



## ROUTE 1

### THE MANY COLOURS OF ROMAGNA

**Departure:** Bagnacavallo

**Circular route:** Bagnacavallo - Boncellino - Traversara - Bagnacavallo

**Length:** km 19,65

**Difficulty:** low

This is a route with some beautiful scenery on the way, and one which gives you a real feel for the atmosphere and history of the countryside around Bagnacavallo. Pedalling along paths where silence reigns and the only noises are birdsong and the sounds of country life, it takes little effort of the imagination to be transported back to the “sunny Romagna, gentle country” celebrated by Pascoli. Whichever way you turn, nature is all around – on the river bank, in country lanes which thread through orchards and vineyards and fields of wheat and sugar beet. The colours change depending on the season: in spring the dominant hues are the pink and white blossom of peach, apple, pear and cherry trees; in summer the wheat fields are a vivid yellow and the vegetation an intense green; autumn ignites the landscape in an endless variety of burnished golds and russets; and in winter, the fresh brown soil of the newly-ploughed fields is set off by the soft green of the new wheat and the searing orange of basket-willows. And all this countryside is dotted with farms, farmhouses and outbuildings, many of them now rebuilt complete with the wood-fired ovens formerly used for baking bread and cakes.

Departure point for this route is piazza della Libertà in the heart of the historic centre of Bagnacavallo.<sup>1</sup> From here, take via Matteotti,<sup>2</sup> and when you come to the roundabout turn right onto the cycle lane which runs along via Di Vittorio. Follow the cycle lane as far as the junction with the San Vitale highway. At the traffic lights the cycle lane ends. Cross the junction and head into via Boncellino. On the other side of the level crossing, a short detour on via Antiche Terme to the right will take you to the Verna Mario winery.<sup>3</sup> Back on via Boncellino, head straight on. At the junction with via Galavotti, bear left on via Boncellino<sup>4</sup> and then turn right into via Reda. Follow the signs for via Reda after the motorway bridge. From here the route enters the open countryside. At the junction with via Lame keep left and take via Ponte Nuovo, then turn left onto via Malpeli. At the junction with via Boncellino turn right and keep straight on. On the right you'll see Casa Baldini<sup>5</sup> and “La Rondine” study farm;<sup>6</sup> on the left is another farm, Ballardini Ricci.<sup>7</sup> At the intersection with via Sottofiume Boncellino turn right and then, a little way on, left onto via Argine Lamone.<sup>8</sup> At the end of the ramp, where the asphalt road continues on the right, turn left along the river embankment. Following the fringes of the Lamone<sup>9</sup> you'll see the village of Boncellino on the left. Then, a few kilometres on, you come to the Muraglione waterfall.<sup>10</sup> At this point, when you get near a brick-coloured house turn right off the riverside road\* onto via Sottofiume Boncellino, where on your right you'll see the Zini Aliero farm.<sup>11</sup> At the junction with the San Vitale highway, head straight on along via Torri. On your left you'll see the Ercolani Tower.<sup>12</sup> Arriving in the village of Traversara, turn left into via Centro Traversara. On the other side of the village, before you reach the cemetery, turn right along via Longanesi and you're back in the peace and silence of the countryside. Continue along via Longanesi, which veers left at one point; ignore Carraia Zorli straight ahead. After covering the last stretch of via Longanesi on the banks of the Fosso Vecchio canal, turn right into via Vecchia Traversara and then, a little further on, right again into via Carraia Biondina. Follow this road until you reach the junction with via Cogollo. On the other side of the junction, rejoin via Carraia Biondina until the Naviglio cycle lane: here, turn left into via Destra Canale Inferiore. Before arriving back in Bagnacavallo, you'll see the Liverani Falco farm on your left.<sup>13</sup> Go straight

ahead until you come to the wooden bridge. Cross the bridge then turn left onto the cycle lane. A couple of hundred metres further along you'll find yourself back in Bagnacavallo. Keep straight on and, at the third roundabout, turn right into via Matteotti – and you're back where you started from in piazza della Libertà.

\* From **spring 2006** it will be possible to follow the bank of the Lamone as far as Marina Romea (see: "Down the Lamone towards the sea", page 48), meaning you won't have to divert onto via Sottofiume Boncellino but can continue along the river bank as far as the bridge of Traversara. From here, go down and turn left into via Centro Traversara, where you rejoin the route as indicated above. By cutting down to the flood bed of the Lamone you can avoid the level crossing with the busy San Vitale main road (SP253).

