Valpiana

Rio di Valpiana,Rio di Vòlpiana

Info: The quality of this description has not been checked yet or was rated bad.
If you know this canyon, please check this description and file a report with a rating for this description using *Reports -> +New Report.* Should you notice any error, please let us know or join the community in order to fix this description yourself.

Create: 2026-07-22 19:48:10	**Update:** 2026-08-14 11:30:38	**Print:** 2026-10-30 02:10:03
Country: Italia / Italy **Region:** Piemonte **Subregion:** Vercelli **Town:** Mollia		
Difficulty: difficult	**Grading:** v5 a2 V	**Total time:** 9h10
Approachtime: 3h	**Tourtime:** 6h	**Returntime:** 10min
Altitude entry: 1970m	**Altitude exit:** 1050m	**Delta Altitude:** 920m
Canyon length: 1500m	**Highest rapell:** m	**Amount rapells:** 30
Transport: Car optional	**Rock type:** gneiss	**Drainage area:** 3.00km²
Season: June - September	**Orientation:** South	**Best Time:**
Rating: ☆ 4 (1)	**Info:** ★ 1 (1)	**Belay:** ★ 1 (1)

Specialities:

Gear:

Summary:
Long and technical canyon with almost no escape routes along the entire descent.

Hydrology:
Low water flow in late summer but choose a day with stable weather conditions as there are no escape routes. Avalanches/snowbridges can be found in the stream bed even in mid-summer.

Access:
Car 1 (Exit): Drive along the Valsesia provincial road (SP) past Mollia until you see the hamlet of Casa Capietto on your right. Leave the first car in the parking area below the houses.
Car 2 (Start): Drive further until you spot a pedestrian bridge on your left marked "Buzzo". Park in the small parking area there. If full, continue another 200 m to Boccorio, where there is a large parking area.

Approach:
Walk back along the main road to a small church, where a steep trail marked for "Passo della Cricca, Alpe Valpiana" begins. This is the only trail leading up this steep side of the mountain. Follow it all the way to the top (~1000 m elevation gain).
Upon reaching Passo della Cricca, you enter "Valpiana". The trail stops climbing steeply and traverses mid-slope into the wide pastures of the valley. After about a 3-hour hike (from the start), you will reach Alpe Valpiana. From here, descend along faint tracks through the meadow to the stream bed, located about 50 meters below the alpine pasture.

Tour:
Once in the stream bed, walk for about 5 minutes until you reach the first bolted waterfall, which drops into a narrow canyon. From here to the end, you will face a fairly continuous sequence of small and large drops, totaling 30 rappels.
The highest waterfall measures 115 m, split into 3 pitches/rappels. The stream flows through a deeply slotted environment that is visually stunning in places. There is also a characteristic rappel under a giant boulder inside a cave directly under the flow.
After the final sequence of large waterfalls, you will reach a flat section beneath massive overhanging cliffs on your right. There are still 5 simple rappels left to complete; here, on the left, lies the only escape route of the canyon. Following a faint trail through the bushes leads to an old path that descends to Piana Toni and the provincial road (Strada Provinciale).
Bring a power drill to potentially reinforce/add anchor points, given the low turnout of this canyon.

Return:
After the last rappel, continue through the boulders in the stream bed until you reach a path. Follow it uphill to the right; once you reach a cluster of ruins, it descends into the woods back to Casa Capietto and your car (15 min).

Coordinates:
Canyon Start 45.8394 8.0037
Canyon End 45.8227 8.0118
Intermediate Canyon Exit 45.8247 8.0110
Parking at Exit 45.8203 8.0106
Parking at Entry 45.8196 7.9916

Reports:

2026-08-26 | Enrico Rispoli | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ | 🕮 ★ | ⚓ ★ | ≋ High | 👍 Completed
We took advantage of the heavy rain two days earlier to try out this canyon—the longest in Valsesia—which had a good flow; we'd been planning this for a while... The approach is very strenuous; 3 hours is about right, maybe even a little longer... It starts off wide with a few rappels in a high-mountain setting, then narrows... It's impossible to get out; you come to the highest waterfall, and then you're inside between high walls almost all the way to the bottom. Most of the anchors are good, but we couldn't find a couple—maybe washed away by an avalanche or the flood? Who knows. We made minimal replacements; obviously, always bring a drill for this descent. It took us 7 hours, even though we had to deal with a good flow of water... It's definitely worth it—in some spots, the canyon is absolutely stunning. (machine translated)

First descent: 20.08.2021 by CAI Varallo