

C ZONA MONUMENTALE SACRA

HOW TO GET THERE

- A** Take the cable car from Malga Ciapela
- B** Reach Banc's station and take the next cable car
- C** Reach Serauta's station

MINISTERO DELLA DIFESA
Comando in Capo Gruppo Caduti di Guerra

Once you have reached Serauta's station, follow the signs "Sacred Historic Area of Punta Serauta", they will lead you to the beginning of the itinerary.

WHAT IS A SACRED HISTORIC AREA?

Serauta's Sacred Historic Area was established by Law N°719, December 5th, 1975, under the legislation D.L. 29/10/1922 n. 1386, mutated into law 16/6/1927 n.983. The area is assigned to the custody of the Ministry of Defence, Department for the protection of the culture and memory of defence, under the direction of the military memorial monument of Cima Grappa. This site commemorates and honours the men who fought on Marmolada during WWI, from 1915 to 1917.

THE AREA MUST BE EXPLORED PAYING ATTENTION AND BEING CAREFUL. CLIMBING CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT ARE NOT PROVIDED ON SITE.

It is compulsory to wear climbing equipment (rope, carabiner, harness, helmet with light, crampons). It is strictly forbidden to leave the marked path and venture on the glacier.

HISTORY PILLS - Chronicle

24th May 1915 > Italy enters war against the Austro-Hungarian Empire. A new front opens and it crosses the Dolomites. Soldiers begin to fight on Padon and Ombretta Passes.

30th April 1916 > After having spent the Summer of 1915 patrolling the glacier, without creating here permanent posts, Italian soldiers try to conquer Forcella Serauta. However, Winter comes with snow and cold, making the enterprise harder. The post will be permanently conquered only at the end of April 1916.

1916-1917 > The Austro-Hungarians build the City of Ice inside Marmolada's glacier with tunnels even 50/60 m in depth. A direct consequence of the Italian conquests of Forcella and Punta Serauta.

September 1917 > Italians conquer Forcella V, reporting huge losses, among which also 15 infantrymen, still missing today.

November 1917 > After the Italian defeat in Caporetto, the order comes to withdraw. On Marmolada there's silence again.

THE ITALIAN CONQUER OF SERAUTA

Although the war between the Reign of Italy and the Austro-Hungarian Empire blew up on the 24th May 1915 and that already on the 27th May the Italian troops began to fight on Padon and Ombretta Pass, only at the beginning of 1916, both armies understood the importance of Marmolada and moreover of Serauta's area for the dominion on Marmolada. The other key position was Forcella Marmolada, on the western side of the mountain, more than once occupied by Italians, but never permanently. In February 1916, the Austrian Kaiserjäger were able to occupy it definitively, anticipating the Italians. From here, they went up to Marmolada's highest peak, Punta Penia, being so ahead of the Italians. With these first actions, WWI began on the Queen of the Dolomites. It was necessary for the Italian troops to conquer at least Punta Serauta to avoid that the Austro-Hungarians had a too great advantage. This post has been disputed for the whole month of April 1916. Blizzards killed many men, dictating the terms for any military action. Forcella Serauta was occupied on April, 8th by 12 soldiers of Val Cordevole battalion, substituted the next day by

infantrymen of the 51st regiment "Alpi". The Austro-Hungarians on the glaciers got aware of the Italian activities and fought back on April, 13th conquering again the post. Italian soldiers went back to Vallone d'Antermoia. During the following 15 days, in severe conditions with temperatures even 40° below zero, Forcella Serauta was conquered again by the Italians, then conquered back by the Austrians and finally permanently occupied on April, 30th by the Italian soldiers of Belluno, Val Cordevole and 51st battalions with a combined action. To conquer the post, they rolled out hundreds of meters of fixed ropes all along the surrounding peaks to dominate from above the enemy with the machine guns. On this occasion, Italians captured more than 40 Austro-Hungarian prisoners, most of them were Czechoslovak. On May, 2nd they occupied also Quota 3065, which was a post above the area that now hosts Serauta's cable car station. It followed various counterattacks of the Austro-Hungarians, who were on the glacier and on Forcella V, and Italian attacks for the conquer of this last post from May to July 1916. During Summer 1916, the situation stabilized and the Italian soldiers began to hugely refurbish their tunnels in Serauta's area, these works can be visited still today. Marmolada, sublime solitary massif in the Dolomites, had become the tragic setting of a trench warfare. Autumn 1916 passed by preparing the posts for the following Winter, but already in October the first snow arrived, creating massive problems to the communication between top and valley posts, sometimes avalanches isolated soldiers even for many days. Bad weather conditions blocked cableways and phone lines, supplies had hence to be transported by soldiers, but blizzards impeded the path and cancelled the traced routes.

