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Adriabike the Upper Adriatic cycling route

A 1000 km long cycling path which connects the Slovenian Alps and lakes with the beaches and lagoons of the Adriatic.
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THE EMERALD GREEN ROAD

Kranjska Gora - Most na Soči - Nova Gorica - Komen - Koper - Trieste

THE ROAD OF THE SERENISSIMA

Portorož - Koper - Trieste - Grado - Portogruaro - Venice

THE ROADS OF THE MERCHANTS AND THE BURCI

Venice - Padua - Chioggia - Po Delta - Comacchio - Ravenna



2007-2013
cooperazione territoriale europea
programma per la cooperazione
transfrontaliera
Italia-Slovenia
evropsko teritorialno sodelovanje
program čezmejnega sodelovanja
Slovenija-Italija

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Adriabike

the Upper Adriatic cycling route

Kranjska Gora, Koper, Trieste, Venice, Ravenna



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Adriabike

The Upper Adriatic cycling route

*Kranjska Gora, Koper,
Trieste, Venice, Ravenna*



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Introduction

This guide, created with the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Italy-Slovenia INTERBIKE project, presents Adriabike, cycling route of the Upper Adriatic, a journey made of stages carried out by bicycle which starts from the Triglav range in Slovenia and arrives at the Adriatic Sea.

The route, illustrated with descriptive touristic texts and accurate maps, is divided into three weekly proposals:

Kranjska Gora – Trieste. The emerald green road: from the heart of the Julian Alps, along the Bovec and Tolmin valleys, through the Karst until Koper and then Trieste.

Koper – Venice. The road of the Serenissima: from Istria to the Venetian lagoon. A highly fascinating route amidst land, sea, beaches and lagoons.
Venice – Ravenna. The road of the merchants and the *burci*: along the rivers and lagoons of the sailors' trading routes to reach the ancient capitals of the Upper Adriatic.

Each route proposed lasts for six days, uses cycling paths and B roads and suggests the use of public transport such as trains and boats. From the website www.adriabike.eu it is possible to download the geo-referenced maps and the useful Adriabike app for smartphone.

The first week's journey

THE EMERALD GREEN ROAD

Kranjska Gora – Nova Gorica – Koper – Trieste

Pedalling from the Julian Alps to the Gulf of Trieste

You will have a really pleasant ride – in the heart of the Slovenia wild nature – which starts right from beneath the highest peaks of the Julian Alps to then cross the famous skiing resort areas like Kranjska Gora and the Planica Valley, as well as many enchanted lakes. You will follow the crystal waters of the Soča river, with its many dams, the numerous rapids, the bold and roaring waterfalls, crossing the course many times thanks to the evocative bridges at Kanal, Kobarid, and Tolmin. In fact this territory is a real paradise for the fans of exciting water sports like rafting, kayak, canoeing and hydro-speed.

So, for our slow journey on two wheels towards the Adriatic Sea and the Istrian coast, you can take all the time you need to visit the interesting local archaeological and ethnographic museums, as well as some First World War mausoleums, as one of the most decisive fronts of the Great War was



Photo

1 Tolmin, the Tolmin gorges

2 Sicciole salt mines, Parenzana cycling Lane

on this territory. Making your way along narrow secondary roads which wind their way up to the harsh Karst Plateau – which especially in Autumn takes on a rainbow of colours – you will see monasteries, vineyards, some of the most famous horse stables in the world (the Lipica stud farm), the Karst caves which have become part of the Unesco Heritage (Škocjanske jame) and castles clinging to the hills. Finally – before plunging into the cobalt blue of the Istrian sea and the Gulf of Trieste with its many famous touristic resorts - you can make out the place where the alpine breezes and the perfumes of the Mediterranean meet up. Always keeping the railway line beside you (just in case).

First week 1st day

The tour of the Triglav Mountain

Tarvisio – Kranjska Gora - Most na Soči

*From the triangle of the frontiers (Italy, Austria, Slovenia)
along the Sava cycling route*

You are at Tarvisio, a well-known Italian frontier town, and you start out on foot from the parish church of Saints Peter and Paul, a fine example of a fortified church complete with defensive tower. You are at the place where the virtuous cycling circle meets up, uniting by bicycle the three bordering countries (Italy, Austria, Slovenia), joining the Alpe Adria cycling route – which goes towards Grado – with various Slovenian routes and other well known itineraries such

as the Drava cycling route. From the old railway station in the town of Tarvisio, head east on the asphalted cycling route, up to **km 1.6**, leave the route which goes towards Austria and Arnoldstein and take the one on the right which leads to Slovenia. Continuing along this route, at **km 8.1** you arrive at the crossroads with the detour which leads to the two magnificent alpine lakes at Fusine, the Upper one and the Lower one (2 km only one way), inside the Natural Park of the



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 52 km

Starting point: Tarvisio

Arrival: Bled (then Most na Soči by train)

Conditions: all asphalted cycling lanes, some exceptions with uphill in the first part

Indications: present

Inter-modality: train + bike





Fusine Lakes. At **km 11.0** you reach the small town of Rateče, dominated by the Peč mountain (1510 m), which marks the triple border between Italy, Slovenia and Austria. Continue along the good asphalted cycling route which uses the old nineteenth century railway line that went from Tarvisio to Ljubljana (Lubiana); this will keep you company for a good part of the day, skimming large fields and winding into refreshing woodlands on the slopes of

the Julian Alps. After a short while you reach the foot of the spectacular Planica side valley, at **km 12.5**: many world records have been set up from its famous ski jump trampolines. With a pleasant ride, at **km 17.5**, you are in the centre of Kranjska Gora – a place which is well known for hosting world alpine skiing competitions – where you can visit the church of the Assumption and an interesting ethnographic collection at the eighteenth century Liznjek House. You

ride along the right bank of the Sava Dolinka, one of the two source branches of the Sava river, which offers enchanting scenery in this rich and generous land, characterised by well cared for fields dotted with the typical wooden barns, wooden racks where the grass is put out to dry. At **km 22.5** you cross the river thanks to a fine cycling bridge and then you cross it again a couple of times to reach, at **km 31.0**, the bridge which leads to Mojstrana, where you can visit



the Pocar House – one of the oldest farm houses in the Triglav National Park, now used for exhibitions – and the futuristic structure of the new Slovenian alpine museum. The proper cycling track finishes at Mojstrana.

Now you continue on a road with mixed but light traffic, and at **km 33.2** you turn right, and take up the cycling route once again on the edge of thick woodland, which at the village of Hrušica, at **km 38.0**, overpasses the A2 motorway; then keep to the right and pedal towards Jesenice, that you reach at **km 41.5**. This highly populated town is an important international railway yard and home of the most important national iron and steel industry. Continue on the main road until **km 44.0** and turn left in the direction of Blejska Drobrava, reaching the splendid Lake Bled at **km 52.0**, after another plunge into the green Slovenian alpine woods.

With an hour's train journey you change valley and reach Most na Soči, along the Soča river.



Photo

1 Kranjska Gora, Jasna Lake

2 Zelenci, source of the Sava Dolinka

3 The Martuljek forest, cycling path

4 Kranjska Gora, the Russian chapel under the Vršič pass

5 Tarvisio, cycling path on the former railway line

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Tourist Office Dovje-Mojstrana

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www.mojstrana.com

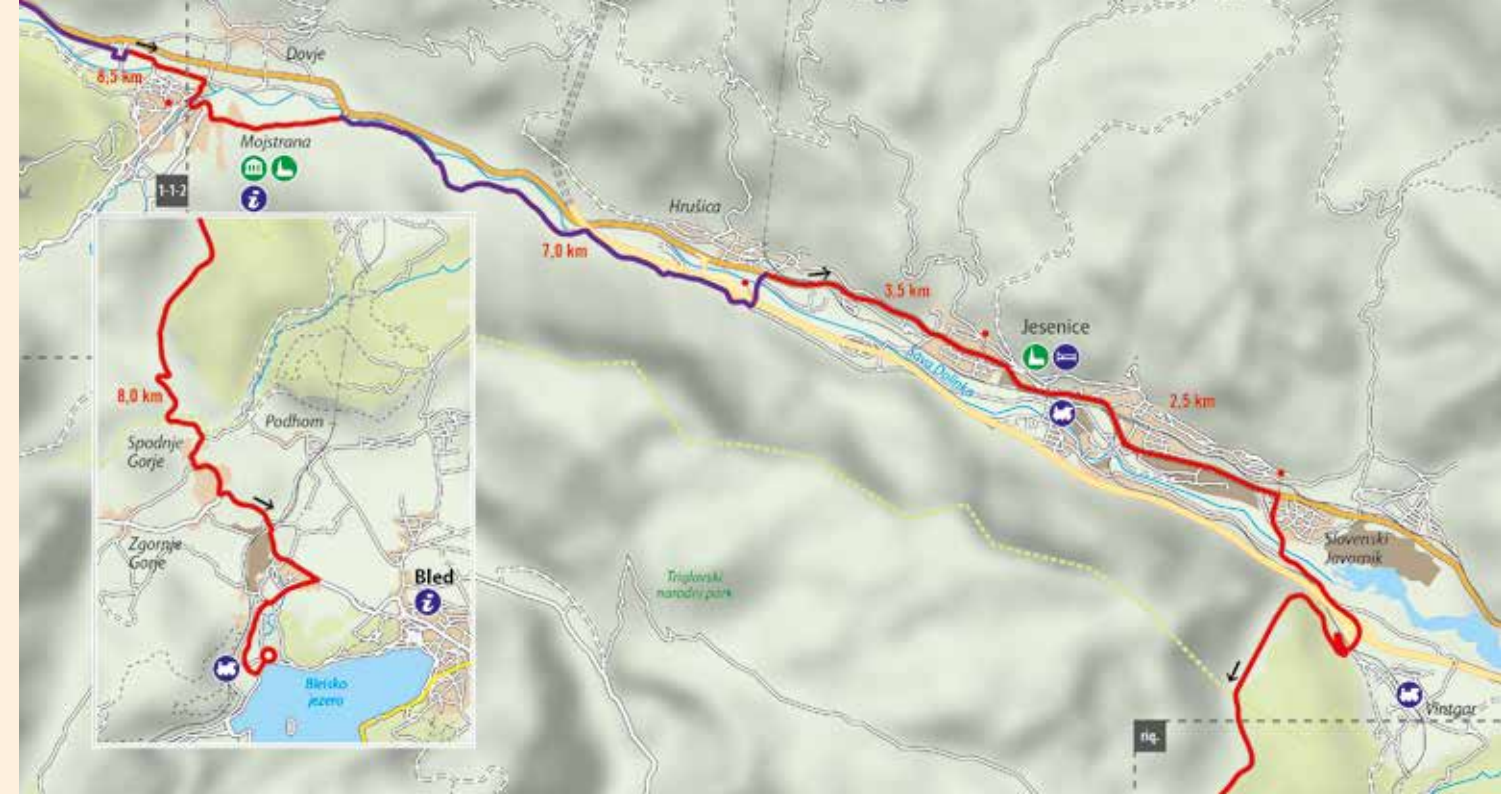
Tourist Office Bled

Cesta svobode 10, 4260 Bled tel. +386 04 5741122
tdbled@telemach.net www.td-bled.si

Railway stations Tarvisio Boscoverde, Jesenice, Vintgar, Bled Jezero, Bohinjska Bela, Nomenj, Bohinjska Bistrica, Podbrdo, Most na Soči

Slovenian railway

tel. +386 01 2913332, www.slo-zeleznice.si



First week 2nd day

The Upper Soča valley

Most na Soči – Tolmin – Kobarid – Bovec – Kobarid

An enchanting bike ride along the emerald coloured river

You are in front of the Most na Soči railway station after getting off the train which has brought you from Bled to the Soča valley. You head right from the railway station, cross the bridge over the Idrijca river, then turn left towards Tolmin until **km 1.8** when you reach the centre of Most na Soči, right where the Idrijca plunges into the Soča. This is an important archaeological area, as shown by the many findings of Iron Age tombs: here they even

speak about the Sveta Lucija Culture. A lot of documentation about all this can be found in the small but interesting Archaeological Museum – hosted in the former primary school – you should also visit the church of Saint Lucy and the ancient chapel of Saint Maur which dates back to the XII century. The village is nestled on a rocky spur, surrounded by an artificial green lake formed by a dam over the river and well known among the fishermen for



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 67 km

Starting point: Most na Soči

Arrival: Kobarid

Conditions: almost all the route is on asphalted secondary roads with mixed traffic

Indications: absent

Inter-modality: train + bike



its barbed gill trout, typical of the Soča. Now you turn right, following the directions for Tolmin, and go back up the green course of water towards its Karstic source in the Triglav National Park, pedalling on the orographic left. You ride along the first part of the picturesque lake, then you go close to the village of Modrej and at **km 5.5** you leave the asphalted road, turning left along a rough path which leads to the characteristic footbridge over the Tolminka torrent; soon after you return to asphalt and at **km 6.9** you are in the centre of Tolmin, the main economic, cultural and administrative centre of the Upper Soča valley. Once populated by the Romans and Lombards, it still has many points of interest: the Ethnographic Museum and the remains of the medieval castle. Continuing straight ahead, at **km 7.0** you pass a church and continue along the narrow road which winds into the green countryside in the direction of Kobarid.

We advise you to make a detour at Zatočin



to visit the Tolmin Gorges, located at the lower entrance of the Triglav National Park. They are characterised by a large mass wedged in among the faces, by the Devil's Bridge, suspended at a height of 60 metres above the bright blue waters of the Tolminka and by Dante's Cave, where local legend has it that the poet found inspiration for his *Inferno*. Let's remember that when we visit his tomb in Ravenna ... Going back, you continue keeping to



the left bank and now the route unwinds along a narrow strip of asphalt, with very little traffic, set in green fields with hills going pleasantly up and down.

You pass through the villages of Dolje (**km 9.1**), Gabrje (**km 10.3**), Volarje (**km 12.8**), Selišče (**km 14.2**), Kamno (**km 15.7**), Ladra (**km 20.1**), small towns that are sometimes enhanced by the presence of drinking fountains or a beautiful chapel. So at **km 22.2** you





approach Kobarid, where you cross the river thanks to a beautiful Napoleonic bridge – a stone arch – and you go along the orographic right of the river. After about 600 metres, to the left, you can reach the centre of the town which became part of history during the Great War: don't miss the museum which is mainly focused on peace.

From the bridge, turning right along a road with little traffic, continue going up along the

river and at **km 25.6** you go onto the main road; keeping on the right bank you pass the small town of Trnovo ob Soči at **km 27.5m** then you approach Srpenica and at **km 32**, you go to the right and then immediately right again to cross the Soča river using a wooden "Tibetan" bridge at **km 33.0**. Now you find a path on the left bank which is really spectacular.

At **km 34.5**, the road widens and is easier, then



the river makes a large bend towards the east and at **km 36.0** you reach the village of Log Čezsoški; from the road you can admire the Boka waterfall, one of the most spectacular in Europe with its height of 144 metres and its 18 metres in width.

Now the course of the river is wilder and quite fascinating, you keep to the orographic left until **km 41.8** – at Čezsoča - you cross the bridge: you are now in the Bovek plain, where the



Photo

1 Kobarid, Napoleonic bridge

2 The Soča Valley, Tolmin

3 River beach, Soča

4 Trnovo ob Soči, bridge over the Soča

5 Glimpse of the Soča

6 Kobarid, First World War Museum

source of the Soča can be found. At **km 43.7** you reach the beautiful centre inside the Triglav National Park, in front of the two beautiful Gothic churches.

The route is a cul-de-sac and you can turn back towards Kobarid which you reach at **km 67.0**, continuing to enjoy the green waters of the Soča.

USEFUL INFORMATION

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Tourist Office Kobarid

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Tourist Office Bovec

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Railway Stations

Most na Soči

First week 3rd day

The middle course of the Soča

Kobarid – Most na Soči – Kanal – Nova Gorica – Gorizia

Where the alpine breezes meet the perfumes of the Mediterranean

You start from Trg svobode, the main square in Kobarid which hosts the Gothic church of the Assumption: with your back to the church take the second road on the right, the winding Gregorčičeva ulica, which at **km 0.3** leads in front of the Kobarid Museum, entirely dedicated to the Soča front and the dramatic fighting which took place in the surroundings during the First World War. Don't miss this. Then you continue straight ahead, and with

a pleasant descent at **km 0.9** you reach the evocative stone Napoleonic bridge over the Soča river, you cross it turning immediately towards the right and following the orographic left: the beautiful panoramic road towards Tolmin crosses through small rural villages thanks to a narrow strip of asphalt which goes gently up and down. At **km 2.9** you pass through the centre of Ladra, with its refreshing fountain on the right, then at **km 7.1**, you are in Kamno



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 60,0 km

Starting point: Kobarid

Arrival: Nova Gorica

Conditions: mainly on asphalted roads with mixed traffic, with a good stretch of cycling route

Indications: absent

Inter-modality: train + bike



and then at **km 8.8** you pass through the tiny village of Selišče: later at **km 9.6** you can admire a beautiful isolated church on the left and at **km 10.1** the village of Volarje begins. Continue amidst cultivated fields with almost inexistent traffic and at **km 12.6** you approach Gabrje, while at **km 13.8** you reach the village of Dolje. After about 300 metres you find a fork and you keep to the right going towards Tolmin, you reach the church in Tolmin at **km 16.1**. At the traffic light in Mestni trg square continue straight on, downhill towards Dijaška ulica and continue until you reach the spectacular footbridge over the Tolminka river, which you cross (leading your bike by hand!) at **km 17.5**. From there you quickly reach the B road which first leads next to the characteristic Most na Soči lake, squeezed among the mountains, and then, at **km 21.2**, toward Tolminski Lom. Visit the interesting archaeological Museum, the church of Saint Lucy and the XII century chapel of Saint Maur and, returning in the



town centre, keep following the Soča on the left bank.

