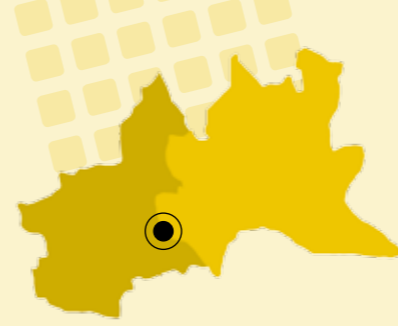




SACRI MONTI OF PIEMONTE AND LOMBARDY

REGIONE PIEMONTE Regione Lombardia

Sacro Monte of Crea



SACRO MONTE OF CREA
 Surface Area: 47 hectares
 Elevation: 355 - 455 metres
 Environment: hilly
 Property: diocese of Casale Monferrato

PROTECTED AREA

The Sacro Monte of Crea stands on one of the highest points of the eastern sector of Lower Monferrato, on a hill with steep slopes, made of sedimentary rocks which are easily erodible. Its exposure and particular climatic conditions offer a wide range of vegetation (at the beginning of the XX century 996 floristic entities were catalogued in this zone) and also provide for cohabitation of groups of plants with contrasting needs. The underbrush includes dogwood, fusaria, vesicaria, gorse and viburnum. Worth mentioning are also the flowerings of red lilies, anemones, fairy clubs and orchids. Its fauna can boast **badgers, foxes, squirrels, dormice and hares**; among the birds are **hawks (buzzards), falcons (windowers), owls** and numerous passerines. The ecological indication that enriches and makes the hilly area of Crea very special is the presence of two endemic species of hymenopterons (wasps): *Stictopisthus sacromontis* and *Mesochorus scaramozzinoi*. The Sacro Monte di Crea is a protected area of Regione Piemonte (1980) and since 2012 has also been part of Ente di gestione dei Sacri Monti.



Access to the Sacro Monte is free of charge

HOW TO GET THERE

By car: Motorway A26, exit Casale Sud, direction Asti and Moncalvo, in the hamlet of La Madonna di Serralunga follow indications for Sacro Monte
By bus: connections with Asti and Casale, bus stop hamlet of La Madonna the Sacred Mount is 5 Km away - info: <https://www.gruppostat.com/>
Info: Local public transportation: PRONTO TPL - tel 800333444 <http://prontotpl.5t.torino.it>

INFORMATION

Ente di gestione dei Sacri Monti - Riserva Speciale del Sacro Monte di Crea (A) Documentation Centre of the European Sacred Mounts, Calvaries and Devotional Complexes
 Cascina Valperone, 1 - 15020 Ponzano Monferrato (AL)
 tel +39 0141 927120 - fax +39 0141 927800
 info.crea@sacri-monti.com - <https://www.sacrimonti.org/en/sacro-monte-di-crea>

P.zza Santuario - 15020 Serralunga di Crea (AL)
 tel +39 0142 940109 - fax +39 0142 940772 - creasant@libero.it
www.santuari.it

Tourist Office (Alessandria)
 Agenzia di Accoglienza e Promozione Turistica Locale della provincia di Alessandria - tel +39 0131 288095 - fax +39 0131 220546
info@alexala.it - www.alexala.it

MUST SEE

MOMU, Monferrato Musei: 8 sites of Monferrato to visit with one single card
 info: tel +39 0142 444249 - fax +39 0142 444309
cultura@comune.casale-monferrato.al.it
<http://www.comune.casale-monferrato.al.it/MoMu-Monferrato-Musei>
"I Paesaggi Vitivinicoli del Piemonte: Langhe-Roero e Monferrato"
 World Heritage List - info: www.paesaggivitivinicoli.it

SERVICES

Hotels - Restaurants
Il ristorante di Crea (B) - tel +39 0142 940108 - fax +39 0141 782845
info@ristorantedicrea.it - www.ristorantedicrea.it

Hospitality at the Sanctuary. Info: tel +39 0142 940109 - fax +39 0142 940772
creasant@libero.it

Visit of "The Paradise" Chapel (23)
 On reservation fee-paying tour for 10+ people groups. Info: Riserva speciale del Sacro Monte di Crea - tel +39 0141 927120 - info.crea@sacri-monti.com

