

# ALLE VERZASCA

## gio etnografico – Ethnografischer Rundgang **“FRASCO”**

## io etnografico – Ethnografischer Rundgang

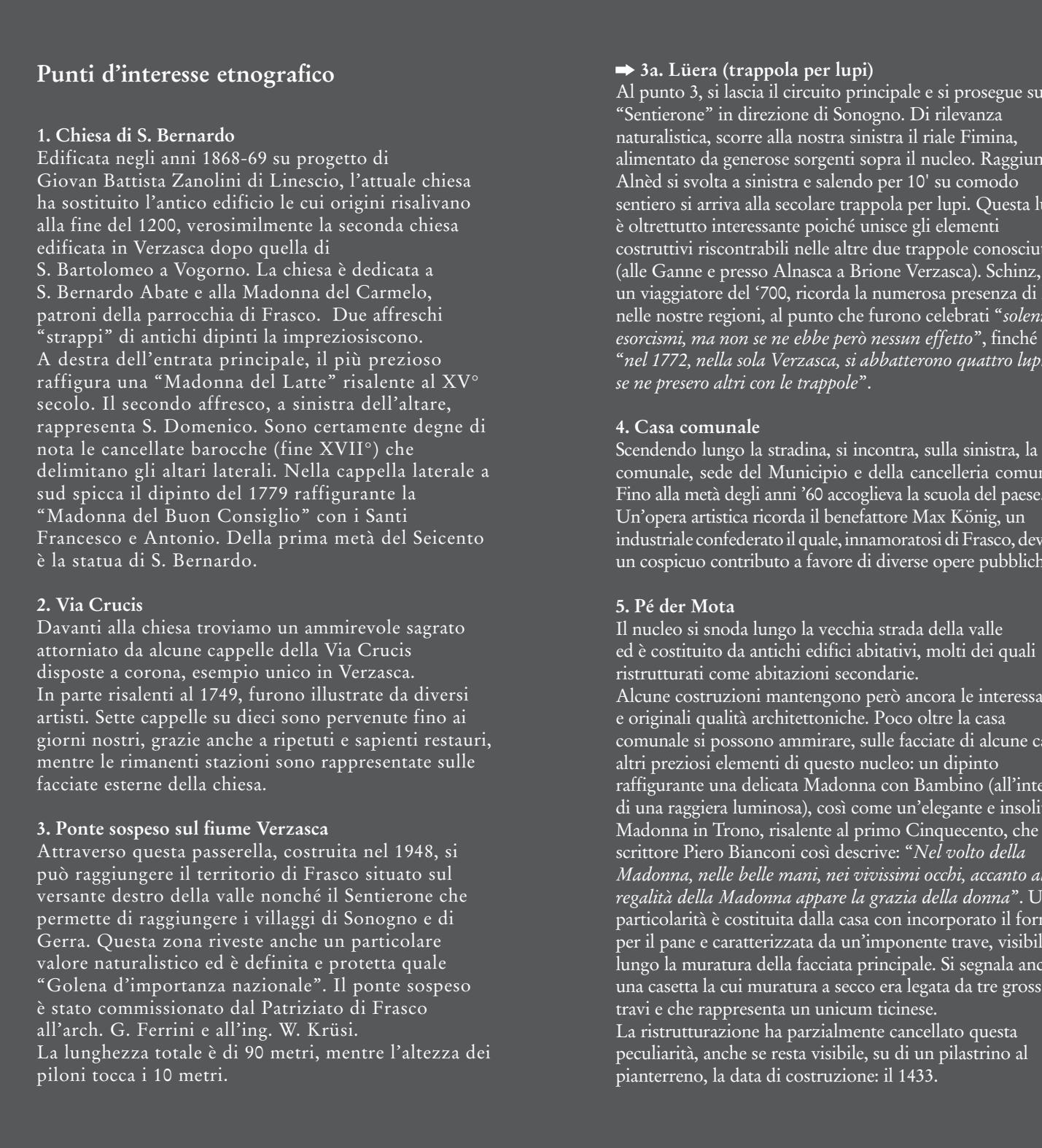
# “FRASCO”



