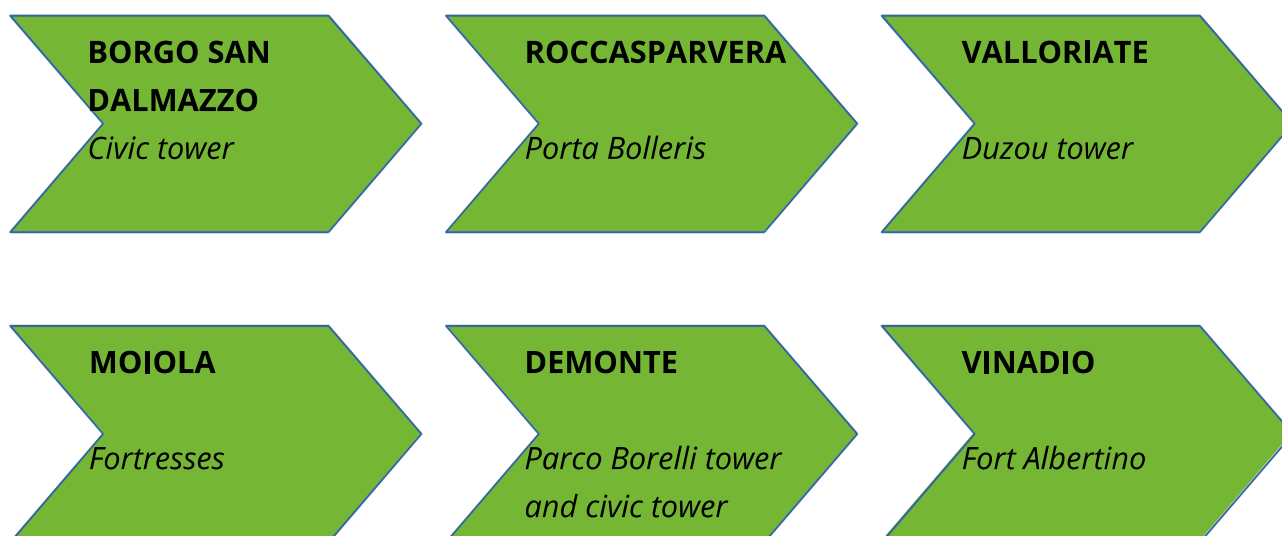


ITINERARIES IN VALLE STURA

TOWERS AND FORTRESSES

ROUTE



INTRODUCTION

Surrounded by greenery or nestled in the center of the main districts, several towers still witness - even today - the strong defensive apparatus of the Stura valley, which has always been a transit ground for armies and enemies. The solid structures had, on the one hand, the function of representing the civil power in the territory; on the other hand, they performed the function of sighting and communication stations in case of invasion or imminent danger. These are flanked by more extensive defence structures, such as the grandiose Fort Albertino di Vinadio or the 19th Century bunkers of Moiola, evidence of the vocation of the pass valley that this territory has maintained throughout the centuries.

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THE STOPOVERS

1. BORGIO SAN DALMAZZO. Civic tower

The imposing tower along the main artery controlled the access to the ancient Ricetto, documented at least since the 14th Century. The "ricetti" are fortified structures typical of northern Italy, aimed at keeping the "precious" elements of the agricultural community, such as agricultural products, livestock, and working tools. In the event of an enemy attack, it was also to protect the population. The building underwent numerous renovations, some already documented in the 16th Century. The major changes took place in the 17th Century, with the adaptation to the role of the civic tower, and in the 19th Century. In 1837, the clock was placed, while the two bells are the result of the fusion of the three bells that were part of the previous tower.

2. ROCCASPARVERA. Porta Bolleris

The rest is more substantial than a complex defensive system that surrounded the fortress, consisting of three fortresses, a castle and the city walls with turrets and gates. The fortresses were badly damaged in the battle between the French troops and those of Cuneo led in 1559. The structure was actually a tower - a gate with a round archway in brick; it was equipped with a drawbridge of which some structural elements still remain.

3. VALLORATE. Duzou tower

Built on a hill at the entrance to the municipal territory, the tower served as a lookout point and was - according to the tradition - part of the Castle of Valloriate. Today it is reduced to a few ruins among the vegetation.

4. MOIOLA. Fortresses

At the entrance to the valley are the defensive fortresses of more recent times, built between 1940, and 1942. They are part of a larger system known as the Vallo Alpino (Alpine Wall) built in anticipation of the Second World War clashes along the



entire Alpine chain. The purpose of the defence, organized near the passageways, was to slow down the enemy's advancing progress. The Stura valley was, from this point of view, a strategic sector and for this reason it counts more than 300 works. The bunkers were organized in small groups, built of reinforced concrete and steel; the heavy concrete roofing had to shelter from heavy artillery. In these structures were set up the command quarters, the sighting and firing positions for machine guns and cannons.

5. DEMONTE. Parco Borelli tower and civic tower

The circular crenellated tower dominates from above the town of Demonte and the Borelli Park. It was rebuilt in the 19th Century in neo-Gothic style at the request of Count Giacinto Borelli, whose family coat of arms stands out on the parapets. The tower stands on the site of the ancient 13th Century castle, seat of the Angevin power: the castle was entrusted to the powerful Franceschino Bolleris who, in 1377, undertook the task of rebuilding it with the help of the city's inhabitants. In the center of the district, marked by a mighty medieval stone entrance, stands the civic tower, a sign of the municipal power.

6. VINADIO. Fort Albertino

The size of Fort Albertino and its dependencies clearly characterize the town of Vinadio and the surrounding area. King Carlo Alberto chose Vinadio because of its strategic position, since from here, it was possible to control and defend not only the main route of the valley, but also the side valleys connecting it with France. Engineer Barabino designed it, with interventions by engineers Chiodo and Racchia. The walls are more than 1 km long and in some places exceed 18 meters in height. New modifications were made in the 1880s, when Vinadio had to adapt to the new defence requirements necessary for the evolution of artillery and military strategies.

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