You pass a short, 500 mt, but steep slope to reach, turning right on the first intersection, the picturesque villages of Drobočnik , at **km 23.5**, and of Gorenji, at **km 26.0**. Follow a military road built during the Great War, whose surface conditions force you to get off the bike for a short distance. Look over the landscape of the valley to see the river flowing, the railroad

and the lush forests of beech. Then you meet the first houses and from now you pedal on an asphalted road , with practically no traffic. You enter the village of Avče, where at **km 31.2** you go towards Kanal.

Continue on this gently undulating road until you reach the elongated village of Bodrež and then at **km 36.1** you pass under the sign which marks the entry into Kanal, whose beautiful centre at **km 36.8** shows a clearly Baroque



influence. Don't miss Kontrada square with its Gothic House and the parish church of the Assumption built in 1431. The famous bridge over the Soča is the symbol of the town: with ancient origins, destroyed and rebuilt many times, also mentioned in Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*, it is at the centre of the social life of the town, so much so as to become the trampoline, from its height of seventeen metres, for a famous international diving competition.





Once you have crossed the bridge, you continue along the right bank keeping the railway tracks on the left for some time, then you pass the built up area of Anhovo. At **km 43.4** you pass in front of the Plave railway station, famous for being a theatre of the first, second, third and tenth battle of the Soča during the Great War. Shortly after, near Prilesje pri Plavah – at **km 45.4** – you set off beside the river on a spectacular gravel cycling path, which creates the illusion of cycling on water. Now the river is narrow, winding: it is certainly not by chance that it is well loved by the fans of sports like rafting, canyoning, hydro- speed, kayak ... The vegetation varies continuously from beech tree woodlands to more thermophilic formations and the aromas of the mountains now give way to Mediterranean essences. At **km 48.4** you cross the railway line and keep the tracks to your left until at **km 53.6** the majestic and impressive Solkan railway bridge appears,



reflected in the Soča: with its eighty-five metres in length it is the longest single arched stone bridge in the world. Then at **km 55.1** you cross the river reaching the centre of Solkan, a suburb of Nova Gorica. You soon reach the end of this stage and at **km 58.5**, at the impressive railway station, in Europe Square, located on the Transalpine line, just a few metres away from the Italian border. Just nearby – at Kostanjevica - there is the important cultural and



religious centre formed by the church of the Annunciation, a Franciscan convent and the tomb of the last Bourbon descendants as well as a vast library.

At **km 60.0** you are in the heart of Gorizia in via Roma: don't miss a visit to the Castle – symbol of the town -, the church of Saint Ignatius, the synagogue and the cathedral.



Photo

1 Solkan, railway bridge

2 Kostanjevica, church of the Annunciation

3 Kanal, diving competition from the bridge over the Soča

4 Prilesje, church of Sveti Ahac

5 Nova Gorica - Gorizia, Europa Square

6 The cycling path near Avče

USEFUL INFORMATION

Tourist Office Kanal

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Railway stations:

Most na Soči, Avče, Kanal, Anhovo, Solkan, Nova Gorica

First week 4th day

Crossing the Karst

Gorizia – Nova Gorica – Komen – Lipica

Discovering the Slovenian Karst: pleasant up and downhill ride, rich landscapes, perfumes and tastes of the Mediterranean

You start out from the centre of Gorizia and immediately head towards the frontier and at **km 1.2** you reach Europe square, divided between Italy and Slovenia, symbol of the fraternity between the two cities which were divided for so many years. Then you keep to the right and pedalling along narrow roads that skim the border at **km 3.1** you reach the centre of Šempeter (Saint Peter). Here there is the fifteenth century church of Saint Peter, the

Coronini Counts' castle and – further north – Villa Maffei. At **km 3.9** you go under an overpass and shortly after a nice cycling lane starts which at **km 8.5** reaches the centre of Miren, on the bank of the river Vipava – a tributary of the Soča – dominated by the wonderful sanctuary of Saint Grado in Merna, dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows. At **km 10.2**, at the foot of the sanctuary, you leave the asphalted road and turn right along a gravel road which winds



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 77 km

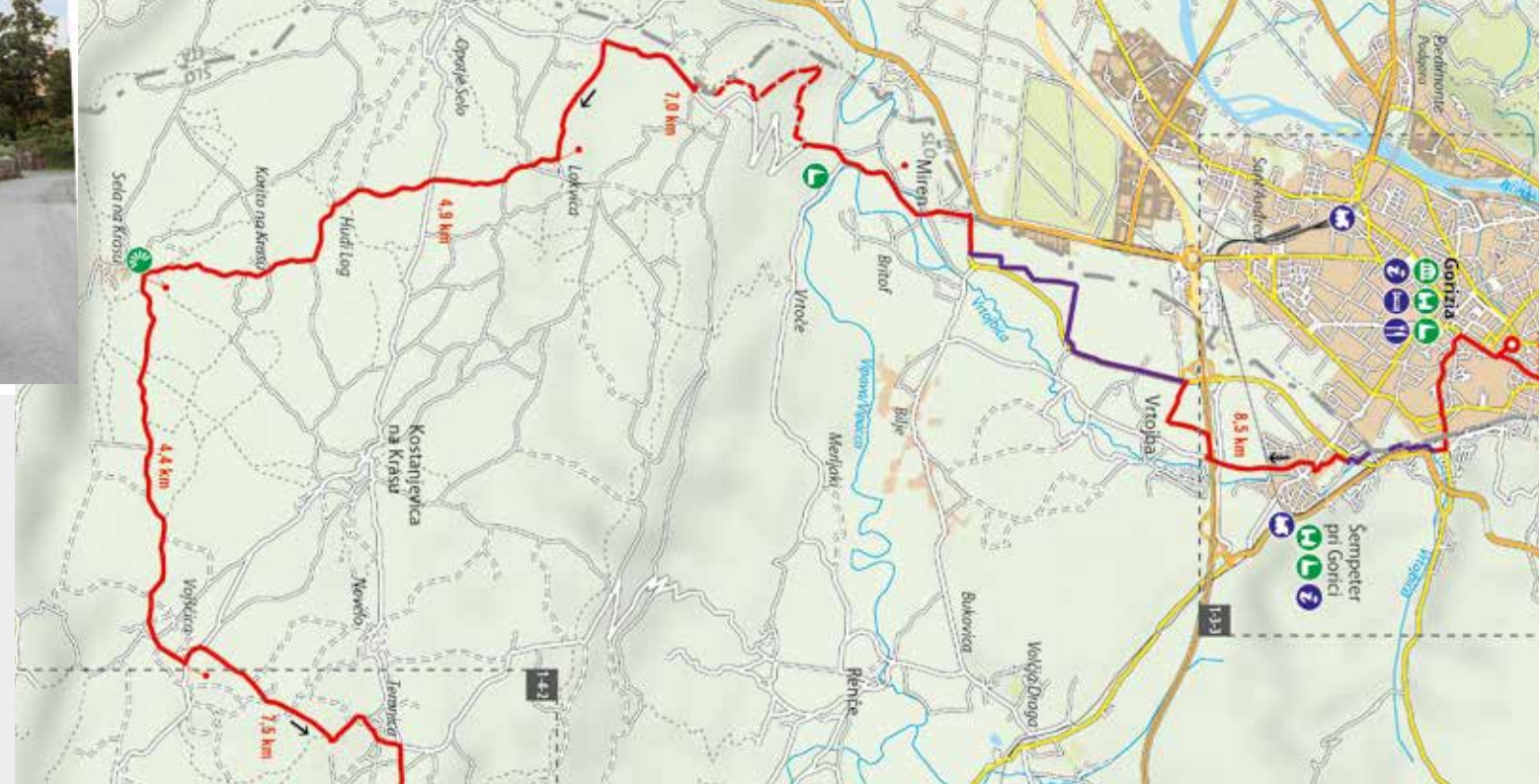
Starting point: Gorizia – Nova Gorica

Arrival: Lipica

Conditions: mainly on asphalted roads with mixed traffic and a cycling lane from Vrtojba to Miren. Some uphill. Be careful of the wind.

Indications: absent

Inter-modality: train + bike



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Railway stations

Gorizia, Nova Gorica, Šempeter pri Gorici, Štanjel,

Dutovlje, Sežana

into the green countryside. Then at **km 11.3**, arriving close to the Italian frontier, turn sharp left and go back up until **km 12.5** and return on the B road 614. Turn left at **km 14.3** towards Lokvica that you reach at **km 15.5**.

Pedalling amidst vineyards at **km 20.4** you reach Sela na Krasu (Saddle of the Trenches) where you can enjoy a spectacular view of the Gulf of Trieste: nature rules here, modelled by the Bora wind and enriched by unique colours,

which especially in Autumn, present us with glimpses of great vitality. At **km 24.8** you pass through Vojščica, then Temnica at **km 27.5**, Lipa at **km 29.7** and Škrbina at **km 32.3** where you can visit the painter Lojze Spacal's house; then at **km 35.2** the beautiful village of Sve-to appears with its church dedicated to Saint Egidio, one of the leading examples of sacred architecture in Slovenia. Now at **km 37.0** you reach Komen, which was an important ad-

ministrative centre in the western Karst region and which has, in the suburb of Gorjansko, an Austro-Hungarian military cemetery with more than ten thousand fallen from the First World War. You continue into the heart of the Karst – along narrow paths, open to traffic but with very little movement, surrounded by dry walls which seem to disappear into nowhere – until you cross the villages of Gabrovica pri Komnu at **km 40.2**, Pliskovica at **km 44.4** –

where there is a fine Youth Hostel – and Dutovlje at **km 49.6**, a famous wine making centre specialised in the production of Teran, a full bodied red wine. Alternatively you can reach Dutovlje also passing through the medieval town of Štanjel which with its castle and surrounding walls represents one of the most attractive tourist spots in the whole Karst area. The panoramic view of the Slovenian Karst continues, passing at **km 51.3** through Kreplje





and at **km 53.4** Tomaj, a village where you can visit Srečko Kosovel's birthplace house, he was one of the most important Slovenian poets. Then you pass through Utovlje at **km 56.0**, Grahovo Brdo at **km 57.5**, Štorje at **km 60.4**, Podbreže at **km 62.6**, Povir at **km 65.8** until you approach Sežana at **km 72.8**, this is the main economic centre of the Karst which hosts a botanical orchard that is over a hundred years old. Finally, at **km 77.0**, you reach the goal of today's trip, the famous Lipica, known all over the world as the place where horses from the famous Hapsburg stud farm have been bred since the XVI century, giving origin to the Lipizzaner horses. Here everything centres round the horse stables: courses, exhibitions, horseback excursions, carriage rides, visits to the historical stables.

Photo

1 Dutovlje, wine making centre

2 Štanjel, castle with surrounding walls



First week 5th day

The descent towards the Adriatic

Lipica – Škocjan – Koper - Portorož

*A slow gentle ride from the Karst to Istria,
with a visit to the spectacular Škocjan Caves*

From the Lipica golf course, you head east, then at **km 0.2** you turn left, passing a wooden fence and continue on a gravel path through the fields until **km 2.8** when you start pedalling on asphalt roads, just before the signpost marking the entrance to Lokev, a small town where you find an impressive stone tower, erected as defence from the Turkish invasions, today it hosts a fine collection of arms, uniforms and other military objects. Continue

along the main road, the 205, which you leave at **km 4.6** turning right towards Prelože, then you keep to the left and at **km 7.4** you go under the A1 motorway while at **km 9.4** you reach the entrance to the Škocjanske jame Park (the Skocjan Caves Park) – in the town of Divača – one of the greatest attractions in Slovenia.

This is one of the three Slovenian sites which have been declared world heritage sites by



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 61 km

Starting point: Lipica

Arrival: Portorož (Portorose)

Conditions: some stretches of gravel road, mainly on asphalted roads with light mixed traffic

Indications: partial (along the Parenzana cycling path)

Inter-modality: train + bike

Unesco: it is a complex system of caves and tunnels covered by stalactites and stalagmites shaped by the underground river Reka which, after more than 40 kilometres underground, flows into the Gulf of Trieste near Štivan (San Giovanni di Duino).

After this visit continue pedalling until you reach the village of Dane pri Divači at **km 10.7**, then Kačiče-Pared at **km 13.0** and finally Rodik with its railway station at **km 14.9**. Then you continue in the countryside also passing close to the motorway, until you get to the town of Kozina at **km 18.5** which is also crossed by another cycling route, the Trieste-Hrpolje (you will use this partly during the second day of the second week as it crosses the splendid Rižana valley), along the former Trieste-Ljubljana railway line. At **km 19.8** you pass under the motorway and immediately turn right taking the road for Ocizla and Klanec, then at **km 21.2** you start pedalling through the elongated village of Klanec and at **km 22.3** you pass under





the signpost for Ocizla. At this point keep to the left and at **km 23.6** you go under the motorway once again, going close to Petrinje: at **km 24.6** you leave the wide 409 road and take one on the left, asphalted, which at **km 31.5** leads to the beautiful town of Črni Kal, nestled in the green from where the white church of St. Valentine stands out. The gate of Benko House is also interesting to see, this is the oldest farmhouse in Slovenia. Now the road descends with wide bends – at **km 34.3** you pass in front of the small church and cemetery in Stepani – to then wind into the Rižana river valley, which you ride alongside for some time until reaching, at **km 40.9**, the tracks of the old narrow gauge Parenzana railway line that connected Trieste to Poreč in 123 kilometres. It went out of use in 1935, and a few years ago it was transformed into a cycling route (D8 cycling route) “Parenzana: road of health and friendship”. Pedalling on this good cycling route at **km 43.2** you reach the Škocjanski zatok Nature Re-





Photo

1 Lipica, horses grazing

2 Škocjan, Škocjanske jame caves

serve, greatest salt marsh area in Slovenia and then at **km 46** you reach Koper (Capodistria) with its splendid historical town centre. Now a spectacular cycling route starts along the sea-shore, with the B road on the left and the rocks on the right (be careful as it is two-way...), until you reach the other beautiful town of Izola

USEFUL INFORMATION

Tourist Office Equile di Lipica

Lipica 5, 6210 Sežana, tel. +386 05 7391580
info@lipica.org, www.lipica.org

Park Škocjanske jame

Škocjan 2, 6215 Divača, tel. +386 05 7082110
psj.info@psj.gov.si, www.park-skocjanske-jame.si

Tourist Office Koper

Titov trg 3, 6000 Koper
tel. +386 05 6646403, tic@koper.si, www.koper.si

Tourist Office Izola

Ljubljanska ulica 17, 6310 Izola
tel. +386 05 6401050, tic.izola@izola.si, www.izola.eu

Tourist Office Portorož

Obala 16, 6320 Portorož, tel. +386 05 6742220
ticpo@portoroz.si, www.portoroz.si

Tourist Office Piran

Tartinijev trg 2, 6330 Piran
tel. +386 05 6734440, ticpi@portoroz.si
www.portoroz.si

Railway stations

Divača, Hrpelje-Kozina, Koper

Ferries: the Trieste-Rovinj line is active in July and August five times a week with a stop at Piran (Pirano)
The number of bikes allowed on board is limited

(Isola) at **km 53.0**, this also has a clear Venetian influence.

The cycling path abandons the coastline, you go through the tunnel of the former railway line and at **km 59.1** you reach Strunjan, with its local natural reserve, located in the former salt mine area, a strategic place together with

the other Sečovelje salt mines, on the other side of the headland, where you can find Piran (Pirano) and Portorož (Portorose).

At **km 61.3** a second tunnel allows us to reach Porotož (Portorose), a famous tourist resort in Slovenian Istria – in the municipality of Piran – with a centuries old spa tradition.



First week 6th day

Along the Parenzana

Portorož – Koper – Trieste

Along the Istrian coast to the Gulf of Trieste

You start from the picturesque seafront of Portorož (Portorose), right in front of the majestic hotel Kempinski Palace, which brings to mind the refined atmosphere of the beginning of the twentieth century, with a touch of Liberty and Austro-Hungarian style, typical of this seaside resort, which has been specialised in spas for over a century.

