

PATH 002 – THE MADONNA OF THE PRESALE

HISTORIC NOTES.

After beginning to walk in the valley of Presale we find the Madonna of the Presale's shrine – already provided by documentary evidence from the 12th which was part of an ancient castle. The church has only a nave with a colonnade. On the left still lay the remains of the old hermitage. This path reaches for Monterano, Risecco and Poggio Baroni, used as an isolated alpine pastures till few decades ago.

The path begins on the street that climbs down from Badia Tedalda to Presalino's Waterfall. Before it, turn right and take a forest street, then turn left at the first crossroads and lead into the small street that – thanks to a wide curve – goes up to the top of the hill where the ancient Madonna del Presale's shrine arises. If you retrace your own steps from the church, walking a few minutes you leave the small street and turn right to enter an old mule track climbing down to the previously left street on the valley floor. Then turn left, so walking on the valley floor between the wood and some pastures in a bucolic environment where you can hear only the ringing of cows. At the next wide crossroads, go on keeping right till a picnic area; here abandon the street to go up on the left to a mule track, which makes you gain height quickly thanks to many curves. Leave the path leading to Risecco on the left, and keep on going to Monterano (an isolated cottage at an altitude of 930 m is the only standing building in a small village settled by farmers and woodcutters till half of the past century). After crossing a grazing land, the path leads into a clear and well signaled forest street, before the cottage of Monterano. Here turn left towards the path CAI 5, which is reachable on the overhead ridge. Now follow the path CAI 5 towards Montelabreve. But if you follow the ridge, on the left you can see the indications for the Historical Park of the Gothic Line leading (thanks to a short change in direction) towards the remains of the ancient German emplacements during the Second World War. Then leave the path CAI 5 to climb down on the left on a well traced forest street till the refuge of Risecco. Before the cottage, the street inserts an open field till a crossroads, while the well trodden way turns right; here turn left and follow the way climbing down to the now visible cottage. If you don't want to see it, it's not necessary to arrive there, because you have to leave the way and turn right on the field searching for an initially nearly vanished trace, but then it gradually becomes clear. On the right there is the wood and on the left some grazing lands – you climb down to the slope, cross an initial row of oaks, then another grazing lands and then the indications make us turn right on the second row of oaks, so taking the old mule track which went up to Risecco from the valley floor. When you climb down, enjoy magnificent panoramas on the High Valley of Marecchia and on the Alpe della Luna, which become breath-taking when you arrive to Poggio Baroni, where a ruin – covered by brambles – indicates the Apennine populations' tenacity to live in such isolated places. After this ruin, the mule track keeps on climbing down, so becoming a small forest street. After following just few curves and some steep stretches, arrive to the stream; after the ford, come back again to the initial valley floor way. Turn right and very soon do you come back to the very beginning of this path.

TOTAL LENGTH – 9,5 km

TOTAL UPHILL GAP – 620 m

WHITE AND RED INDICATIONS + ARROWS TO INDICATE THE WAY

DIFFICULTY - E