

## High altitude walks and spa

Surrounded by vapors castles lakes and gardens

By Marta Delpiano



Summer seems to be in late but nothing prevents us from planning a long week end to enjoy a simple holiday in the **Aosta Valley** taking advantage of this fresh June.

### Starting from me

In order to begin the holiday in the perfect way, I suggest a fully relaxing day to spend immersed in the hot thermal water of the Pré Saint-Didier's spa: an authentic wellness oasis enclosed between the majestic mountains of the area.

The ancient structure, dating back the XIX century, has been fully refurbished but maintaining the original fascinating appearance; it is made of traditional materials such as wood and natural rock. Thermal pools in the wide garden collect hot water coming from the core of the mountains as it did 1000 years ago.

Water proprieties make skin softer and facilitate blood circulation and muscular movements. They are a great source of wellness and toned body.

Spa uses high quality products realized with raw material cultivated in the Aosta Valley respectful of alpine environment and its natural rhythm.

The inner part of the structure presents a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere thanks to the local wood saunas faced to panoramic views on the Mount Blanc and the surrounding woods.

You can spend here the whole day among vapors, hot and cold thermal water, iodized salts and regenerating thermal events. A great buffet is available also, full of light salutary products, both sweet and salty, to accompany with digestive tisanes while waiting for the night to come enjoying the experience under the stars.

### **Local Aosta Valley savors**

Despite the good sensation you will experience after the full day spent in the spa, tiredness could affect you.

For this reason you should choose a close accommodation where tasting traditional recipes and local products (branded "**Saveurs du Val D'Aoste**").

Few minutes by walk far from the spa, the **Locanda Belle-Vue** can be found. As last year, it owns the first place in excellence. It reminds to an ancient comfortable alpine house offering wide rooms and a restaurant where tasting typical local dishes.

### **A walking on the lake**

The day after, once you got away from daily working stress, you are ready to a calm and easy excursion deep into the alpine nature.

**Arpy Lake** is the destination: a walk everyone can do. Starting from the Morgex Valley (Saint Carl hill), it is a 45 minutes' walk from **Genzianella** restaurant, at the top of the hill, all along the paths from where you can observe the Saint Carl Hill, village of and Valdigne.

If you are passionate by bicycles, you can reach it by mountain bike also. Once at the destination the scenery on the Arpy Lake and the waterfalls composing it, is amazing.

### **Till the highest panoramas in Europe**

The third day, on the contrary, is dedicated to the **Glaces Terrace** starting from **La Palud**, Courmayeur. In 20 minutes you can reach the Helbronner Top by cable car.

Here you can visit the permanent collection of Mont Blanc's crystals: 150 minerals exposed by "Les Amis de Berrio" group, among which the most special varieties of quartz and other local minerals are to admire.

Going down till the **Pavillon** you will reach a real natural oasis, where you can walk through the **Botanic Alpin Saussurea Garden** from June to September.

It is one of the highest in Europe and owns more than 900 vegetal Mont Blanc's species together with the local species typical of the surrounding mountains. It is a relaxing and tranquility place surrounded by 500 green hectares framed by fascinating tops. There you can

enjoy also guided tours on demand. Furthermore, the staff is always available and helpful for everything.

Now that you have reached the oasis you should stay for the lunch. The **Pavillon Restaurant** is situated here, 200 meters high, where nature mixes with typical local dishes to try while comfortably seated outside just in front of the Courmayeur's basin and its natural valleys.

I suggest you to bring with you your sunglasses and an high protection solar cream against strongest solar rays. It is important also wear the right clothes in line with the temperature that go down the 0° in summer as in winter.

In **Courmayeur**, before coming back to the hotel, you can visit the village using the **electric bike sharing service** that makes easier the displacements, thanks to the photovoltaic energy.

In order to conclude your day in the best way, now you could have a cocktail in the frizzy via Roma: seated in front of the fascinating scenery of the sun getting down coloring the sky with rose tints while sipping your glass of wine accompanied by some snacks made of local products.

### **Wondering through the history**

After the relax at the spa and the walks deep in nature, for the last day, I propose a visit to Fenis just some km far from Pré Saint-Didier.

There you can find the **Aosta Valley Craft Museum**. It was inaugurated in 2009 and enclosed into the Villa Montana collecting manufactures and sculptures.

The **Fenis's Castle** is not to lose neither: a Medieval structure you can discover following the guide among all the different rooms and listening to the local tales.

This is the end of our short holiday but the valley offers lot of other things to enjoy. I suggest to come back in order to discover all its fascinating places.

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Translated by Marta Delpiano