Looking at the sea you head left and turn left at the second road, at **km 0.3**, following the signs

for the Auditorium, then you head left again and immediately to the right onto a road called Senča pot. Now you go slightly uphill and at **km 0.8** you get onto the wonderful Parenzana cycling route which you will follow for some kilometres and that winds into the green countryside. This is the old railway line with a narrow gauge that from 1902 connected Trieste to Poreč, for a distance of 123 kilometres. This was no longer used after 1935, and a few years ago



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 43 km

Starting point: Portorož (Portorose)

Arrival: Trieste

Conditions: almost everywhere there are good separate cycling lanes, with a few stretches of mixed traffic near Trieste

Indications: present

Inter-modality: bike + boat (from Muggia to Trieste)





it was transformed into the much appreciated Parenzana cycling route (D8). Immediately after this there is the Valeta tunnel, an illuminated tunnel, 550 metres long, that leads towards Strunjan, where the salt mines can be found, you can admire the view of these from above, included in the Strunjan Nature Reserve. You continue, overlooking the coast from an elevated position, pedalling among vineyards

and cultivated fields, led by the many signs indicating the cycling route. At **km 5.4** there is another tunnel, about 200 metres long and then you are on the outskirts of Izola (Isola) which you reach at **km 8.0**. You must visit the historical centre where there are clear signs of a Venetian influence, with the church of Saint Maur, the Town Hall, some beautiful Gothic structures and the inevitable lions of St. Mark, sign of the Serenissima domination which last-





Photo

1 Sečovlje salt mines, the Parenzana cycling path

2 Koper - Capodistria, former salt warehouse

3 Koper - Capodistria, Praetorian Palace

4 Trieste, Grand Canal

5 Strunjan - Strugnano, tunnel on the Parenzana cycling path

6 Trieste, Unity of Italy Square

ed for centuries. Returning to the Parenzana, at **km 9.0**, the most spectacular part of the stage begins: you enjoy the panorama from an elevated position over the blue sea, with a view over the vast Gulf of Trieste. However, you must pay attention when you pass other cyclists. Then at **km 13.5** – at Žusterna - you reach the historical centre of Koper (Capodistria), which can be recognised by its characteristic high bell-tower. You can visit the historical town

centre which is so much like a little Venice, with its narrow cobblestone roads, the solemn Gothic-Renaissance style Praetorian Palace, the town loggia, the Carmine Baptistery and the Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary. Then you return to the Parenzana which at **km 17.3** leads you close to the wonderful Škocjanski Zatok Nature Reserve, the biggest salt marsh area in Slovenia, famous for its great variety of flora and fauna.

You continue up the beautiful valley of the Rižana river, which offers us wonderful views and the play of reflections on the water: pedalling along the well signed cycling route you reach, slightly uphill, the city of Škofije, at **km 24.3** then at **km 26.0** you pass through the Rabula border.

You continue, cutting across the headland where you find Muggia and at **km 29.1** the cycling path comes to an end – at the estuary of

the Ospo river - about 2 km east of the centre of Muggia. From here you head towards Trieste with mixed traffic (be careful!) reaching the spectacular Unità d'Italia square at **km 43.0** where you will finish your ride that has led from the Julian Alps to the Adriatic coast in six stages.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Tourist Office Portorož

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Tourist Office Piran

Tartinijev trg 2, 6330 Piran, tel. +386 05 6734440
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Tourist Office Izola

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Tourist Office Koper

Titov trg 3, 6000 Koper
tel. +386 05 6646403 tic@koper.si, www.koper.si

IAT Muggia

Via Roma 20, Muggia, tel. + 39 040 273259

INFOPOINT Trieste

Via dell'Orologio 1, tel. +39 040 3478312
info.trieste@turismo.fvg.it

Ferries: the Muggia-Trieste line is active every day (limited number of bikes), tel. 800 016675
www.triestetrasporti.it

Second week's journey

THE ROAD OF THE SERENISSIMA

Portorož – Koper – Trieste – Venezia

Bike and boat among beaches and the lagoon

This amphibian route leads into the territories of the Serenissima and connects gulfs and lagoons, small islands and extraordinary archaeological sites. To “savour” this salty atmosphere even better and gather its rarefied nature from the inside, with thinned out landscapes, fishing villages, you have the possibility to use some boat transfers which make this stage particularly evocative.

You leave Istria, immediately reaching Trieste, then just near Monfalcone you get to the estuaries of the Timav and Soča rivers, characterised by extraordinary natural environments which merit a careful and in depth visit (The Regional Natural Reserve of the Soča Estuary, The Nature Oasis of Caneo and the Cavanatta Valley Regional Nature Reserve).

The pleasant alternation between wonderful nature areas and places which are interesting from a historical, architectural and archaeological point of view is guaranteed by the visit to the histor-



Photo

1 Portorož - Portorose, Landscape

2 Venice-Mestre, San Giuliano Park

ical centre of Grado with its extraordinary early Christian monuments; then a new cycling path leads to the nearby site of Aquileia, a jewel of Roman and Byzantine art with mosaics that you absolutely must see. Continue your tour visiting the more modern little town of Torviscosa, to then cross the wonderful area of the Marano lagoon, until you reach the seaside resort of Lignano Sabbiadoro. It is then time to enter the Veneto region, passing through recently reclaimed land until passing by Concordia Sagittaria, one of the best archaeological areas in the region, and then you are nearby Portogruaro, a beautiful centre along the banks of the Lemene river, enriched by the picturesque mills and by important Gothic palaces. Then you pedal next to the river network which corresponds to the Veneto coast, along the seashore cycle paths which touch important rich pine-woods, natural oasis (the Mort lagoon) and great beaches like Caorle, Eraclea, Jesolo, Cavallino and Punta Sabbioni. The itinerary finishes with an unforgettable ride next to the water across the islands of Venice – the Lido of Venice, Malamocco, Alberoni, Pellestrina and San Pietro in Volta – connected by ferries, to reach as far as Ca' Roman, opposite Chioggia. Obviously from here you are advised to go on an excursion by ferry to Venice (preferably without your bike so that you have more freedom of movement).

Second week 1st day

The Gulf of Trieste

Portorož – Koper – Muggia – Trieste

Pedalling along the seafront on a cycling path to reach the town

To get from the spectacular Istrian coast into the pulsating heart of Trieste, we advise you to use the sea route, which will get you from Muggia to the main town in the Julian area which offers the breath-taking sight of the city surrounded by a sort of amphitheatre overhanging the gulf. For references to the cycling route from Portorož (Portorose) to Muggia - passing by the Strunjan salt mines and the splendid towns of Izola (Isola) and Koper (Capodistria) – see the

description relative to the sixth stage of the first week of the journey. Once you reach **km 29.1**, at the end of the Parenzana cycling route, at the estuary of the Osopo river, turn left and at **km 30.8** you reach the picturesque historical centre of Muggia. Here you must have a good visit at the small port (Mandracchio), the old circle of walls with the gates topped by lions of St. Mark and the castle which overlooks the city and – for those of you who are



1



2

Photo

1 Trieste, Miramare Castle

2 Portorož - Portorose, beaches

ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 31 km (to Muggia)

Starting point: Portorož (Portorose)

Arrival: Trieste

Conditions: a good separate cycling path almost everywhere

Indications: present

Inter-modality: bike + boat (from Muggia to Trieste)

better trained – the old sanctuary of Saint Mary of the Assumption which dates back to the XIII century. Then you can catch the convenient ferry (limited number of bikes) which takes you to Trieste while enjoying spectacular views. Once you get off you are immediately in the heart of the city – Unità d'Italia square - surrounded by

USEFUL INFORMATION

Tourist Office Portorož (Portorose)

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Tourist Office Izola (Isola)

Ljubljanska ulica 17, 6310 Izola/Isola

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Tourist Office Koper (Capodistria)

Titov trg 3, 6000 Koper, tel. +386 05 6646403

tic@koper.si, www.koper.si

IAT Tourist Office Muggia

Via Roma 20, 34015 Muggia, tel. + 39 040 273259

INFOPOINT Trieste

Via dell'Orologio 1, tel. +39 040 3478312

info.trieste@turismo.fvg.it

FVG TOURISM AGENCY

tel. 800016044 (toll free number from Italy)

tel. + 39 0431 387130

Trieste railway station: piazza della Libertà 8

Trieste, www.trenitalia.com

Ferries: the Muggia-Trieste line is active daily (limited number of bikes) tel. 800 016675

www.triestetrasporti.it

numerous palaces and public buildings like the Trieste Town Hall, the building of the Regional Council of Friuli Venezia Giulia and the Prefecture, as well as historical coffee houses. There are so many interesting places to visit in this town where you can still breath the air of Central Europe, from the Revoltella Museum to the

Natural History Museum, from the Museum of the Sea to the Town Theatre, from the Cathedral of Saint Justus to the synagogue, from the Serbian-Orthodox church of Saint Spyridon to the Greek Orthodox church of Saint Nicholas, from the Miramare Castle to the Saint Justus castle, from the Roman Theatre to Richard's Arch.

Second week 2nd day

Between the Karst and the sea

Trieste – Duino – Monfalcone – Grado

Pedalling between land and water, sea and lagoon, canals and groves of reeds

Let's be honest: we advise the less trained cyclists to avoid the first part – where you go back up the Karst – spectacular but a little difficult, and to go to Monfalcone by train (a journey of 23 minutes). Also because otherwise the distance becomes greater ...

Having said this, for the more daring you start from Unità d'Italia square and pedal along the city streets passing through Campo Marzio and heading towards Rione San Giacomo,

perched up on the first high ground. At **km 5.8** you reach via Ponziana and the info-point at the start of the new cycling-pedestrian path in Val Rosandra, named after Giordano Cottur the champion from Trieste, on the nineteenth century Trieste-Hrpelje railway line. There are a lot of explanatory signposts.

You start on asphalt, slightly uphill but not too steep; you are still in Trieste, in the middle of the city life, then two road crossings appear



1

ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 100 km from Trieste (40 km from Monfalcone using the train service from Trieste to Monfalcone)

Starting point: Trieste

Arrival: Grado

Conditions: some long stretches are on protected cycling paths (Trieste – Draga S. Elia and Punta Sdobba-Grado), others on mixed traffic roads

Indications: present on Grado route

Inter-modality: bike + train





quite quickly, one after the other. Now the area becomes wilder, the noticeable green areas start to appear with orchards and fruit gardens, you can see all this at **km 7.9** from a viaduct with numerous arches; then at **km 8.7** you find the bicycle help point Aerre (tel. +39 040 8438095).

At **km 9.8** you go under the motorway and at **km 10.1** you go over it: on the left there is the large building of Cattinara Hospital. This is



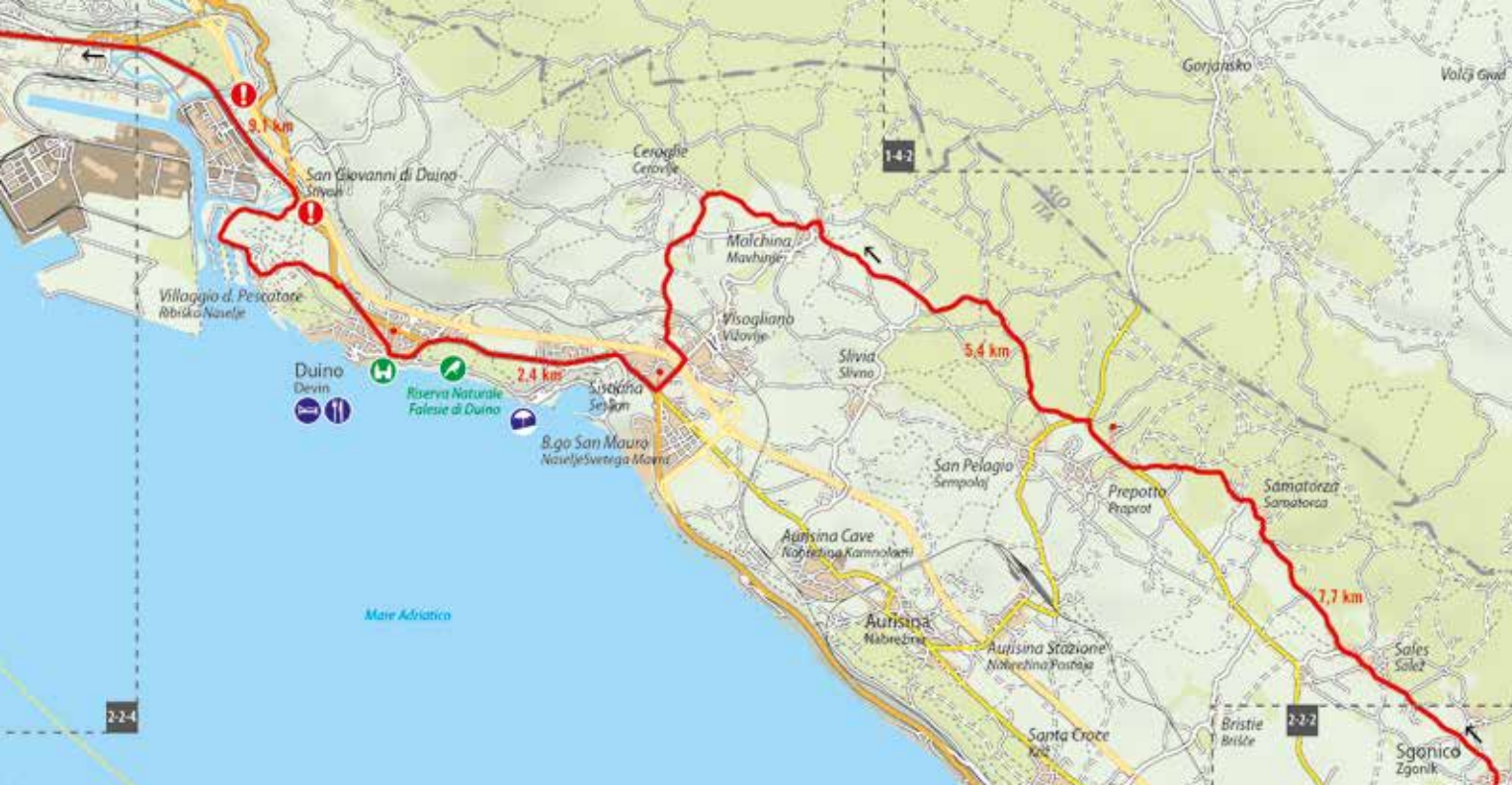
where the gravel part begins. You go back up the wild Rosandra valley – the route of an ancient spice and salt road – going through some tunnels illuminated on the ground; pedalling along this enchanted woodland, at **km 12.5** you pass in front of the old Sant'Antonio-Mocò railway station. On the other side of the valley you can enjoy the view of a small church – Holy Mary in Siaris – clinging to a rock spur. At **km 16.6** you reach Draga Sanit Elijah, the last

town in Italian territory on the cycling route, here a cool fountain greets you. Now you leave the cycling path (which continues into Slovenia and with another 6 km leads to the town of Hrpelje-Kosina) and at a crossroad – at **km 18.0** – you turn left towards Basovizza which you reach at **km 20.8**. At this point you enter the heart of the Karst plateau: at **km 25.5** you ride next to the Nature Center of Basovizza of the FVG Region. Then



at **km 27.2** you pass Trebiciano, followed by Opicina, Borgo Grotto Gigante [town of the Giant Grotto] (**km 34.1**), Rupinpiccolo (**km 37.0**) and Sgonico (**km 38.8**). You are now on the edge of the Karst plateau and descend towards Prepotto (**km 44.7**) reaching the sea at Sistiana (**km 52.5**), a place which is well-known for its castle, also for the spectacular Regional Nature Reserve of the Duino Cliffs as well as for the panoramic Rilke Path.

Continue to Villaggio del Pescatore and at **km 55.9** you arrive at the Timav estuary, officially entering the Bisiacaria, the historical region between the estuaries of the Timav and the Soča (an uncertain word history says that this derives from the Latin *bis aquae*) with its own traditions, history, culture and language. At **km 61.6** you are in the centre of Monfalcone, at the beautiful little harbour of Nazario Sauro. Here a very pleasant cycling path starts which touches three very important nature areas: The Regional Nature Reserve Estuary of the Soča,



the Nature Oasis of Caneo and the Cavanata Valley Regional Nature Reserve.

The cycling path runs parallel to the B road and at **km 64.1** you pass the Roncola canal and enter the salt marshes of the Cavana river. Then at **km 64.7** turn right and following the indications for Marina Julia, you reach the sea. Then you ride alongside the Quarantia canal, at **km 72.4** you reach the bridge which crosses the Soča; and you continue on the main road no. 19 and you reach the Isonzato canal. Then you turn left following the bank which leads to expanses of fields up until Punta Sdobba. Carry on along a mixed road which sees quite heavy traffic, keeping alongside the course of the Isonzato canal, now more winding, to reach at **km 83.1** the Soča estuary. You are now in the spectacular nature reserve of the Caneo Oasis, a large extension of reed beds among mud-flats and sandbanks at the estuary, with many sandy islands inhabited by numerous varieties of birds (more than 300 species, eighty of





USEFUL INFORMATAION

Infopoint Grado

Viale Dante Alighieri 66, 34073 Grado
tel. +39 0431 877111, info.grado@turismo.fvg.it

Trieste Railway Station

Piazza della Libertà 8, 34135 Trieste, www.trenitalia.com

Monfalcone Railway Station: Piazza della Stazione 1,
34074 Monfalcone, www.trenitalia.com

which nest there). You then go along a spectacular river bank where there is a blending of the noise of the backwash, the smell of the sea, the view of the Istrian coast and the never-ending expanse of the Bonifica della Vittoria (Victory Land Reclamation). At **km 87.6** you turn left alongside the Averso canal and the splendid Nature Reserve of the Cavanata valley (with a visitors' centre at **km 90.2**).

