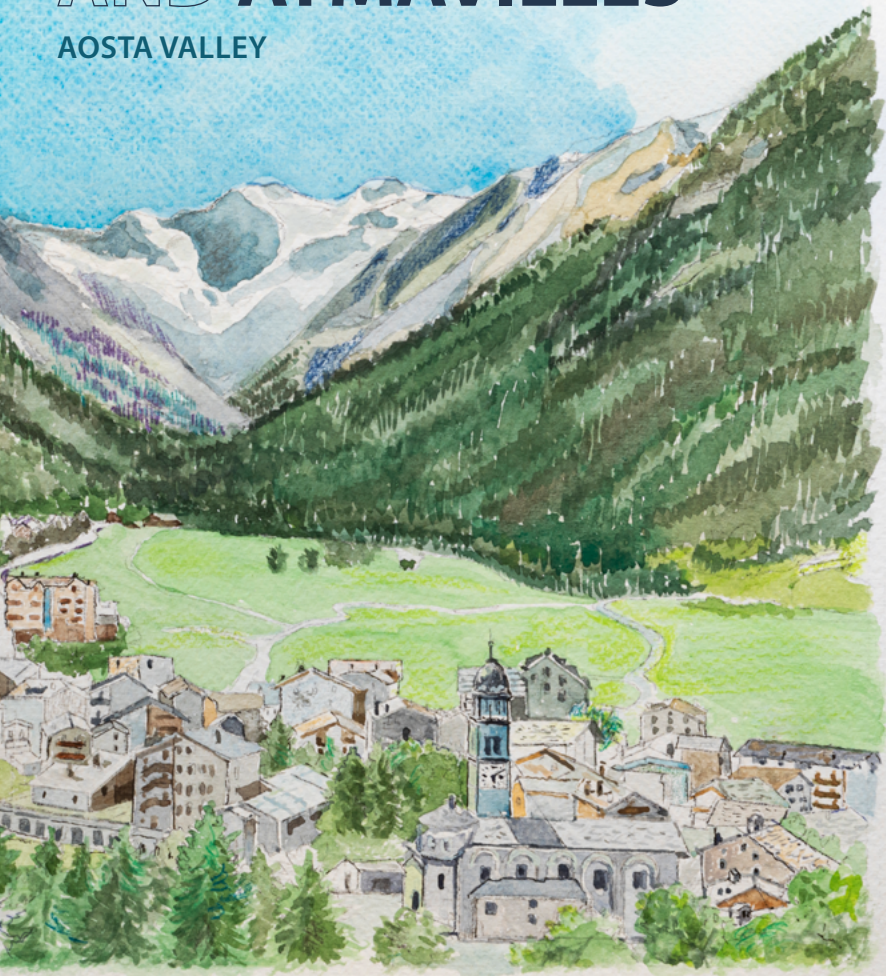




# COGNE AND AYMAVILLES

AOSTA VALLEY







Sylvenoire Wood

Gran Paradiso

Meadows of Sant'Orso





## AOSTA VALLEY

# COGNE AND AYMAVILLES

### VERTICAL POETRY

In my mind's eye I can still see that distant land where the mountains stood on tiptoe, lightly brushing the sky, while, wearing a long cloak, Mother Nature paraded amongst woods and streams, leaving behind her a trail of petals, a maze of streams, snow diamonds and ice forests.

Yes, that's what I can remember... bright buds and scree studded with chamois, but also brave rangers and the nostalgic song of miners. I shall never, ever fail to remember that land which has stayed with me, and along with it the genuine poetry of the peaks and rocky fingers that caress the world's limbs.

Find full updated information on sites of interest (opening times, details, initiatives...) by visiting [www.lovevda.it](http://www.lovevda.it) »





## UNDYING NOSTALGIA

A place exists in the Aosta Valley that stays in the heart of all those who set foot there. It's a place you visit with naive awareness, then return for a physical necessity, as if in response to a vital need.

