

Sa conca de Oppiane

Sa conca de Oppiane is located along one of the many nature trails in the Austis countryside.

It is a natural refuge that opens up below the crest of Mount Oppiane, a vantage point offering a view of the valley below Ghea-Benzone and the vast surrounding area. The cave, known as *sa conca* (meaning 'hollow'), consists of a large space carved into the granite rocks by atmospheric agents and used for centuries as a shelter by shepherds who grazed their flocks in the area, and later by coal merchants. Throughout the area, numerous ovens dug into the ground used for the process of reducing wood into charcoal were active during the 1800s.

Also evident in the cave are the works carried out by the shepherds to make the cattle shelter more comfortable, with the addition, on one side, of a small wall of stones and branches; and work tools such as the *lappiolu*, i.e. the cauldron, used to cook the milk from which cheese is made, can be seen hanging.

At present, the place is a destination for walkers, who make it a stop on their discovery route along the area's dirt tracks.

Text by Laura Melis

From Via Lazio 21 to *Sa conca de Oppiane* link for path plotted on Google maps:

<https://goo.gl/maps/EuhfrK4B8bpY1h5T9>