gan to hugely refurbish their tunnels in Serauta's area, these works can be visited still today. Marmolada, sublime solitary massif in the Dolomites, had become the tragic setting of a trench warfare. Autumn 1916 passed by preparing the posts for the following Winter, but already in October the first snow arrived, creating massive problems to the communication between top and valley posts, sometimes avalanches isolated soldiers even for many days. Bad weather conditions blocked cableways and phone lines, supplies had hence to be transported by soldiers, but blizzards impeded the path and cancelled the traced routes.

HE CITY OF ICE

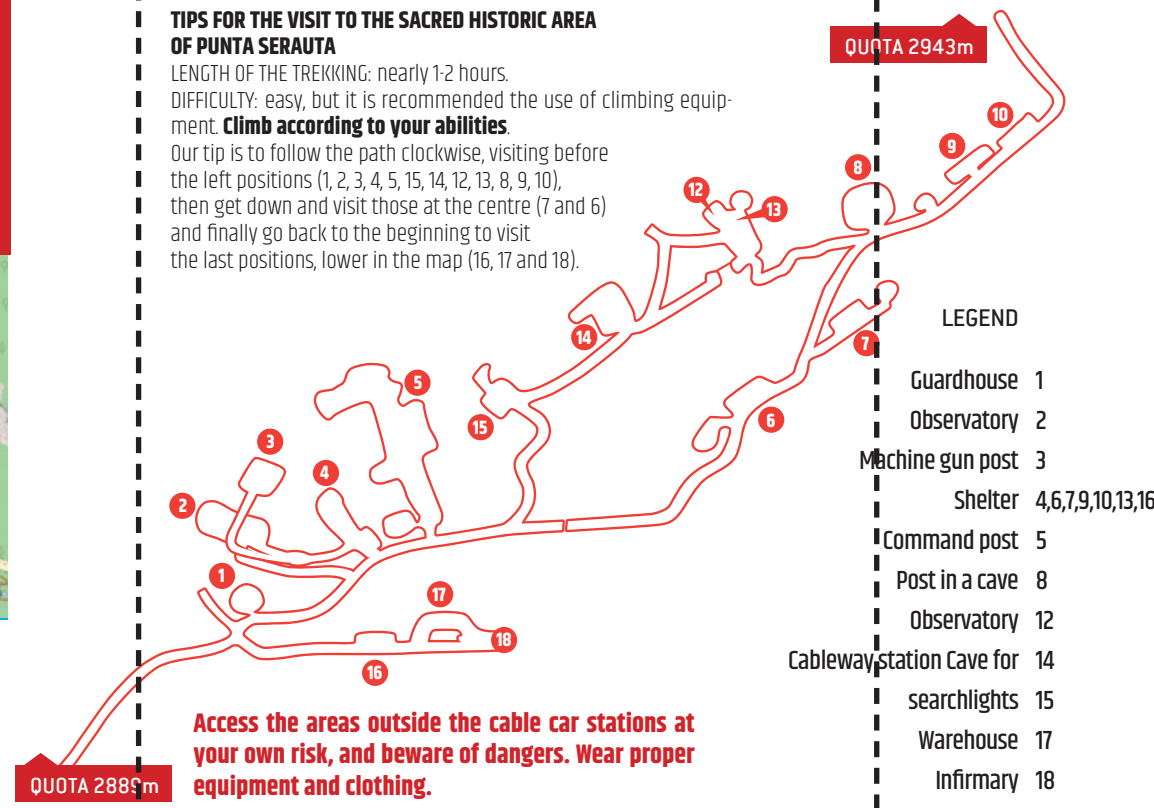
It was the conquer of Serauta by the Italian soldiers that convinced the Austro-Hungarians to find a shelter into the glacier. Under the Italian bombings, Leo Handl and Fritz Malcher had the ingenious idea of exploiting crevasses and natural galleries to connect the posts at the foot to those on the peaks of Marmolada. Between 1916 and 1917, Austro-Hungarians dug 12 km of tunnels even 50/60 m in depth into the glacier and here

