VAL D’AOST

VALLE d’AOSTA

AOSTA VALLEY

THINGS TO SEE/PLACES TO VISIT IN THE AOSTA VALLEY:

**Fenis Castle** – across the highway from Nus and the Wood Carving Museum next door

**Sarre Castle** (if you have time and love history) a Hunting Lodge with unique decor

**Nus Castle** – just a walk from our house in Marsan, view ruins from outside

**Aosta** – downtown shopping district and Roman Ruins

**Nus** – Our little town, Roman Ruin, IX Mile Pizzeria, Despars Groceries and Angolo’s Deli (the Junk Yard/”museum” is quirky too and the old man likes a small tip) and the **Agriturismo Restaurant**, Maison Rosset (see below to make reservations ahead of time)

**Cogne** – a charming mountain town, Le Bon Bec restaurant, Wine store, the Belvedere Hotel and Inn, PLUS: **Lillaz** – the Waterfall and hike

**Mt. Blanc** and it’s ski resort Courmayeur

**Mt. Cervino/(the Matterhorn)** and it’s ski resorts Breuil/Cervinia PLUS Blue Lake

**Lake Arpy** (Lago d’Arpy): a hike/walk to an Alpine lake

**St. Bartholemy**: Planetarium and Observatory (open some evenings) and hikes from there

**REMEMBER:** Museums are closed on Mondays; most shops/stores in the Valley are closed on Sundays, Monday mornings, Wednesday afternoons and Saturday afternoons – *except for* the large Grocery Stores and “big box” stores on the American Mile portion of the road SS226 between Marsan/Nus and Aosta.

**Suggestions:**

**DAY 1:** ARRIVAL

Our House is on the middle level of the 2nd house on the left as you enter Marsan from Nus. Park in the upper spaces by turning around and coming back. It’s all right to park outside the house to unload first.

Open up the house. Enjoy the view and unpack.

Drive back down into Nus to buy some basic grocery items at Despars or the Angolo Deli across the street, or, if you have the stamina, stop at these stores on the way into town before going up the hill to the house. You can at least get mozzarella, tomatoes, crackers, bread sticks, drinks to feed the hungry crowd. (Olive oil, vinegar, etc. all unrefrigerated condiments are at the house.)

When driving back down into Nus for the grocery stores, you have to TURN LEFT *before* getting all the way down to the main street, on a street that runs parallel to the main street. Watch for the sign that points to Fenis Castle.

Eat dinner at the IX Mile (“9th Mile”) pizza restaurant in Nus. They are good with ‘foreigners.’

\*\*\*\*Read about the **Agriturismo restaurants** in the Aosta booklets at the house. The Agriturismo in Nus is named Maison Rosset. It charges about 35 Euros per person for a 5-6 course set menu dinner, including wine. There is a lot of hearty and fresh food local to the area. It’s the best value in the Valley for the money and quality of the food. **You MUST make reservations ahead of time,** maybe even before you leave for Italy. They will speak enough English over the phone to handle a reservation.

Note: The entrance to the restaurant is off the street behind a side gate and everyone waits in the courtyard to go in until invited by the owners. The website is maisonrosset.it , but it is in Italian.

Azienda Agriturismo
**MAISON ROSSET**
Via Risorgimento, 39 - 11020 Nus (Aosta)
Tel. +39 0165.767176

**DAY 2 – 4:**

Spend Friday morning in **Aosta** itself. The town will be lively and all the stores will be open until 12:30 pm. Have lunch there at Aldente (on a side street at the west end of the shopping street) or Brasserie(?) Vecchio (not the one in the Roman wall - Antica Ristorante Vecchia, but the smaller restaurant next to the record/cd store on the main shopping street near the Tourist Information office).

See the Roman amphitheatre, the medieval church and underground chapel, Roman towers, archeological museum between the St. Orso Church and the Amphitheatre.

Except for the ‘big box’ stores on the American Mile, the stores in all the towns, including Aosta, close early on Saturdays and are closed on Sundays, Monday mornings and Wednesday afternoons.

**Parking in Aosta**: When you go into Aosta, there are **various parking options**.

One option is to park in the large parking lot for the "**Gondola to Pila"** on the east side of Aosta just before you get to the town center and walk into town from that direction. Look for signs to Pila.

Another parking option is the pay parking lot on the south side of the town center of Aosta in **Piazza Plouves**: Go around the Roman Arch roundabout as you enter Aosta on the east side of town, go south (left) on Vialle Garibaldi, turn right on Via Torino and go about 4 blocks, the parking lot is on the north (right) side of the street just past Via Vevey. This parking lot puts you right at the Porta Praetoria where the Tourist Information office is.

Also, there is pay parking on the west side of the Aosta town center in the **Piazza della Repubblica**: continue on Via Torino past the Piazza Plouves for several short blocks then turn right on Vialle Partigiani and right into the Piazza della Repubblica. You then walk into the town center from the west end of town.

If you want **outdoor/hiking activities**, plan a day to go to:

Lago D’Arpy OR Cogne/Lillaz. Or…

Go visit **Sarre Hunting Lodge** or **Fenis Castle** and the **Wood Carving Museum** in **Fenis**. **Fenis** is, of course, right across the highway from Marsan. There’s a nice new round-a-bout that makes for easy access. Taking the 45 minute tour through **Fenis** Castle is a MUST. I think the castle is open on Sunday, too; check the website. The tour is in Italian and some English, but the brochure is in English. Sarre is a self tour and can also be done fairly quickly unless you like to read about all the exhibits (which I do). It’s less interesting than Fenis to the kids. Or, drive up to **Mt. Blanc** and walk around the ritzy **Courmayeur** ski resort.

Drive back to Marsan by SS226 or the Toll Road (faster, but expensive), depending on tiredness levels.

Check out the Observatory and Planetarium at **St. Bartholemy** up the road from the House, if you’re still needing entertainment. Or, walk from the house down the main road of Marsan to the Nus Castle, bearing left at the V and then following the trail sign to the right. You can’t go in, but it’s a nice destination for a little easy walk.

Leave Marsan in the morning and drive either to **Cogne** (west) or to **Mt. Cervino**/the Matterhorn (the ski resort is Breuil/Cervinia). See the maps in the little plastic cases on the bookshelf.

**Cogne** may be crowded on the weekend, but there is ample parking behind the town and numerous restaurants. It’s one of our favorite places to go to eat (at Le Bon Bec, but it may be a little expensive for the whole family) and stroll and shop. Most importantly, you then drive through **Cogne** up the mountain a little more to **Lillaz** where there is a waterfall and hiking and possible swimming holes. There is good parking and signage. We park in the big parking area and follow the trail sign over the bridge to the right to go directly to the waterfall and a cool geological exhibit. OR, head to Lillaz first, early in the day to beat the crowds, then go to Cogne for lunch (but the stores will be closed).

If you go to **Mt. Cervino/Matterhorn**, there is parking on the both before the ski resort and on the left side of the main street (which is closed to traffic). On the way to or from Cervino, stop at **Blue Lake** to see the reflection of the mountain in the water. There’s a sign and parking on the side of the main road.

So much to do…so little time ☺ Ciao!