

The mountain peaks of Monte Rosa dominate Macugnaga at the end of the Anzasca valley. Like a huge cathedral of rock and ice, Monte Rosa is the only Himalayan-type face within the Alps. Rising to a height of 4,638m, there are four distinct peaks - or "le quattro sorelle" (the four sisters) - Gnifetti, Zumstein, Dufour and Nordend.

When the sky is bright and the sun shines on to the vast face, Monte Rosa lives up to its name of the Pink Mountain, providing a wonderful natural splash of colour. At these times it is truly breath-taking, even from some distance away, and we defy anyone not to want to stop the car and take a photo.



In common with many of the great mountains, Monte Rosa attracts many climbers and has, unfortunately, claimed many lives of those who have attempted to scale its various peaks.

Poignant reminders exist in the beautiful mountain chapel next to the town's century-old lime tree, which is the symbol of Macugnaga and where the towns elders and officials once met to discuss matters of importance. The chapel has an area in its place of rest outside dedicated to those who have lost their lives while persuing their dreams of climbing the great peaks.

Imagining what pushes men and women to take such risks, that overwhelming desire to succeed, and how young lives are often cut short makes it very moving and we strongly recommend a visit. Follow the path up from the cablecar station and you'll soon reach the chapel.

italian alps, monte rosa, piemonte

Macugnaga

Nestling at the foot of Monte Rosa is Macugnaga (pronounced MA-KOO-NIAGA), the principal tourist and ski resort of the Ossola valleys. The town offers a good number of hotels, cabin-style villas and apartments for holiday accomodation all year round. There is also a nearby, well-established camping/caravan site.

Macugnaga is an ancient town founded by the Walser, a Germanic people who in the 13th century emigrated from the Vallese area to the alpine pastures to the south of Monte Rosa. The traditions and cultural signature of the Walser is still to be found in the characteristic stone and wooden buildings, in the local dialect, and in the costumes worn during festivals. There is a museum dedicated to the Walser at Borca.