

# RIVIERA

EMILIA ROMAGNA

**RIVIERA**  
EMILIA ROMAGNA

The most  
entertaining  
relaxation  
there is.

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## Cycling along the Adriatic Coast.



*16 itineraries from the Adriatic  
to the Tuscany-Romagna  
Apennines*



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The italian summer's New Year's Eve



atmosphere

## Appointment in july

emotions



having fun together



amusement



concerts



fireworks



look



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# THE ADRIATIC COAST OF EMILIA ROMAGNA

## The most entertaining relaxation there is

### Bike People

Someone's going slowly along a road by a canal. On a bike of course. There can be no doubt that we're in Romagna, and the image is the classic one made famous by the films of Zavattini and Fellini. No official statistics exist on how many bikes there are in this region, for the simple reason that everybody goes by bike. It's no coincidence that a lot of cycling champions come from around here. There are physical, cultural and organisational factors, over and above the economic ones, that make this territory especially suited to cyclists. First of all the variety of routes: in the space of a few miles you go from flatlands to hills and mountains, so bike enthusiasts can choose a whole day trip or a few hours' spin.

For some years now, particularly in spring, thousands and thousands of bike lovers and specialists have chosen the Adriatic Coast of Emilia Romagna as a competition training ground. Professionals, amateurs and beginners find the right pedalling conditions in this area.

The numerous cycling tour events organised here and the cycling schools held by expert professionals offer the chance to select a sports holiday at any time of the year. Many operators are specialised in the cycling field and their hotels are equipped with bicycle sheds, small workshops and menus suited to cyclists, as well as informative material about the various routes.

With this guide and its sixteen bike itineraries from the Adriatic to the Apennines across the provinces of Ferrara, Ravenna, Forlì-Cesena and Rimini, the Unione Costa wants to offer its old and new guests an increasingly rich way of holidaymaking. What else? All that remains is to wish you a pleasant stay on the Adriatic Coast.

**Andrea Corsini**  
president

**Antonio Carasso**  
project co-ordinator





[www.adriacoast.com](http://www.adriacoast.com)

The touristic website of Adriatic Coast of Emilia Romagna with all the localities, events and holiday offers and where to book.





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## Ferrara

# IN THE LAND OF THE D'ESTE FAMILY

### What to see

IN THE FERRARA AREA THE BICYCLE HAS ALWAYS BEEN LINKED WITH WORK, TRANSPORT, SOCIALISING AND LEISURE. THE FLAT COUNTRYSIDE CUT BY WATERWAYS INVITES YOU TO TRAVEL. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A CHAMPION TO GO CYCLING IN THE PROVINCE OF FERRARA. THERE ARE NEITHER HILLS NOR MOUNTAINS. THE LANDSCAPE FEATURES A WIDE AND FERTILE PLAIN, ONCE LARGELY COVERED WITH WATER AND CONQUERED BY MAN IN THE COURSE OF EXTENSIVE LAND RECLAMATION WORKS. YOU PEDAL SLOWLY THROUGH A ENVIRONMENT OF CULTIVATED FIELDS, RURAL HOUSES, ARISTOCRATIC VILLAS, CASTLES, FORTRESSES AND A NETWORK OF RIVERS AND CANALS REIGNED OVER BY THE GREAT RIVER PO.

### Powerful and Splendid Renaissance Ferrara

Ferrara has a fascinating town-plan and is a splendid city of medieval and renaissance art. In Piazza della Cattedrale, the pulsating heart of political and religious life in the times of the D'Este family, are the **Archiepiscopal Palace** and the **Town Hall**, built in 1243 as the dukes' residence. Building of the **Castello Estense** in the adjacent piazza was begun in 1385. The Cathedral with its magnificent Romanesque-Gothic façade stands almost opposite the Town Hall. The main portal is very beautiful with a bas-relief depicting St. George on horseback piercing the dragon. One of the most celebrated buildings of the Italian Renaissance is the 15th century **Palazzo dei Diamanti**, so called because of the diamond point stone facing devised by Biagio Rossetti. Today the palazzo is the prestigious home of the **National Picture Gallery and the Gallery of Modern Art**. Also noteworthy are Biagio Rossetti's **Palazzo Costabili**, home to the Archaeology Museum, and the **Palazzo Schifanoia**, marvelously frescoed by Cossa and by Ercole de' Roberti.

### The Beautiful and the Good

Decorated ceramics, the carvings and the wooden sculptures are the most popular craft items, but also objects made of wrought iron, copper and pewter are also very interesting. As for food, in Ferrara there is a happy marriage of aristocratic and popular cuisine, starting with the **salama da sugo** of Renaissance tradition, a kind of pork sausage much loved by Lucrezia Borgia, and going on to pasticcio of macaroni, **cappellacci with pumpkin** and the spice cake called **pampepato**. As for river and sea fare, the eels of Comacchio are celebrated by gourmets and should be washed down with the red "wine of the sands", the Bosco Eliceo DOC. Bread too is special in the Ferrara area (**cornetto, ciupèta, ricciolina**), to be enjoyed all day long, from breakfast to lunch, with aperitifs and obviously at dinner. An excellent and fragrant companion for the cured meats of Ferrara and other local produce.

### Information

#### Ruote Panoramiche Percorsi cicloturistici dal sapore estense

**Languages:** Italian, German  
**Information:** Province of Ferrara  
Tel. +39 0532 299 303  
infotur@provincia.fe.it  
www.ferrarabike.com



2



3



4

1. Po Delta Park, eels
2. Comacchio
3. Ferrara, Estense Castle
4. Ferrara, Cathedral

## Festivals and Fairs

### **MAY** › *Mesola* › Asparagus Fair

The sandy soil of the Po Delta is ideal for green asparagus. During the fair it will be possible to buy fresh asparagus or taste a wide variety of dishes at the gastronomy stands.

### **MAY** › *Berra* › World Hop Shoot Fair

With the rediscovery of the refined aroma of this shrub (a spring shoot of *Humulus Lupulus* with a taste similar to asparagus) the fair aims at spreading awareness of the simple things of the past.

### **MAY / JUNE** › *Gorino* › Fish Fair

The fair celebrates the main gastronomic resource of the area. There are stands where you can taste grey mullet, gilthead, sea-bass and other fish-based specialities.

(Info: Tel. +39 0533 995 030 – 995 355)

### **MAY / JUNE** › *Guarda, Ro Ferrarese*

#### › Salama da Tai Fair

Star of this gastronomic event is the salama da tai (slicing sausage), a rich tasting charcuterie item with a characteristic aroma. It is produced by craftspeople in accordance with the old methods of local tradition.

### **JUNE** › *Goro* › Clam Fair

Dishes prepared to ancient recipes of the seafaring tradition offer the chance to discover one of the most characteristic products of the whole Adriatic coast: wild clams.

### **AUGUST** › *San Giuseppe, Comacchio*

#### › Bosco Eliceo Wine Festival

The cultivation of the golden grape has ancient origins. The land in this area, being characterised by traces of salt, gives the wine those organoleptic characteristics that make it one of the few red wines suitable for serving with fish. The festival offers a splendid opportunity to taste the “wines of the sands” with typical local dishes.

### **OCTOBER** › *Comacchio* › Eel Fair

Thanks to this fair, thousands of tourist can follow an itinerary between valleys and lagoons rich with antique flavours and curiosities. It will be delightful to stroll amongst the bridges and canals of this lagoon town, decorated especially for the occasion, listening to live music and enjoying the unmistakable aroma of eel prepared and served in a variety of ways, from starters to side dishes.

### **OCTOBER** › *Bondeno, Panarea* › Bread Festival

The festival intends to relaunch the excellent quality of both soft wheat and Ferrara bread. All visitors will be invited to “The Bread Village” where they can taste different oven-baked specialities.

**Info: IAT Centro Unificato di Ferrara Tel. +39 0532 299 303**



The holiday offers are available  
[www.adriacoast.com](http://www.adriacoast.com)

# Trip through the Comacchio Lagoons

## Not to be missed

### Nature-Historical itinerary of the Comacchio Lagoons

Guided excursions leave from Casone Foce, just a few kilometres south of Comacchio. On foot or by boat you can follow an itinerary suspended between land and water in a richly evocative environment. Over and above the flora and fauna typical of the Po Delta Park you will also see and admire the "Casoni" fishing houses and the typical traps "lavorieri" for catching eels.

(Info: Tel.  
IAT +39 0533 314 154)

FROM PORTO GARIBALDI TO ANITA'S MEMORIAL STONE: THE NAMES ARE ENOUGH IN THEMSELVES TO TRANSMIT THE ATMOSPHERE OF THIS TRIP WHICH EVOKES THE HEROIC GESTURES OF THE HERO OF TWO WORLDS AND HIS PASSIONATE LOVE FOR HIS WIFE. THE TWO OF THEM, FLEEING FROM ROME WHERE THE REPUBLIC HAD FALLEN, WERE TRYING TO ESCAPE THE AUSTRIAN- PAPAL TROOPS AND REACH THE REPUBLIC OF VENICE.

BUT ANITA, WORN OUT BY HARDSHIP, DIED IN THE COMACCHIO LAGOONS. GARIBALDI AND HIS MEN NEVER MADE IT TO VENICE BUT TOOK REFUGE IN SAN MARINO.

### A stop in Comacchio is a must

The first leg is from Porto Garibaldi to Comacchio, a fine lagoon town characterised by bridges and canals, a pleasant place to take a break in a unique atmosphere. From Comacchio you will head towards Ostellato, home to the Vallette nature reserve, and after a few kilometres, turning right onto the flyover and then travelling southwards, you will follow the signs for **Anita** and the nature-historical route of the lagoons. The route touches on the very important archaeological area of the Greco-Etruscan town of Spina. The residential area – on which excavation work is still in progress – is not open to visitors, but valuable finds can be admired in the Archaeology Museum in Ferrara.

### Great view over the lagoons

Leaving the Spina area and heading towards Anita you take the road of the Argine Agosta, the first stretch of which divides two reclaimed marshlands: the **Valle Pega** and the **Valle del Mezzano**.

Leaving the **Argine Agosta** and taking the Fiume road you come to an interesting archaeological site: the remains of the Parish Church of Santa Maria in Padovetere, built in the 6th century.



2

After this detour you return to the Argine Agosta and arrive at the Valle Zavelea nature reserve, a freshwater zone inhabited by the avocet and the white heron. Slightly farther on, a stupendous view opens up over the Comacchio Lagoons, one of the most important lagoon areas in Italy.

### Balancing on the Argine Agosta

The road is straight for another 9 kilometres, balanced between the lagoon on the left and the surrounding canal on the right. Continuing towards **Anita** you will come to the bank of the River Reno, which frames the

**Comacchio Lagoons** to the south and offers an unforgettable natural view. From here it is also possible to admire the peninsula of **Boscoforte**, a narrow strip of land that winds between the waters of the valleys and a reserve for numerous species of birds. From here, crossing the river Reno on the ferry, you arrive in **Sant'Alberto** in the province of Ravenna. Continuing eastwards, near the intersection with the Romea state road, you will find on the left the Guiccioli farm where Anita Garibaldi died on 4th August 1849. Slightly farther ahead is the **Memorial Stone**, inaugurated on 9th August 1896.



1



3 m Porto Garibaldi

1 m Valle Fattibello

2 m Valli di Comacchio

3 m Cippo di Anita

Km. 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 42

Departure: Porto Garibaldi Arrival: Anita Garibaldi Memorial Stone Distance: 42 Km Degree of difficulty: low Maximum altitude: 3 m. Duration: roughly 1h 1/2



3



4



- 1./2./5. Comacchio, Trepponti bridge
- 3. Comacchio
- 4. Comacchio Lagoons



5

## ITINERARY 2

### Ferrara

# Cycling through history

#### Not to be missed

##### **Voghiera and Voghenza, a nucleus with a very ancient heart**

Voghiera and Voghenza, a nucleus with a very ancient heart. Not far from the Po di Primaro, Voghenza is spread out around the grandiose D'Este palazzo of Belriguardo. The palazzo now houses the Archaeological Museum which contains steles, sarcophagi, tombs and objects accompanying the dead, found in the Roman burial ground of Voghenza. Voghenza itself is practically next to Voghiera and has an important archaeological area where excavations and the Roman burial ground can be visited.

(Info: Tel. Comune di Voghiera +39 0532 328 500 – 328 511)

A ROUTE, STARTING IN FERRARA AND FOLLOWING THE WINDING COURSE OF THE PO DI PRIMARO FOR ABOUT HALFWAY BEFORE HEADING FOR ARGENTA AND THE SURROUNDING NATURE RESERVES. A HIGHLY ENJOYABLE SPIN AMID RURAL ARCHITECTURES, ANCIENT PARISH CHURCHES AND ARISTOCRATIC VILLAS THAT TAKES YOU TO THE SOUTHERNMOST PART OF THE PROVINCE WHERE THERE WERE ONCE A GREAT NUMBER OF SWAMPS.

##### **San Luca, the miracle village**

You leave Ferrara by way of **Borgo San Luca** whose Baroque style Sanctuary contains an ancient crucifix held to be miraculous. You follow the course of the river, pedalling in open country, and near **Sant'Egidio** you come to the Sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin of Poggetto.

After a few kilometres you reach **Marrara** from which, with a detour of 9 kilometres in the direction of **San Bartolomeo in Bosco**, you can visit the Farming World Documentation Centre (Info tel. 0532 725 294), which bears witness to life and work in the countryside from the late 19th century through the first half of the 20th century.

After returning to the main road, you will soon reach **San Nicolò** and, beyond the village of Bova, the route continues along the left of the Po di Primaro to **Ospital Monacale** and **Traghetto**, where you climb the bank of the Reno river, cycling along it to the cycle bridge across the river. At this point, following the road at the bottom of the bank, you will come to Argenta.

##### **Argenta, the rural spirit also in art**

Argenta has been almost entirely rebuilt after the Second World War. But some of its



past remains, such as the 7th century **Parish Church of San Giorgio** with its portal dating to 1122, decorated with representations of the months and of work in the fields. Also worth seeing is the former Church of San Domenico which now houses the Municipal Picture Gallery.

##### **In the lagoons, magical nature oases**

If you like you can continue from Argenta to the nature reserves of the **Valli di Argenta and Marmorta**, with stretches of water surrounded by dense vegetation and populated by

an extraordinary number of birds and animals.

