

Warning to those walking the Via Francigena in Swizerland, 2011

Section: Martigny Croix to Bovernier

Pilgrims (June 2011) have reported rockfalls on the walker's route up the valley from Martigny Croix to Bovernier, with the result that this path is now very dangerous. There is, however, no alternative to this "mountain goat" route up a narrow valley on small, uneven footpaths, with steep-sided cliffs on either side of the river Dranse, the road and the railway line below.

You do not actually need a very good head for heights to tackle this section but you do need to be very careful if it is wet or windy, if visibility is poor, if you aren't very agile or are unused to this type of walking, all the more so if you are alone and carrying a heavy rucksack. **Do NOT, however, and under any circumstances at all, even consider walking on the road: this is only two lanes wide, is full of very fast-moving, heavy traffic and there is rarely any hard shoulder or pavement to protect you.** It is the worse section of the whole *Via Francigena*, all the way from Canterbury to Rome, and if you feel unable to tackle it for whatever reason you will have to resign yourself, reluctantly, to taking the train (frequent service) for the 5km stretch from Martigny Croix to Bovernier.