



The Cavaglia Glacier Garden

Complete documentation of the website: www.ghiacciai.info

Location

Topography

«The Bernina valley runs from Pontresina in a south-south westerly direction and ends at the Bernina pass, positioned in a wide hollow between Piz Cambrena (3'604 m) and Piz Lagalb (2'953 m), from where the Poschiavo valley starts. This valley then divides into two distinct branches, separated by a ridge that goes from Piz Campasc (2'599 m) to Motta di Balbanera (1'783 m). The first branch is the Pila valley, which flows into the Cavaglia basin at an altitude of 1'683 m. From here it drops, by way of a 600 m downward step, to the San Carlo area. The southern side of the Cavaglia basin is closed by a glacial threshold, which culminates in the Moti da Cavagliola (1'742 m). The valley then continues with a 600 m drop ending at San Carlo, where it is joined by the branch that comes from the Laguné valley.

The second branch descends from the lateral depression of the Bernina pass to the La Rosa basin (1'871 m), where it is joined



The Cavaglia basin and glacial threshold together with the village of Cavaglia and its railway station

by the Laguné valley, which in turn starts from the Forcola di Livigno (2'315 m). From there it continues downwards towards Sfazù, where the Poschiavino torrent disappears in a narrow gorge and joins the Cavagliasco torrent at San Carlo».

(Aldo Godenzi)

Climbing upwards from Poschiavo (1'009 m) on the Rhaetian Railway – the mythical Bernina Little Red Train – it takes about half an hour to reach Cavaglia station (1'683 m), located on a wide plateau known as the Cavaglia glacial basin. The plateau houses two small inhabited locations: Cavaglia and Cavagliola.

Until the end of the Sixties the village of Cavaglia, situated in the northern part of the plateau, was inhabited all year long by about twenty workers associated with the Forze Motrici di Brusio (today Rhaetia Energie SA) hydroelectric power station, and their respective families. The village, which at the time included a school with a church, a station with a post office, a shop, a restaurant and a milk farm, is at present a holiday location inhabited mainly in the summer.



Until the Sixties Cavaglia was inhabited all year long.

Cavagliola, situated in the western part of the plateau, is an agricultural hamlet which today is also frequented by holidaymakers. Both Cavaglia and Cavagliola have large flat meadows which are mowed once a year.

To the south of Cavaglia an outcrop, known as «Moti da Cavagliola» in the Poschiavo dialect, breaks the continuity of the flat meadows. Here we are faced by an almost magical phenomenon: an extraordinary number of glacial potholes, otherwise known as «giants' pots», «deep cylindrical holes» or «mythological pits», unmatched by any other similar site in Europe. Close by, the deep and imposing Cavagliasco gorge can also be admired. The Glacier Garden, characterized by a rich alpine flora, can be reached on foot from Cavaglia railway station in about ten minutes.



Cavagliola is an agricultural hamlet and a holiday location