A visit to the Museo delle Valli, housed in the Casino di Campotto, which provides a perfect historical-naturalistic picture of the Argenta territory, is highly recommended.

(Info tel. 0532 808 058)

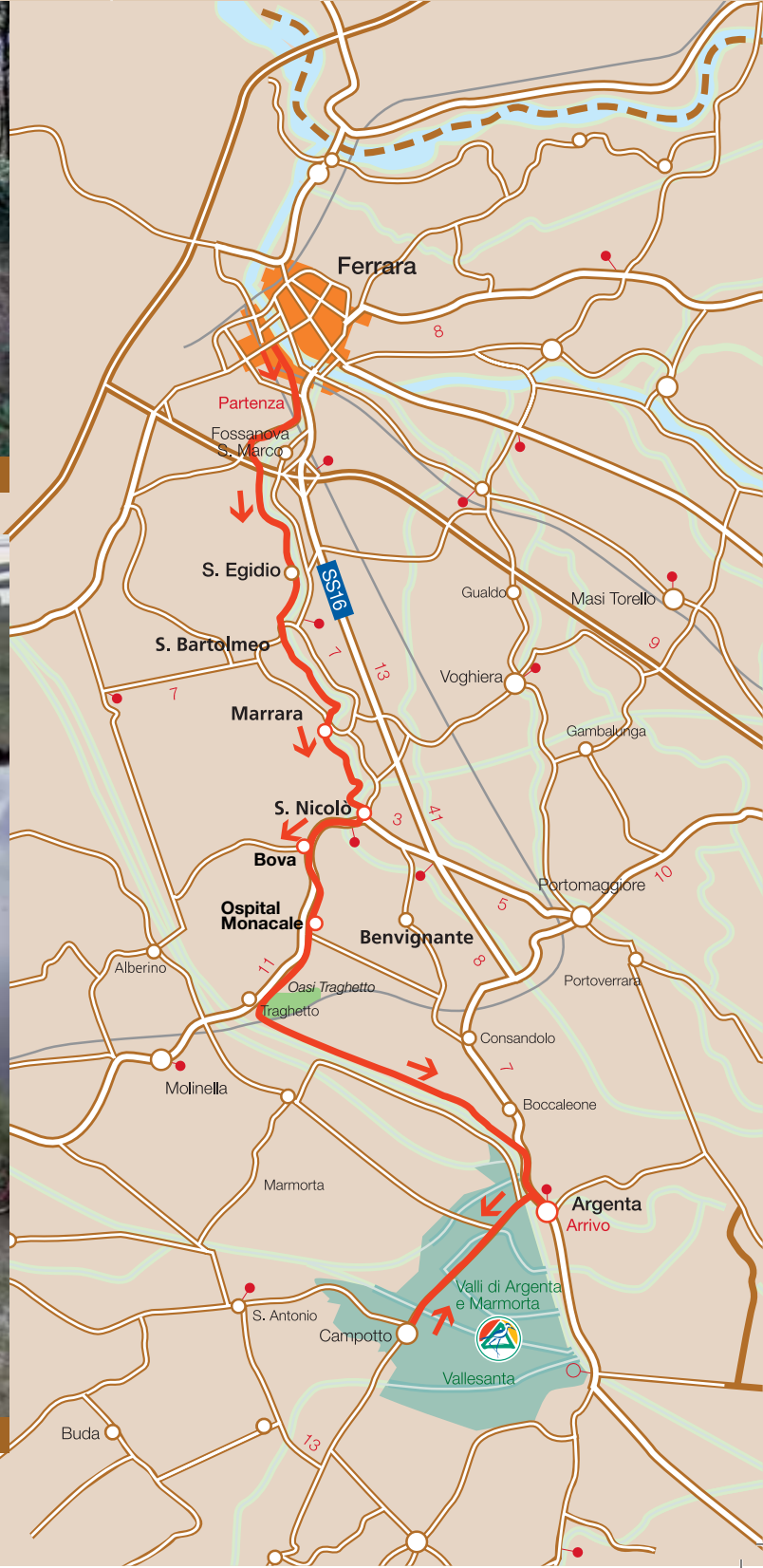
1. Pomposa, Abbey
2. Ferrare, Estense Castle
3. Ferrare, palio
4. Po Delta Park
5. Comacchio Lagoons





Km. 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 42

Departure: Ferrara Arrival: Argenta Distance: 42 Km Degree of difficulty: low Maximum altitude: - Duration: roughly 1h 1/2



## ITINERARY 3

Ferrara

# Right bank of the river Po

### Not to be missed

#### Pomposa Abbey, place of the spirit

Pomposa Abbey, in the flat-land of the Po Delta, is a monastic nucleus which after the year 1000 became one of the most important spiritual and cultural centres in Italy. Here lived Guido da Pomposa, better known as Guido d'Arezzo, inventor of the modern system of transcribing music. What has come down to us of the original Abbey includes the Palazzo della Ragione, the church, the Chapter House, the Refectory and the splendid bell-tower. Thanks to its frescoes, the complex is a masterpiece of Romanesque art.

(Info: Tel. +39 IAT 0533 719 110)

THE ROUTE RUNS ALONG THE RIGHT BANK OF THE PO, THE LONG BOUNDARY LINE WHICH AT THE BEGINNING DIVIDES FERRARA TERRITORY FROM LOMBARDY AND THEN, PROCEEDING TOWARDS THE ADRIATIC, FROM VENETO TERRITORY. THE GREAT RIVER IS A CONSTANT TRAVELLING COMPANION, WITH ITS HISTORY, ITS TALES, ITS CUSTOMS AND GREAT PLAINS.

#### Departure in the lee of the Rocca Possente Fortress

The starting point is **Stellata** on the north-west boundary of the province of Ferrara where the countryside meets the river as it flows in from Mantua territory. Stellata takes its name from the star-shaped plan of the Rocca Possente fortress, built in 1362 by Niccolò II D'Este for greater river traffic security. From Stellata you head towards Bondeno, temporarily leaving the main river bank and following the Panaro river. After **Bondeno** you rejoin the right bank of the Po river and pass another

watercourse, the Cavo Napoleonico, created at Napoleon's behest to link the river Po and the river Reno: one of the many interventions on the waterway network of the zone.

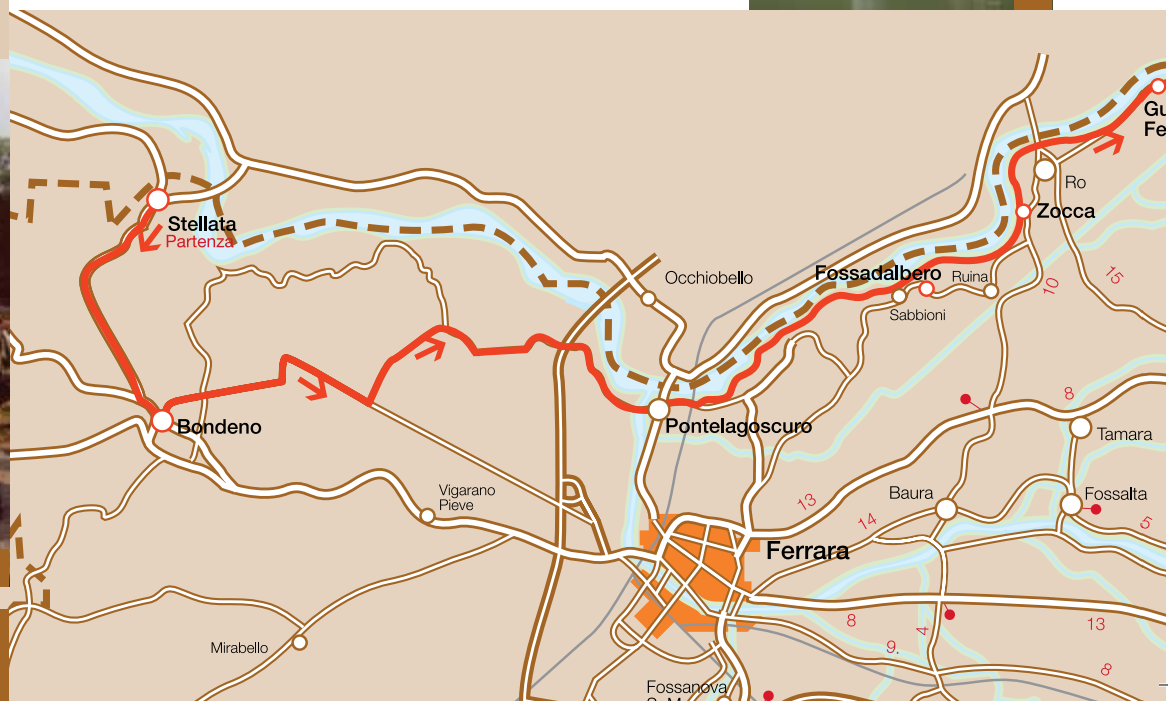
#### Before the "Delta Gate"

At **Pontelagoscuro**, after about a 27 kilometre run, in the middle of the river you can see Isola Bianca, today a fauna reserve. This is also the point closest to Ferrara city centre, which is only six kilometres away. Then the river moves away from the city, touching the villages of **Fossadalbero**, **Zocca**, **Ro**

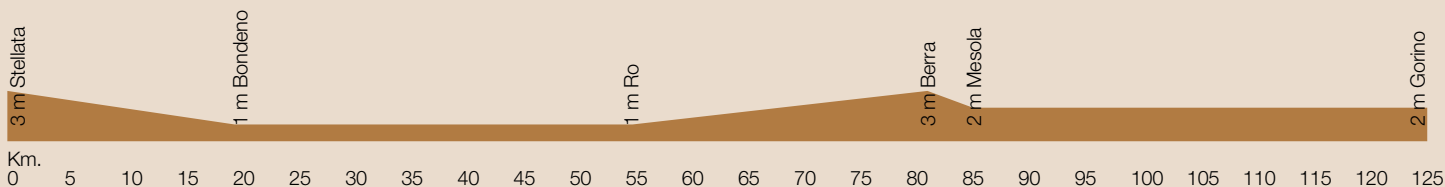
1. Stellata
2. Ferrare, Estense Castle
3. Mesola, the Castle
4. Gorino



2



1



Departure: Stellata | Arrival: Gorino | Distance: 125 Km | Degree of difficulty: medium | Maximum altitude: - | Duration: 4/5 hours

with the famous mill on the Po, **Guarda, Berra and Serravalle**. The Po splits up precisely at Serravalle and this is why the latter is also called the Delta Gate: one branch goes north towards Venice and one runs south, taking the name of Po di Goro. In this area there is a mooring place for small pleasure craft that are used for silur fishing. After about fifteen kilometres following the Po you come to the Fossil Dunes of **Massenzatica**, an ancient sandbars dating to the second millennium before Christ. The area, a nature reserve, is accessible along pre-established paths which are also sig-

nalled for the blind and sight-impaired. Guided tours are organised occasionally.

**Mesola Castle, Delizia Estense** You can now see the sea. **Mesola** welcomes you with its Castle that overlooks the river, one of the so-called Delizie Estensi, built by the D'Este family for pleasure and entertainment. It dates to the end of the 16th century and was used as a lodge by the dukes when they went hunting in the Mesola Wood. The Castle is now the headquarters of the Environmental Education Centre (Info tel. +39 339 1935943), which documents the origins

and evolution of the Po Valley territory as well as the flora and fauna of an area that is unique of its kind and with a specific section dedicated to the Deer of the Dunes. After Mesola the course of the river alters southwards. It is worth stopping for a visit to the 17th century **Torre dell'Abate**, one of the many works built to regulate the flow of the water. Equally worthy of attention is the **Mesola Wood**, more than a thousand hectares of nature reserve and habitat of the Dune Deer, residual evidence of the deer that once populated the Po Valley. The Wood can be visited on foot and by bike.

There are also guided tours. (Info tel. + 39 0533 993 358)

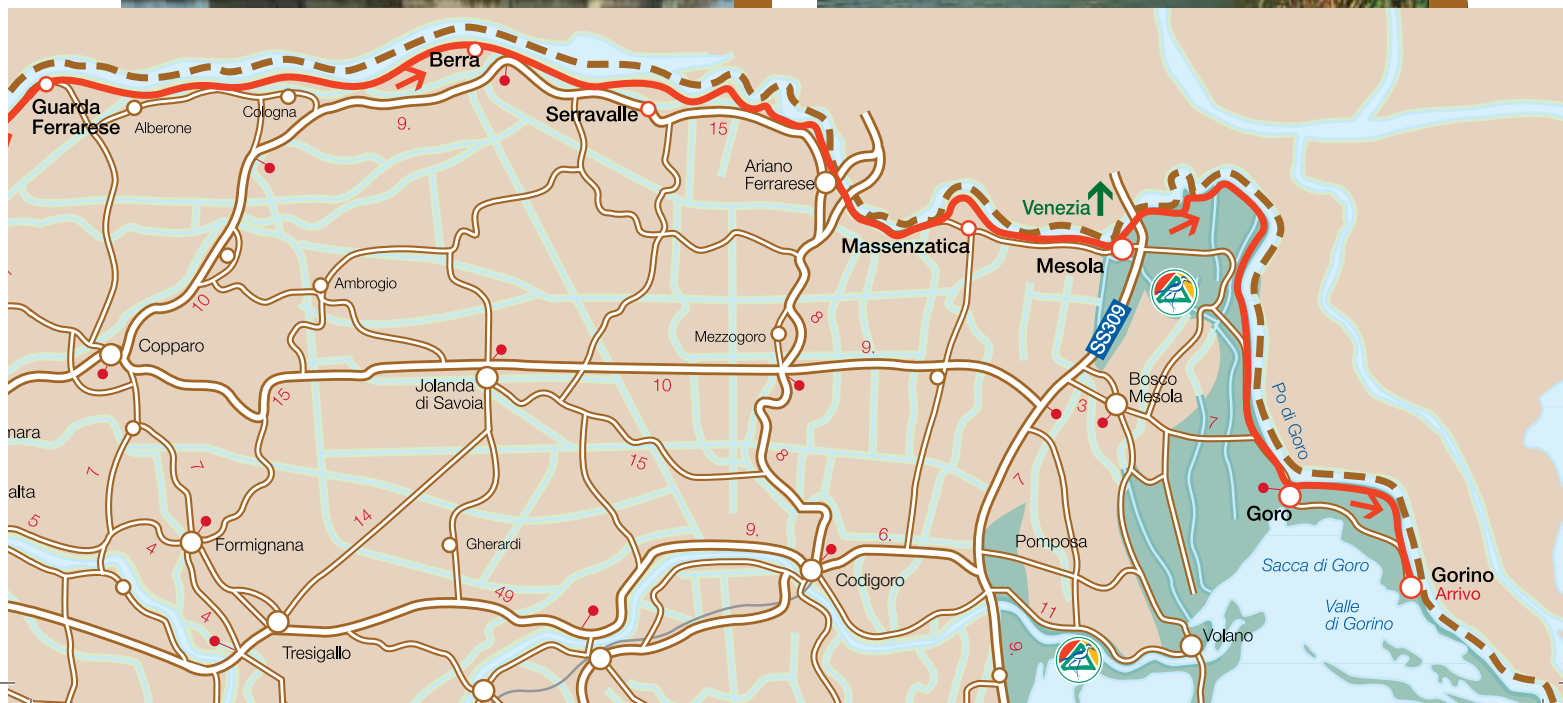
**Goro, a "mobile town"** You're almost at the end of the trip and the waters of the Po mingle with those of the Adriatic Sea: here you are in **Goro** whose history is closely bound to the waters on which it stands. The town already existed in the Middle Ages but the ceaseless movement of the Po Delta led to the founding in the 18th century of a new Goro in a better position. The terminus is **Gorino**, where there are motorboat excursions to the Po mouth.



