church and the consequent annexation of the chapel of San Mauro. In the interior, the church preserves a beautiful statue, probably dating back to the 17th Century that represents Saint Mauro, as well as numerous votive offerings dedicated to him.

### 3. ROCCASPARVERA. Sanctuary of Madonna delle Grazie

The chapel was built in 1707, at the behest of the prior Don Giovanni Antonio Meiranesio, but only in 1877, it was fitted with a large external portico. The interior decoration recalls the Marian dedication with the statue used during the feast period and the Stories from the Life of the Virgin painted on the walls.



#### 4. MOIOLA. Chapel of San Membotto

In 17th century documents, the chapel dedicated to Saint Membotto is also mentioned as dedicated to Saint Benedict, a very ancient devotion in the valley attested by the presence of the chapel mentioned since 1098. This depended on the Benedictine Abbey of San Teofredo di Le Puy. Membotto– according to what the sabaudo historian Guglielmo Bardessono writes– it belonged to the legendary martyrs of the Thebean Legion led by Saint Mauritius and even received martyrdom in this same area.

#### 5. VINADIO. Sanctuary of Sant'Anna

The Sanctuary of Sant'Anna di Vinadio, with its 2035 meters of altitude, is considered the highest of Europe. In this place, located on the border with France, there was already in the Middle Ages a hospice for wayfarers, perhaps cared for by a hermit, which would later be called "randiere". Already in 1307, we have news of a chapel called "Santa Maria di Brasca", but in the middle of the 14th Century, the small church was dedicated to Saint Anne. The flow of numerous believers and the devotion of the Savoy dynasty led to the construction of the of a new big church in 1680; the reception rooms and the large portico surrounding the church are 19th Century works.

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