At **km 91.4** turn left and the cycling path runs

next to the B road, continuing along the coast, where you can find a lot of camp sites and also a golf course. At **km 96.4** you find the signpost indicating the entrance to Grado, continue on the cycling path and at **km 98.5** after looking out over the lagoon, you reach the Isola delle Ciove; continue on the jetty along the Foscolo and Slataper banks and then at **km 100.0** you are in the centre of Grado. You must see the early Christian Cathedral of Saint Euphemia, the fifth century baptistery and the early Christian Cathedral of Saint Mary of Graces.

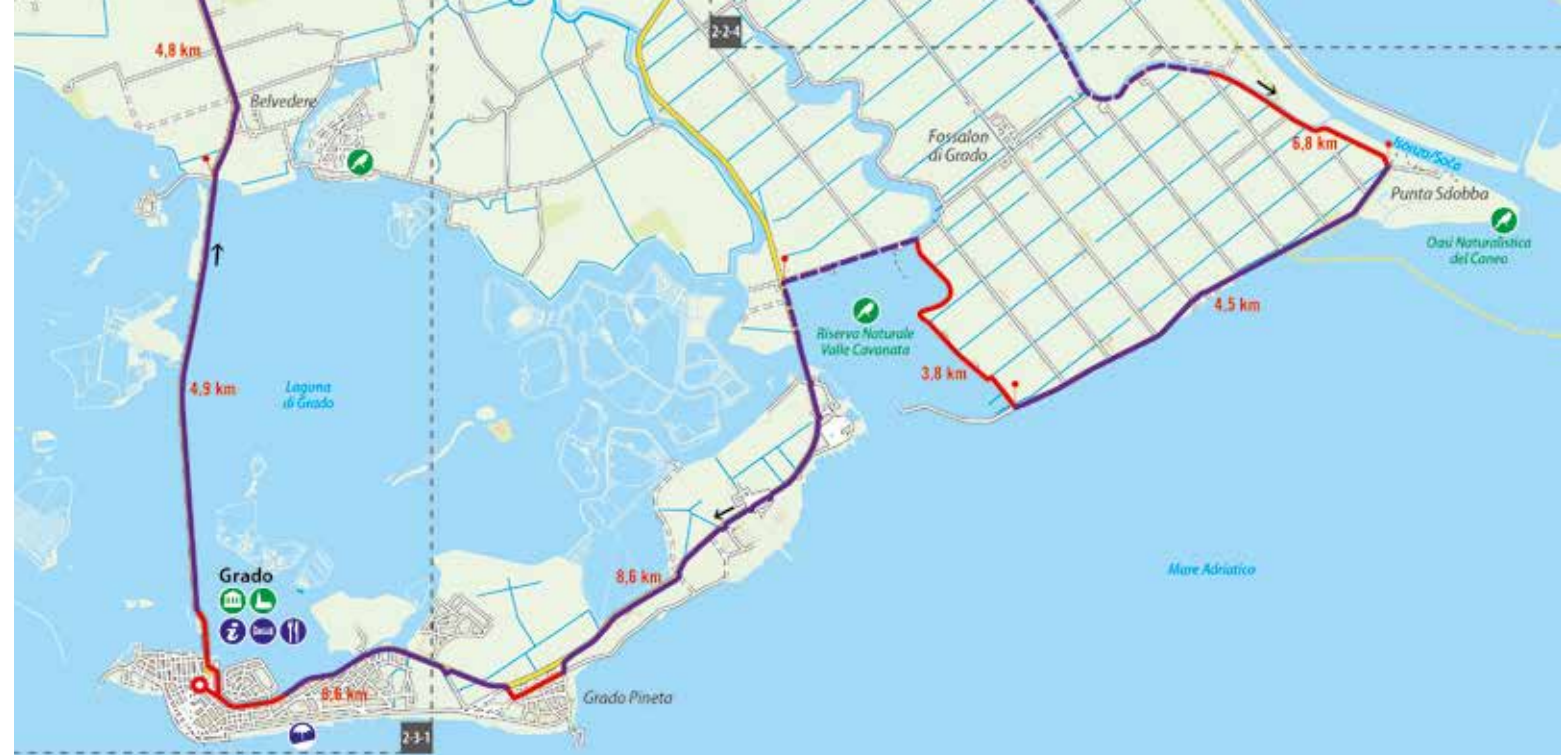
Photo

1 Duino Castle, panoramic view

2 Grado, lagoon

3 Trieste, Audace pier

4 Duino, view of the Karst towards Slovenia



Second week 3rd day

The Grado and Marano Lagoon

Grado – Aquileia – Lignano Sabbiadoro

From Grado and Aquileia to the Marano lagoon and the estuary of the Tagliamento river near Lignano Sabbiadoro

This stage can be carried out in two ways: using some spectacular boat rides or entirely on two wheels. In the first case, both at Aquileia, both at Terzo d'Aquileia, in the Salmastro area, you can find a boat & bike service for Marano (for reservations contact phone numbers provided from Infopoint of Aquileia). In the second case just follow the itinerary described here below. You leave Grado crossing the bridge across the

lagoon, on a cycling path until **km 4.9** where you arrived on the mainland at Belvedere, where there is a centuries old pine-wood. The quite recent cycling path starts here, passing through Aquileia, Cervignano arriving at Palmanova: a real *greenway*, as it uses the land of the early nineteenth century Cervignano-Belvedere railway, which, together with the ferry service, made it possible to reach the cen-



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 82 km

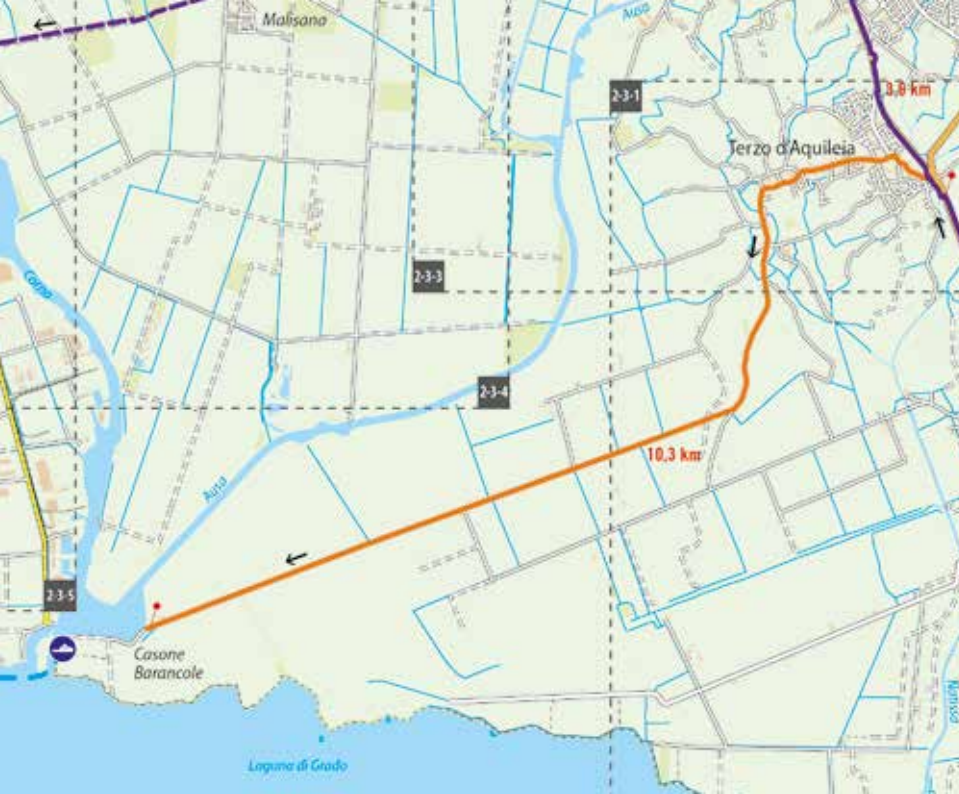
Starting point: Grado

Arrival: Lignano Sabbiadoro

Conditions: a long stretch of cycling path from Grado to Cervignano, then the route progresses on very light traffic roads (except Cervignano-Torviscosa East)

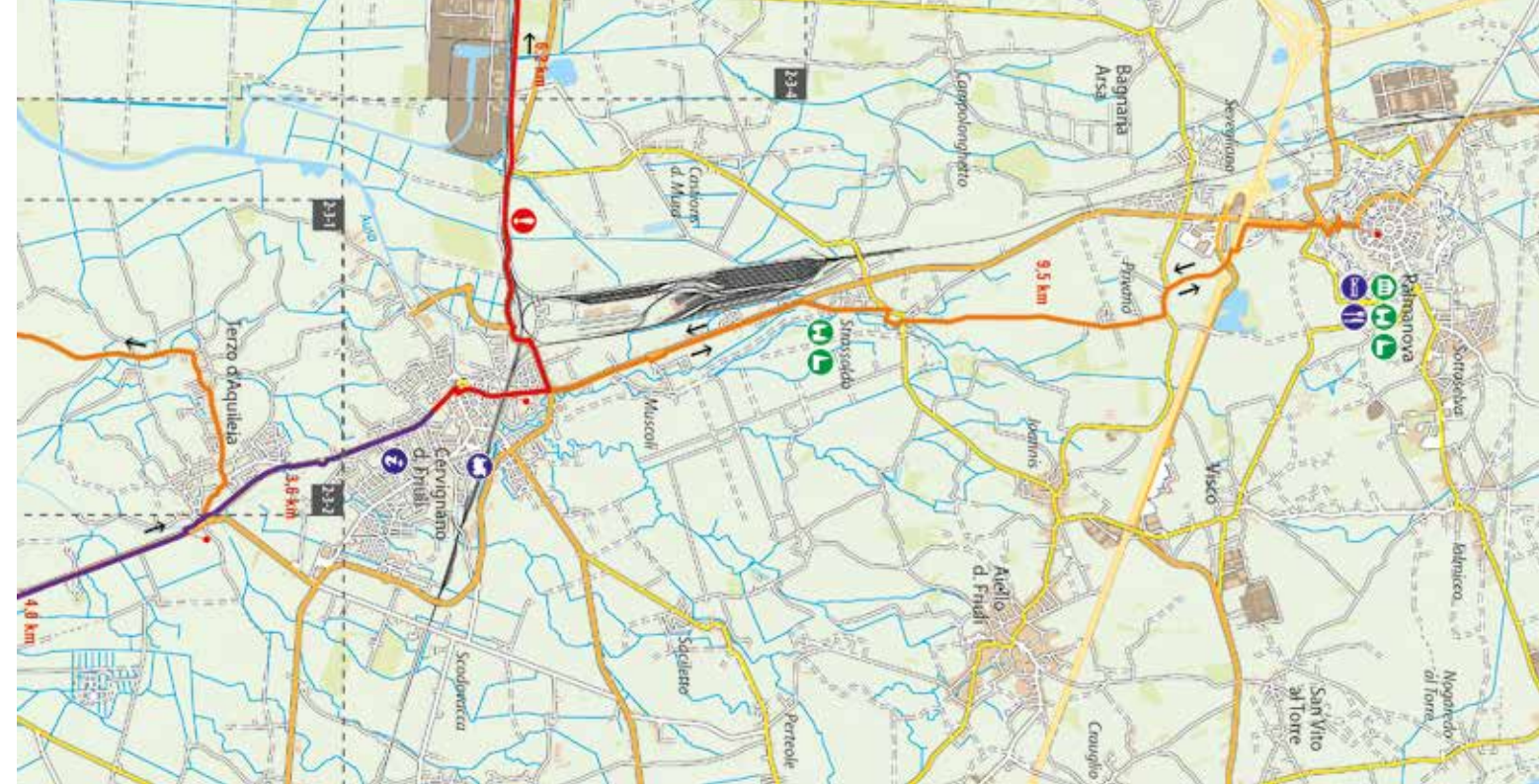
Inter-modality: bike + boat

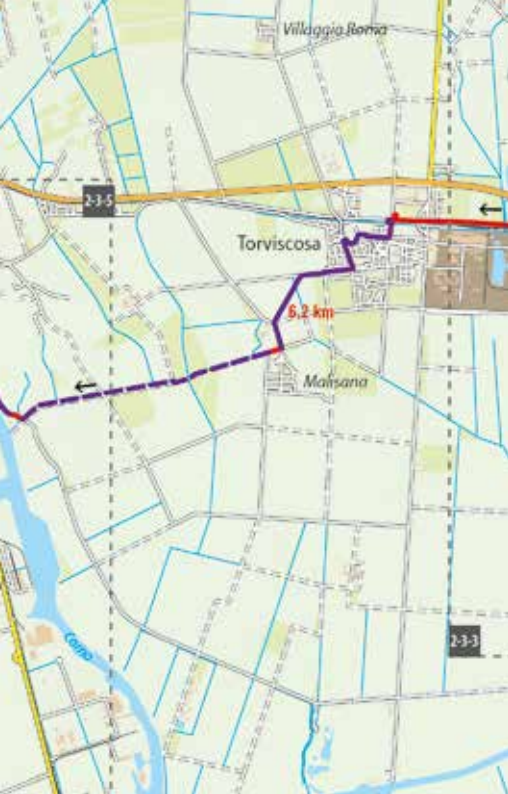




tre of Grado. The cycling path is well indicated, flows nicely and is safe – it runs next to the main road until **km 9.7** where it turns slightly towards the right to enter the town of Aquileia, announced by the cathedral bell tower, like a lighthouse in the Friuli countryside.

This is one of the most interesting archaeological sites in Italy, a rich empire in Roman times, an administrative centre during the X Reign (*Venetia et Histria*), Aquileia took on a very important role with Christianity, becoming the largest diocese during the entire period of the Middle Ages. Don't miss the mosaics on the floor of the cathedral, the archaeological walk, the Holy Road of the river port, the National Archaeological Museum and the Roman forum. Carry straight on, next to the B road once again and at **km 13.7** – at the entrance to the town of Terzo d'Aquileia – you cross the B road and follow the cycling path which is on the other side, riding next to the river Terzo. At **km 13.9** you arrive at the picturesque port and the





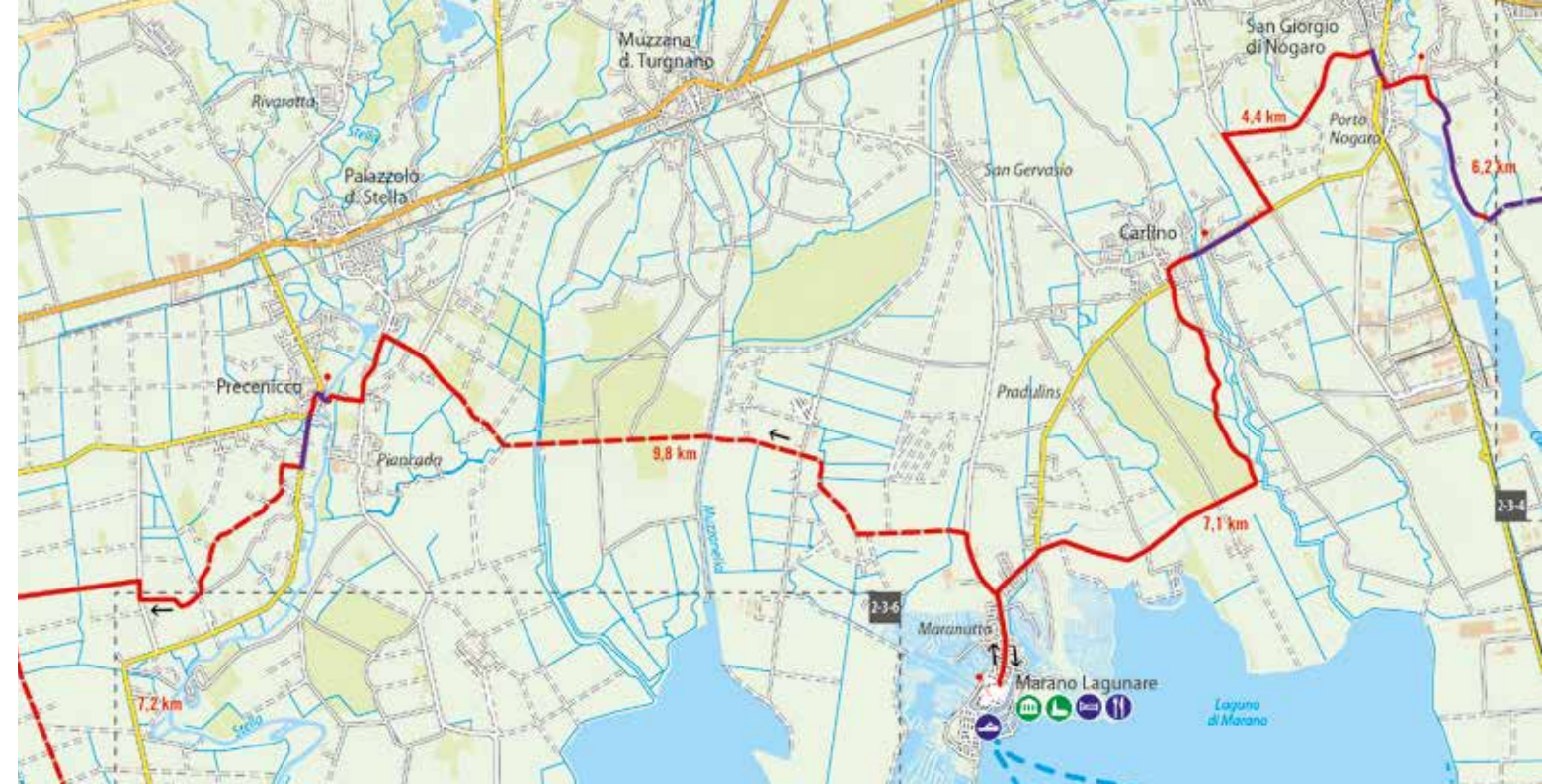
footpath over the river. The cycling path immediately returns next to the main road until it reaches the large town of Cervignano, where at **km 17.1** you cross the Ausa river. The town is an important railway junction and still has some wonderful villas; continuing north you can reach Strassoldo with two castles and the star-shaped city of Palmanova.