The Irish would compare it to the nostalgia felt after visiting the land of fairies - such a heart-wrenching languor that it takes your breath away. This is exactly how you'll feel after leaving the Cogne Valley; in your mind's eye remain its verdant expanses of larch and spruce trees, the gentle slopes dotted with white lilies where chamois and marmots bound in the shade of rock cathedrals, and fox

creep stealthily across snowy glades under the stern gaze of ibex intent on guarding the mountains.

Mountains that resemble a crowd of grey giants jostling for height, overlooked by Gran Paradiso and its dizzying 4,000 metres – a white Titan whose slopes are woven with footpaths and mule tracks. The very ones used by the great Kings of Italy in past centuries, paths of untamed beauty that lead to roaring waterfalls, and boundless blooming meadows, cutting through quaint villages that overlook infinity and sparkling ski runs which are perfect for snowshoeing or skiing.

It's a delightful valley that appears to spring from a romantic water painting, so immersed in nature and respectful of the environment it deserves the title "Pearl of the Alps".

It's a valley that echoes with voices of the past, old tunnels hewn out of the rock, folk dancing to the rhythm of drums and jingles, colourful costumes parading in a swirl of lace at village festivals.

It's a land of delicious recipes and secular traditions; at its dewy feet stretch lush orchards and abundant vines whose succulent grapes

admirably watch imposing Roman and medieval ruins: colossal aqueducts and fairytale castles.

This and much more awaits you in the Cogne Valley, but beware, once you've been there, a lifetime spell will be cast upon you ensuring your return.



# *Bonjour, I'm Martin, your guide!*

Welcome stranger! What a pleasure to meet you! Just a moment, let me get closer... I can hardly hear because of the racket the picks are making.

Well, yes, you guessed right, I'm Martin, a miner!

Perhaps you didn't know but here in Cogne there used to be a thriving mining

industry with underground tunnels, wagons and material ropeways, and miners used to dig to the depths of the mountains to bring magnetite to the surface.

Do you want to hear some anecdotes? Then let me guide you around this land of legendary beauty, where past and present mingle, giving life to such a precious union no jewel can compare to it...



In addition to iron, also copper and silver have been extracted from Cogne mines - the highest in Europe - since the dawn of time, even by the Salassi peoples and the Romans. This historical and cultural heritage of inordinate importance has been salvaged thanks to the creation of museums and guided tours into the bowels of Mount Crea.

THE MINES



9



*Martin*  
your guide





Cogne in winter





# NOT TO BE MISSED

GRAN PARADISO NATIONAL PARK,  
MARCIAGRANPARADISO, MINES AND  
MINING PARK, AYMAVILLES CASTLE,  
LES DENTELLIÈRES





NOT TO BE MISSED

## GRAN PARADISO NATIONAL PARK

SUPREME BEAUTY OF THE ALPS

Get ready to admire soft grassy expanses studded with white lilies, which intertwine gurgling streams and woods with towering, tousled tree canopies.

Prepare to be left speechless before the crystal-clear water of lakes that reflect a limpid sky traversed by soaring eagles, or to listen to the infinite chanting of nature spread over 70,000 hectares of pure wonder.

Here chamois nimbly scale sheer rock faces, marmot hide amongst tufts of grass and solemn ibex graze in silent, rugged pastures...



« PNGP ibex  
Cogne



## MARCIAGRANPARADISO

IF SPORT BECOMES HISTORY



It was in 1910 when the people of Cogne discovered a new, rather bizarre means of transport: pieces of wood bound to shoes by strips of leather and used to slide on snow.

Sixty-five years passed before those rudimentary skis gave rise to one of Italy's most important long distance cross-country races: the MarciaGranParadiso. In

the meantime, this new sport had become popular, and one of the Aosta Valley's first ski clubs had been formed. The 40-kilometre MarciaGranParadiso competition takes place once a year at the foot of Gran Paradiso range and hosts many famous top international skiers.

Start of Marciagranparadiso »  
Cogne





NOT TO BE MISSED

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## MINES AND MINING PARK

COGNE'S HEART OF IRON

Welcome to Europe's highest magnetite mine. Here, amongst gloomy ancient tunnels and creaking trains, you can visit an underground world where the sounds still echo of labouring miners, pick-axes chipping at the rock and rail wagons rattling by.



