



Domobianca 365 - Moncucco

 OC (CHALLENGING)

Loop itinerary starting from Domodossola to discover the rural hamlets and mountain pastures located on the slopes of Moncucco, the mountain of Domodossola. The proposed itinerary is a combination of two routes: Domodossola - Alpe Lusentino (Domobianca 365) and Alpe Lusentino - Moncucco. Thanks to the renovated Domobianca 365 ski resort, which has invested heavily in summer outdoor tourism, there will be beautiful trails specially prepared for downhill mountain biking.

The route starts from **Domodossola International Station**. For those coming by car, we recommend the large parking lot "della Vigezzina" in Via Piave, behind the train station.

Leaving the station, continue straight along **Corso Paolo Ferraris**; at the second crossroads, turn left along **Corso Fratelli Di Dio** reaching the small square of the Town Hall, to continue straight along **Via Garibaldi** to the next small square from which several roads depart and take the second on the left, **Via Rosmini**, which then becomes **Via Matterella** and crosses the **Tangenziale Dalla Chiesa**. You cross the ring road and, following the signs for **Sacro Monte Calvario**, climb along the Via Crucis until you reach the beautiful monumental complex, a Unesco World Heritage Site since 2003. Continue on asphalt in the direction of **Crosiggia**, go around the small cemetery and, still on a narrow asphalt road, climb to the Oratory of San Defendente and the beautiful rural village of **Cruppi**. You cross the village to take the marked path A01a, which with some ups and downs (watch out for a few obstacles and a few short exposed sections) reaches the characteristic village of **Anzuno** (wine press from 1712 and a bread oven from 1895). Go through the whole village and just before reaching the Rio di Anzuno turn right following a forest track that gradually rises in altitude until it comes out on the carriage road coming from Domodossola, which you follow entirely to **Alpe Lusentino**. Immediately before the terminal parking area, take the dirt road to the right that enters the forest slight slope and climbs to the Oratory of San Bernardo and then to **Alpe Foppiano**. From the alpine pasture the climb becomes particularly challenging with steep gradients, alternating between asphalt and dirt stretches; past **Alpe Torcelli** you reach the huts of **Alpe Casalavera** with its characteristic small lake that reflects the Moncucco peak in the background. Leaving the pond on our left, continue to climb along the initially paved trail that then continues steeply on uneven dirt road skirting the **Ski Bar** until you reach the chairlift arrival station. From there it is a few minutes' walk to the top of **Moncucco** (1896 m), from which there is a wonderful panorama of the Ossola mountains.

For the descent, follow the same route up to the **Ski Bar**. From here starts a fun trail for mountain bike use only called "**Skialp**," of medium-difficult level. There are also some jumps but they are avoidable. The trail descends until it rejoins the uphill trail at **Foppiano**. From here continues another trail called "**Valle degli orti**," of medium level, which bends to the right to follow the ski slope and with a last section with nice rounded curves ends near the **Alpe Lusentino** square.

Immediately downstream from the lay-by, a sheep-track descends (trail D03 to Alpe Ciupata - Prata - Vagna). The sheep-track descends into beech forest, with some steep and uneven sections until it crosses the Domodossola- Lusentino road. From here continue straight on the mule track that crosses **Prata** and descends to **Vagna**, with the beautiful parish church of San Brizio. From the center of the village a wide mule track descends to the hamlet of **Castanedo** where it crosses Via Giuseppe di Vittorio. You descend to the right and guided by the one-way traffic signals you take Via Salvo D'Acquisto to the traffic circle, then turn left onto Via Cassino. At the next traffic circle turn right onto Via Mauro until you reach a traffic light, then continue straight on reaching the historic center of Domodossola and following the city route already taken on the outward journey back to **Domodossola station**.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

The route is challenging overall and has significant elevation gain that can put a 500 Wh battery to the test, but a from Alpe Lusentino on up there are several points where you can recharge your battery. You can also start directly from Alpe Lusentino and have fun on the Domobianca 365 bikepark trails.

Bike Park trails from Alpe Casalavera to Lusentino require experience and good vehicle handling. They are not recommended for beginners who will be able to descend from the same trail followed uphill.

POINTS OF ATTENTION

1. Be careful on the ascent of the Via Crucis to Sacro Monte Calvario because it can be crowded with tourists on foot.
2. A few technical passes between Cruppi and Anzuno.
3. On the ascent from Casalavera to the arrival of the chairlift below Moncucco beware of the uneven bottom and some treacherous water cuts.

