



Exploring the Grange

The history of Vercelli's agriculture and the transformation of the territory from lowland forest to rice-growing land can be found in a small strip of plain, located among **Vercelli**, **Crescentino**, and **Trino**, known as the Triangle of the Grange. Through this itinerary, you may visit the locations that first saw the birth of the cultivation of rice, **the Grange**, which represents a living example of an environment full of history and art. A wonderful journey between the past and the present of rice growing in Vercelli, discovering charming **medieval corners hidden among the rice fields**.

Farms and rice mills

To learn more about its cultivation and to buy some of our best qualities of rice, your best option is to visit a farm or a rice mill. Discover the list of farms and rice mills available for visits along the Grange on www.atlvalsesiavercelli.it



Cyclable rice paddies

Discovering Vercelli's rice fields by bicycle is the best way to explore this land: ancient farmsteads, ingenious hydraulic works and places that offer unique and different scenarios in every season. Discover all the cyclable rice paddies itineraries on www.atlvalsesiavercelli.it



Stampa: Industria Grafica Borgosesia - Progetto Grafico: www.enesi.it - Materiale fotografico: Archivio ATL Biella Valsesia Vercelli - Donatello Lorenzo



HOW TO REACH THE GRANGE:

VERCELLI

SP1 "Strada delle Grange" to Crescentino

A26 GENOVA - GRAVELLONA T.

Exit Vercelli Ovest. SP1 to Crescentino

A4 MILANO - TORINO

E25 highway to Vercelli.
Exit Vercelli Ovest.
SP1 to Crescentino

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Find out more:



www.atlvalsesiavercelli.it - #discovervalsesiavercelli



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EXPLORING THE GRANGE

Medieval corners among the rice fields



1 ABBAZIA DI LUCEDIO

Known as **Principato di Lucedio** since 1875, the ancient abbey, was founded in 1123 by the **Cistercians** at the behest of the Marquis of Monferrato, who granted them the rights over various lands. Now the Abbey is a modern farm that can be toured, and that was able to preserve its characteristic medieval environment. After having crossed the fortified walls, it is still possible to admire the **Abbey church**, the peculiar bell tower, octagonal at the top but square at the base, and the beautiful chapter house.



2 CASCINA DAROLA

Located due north of Lucedio, this farmhouse boasts **ancient origins**. Donated in 933 by the kings of Italy Ugo and Lotario to the marquises of Monferrato, the latter sold it to Lucedio in 1123: it thus became one of the six granges owned by the abbey. From a structural point of view, it represents an excellent example of a **farmstead with a closed courtyard**.



3 MONTAROLO, RAMEZZANA, CASTELMERLINO, LERI E MONTARUCCO

In the past property of Lucedio, the others **Grange** are located near the rural complex. While **Montarucco**, **Ramezzana** and **Montarolo** are located due south of Lucedio, **Leri** and **Castelmerlino** are located in



THE GRANGE

The Grange, literally "**granaries**", were ancient residential units and agricultural centers where the lay brothers, or Cistercian monks not part of the convent, carried out **land reclamation works** on an area covered by lowland forests to make it suitable for agricultural use. The granges represented a key instrument in the process of transformation of an uncultivated area into arable land in order to turn the Vercelli area into an area suitable for **rice growing**.



LEGEND

- 1 *Abbazia di Lucedio*
- 2 *Cascina Darola*
- 3 *Montarolo, Ramezzana, Castelmerlino, Leri e Montarucco*
- 4 *"Sorti della Partecipanza" Forest Nature Park*
- 5 *San Genuario*
- 6 *Santuario Madonna delle Vigne*

 Historical sites

 Natural sites

 Churches

 Castles/Towers

the area that extends to the northwest of the "principato" and correspond to the possessions of the Benso di Cavour family, to whom the minister **Camillo Benso Conte di Cavour** belonged.

4 "SORTI DELLA PARTECIPANZA" FOREST NATURE PARK

The last remnants of the **ancient lowland forest** that extended across the Po Valley, a forest, of very ancient origins and already sacred to the Romans,

was preserved thanks to an extremely strict collective management system known as the "**Partecipanza**" that dates back to the Middle Ages. The forest features several hiking trails and equipped areas where you can enjoy pleasant moments of relaxation.



5 SAN GENUARIO

San Genuario, an agricultural estate that was in the past the site of an abbey, is the most ancient Benedictine monastic settlement inside the forest of Lucedio. Do not miss the **Castle** dating back to the 14th century, which has a magnificent circular tower surrounded by a fortress and the **San Genuario Nature Reserve**, which preserves an important system of wetlands fed by springs and fountains.



ITINERARIES IN RICE FIELD



6 SANTUARIO MADONNA DELLE VIGNE

The Sanctuary, abandoned for many years, is located on the hill leading to Montarolo and is a fine example of Piedmontese Baroque architecture and a place that has inspired many **legends and mysteries**. The most famous is the "**Spartito del Diavolo**" ("Devil's score"), a palindrome song considered magical and supposedly able to free a demon held prisoner in the Abbey of Lucedio.