At **km 17.3** you pass under the railway, then at **km 17.7** you turn left onto the SS 14 Triestina (main road) and head towards Torviscosa which you reach at **km 23.5** after leaving the main road. Don't miss a visit to the small urban town which was built after important land reclamation work at the end of the 1930's to host the workers in the local factory where cellulose was worked and artificial fibre cloth was produced. This is a great urban example of rationalism during the Fascist period.

Continue in the reclaimed land, pedalling alongside artificial canals, natural canals and waterways until you pass the Corno river at

km 29.7, at Villanova di Nogara and the Zelli-na river at **km 34.1** at Carlino, heading south towards the Marano lagoon. Following the clear signposts, at **km 41.2** you reach Marano Lagunare, a large fishing town which gives its name to the lagoon. The town was dominated by the Serenissima for centuries, and you can clearly feel the Venetian influence in its main buildings, that is the Loggia, the Palace of the Proveditors and the thousand year old Tower; the eighteenth century church dedicated to Saint Martin is also interesting. The itinerary continues for a couple of kilometres towards the north to then turn towards the west crossing the Cormor canal at **km 46.2** and the Stella river at **km 51.0** reaching the centre of Prece-nicco.

Now you pedal along secondary roads going south, you reach the main road no. 56 and then the lagoon of Marano, approaching the really interesting Foci della Stella Nature Reserve. Then you ride alongside the lagoon again in a





very evocative atmosphere: marshland vegetation, sandbanks, fishing *casoni* with their typical thatched roofs, small boats, fishing nets. At **km 67.8** you reach the small town of Aprilia Marittima and then head towards the beautiful peninsula where Lignano Sabbiadoro rises between the sea and the lagoon, in the 1960's it became one of the most well-known resorts on the Adriatic. You are now north of the river Tagliamento estuary. At **km 72.8** you pass by

the Lignano Golf Club and then you ride alongside the Tagliamento, turning left into Lungomare R. Riva at Lignano Riviera, continue passing through Lignano Pineta and at **km 82.1** you reach the Lignano Sabbiadoro boatyard, near the lighthouse and the harbour mouth.

Photo

- 1 Grado, cycling path along the lagoon
- 2 Aquileia, archaeological area
- 3 Marano, *casoni* in the lagoon

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Infopoint Aquileia
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info.aquileia@turismo.fvg.it

Infopoint Lignano Sabbiadoro
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tel. +39 0431 71821, info.lignano@turismo.fvg.it

SAF – Società autoservizi FVG
Free telephone 800 915303 (from land line)
tel. +39 0432 524406 (from mobile), numeroverde@saf.ud.it

Boat service
Private service. Ask the Tourist Office Friuli Venezia Giulia for information



Second week 4th day

Along the Lemene

Lignano Sabbiadoro - Caorle - Concordia Sagittaria – Portogruaro

From the pine-woods to the Roman Julia Concordia

You leave the Lignano peninsula pedalling along the busy main road of the well-known tourist resort and crossing the three centres, Sabbiadoro, Pineta and Riviera, at **km 8.2** you cross the bridge over the Tagliamento river which leads into the province of Venice. So here you are, at **km 9.5**, at Bevazzana, at the entrance to Bibione, a quite recently created tourist and spa resort with one of the busiest beaches in Italy, with its splendid pine woods

near the lighthouse. It has a rich natural patrimony, including the precious hyper-spa water which gushes at 52 degrees, used in the spas. In via Litoranea, from **km 10.4**, the itinerary begins to run alongside the Val Grande National Park following the Lugugnana canal, until you cross the bridge with the locks over the canal itself, at **km 13.9**. You find yourself amidst swans and the characteristic *casoni* – old thatched wooden huts, used by fishermen –



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 45.2 km

Starting point: Lignano Sabbiadoro

Arrival: Portogruaro

Conditions: almost all the route is on mixed traffic roads, some nice stretches on cycling paths

Indications: present

Inter-modality: bike + boat

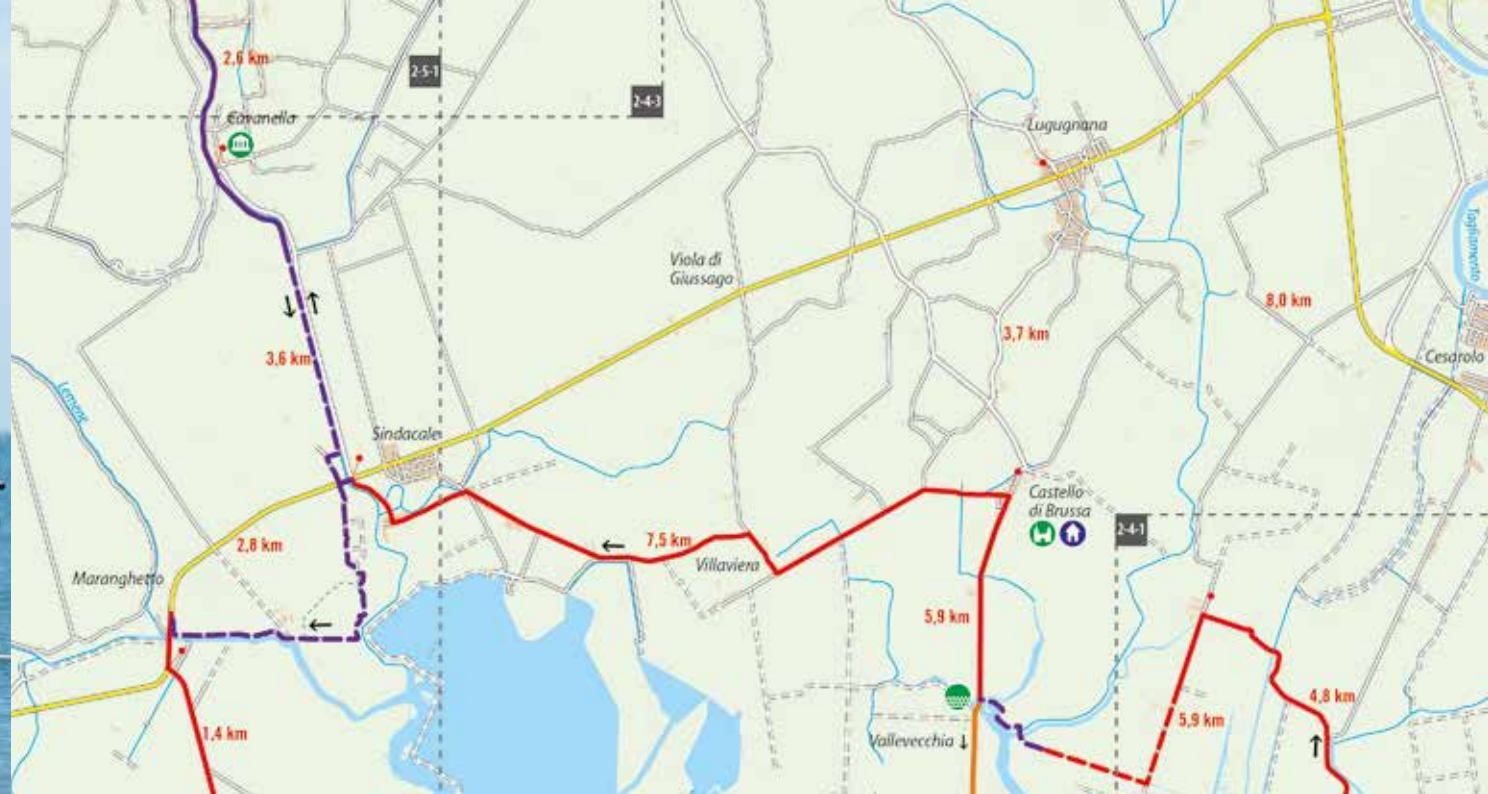


with places where boats can be moored, boats and wooden bridges; you also go through never-ending stretches of fields.

Now the itinerary goes along narrow paths which wind into a vast territory which was reclaimed at the beginning of the twentieth century and which transformed the marshy land into stretches of fields where the famous white asparagus of Bibione is cultivated. At **km 15.7** you turn right into via Valpelina, which leads you to Terzo Bacino at **km 18.2**, then the narrow path leads you across an iron bridge at **km 21.6** and at **km 22.5** you turn into via Pradis. Here you turn left and continue straight ahead until you cross a canal at **km 24.3** and immediately turn left onto a gravel path. At **km 25.7** a very newly created cyclist bridge leads across a stream and at **km 26.3** you turn right into via Brussa, heading north in the direction of Castello di Brussa which you will reach at **km 28.4** and where you can also find a youth hostel which is open in the summer; nearby

there is the nature area called Vallevecchia (or Brussa) which merits a thorough visit to see its thick Mediterranean pine-woods and a beautiful nature beach. We really advise you to make the detour (about 9 km each way): this is a vast area, about 900 hectares in all, partly cultivated and partly redeveloped. There is the possibility of going by boat from Bibione Pineda to Valle Vecchia.

Then you go back to the road heading towards Sindacale, pedalling along via Villaviera and skimming the offshoots of the Caorle lagoon; at **km 35.8** you arrive at Sindacale, turn left onto the B road 42 Jesolana (be careful!), after 50 metres you turn right to head north along via Lame, a well marked up road with the cycling signs "GiraLemene". After a short while the road becomes gravel, then at **km 38.9** it runs alongside the Nicesolo canal and at **km 39.5** you reach the point where the course flows into the Lemene river, at Cavanella where there is a small ethnographic collection in the





3

former primary school, relative to domestic and artisan activities, clothes, free time and games. Continue along the left bank heading towards Concordia Sagittaria: here there is a wonderful natural context, with weeping willows reflected in the river, pedalling along a cycling path next to the B road 68. At **km 42.2** you turn left crossing the bridge over the river and you enter the historical centre of Concordia Sagittaria,



4

one of the most interesting archaeological areas in the whole Veneto region. It is the Roman colony of Iulia Concordia, which arose in 42 BC, at the crossroads of the two consular roads Annia and Postumia: in the III and IV centuries it was the seat of an important arrow factory (*sagittae*) becoming a bastion of the eastern frontier. An archaeological itinerary allows you to visit the most interesting Roman and Late Antiquity finds, that

is the remains of the Roman bridge, the site of the theatre, the complex of the early Christian cathedrals, the remains of some Roman *domus* with mosaic floors, the great cathedral of St. Stephen the Martyr, the XI century baptistery which holds a very impressive series of frescoes, the fifteenth century Bishop's Palace and the Town Hall where you can visit an interesting exhibition of archaeological finds. You continue straight on along via Claudia and at **km 43.3** you cross the Lemene once again, then you turn left and pedal along a cycling path on the left bank until **km 44.4** crossing it once more using a footbridge. Then you turn right and then left along Borgo San Giovanni, to finally reach, at **km 45.2**, the heart of Portogruaro, in piazza della Repubblica, enriched by the elegant façade of the Town Hall with its characteristic battlements. Portogruaro is in the centre of the area well-known for its wine production, Lison Pramaggiore, and it has a typical Veneto influence:



beautiful Gothic buildings line the main street, some with superb frescoes, many porticos, a number of tower-gates, while the bridges and picturesque mills on the Lemene offer unforgettable views. The former Bishop's Palace, the Concordia National Archaeological Museum, the Municipal villa which hosts the Michele Gortani Paleontology Museum, Villa Marzotto with its frescoes, are all remarkable.

Photo

- 1 Portogruaro, historical centre on the Lemene
- 2 Bibione, beach
- 3 Concordia Sagittaria, Cathedral of St. Stephen
- 4 Bibione, pine wood and lighthouse

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Second week 5th day

The Veneto coast

Portogruaro – Caorle – Eraclea – Jesolo – Cavallino – Punta Sabbioni

Pedalling along the coastal cycling path

From Portogruaro you follow the right bank of the Lemene towards Concordia Sagittaria and its splendid archaeological area, after visiting this you cross the bridge at **km 3.3** to then continue with a pleasant ride on the left bank; at **km 5.9** you pass by Cavanella and reach the confluence of the Lemene with the Nicesolo canal: here you keep to the right along via Frattuzza and begin following the canal on the gravel path. Continuing along the main route,

at **km 9.5** you cross the B road SS 14 Jesolana, near Sindacale and carry straight on (following the indications “GiraLemene”) along a gravel road which leads, at **km 10.3**, into the Lame Woods. Then at **km 12.8** you cross the bridge over the canal and follow the road to the left towards Marango, a place that you reach at **km 14.1** and which has an important monastic community. Continue along the straight path of via Olmo until you reach the road sign for



ROUTE INFORMATION

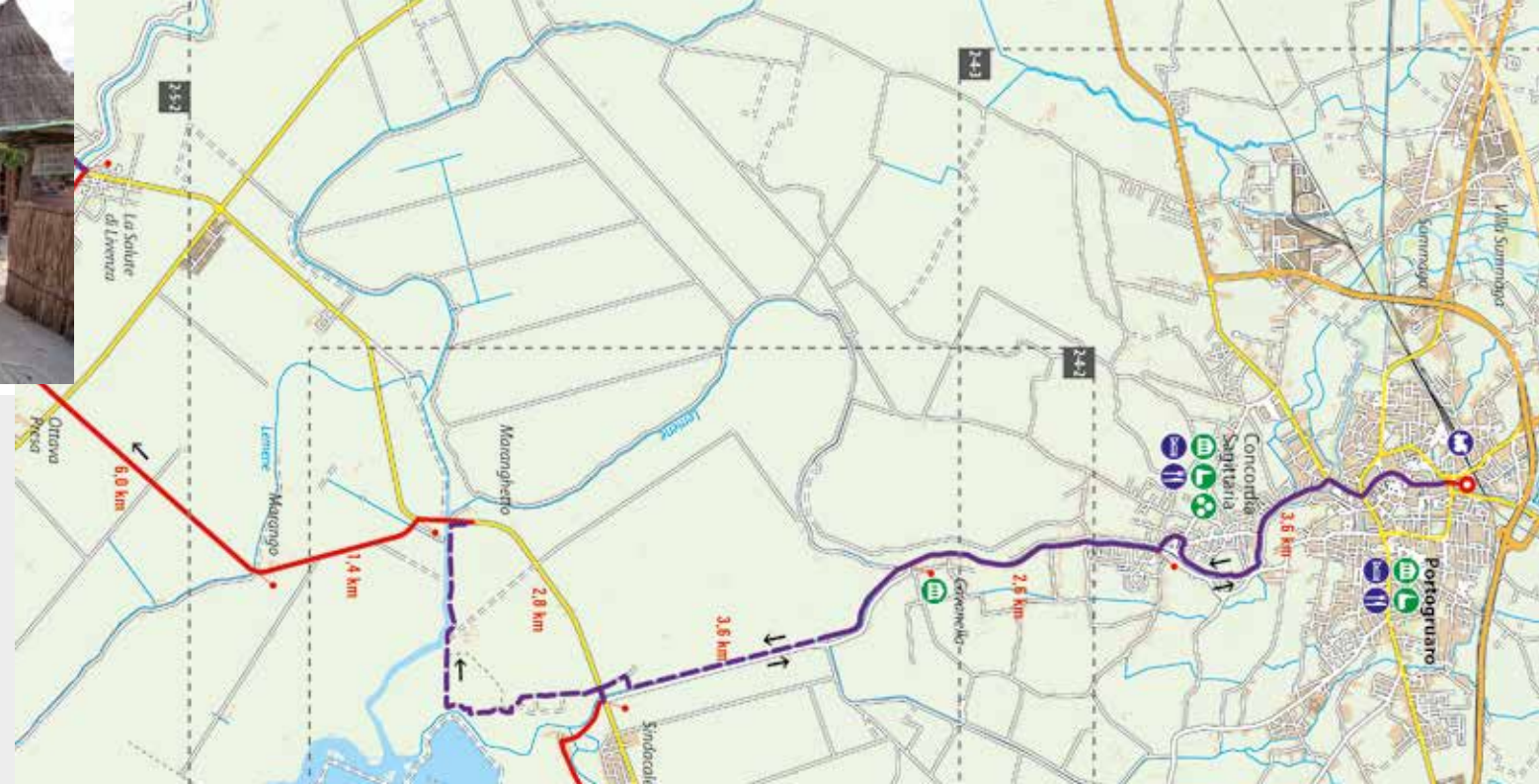
Length: 77 km

Starting point: Portogruaro

Arrival: Cavallino-Treporti-Punta Sabbioni

Conditions: the route is on mixed traffic roads, with some stretches of cycling lanes. Some short stretches on busy roads.

