Cugnasco (superiore)

Valle di Cugnasco med.,Riale Riavena

Create: 2023-03-09 20:55:40	**Update:** 2026-07-06 12:45:06	**Print:** 2026-10-30 12:10:41
Country: Schweiz / Switzerland **Region:** Kanton Tessin / Cantone Ticino **Subregion:** Bezirk Locarno **Town:** Cugnasco		
Difficulty: difficult	**Grading:** v5 a4 III	**Total time:** 3h50
Approachtime: 50min	**Tourtime:** 2h50	**Returntime:** 10min
Altitude entry: 600m	**Altitude exit:** 430m	**Delta Altitude:** 170m
Canyon length: 600m	**Highest rapell:** 55m	**Amount rapells:** 8
Transport: Car optional	**Rock type:** gneiss	**Drainage area:** km²
Season:	**Orientation:** South	**Best Time:**
Rating: ☆ 3.8 (11)	**Info:** ★ 2.3 (7)	**Belay:** ★ 2.4 (9)

Specialities:

Gear:
Ropes: 2x 60m

Summary: (machine translated)
Watery rappel canyon

Hydrology: (machine translated)
ATTENTION: two bottlenecks - can withstand significantly less water than the lower part

Access: (machine translated)
First as for Cugnasco inferiore: From the Locarno/Bellinzona road, turn off at the bridge over the stream in the village of Cugnasco and drive upstream on the left towards "Medoscio". 200 meters further on, in the parking lot on the left before the second bridge, you can park a car at the canyon exit if you want to add the Cugnasco superiore to the Cugnasco inferiore (450m above sea level).
The road now winds steeply up the slope in hairpin bends. After the fourth left hairpin bend and the following right-hand bend, there is a small unpaved parking lot on the right. There are two signs opposite: "Via Medoscio" and a few meters further on "Sentee Colett" (park the lower car here if you only want to walk the upper part of the Cugnasco (450m above sea level).
Continue uphill on the tarred road in the other car. After a left-hand bend and a longer straight section, there are 5 successive hairpin bends to the right and just as many to the left. At not quite 700m above sea level, we turn right after a detached house, pass the houses of the hamlet of Curogna on the north side, then keep left and park the second car about 400m after the turn-off (720m above sea level).
The approach is also possible by bus, which runs approximately every 2 hours, with slightly shorter intervals in the morning.

Approach: (machine translated)
We continue along the dirt road and, after about 350 meters, reach the houses of Alpe Ronchi. Here, we take a few steps down the slope, then we see the signpost “Curogna 705” on a white background and a sign pointing right down toward “Cugnasco 1h”. This is where we’d come up if we only had one car available.
However, we continue on level ground here, following the sign for “Monti Velloni 1h.” The trail leads into the forest, but after a few meters it veers left and uphill, while we take the faint trail that continues roughly level. We pass a stone house on the left and now follow the trail, which is sometimes eroded and barely visible, then clearly discernible again. After a ridge, we find ourselves high above the Valle di Cugnasco. We pass—in a somewhat exposed section—a small rock overhang, then continue downhill (with fixed ropes in some sections along the access). Where the trail abruptly exits in a narrow rock chute, we climb steeply down to the stream on the right side of the chute (it’s also possible to rappel down from trees).

Blue dots mark the route during access.

Tour: (machine translated)
The tour begins immediately with the highest and most impressive 55m waterfall (anchor left). After about 16m to the right of the watercourse (but practically in the fall line), there is a comfortable switch, from which you rappel the remaining 43m. This is followed by a small jump (S4). We jammed down the following chute a bit and then jumped. The next rappel (15m) leads left onto a wide ledge. If you want to avoid the following chute, you can take the anchor on the top left above the rock structure (approx. 20m). The following rappel from the block in the narrow chute (C8) can be unpleasant if there is a lot of water. But then you are soon at the last rappel. Here you reach the belay on the right outside the beam after about 8m (possibly with a redirection right above). From here you descend the last 25m almost dry. After about 300m we come to the entry into the Cugnasco inferiore, possibly our exit to the right and up to the parking lot at 450m above sea level. The path starts to the right of a large boulder that lies directly on the right bank.

Return: (machine translated)
Either as described above right up to the parking lot at 450m above sea level or at the exit of the lower parts right from the slide brake out to the road.

