

## Brione (756 m) - Poncione d'Alasca (2301 m) and back

I do not know how many people will agree with these considerations. More and more I remain in the idea that a mountain draws us especially when we see it from below, or better, from a certain perspective and this pushes us to ascend it by an instinct rather than a reasoned justification. Very often its reputation in the limited world of climbers and hikers draws us, but more frequently is the beauty of its shape to draw us. This, for example, was the case of Poncione d'Alasca, at least for me. I was immediately fascinated and inspired to go by its South wall, immense, sparkling in the sun, cut from a huge cleaver long time ago. To go ... but where? Sadly, the permitted access way to the "normal" hikers is the one that follows the Northern ridge, very different from the celebrated view. And then? The desire push me to rise starting from Brione and then, crossing the [Verzasca\(1\)](#) river with a beautiful suspended walkway from Alasca through the wood of the West side. Then, once came out into a more open field, under the giant towers of granite for a long and hard way full of ups and downs (an average gradient of 25% still has to be won) I reached a pass at 2000 m where you can choose between a Southern direction to the summit along the North ridge or an East and then South direction, as the friend [Jules](#), to reach first the Fopia crest, then Fopia summit . The last 300 m are those that unfortunately I suffered more because they coincide with the lighting of my energy reserves alarm. However, grafted the "low gear" with a consequent speed reduction, I, step by step, climb towards the goal. When I arrived where is a so called "key and exposed passage" that actually lasts a few meters, I chose to climb using my hands on the rock instead to use the rope stretched across, first because I like it the most, then because the rope, unlike a chain, ages when exposed to UV rays and I preferred not to establish the value of its tensile strength or how long it stays there helping the hikers.

Finally, the summit Cross appears; first its top then, gradually, all the stem together with its basement and the large top of the Poncione d'Alasca. The Cross also seems suffering from exposure to the elements and shows a visible crack. The view is beautiful from any side we may turn; immediately below, the crest and the summit of Fopia that gives me a strange feeling, already proven other times in front of the immensity, halfway between the fear of emptiness and the desire to fly through, the desire to anchor itself to solid and, in contrast, a sense of lightness which deludes you can fly without risk.

Now the just reward, the rest, a snack and suddenly I hear voices coming from Fopia, a typical hullo of those attending the mountains. I jokingly call too, yet excited for the goal achieved and I see two little dots next to the Fopia Cross. We are unable to establish a contact and shortly after I begin my descent retracing the same route. If the name [Verzasca\(2\)](#) has its roots in the green water .... well, a choice of name was never more apt. You can find a lot of water along the way, drinking at rustic fountains, soaking your feet in the streams crossing the trail and finally you can have even a shower near Alasca.

In conclusion: won I the Poncione? I do not think so! I was attracted by the South wall but I climbed from the North side, another planet. When I was on the top I forgot where I was and I wanted to climb the beautiful mountains that surrounded me; I wanted to descend and walk along the Crest of Fopia but there was no more time. Well .... a beautiful woman dressed in elegant clothes.... then you see her in curlers and dressing gown and then ... .. I think it is the insatiable dissatisfaction, however, is also our eternal spring and then go, so be it. I also believe that if I would be able to follow the route of [Alpine Rise](#) along the South wall, I would not have the same perception of admiration because, from my experience, on a wall you have a more limited view, especially when the wall is so large and you just think to the rope management, to knots, to carabiners, etc.. But I would like to do this and who ever knows ...! The dreams never die and come back to the parking I surprise myself to see from below, again, my first love: Poncione d'Alasca ... .. but was I really there?

**Key data:**

Altitude difference 1542m

Total length km 14.6

Average gradient 2.2% (x 2 km), 27% (x 5.3 km )

Total time 7h25' ; including stops 8h23'

Brione-Poncione d'Alasca : 4h18'

Poncione d'Alasca-Brione : 3h:07'

**Note:**

Alpine\_Rise: <http://www.hikr.org/tour/post17650.html>

Jules: <http://www.hikr.org/tour/post25421.html>

Verzasca(1): [http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verzasca\\_\(fiume\)](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verzasca_(fiume))

Verzasca(2): [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valle\\_Verzasca](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valle_Verzasca)