Guided Tours
 On reservation at Riserva speciale del Sacro Monte di Crea - tel +39 0141 927120
info.crea@sacri-monti.com

LINKS
Comune of Serralunga di Crea - www.comune.serralungadicrea.al.it
Comune of Ponzano Monferrato - www.comune.ponzanomorferrato.al.it
Unesco Italia - www.unesco.it
Regione Piemonte turismo - www.visitpiemonte.com



Ente di gestione dei Sacri Monti (legal seat)
 Documentation Centre of the European Sacred Mounts, Calvaries and Devotional Complexes
 Cascina Valperone, 1 - 15020 Ponzano Monferrato (AL)
 tel +39 0141 927120 - fax +39 0141 927800
info@sacri-monti.com - <https://www.sacrimonti.org>



HISTORY

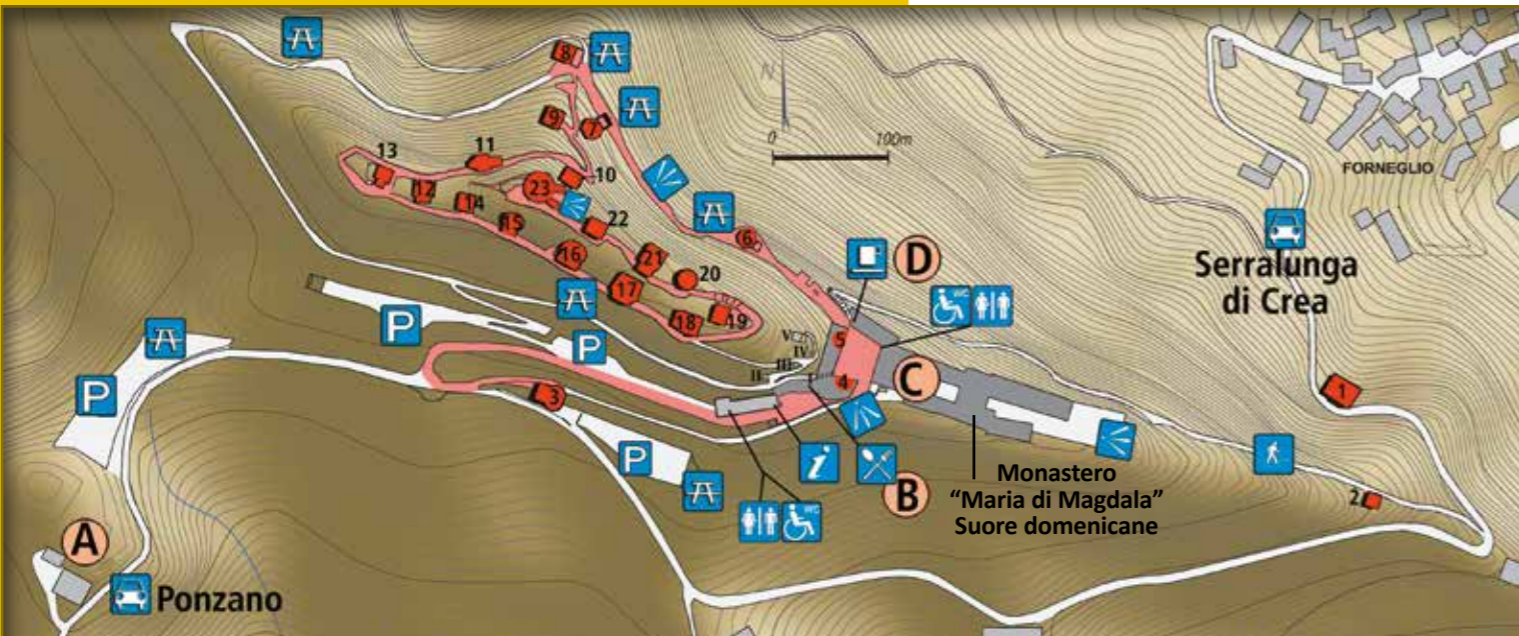
The Sacro Monte of Crea is situated on one of the highest hills of the Monferrato area (455 m. a.s.l.) in the province of Alessandria. Its special position offers a breathtaking view over the surrounding hills and the Alps mountain range. The Sacro Monte construction works started in 1589 by initiative of the Prior of Crea Costantino Massino, who planned the enlargement of the pre-existing Marian sanctuary, providing also for the construction of a series of chapels dedicated to the mysteries Holy Mary's life and triumph. Among the first chapels built, are the *Nativity of Mary* and the *Presentation of Mary at the Temple*. The Sacro Monte of Crea includes twenty-three chapels, built in two different construction phases, one between the XVI and XVII century, and the other in the XIX century. The oldest chapel stands out for the complex sculpture groups in polychrome terracotta, inserted in frescoed sceneries and realized by artists such as Moncalvo, the Prestinaris and Wespins. The XIX century intervention, which replaced the lost chapels, reveals instead a simpler style of statues, except for the *Climb to Calvary* chapel, including a composition of great emotional intensity by Leonardo Bistolfi. The chapels, except for the first two dedicated to Saint Eusebius, are dedicated to stages of the Virgin's life (initially to the mysteries of the Rosary), following a path that culminates in the *Coronation of Mary* chapel, better known as *The Paradise*. The Paradise Chapel, with over three hundred statues, is the most complex of this Sacro Monte. The subject is treated with great richness, including Holy Mary's Coronation the Holy Trinity, supported by a host of angels. Her figure is crowned by three rings of statues portraying apostles, saints and martyrs.



