

## **"PUNT DE SAS" OF VILLA DI TIRANO-STAZZONA**

You are about to cross the "punt de sass", literally "stone bridge", an ancient stone bridge with double arch also called "Roman bridge" or "medieval bridge".

Although popular tradition attributes an ancient origin to it, in reality the sources do not allow us to date the artefact with certainty or to confirm its Roman origin. However, we know for sure that the "punt de sass" was used to connect the municipality of Villa di Tirano to Stazzona and that the Adda river flowed under this bridge until 1817. In fact, on August 27 of that year there was an important flood which diverted the course of the river, thus ending the function of the connecting bridge between the two municipalities. Currently the bridge is therefore located in the middle of meadows, in a context detached from the original one.

From the construction point of view, the bridge is unique in the Valtellina area. You can rarely find the use of large stones, even more than a meter long and well squared in the lower part, and the skill in arranging them in regular horizontal course. The constructive rigor undoubtedly recalls the need to create an artifact capable of withstanding the rushing floods of the river, a need for solidity that leads us to believe that the bridge was one of the most important in Valtellina and therefore did not have a peripheral role. The remaining parts, especially the parapets built with roughly roughed stones, seem instead to indicate a subsequent intervention. The rocks used for its construction are gneiss and quartzites.

The bridge is about 28 m long and consists of two large symmetrical arches separated by a central pile which, on both sides, has buttresses and spurs with an almost triangular section. At the extremity, the construction ends with walls that open to the width of the bridge. The two arches measure 12 meters each. Adjacent to the central pile there are stone gargoyles for rainwater. Finally, iron keys surround the arches.