It's an extraordinary journey taking you to the bowels of Mount Creya, in one of the Aosta Valley's most fascinating mining parks, with over 100 kilometres of tunnels in which you can see for yourself the work of brave miners whose fate has been left etched in the rock. Aosta Valley Mining Park and Cogne mines Exhibition Centre has recently opened to the public.

« Visit to the mine  
Cogne



## AYMAVILLES CASTLE

### A FORTRESS ON THE HILLSIDE

You cannot fail to be charmed by this graceful castle that overlooks Aymavilles with four imposing crenellated towers - an everlasting memory of the Challant family.



It has taken decades to restore it to its former glory: today an interesting display itinerary recounts the history of the castle's noble owners and its distinctive, prestigious architectural features, which are partly medieval, partly eighteenth century. It additionally houses wooden sculptures, jewellery, painted canvases and numerous other treasures that form part of the valuable Académie Saint-Anselme collection.

The castle in winter »







NOT TO BE MISSED

## LES DENTELLIÈRES

LACEWORK

Once upon a time, in 1665, a small group of Benedictine nuns fled from Cluny to find refuge in neighbouring Aosta Valley. With them they conveyed a tradition that would soon become the symbol of Cogne: bobbin lacework.



This art requires patience, memory and precision. Considering that the techniques are handed down orally with no drawings or written instructions, it is a true miracle that the craft has survived to today. The cooperative Les Dentellières has perfected this tradition, and it is possible to admire their elegant items of hand weaving in a permanent exhibition at Maison di Pitz.

« Bobbin lacework  
Cogne





Cogne at sunset



# A DAY, A WEEKEND, A WEEK

## HOW TO ORGANISE YOUR VISIT

With so much to see and do in Cogne and Aymavilles the temptation to stay a few days longer is almost irresistible.

Where to go? What to see? Here's some advice on how to get the most out of your holiday and turn it into a genuine travel itinerary. You can customize the recommended itineraries - feel free to include or remove any visits according to your time schedule, interests and spur-of-the-moment decisions!

24  
HOURS

1 day

48  
HOURS

2 days

168  
HOURS

1 week

Money farmsteads »  
Cogne





## RECOMMENDED VISITS

# COGNE AND AYMAVILLES IN ONE DAY

### DAY ONE

#### 1 Cogne

Begin the day with a tour of the town, exploring the delightful Meadows of Sant'Orso and the small town with its characteristic shops, cobbled square and historical iron water trough.

#### 3 Lillaz Waterfalls

After having lunch in one of the many traditional restaurants, start the afternoon with a stop at roaring Lillaz waterfalls, which you can view conveniently along the short circular footpath.

#### 2 Valnontey and Paradisia Garden

Continue the morning with a suggestive walk to Valnontey in the heart of Gran Paradiso National Park and then to the botanical garden, where you'll find over a thousand different plant species.

#### 4 Aymavilles Castle

On returning from Cogne, round off your outing by stopping at Aymavilles Castle, which, with its prominent architecture and rich art collection, will bring you directly in touch with the noble Challant family.



RECOMMENDED VISITS

# COGNE AND AYMAVILLES IN TWO DAYS

## DAY TWO



**1** Exhibition Centre of Aosta Valley Mining Park and Cogne Mine

The morning tastes of iron: treat yourself to a visit to the centre and to the mines where tunnels snake towards the bowels of the earth, among old wagons and vintage trains.



**3** Pont d'Aël

Return to Aymavilles in the afternoon and head to Pont d'Aël, where you'll see one of the region's most incredible engineering feats: an astounding aqueduct dating back to Roman times.



**2** Panorama from Gimillan

After re-emerging from the darkness, it's time to fill your eyes with boundless nature: take a trip to Gimillan and enjoy the spectacular vista that opens up over the splendid surrounding valley.



**4** Aymavilles wine farms

What's better than a tour of Aymavilles pretty vineyards to round off your holiday? This is a unique occasion to visit local wine producing farms and taste some excellent labels.