3



4



## ITINERARY 4

### Ferrara

# Balanced between land and water

### Not to be missed

#### History of Comacchio, town on the water

Of very ancient origins, Comacchio stands on 13 islets emerging from the lagoons of Valle Pega and Valle Isola. Its symbol is the 17th century Trepponti bridge, a unique structure with five flights of steps and five arches.

Other notable buildings are the Cathedral dedicated to San Cassiano, the Loggia dei Cappuccini, the Clock Tower, the Merchants' Loggia and the Fish Market.

The Pescheria (an ancient fishmonger's shop), the Antica Manifattura dei Marinati and the Roman Ship Museum are of considerable interest; the ship, about twenty metres long and dating to the 1st century BC was found by chance just a few kilometres from the town in 1981. The ship had been quickly sanded over so it and its cargo were preserved: the latter is now on show in the museum while the hull itself is in an adjacent pavilion-laboratory.

(Info: Tel. IAT +39 0533 314 154)

YOU SET OUT FROM PORTO GARIBALDI, ONE OF THE SEVEN LIDOS OF COMACCHIO, WITH WIDE SANDY BEACHES. DELIMITED TO THE NORTH BY THE PO DELTA AND TO THE SOUTH BY THE RENO ESTUARY, THE COMACCHIO LIDOS, WHICH SEEM TO FLOAT ON THE WATER, ARE SURROUNDED BY MAJESTIC PINEWOODS AND VAST GREEN SPACES.

#### Valle Bertuzzi, between woodland and sea

From **Porto Garibaldi** you head towards Volano by the panoramic **Acciaioli** road, a distance of about 18 kilometres. The Acciaioli road skirts the **Valle Bertuzzi** on the left: 2,000 hectares of spectacular seascape/landscape suspended between the extensive lagoons, separated from the stretches of dunes over which herons and pink flamingos fly. On the other side there is the **Lago delle Nazioni** on the shores of which the white horses of the Delta, descendants of the Camargue breed, live in a wild state.

#### The heron builds its nest in Cannevié

Leaving Volano you should stop at the **Torre della Finanza**, built in the 17th century by the Papal States to control access to the Po di Volano. Skirting the Valle Bertuzzi from the northern side you take the bicycle lane Passo Pomposa - Volano. On the right, the **Cannevié - Porticino** nature reserve, a brackish marsh where the red heron and the little bittern build their nests.



1. Comacchio
2. Goro, harbour
- 3./6. Po Delta Park
4. Pomposa, Abbey
5. Mesola, Torre Abate

3 m Porto Garibaldi

1 m Lido di Pomposa

1 m Lido di Volano

3 m Pomposa

Km. 0 5 10 15 20 25 28

Departure: Porto Garibaldi Arrival: Pomposa Distance: 28 Km Degree of difficulty: very low Maximum altitude: - Duration: roughly 1 hour

### Chiavica dell'Agrifoglio

About 3 kilometres from Cannevié you turn right towards the Chiavica dell'Agrifoglio, the oldest hydraulic work extant in the lower Ferrarese area (1689). As soon as you pass the sluiceway you turn left to get to the celebrated **Pomposa Abbey** where you can visit the church, the refectory, the chapter-house and the Palazzo della Ragione.



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## Ravenna

# PEDALLING AMONG BYZANTINE TREASURES

### What to see

NATURALLY SUITED TO CYCLISTS, THE PROVINCE OF RAVENNA OFFERS THE TOUGH RIDGES, GENTLE HILLS, VAST PLAIN AND COASTLINE WITHIN THE PO DELTA PARK AREA, A STIMULATING VARIETY OF LANDSCAPES THERE TO BE EXPERIENCED.

IT ISN'T ONLY THE LANDSCAPE THAT HAS GENUINE SURPRISES IN STORE FOR KEEN CYCLISTS. ANOTHER EXTRAORDINARY ASPECT OF THIS PROVINCE IS THE UNIQUE TREASURES FOUND HERE. ONE AMONG MANY: RAVENNA, BETWEEN EAST AND WEST, WHICH PRESERVES THE LIGHT OF ANCIENT BYZANTIUM IN THE GOLD OF ITS MOSAICS.

### The mosaics, Ravenna's gold worldwide

No less than 8 of its monuments have been declared "world heritage" by Unesco for the supreme artistic mastery of the **mosaics**, the heritage of 1600 years of history.

And you cannot leave Ravenna without visiting at least its most important sights.

The 6th century **Basilica of San Vitale** with the two great mosaics depicting Justinian and Theodora; the 5th century **Mausoleum of Galla Placidia** with the blue vaulted ceiling featuring mosaic stars; the famous **Baptisteries**, the **Neonian** and the **Arian**, and the **Archbishop's Chapel** where the mosaics depict the fauna of the Ravenna pinewoods.

There are two basilicas dedicated to Sant'Apollinare, patron saint of the town. One is in the centre, **Sant'Apollinare Nuovo**, with its stupendous procession of Virgins and Martyrs, and the other a few kilometres out of town, **Sant'Apollinare in Classe** featuring a magnificent apse with a hemispherical semi-dome. Both basilicas have a cylindrical bell tower (10th – 11th century) about 40 metres high. Another majestic monument is the **Theodoric's Mausoleum** built at the Goth king's behest in 520 AD.

Also noteworthy is the Dantesque area that includes **Dante Alighieri's Tomb** and the Church of San Francesco.

1. Ravenna, Mausoleum of Galla Placidia
2. Ravenna, Basilica of San Vitale
3. Sant'Apollinare in Classe

### The Beautiful and the Good

The art of mosaics is still very much alive in **Ravenna**. Street markets, shops and art galleries offer original **modern mosaics** and reproductions of **ancient ones**.

In Faenza numerous workshops continue the traditional craft of **ceramics**, enriched with new ideas.

In Villanova di Bagnacavallo there are craftspeople specialised in working **marshland plants** and wood.

The foodstuffs of the province are also special: **piadina**, **salt** from Cervia, olive **oil** from Brisighella and **shallots** from Riolo, all of which have been masterfully used for centuries in cooking, preserving and dressing food.

The typical cuisine of this area between land and sea consists of grilled meat, home-made pasta such as passatelli, tagliatelle and cappelletti as well as grilled fish, with frogs and eels for the more curious palate.

### Information

#### Cycling in Romagna The most fascinating routes for cyclists and bikers

**Languages:** Italian, English, German

**Information:** Province of Ravenna - Tourism Department  
Fax +39 0544 506 024  
[ravnaintorno@mail.provincia.ra.it](mailto:ravnaintorno@mail.provincia.ra.it)



1



2





## Festivals and Fairs

### **MARCH** › *Cervia* › Festival of San Giuseppe and Squid Fair

Organised entertainment and shows in the Romagna tradition; music, street markets, flower show and seafood stands.

Pinarella Shopping Centre (Info: Tel. +39 0544 993 435)

[www.turismo.comunecervia.it](http://www.turismo.comunecervia.it)

### **JULY** › *Riolo Terme* › Shallot Festival

A chance to discover the delicacies of the Romagna shallot. Food stands. (Info: Tel. +39 0546 71 044)

[www.terredifaenza.it](http://www.terredifaenza.it)

### **JULY AND AUGUST** › *Casola Valsenio*

› Evening street Herbs Market

Medicinal plants on sale, lectures, tasting at the “green table”.

(Info: Tel. +39 0546 73 033)

[www.terredifaenza.it](http://www.terredifaenza.it)

### **SEPTEMBER** › *Cervia* › Flavour of Salt

A whole month dedicated to the salty origins and tradition of the town, with a busy programme of shows, exhibitions, meetings, cultural get-togethers and markets on a theme. There is also a

revisitation of the old tradition of the salt store, with transportation from the salt pans to the storerooms using the “burchiella”.

(Info: Tel. +39 0544 993 435)

[www.turismo.comunecervia.it](http://www.turismo.comunecervia.it)

### **SEPTEMBER** › *Riolo Terme* › Province Grape Fair

Established in 1952, the event offers typical dishes, DOC wines, historical processions and shows. (Info: Tel. +39 0546 71 044)

[www.terredifaenza.it](http://www.terredifaenza.it)

### **OCTOBER** › *Casola Valsenio* › Festival of Forgotten Fruit

Display and sale of small autumn fruits forgotten in the change from an agricultural to an industrial society. Jam competition.

(Info: Tel. +39 0546 73 033)

[www.terredifaenza.it](http://www.terredifaenza.it)

### **NOVEMBER** › *Brisighella* › 4 fairs for 3 hills

A delicious gastronomy event which dedicates each Sunday in November to a typical local product: pork, the Volpina pear and mature cheese, truffles and oil. (Info: Tel. +39 0546 81 166)

[www.terredifaenza.it](http://www.terredifaenza.it)



The holiday offers are available  
[www.adriacoast.com](http://www.adriacoast.com)

## ITINERARY 5

### Ravenna

# A plunge into the hinterland

#### Not to be missed

##### Treatments and relaxation at the Cervia Spa

Surrounded by a centuries-old pinewood the Spa of Cervia, open from May to October, offers many avant-garde services, from the classic therapies to treatments for beauty, well-being and relaxation. The spa uses a rare and precious brine that comes directly from the Cervia salt-pans, as do the highly prized muds used which are similar to the "liman" of the Dead Sea. The thermal pool and the gym are open until December.

(Info: Tel. Terme  
+39 0544 990 111)

FROM THE SEA OF CERVIA TO THE PEAK OF BERTINORO AND BACK. THERE ARE LONG PLEASANT STRETCHES OVER THE PLAIN AND FIELDS, BUT BRUSQUELY INTERRUPTED BY THE CLIMB TOWARDS BERTINORO. ABOUT 60 KILOMETRES IN ALL, WHICH WON'T BE ANY EFFORT FOR EXPERTS BUT MAY PROVE TIRING TO THE BEGINNERS.



##### Ten kilometres of flatland and then...

You cross the "Adriatica" state road and at the first fork take Via Cervara on the left. After eight kilometres on the flat, to warm up your muscles, you come to **Pisignano** and immediately afterwards **Cannuzzo**. The atmosphere is the peaceful one you breathe in the countryside. At the tenth kilometre, having crossed the river Savio, you leave the province of Ravenna and enter the province of Forlì Cesena; near **Santa Maria Nuova** you start the climb towards Bertinoro. The road gets gradually tougher over an ascent of ten kilometres with some hard gradients that will test your physical condition.

##### Bertinoro, a hospitable place

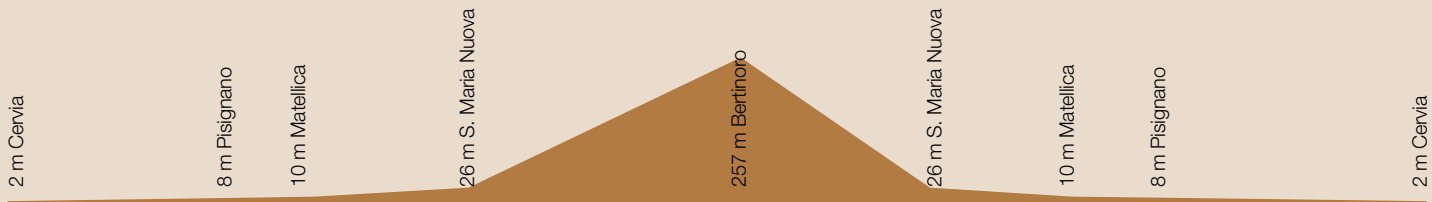
You arrive in **Bertinoro** after a fairly tough climb and the town is the just reward for your efforts. An atmosphere of other ages, but not only this: Bertinoro is renowned as a place of hospitality, a 700 year tradition as may be seen from the *Colonna delle Anelle* (Hospitality Column) in the main square. If you then think of its gastronomic fame you may indulge yourself with a glass of wine. No doubt accompanied by the inseparable piadina.

##### Headlong to the sea

The return to Cervia is genuine pleasure. As you speed along amid vineyards you get glimpses of the plain as far as the sea. As the road flattens out you come to the road back: Santa

1. Riolo Terme
2. Ravenna
3. Ravenna, San Vitale Pinewood
4. Po Delta Park





Km. 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60

Departure: Cervia Arrival: Cervia Distance: 60 Km Degree of difficulty: medium-low Maximum altitude: 257 m. Duration: 2 and a half hours

Maria Nuova, the Dismano road, Matellica, Cannuzzo and Pisignano. You swiftly approach the sea and the welcoming beaches of Cervia.



# Tour for connoisseurs

## ITINERARY 6

### Not to be missed

#### At Riolo the “Chalk Vein”

Anyone passing through the area, by bike or by other means, should take a stop in Riolo Terme. This spa town with its therapeutic springs offers not only the spa centre immersed in magnificent grounds with an elegant Art Nouveau pavilion, but also the imposing 15th century fortress, still intact, and a richness of nature that is not to be missed: the Chalk Vein is a long rocky ridge known as “moonstone” due to its extraordinary reflections at night.

