



# A heritage of stories and people



The aim of the MinerAlp project is to showcase the **great geomineral and naturalistic heritage** of Piedmont, the Aosta Valley and Switzerland, retrieving and promoting part of our history. Many abandoned mining sites have been brought back to life following the rediscovery of their historical, cultural and touristic value. Following the recovery and structural restoration of the mines and mining structures scattered throughout the area, it is now possible to go down into the heart of the mountain, venture through the tunnels, rediscover places of work, examine the objects and tools used in the working day, invaluable evidence of the arduous life of the miner. The sites are often to be found in unique locations that offer breath-taking views and make it possible to combine an interest in **industrial archaeology** with the opportunity for **splendid excursions in Nature**. An intense sensory experience, a plunge into a past that deserves a place in our memory.



## But your mining experience doesn't end here!

Come and visit all the other mining sites scattered around the mountains between Italy and Switzerland, and find out more about the rich geomineral heritage of these territories.

Visit [www.mineralp.net](http://www.mineralp.net) to see the comprehensive tourist offer and choose the right mine for you!



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[www.mineralp.net](http://www.mineralp.net) - [www.montavic.it](http://www.montavic.it)



# Exploring the mines of Mont Avic



The mining sites in the Mont Avic Nature Park area of the Aosta Valley. A different experience, where an interest in industrial archaeology comes together with splendid nature excursions to explore life around the mines.



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## The iron way

### The Lac Gelé mine (2600 m)

Located near the northern end of the lake, this offers a wonderful panorama.



It can be reached by trail n° 6 from Chevrère (crossroad at Magazzino). Along the way, note the dry-stone sections of track that are raised above ground level and still today partially passable. These are the remains of the track used to sledge ore from the mine to the blast furnace at La Servaz.

The mine was organised into levels, the entrances to which and the old miners' refuge, which has been perfectly restored, are still visible.

### La Servaz blast furnace (1550 m)

From the visitor centre at Chevrère, take trail n° 5b that leads directly to the ancient blast furnace, a massive brick building now in ruins.

The iron ore from the Lac Gelé mine was processed here using water from the Chalamy stream.

The first furnace was built in 1694 and the site remained in operation until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### The Barma de Rova millstone quarry (1960 m)

At Barma de Rova (trail n° 6b) in the municipality of Champdepraz, lies an old millstone quarry corresponding with two galleries excavated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the lower slopes of Mont Avic.

A few millstones, barely roughed out, can be seen on the rock face, next to two mine assays.



## The copper way

### Hérin copper mine (1700 m)

Just outside the protected area, in the vicinity of Champdepraz, you will find the Hérin mining site (trail 8).

The mine was Piedmont's largest copper supplier until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The trail offers some wonderful views of the central valley and also to be admired is the unmistakable profile of Mont Avic. Once you get to the mine, which closed in 1957, you will see the external parts of the structure, the buildings, a fountain dating back to 1913, an old explosives deposit and what remains of the old cableway that transported the ore to the washery at Fabbrica, at the bottom of the valley.



### Perrot blast furnace

The precious copper from Hérin was processed in this blast furnace, of which only a few traces remain today.

Just before the village of Barbustel, take trail No. 4 and, after crossing the stream in sparse woodland, you will come upon the ruins of a building and some heaps of metallurgical slag.

These are the only remains testifying to life in a mining hamlet.