TIPS FOR THE VISIT TO THE SACRED HISTORIC AREA OF PUNTA SERAUTA

LENGTH OF THE TREKKING: nearly 1-2 hours.

DIFFICULTY: easy, but it is recommended the use of climbing equipment. **Climb according to your abilities.**

Our tip is to follow the path clockwise, visiting before the left positions (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 15, 14, 12, 13, 8, 9, 10), then get down and visit those at the centre (7 and 6) and finally go back to the beginning to visit the last positions, lower in the map (16, 17 and 18).



1 GUARDHOUSE



14 CABLEWAY STATION



2 OBSERVATORY



17 WAREHOUSE



18 INFIRMARY

1. GUARDHOUSE: it was the post at defence of the entrance to Serauta's Italian fortress against Austro-Hungarian attacks. It had to be always guarded and it was made more comfortable with chairs and a table.

2. OBSERVATORY: Italian soldiers observed Austro-Hungarian soldiers in their posts on Marmolada, like Forcella V and Punta Rocca.

3. POST OF THE MACHINE GUN: position from where to keep at gunpoint the Austro-Hungarian soldiers on the glacier and on Sasso delle Undici.

4. 6. 7. 9. 10. 13. 16. SHELTER: soldiers could find here a bedding where to rest. In 1917, n. 4 hosted also a cannon (calibre 65 mm). From the slit, you can observe Sasso delle Undici and the area where there was the Austro-Hungarian city of ice, covered by the glacier.

5. COMMAND POST: wide cave where the command of Serauta's ridge had its offices and phone post. Here there was also a cannon (calibre 65 mm).

8. POST IN A CAVE: here there was another cannon (calibre 65 mm) pointing at the Austro-Hungarian posts of Porta Vescovo.

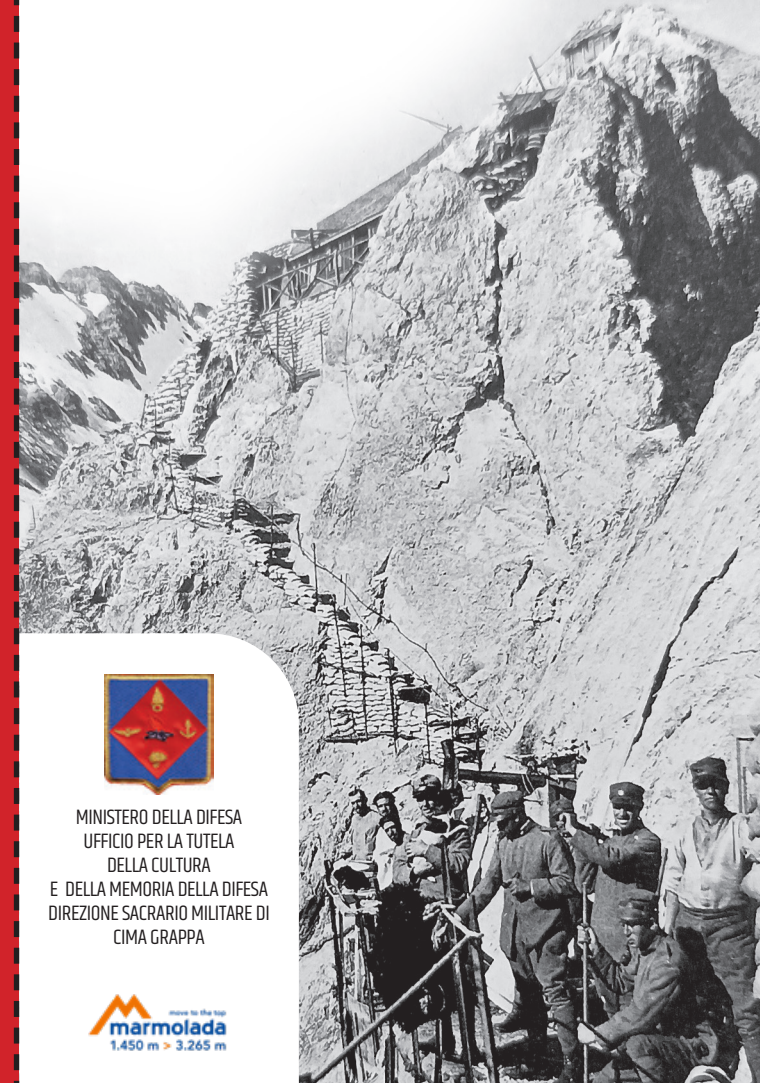
12. OBSERVATORY: provided with slits from where to observe the Austro-Hungarian posts.