# COGNE AND AYMAVILLES IN A WEEK

## 5 MORE DAYS

1

### Nature

Wondrous sights and marvels

Cableway and Montsec nature trail (**1A**), nature trail and Les Fontaines pond (**1B**), walk through Sylvenoire woods (**1C**), Erfault springs (**1D**), visit to Ozein (**1E**).

2

### Outdoors / summer

The proud beauty of the mountains

Sella Hut (**2A**), Grauson Hut (**2B**), Sogno di Berdzè Hut (**2C**), Alpe Grand Nomenon (**2D**).

3

### Culture and traditions

A glimpse of bygone life

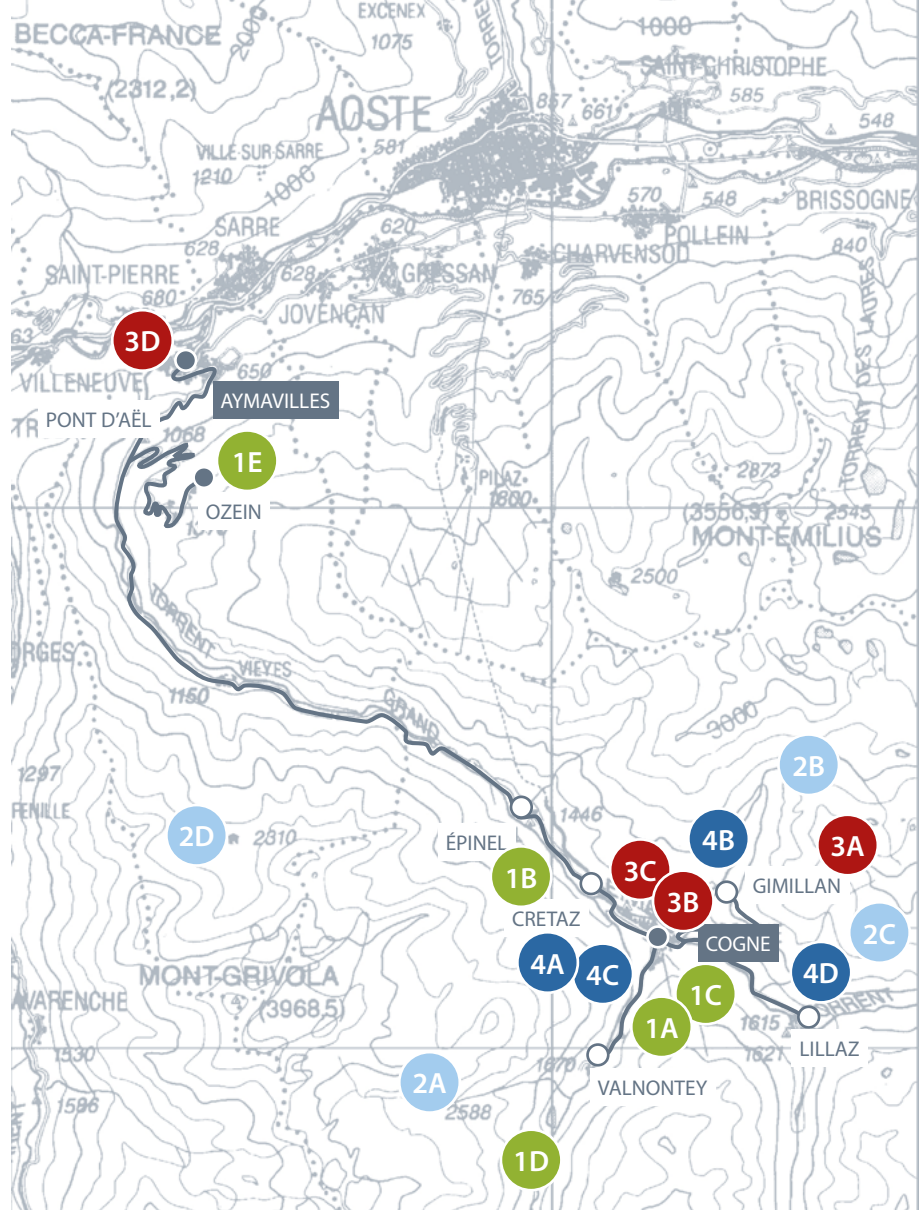
Cogne mines (**3A**), PNGP Visitor Centre (**3B**), Maison Gérard-Dayné (**3C**), Saint-Léger crypt (**3D**).