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## Il fuoco etnografico verzaschese

Etnografico verzaschese



## 6. Torbora: forno per il pane

s intravvedono, a m  
l'antico elettrici

la centralina elettrica e il vecchio albergo Erra. Si raggiunge così la frazione della Torbora. Il primo edificio che s'incontra sulla sinistra del sentiero è il forno per il pane, ancora oggi usato dalle famiglie del luogo. Addossato alla parete posteriore della costruzione si trovava un porcile, che godeva del tepore emanato dal forno. Ulteriore testimonianza che il mulino era un luogo di vita quotidiana.

**7. Torbora: il nucleo**  
Il paese di Torbora è un borgo rurale.

accoglie una fontana ed è completamente attorniata da vecchie case d'abitazione che conservano intatto il loro carattere originale. Alcune date sugli architravi fanno risalire questi edifici agli inizi del 1700. Un'architrave negli anni 1994-1996 macine e la turbina, i ammirare nel loro co Apertura su appunta

queste case, lungo gli stretti vicoli, troviamo vari affreschi e nicchie raffiguranti la Vergine Maria. Sulla piazzetta, a ridosso di una delle case che la circondano, è posta la fontana dei quattro cani, conosciuta anche come la fontana del Diavolo.

d'approvvigionamento per tutto il nucleo, essendo le case sprovviste di acqua corrente. La fontana reca l'iscrizione *"Benefatori calliforgnesi"* e la data del 1901. Lungo l'itinerario si incontreranno altre fontane identiche a questa, riportate su tutto il territorio e costruite grazie ai "en bleu" così come nei cinque... altri tempi! Le botteghe e alla posta, o costituivano in passato

lasciti di emigranti di Frasco che fecero fortuna in California. Attorno al nucleo erano un tempo presenti numerosi pozzi per la macerazione della canapa così come una piccola cava per l'estrazione delle piode.

→ 10a. Fornaci della Cossato

Così come in altre regioni erano preziose e imponenti le verzaschese. Lasciando

**8. Cascata Efra e Pozz Negro**  
Lasciato il nucleo della Torbora, si sale per raggiungere il ponte sulla strada cantonale e attraversare nuovamente il torrente Efra. Si incontra così uno dei luoghi più suggestivi e selvaggi del nostro itinerario: la cascata dell'Efra e il Pozz Negro sottostante. Ancora oggi si può intravedere, dipinta con vernice rossa, "la Mòrfiga"; questa maligna presenza nel pozzo era evocata nei racconti affinché i bambini, intimoriti, si mantenessero di marmo bianco certa produzione della calcin nell'intonacatura delle scuole a Sonogno calce, ma più fonti ricche della scarsità di legname per le difficoltà di trasportarle verso il versante opposto: le rovine, fino al limite del torrente.

suggeriti e selvaggi del nostro itinerario: la cascata dell'Efra e il Pozz Negro sottostante. Ancora oggi si può intravedere, dipinta con vernice rossa, "la Mòrfiga"; questa maligna presenza nel pozzo era evocata nei racconti affinché i bambini, intimoriti, si mantenessero lontani dal pericolo. La forza di questa cascata è stata sfruttata in passato mediante la costruzione del mulino e della centralina elettrica.

le sue costruzioni da

una cappella affrescata dal  
getto principale la  
riconoscibile con le  
apidazione).

ricca  
niva un piccolo centro  
con numerose installazioni  
tra queste, alcuni mulini  
furono distrutti nel 1868  
e ne sorsero, sul riale Efra,

centralina idraulica del  
nuovo acquistato e restaurato

sono ora nuovamente  
nale.  
41 (0)91 746 17 77.