14. CABLEWAY STATION: arrival point of weapons, ammunition, and food, which trip began in the valley. It had also an observatory toward the glacier and Punta Rocca. The slit is still decorated with an inscription of the period made by one of the squads of the 51st Infantry.

15. CAVE FOR SEARCHLIGHTS: here there was a searchlight (diameter 75 cm) used to illuminate the glacier during the night and locate Austro-Hungarian soldiers transporting weapons, ammunition, and supplies to their posts.

17. WAREHOUSE: located in a cave, it was used to keep materials useful for life and war at high altitude, like working tools, food, firewood, etc.

18. INFIRMARY: here wounded soldiers received first aid. Inside you can find original objects used for first aid during WWI and belonging to the 5th Centre of Deployment of the Italian Red Cross in Verona.



MINISTERO DELLA DIFESA
UFFICIO PER LA TUTELA
DELLA CULTURA
E DELLA MEMORIA DELLA DIFESA
DIREZIONE SACRARIO MILITARE DI
CIMA GRAPPA



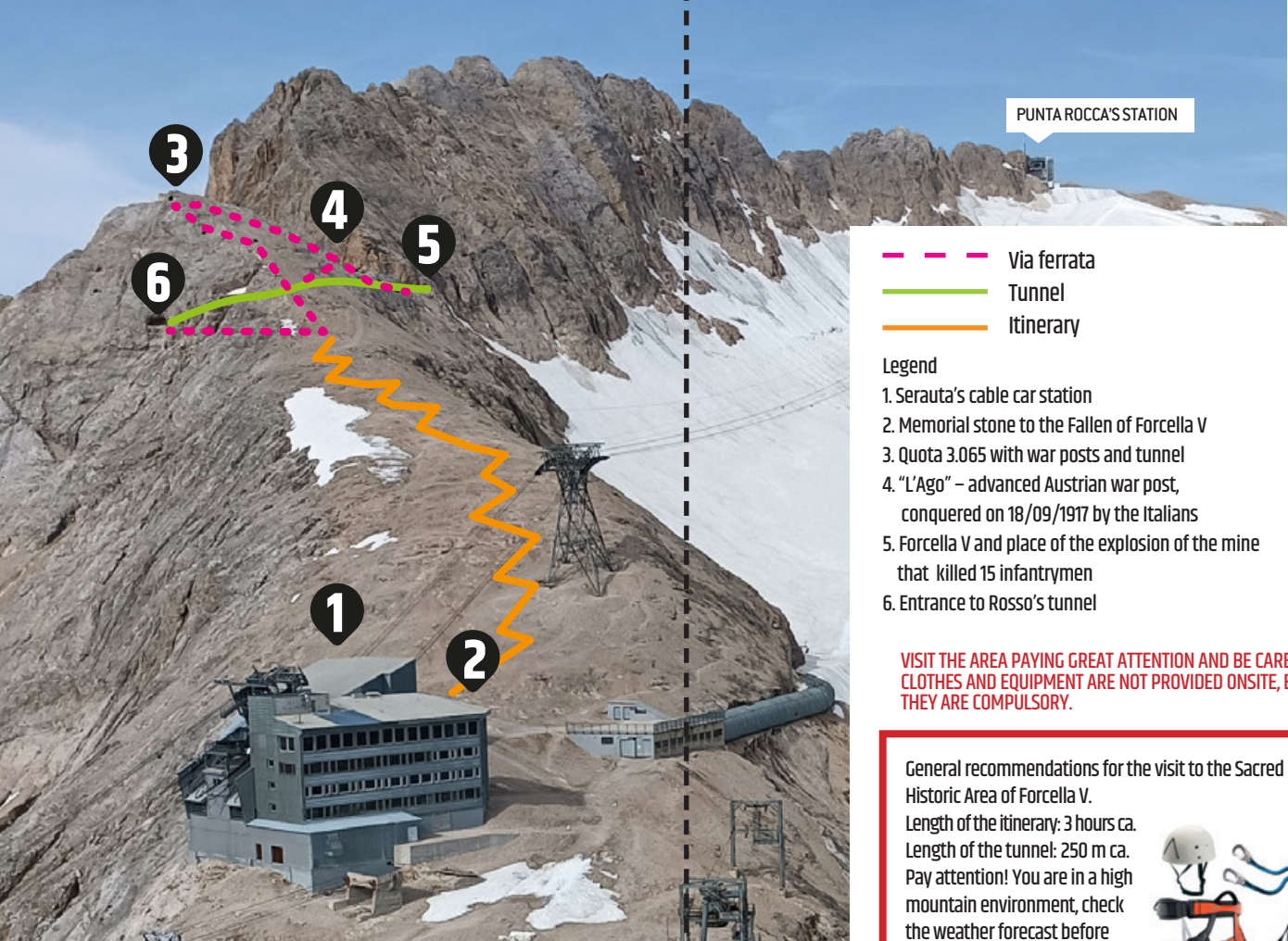
On the rocky massif of Punta Serauta, Italian soldiers dug tunnels and tracks during WWI, which can still be visited in Summer. A 360° view on Marmolada from the "Sky pulpit", retracing the life, story, and sacrifice of many Italian soldiers

SACRED HISTORIC AREA

OF PUNTA SERAUTA



MUSEO MARMOLADA GRANDE GUERRA 3000 M
32023 MALGA CIAPELA - ROCCA PIETORE (BL)
Tel: 334 6794461
visitmuseo@museomarmoladagrandeguerra.com
www.museomarmoladagrandeguerra.com