4. On the Lusentino-Prata downhill section, there are some sections with a rough surface.
5. Always remember that, apart from the bike park trails that are for the exclusive use of mountain bikes, other trails and mule tracks are not for the exclusive use of bicycles so speed should always be moderated, especially near curves or any blind spots. Same behavior should be observed when crossing small hamlets.

TECHNICAL DATA

Geographical relevant area :	Verbano Cusio Ossola / Ossola / Ossola Plain
Place of departure:	Domodossola (Railway Station 270 m)
Place of arrival:	Domodossola (Railway Station 270 m)
Number of legs:	1
Length:	25.5 km
Total ascent:	1750 m indicative
Total descent:	1750 m indicative
Difficulty:	OC (CHALLENGING)
Average duration:	4 hours 00 minutes
Minimum elevation:	270 m asl (Domodossola Railway Station)
Highest altitude reached:	1896 m asl (Moncucco)
Degree of cyclability:	Good
Recommended period:	May - October
Presence of dedicated signage:	In part (along Domobianca 365 trails)
Target Audience:	Mtb lover

VANTAGE POINTS

Alpe Torcelli, Alpe Casalavera, Moncucco

EATERIES

Domodossola, Sacro Monte Calvario, Alpe Lusentino, Alpe Foppiano, Alpe Casalavera, Vagna

TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

DOMODOSSOLA - Piazza Matteotti c/o Railway Station - 28845 Domodossola (VB), Tel. +39 0324 248265, infopoint@visitossola.it

BIKE SERVICE

Domobianca 365 Bikepark, **Assistance-Rental-Guided Tours-Bike transport by chairlift**, Alpe Lusentino location and Info Point at Via Cantarana 12 - 28845 DOMODOSSOLA (VB), Tel. 0324 44652 info@domobianca.it , <https://domobianca365.it>

Ciclomania Barale, **Sale-Shop-Rental**, Via Papa Giovanni XXIII, 64 - 28845 DOMODOSSOLA (VB), Tel. +39 0324 241203, info@ciclomania.com , www.ciclomania.com

Il Ciclista di Calvetti Fabio & Brusco Stefano, **Sale-Shop-Rental**, Corso, Via Ferdinando Disegna, 10 - 28845 DOMODOSSOLA (VB), Tel. +39 0324 227400, ilciclista.snc@tiscali.it, <http://www.ilciclista.com>

BikeMotion, **Sale-Shop-Rental**, Corso Colonnello Attilio Moneta, 57 - 28845 DOMODOSSOLA (VB) Tel. +39 349 2562899 info@bikemotionshop.com, www.bikemotionshop.com

Cicli Niccioli, **Sale-Shop-Rental**, Via Luigi Cadorna, 42 - 28845 Domodossola VB Tel. 0324 45533 / 366 304 9272 cicli.niccioli@libero.it

CHARGING STATIONS

The route has significant elevation gain that can put a 500 Wh battery to the test. You can recharge at the Domobianca 365 Bikepark at Alpe Lusentino, in Foppiano and at the ski bar in Casalavera (remember to bring your own charger).

PLACES OF INTEREST

Along the route

Domodossola: historic center with the beautiful Piazza Mercato, the Civic Museums of Palazzo Silva and Palazzo San Francesco, the Medieval Tower, the Collegiate Church of SS. Gervasio and Protasio

Rural mountain civilization

The mountain range at the foot of Moncucco, has seen in the last thousand years the development of a rural civilization that has had in terraced cultivation the strongest link in its production systems. The settlement pattern of villages such as Crosiggia, Anzuno, Cruppi, Prata, Vagna, Vallesone, and Andosso sees buildings clustered in closed agglomerations arranged linearly on the slopes of steep mountain slopes. Stone buildings cling to the mountain and surrounded by terraced fields that tell the story of "rural mountain civilization." These villages preserve the infrastructures of the peasant economy: presses to press grapes and obtain a sour wine (prunent), mills to grind rye, barley and chestnuts, ovens to bake "pansègla" (dark bread made with rye and wheat flours), imposing terraces that testify to centuries of labors to wrest small fields from the slope, "toppie" (pergolas made with stone slabs to support chestnut crossbars for the development of the shoots).

Moncucco (1896 m)

Moncucco is the mountain of Domodossola. A scenic "almost Two thousand" served by good trails that is frequented for the panoramic view offered by the summit. Rounding the horizon are the Great Alps (Monte Rosa with its imposing east face and the Weissmies-Lagginhorn-Fletschorn triptych, the Simplon Four-Thousanders) and the Domodossola plain with the Toce valley and tributary valleys. A striking scenic effect that allows one to "look at the world from above."