(Info: Tel. IAT +39 0546 71 044)

A MORE THAN EIGHTY KILOMETRE RUN, WHOLLY INTERNAL, OF TOP CYCLING QUALITY BUT ALSO OF HIGH HISTORIC-CULTURAL INTEREST. A SORT OF RECTANGLE THAT STARTS AND FINISHES IN FAENZA AFTER PASSING THROUGH TOWNS OF ART AND SPAS SUCH AS CASTROCARO, BRISIGHELLA AND RIOLO. IN THE MIDDLE, MONTE TREBBIO AND OTHER BREAKAWAYS THAT ARE NOT NEGLIGIBLE, CASALE AND MONTICINO FOR EXAMPLE.

ADVICE TO THOSE ABLE TO DETACH THEMSELVES FROM COMPETITIVE FERVOUR: A FEW STOPS AND GLANCES AT THE PANORAMA ARE WELL WORTHWHILE.

#### The Dovadola truffle, a prized species

The first stretch, leaving **Faenza** towards **Forlì**, is on the **Via Emilia** where traffic is heavy. But all that's needed is a little patience because after about ten kilometres, following the signs for **Villagrappa** on the right, peace will return.

This stretch that goes towards **Castrocaro** is on apparently slightly flat ground that gets your legs ready for the effort of the upcoming climb. From Castrocaro there are about ten up and down kilometres to **Dovadola**, famous for a prized species of truffle that grows there. Here you start going up: first there are two kilometres of pretty gentle ascent then, starting from the **Monte Trebbio** fork, more than five kilometres from the top, the climb gets really serious.

The first kilometre has a gradient of about 10%, then there is a providential flat before you take on about 1500 metres at 12%. Lastly, after a few hundred metres that are fortunately more easygoing, there is a final diabolical kilometre.

When you get to the top you feel gratified by the achievement and by the Memorial Stone dedicated to cyclists. Never was there a better aimed homage.

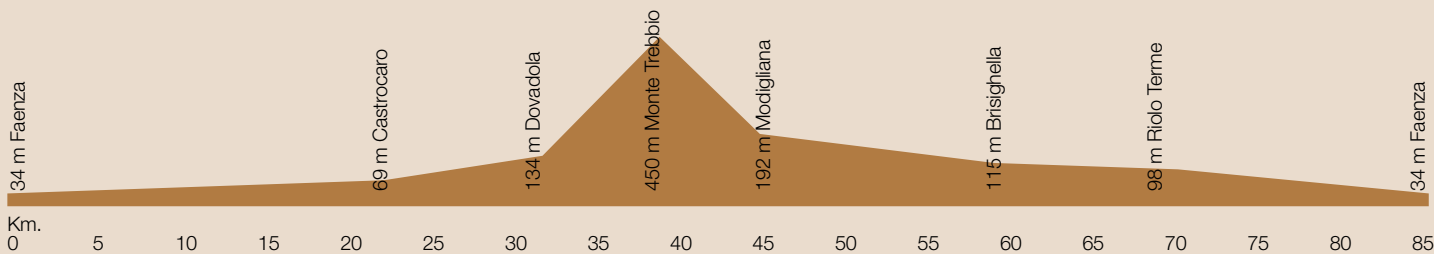


#### Watch out at the Monte Casale breakaway

You start going down to Modigliana and the descent is difficult in stretches. You pass the town on a road surface that is treacherous for bikes and carry straight on to the road for Brisighella. Now you

have to face the second climb of the day: Monte Casale. It isn't a long stretch, about three kilometres, but the gradient is roughly a fairly constant 10%. The last 300 metres are the worst and they bite into your legs, but then you are on the way down to Brisighella, once more





Departure: Faenza | Arrival: Faenza | Distance: 85 Km | Degree of difficulty: medium-high | Maximum altitude: 450 m. | Duration: roughly 4 hours

in the province of Ravenna.

**Brisighella, the pleasure of the beautiful**

Brisighella, over and above being an important spa centre, is one of the most evocative places in the province. If you feel like taking a break, this is the right place. It is full of mediaeval charm with its narrow streets, the Fortress, the Clock Tower and that peculiarity, the raised and arcaded Via degli Asini. At Brisighella you've covered 60 kilometres but the climbs aren't over yet: there's still Monticino, three kilometres touching on 10% with your muscles and spirit already suffering from previous ascents. Then after three downhill kilometres and another breakaway at the fork of Villa San Giorgio in Vezzano, you arrive at Riolo Terme in the lower valley of the river Senio.

**Towards the finishing line**

At the Riolo Terme roundabout you take the wide road on the right that leads to Via Emilia. At the traffic lights you see, on the right, the first houses of Castel Bolognese. The road is busy but in a flash you get to Faenza which a byword for ceramics throughout the world. And the itinerary ends here.

- 1. Apennine
- 2. Brisighella
- 3. Faenza, Cathedral
- 4. Riolo Terme



3



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## ITINERARY 7

### Ravenna

# A thousand metres up

#### Not to be missed

##### Faenza, the art of majolica

The place name means ceramics in various languages, including the French faïence and the English faience, so you must not miss a visit to the International Ceramics Museum. The churches and buildings of the old town centre are of great value such as the 15th century Cathedral, designed by Giuliano da Maiano, the 18th century Palazzo Milzetti, the Masini Theatre and the Chiesa della Commenda.

(Info: Tel. IAT +39 0546 25 231)

A RUN THAT IS NEITHER EASY NOR SHORT: 120 KILOMETRES FROM FAENZA TO THE APENNINES WITH, IN THE MIDDLE, THE SAMBUCA CLIMB, 9 KILOMETRES OF ASCENT AND 18 OF DESCENT, ONE OF THE LONGEST IN ROMAGNA. IT'S A REGULAR RATHER THAN MASSACRING ROUTE, HIGHLIGHTING THE SKILLS OF THE LONG DISTANCE CYCLIST. IT CAN'T BE SAID TO BE WITHIN EVERYONE'S REACH BUT IT'S AN ITINERARY WORTH TACKLING, ALSO PLANNING VARIOUS PAUSES, BECAUSE THE VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY IS ONE TO BE REMEMBERED.

##### The ascent announces Tuscan Romagna

The first stretch, from Faenza to **Riolo Terme** via **Castel Bolognese**, is pure warm-up. From the spa town towards **Palazzuolo** by way of **Casola Valsenio**, where medicinal herbs are grown, the distance is 37 kilometres and the breakaways wring your legs. You are entering Tuscan Romagna, linked to the Mugello by the Apennine ridges.

##### The Sambuca, not so much hard as long

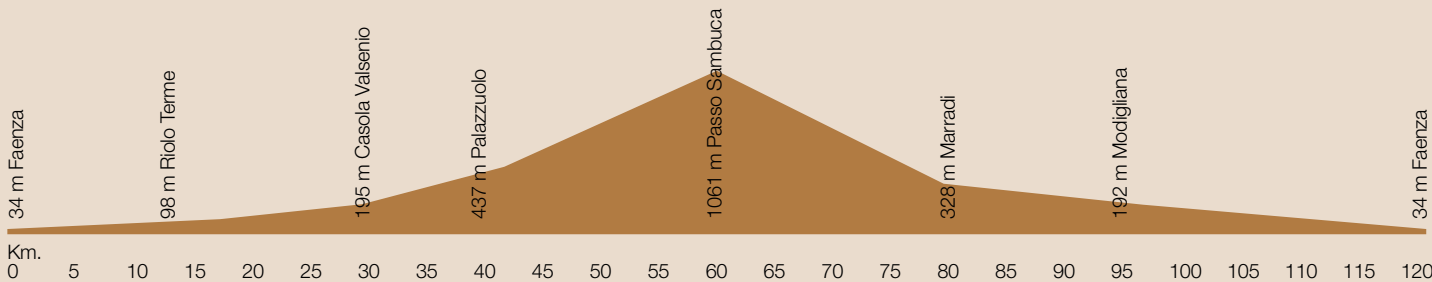
Passing the built up area of **Palazzuolo** you take the road on the left to Borgo San Lorenzo and after 2 kilometres you reach **Acquadalto**. You're faced with the **Sambuca Pass** and the climb gets tough. The nine kilometre ascent to get to the pass is interminable even though the gradients are not unspeakable (around 8%). You should immediately seek the right gear and pedalling rhythm and think about conserving energy.

At 1061 metres of the pass there's a 3 kilometre vertical dive followed by a further 2 kilometre climb, and then down again to arrive, after 1000 metres, at the **Passo della Colla**. Again with clenched brakes to zero a 600 metre difference in altitude and arrive at **Marradi**, where Dino Campana was born and where they grow special chestnuts used for cooking all sorts of things.



1. Ravenna, mosaic  
2./3./4. Brisighella  
5. Modigliana, la Rocca





Departure: Faenza | Arrival: Faenza | Distance: 120 Km | Degree of difficulty: high | Maximum altitude: 1061 m. | Duration: 5/6 hours

**You get there, without too many surprises**

The last 40 kilometres are fairly easy going but with a couple of ambushes: the first is the four kilometre Torretto ascent near Sant'Adriano, tough only on the initial and final stretches, and the second is the ascent to Marzeno, around ten kilometres after Modigliana, with 1300 metres at 9%. Marzeno really is the last effort because Faenza is by now in view and the road offers more than anything else the reward of a downhill run.



## ITINERARY 8

Ravenna

# Gran Fondo del Sale

### Not to be missed

#### The salt-pans, paradise for birds

With an area of 827 hectares and more than 2000 years of history the Cervia Salt-pans, of Etruscan origin and still active, are a not to be missed appointment with the "salt civilisation".

This natural and very beautiful oasis is a nature reserve for animal repopulation and many extraordinary encounters are possible: blackwinged stilts, redshanks, Mediterranean gulls, sheldrakes, herons, cranes, storks and avocets build their nests in the salt-pans.

For some time now, each year, an immense pink cloud descends on these stretches of brackish water, a sight so evocative as to amaze anyone: a great colony of pink flamingos – from 300 to 700 of them – which stop to rest and eat in the salt-pans during their long migrations.

(Info: Tel. IAT +39 0544 974 400)



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THE COURSE HAS BECOME A CLASSIC SEASON-STARTER EVENT FOR AMATEUR CYCLISTS. THE MORE AUDACIOUS CAN MEASURE THEMSELVES UP AGAINST A 165 KILOMETRE LONG DISTANCE RUN, IN NO WAY EASY AND WITH FOUR HILLS TO FACE UP TO. BUT IT NEEDN'T NECESSARILY BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE SPIRIT OF COMPETITIVE SPORT: YOU CAN ALSO PLAN VARIOUS PAUSES. IN ANY CASE, ARRIVING AT THE END WILL BE A GREAT SATISFACTION.

First breakaways at Monte Finocchio

Leaving **Cervia** you take road 254 which borders the salt-pans and head inland over the plain, passing by **Pisignano, Cannuzzo, Matellica and Mensa**.

At **Santa Maria Nuova** you turn towards **Cesena**, arriving at the localities of **San Vittore and Borello**. At Borello, having done about forty kilometres, you start to feel the air of a real climb.

And in the middle of Forlì territory, by way of **Linaro and Ranchio**, you start climbing to the **Musella Pass**, better known as Monte Finocchio. Nothing terrible but the ascent to arrive at the 644 metres of the pass is continuous and pretty long. And it's only the first, so conserve your strength well.

#### Plautus's Sarsina

There is a very difficult seven kilometre plunge down to Sarsina where Titus Maccius Plautus was born (250 BC), the greatest Latin dramatist. From Sarsina the descent proceeds, though less steeply, to **Merca-to Saraceno**.

#### Tough approach to Montevecchio

Having crossed Ponte Giorgi, with about 80 kilometres behind you, the second hardship



2

of the day begins, the stretch leading to Montevecchio.

The first kilometres are terrible with a 14-15% gradient, then the ascent gets more clement. Arriving at 324 metres of Montevecchio you turn off for **Oriola** and continue climbing to 400 metres.

The descent to **San Carlo** is fine and gratifying, and you've now done 100 kilometres.

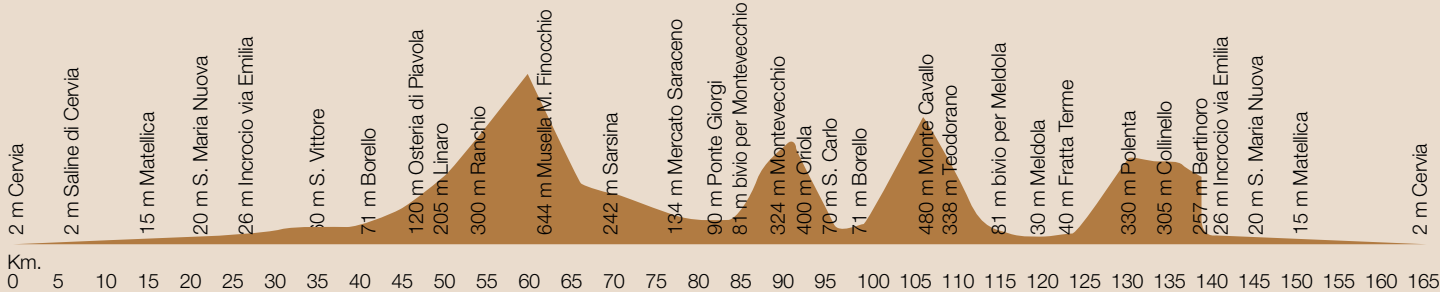
There are 65 to go with two fine hills still to tackle. The first, Monte Cavallo, you taste immediately passing through **Borello**. The gradient is up to

14% and at this point, with the two ascents already done on your legs it's an effort to stay in the saddle. Fortunately the climb isn't really one of those very long ones.

From the summit you go down to **Teodorano** and **Meldola**, but there's no respite. Right after **Fratte Terme** you start climbing towards **Polenta**.