SACRI MONTI UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

"The nine *Sacri Monti* of Northern Italy are groups of chapels and other architectural handmade works built between the XVI and XVII century dedicated to different aspects of the Christian faith. Besides their symbolic and spiritual meaning, they feature notable characteristics of beauty, virtue and charm as they blend in with natural and scenic environments of hills, woods and lakes. They also contain very important artistic remains (frescoes and statues)". This is the motivation according to which in 2003 UNESCO included the "Sacri Monti di Piemonte e Lombardia" site in its World Heritage List. This prestigious acknowledgement confers universal value to seven *Sacri Monti* of Piedmont (Belmonte, Crea, Domodossola, Giffa, Oropa, Orta and Varallo) and two of Lombardy (Ossuccio and Varese), highlighting the extraordinary richness, qualities and values of these historical, artistic and nature gems. The chapels series depicts episodes and mysteries of sacred life through statues, paintings and frescos while blending in with the embracing environment and contributing in defining the features of each monumental complex. *Valuable examples of landscape architecture, the Sacred Mounts represent an important meeting point for believers and lovers of art.* First arising on the western Alps, where this phenomenon originated more than five hundred years ago, the *Sacri Monti* then inspired similar models in many parts of Catholic Europe. The seven *Sacri Monti* of Piedmont are part of the protected area system of Regione Piemonte which provides for historical and artistic preservation, maintenance and protection of the surrounding environment.

On foot among the Sacri Monti - UNESCO
The Sacri Monti of Piedmont and Lombardy, a path where to meet art, landscape and spirituality
 The Sacri Monti of Piedmont and Lombardy are connected by an articulated pedestrian path that intersects and overlaps the ancient Italian and European devotional paths. The complete route of the **Devoto cammino dei Sacri Monti** is being updated but it can be largely downloaded from the website www.sacrimonti.org