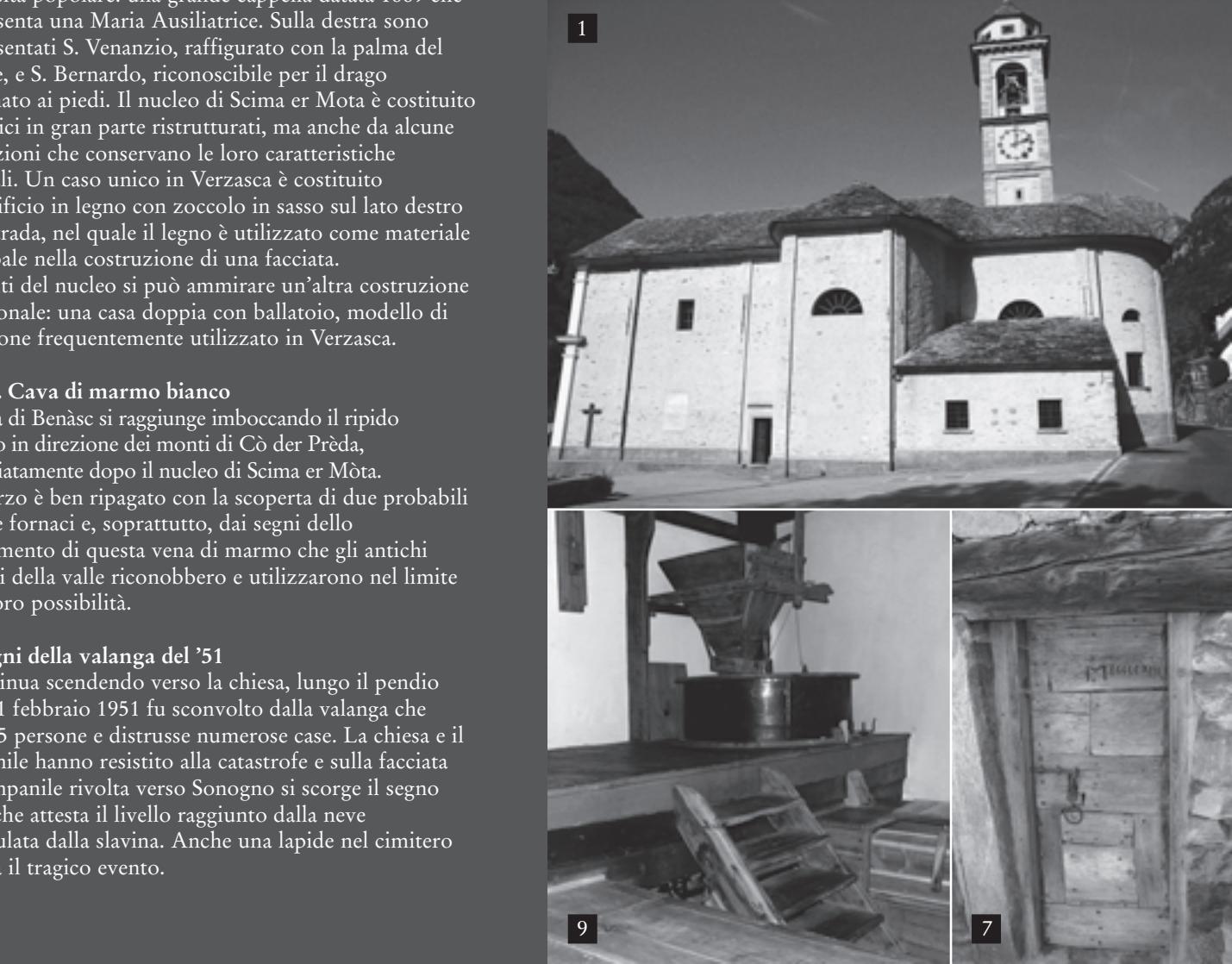
o la scalinata a sinistra  
era frequentato