1. Cervia, salt-pans
2. Po Delta Park
3. Sarsina, Mausoleum of Obulacco
4. Bertinoro, Hospitality Column





Departure: Cervia | Arrival: Cervia | Distance: 165 Km | Degree of difficulty: very high | Maximum altitude: 644 m. | Duration: 6/7 hours

**Amidst the peace of Polenta**

The last hardship of the day. If you want to avoid the toughest part you can make an immediate detour to Bertinoro, but if you want to destroy yourself thoroughly you've got long stretches at 17% ahead of you. A real wall. But it's worthwhile: the whole territory, immersed in a proverbial tranquillity, exudes history and mystery. The church in Polenta – perhaps dating to the 10th century – is one of the oldest in the Forlì area and Carducci, who loved the peace of these places, dedicated famous verses to it. From Polenta you skirt Bertinoro and plunge down towards the sea, going back over the departure stretch and passing through Santa Maria Nuova, Cannuzzo, Pisignano to arrive at the Cervia Salt-Pans.

To take part in the Gran Fondo del Sale tel. +39 0544 974 395



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# CHARMING VILLAGES AND ENCHANTED HILLS



## What to see

**In Forlì, the Rocca di Ravaldino, seat of the Ordelaffi family and Caterina Sforza; in Cesena the precious Biblioteca Malatestiana library.**

The heart of Forlì is Piazza Saffi, overlooked by the Abbey of San Mercuriale with its Romanesque bell tower. Other buildings in the square are the Romanesque-Gothic Palazzo del Podestà, the Town Hall, where the Ordelaffi family lived, and the Palazzo degli Albertini. A walk through Forlì should include a visit to the Rocca di Ravaldino, an imposing square plan fortress built in the 14th century and extended in 1472 at the behest of Pino III Ordelaffi, stage of the events linked to Caterina Sforza, Lady of Romagna. Another building certainly worth seeing is the Monumental Complex of San Domenico which houses remarkable exhibitions, the Picture Gallery and the Municipal Museums with works by Beato Angelico, Guercino, Palmezzano and a beautiful Hebe by Canova. Standing guard over the noble atmosphere of Cesena is the fourteenth century Rocca Malatestiana. From its walkways you will enjoy a stupendous view. Another of the town's treasures is the Library, built as a public library in the mid 15th century at the behest of Novello Malatesta, declared "Memory of the World" by UNESCO in 2005. It is one of the most precious heritages of humanist culture and its structure, furnishings and collection of books have remained intact. Overlooking Cesena, the Benedictine Santuario della Madonna del Monte specialised in the restoration of old books. The ex voto collection is highly interesting: the paintings on wood, mostly dating to between the 15th and 19th centuries, form an actual gallery of popular art. Cesenatico, birthplace of Marco Pantani, pays tribute to the great cycling champion with an exhibition of photos, mementoes and audiovisual materials in an area called "Spazio Pantani".

## The Beautiful and the Good

Throughout the province you will find **wrought iron** workshops. The craft has an ancient history here. **Cloth printed** with the "rust" method is found in Gambettola (also a paradise for collectors of old objects in iron), Castrocaro, Santa Sofia, Forlì and Cesenatico.

In Montetiffi, near Sogliano al Rubicone, they make the best **clay pans** for baking the ancient traditional bread of Romagna: **piadina**, whose fame equals that of another great name in Italian gastronomy, Pellegrino **Artusi**, also a native of these parts.

The high points of local cooking are the home-made **passatelli, strozzapreti, garganelli**, and as Pellegrino himself commands, **ravioli with fossa cheese** from Sogliano, not to mention the fried and grilled fish and **fish soups** that are the main items on the seafood menu of Cesenatico, a delight to the palate. The famous **Albana and Sangiovese wines** are well suited to the traditional cuisine.

## Information

**Bici in FC Itineraries, some of the most beautiful in the province, for touring cyclists**

**Languages:** Italian, English, German

**Information:** Province of Forlì-Cesena  
Fax +39 0543 21 465  
turismo@provincia.fc.it

**Sea and Mountains by mountainbike 16 itineraries for mountainbike enthusiasts**

**Languages:** Italian, English, German

**Information:** Province of Forlì-Cesena  
Fax +39 0543 21 465  
turismo@provincia.fc.it

1. Cesena, Parish Church of Santa Reparata
2. Forlì, Hebe by Canova
3. Cesena, Masini fountain
4. Gatteo a Mare, beach
5. Cesenatico, sail

PEDALLING IN THE PROVINCE OF FORLÌ AND CESENA MEANS BEING ABLE TO CHOOSE YOUR FAVOURITE KIND OF ITINERARY WHENEVER YOU LIKE: FROM BROAD PLAIN TO SHORT SUDDEN ASCENTS, RIGHT UP TO THE WOODED PEAKS OF THE APENNINES.

YOU JUST HAVE TO DECIDE IN WHICH DIRECTION TO POINT YOUR BIKE. THERE'S THE FLAT AND EASY COAST; THERE'S THE PLAIN WITH ROADS CUTTING THROUGH FERTILE, CROP-RICH COUNTRYSIDE; THERE ARE THE HILLS, PROTECTED BY ANCIENT WALLS, FORTRESSES AND FORTIFIED VILLAGES THAT SUDDENLY EMERGE ON THE PLAIN, OFFERING TOUGH BUT BRIEF ASCENTS. AND THEN THERE ARE THE ACTUAL MOUNTAINS, AT THE SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF THE PROVINCE, WHERE THE AIR AND THE ASCENTS ARE TRULY APENNINE.





## Festivals and Fairs

### **EASTER** › *Sarsina* › Easter Loaf Fair

Stands with typical gastronomic and craft products of Romagna; music and organised entertainment.

(Info: Municipal Tourist Board Tel. +39 0547 94 901)

### **MARCH** › *Cesenatico* › *Azzurro come il pesce*

Gastronomic event exalting the “humbler” fish species of the Adriatic sea; tasting of typical dishes and fish.

(Info: Tourist Office Tel. +39 0547 673 287)

### **MAY** › *Civitella* › Prugnolo Festival

Presentation and sale of this highly aromatic mushroom, with delicatessen stands and music travelling through the town’s streets.

(Info: Pro Loco Tel. +39 0543 989 195)

### **JUNE** › *Forlimpopoli* › Artusi Festival

Festival in honour of Pellegrino Artusi, the gastronomic unifier of Italy. Many events during the week.

(Info: Cultural Office Tel. +39 0543 749 234)

### **OCTOBER** › *Bagno di Romagna* › “Noi con Voi” Festival of Fairs

Fairs and festivals dedicated to delicious local products: tortelli alla lastra, zambudelle and chestnuts.

(Info: Tourist Office Tel. +39 0543 911 046)

### **OCTOBER** › *Dovadola* › Truffle Fair

Perfume of the white truffle, the best. Dovadola celebrates this “nugget” with a great Festival.

(Info: Pro Loco Tel. +39 0543 933 200)

### **NOVEMBER** › *Tredozio* › Bartolaccio Fair

The bartolaccio is the characteristic ravioli-type pasta of Tredozio, with a potato, bacon and sheep’s milk cheese filling.

(Info: Comune Tel. +39 0546 943 937)

### **NOVEMBER** › *Sogliano* › Fossa Cheese Festival

Event dedicated to the renowned fossa cheese, with food stands.

(Info: Tourist Office Tel. +39 0541 827 339)



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The holiday offers are available  
[www.adriacoast.com](http://www.adriacoast.com)

## ITINERARY 9

Forlì-Cesena

# Nove Colli

### Not to be missed

**Giovanni Pascoli's rooms-** San Mauro is the birthplace of Giovanni Pascoli. Until 1932 it was called San Mauro di Romagna, then the name was changed to San Mauro Pascoli in the poet's honour. You can pay an interesting visit to the house he was born in where his rooms have been retained intact. Seven kilometres away, the welcoming seaside resort of San Mauro Mare.

(Info: Tel. IAT +39 0541 346 392)

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE NOVE COLLI (NINE HILLS), A LEGEND IN THE TOUR CYCLING MOVEMENT: A LONG DISTANCE RACE THAT FOR YEARS HAS BEEN A NOT-TO-BE-MISSED EVENT FOR THOUSANDS OF ITALIAN AND EUROPEAN CYCLISTS. THE START OF THE NOVE COLLI, HELD EVERY MAY, IS A SPECTACULAR SIGHT TO SEE. BUT ASIDE FROM THE EVENT ITSELF, THE ROUTE IS THERE FOR EVERYONE TO TRY, EVEN ONLY IN PART IF YOU DON'T FEEL UP TO TACKLING 205 KILOMETRES AND 9 RUGGED HILLS IN ONE GO.

#### Polenta, the first tough breakaway

After departure from **Cesena**, you ride without problems as far as Cesena, and then **Forlimpopoli** where you start the ascent to **Bertinoro**, the first steep climb on the course, after 30 kilometres. The toughest point is actually after Bertinoro in breaking away towards **Polenta**, with gradients up to 15%. After the descent to Fratta Terme there's a fine restful stretch, through **Meldola** and **Pian di Spino**; the last stretch is also the same length. After sixty kilometres you start climbing again towards **Pieve di Rivoschio**.

At the start the slope is pretty gentle and easily pedalled, but then becomes tougher. There's also a welcome downhill run that prepares you for a particularly nasty last kilometre. At Pieve di Rivoschio you've covered 64 kilometres.

#### The Barbotto commands respect

You start going down again towards **San Romano** and you must watch out because it's a pretty insidious descent. The third hill, the **Ciola**, is in the direction of **Mercato Saraceno**. The gradient is constant and with the right rhythm you climb without great pains. There are plenty occasions for a break at Mercato Saraceno if you feel



like it. The **Barbotto** is looming, which is no joke at all because though it's a climb of only six kilometres the last stretch has a gradient peaking at 18%.

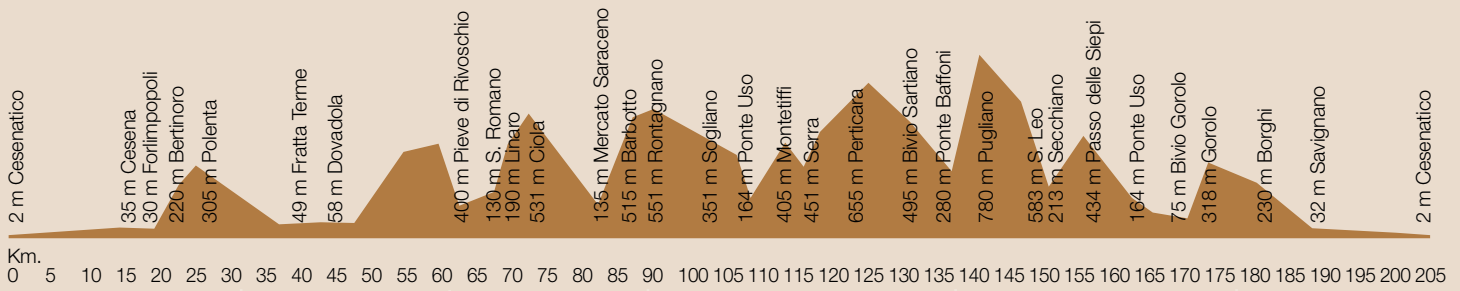
Of the Nove Colli the Barbotto is the summit richest in cycling tradition: the cyclists of the area feel duty bound to measure themselves up against its hairpin bends.

The sixth hill is Montetiffi that you reach after a stretch of road that allows a pause and a pleasant meeting-up: **Sogliano**, home of the famous fossa cheese.

#### At Pugliano you're touching 800 metres

The last stretch of **Montetiffi** is pretty heavy going, but it doesn't last very long and the descent is also short, just a couple of kilometres, because at once, with continual breakaways, you approach the 655 metres of **Perticara**. Having crossed the col the descent is vigorous until Ponte Baffoni, where you have covered 135 kilometres. The seventh hill, **Pugliano**, with its 787 metres, is the highest summit of the circuit. You approach it with the tough climb of the Maiolo (up to 17%), then the slope gets less treacherous and you come





Departure: Cesenatico | Arrival: Cesenatico | Distance: 205 Km | Degree of difficulty: very high | Maximum altitude: 787 m. | Duration: 8/11 hours

to the village.

**Gorolo, last insult to the muscles**

Only two hills to go to complete the enterprise, and the eighth, the Passo Siepi, is not one of the most tiring: the gradients are not extreme and it is preceded by a fine downhill run from Pugliano to San Leo. But at this point, with 160 kilometres and eight ascents behind you, even a flyover would seem too much. The last hill, Gorolo, appears terrible and, with its first stretch at 13% and the last peaks at 17%, is an undertaking to be fully respected.

- 1. San Mauro Pascoli
- 2. Nove Colli
- 3. Cesenatico

It seems intolerable, no matter how small a ratio you have, but it's the final effort because once you've reached Gorolo you head down to the plain and the sea.

You pass Borghi and Savignano, you pass the river Rubicon and now the road is flat towards Cesenatico. There's

not much to be said: these 200 kilometres, so well devised, represent one of the most exciting challenges for the tour cyclist. As for ratios, a 39x28 is advised but some actually opt for 30x28. To take part in the Nove Colli, phone +39 0547 672 156.



# Towards the Apennine ridges

## Not to be missed

### The Acquacheta waterfall, dear to Dante

This itinerary, especially for those who go as far as Premilcuore, arrives at the boundary between Romagna and Tuscany. Approximately two hours from San Benedetto in Alpe, in an almost impenetrable valley, there is the Acquacheta waterfall, mentioned by Dante in the XVI Canto of the Inferno. It lunges spectacularly from a height of ninety metres.

(Info: Tel. Comune Portico San Benedetto +39 0543 967 047)

THIS SEA-HILL ROUTE IS NOT EASY BUT VERY STIMULATING. FROM THE SEASIDE RESORT ATMOSPHERE OF CESENATICO TO THE SPURS OF THE APENNINES, TOWARDS TUSCAN ROMAGNA, SO CALLED BECAUSE OF ITS STRONG LINKS WITH FLORENCE. THIS IS A STRETCH AT A FAIR LEVEL OF CYCLING, NOT EXACTLY SHORT, HERE AND THERE SELECTIVE, AND FEATURING MANY HISTORICAL REFERENCES.

### Roman and Byzantine Treasures in Galeata

The first 30 kilometres, as far as **Forlimpopoli**, are on the flat and give the chance to warm up and prepare for the climbs ahead.

At Forlimpopoli, at the Fortress, you turn left for **Meldola** which is protected by the wall built in the 15th century by Novello Malatesta. From Meldola the road is increasingly uphill: you head for **Civitella** and then, after about sixty kilometres, for Galeata that stands in a broad valley surrounded by the spurs of the Apennines.