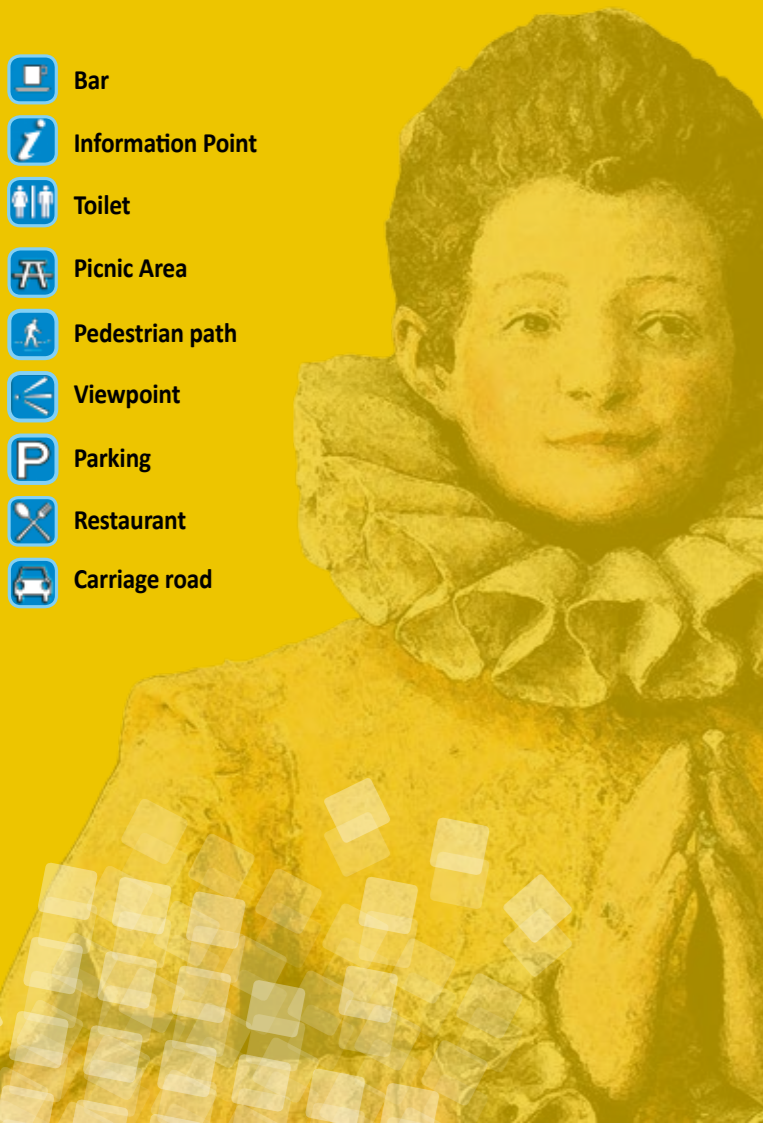


Cartography by University of Genoa - Polytechnic School - D.S.A. Department

LEGEND

- (A) Park Office and Documentation Centre
- (B) Hotel
- (C) Sanctuary and Hospitality
- (D) Souvenirs

- Bar
- Information Point
- Toilet
- Picnic Area
- Pedestrian path
- Viewpoint
- Parking
- Restaurant
- Carriage road



THE CHAPELS

Chapel 1 - Martirio di Sant'Eusebio (*Martyrdom of St. Eusebius*)
Sculptures by G. Wespin; paintings by G. Alberini.

Chapel 2 - Riposo di Sant'Eusebio (*Rest of St. Eusebius*)
Rebuilt in 1860-1866, with statues by G. Latini and paintings by Martini di Robella.

Chapel 3 - Maria prefigurata e profetata (*Prefigured and Prophesied Mary*)
Rebuilt from scratch in 1867, designed by F. Brocchi, statues by Morra di Grazzano; paintings by L. Pavese di Vignale.

Chapel 4 - Concezione di Maria (*Mary's Conception*)
Sculptures attributed to G. Wespin, XIX century paintings by Cima.

Chapel 5 - Natività di Maria (*Mary's Nativity*)
Statues by the Prestinari brothers already working at Sacred Mount of Varallo. Paintings (not original) by Veglia di Asti (1681-1683).

Chapel 6 - Presentazione di Maria al Tempio (*Presentation of Mary at the Temple*)
Statues replaced in 1814 by Varallo di Moncalvo; paintings attributed to G. Caccia.

Chapel 7 - Sposalizio di Maria (*Mary's Wedding*)
Sculptures attributed to G. and N. Wespin or to the Prestinari brothers, and interventions by G. Latini. Frescoes attributed to G. Alberini.

Chapel 8 - Annunciazione dell'Angelo a Maria (*Annunciation of the Angel to Mary*)
Sculptures by G. Wespin and G. and M. d'Enrico; vault frescoes attributed to G. Alberini.



Chapel 9 - Visitazione di Maria ad Elisabetta (*Mary visits Elizabeth*)
Statues by G. Latini (1863); paintings by Veglia (late XVII century), Maggi and Nicora (1866).

Chapel 10 - Natività di Gesù (*Nativity of Jesus*)
Sculptures remade between 1862 and 1934: interventions by G. Latini, A. Brilla and G. Capra.