- Via ferrata
- Tunnel
- Itinerary

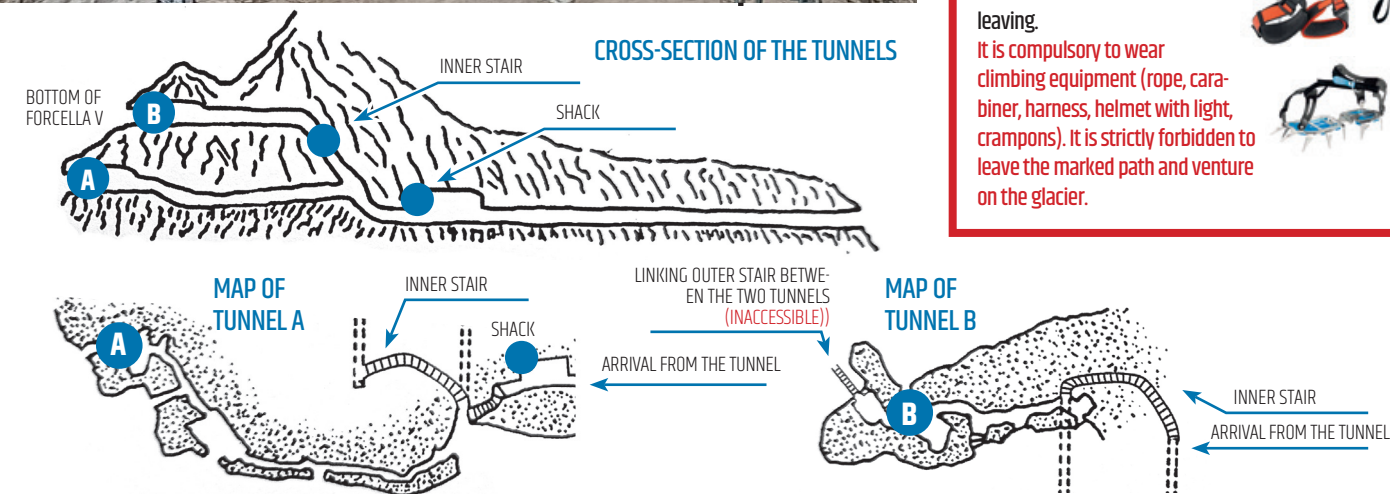
Legend

1. Serauta's cable car station
2. Memorial stone to the Fallen of Forcella V
3. Quota 3.065 with war posts and tunnel
4. "L'Ago" – advanced Austrian war post, conquered on 18/09/1917 by the Italians
5. Forcella V and place of the explosion of the mine that killed 15 infantrymen
6. Entrance to Rosso's tunnel

VISIT THE AREA PAYING GREAT ATTENTION AND BE CAREFUL. CLOTHES AND EQUIPMENT ARE NOT PROVIDED ONSITE, BUT THEY ARE COMPULSORY.

General recommendations for the visit to the Sacred Historic Area of Forcella V.
Length of the itinerary: 3 hours ca.
Length of the tunnel: 250 m ca.
Pay attention! You are in a high mountain environment, check the weather forecast before leaving.

It is compulsory to wear climbing equipment (rope, carabiner, harness, helmet with light, crampons). It is strictly forbidden to leave the marked path and venture on the glacier.



The itinerary, which from Serauta's cable car stations, takes you to the **Sacred Historic Area of Forcella V**, walking through Rosso's tunnel, allows you to visit the most contended places of Marmolada's front. Here, in a very narrow area, they happened tragic and complex events, bringing the life of soldiers to the limit of their abilities. This makes unique the war on Marmolada

The tunnel entitled to **Lieutenant Rosso** was dug by the Italian soldiers during WWI aiming to the conquer of Forcella V, passing underground. The excavations for the tunnel began on the 18th June 1917, on an idea by General Peppino Garibaldi, managed by Lieutenant Giuseppe Schiavoni of the Military Engineering. The main tunnel, identified as **"Tunnel A"** (lower tunnel) hosts a shack, restored by the volunteers of Marmolada's Museum of the Great War; a dormitory for the garrison with original bunks; the compressors room; and panoramic windows that were useful to ventilate the tunnel and to drop materials downhill. In the last part, Tunnel A connects with the old Austrian lower tunnel and it lets you reach the bottom of **Forcella V**.

As you exit, you can find a position made with concrete, built by the Italian soldiers to protect the entrance of the tunnel after the conquer of Forcella V (22nd September 1917). After the garrison room, you will find a junction that goes to **"Tunnel B"**, designed by the Italian soldiers to protect themselves against Austrian mines. Tunnel B goes up with a staircase that takes you nearby the ridge called **"Ago"**. On the left, after the stair, you will see a window from which a group of Italian soldiers (51st Regiment) went out to climb up the rock wall and catch by surprise the Austrian soldiers in the Ago's post (18th September 1917). A bit further, along the tunnel, a plaque shows the place where, during the night between the 20th and the 21st September 1917, the Italian soldiers came across the Austrian upper tunnel. Here took place a terrible fight that ended with the Italian conquest of the upper tunnel at around 5.30 am of September, 21st.