4

### Outdoor / winter

The irresistible appeal of snow

Cross-country skiing (**4A**), snowshoe outings (**4B**), snow park (**4C**), ice falls (**4D**).







Lillaz waterfalls



# THEMATIC FOCUS

NATURE, OUTDOOR, FOOD AND WINE,  
CULTURE AND TRADITIONS,  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES





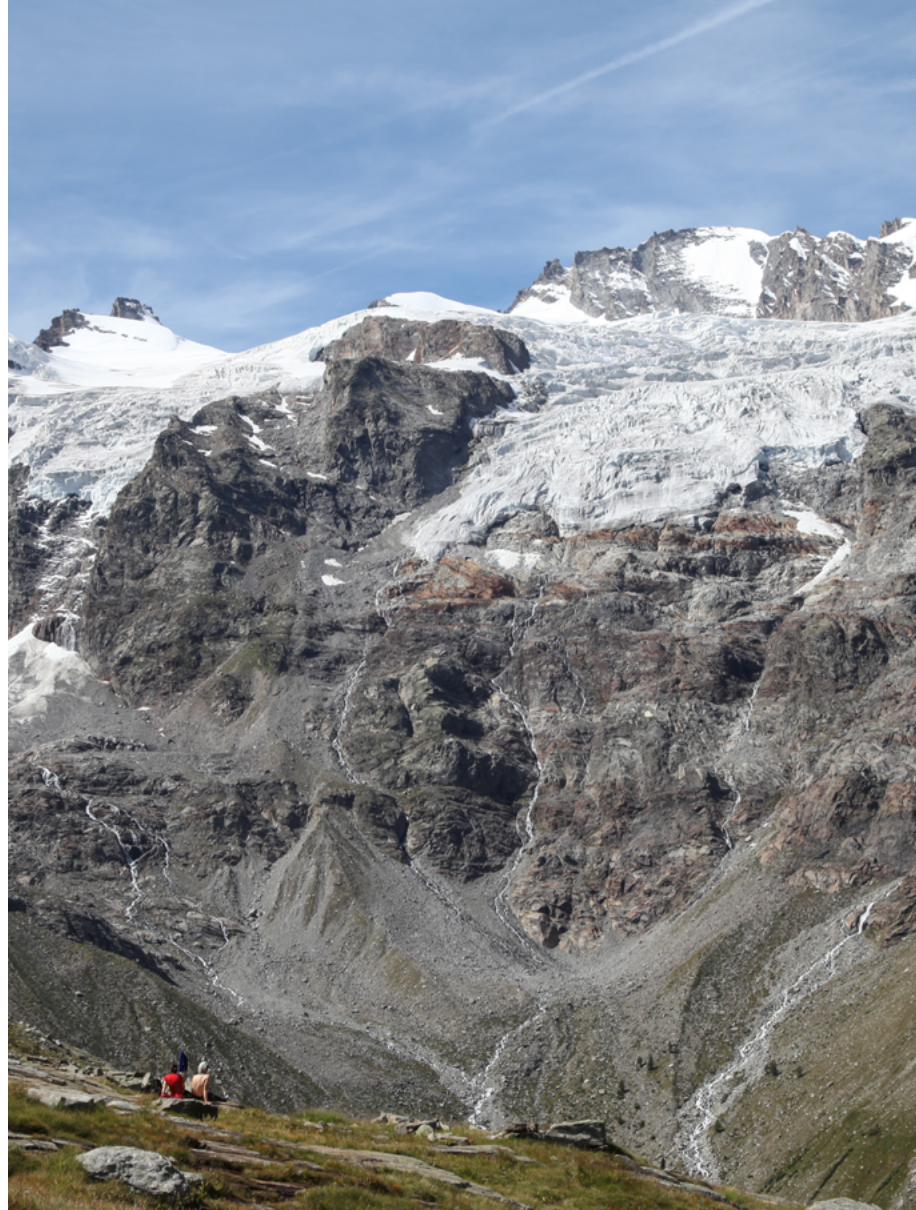
# UNSPOILT SITES

## LUXURIANT PURITY

Most of Cogne Valley territory lies within Gran Paradiso National Park. Therefore, it goes without saying that this spot is an explosion of stunning rugged nature, an oasis of lost splendour, where the environment is untouched and preserved in its most authentic and pure form.