Indications: present





La Salute di Livenza, at **km 17.9**; then you turn right heading up the Livenza until **km 19.9** where you cross the bridge – entering San Giorgio di Livenza – and turn left, going along the bank on the opposite side of the river. Now the straight road leads us, at **km 26.9**, to Ca' Corniani, a village which merits a visit to its structure of cellars, the two squares and the church dedicated to St. John the Baptist. Continuing, at **km 28.2** you cross the Lemene river thanks to a characteristic bridge and enter a natural environment which also bewitched Ernest Hemingway, who set his novel *Across the River and into the Trees* in this place. From here we strongly suggest a short detour on a cycling path to reach Falconara, one of the most impressive rural areas in the Veneto region, amidst silence and the many fishing *casoni*.

At **km 28.9** you turn left along via Sansonessa (with a cycling lane), while going straight ahead you reach the centre of Caorle, where



the impressive IX century cathedral stands out with its cylindrical bell-tower. Returning to via Sansonessa you continue until you merge – at **km 30.0** – onto the main road, which you follow until **km 31.3** when, after passing the Livenza, you turn left into corso Venezia entering Porto Santa Margherita, a tourist resort much appreciated for its well-equipped marina. You head towards Eraclea mare and the Laguna del Mort – which you reach at **km 42.4** – a nature oasis with its famous beach. You continue on asphalted roads and at **km 45.9** you go over a picturesque bridge made out of boats that crosses the river Piave, arriving soon after at its estuary in Cortellazzo. After seeing the last drop nets and lifting your gaze from that exact point where the river flows into the Adriatic, start off once again and at **km 47.4**, pass the bridge over the Cavetta canal turning right to follow the straight bank. The canal was the theatre of harsh fighting during the First World War due to the fact that, after

Caporetto it marked the front between the Italians and Austrians. Pedalling next to the water, continue along via Cavetta Marina until **km 53**, when you get to the road sign for Jesolo; at **km 53.2** keep to the left along via Roma destra and at **km 53.6** – reaching the bank of the river Sile – Piave Vecchia - turn right along via Nazario Sauro. Then at **km 54.2** turn left and cross the river once again keeping to the right of the Sile which has taken over the old riverbed of the Piave. In fact, the Serenissima often deviated, with huge works, the estuaries of the rivers to save the lagoon from being covered by the rubble carried by the waters: not only the Sile and Piave in the northern lagoon but also the Brenta and Adige in the south ... Now you go back up the river Sile (called Piave Vecchia referring to the river in the feminine form, as the river is sacred to the country) along its right bank and at **km 62.9** you reach the navigation lock at Cavallino, with the old

harbours built by the Serenissima in 1632. From here you pedal alongside the Casson canal and then along the evocative via Pordelio, you ride alongside the lagoon until you reach Punta Sabbioni at **km 77.0**, where you embark for Lido and Venice.

Photo

1 Caorle, casoni on the fishermen's island

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Second week 6th day

The Islands of Venice

Punta Sabbioni – Lido di Venezia – Malamocco - Pellestrina

Discovering the islands of the Venetian lagoon, among the ancient capitals of the Doges, natural oases, picturesque fishermen's villages

You embark at Punta Sabbioni on the ferry line number 14 which gets you to Lido, piazzale Santa Maria Elisabetta in twenty minutes. As soon as you get off, there is the big dome of the Votive Temple on your left, then you turn left at the roundabout and go along the Santa Maria Elisabetta avenue which crosses the island longitudinally. You are already right in the centre and at **km 0.3** you can see on your right the polychrome delft facade of the Hotel Hun-

garia, in the Liberty style which can be found in many other constructions on the island. At **km 0.7** you reach the sea, then you turn right and continue pedalling in front of the Hotel des Bains, one of the main tourist attractions for the elite between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when the international jet set arrived here.

Continue straight on along lungomare Marconi, observing the entrances to the beaches,



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 23 km

Starting point: Punta Sabbioni

Arrival: Pellestrina-Ca' Roman

Conditions: route on mixed traffic roads, with some kilometres of asphalted cycling path and one stretch - on the Pellestrina Island - dirt road

Indications: present

Inter-modality: bike + boat





characterised by the typical beach huts, that is huts with verandas and awnings in different colours according to the beach. It is wise to ride steadily, both due to the coming and going of those going to the beaches during the summer season but also due to the tree roots sticking up. Then at **km 1.9** you pass in front of the former casino and the Palazzo del Cinema, the Hotel Excelsior is on the left, in Moorish style, another example of luxury tourism.

At **km 3.0** the road heads to the right, but you carry straight on thanks to a narrow gravel path, continuing next to the sea which you will now be above thanks to a pleasant ride along the Murazzi, a strong barrier system that the Republic of Venice erected centuries ago to protect Lido from the rough sea. Now you can enjoy the view of the blue Adriatic sea, embellished by numerous breakwater pennants, pedalling along a rather narrow

cement path (careful when you meet up with other cyclists or pedestrians ...). At **km 6.1** the old structure of the Malamocco Fort appears, then at **km 6.5** you go down on the right using a narrow gravel road and continue along via del Forte. Then you cross the picturesque Borgo bridge and at **km 7.2** you enter Malamocco (Metamauco, one of the oldest settlements in the lagoon and capital of the Venetian Dogate in the VIII and IX centuries), with its *calli*, typi-

cal Venetian streets, squares, brightly coloured houses and villas: in short, a little Venice. You must see the fifteenth century Pretorian Palace and the XII century church of St. Mary of the Assumption. From here you reach the lagoon and pedal towards Alberoni, on a rather narrow road with mixed traffic but with a splendid view over the calm waters of the lagoon with its various little islands. You pass in front of a couple of health clinics

and at **km 10.2** you enter Alberoni; then after about 200 metres, at a crossroad, you turn sharp right heading towards the ferry boat which goes to Pellestrina. You pass in front of the small Alberoni church then keep to the right on Strada della Droma and you are in front of the lagoon once again, on a paved cycling path, passing in front of some spectacular houses on stilts. You are now near the important Alberoni nat-

ural oasis, managed by WWF, characterised by the presence of a vast system of dunes, among the best kept in the Upper Adriatic; at **km 11.7** you reach the ferry-boat.

After about 10 minutes you get off at Santa Maria del Mare and following the frequent sign-posts you continue pedalling next to the water; then at **km 12.9** you leave the main road and turn right towards Forte di San Pietro in Volta, an Austrian fort built between 1832 and 1842. After 200 metres you get to the waters of the lagoon and begin a pleasant ride which leads into the heart of small villages (San Pietro in Volta, Portosecco, Pellestrina) with low houses and many fishing boats moored up to the banks. At **km 15.2** you continue along a gravel road which is reasonably smooth, still alongside the lagoon, with a lot of fishing *casoni* just a few metres from the bank.

You continue on gravel and at **km 17.3** you arrive in front of the De Poli boatyard and you leave the lagoon by turning sharp left; at **km**

17.4 you reach the main road and here there is a short two-way cycling-pedestrian path which is well marked up. At **km 17.8** the path finishes and you turn right to return to the edge of the lagoon. You can see the fishing boats once again, you pedal on a paved path amongst small low houses with sheets hanging out to dry in the windows: this is the centre of Pellestrina. Then at **km 20.4** in front of All Saints church, turn left and return to the Murazzi, the great barrier which defends from rough seas; then you turn right and head towards the cemetery and the ferry which goes to Chioggia, you reach it at **km 20.9**.

From here we advise you to continue along a spectacular path between the murazzi barrier and the lagoon (be careful, this is only for the more expert cyclists) for a couple of kilometres (each way) which leads, at **km 23.0**, to the Ca' Roman oasis – managed by Lipu the Italian Association for the Protection of Birds – located on the extreme tip of the island, just in front of

the town of Chioggia, an integral environment, extraordinarily rich in fauna. Don't miss this.

Photo

- 1 Malamocco (Venice), historical centre
- 2 Pellestrina, "Murazzi" - barrier system
- 3 Lido of Venice, view over the lagoon
- 4 Venetian lagoon, gondola
- 5 Venetian lagoon, fishermen's houses

USEFUL INFORMATION

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third week's journey

THE ROAD OF THE MERCHANTS AND THE *BURCI*

Venezia – Delta del Po – Ravenna

By bike from the city of the Doges to the capital of mosaics

From the Venetian lagoon to the splendid town of Ravenna, the itinerary leads along rivers and canals which were once used by boats transporting salt, sugar and large pieces of trachyte through estuaries and lagoons, natural parks and protected areas, remains of fossil dunes, fish and shellfish nurseries, beaches and famous resorts.

From Venice you head towards Padua along the Brenta canal, in which many villas are calmly mirrored; in the city of the Saint [St. Anthony - Padua] you can enjoy the visit to monuments like the Scrovegni Chapel, the Cathedral of St. Anthony, the Specola.

Then you reach the foot of the Euganean Hills (Colli Euganei) where there are the Abano and Montegrotto spas; from Battaglia Terme (where there is the interesting Civic Museum of River Navigation) you follow the ancient waterway to Chioggia heading towards the Po Delta with an



Photo

1 Adria, Canalbianco

2 Ravenna, Mausoleum of Galla Placidia

amphibious itinerary among the river Brenta estuaries, those of the river Adige and the Po itself. You finally reach Adria, a small town which gave its name to the sea it looked on to and with a very long history witnessed by the National Archaeological Museum; you are now in Polesine and by following first one branch and then the other of the great river, you leave the Veneto region to enter Emilia Romagna where you can visit the Bosco Mesola Nature Reserve. From here you go to Goro and Gorino, where the Po flows into the Adriatic, it's only a short distance away.

At this point you go alongside the remarkable Sacca di Goro – a paradise for breeding mussels – then you pass by the famous IX century Pomposa Abbey, you go through the wide beaches of Ferrara and reach the historical centre of Comacchio; you then go into the famous fishing valleys (for eels) and the former salt-mines, visiting the places of “Garibaldi’s march”. Riding alongside the impressive pine-woods and beaches of Ravenna you are getting close to the end of this long journey, which finishes in the historical centre of Ravenna, which hosts eight Unesco monuments: the Basilica of Saint Apollinare Nuovo, the Basilica of Saint Apollinaire in Classe, the Mausoleum of Theodoric, the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, the Basilica of Saint Vitale, the Arian Baptistery, the Neonian Baptistery, The Archiepiscopal Chapel. Continuing south you reach Lido Adriano and Lido di Dante.

Third week 1st day

The Riviera del Brenta

Venezia – Padova

The ancient road of the Burchiello where the villas of the nobles are reflected in the river

Today you will ride alongside the Riviera del Brenta, for centuries considered the ideal holiday place by the Venetian nobility, mentioned by Carlo Goldoni in his plays and seen as an ideal extension of the Grand Canal itself. You leave Venice riding over the bridge – Ponte della Libertà (while still waiting for the cycling lane to be inaugurated) and reach, at **km 11.0**, the underpass of Mestre railway station. From here you cross the centre of Marghera on an

urban cycling lane, passing through piazza del Mercato, via della Rinascita, via Pasini – following the signs for the Regione Veneto cycling route 11 – to then turn left at **km 14.2** onto a path which is forbidden to motor vehicles. From here you reach via dell'Avena and at **km 14.7**, at the traffic light, turn left into via Colombara, which leads in the direction of the very modern shopping centres in Marghera. Then at **km 15.4** you cross, with great care



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 50 km

Starting point: Venezia

Arrival: Padova

Conditions: mixed traffic route on light traffic B roads, dirt cycle path from Stra but easy, up to the centre of Padua, where it is asphalted

Indications: present

Inter-modality: bike + train





and using the pedestrian crossing button, the very busy Romea road, and continue along the Brentella-Lusore canal still in via Colombara, which at **km 16.0** leads us past the nineteenth century tower bearing the same name with neo-Gothic architectural elements. You continue in a territory which is partly industrial and partly agricultural and at **km 16.9** you are in front of Forte Tron, a nineteenth century fort which is part of the so-called Mestre Trench



Field (Campo Trincerato di Mestre), which is now a protected fauna oasis. At **km 17.4** you use a cycling underpass and continue along via Colombara, which you leave at **km 17.9**, turning right, passing a small bridge to then continue along via Lusore, pedalling along the opposite side of the course of water. At **km 18.4** you turn left along via Ghebba, which at **km 19.5** leads to the fine centre of Oriago, on the banks of the river Brenta, a small

town mentioned by Dante in the IV canto of his Purgatory: "But had I to La Mira fled/ when at Oriaco surprised/ now were I yonder yet where men breath air".

Now the spectacular journey up the Brenta canal begins, for centuries the famous Burchiello passed along here, the boat which connected the Serenissima with the city of Padua every day. You cross the river and go to the orographic right: the many famous villas start appearing. It is certainly one of the most well-known river towns in Italy and the light traffic allows you to visit it at your leisure.

At **km 20.3** you pass beneath the beautiful bell-tower in Oriago, then you leave the course of water for a little while and at **km 21.4** you turn right into via Valmarana and then, at **km 22.7** turn right again into via Di Vittorio, next to the river again at **km 23.0**, where there is the beautiful Augustinian monastery, at Mira Porte. You continue passing the former Mira Lanza factory, once famous for its production



of soap and detergents. At **km 24.8** you pass in front of Mira town hall and continue alongside the calm waters of the river framed by picturesque weeping willows. At **km 28.1** you reach the eighteenth century Ferretti-Angeli villa, designed by Vincenzo Scamozzi, then at **km 29.0** you arrive at the beautiful “low island” of Dolo, enhanced by the presence of mills and a sixteenth century boatyard.

Continuing still on the orographic right (the very busy main road – Padana Superiore, runs on the left and you should avoid that ...), at **km 34.8** you arrive in front of the magnificent Villa Pisani in Stra, the “queen” of the Venetian villas, a national museum which conserves famous frescoes by Giambattista Tiepolo. Don’t miss the huge park, with its privet maze, orangeries and greenhouses.

Carry on along the Naviglio and then at **km 35.9** you cross it, turn left, pass the Brenta and at **Km 36.3**, you go on the left bank of the Piovego, gravel surface but easy; the Piovego

is part of the network of canals that surround Padua. Keep the water to your left and at **km 40.5**, at Noventa Padovana, you pass in front of Villa Giovanelli-Colonna, surrounded by a large park, it has a monumental stairway and a Classic pronao. Then you cross a bridge, you ride alongside the San Gregorio canal (lungargine Terranegra), at **km 45.1** you arrive at the Voltabarozzo harbour. Here the Scaricatore canal starts, many locals love jogging along the banks; you carry straight on until **km 46.7** and then turn right into via Fabrici Girolamo d’Acquapendente, then at **km 47.7** turn right into via Sanmicheli, making your way into the centre of Padua, to finally reach Prato della Valle at **km 50.0**, one of the largest squares in Europe.