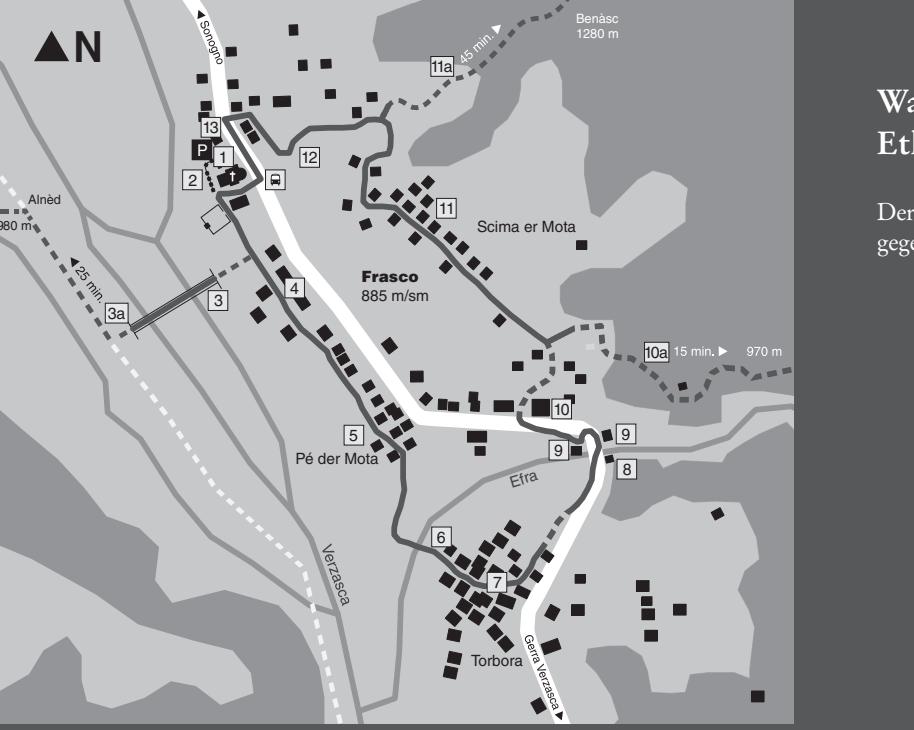
il “tea-time” delle  
ra, unitamente alla  
a diversi anni,  
l villaggio.

ritroviamo a Frasco  
dell'intraprendenza  
principale in prossimità

ta fino al 1870 per la  
ata nella costruzione e  
isco e Sonogno, come pure

e fino a quattro fornaci di  
e attività si esaurì a causa  
mente nocciolo e faggio) e  
a era posta sul ripidissimo  
enivano lasciate cadere  
rasportate alle fornaci per  
nque giorni) sempre  
ra costante (850°).  
o ben conservate.





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# VALLE VERZASCA

## Itinéraire ethnographique – Ethnographic Trail “FRASCO”



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### Water and fire

#### Ethnographic itinerary in Frasco

This itinerary is linked together by two elements: *water and fire*. Water ran the mills and turbines and is a symbol of the ancient driving force necessary for a number of human activities. Fire is the vital source of heat and energy necessary, among other things, to cook food and manufacture lime. And of course one could also metaphorically connect this element to the religious fervour that has been a hallmark of rural life over the centuries. The circular trail has 13 way stations; over and above these way stations, there are three noteworthy points of interest that complete the itinerary. These are the lüera (wolf trap) of Alnèd and the two kilns at the beginning of the Val d'Efra and at the white marble quarry of Benasc. These points are indicated by the letter 'a' and by an arrow showing where the trails lead away from the original itinerary. Frasco, at about 880 meters above sea level, is the next-to-last village of the Verzasca region. It is located along the bottom of the valley and it is made up of a number of family dwellings: **Torbora, Cantòm, Pé** and **Scima er Mota** (translated, respectively, as "at the foot" and "at the top of the slope"). Once, each hamlet was relatively independent, subject to the influence of a number of families. For example, the various settlements had their own bread oven and their own fountain. At the center of the town is the access point to the Val d'Efra, with its tumultuous stream flowing into a spectacular waterfall. The municipality now has about 100 inhabitants. About 15% of the population works, mainly in the primary sector, even today. Some small holdings mainly raise farm animals (goats and cows) and produce excellent cheeses. In the past, Frasco was a fairly important crafts center, thanks to the use of natural resources. A number of mills, a saw-mill and a few rye and corn mills were water-powered, and the oil-mill provided walnut oil. Linen and hemp were grown and marble was quarried for the production of lime in the kilns which were mainly found in the Val d'Efra. At the beginning of the 20th century the spirit of initiative of the Ferrini family led to an upsurge in tourism, above all thanks to the construction of the Efra hotel, whose reputation spread well beyond the region.