Chapel 11 - Presentazione di Gesù al Tempio (*Presentation of Jesus to the Temple*)
The chapel was rebuilt in the XIX century; sculptures by G. Latini, A. Brilla G. Capra.

Chapel 12 - Disputa di Gesù nel Tempio (*Dispute of Jesus in the Temple*)
Sculptures by A. Brilla; paintings by A. Caironi (1883).

Chapel 13 - Orazione di Gesù nell'Orto del Getsemani (*Prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane*)
Sculptures by A. Brilla (1883-1887); paintings by A. Caironi.

Chapel 14 - Flagellazione di Gesù (*Flagellation of Jesus*)
Sculptures by A. Brilla (1886) and G. Capra (1935); paintings by P. Loverini and F. Nicora.

Chapel 15 - Incoronazione di spine (*Crowning with Thorns*)
Statues by A. Brilla; paintings of F. Nicora (1886).

Chapel 16 - Salita di Gesù al Calvario (*Jesus Climbs to the Calvary*)
Built from scratch between 1887 and 1889 according to C. Caselli's project; sculptures by L. Bistolfi (1892-1895); frescoes by G. Gianì.

Chapel 17 - Nozze di Cana (*Wedding at Cana*)
Statues by brothers G. and N. Wespin and some details Varallo di Moncalvo; paintings by G. Alberini.

Chapel 18 - Crocifissione (*Crucifixion*)
Sculptures by A. Brilla (1887) and G. Capra (1935); frescoes attributed to M. Brilla and Maggi.

Chapel 19 - Risurrezione di Gesù (*Resurrection of Jesus*)
Statues by A. Brilla; paintings by L. Morgari (1888-1892).

Chapel 20 - Ascensione di Gesù (*Ascension of Jesus*)
Statues by A. Brilla (1889); paintings by Maggi (1888).

Chapel 21 - Discesa dello Spirito Santo sopra gli Apostoli
Sculptures by Morra di Grazzano (1850) and A. Brilla (1889); frescoes by G. Alberini, with contributions in the XIX century by Maggi.

Chapel 22 - Assunzione di Maria (*Assumption of Mary*)
Statues by A. Brilla (1889).

Chapel 23 - Incoronazione di Maria (*Crowning of Mary*)
Commonly known as "The Paradise". According to the local tradition it stands on the foundations of an ancient tower. The sculptures by G. and N. Wespin and paintings by G. Alberini. During the construction works a buried chapel was found nearby, containing numerous fragments of XVI terracotta statues, part recomposed and placed in the room underneath the Paradise chapel. The chapel is open to visitors during specific times which vary seasonally (for more info contact the Park office).

HERMITAGES

I - San Luca (St. Luke) - Sculpting Madonna's statue; sculptures dating back to the second half of the XVII century.

II - San Francesco (St. Francis) - Sculpture of recent times by L. Bagna.

III - San Rocco (St. Rocco) - Paintings by G. Caccia; sculptures by G. Capra.

IV - Addolorata (Our Lady of Sorrows) - Sculpture dating back to late XVI century.

V - Sepolcreto dei Frati (Friar Graveyard) - Built by V. Torielli on the ancient hermitage of St. Alessio; sculptures by G. Capra.



THE SANCTUARY

Of Roman origin, the Church was held by the Canons of Vezzolano up to 1468, by the Lateranensis up to 1798, by the Serviti up to 1801, from 1820 to 1992 by the Minor Franciscans. It is currently held directly by the Curia of Casale, property of the Sacro Monte. The Church dedicated to the Our Lady of the Assumption, was enlarged in 1483 by the Marquis of Monferrato Guglielmo Paleologo, from 1608 to 1612 by the Lateranensis. The façade was altered in 1735, between 1890 and 1913 and 1953. Also the Mosaic dates back to 1953 (Dalle Ceste). The 3-naves interior houses important works of art: the Madonna and Child with Saints, Macrino d'Alba's autographed panel (1503); the fresco cycle with the Stories of St. Margaret of Antioch from the XV century and attributed to Francesco, brother of the more renowned Martino Spanzotti. The Virgin effigy, a wooden statue dating back to the XIII century; the extensive votive collection, the Via Crucis and the ambos by Luigi Bagna.



Photo A. Langhi