Photo

1 Padua, Prato della Valle

2 Padua, Scrovegni Chapel

3 Villa Foscari, called “the Unhappy One”

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tel. +39 041 5235606, villevenete@pecveneto.it

www.irvv.net

Bike hire, parking and bike repairs in Padua

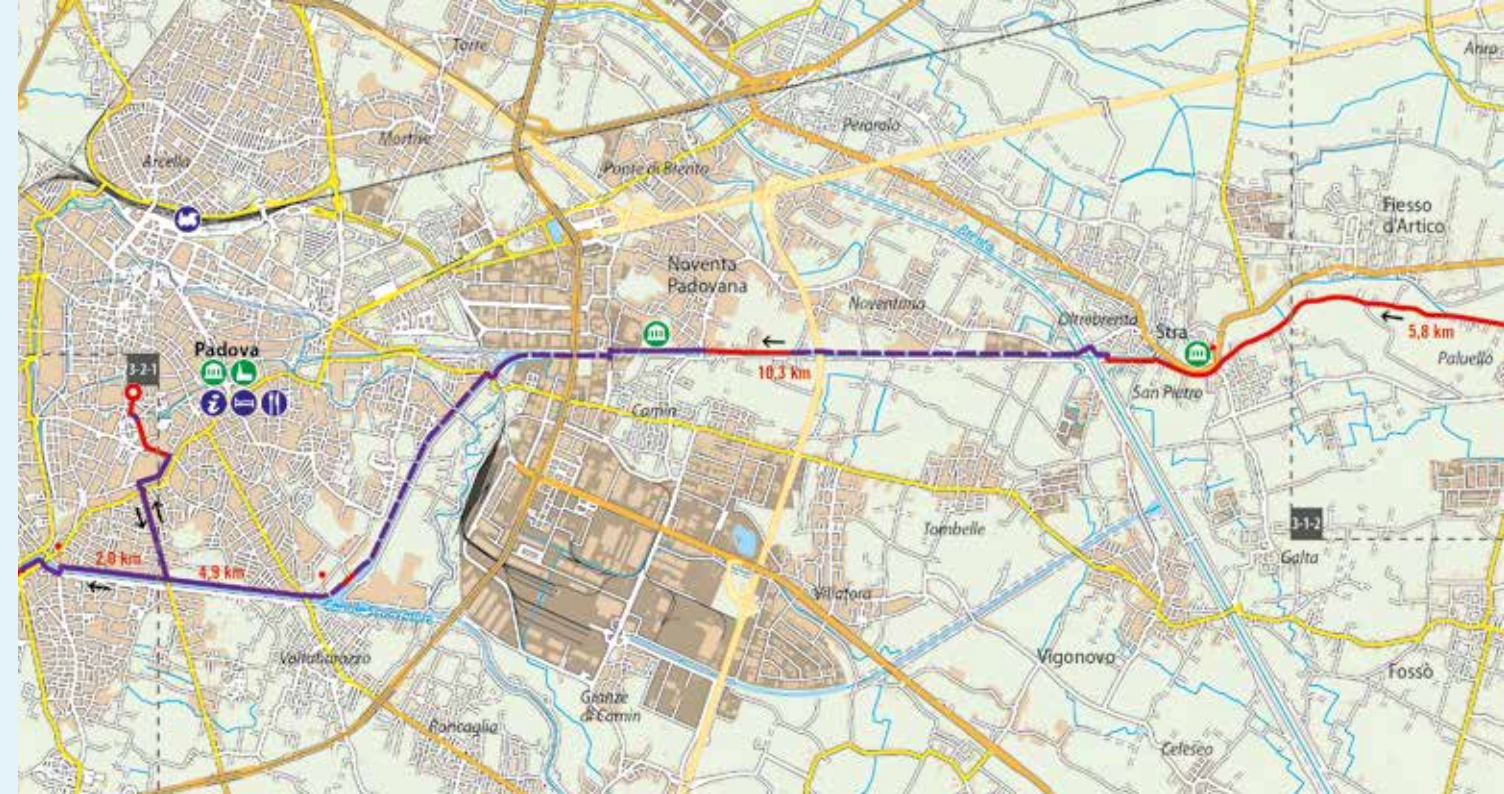
list of bike services on the website

www.turismopadova.it, www.padovainbici.it

Railway stations

Venezia Santa Lucia, Venezia-Mestre, Mira-Mirano,

Dolo, Vigonza-Pianiga, Ponte di Brenta, Padova



The salt and sugar road

From Padua to Chioggia along ancient canals

river. Here the Ring of the Euganean Hills begins, this is an impressive cycling path: you are now along the Barcari riverbank. At **km 2.8** the path becomes gravel and follows the straight line of the canal which leads to Battaglia Terme. The not very wide course of water was an important waterway which for centuries saw the passage of "*burci*", large transport boats which carried trachyte from the Euganean Hills, salt from Chioggia and sugar from Pontelungo.

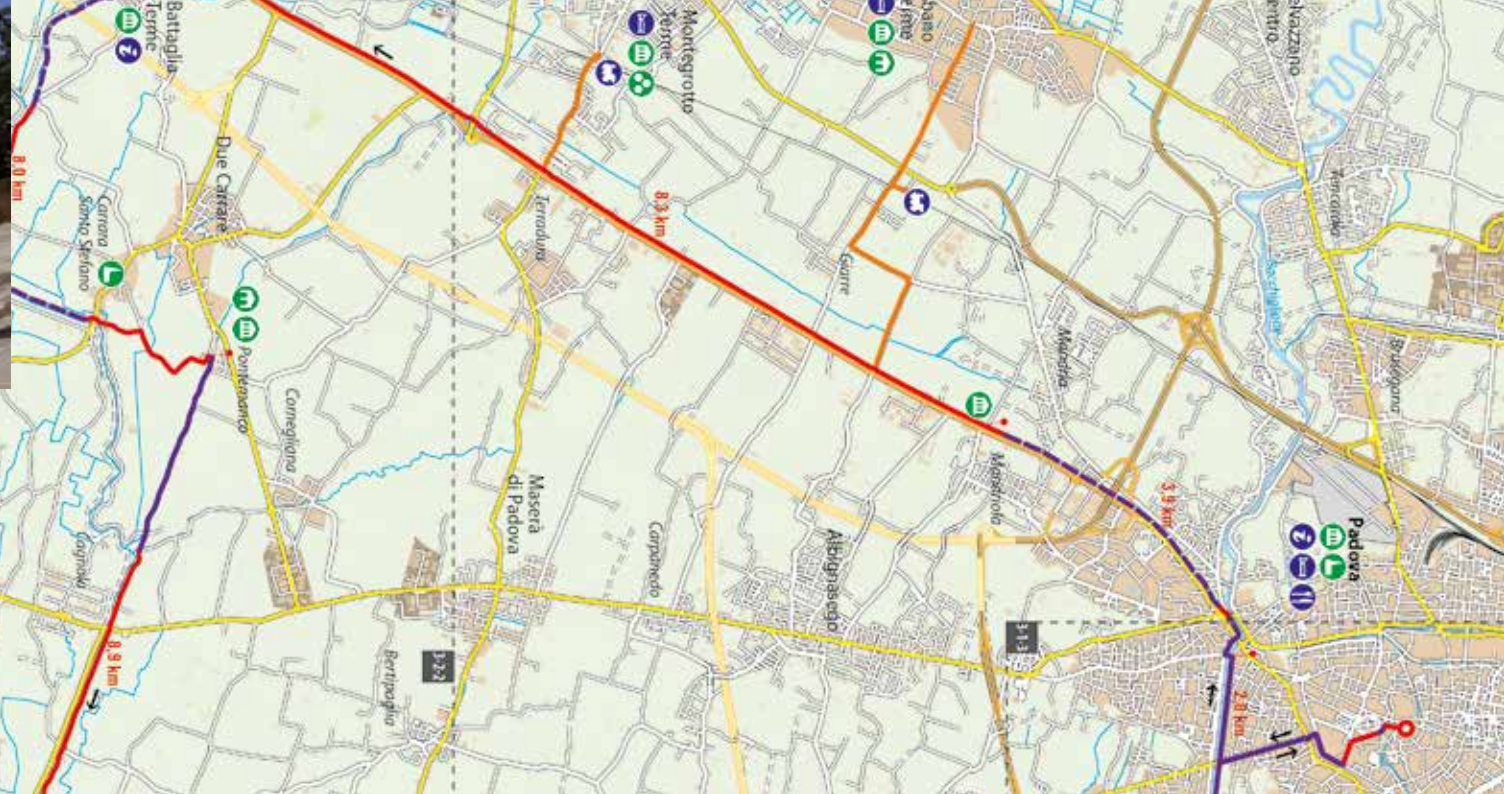
river. Here the Ring of the Euganean Hills begins, this is an impressive cycling path: you are now along the Barcari riverbank. At **km 2.8** the path becomes gravel and follows the straight line of the canal which leads to Battaglia Terme. The not very wide course of water was an important waterway which for centuries saw the passage of "*burci*", large transport boats which carried trachyte from the Euganean Hills, salt from Chioggia and sugar from Pontelungo.

Length: 66 km

Arrival: Chioggia

Indications: present

Inter-modality: bike + train





The beautiful panorama of the countryside is softened by the gentle profile of the Euganean Hills which stand out towards south-west, suddenly rising from the plain (on the other hand they are of volcanic origin).

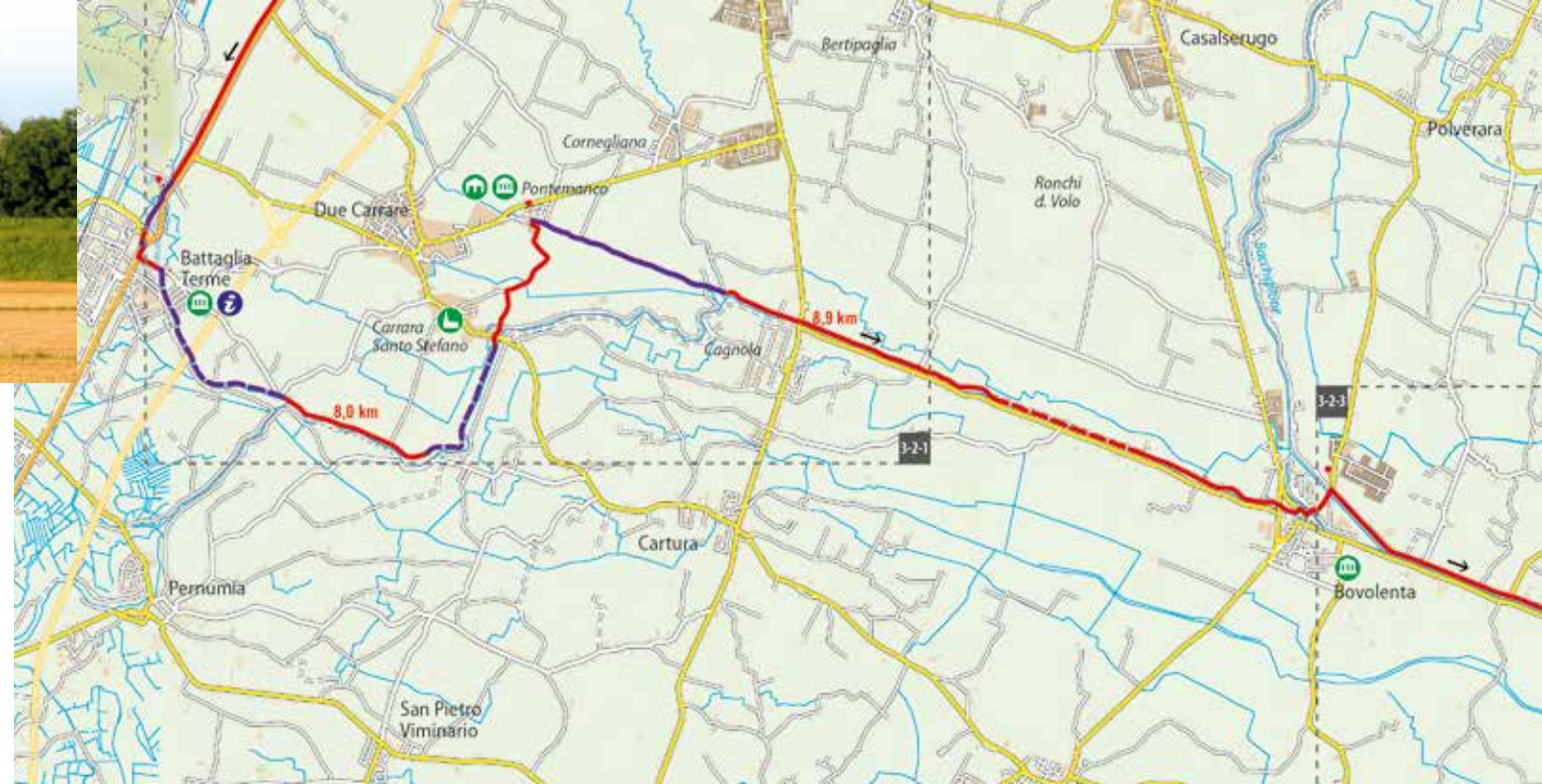
At **km 5.5** the path becomes asphalted once again and shortly afterwards, at **km 5.9** you pass in front of Villa Molin with its spectacular pronaos with Ionic columns, the villa is reflected in the waters of the canal – a work by

Vincenzo Scamozzi inspired by Palladium's Rotonda and Malcontenta. You carry on pedalling next to the water: you pass through artisan areas and leave some small bridges on your left, these would lead to the main Adriatica road (you should avoid it!!). Now you are heading towards the well-known Abano e Montegrotto spas, the largest spa in Europe, famous for its really hot waters – 87 degrees – and its mud.

At **km 14.2** you are in front of the Catajo Castle,

a spectacular building with 350 rooms, built in the XVI century by the Obizzi family (soldiers of fortune; the person who had the enormous villa built, Pio Enea I degli Obizzi, is considered the inventor of the howitzer). We advise you to visit the castle, if only to see the series of frescoes which decorate the rooms and the centuries old park.

Now you are at the entrance to Battaglia Terme, a beautiful town and central junction of





the river navigation, as the waters which lead towards the Venetian lagoon meet here (the meeting between the Battaglia canal, Bisato canal – which reaches Monselice – and the Vigenzone canal which in turn flows into the Bacchiglione). The crucial point is the triple lock called Arco di Mezzo, which you can see at **km 14.7**. You turn left immediately crossing the Terme bridge on a busy road, then you turn right moving to the opposite side of the canal,

then at **km 15.0** you turn left, pass the bridge over the Vignzone canal and immediately turn right, **at km 15.3** along a gravel cycling lane which leads along the left side of the canal. Behind your back there is the interesting Civic Museum of River Navigation. Now the waterway becomes more meandering and heads towards the east; while pedalling you can glimpse some numbered white stones which indicate the areas assigned to



the farmers for cleaning the river banks. At **km 20.4** you reach Due Carrare, at the Ponte di Riva water pump and momentarily leave the canal carrying straight on along via Ponte di Riva, then at **km 21.0** you turn right, then at **km 22.2** you turn right again towards the picturesque little village of Pontemanco, in via Biancolino and at **km 24.3** you reach the left bank of the Vigenzone. Now the path is straighter, at **km 26.4** it be-



comes gravel for the next 3 km, then at **km 30.5** you pass through Bovolenta, where the canal flows into the Bacchiglione river. At **km 31.1** you cross the bridge and go along the left bank of the river, pedalling along the main road which at **km 38.6** leads to Pontelongo, the town of sugar: here there is a famous sugar refinery which has been active for over a century. Just in front of the fine town hall, Villa Foscari Erizzo, you turn right crossing the bridge and you go along the right bank towards Correzzola. At **km 41.3** the bank becomes gravel and you enter the small town enhanced by the presence of a sixteenth century Benedictine court founded by the monks who carried out some important reclamation works: you get there by means of a metallic footbridge. You continue on gravel until **km 43.1**, then there is an asphalted surface for just 200 metres when it becomes gravel again up to **km 44.9**. Now you head towards the lagoon, passing through the centre of Brenta d'Abbà and the Ca' di Mez-

zo oasis; riding alongside the Bacchiglione the panorama flattens out and you begin seeing the twinkling surfaces of salt water. At **km 54.4** you pass through the village of Ca' Bianca then Ca' Pasqua at **km 57.8**, where the Bacchiglione flows into the Brenta and then you are in front of the lagoon at **km 58.0**, near Chioggia. You pass through Brondolo and then at **61.0** you turn left along via Padre Venturini and you pedal along a cycling lane reaching the historical centre of the picturesque town of Chioggia, which will welcome you with a triumph of coloured sails and fishing boats after going alongside the Lusenzo lagoon and crossing the bridge which leads into the historical centre, at **km 66.0**, in corso del Popolo.

Photo

- 1 Abano Terme, sources of the Montirone river
- 2 Battaglia Terme, Civic Museum of River Navigation
- 3 Due Carrare, Veneto countryside
- 4 Chioggia, Vena canal
- 5 Chioggia, arrival in the town

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Railway stations

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Third week 3rd day

The road of the valleys

Chioggia – Porto Viro – Adria

An amphibian route amidst water and land in the heart of the Po Delta Nature Park

You leave the historical centre of Chioggia, corso del Popolo, in front of the eighteenth century cathedral of St. James the Apostle to then pass by Porta Santa Maria, the southern entrance to the city. You cross a long bridge, at the end of it – at **km 0.8** – you turn left immediately to ride on a cycling-pedestrian bank which goes alongside the Lusenzo lagoon offering unforgettable views thanks to the fishing boats, *briccole* (piles used to mark the

navigable channels in the Venetian lagoon) reflected in the water and the brightly coloured sails. At **km 2.6** you turn right heading south towards Brondolo, which can be reached by an urban cycling lane. At **km 5.0** you cross the bridge over the river Brenta – near its estuary – and then you turn left immediately, following the left bank for a few hundred metres and then at **km 6.0** you turn right into via San Giuseppe which leads towards the village of Ca'



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 84 km

Starting point: Chioggia

Arrival: Adria

Conditions: easy route, on secondary roads and embankments mostly asphalted

Indications: present

Inter-modality: bike + boat to Porto Levante





Lino. Now you pedal along stretches of fields where there is a concentrated cultivation of the typical local product, *radicchio rosso*, the “rose of Chioggia”; then at **km 10.6**, you reach the bank of the river Adige. Turn right and go up the river until **km 12.2** where you go left and leave the river momentarily. If you like you can continue along the river bank but we advise the detour as in this way you can visit – going through Sant’Anna – the interesting Bosco

Nordio Nature Reserve, remains of an ancient wet woods plain area where among the holly oaks, and maritime pines there are badgers, stone martens and many birds such as marsh falcons and serins.