### Ethnographic points of interest

#### 1. Church of St. Bernard

Built between 1868 and 1869 on the basis of a design by Giovan Battista Zanolini of Linescio, the present-day church has replaced the ancient building whose origins date back to the end of the 13th century, and which was in all likelihood the second church ever built in Verzasca, after the Church of St.

Bartholomew at Vogorno. The church is dedicated to St. Bernard the Abbot and to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the patron saints of the Frasco parish.

Two frescoes 'torn' from old paintings adorn the church.

An 18th century traveller, Schinz, noted the great number of wolves in our regions,

so many that there were several 'exorcisms conducted with great solemnity, but which were completely useless', until 'in 1772 four wolves were killed in Verzasca alone, and others were caught in traps'.

#### 2. Town Hall

Walking down the narrow street you will encounter the town hall on your left, the home of the municipal government and the Registrar's Office of Frasco. It was also the site of the town's school up until the mid 60s.

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#### 3. The hanging bridge over the Verzasca River

Once you are past the hamlet of Torbora, climb up to the bridge crossing the cantonal road and cross the Efra river once more. Here you will find one of the most fascinating and wild areas of the itinerary: the Efra waterfall and the Pozz Negro underneath it. Even today one can discern 'la Mòrfiga' in red paint—the evil presence in the well used to scare little children away from the dangers therein. In the past, the waterfall was

commissioned by the Patriarchate of Frasco, designed by G. Ferrini, an architect, and W. Krüsli, an engineer.

The hanging bridge was

used to power a watermill and an electrical power

station. As if to protect man and his constructions from

the forces of nature, a chapel with frescoes by Vanoni (1810-86) was built; depicted in the chapel are the Virgin

#### 4. Stations of the Cross

In front of the church is an admirable church-yard, encircled by a few chapels of the Stations of the Cross, the only example of this in Verzasca. Some date back to 1749 and were illustrated by a number of artists. Seven chapels out of ten have survived and have come down to us today, in part thanks to repeated and expert restoration. The other stations are represented on the

outer façades of the church.

10. The Efra hotel

Follow the itinerary by climbing the steps to the left of

the Efra hotel, which in the 1950s was a favourite haunt

of English tourists. The hotel was famous for its 'en bleu'

trout and its high tea at 5 p.m.—ah, the good old days!

The Efra Brewery, together with the shop and the post office, both of which closed years ago, were once the

heart of the village.

#### 5. Pé der Mota

The hamlet winds its way along the old valley road and is made up of ancient dwellings, many of which have been restructured as second homes. Some of the buildings have indeed maintained intact a number of interesting and original architectural qualities. Just past the town hall, some of the houses have very interesting façades: a painting depicting a tender Madonna with Child (inside a bright sunburst), another depicts an elegant and unusual

Madonna Enthroned which dates back to the early 16th century, described thusly by the writer Piero Bianconi: 'The Madonna's face, her beautiful hands, her extremely lively eyes show not just a regal Madonna but also a woman's grace.' Note a small house with a built-in bread oven and a massive wooden beam running along the masonry of the main façade. Another house worthy of note has dry walls bound by three large beams,

something unique to Ticino. During restoration work, the total length of the bridge is 90 meters and the piers are 10 meters high.

#### 6. Torbora: the bread oven

With Child, St. Peter (identified by his keys) and St. Stephen (while being stoned to death).

very simple yet highly efficient way they worked. It is interesting to note that the Val d'Efra also has a

number of seams of potstone and that at the beginning of the last century, a few timid attempts were made to exploit small veins of gold-bearing and silver-bearing pyrite.