Colle Mattarella and Sacro Monte Calvario

Colle Mattarella, behind Domodossola and in an elevated position open to the Ossola plain, holds the sediment of more than a thousand years of civil and religious history of the Upper Ossola. Rock carvings and the foundations of an early Christian church with two apses have been

identified on the top of the hill. Mattarella Castle, built in the early Middle Ages on the top of the hill, became, with the donation of the Ossola Committee to the bishop-count of Novara by Henry of Saxony (1014), the political center of Ossola. It was attacked and destroyed by the Swiss in 1416. The square-plan keep, two enclosures, a section of wall reinforced by 21 blind arches and two towers equipped with machicolations remain well preserved.

The religious history of Colle Mattarella began in the mid-17th century when two Capuchin friars advocated the construction of a Sacro Monte.

The "sacri monti" are creations of folk art: in an articulated series of chapels, often of considerable architectural dignity, episodes from the life of Christ, the Virgin or the Saints are depicted by means of complicated scenes with life-size colored terracotta characters and paintings on the walls, aimed at enlarging the space. It is popular theater fixed in plaster: the complex scenic apparatus tends to perform a didactic and spiritual function by involving the viewer in the action depicted.

The sacri monti are a fruit of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, and their placement indicates them as a barrier against the threat of the Protestant Reformation.

The Sacro Monte Calvario complex in Domodossola consists of fourteen chapels dedicated to the Stations of the Cross and a fifteenth to the Resurrection. The church-sanctuary on the top of the mountain incorporates three stations. The chapels are connected by a Via Sacra or "Via Regia" that begins on the Domodossola plateau.

Standards of behavior

1. Stay on the trails

Respect the trail and any prohibitions on access. Respect private property.

2. Leave no trace

Respect the land. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable than dry trails. Stay on existing trails and do not create new ones. Don't take shortcuts by cutting corners. Take any litter with you.

3. Drive carefully

A moment's distraction can endanger both yourself and others. Abide by speed limits and ride in such a way that you are always in control of your bicycle. Always wear a helmet.

4. Don't scare the animals

Animals are easily startled by an abrupt approach, a sudden movement or a loud noise. Allow them enough space and time to adjust to your presence.

5. Give right of way properly

These trails are not for bicycle use only but are also shared by hikers on foot. So, especially downhill, speed should be moderated: around a bend there may be someone coming up. Let other trail users know you are about to overtake them through a friendly greeting or use of a bell. Bikers must give way to all non-motorized trail users. Bikers proceeding downhill should give right of way to those going uphill. Make any overtaking as safe and polite as possible.



REMINDER:

BIKERS MUST ALWAYS GIVE WAY TO OTHER USERS

RULES OF CONDUCT FOR BIKERS

Since the appearance of the first mountain bikes, the N.O.R.B.A. (National Off Road Bicycle Association) drew up a code of conduct intended to regulate off-road activity with full respect for nature and other frequenters of the mountains and trails.

The N.O.R.B.A. Code has been adopted by many clubs, organizations, associations and schools throughout Italy. It consists of a series of general tips that, if followed carefully, can help make this sporting and hiking practice so much in vogue today more enjoyable for everyone.

N.O.R.B.A. Code.

1. Always give right of way to hikers on foot.
2. Slow down and use caution when approaching and overtaking hikers on foot or other cycle walkers, always making sure to signal your arrival well in advance; avoid cackling or shouting, rather apologize and greet politely.
3. Keep mountain bike speed under control at all times and approach turns with extreme caution, anticipating sudden obstacles. The pace should be commensurate with the type of terrain, the type of trail and each person's experience.
4. Always stay within the marked route, thus minimizing environmental impact (permanent damage to surrounding vegetation and subsequent soil erosion).
5. Do not disturb or frighten animals, whether domestic or wild; give them time to move away and off the path.
6. Do not, for any reason, leave garbage as a result of your passage; you should collect your own and, when possible, also those abandoned by other "distracted" hikers.
7. Always respect private and public property, leaving gates, moving barriers or bars as they are found. In any case, if possible, go directly to the landowners to ask for permission to pass. "No trespassing" often just means "Please ask permission if you want to pass."
8. During cycle hiking it is always advisable to be self-sufficient. The goal to be reached and the speed at which one moves should be proportionate to the psychophysical fitness and ability of the driver, the equipment, the environment, the terrain and, above all, the weather conditions.

9. Never undertake a bicycle excursion alone, except in cases of force majeure. Do not pass through isolated areas far from major roads and always leave clear directions regarding the route to be taken and the estimated time of return.

10. Minimize impact with nature: steal only images and memories, and leave, at most, the barely perceptible imprint of the wheels of your vehicle.