That's why you may find yourself strolling amidst fox and partridges, hare and marmots, or enjoying the perfume of flowers rarely found in the Alps, while your wonder-filled eyes rest on titanic stone strongholds, sparkling expanses of ice and deafening waterfalls...

Valnontey »  
Cogne





## GRAN PARADISO MOUNTAIN

A granite cathedral with slender spires and walls scattered with pearly-white glaciers, crowned by Gran Paradiso - the only 4,000-metre peak standing entirely within Italian territory.

COGNE



## MEADOWS OF SANT'ORSO

Officially recognised as an "Italian Wonder", these sweeping meadows resemble an endless emerald ocean littered with blooming anemones overlooked by snowy mountain crags.

COGNE

## PANORAMA FROM OZEIN

It's not just a small quaint village but also a stunning 1,400 metre viewpoint: from Ozein the vista sweeps over majestic Mount Grivola and down to the entrancing panoramas of the valley floor.

OZEIN



## LILLAZ WATERFALLS

Here, the crystal-clear waters of River Urtier make three spectacular drops creating a cavernous roar. In winter these frothy webs transform into spectacular ice falls.

LILLAZ

## PARADISIA ALPINE BOTANICAL GARDEN

Get ready to walk in the midst of multicoloured butterflies, powerful rocks and wild lichens, discovering over 1,000 plant species and their fragrant secrets.

VALNONTÉY



## CABLEWAY RIDE TO MONTSEUC (2,100 M)

A ride on Pulsé cable car takes you over 2,000 metres altitude, where you'll find natural balconies, circular itineraries and excursions to the summit: all you have to do is take your pick!

COGNE



## CHAMPLONG GEOSITE

LILLAZ

In 2000 a catastrophic flood struck the Aosta Valley, causing a landslide to fall at Champlong. The consequences are still clearly visible - uprooted trees, debris and clay deposits.



## PNGP NATURE TRAILS: LES FONTAINES POND AND MONTSEUC

COGNE

A network of coloured pathways varying in difficulty lead you along splendid panoramic itineraries, and along routes with information panels that help you discover the wonders of local nature.





# PURE ENERGY

## THE CALL OF THE MOUNTAIN

Where there's nature, there's sport, and here in Cogne sport is at its very best. Rocky cliffs turn into climbing walls, broad meadows into green treadmills, footpaths and mule tracks into wonderful trails for mountain biking, horse riding and trekking.

If summer is the queen of outdoor life, then winter must be her consort; this is the time for sports and competitions such as the Marciagranparadiso long distance cross country ski race, snowshoe excursions and ice fall climbing, all of which are sporting excellences that have brought worldwide fame to this enchanting valley.

Ice falls »  
Lillaz



## CROSS-COUNTRY AND DOWNHILL

80 kilometres of cross-country trails meander like shiny ribbons amidst snowy woodlands and wild animals. But also downhill pistes that are well served by chairlifts and an enthralling snow park.

COGNE



## LOW AND HIGH ALTITUDE HIKES

Whether you like ambling through small villages, parks and gardens or prefer more adventurous hikes amidst crevasses and mountain huts, you'll always find what suits you in Cogne and Aymavilles.

COGNE & AYMAVILLES



## MOUNTAIN BIKING AND E-BIKING

Have you ever dreamt of pedalling at the heart of Italy's oldest National Park? Don't worry, if hard work is not for you then opt for an e-bike! If you plump for a muscle-powered bike, then don't miss Gran Paradiso Bike – a 50-km, long distance mountain bike race.

COGNE & AYMAVILLES



## ASCENTS

Do you want to demonstrate your courage, stamina and commitment? Then arm yourself with a guide and set off to conquer the summits of Gran Paradiso - the perfect outdoor gym for a mountaineer like you!