Of great interest are the Abbey of Sant'Ellero, with its Romanesque façade, and the Museo Mambrini which houses finds from Roman, Byzantine and mediaeval times.

### Tough approach to Monte delle Forche

From Galeata you really start climbing to the top of **Monte delle Forche**. The first part is pretty hard and at least 39x25 is advised, then the gradient becomes less tiring and you can maybe manage to get your rhythm with a couple of teeth less.

But on the whole it's a difficult climb and you have to be in training to overcome it without too much dragging. At the top



of Monte delle Forche (444 metres) you've covered 66 kilometres. The descent to **San Zeno** gives you a second wind.

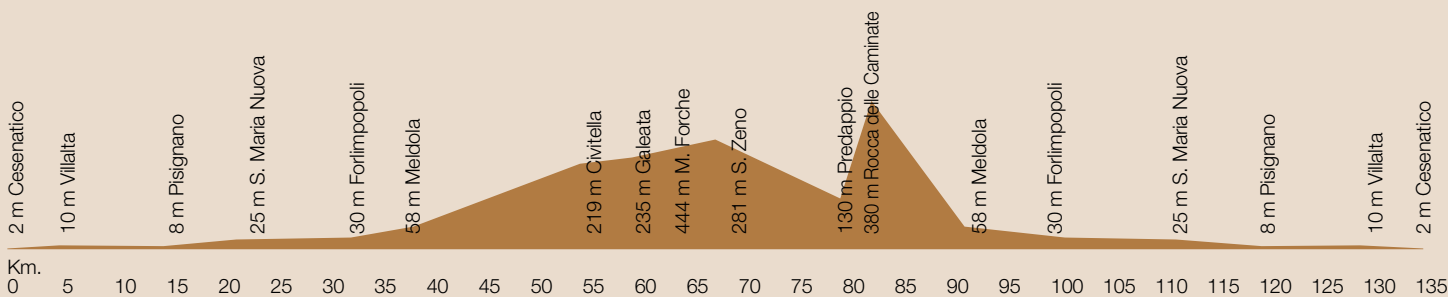
At this point you can head directly for **Predappio** or turn left and take a variant route to nearby **Premilcuore** (11 and a half kilometres up and down, actually more up than down) and **Santa Sofia**. These two villages are fully paid up members of Tuscan Romagna, having belonged to the Province of Florence until 1923, before coming under Forlì.

### Variant possible at Premilcuore

In **Premilcuore** (its charming name means "Overwhelms the heart") the Museo della Fauna del Crinale Romagnolo (a museum on the local fauna) is very interesting and is open from spring to summer. The **National Park of the Casentino Forests, Monte Falterona and Campigna** is the habitat of the Apennine wolf, the deer and roe-deer, birds of prey and also reptiles and amphibians, adders, frogs, toads and fish. There is nature, art and history also in **Santa Sofia**, another village of the Park, where enthusiasm for music involves the



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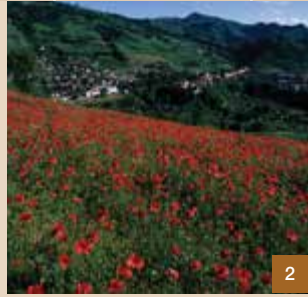


Departure: Cesenatico | Arrival: Cesenatico | Distance: 136 Km | Degree of difficulty: very high | Maximum altitude: 444 m. | Duration: 5h 1/2

whole village whose band has existed for 150 years.

**Mussolini's house in Predappio**

Those who choose the variant can go back by the same route and take the main road to **San Zeno**. Those sticking to the programme go down immediately from San Zeno to **Predappio**, the village where Benito Mussolini was born in 1883. The village has two quite distinct architectures: the upper part which is mediaeval and the new part which can be recognised by its rationalist style buildings. From Predappio you go up to the nearby **Rocca delle Caminate**. The four kilometre climb is fairly hard, but it's also the last effort because from the fortress you go down to the built up area of Meldola where you join up with the first stretch of the itinerary. Then you head for the plain by way of **Forlimpopoli, Santa Maria Nuova and Pisignano** until you reach Cesenatico after 136 kilometres full of surprises and not negligible climbs.



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- 1. Acquacheta
- 2. Civitella
- 3. Santa Sofia



## ITINERARY 11

### Forlì-Cesena

# Sixty kilometres of exciting ups and downs

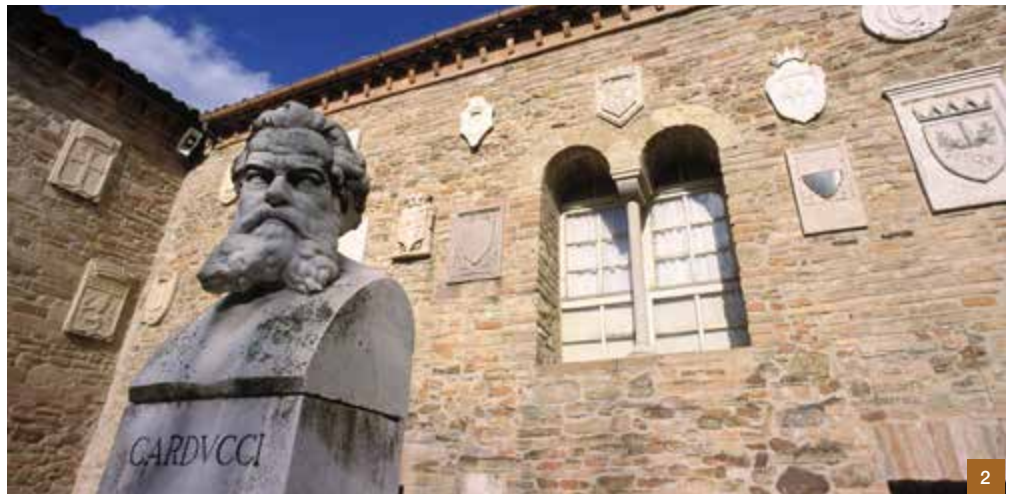
#### Not to be missed

##### Forlimpopoli, where Pellegrino Artusi was born

On the Via Emilia, between Forlì and Cesena, the Roman Forum Populi grew up around its imposing Fortress, built by Cardinal Albornoz in the 14th century. Today it houses the Archaeological Museum. A great figure in the world of Italian gastronomy was born in Forlimpopoli in 1820, Pellegrino Artusi, author of the highly successful manual "Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well". The old town is home to Casa Artusi, the gastronomic culture centre dedicated to Italian home cooking. In June of each year the town organises an Artusi Festival, a gastronomic event for lovers of good food.

(Info: Tel. Comune  
+39 0543 749 111)

THE COURSE FAITHFULLY REFLECTS THE FEATURES OF THE FORLÌ TERRITORY IN A CONTINUOUS DIALECTIC BETWEEN FLATLAND AND HILLS. A STRETCH THAT IS NEITHER EASY NOR TOO TOUGH, IN WHICH THE RUGGEDNESS OF CERTAIN ASCENTS IS MADE UP FOR BY RELATIVELY SHORT DISTANCES. BUT ANYONE NOT ON TOP FORM SHOULD PAY DUE ATTENTION TO THE HARSH CLIMBS OF PIEVE DI RIVOSCHIO AND POLENTA.



2

##### Fratta, 11 springs of miraculous waters

Departure on the flat from **Fratta Terme**, a village with an ancient spa tradition at the foot of the Bertinoro hills. There are no less than 11 springs with different properties depending on the composition of the deep subsoil they pass through, and a renowned Spa Centre.

From Fratta there's an easy up and down run until you get to **Meldola**.

From here, on a gradual and almost imperceptible ascent, you reach **Pian di Spino**. The road gets increasingly undulating, almost as if presaging the uphill stretch.

And 5 kilometres from **Pieve di Rivoschio** you start climbing

seriously: at first the hairpin bends can be pedalled then it gets tougher and you need a 39x25. There's also a bit of downhill to get your breath back but it's followed by a diabolical final kilometre.

##### Keep an eye out on the San Romano descent

Concluding the last leg there's a crossroads where you must go left, following the signs for **Borello**. There are certainly better descents for getting your breath back.

The one to Borello is nervy and steep: you have to keep your eyes open on the tight bends and your hands ready on the brakes.

**San Romano** passes in a blink, then after a 37 kilometre run

you come to the built up area of Borello. One hill behind and already another ahead. At 46 kilometres, having passed the village of Settecrociari and taking the road towards Bertinoro, you start climbing. The road rises at once under your pedals with a 10% gradient before a few ups and downs comfort your spirit somewhat.

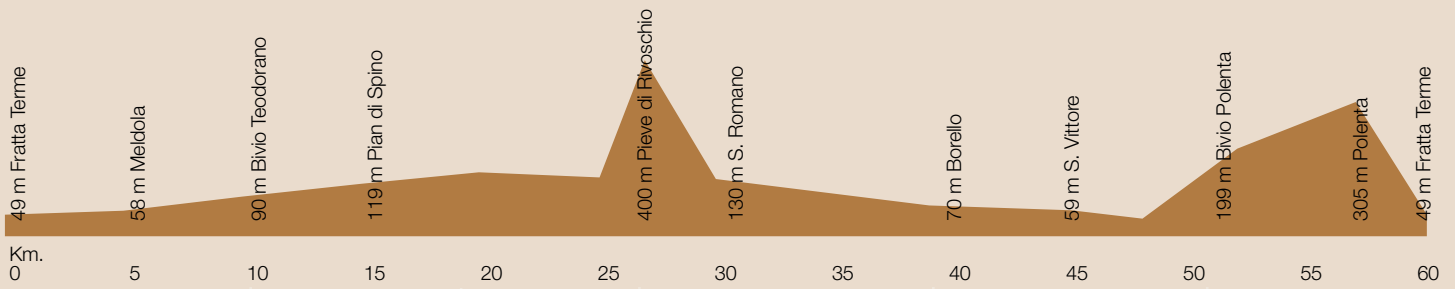
Then there's the turnoff for **Polelenta** and the climb (about 5 kilometres to the summit) gets rough with stretches at 15% that take your breath away and intoxicate your muscles.

1. Forlimpopoli, Festa Artusiana
2. Polelenta



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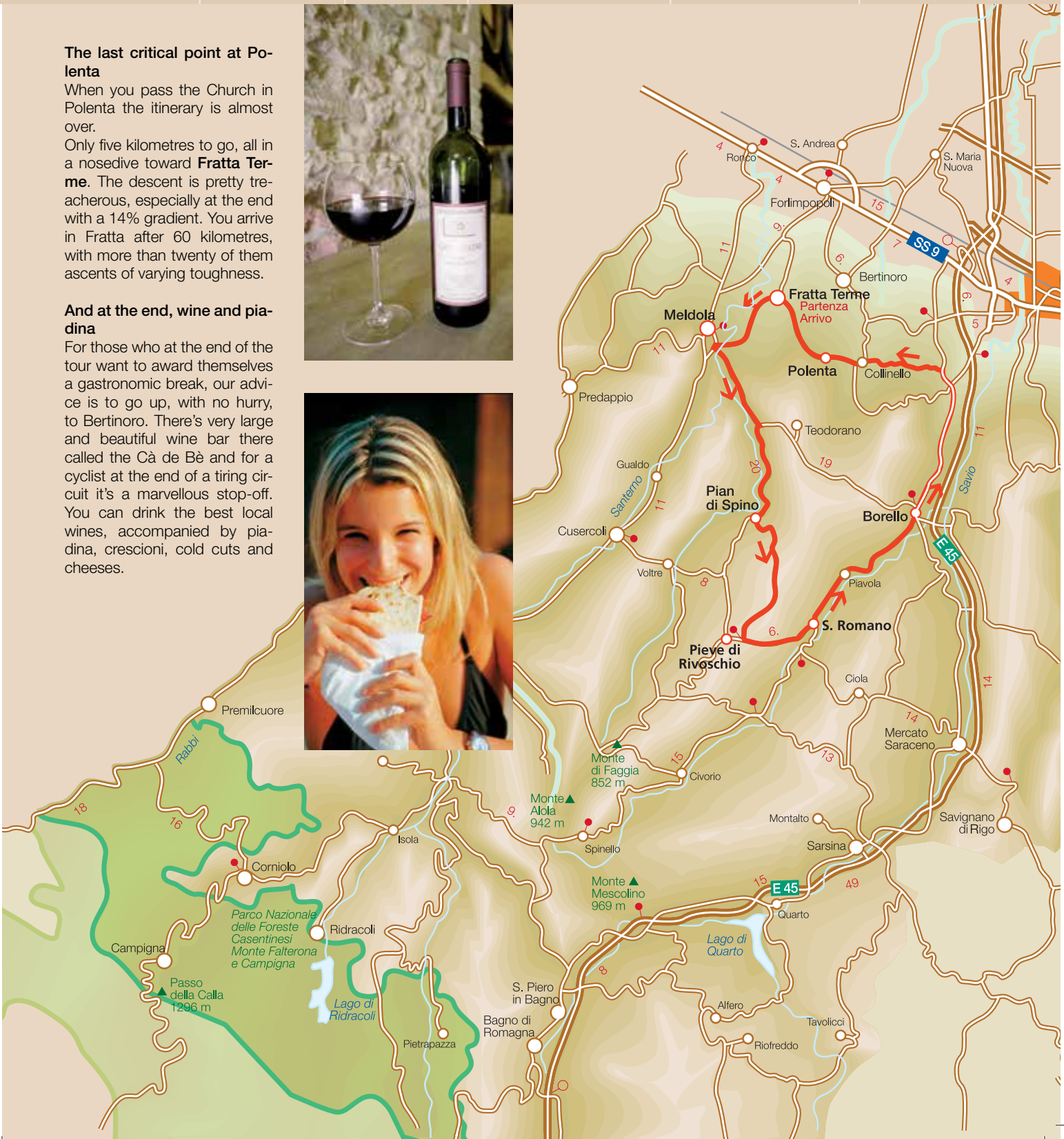
Departure: Fratta terme    Arrival: Fratta terme    Distance: 60 Km    Degree of difficulty: medium    Maximum altitude: 400 m.    Duration: about 2h 1/2

**The last critical point at Polenta**

When you pass the Church in Polenta the itinerary is almost over. Only five kilometres to go, all in a nosedive toward **Fratta Terme**. The descent is pretty treacherous, especially at the end with a 14% gradient. You arrive in Fratta after 60 kilometres, with more than twenty of them ascents of varying toughness.

