

THE ALPS AND THE PLAIN

From Bolzano to Ferrara



Bolzano, Piazza Walther

A voyage of discovery: natural and artistic panoramas of Italy in all their riches and variety. This route touches on four regions: Trentino Alto Adige, Veneto, Lombardia and Emilia Romagna; from Bolzano to Ferrara, along part of the Ciclopista del Sole long distance cycle route. The route descends from the enchanted basin in which **Bolzano** is immersed among vineyards and woodlands, at the heart of the Dolomite region of Alto Adige; it drops into **Trento** passing through mediaeval villages, skirts along Lake Garda, follows the river Mincio, then, after visiting **Mantova**, joins the Po to arrive in **Ferrara**, the city of the cycle.



1 GPS + ROAD BOOK www.ferrarabike.com Technical notes

Depart: Bolzano, Piazza Walther

Arrive: Ferrara, Piazza Savonarola

Length: 314,690 km

Difficulty level: the route is mainly cycle path, difficult only because of its length and for a little climb just before Affi.

Railways

Brennero/Bologna - Suzzara/Ferrara

Bicycle transport available.

Please check timetables and availability.

Info: 892021 • www.trenitalia.com

800 91 50 30 • www.fer.it

NB. We suggest splitting the route into 3 stages: Bolzano - Rovereto, Rovereto - Mantova, Mantova - Ferrara.

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Bolzano-Bozen:

Piazza Walther, 8
tel. 0471 307000
www.bolzano-bozen.it

Trento: Via Mancini, 2

tel. 0461 216000 • www.ap.trento.it

Rovereto: Corso Rosmini, 6

tel. 0464 430363 • www.visitrovereto.it

Peschiera del Garda: Piazzale Betteloni, 15

tel. 045 7551673 • www.tourism.verona.it

Mantova: Piazza Mantegna, 6

tel. 0376 432432 • www.turismo.mantova.it

Ferrara: Castello Estense

tel. 0532 299303 • www.ferrarainfo.com



FURTHER INFORMATION

Bolzano is the finest route to the foot of the Dolomite peaks.

In art and architecture, as in language, the characteristics of German country coexist with the Italian; among its many major attractions is the archaeological museum which is home to Ötzi, the mummified body from 3500-3300 BC discovered in the Similaun glacier.

Trento is the capital of the Trentino and has a strong renaissance flavour in its art and architecture. Historically at the meeting point of Latin civilisation with the German language, it maintains a lively cultural tradition: it has notable museums for archaeology, mediaeval art, the natural sciences, and its own history of Irredentism.

Mantova is the city of the Gonzagas: they took over the governance of the city in 1328 and held it securely, ruling over a long period of economic, political and artistic splendour. Don't miss strolling among its squares, or visiting the cathedral and the splendid Palazzo Ducale and Palazzo Te complexes.

The 'Ciclopista del Sole' between Bolzano and Trento



BOLZANO TO ROVERETO

km 90,180

This first part of the BOLZANO-FERRARA route follows the 'Ciclopista del Sole' which runs for the most part along gentle gradients down the valleys of the Isarco and the Adige.

Our point of departure in **Bolzano** is Piazza Walther, dominated by the memorial to Walther von der Vogelweide, one of the greatest poet-troubadours of the German middle ages. Out of the old centre, the cycle track follows an embankment between the two rivers, the Adige to the right and the Isarco to the left - these join later downstream.

The route passes through **Ora** and **Egna**, and then **Salorno**, before the border with the province of Trento. After a few kilometres the valley grows wider and opens out into the Rotaliana plain, with the towns of **San Michele all'Adige**, **Mezzocorona**, and **Mezzolombardo**, famous for their wine, including the outstanding Teroldego.

Arrival in **Trento**.

After Trento, sticking to the left of the Adige, we pass through Besenello, and then **Nomi** - where there is a specialist cycle travel resource called the 'Bicigrill' - arriving in the outskirts of **Rovereto**. A little town of the Vallagarina, this is known for its great Peace Bell and for the MART modern art museum, with its prestigious permanent collection of 20th century Italian art.

ROVERETO TO MANTOVA

km 117,330

From **Rovereto** we stay on the cycle track alongside the Adige, eventually crossing it at the Diga di Mori dam. After Chizzola, the track is high up on the river bank crossing the vineyards of the lower Vallagarina, as far as Pilcante. Near **Borghetto all'Adige** the Valle dell'Adige cyclepath finishes, and the route runs between Monte Baldo and the river on the left; important landmarks are Belluno Veronese, then Rivalta and Peri. At Zuane is the start of a good climb, necessary to pass from the altitude of the Adige to Lago di Garda across the Caprino-Costermano-Affi plateau.

After Affi and Lazise, with its Gardaland amusement park, we get to the walled town of **Peschiera del Garda**.



Lake Garda

The variety of countryside and historical stratification are truly breathtaking; olive trees, perhaps brought here by the Etruscans, cypresses from Venetian times, citrus trees for which the Franciscans built winter greenhouses, vines, stark fortresses overhanging its fjords, villages, ancient walls, churches, and houses on the banks to which the centuries have given the distinct flavours of their respective origins, Venetian on one bank, Lombard on the other.

From the fortress of Peschiera, we leave Lago di Garda, along the river Mincio. The Mantova-Peschiera cycle/pedestrian track, easy and well-known among cyclists, follows the river as far as **Valeggio sul Mincio** and its romantic **Borghetto**. We reach **Mantova** across the area around the lakes, the Periurban Park.

MANTOVA TO FERRARA

km 107,180

It's impossible to list the thousand threads that link these two Renaissance courts, Mantova and Ferrara: historic links from alliances and marriages, but above all artistic links so close that you can easily claim that a visit to one complements a visit to the other. Both are listed as World Heritage Cities by UNESCO, and are both cities on the water, linked to a river, the Mincio for Mantova and the Po for Ferrara.

On leaving **Mantova** we aim for Bagnolo San Vito where we meet the river Po: we climb up onto its embankment, which here is the Sinistra Po cycle route, but then leave it again for a while to head towards **Governolo**. There we come again upon the river Mincio, which flows into the Po here, and continue on the left bank of the Po as far as **Ostiglia**.

At Ostiglia we cross the Po by the iron bridge and arrive at **Revere**, where we continue along the right-hand side of the Po on the Destra Po cycle track. The province of Mantova ends with Borgofranco sul Po, Carbonara di Po, Sermide and Felonica; we enter the province of Ferrara at **Stellata** di Bondeno. Here the cycle track on the riverbank officially becomes the "Destra Po" and passes the beautiful Rocca Possente castle; from Stellata, crossing over the river Panaro we arrive in **Bondeno** where we turn onto the Burana cycle/pedestrian route as far as Ferrara (see Routes around Ferrara n° 2, p.38).

Stellata di Bondeno, the Rocca Possente