COGNE & AYMAVILLES



## NORDIC WALKING PARKS

Four low altitude itineraries along the valley floor lead to the chief villages of Cogne past cool streams, shady forests and history-laden hamlets.

COGNE





## CLIMBING AND ROCK WALLS

Sink your fingers into live rock, feel your muscles contract, let your gaze conquer fear and admire the world from above: explore the outdoor rock walls in Cogne and Ozein.

COGNE & AYMAVILLES



## ICE FALLS

COGNE

Climbers from all over the world are attracted to Cogne's 150 falls with their transparent pinnacles and crystal pillars: welcome to the realm of frozen waterfalls!

## LILLAZ PALEO-LANDSLIDE

Despite appearing unchanging, mountains move: this is what happened at Lillaz many years ago and now, with the aid of a guide, you can explore this old landslide and scramble amongst stone caves and rocky crags.

LILLAZ



## SKI TOURING

COGNE & AYMAVILLES

Lauson, Grauson, Arpisson, Urtier and Pointe de la Pierre: take note of these valleys then prepare your skins because there's plenty of excitement in store for you far from the groomed pistes!

## WHITE WATER RAFTING

If you're afraid of getting wet then this is not for you: drift with the flow and waves of the River Dora in a dinghy, kayak or hydrospeed float accompanied by the most intrepid guides ever!

AYMAVILLES



## SNOWSHOEING

COGNE & AYMAVILLES

A total of thirty kilometres lead through corridors of snow-clad trees, ethereal expanses in the muffled silence of Gran Paradiso National Park...

# DELICIOUS INSPIRATION

## DESIRE FOR FLAVOUR

Wherever you go in the Aosta Valley the food is good, but the Cogne Valley deserves a special mention: some of the region's top restaurants are located here, in an area which has been able to express its most intense and audacious notes, leaving tables spread with irresistible delicacies.

The key ingredients of mountain cuisine – wholemeal bread, cheese, red wine and cured meats – encounter liqueurs, legumes and cereals to create delicious and surprising combinations that reflect Alpine life and its authentic traditions.

Cogne Cream »





## AYMAVILLES WINES AND VINEYARDS

Aymavilles' thirty-five hectares of vineyards make it an endless source of top quality wine. Don't miss Torrette DOC, which pairs excellently with meat and cheese.

AYMAVILLES



## COGNÉ CREAM

COGNÉ

A dessert made with cream, chocolate and eggs and served with a small plateful of traditional tegole biscuits that melt in the mouth.

## MECOULIN

Plump sultanas and all the flavour of traditional wood-oven baking make this sweet bread one of Cogne's distinguishing culinary specialities.

COGNÉ



## FAVÒ DI AYMAVILLES

AYMAVILLES

All the flavour of the mountains distilled into one single dish: wholewheat bread, sausage, bacon and Fontina, to which a generous portion of broad beans is added. You can't beat that...

## SEUPETTA DI COGNÉ

An exquisite dish of bread and rice mixed with Fontina and clarified butter, giving off a fragrance of nutmeg and cinnamon. Best served with a glass of wine.

COGNÉ



## MOCETTA

COGNÉ

Once it was made from chamois thigh muscle but now beef is used. This cured meat has an unmistakable flavour and is a culinary must when visiting Cogne, preferably with some rye bread.

# HISTORY ROLLS ON

WHEN ANTIQUITY AND MODERNITY MEET

If everything in the Aosta Valley is rooted in rock, then this is even more true in Cogne where miners have left a forceful imprint, not only in the underground tunnels but also on the surface - in local architecture, urban planning and traditions that hark back to bygone times.

Despite Cogne's strong tie to the past, it has always been a forerunner and the birthplace of eclectic figures who have known how to restore, foresee and innovate. So, don't be surprised to find yourself co-working at a historical building or visiting a futuristic exhibition in an old mining village...

Lou Tintamaro Enfants  
Folk Group »  
Cogne





## PONT D'AËL

Standing before this monumental Roman aqueduct you'll believe you can still hear the echo of cartwheels, the bustle of oxen and burbling of water flowing towards the marble quarries of Aymavilles...