Ahead of this point, on the left, you will find the old entry to the Austrian upper tunnel, changed into a post for the machinegun by the Italians with a view on Forcella V and on the glacier. On the right, instead, you can see the opening that took to the Austrian position of **"Ago"**. From here, you go back to the outer part of the itinerary that goes on along the ridge and then down to Forcella V or you could go up to **"Quota 3.065"**. From the bottom of Forcella V, you can perceive also the rocky stair

that connected the two Austrian tunnels, then conquered by the Italians. The stair is completely **inaccessible**, because it is exposed on the southern canyon.

On the bottom of Forcella V, you can see part of the debris caused by the mine that killed Lieutenant Rosso and his companions at 4.30 am on the 26th September 1917. Forcella V at that time was 2 m large, now it is more than 12 m. The tunnel conquered by the Italians on the western wall is no more visible, because it was destroyed by the explosion. Two plaques remember the soldiers who are still missing today and their enemies, the Kaiserschützen. Here the itinerary stops. What you can perceive on the western side of Forcella V is probably what remains of the Austrian tunnel for the mine. From the windows of Rosso's Tunnel and from Forcella V, you can observe the stairs and ropes remained by the **extraordinary via ferrata built by the mountain troops of the 206th Company "Val Cordevole"** to conquer Quota 3.153 in October 1917, a work of great mountaineering value. On Quota 3065, you can also find the Italian war post with a tunnel and an evocative little statue of the Holy Mary.

To delve further into these historic facts, you can also visit Marmolada's Great War Museum, where you can find various books of great historical value, which analyse the war on Marmolada.

The works for the restoration of Rosso's Tunnel and for the search of the remains of Lieutenant Rosso and his companions begun in 1988 thanks to members of the Cadore and Tridentina Military Company, in collaboration with workers of Marmolada Srl and volunteers of Marmolada's Museum of the Great War. The renovation of the whole itinerary was brought on in 2022 by the troops of the 7th Regiment of the Mountain Troops, coordinated by the Ministry of Defence, Office for the preservation of the culture and memory of the defence.



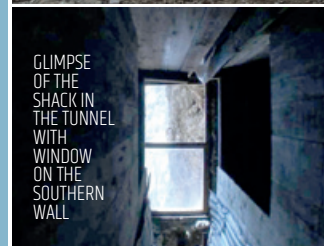
FIXED ROPES TOWARD QUOTA 3065 AND SERAUTA'S STATION



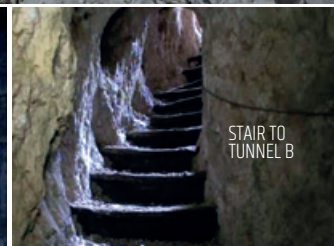
EQUIPPED PATH ON THE RIDGE BETWEEN QUOTA 3065 AND THE AGO



TOWARD THE ENTRANCE OF ROSSO'S TUNNEL



LEDGE TO REACH ROSSO'S TUNNEL



STAIR TO TUNNEL B



MINISTERO DELLA DIFESA
UFFICIO PER LA TUTELA
DELLA CULTURA
E DELLA MEMORIA DELLA DIFESA
DIREZIONE SACRARIO MILITARE DI
CIMA GRAPPA



A touching itinerary along a tunnel dug in 1917 and a stunning walk on a ridge with extraordinary landscapes that will help you to discover the protagonists and the places where the most important war event on Marmolada took place. A very moving experience at the heart of the environment at 3000 m on the Dolomites' Queen.

SACRED HISTORIC AREA OF FORCELLA A V



MUSEO MARMOLADA GRANDE GUERRA 3000 M
32023 MALGA CIAPELA - ROCCA PIETORE (BL)
Tel: 334 6794461
visitmuseo@museomarmoladagrandeguerra.com
www.museomarmoladagrandeguerra.com