Coordinates:
Canyon Start 46.1901 8.9164
Canyon End 46.1841 8.9165
Waterlevel Checkpoint 46.1774 8.9174
Parking at Exit 46.1814 8.9143
Parking at Entry 46.1849 8.9082

Reports:

2026-09-18 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Cugnasco (supérieur) (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2666/observations.html)

2026-09-14 | Enrico Rispoli | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Low | 👍 Completed
The waterfall is beautiful even with less water than usual... And the rest of the canyon is also very beautiful; there are a few less interesting sections, but if it weren't in the Ticino canton, it would be a real classic. (machine translated)

2026-08-15 | Hexig | ☆ ☆ ☆ |🕮 ★ ★ ★ |⚓ ★ ★ ★ | 〰 Low | 👍 Completed
All conditions are OK, but there's not much water and it's slippery. (machine translated)

2026-08-07 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Low | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Cugnasco (supérieur) (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2666/observations.html)

2026-07-02 | Roie | ☆ ☆ ☆ ½ |🕮 ★ ★ |⚓ ★ ★ ★ | 〰 High | 👍 Completed
The starting point for the Cugnasco Sup-Start is the end point of the SUP-SUP section. The exact coordinates are: 46.1900797N, 8.9163717E The location currently shown on the website/app is not the actual start. The approach is not as bad as it described in the book and there are blue markers leading along the trail, so just look for the blue dots and follow them. In the exposed sections (which aren't actually that exposed), there are fixed ropes in place from the last RIC. We didn't need to make any rapple to the canyon, just went down slowly. The approch condition is reasonable-plus, and not as dramatic as described in the guidebook ("If you survive the approach on foot"). link to the approach trail we record up to the starting point: https://www.wikiloc.com/canyoneering-trails/approach-cugnasco-superior-272207044?h=3z5r66kyap&wa=sd&utm_campaign=badge&utm_source=unknown&utm_medium=unknown Google photo https://photos.app.goo.gl/vgL5hGnXERLUdE3v7 Lovely canyon Enjoy

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2026-05-16 | Peisen | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |🕮 |⚓ ★ ★ | 〰 High | 👍 Completed
4.5 stones washed over. Sufficient anchors available and most in good condition. Quite easy to walk. (machine translated)

2025-09-25 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Crazy | 👎 Not done
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Cugnasco (supérieur) (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2666/observations.html)

2025-06-01 | Bina | ☆ ☆ ☆ ½ |🕮 |⚓ ★ ★ ★ | 〰 High | 👍 Completed
4 rocks washed over, no problem for canyonists who know the canyon very well. (machine translated)

2025-05-31 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | |
Automatisch importiert von Schlucht.ch für Canyon Valle di Cugnasco superiore, Wasserstand: "Mittel 4 steine" Verankerungen: "Gut" Recht griffig, viel geröll in den Becken (Quelle: https://schlucht.ch/schluchten-der-schweiz-liste/1187-cugnasco-superiore)

2024-09-12 | Pepijn Hoeksema | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |🕮 ★ |⚓ ★ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Good trip! Some nice abseils. Anchors are in good condition. The flow was normal today.

2024-09-11 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 High | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Cugnasco (supérieur) (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2666/observations.html)

2024-08-11 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | 〰 Normal | 👍 Completed
Automatisch importiert von Descente-Canyon.com für Canyon Cugnasco (supérieur) Equipement ok. RAS. (Quelle: https://www.descente-canyon.com/canyoning/canyon-debit/2666/observations.html)

2024-07-15 | System User | |🕮 |⚓ | |
Automatisch importiert von Schlucht.ch für Canyon Valle di Cugnasco superiore, Wasserstand: "niedrig (3 Steine)" Verankerungen: "gut (inox)" (Quelle: https://schlucht.ch/schluchten-der-schweiz-liste/1187-cugnasco-superiore)

2024-06-02 | Matthias Holzinger | ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ |🕮 ★ ★ ★ |⚓ ★ | 〰 High | 👍 Completed

Parts:
Cugnasco (sup-sup), v6 a4 IV, ++
Cugnasco (superiore), v5 a4 III, 50min+2h50+10min
Cugnasco (inferiore), v3 a4 III, 45min+2h15+2min