AYMAVILLES



## LOU TINTAMARO DE COGNE

The cultural heart of Cogne beats to the rhythm of colourful tambourines, festive accordions, traditional music and dances – all best expressed by this historical folk group.

COGNE



## VILLAGES OF GIMILLAN, OZEIN AND EPINEL

Three small villages embracing the charm of Alpine life, sketching quaint landscapes and dominated by rural buildings, medieval towers, panoramic spots and bread ovens...

COGNE & AYMAVILLES



## CHURCH OF SAINT-LÉGER AND CRYPT

Brace yourself to be struck by an explosion of colours: this old church dating back to 1762 treasures bright frescoes, ancestral crypts, an extremely rare 14th century bell and colourful trompe l'œil façade.

AYMAVILLES



## LA MAISON DE COGNE GÉRARD-DAYNE AND MAISON GRAPPEIN

Two houses that enshrine Cogne's fascinating past: Maison Gérard-Dayné, where you can discover how people lived in the past, and Maison Grappein, with its clock and mementoes of a visionary doctor.

COGNE



## IRON WATER TROUGH

COGNE

Made of iron extracted from the town mines, this trough and its melodious chant have kept watch over the people of Cogne for more than two hundred years, and never tires of reflecting the mountains' clear gaze.

## CHURCHES AND CHAPELS

A spiritual journey among gilded altars and marvellous frescoes: from the parish Church of Sant'Orso to the small Church of Crêt, to the parish church of Cristo Re and the delightful chapels scattered around the villages of Cogne and Aymavilles.

COGNE & AYMAVILLES



## GRAN PARADISO NATIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTRE

COGNE

Cogne's Gran Paradiso National Park Visitor Centre featuring interactive and multimedia displays is housed in an old village.



# NO ADULTS ALLOWED

WHERE AN AMUSEMENT PARK IS...LITERALLY THAT!

All children enjoy going to the park, but the wow effect is guaranteed when you have one of Italy's most extraordinary natural treasures to play in: you can pretend to be a gamekeeper, ranger or druid in the midst of swaying tree fronds, or track down exotic animals.

If you happen to visit Cogne in winter, don't miss the baby snow park on the Meadows of Sant'Orso with its inflatables, sledges and magic carpets.

Snowpark »  
Cogne







Aymavilles vineyards



# IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME

Get ready to make an extraordinary holiday even more out of the ordinary...



## GOURMET WINE CELLARS

An itinerant event along the streets of Cogne: taste some of the top wine labels, aperitifs, food and wine specialities, and many other culinary indulgences.

MARCH

## FAVÒ FESTIVAL

A delicious festival held at the enchanting village of Ozein, Aymavilles to promote the local dish known as "Favò" made of broad beans, cheese and meat.

JULY



## GRAN PARADISO FILM FESTIVAL

An international film festival dedicated to nature cinema, including feature films and shorts, conferences and outdoor events starring important figures from the mountain world.

JULY - AUGUST



## DEVÉTÉYA

A festival to celebrate a historical tradition featuring songs, dances and traditional local products: cows descend from their Alpine pastures at the close of summer.

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

Valle d'Aosta  
EVENTS

Download the app!





### SKYWAY: A REFUGE ON TOP OF THE SKY

Skyway is one of the most impressive cable cars on earth and an extraordinary feat of engineering that carries passengers to a height of almost 3,000 metres – a stone's throw from Mont Blanc peak.



### SARRE CASTLE AND SARRIOD DE LA TOUR CASTLE IN SAINT-PIERRE

Two splendid castles: one was the Savoy family's elegant hunting lodge, while the other was an abode with an artistic, fanciful heart in which you can admire a magnificent hall inspired by medieval bestiaries.



### AOSTA-PILA: FROM THE CITY CENTRE TO THE SKI RUNS

Just 5 km from Aosta rise 1,790 metres of pure fun: a cableway connecting the city to Pila ski runs – a renown winter ski resort and gripping summer bike park.



**OFFICE  
DU TOURISME  
UFFICIO  
DEL TURISMO**

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