**And at the end, wine and piadina**

For those who at the end of the tour want to award themselves a gastronomic break, our advice is to go up, with no hurry, to Bertinoro. There's very large and beautiful wine bar there called the Cà de Bè and for a cyclist at the end of a tiring circuit it's a marvellous stop-off. You can drink the best local wines, accompanied by piadina, crescioni, cold cuts and cheeses.



## ITINERARY 12

Forlì-Cesena

# Flat start and immediate ascent

### Not to be missed

#### Terra del Sole, a fortified town

Just a few kilometres from Castrocaro, Terra del Sole, a fine example of a perfectly preserved fortified town, is worth a visit.

It was conceived by Cosimo I De'Medici and built in accordance with the town-planning canons of the renaissance "ideal town".

It is symbolic: both a war machine and a main "frontier" town of the Grand Ducal Province (1543-1776) of Tuscan Romagna.

(Info: Tel. Pro Loco +39 0543 766 766)

THE FORLÌ HINTERLAND, BETWEEN PLAIN AND HILLS. YOU NEED THE RIGHT GEAR RATIOS BECAUSE AT A CERTAIN POINT THE ROAD STANDS UP UNDER YOUR PEDALS AND IT ISN'T SO EASY TO MAKE THE CHAIN TURN. A 39X26 IS SUITABLE BUT YOU MAY ALSO "EXAGGERATE" AND USE 28, WHICH WOULD NOT BE DISHONOURABLE. BECAUSE THESE ROMAGNA HILLS THAT SUDDENLY LEAP OUT OF THE PLAIN WITH BRIEF BUT TOUGH CLIMBS DESERVE CONSIDERATION. THE WHOLE TRIP IS ABOUT 66 KILOMETRES, WITH TWO CRITICAL POINTS: MONTE TREBBIO AND THE CLIMB TOWARDS SANTA MARIA IN CASTELLO.



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#### On the Trebbio, a Monument to the Bike

From the departure point **Castrocaro** you head towards **Dovadola**, truffle country.

The first kilometres are fairly flat though with an uphill tendency. Two kilometres after Dovadola there is the fork for **Monte Trebbio**, and suddenly there are about two thousand metres at 10%; then the climb becomes irritating with an alternation of easy stretches and diabolical 12% gradients. It is no coincidence that there is a monument to the bike at the crossing of the Trebbio. The descent is easy going but the last stretch requires constant attention because you are going at extreme gradient (17%). Technique and ability are called for, but also carefulness and brakes.

#### Modigliana, in the footsteps of the Counts Guidi

At the end of the descent you arrive in Modigliana after a 23 kilometre stretch. This is where the Guidi family was born, one of the most powerful noble families of Romagna, capable of standing up to the most warlike families of the middle ages.

There are still visible traces of their long rule over Modigliana. Leaving this town you proceed towards **Tredozio**.

#### In Tredozio, a centuries-old peace

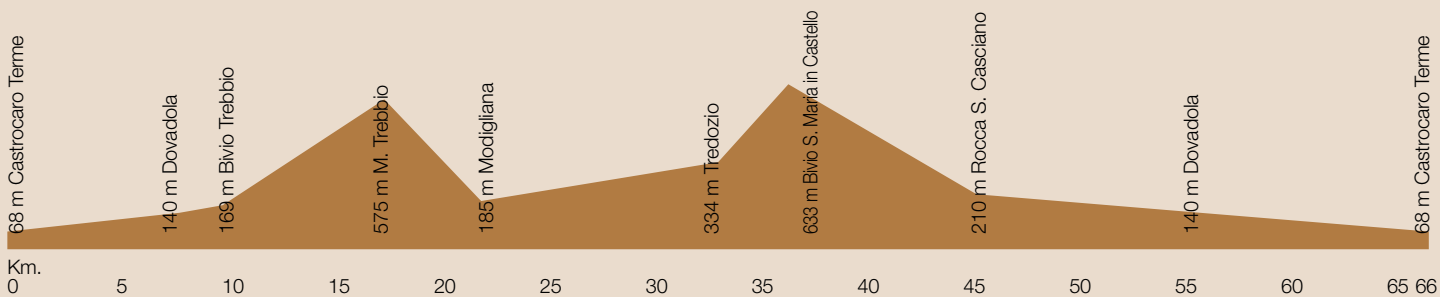
1. Terra del Sole
2. Dovadola, Rocca dei Conti Guidi (the fortress)
3. Modigliana, la Tribuna
4. Tredozio
5. Castrocaro Terme, Baptistery
6. Portico di Romagna



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Departure: Castrocaro terme Arrival: Castrocaro terme Distance: 66 Km Degree of difficulty: medium high Maximum altitude: 633 m. Duration: 3 h

The ascent is easy. With your muscles run-in by the ascent of the Trebbio you pedal the course rhythmically and with pleasure. Half way you come to Tredozio in the Tramazzo valley: stupendous views and age-old woodlands.

Leaving the village the cyclist realises at once that there's some sweating to be done.

The road goes up towards **Santa Maria in Castello** and some stretches reach the terrible gradient of 16%. The ascent flattens out a bit but it's a short truce because the last stretch is tough and you can use a 28 without feeling ashamed. At the fork of Santa Maria in Castello there are two alternatives: go down towards **Rocca San Casciano** or head farther south to Monte Busca (709 metres) and arrive at **Portico di Romagna**.

The deviation towards Portico is for those who still have surplus energy and legs ready to eat up the ascent.

From Portico di Romagna you once more pick up the road to **Rocca San Casciano** until you link up with the main stretch that goes placidly down to **Dovadola** and returns, with no more treacherous or uphill runs, to **Castrocaro Terme**.



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## Rimini

# A LAND OF NOBLE HISTORY

### What to see

THERE ISN'T JUST THE SEA AND THE FAMOUS LOW AND SANDY COAST. INCREASINGLY KNOWN AND APPRECIATED BY TOURISTS, THE HINTERLAND OF THE PROVINCE OF RIMINI, FEATURING THE VALLEYS OF THE RIVERS MARECCHIA AND CONCA, ALSO OFFERS CYCLISTS IMMENSE SATISFACTION. A BIKE TRIP THROUGH THE VALLEYS IS LIKE FOLLOWING THE THREADS OF HISTORY AND NATURE. VALMARECCHIA, RUGGED AND FLANKED BY ROCKY MASSES, PRESERVES THE MEMORY OF ONE OF THE FIRST ITALIC CIVILISATIONS, THE VILLANOVAN CIVILISATION OF VERUCCHIO. VALCONCA, WITNESS TO THE CONTINUAL DISPUTES BETWEEN THE MALATESTA AND MONTEFELTRO FAMILIES, IS SOFTER THOUGH AT THE BOUNDARY WITH THE MARCHES THERE ARE BARE EROSION FURROWS.



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### The Arch of Augustus and the Tiberius Bridge bear witness to Roman Rimini

There are many monuments indicating Rimini's Roman origins and its role as capital of the Malatesta dominions. The **Arch of Augustus**, the gate to the town built in 27 BC and recently restored, and the 1st century AD **Tiberius Bridge** over the river Marecchia, a masterpiece of Roman engineering, belong to the Roman period.

The **Tempio Malatestiano** dates to the Renaissance and was commissioned by Sigismondo Malatesta and designed by Leon Battista Alberti. One of the most significant examples of the architecture of the period, it contains the majestic **Arca degli Antenati e dei Discendenti**, a masterpiece by Agostino di Duccio (1454).

Following in the footsteps of Federico Fellini, the Maestro of Italian cinema who was born in Rimini, see **Borgo San Giuliano**, a sailors' and fishermen's quarter which, together with the Grand Hotel, forms part of the Fellini atmosphere.

1. Rimini, Arch of Augustus
2. Rimini, Tiberius Bridge
3. Santarcangelo, printed cloths
4. Rimini, Tempio Malatestiana
5. Rimini, Castel Sismondo

### The Beautiful and the Good

The beautiful Romagna **tablecloths** printed with the "rust" method are exclusive to the south of the region, and throughout the province you find workshops that still make them in accordance with traditional techniques.

Craftsmen are still working in Montefiore and Montecolombo, producing tableware and **terracotta** and **ceramics** ware.

The height of seafood cooking consists of **grilled fish, fish soups and stewed squid**, washed down with the **DOC wines** of the "Colli di Rimini" which, together with **cheeses** and **extra-virgin olive oil**, are part of the basket of typical products from the "road of wines and flavours".



3

### Information

#### Tour cycling itineraries in the province of Rimini sport, relaxation and nature in the Romagna hills

**Languages:** Italian, French, English, German

**Information:** Province of Rimini

Fax +39 0541 783 808

[turismo@provincia.rimini.it](mailto:turismo@provincia.rimini.it)



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## Festivals and Fairs

### **MARCH** › *Morciano di Romagna*

#### › Festival of San Gregorio

Craft and industry products; market exhibition of typical Valconca products.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 851 927)

### **APRIL** › *Saludecio* › *Saluserbe*

Street market: natural foods, herbalist products, shows and exhibitions.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 981 621)

### **JULY** › *Montecolombo*

#### › Tripe and Strozzapreti pasta Fair

Gastronomic rejoicing.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 984 471)

### **AUGUST** › *Gemmano*

#### › Fair of pappardella pasta with wild boar sauce

Dedicated to lovers of good cooking.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 854 135)

### **AUGUST** › *Montescudo*

#### › Potato Fair

The big dish of the Festival is the potato, cooked in the most delicious ways.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 984 176)

### **SEPTEMBER** › *Coriano* › *Sangiovese Festival*

Homage to the red wine of Romagna.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 656 255)

### **SEPTEMBER** › *Torriana, Montebello*

#### › Honey Festival

A meeting with honey and its by-products.

Tasting and on the spot honey extraction.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 675 220)

### **OCTOBER** › *Montefiore Conca*

#### › Chestnut Fair

An autumn event not to be missed, with the choice nut of the Apennine woods.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 980 035)

### **OCTOBER** › *Sant'Agata Feltria*

#### › White truffle festival

A big celebration of the prize tuber, with a festival that proposes the entire range of autumnal and farming produce as well as local crafts.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 848 022)

The holiday offers are available  
[www.adriacoast.com](http://www.adriacoast.com)



### **NOVEMBER** › *Talamello* › *L'Ambra di Talamello*

A big celebration of this delicious cheese, matured in pits dug into the sandstone rock

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 920 036)

# The Romagna hills route

## Not to be missed

### Santarcangelo di Romagna

Santarcangelo is a fine and important little town that has maintained its special appearance and powerful links with its past and traditions. The whole historic centre is alive, with well cared for houses and buildings, excellent restaurants and inns, and alleys and steps that always lead to lively scenes. It is dominated by the Malatesta Fortress and there is much to see: the tufa caves, the Collegiate Church, the Ethnographic Museum (one of the best in Italy) and the Antica Tintoria Marchi (Old Dye-Works) where there is a 17th century mangle, still functioning, for rust printing on canvas.

(Info: Tel. Ufficio IAT  
+39 0541 624 270)

FROM SANTARCANGELO ONWARDS THE ROUTE FOLLOWS THE FOOTHILLS, WHICH IS TO SAY THE COUNTRY ROAD RUNNING PARALLEL TO THE RIMINI COAST, SO YOU CAN ENJOY EVOCATIVE VIEWS OF SEA, HILLS AND VILLAGES.

FROM A CYCLIST'S VIEWPOINT IT IS A MEDIUMDIFFICULT RUN WITH A FINE STRETCH ON THE FLAT AND CLIMBS THAT ARE SOMETIMES TOUGH, SO A 35/25 RATIO IS ADVISED.



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### The gentle hills of Rimini

From **Bellaria Igea Marina** you head for **Santarcangelo di Romagna** where the foothills road begins, indicated by signs and by the wine red colour of the road itself.

Follow the signs for **Sant'Ermate**, **Ospedaletto** and **Cerasolo**. You are immediately immersed in a landscape made up of gentle hills, planted fields, vineyards, olive groves and small villages. A territory where human activities and nature still have many points of equilibrium.

### In the middle of Valconca

After **Coriano**, where a fine river park has been set up, you head into the **Valconca** proper. You pass through **San Clemente**,

home of the cobbler-poet **Giustino Villa** and rightly noted for its top quality **Sangiovese**, and **Morciano** which has always been the business centre of the valley. Then you head for **Saludecio** which from the 16th to the 19th century was a small capital of the area.

Refined palazzos and small village houses have created a style at once aristocratic and popular which has come down to us intact.

The village squares and streets are enlivened during the first week of August by the "Ottocento Festival".

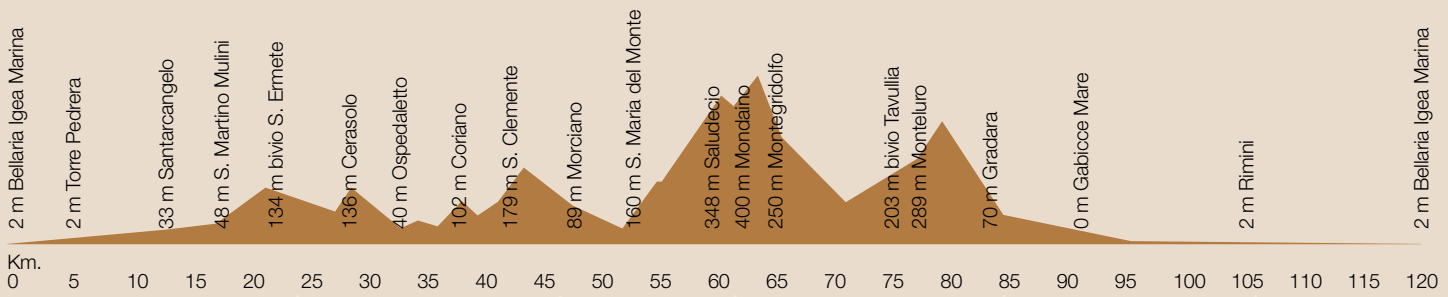
### The ridge between Romagna and The Marches

From **Saludecio** you take the road for **Mondaino**, a fortified

village created by the **Malatesta Lords** which still has its imposing fortress and a highly singular circular piazza. In mid August the **Palio del Daino** is celebrated, one of the best organised historical evocations in the province of Rimini. You continue towards **Montegridolfo**, a renovated mediaeval village that stands guard over the ridge dividing the **Conca** valley, on the Romagna side, from the **Foglia** valley on the **Marches** side, and the foothills road ends at **Montegridolfo**. From here you follow the signs for **Tavullia**, **Gradara**, **Gabicce** and **Cattolica**. The last stretch of the course is flat: you take state road 16 to **Bellaria**, passing through the Municipalities of **Misano**, **Riccione** and **Rimini**.