When you have visited the Bosco Nordio, continue straight on and at **km 16.4** you are on the river bank which you ride along until **km 18.1**, when you cross the river using the bridge over the Romea B road, a road which you leave

almost at once, turning left and going along the right bank of the Adige river, pedalling towards the estuary. At **Km 21.2** you leave the bank (which in 4 km would lead to the river estuary, then to the tourist resort of Rosolina Mare and then the Porto Caleri Coastal Botanical Garden, an important naturalistic oasis which deserves a visit) and here the spectacular Road of the Valleys begins, a narrow asphalted path leading into a precious, unique



and rarefied environment. You pedal among stretches populated by coots, herons and pink flamingos as well as other species. You can enjoy this magical scene slowly crossing the Boccavecchia valley, Canelle valley, Passarella valley, Spolverina valley, Segà valley, Capitania valley, Veniera valley; you can also visit some fishing areas where there are eel, sea bream, sea bass and mullet nurseries. Now the asphalted road winds along for about



fifteen kilometres until it goes alongside the river Po di Levante and you are close – at **km 36.8** – to the island of Albarella which formed thanks to an accumulation of sediment carried by the great river and which is now an exclusive tourist resort. To be able to cross the river here you have to catch the special ferry and arrive at Porto Levante; so you continue along the Road of the Valleys, on that imperceptible boundary between water and land, in a unique

natural environment. You are inside the vast Veneto Regional Park of the Po Delta. The path, narrow but perfectly asphalted, zigzags among these great stretches of shiny water: Bagliona valley, San Leonardo valley, Vallona Lagoon. At **km 46.0**, you pass through Barchessa Ravagnan until arriving, at **km 48.5**, near the Oasi Val Pisani, on the bank of the branch of the Po di Maistra. You follow the course of this branch, passing near Ca' Pisani to



reach the larger Po di Venezia, in front of the small town of Porto Tolle on the other bank. You continue on the left bank of the Po di Venezia observing the towns of Villaregia (**km 57.6**) and Ca' Cornera (**km 59.5**) on your right while overlooking infinite stretches of cereals from above.

Finally the narrow strip of asphalt which runs next to the great river Po makes you leave the Ca' Cappellino area on your right at **km 63.0** and then at **km 67.0** you pass under the big bridge which crosses the river: now you are at Porto Viro, a large recent town which came into being with the unification of the towns of Donada and Contarina. You continue along the B road 41 until **km 71.3** where you find the impressive Volta Grimana basin, with a beautiful natural oasis, which joins the Po di Levante with the Po di Venezia. From now on you follow the right bank of the Canalbianco, an artificial canal which is part of the network of navigable ways which leads to Mantova. Following its

bank you reach – thanks to an itinerary which has some gravel stretches and grassy ones – Adria: at **km 82.7** you turn right, crossing the bridge over the Canalbianco and carry on until you arrive – passing through via Leonardo Da Vinci, corso Garibaldi, corso Mazzini and via Vittorio Emanuele – in front of the cathedral of Adria, at **km 84.0**. This is the small town which gave its name to the sea: you must not miss a visit to the National Archaeological Museum.

Photo

- 1 Po Delta, valleys
- 2 Taglio di Po, Reclamation Museum
- 3 Chioggia, historical centre
- 4 Po Delta
- 5 Adria, public gardens
- 6 Porto Levante, ferry boat

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Ferry

Private service. For information – IAT Rovigo



Third week 4th day

The crossing of the Delta del Po

Adria – Goro

The Delta del Po, up to the estuaries of the great river

Starting out from the beautiful town of Adria we ride the first stretch of road that we have already been along – on the right side of Canalbionco – and at **km 2.2**, at Piantamelon, you turn right following the indications for Bottrighe, and at **km 3.1** you ride for a short while on the B road 495 which is very busy, going to the left. Then at **km 6.0** you start pedalling along the Brigata Cremona bridge (one of the most recently erected over the great river) which crosses the Po di Venezia.

At **km 7.8** you leave the main road turning right towards Corbola and at **km 8.2** you turn right onto a cycling lane in an industrial area, carrying straight on, at **km 9.2**, on the asphalted right river bank of the Po di Venezia. You continue following the current and going close to the small village of Mazzomo Destro at **km 12.3**. Here you are in the so-called Ariano Island, a vast territory which originated from flooding, between the three branches of the Po: Goro, Venezia and



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 51 (62.5 km to the estuary)

Starting point: Adria

Arrival: Goro (Gorino)

Conditions: easy route, on secondary roads and asphalted embankments, from Mesola to Goro all cycling route Destra Po

Indications: present



Gnocca. It is protected by impressive embankment works and still has some remains of some fossil dunes which are about two thousand years old, witnessing the ancient border line with the sea. Continuing to pedal along the asphalted bank you overlook the surrounding countryside and at **km 19.3** you go down to enter the town of Taglio di Po, which you pass through by pedalling along the straight via San Basilio. All this territory was formed after the Taglio di Porto Viro, an important hydraulic work which “cut” the Po, carried out by the Republic of Venice at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Now you head south, momentarily leaving the river and following this straight road which leads, at **km 23.0**, to the village of Grillara, a community of Ariano Polesine where there is an interesting collection of ocarinas and also a fossil dune. Then at **km 27.1** you approach San Basilio and here, on top of a fossil dune, there are remains of a proto-historic era – there is a Romanesque church, founded in the X century by the Benedictine

monks of Pomposa – where, they say that also Dante Alighieri was welcomed. You can also visit a vast archaeological area of Roman origin. Continuing straight on you arrive, at **km 27.8**, on the left bank of the Po di Goro which you will follow keeping the river to the right, until at **km 33.0**, at Rivà di Ariano, you turn sharp left to merge on the right at **km 34.0** onto the SS Romea road immediately crossing the Po di Goro bridge which leads into Emilia Romagna. If you continue along the left bank, so remaining in Veneto, you would arrive at Ca’ Vendramin, where you can visit the interesting Museo Regionale della Bonifica (Regional Reclamation Museum), to then continue to Gorino Veneto.

At **km 35.1** you leave the Romea road, turning right and entering Mesola, in the province of Ferrara, dominated by the impressive sixteenth century castle that is one of the prestigious summer residences built by the Este family – which you reach at **km 35.6**. Built as a reference point for the hunting expeditions in the nearby

Mesola Woods, today it hosts the Wood and Deer Museum.

Now you follow the well indicated Destra Po cycling route until Goro (and even to Gorino): you ride alongside the bend which the much narrower and more meandering Po di Goro follows towards the north to then turn south. You ride alongside beautiful holme woods with natural hedges, willows and brambles: the path is not very invasive and there are few traces of human presence. Then at **km 41.6** you can glimpse on your right the thick green woodlands of the Santa Giustina or Fasanara Woods, a very interesting natural oasis equipped with rest areas.

You continue on a quite narrow asphalted cycling path and at **km 45.7** you reach a crossroad with the road that on the right leads to Santa Giustina, Torre Abate (2 km) and the Pescara water pump; you carry straight on, even though the path is no longer a cycling lane but there is mixed traffic – though limited – with a wider carriage-way. Continuing along the river bank, at **km 49.2**,





you start off towards the right on the big straight road that leads in the direction of Mesola and Torre Palù (2 km), an eighteenth century hydraulic building located at Canalbiano. Immediately after the profile of Isola Rossi stands out on the waters of the Po river, with its elongated shape, covered by thick vegetation of white willows and poplar trees, while glancing to the right you can see a stretch of water called “Po morto” [dead Po], remains of the old course of the river which has

been buried. At **km 50.2** you pass by a cemetery on the right and – continuing on the river bank – at **km 51.0** you reach Goro. Turning right into via Nuova, in about 300 metres you arrive in the heart of the town (piazza Togliatti), while if you continue along the bank of the Po you can reach – pedalling for 7 km – the centre of Gorino Ferrarese. From here you can go by boat to the lighthouse of Gorino and reach the exact point where the Po plunges into the Adriatic.

Photo

1 Estensi castle, Mesola

2 Po Delta, water pump Pescara

3 Po Delta, flamingos in flight

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Third week 5th day

Between the park and the sea

Goro – Pomposa - Comacchio

From the Goro inlet and the thousand year old Pomposa abbey to the Comacchio coast with its famous beaches

You leave from the centre of Goro, an old fishing village, now a modern port with a large fleet of fishing boats, undoubtedly the main economic activity in the area.

From piazza Togliatti you turn left along the main road, at **km 0.4** you turn right into via Brugnoli, heading towards the fish market and the port which you reach at **km 0.9**. Here you can see the many boats moored up; at **km 1.5** the itinerary, even closer to the water here,

becomes gravel. You pedal alongside the Goro inlet, a unique natural environment: it is a vast lagoon with an average depth of about 60 cm and a maximum of 2 metres. This large moon-shaped inlet is used for intensive fish and mussel nurseries, including the typical clam from Goro. Pedalling along the gravel bank you can see fishermen getting into the water up to their chests or boats tied to the *briccole* to catch mullet, sea bream, eels or sea bass. You



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 32 km

Starting point: Goro

Arrival: Comacchio

Conditions: easy route, on secondary roads and asphalted embankments, some stretches with heavier traffic

Indications: present



continue to the Mesola Woods, a reserve managed by the State Forest Rangers, in the southern part it overlooks the salt waters of the inlet. In this stretch the land is irregular, a sign of the presence of ancient dunes; the path has been left as natural as possible, so in some places it might be better to get off your bike.

At **km 6.2** you exit the Mesola Woods, at Taglio della Falce, another interesting area from a naturalistic point of view, covered by marsh rushes, and at **km 7.2** you reach a narrow asphalted road. At this point we strongly advise you to turn right and carry out a detour (about 7 km each way) to visit the Pomposa Benedictine abbey, a spiritual and cultural centre placed along the old Popilia road which hosts a precious series of frescoes and a refined mosaic floor inlaid with precious marble. Its Romanesque bell-tower acts as a lighthouse, showing you the way.

Returning to the itinerary, at the fork at **km 7.2**, turn left winding into another fauna oasis,

the Canneviè-Porticino valley, where there are some fishing *casoni* and a typical *lavoriero* – a traditional eel trapping weir. There is also a beautiful nature path which winds among narrow strips of land and stretches of water.

At **km 8.9** you turn left onto the B road 54 and at **km 9.4** you cross the bridge over the Po di Volano, at the estuary; then you keep to the left towards Lido di Volano and at **km 10.1** you turn into via Lido di Volano, to then turn sharp left at **km 10.4** onto a beautiful gravel road which leads you to a pleasant pedal alongside the coast, immersed in a splendid pine wood. Heading south you cross the seven lidos of Comacchio, Lido di Volano is the one furthest to the north: at **km 16.2** you return to asphalted road at Lido delle Nazioni and you carry straight on, surrounded by greenery, to reach Lido di Pomposa at **km 20.4**. At **km 21.6** you pass through Lido degli Scacchi and at **km 26.3** you reach the picturesque canal harbour of Porto Garibaldi, an important fishing

and tourist harbour as well as a tourist resort. It was once called Porto di Magnavacca and changed its name in honour of the Hero of the Two Worlds (Garibaldi) who disembarked here in 1849.

Now you ride alongside the harbour canal, momentarily leaving the two most southern beaches, the Estensi and the Spina, to reach, with a really pleasant ride, the splendid town of Comacchio, at **km 32.0**, right under the most significant and representative monument, the architectural complex of Trepponti. You should also visit the cathedral, the fourteenth century clock tower, the Merchants' Lodge, some fine palaces, the Capuchin Portico with its 142 arches, the Museum of the Roman Ship and the old Eel Pickling Factory.

Photo

1 Comacchio, sunset in the lagoon

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Bike hire www.ferrarainfo.com



Third week 6th day

Among valleys, beaches and pine woods

Comacchio – Sant'Alberto – Ravenna

Pedalling towards Ravenna, Byzantine art capital and Unesco heritage site

The itinerary starts from the monumental structure of Trepponti, which with its five stairways is the symbol of Comacchio, a lagoon town founded by the Etruscans, surrounded by water and canals. With your back to the bridges pedal to the right along via Trepponti, the main road, and at **km 0.4** turn left crossing the San Pietro swing bridge, which leads into the famous Comacchio valley one of the vastest wetland areas in Italy with its 15,000 hectares: you start riding alongside the perimeter,

pedalling on asphalted roads in a landscape rich with drop nets, fishing *casoni*, outlook towers. At **km 0.9** you reach a fork in the road and go to the left, alongside the bank of the Fattibello valley, already observing the first birds in flight; at **km 4.1**, at another fork, you take the gravel road which goes straight on, then you cross a small bridge at **km 4.3** and immediately turn right onto a gravel cycling-pedestrian path. You are near the Comacchio salt-mine, where for some years pink flamingos



ROUTE INFORMATION

Length: 65 km

Starting point: Comacchio

Arrival: Ravenna

Conditions: easy route, mainly on secondary roads with light traffic, some stretches of dirt cycling paths in the Comacchio valley

Indications: present

Intermodality: bike + ferry

gos have been making their nests, and you pedal along the Fosse-Foce canal, practically on the water, next to the Cona valley. Then at **km 10.8** you turn left onto a mixed traffic asphalted road and a new long straight path starts along the Agosta bank, suspended between water and reclaimed land, along the Fossa di Porto valley. Continue straight ahead along the Umana valley, until **km 20.8** where you turn left into via Rotta Martinella, towards Boscoforte. Continuing along via Rotta





Martinella the road narrows until it becomes almost a single carriageway and at **km 25.0** you reach the left bank of the Reno river and immediately after the Boscoforte peninsula – a narrow strip of dunes, about 6 km long which is now a natural oasis where numerous wild horses live – which penetrates into the valleys. At **km 25.9** you reach the ferry on the Reno which takes you across to the opposite side, to Sant'Alberto, close to Ravenna, where at **km 26.6** you reach the interesting Natural Science Museum, full of ornithological and entomological collections and the Po Delta Park visitors' centre. Continue along the B road 1 until, at **km 29.0**, you pass the bridge over the Bonifica Destra Reno canal immediately turning left following the straight bank until you reach Mandriole at **km 34.0**. Now you head towards the coast of Ravenna and its beaches, following the bank until **km 36.3** then you cross the bridge, turn left and you arrive near the former Guiccioli Farm, with an interesting exhibition inside showing mementos from the Garibaldi period seeing as it was here on August 4,



1849 that Anita Garibaldi died. There is a memorial stone in her honour at the entrance. At **km 36.4** you turn left into via Corriera Antica, which you follow until **km 38.4** when you reach the right bank of the Reno and you turn right onto a gravel path, passing under the big bridge forming part of the Romea road; immediately after, at **km 38.7**, you turn right and at **km 39.0** you go left returning to an asphalted road which, after a wide bend, leads us along the coast at **km 41.0**. You continue, heading south towards the Ravenna coast with its splendid pine-woods, entering an impressive natural eco-system. First you cross through the Natural Reserve of the Reno river, then you enter the tourist centre of Casal Borsetti, where at **km 43.1** you cross the bridge over the Bonifica Destra Reno canal; then you continue along a protected cycling lane parallel to the road, alongside a beautiful pine-wood, and at **km 46.2** you cross the bridge over the river Lamone estuary which leads into the tourist resort of Marina Romea, surrounded by the inevitable pine woods. Then you pedal alongside

the Porto Corsini Natural Coastal Dune Reserve arriving, at **km 50.5** at the ferry which will take you across the Candiano canal, part of the commercial and industrial port of Ravenna. A few hundred metres to the west there is the Pialassa della Baiona, a large salt-water lagoon with many fishing huts, reed beds, wide open stretches of water and artificial canals which connect to the sea characterised by the movement of the tides, this also determines its name (*pia*, take and *lassa*, leave). You continue along Marina di Ravenna, pedalling in viale delle Nazioni, then at **km 52.0** – in via Ciro Menotti – you turn left onto gravel, inside the splendid pine-woods; at **km 55.7** you leave the pine-woods turning left and then immediately to your right into the wide viale delle Americhe. Then at **km 56.9** you turn right onto a cycling lane alongside viale dei Navigatori and still on the cycling lane you reach the heart of Ravenna, the city of mosaics, the final goal of our long journey. Numerous monuments on the Unesco Heritage list will appear in front of your eyes: the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, the



Photo

1 Commacchio, Trepponti or Pallotta Bridge

2 Ravenna, Mausoleum of Theodorich

3 Ravenna, the church of St. Vitale

Arian Baptistery, the Neonian Baptistery, the Mausoleum of Theodoric, the Church of St. Vitale, the Basilica of Saint Apollinaire in Classe, the Basilica of Saint Apollinaire Nuovo, and the Archiepiscopal Chapel. You must certainly not miss Dante's tomb in the Basilica of St. Francis.



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Key

- Main route on asphalted cycling path
- Main route on dirt/gravel cycling path
- Main route on asphalted road
- Main route on dirt/gravel road
- Detour on asphalt
- Detour on dirt/gravel
- Toll Motorway
- Toll free motorway
- Main road
- B road
- Local roads
- Dirt/gravel road
- Railway line
- Beginning/end of stage, distance in km and route direction

- Urban area
- Industrial area

- Railway station
- Boat landing stage
- Beach resort
- Information point
- Hotel
- Bar/Restaurant
- Uphill
- Danger point
- Villa – Palace
- Museum
- Castle
- Church
- Archaeological site
- Natural oasis
- Cave
- Lighthouse
- Hydraulic work
- Panoramic look out point
- Monument