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Departure: Bellaria Igea Marina | Arrival: Bellaria Igea Marina | Distance: 120 Km | Degree of difficulty: medium | Maximum altitude: 400 m. | Duration: about 4h 1/2



1. Santarcangelo, Ganganelli Arch
2. Valmarecchia
3. Coriano, castle
4. Morciano



4

# Mini Nove Colli

## Not to be missed

**San Leo** stands on a huge rocky mass which is completely impenetrable; the only access route is a road cut into the rock. The highest point of the spur is crowned by the inexpugnable fort, reworked by Francesco di Giorgio Martini in the 15th century. It is famous for having been the prison of the Count of Cagliostro. There are numerous other monuments worth visiting: the pre-Romanesque parish church, the 12th century Lombard Romanesque Cathedral, the Museum of Religious Art recently set up in Palazzo Mediceo, as well as the ruins of several castles, including Pietracuta and Piega, scattered across the territory, the Franciscan monastery of S. Igne, the Dominican monastery of Monte di Pietracuta and Montemaggio church, with its a valuable wood case-ment ceiling.

(Info: Tel. +39 0541 916 306)

THE TRAIL WINDS THROUGH THE GENTLY ROLLING HILLS OF THE CESENA DISTRICT, BECOMING IMMEDIATELY MORE TAXING UPON ARRIVAL IN THE MONTEFELTRO AREA AND CLOSE TO SAN LEO. AFTER LEAVING THE ANCIENT CAPITAL OF ITALY, WE MOVE INTO THE TERRITORY OF SAN MARINO, RETURNING TO BELLARIA THROUGH SANTARCANGELO DI ROMAGNA. THIS IS A ROUTE FOR EXPERT CYCLISTS: GEAR 39-27/TRIPLE.

### Challenging ascents from the very beginning

From Bellaria you take the road for San Mauro Pascoli and Savignano. Heading towards Borghi, you come to the first ascent, which leads to **Borghi** and then to **Sogliano**. The route descends to Bivio Montegelli and, after pedalling for 7 kilometres towards Mercato Saraceno, you take the uphill road (heading to Barbotto) which has a gradient of 18% for one km. From **Barbotto**, you proceed towards Savignano di Rigo and Perticara.

### Towards San Leo

From Perticara, you descend towards Novafeltria (ten km), turn towards Arezzo and then, after four km (Ponte Baffoni), take the uphill road (12% gradient) towards Maiolo until you reach the highest point of the itinerary, which is at the junction for Madonna di Pugliano. At the bottom of the descent you will be beneath the spur of San Leo dominated by the majestic Fort.

### Climbing the Mount Titano

Leaving San Leo behind you, it is time to climb Mount Titano, taking the road for Castello Montemaggio and then Chiesanuova. In the territory of the Republic of San Marino, you cycle through the hills, going up and down occasionally and then taking the sharp descent from Monte Ventoso towards Verucchio. At the Dogana fork,



2

1. San Leo
2. Verucchio, la Rocca (the fortress)
3. Santarcangelo, il Campanone



3

4. San Marino
5. Talamello
6. Perticara
7. Sogliano sul Rubicone

on the crest of the hill, continue towards Rimini as far as Sant'Ermete, where you will take the road for Santarcangelo, followed by that for Bellaria.

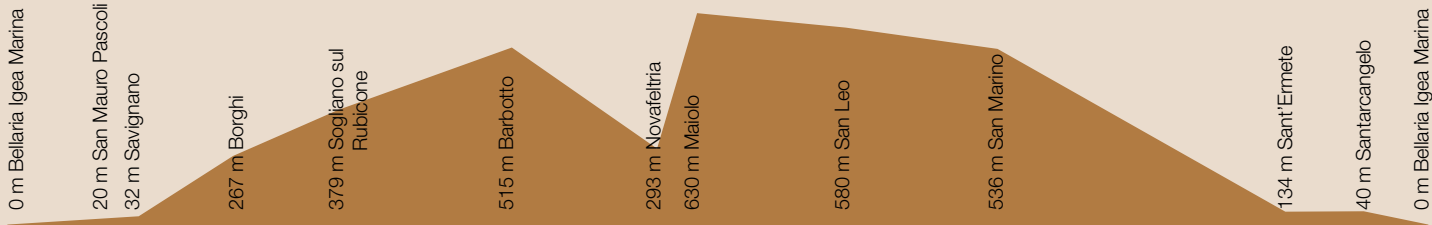


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Km. 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100 105 110

Departure: Bellaria Igea Marina | Arrival: Bellaria Igea Marina | Distance: 119 Km | Degree of difficulty: high | Maximum altitude: 630 m. | Duration: 5 h



# Valconca, the Malatesta fortresses

## Not to be missed

### Torriana nature reserve, between nature and history

An area of 12 square kilometres with 20 kilometres of pathways to cover on foot, on horseback or by mountain bike. This is the Torriana nature reserve that stretches from the cliff of Torriana to that of Verucchio. The reserve safeguards precious parts of the landscape: woodlands, rocks and erosion furrows that are the habitat of roe-deer and porcupine. The reserve also includes the mediaeval village of Montebello with its Malatesta castle and the Saiano complex with the Sanctuary and Roman Tower. The Nature Museum and the Environmental Education Centre are also of interest.

(Info: Tel. Comune  
+39 0541 675 220)

THE COURSE RUNS THROUGH THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE PROVINCE AMONG THE ANCIENT PROPERTY OF THE MALATESTA FAMILY, THE LORDS OF RIMINI. THEY BUILT IMPOSING FORTRESSES IN EACH IMPORTANT VILLAGE. FROM A CYCLING VIEWPOINT THERE IS A CERTAIN DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY, WITHOUT EXTRAORDINARY SUFFERING, BUT WITH A SERIES OF RESPECTABLE ASCENTS SUCH AS TO REQUIRE THE USE OF AGILE RATIOS (A 39X26 IS ADVISED FOR CERTAIN STRETCHES).

### In the distance, the turrets of Gradara

From **Rimini** you head south following the sea road to **Cattolica**. It's a very comfortable spin on the flat and just right for warming up the muscles.

From Cattolica you drift over into Pesaro territory following the signs for **Gradara** where you arrive after 15 kilometres. The view is surprising: the outline of the ancient town with its battlement walls punctuated by quadrangular turrets right up to the fortress.

It belonged first to the Malatesta family then to the Sforza and the Della Rovere families. Under the Malatesta family the fortress was witness to the moving love story of Paolo and Francesca that inspired Dante's passionate verses.

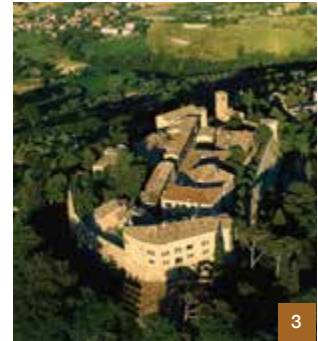
### Montevidolfo, one of the loveliest villages

You **ride astride the boundary between The Marches and Romagna in the direction of Montevidolfo** whose castle is one of the best preserved in the region. The wall enclosing the historic centre is still intact.

After Montevidolfo there's a brief 2 kilometre climb to **Mondaino** which welcomes the cyclist with a fine view over the sea that can be enjoyed from its fortress.



1. Montebello, la Rocca dei Guidi (the fortress)
2. Verucchio, porta Sant'Agostino
3. Montevidolfo



4. Montefiore, la Rocca (the fortress)
5. Verucchio, la Rocca (the fortress)

### Verucchio, the origins of the Malatesta family

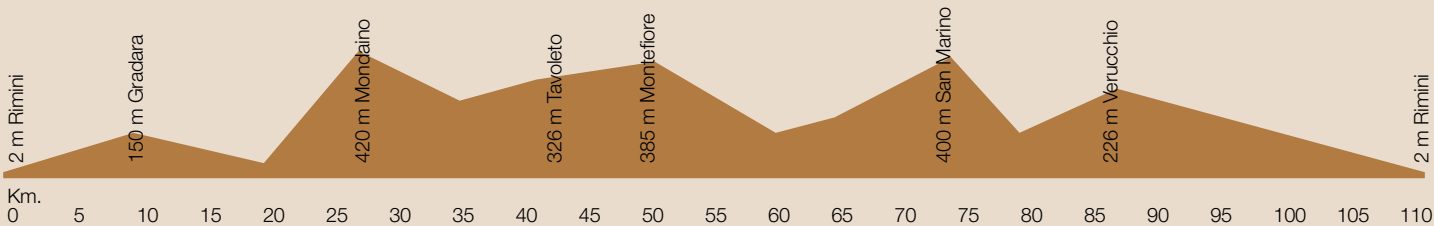
You continue for Tavoleto, by which point you have covered 45 kilometres, then there's a fairly long descent to get your breath back until you come to the foot of the Fortress of **Montefiore Conca** whose rooms contain important frescoes by Jacopo Avanzi.

There's a surprise around every bend, a different panorama, some aspect of nature or history as the route winds its way through **Valconca** and into the **Republic of San Marino**. A few tough stretches of climbing are inevitable, and they get less tolerable with the passing of the kilometres. But following the signs for **Acquaviva - Arezzo**, when you turn

at the fork for Ventoso there's an 18% descent that offers pleasant sensations though it isn't the best thing for resting.

After 90 kilometres the last climb is to **Verucchio** where the Malatesta dynasty originated. The fortress of Verucchio, open to visitors, was built in 1449 at the behest of Sigismondo Malatesta, the last great member of the family, on the remains of an earlier 12th century castle. From Verucchio you head down towards the sea and arrive in **Rimini**.





Departure: Rimini | Arrival: Rimini | Distance: 110 Km | Degree of difficulty: medium-high | Maximum altitude: 420 m. | Duration: 4h 1/2



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# Valmarecchia, the Malatesta Seigniory

## Not to be missed

### San Marino, the towers on Mount Titano

Founded at the end of the 3rd century the little republic has maintained its independence for more than 1700 years. It is hard to understand how this citadel on the 749 metres of Mount Titano was able to stand up to the appetites of emperors and popes and preserve its autonomy. Certainly much was due to the diplomacy of its governors and a farsighted policy of alliances. The Republic of San Marino covers an overall area of 60 square kilometres. Its impregnable capital has retained its ancient structure with a triple city wall built between the 12th and 14th centuries and the three turrets which served as watchtowers and protection from the enemy.

(Info: Tel. State Tourism Office +39 0549 882 410)



YOU PEDAL ALONG A DIFFICULT BUT ALMOST NEVER EXTREME ROUTE IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE PROVINCE OF RIMINI. THE CLIMBS ARE MOSTLY BRIEF BUT HERE AND THERE THE GRADIENT IS TYRANNICAL.

ON THOSE STRETCHES A "26" WILL HELP YOU KEEP A DECENT RHYTHM AND AVOID PUNISHING YOUR MUSCLES WITH LACTIC ACID.

### First leg to Santarcangelo and the up-and-down dance begins

From **Rimini** you head towards **Santa Giustina** and start the up-and-down dance. First objective: **Santarcangelo**. Dominated by the 15th century Malatesta fortress, the village conceals, underground, an intricate network of caves carved out of the tufa.

There is a long access tunnel with niches opening at the sides and terminating in highly evocative circular spaces.



### To Torriana, a heartrending climb

Fifteen kilometres, uphill more than anything else, separate Santarcangelo from **Torriana**, perched on a spur of rock from which there is a very clear view of the Adriatic coast. On the final part of the ascent to Torriana there's a heartrending stretch: no less than two kilometres with an 18% gradient.

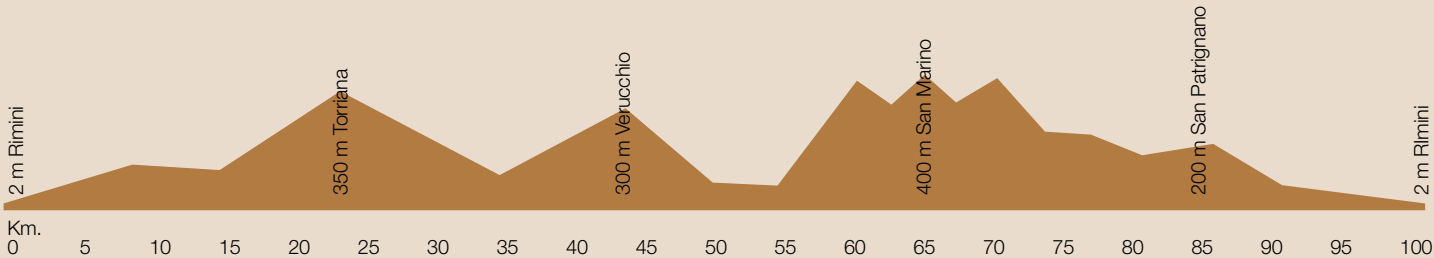
We are at the level of the "wall" in the Tour of Flanders. A point where you can test your physical condition and dedication to cycling.

### Towards the Ancient Republic

You continue pedalling along the Valley of the Marecchia, the river that reaches the sea in Rimini.

From Torriana to **Verucchio**





Departure: Rimini | Arrival: Rimini | Distance: 100 Km | Degree of difficulty: medium-high | Maximum altitude: 400 m. | Duration: 4h 1/2

there are about fifteen kilometres, four of them a fair climb. The final part of the itinerary involves more climbing on the territory of **San Marino**, the ancient republic, and then a long and uneven drop towards Rimini.

**The "Freccia dei due Mari"**  
 There's another great tour cycling itinerary that starts from Rimini, crosses the peninsula and ends in Viareggio. The race is held in June.  
 (Info: tel. +39 0541 720 227)



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1. Republic of San Marino
2. Torriana, Santuario della Madonna di Saiano
3. Poggio Berni
4. Santarcangelo, la Rocca (the fortress)
5. Valmarecchia
6. Verucchio



6

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