## WHAT TO SEE

### 1. Piazza della Libertà

Overlooking piazza della Libertà is the neoclassical **town hall**, built in 1791 to a design by Cosimo Morelli. Next door is the elegant **Goldoni theatre**. Opened in 1845, the interior is sumptuously decorated with stuccoes and frescoes. The impressive tempera backdrop by Bolognese painter Antonio Muzzi is a typical example of the 19th-century vogue for drama-drenched history painting. On the west side of the piazza are **Palazzo Vecchio** (originally dating from the 12th and 13th centuries but restored on several occasions since) and the **town tower**. Built in the first half of the 13th century, the tower has been rebuilt several times over the course of the centuries. Internally it's divided into three storeys. It was one of the first of such towers to be fitted with a clock, during the domination of the Este dynasty in the early 16th century. Its bottom level was used as a prison from the 17th to 19th centuries, and since then its three storeys have been known as Inferno, Purgatory and Paradise after Dante's Divine Comedy. One of the tower's most (in)famous inmates was the bandit Stefano Pelloni, nom de guerre Il Passatore ("The Ferryman"), who was imprisoned here in 1849. One curious feature: the large nails driven into the wall at the base of the tower were used as a kind of lost-and-found office. People finding lost items would hang them from the nails for their rightful owners to reclaim them.



### 2. Via Matteotti - Palazzo Capra

On the left before the roundabout stands the 17th-century Palazzo Papini, later renamed Palazzo Capra. Rising from a flared basement, the façade of the palace has windows decorated with raised mouldings and scrolls on the ground

floor, while the windows of the piano nobile above are topped with triangular and round pediments. Crowning the façade is a heavy cornice carried on modillions. The entrance leads into a broad atrium and court. From here a grand staircase with stuccoes and frescoed vaults leads to the apartments of the piano nobile. Queen Christina of Sweden stayed at Palazzo Papini-Capra in 1662 during her journey to Rome. The palace was partially renovated in the mid-1990s.



### 3. The Verna Mario winery

The winery of Verna Mario (via Antiche Terme, 1) is a member of "Il Bagnacavallo" co-operative and is open to visitors. Verna Mario produces and sells a range of vinegars including condimento balsamico bianco, made from white vinegar and grape must, and the famous L'asé d'Bagnacaval (vinegar produced in Bagnacavallo). All products are manufactured by the traditional natural wood shavings fermentation method. Tel. +39 0545-61690

### 4. Casa Conti Guidi

A stone's throw from the junction with via Reda on via Boncellino 113 stands Casa Conti Guidi, headquarters of "Il Bagnacavallo" co-operative (tel. +39 0545 63094). It's open to visitors, and the "Bottega della bontà" on the ground floor houses an exhibition of wines, honey, vinegar, preserves and other traditional produce. A restaurant now occupies the former stables. Upstairs are the *Sala dell'Arte e della Cultura* (Hall of art and culture), dedicated to literature on Romagnol heritage, a conference area named *Sala dei Legni* (Hall of woods) and a third hall, *Sala dei Timpani* (Hall of tympanum), which hosts educational events as well as shows, concerts and exhibitions. In the gallery outside is a market selling flowers, fruit, salamis, cheeses, wines and other traditional produce. There's also a wood-fired oven for baking bread. On Sunday afternoons Casa Conti Guidi is open for light refreshments with the delicious Romagnol bread known as *piadina*, sausage, cheeses, sweets and wines. Bikes and binoculars are available for hire. Casa Conti Guidi was built in 1883 and was the last farmhouse to be erected in Bagnacavallo by the descendants of the Guidi family of Faenza, who inherited vast tracts of land in this area in the second half of the 19th century. Every one of the estates built by the Guidi comprised two separate buildings, and in each estate the architectural features of the two buildings are identical. The buildings are located symmetrically, usually on each side of a road. Today, eleven of these buildings remain, nearly all of them in the vicinity of Boncellino.



### 5. Casa Baldini

Casa Baldini was built in the 17th century as a country villa for the Papini family. It was acquired by the Baldini family in 1772 and converted into a farmhouse. Inside, the house retains some 19th-century frescoes and quadratura work. Beside the house is an oratory dedicated to St Antony Abbot.



## 6. La Rondine study farm

La Rondine (via Boncellino, 178) is a family-run farm school which is open to visitors. Orchards and vineyards occupy some eighty acres of the farm; it also raises cattle of the local Romagnol variety and numerous farmyard animals. The rural character of the Romagna plain is perfectly preserved here in the form of hedgerows, groves, and vines trained in the *viti maritate* method, i.e. hung well clear of the ground amid other vegetation. La Rondine is committed to organic farming and sells all its own produce. You're welcome to visit to take a look at the livestock and orchards, and you can also try the locally-made organic produce.  
Tel. +39 347 4230464 – +39 0545 69262

## 7. Ballardini-Ricci farm

The Ballardini-Ricci farm (via Boncellino, 203) is another member of "Il Bagnacavallo" co-operative and is open to visitors. A family-run concern, it's farmed using only environmentally-friendly techniques. The introduction of non-yielding hedgerows and thickets has stimulated the recovery of a fast-disappearing local ecosystem, while making the scenery a lot more attractive too. The farm now produces and sells quality wines including "Il Boncellino" (a dry white wine), "L'Ambrosia" (a strong, sweet white), "Bursòn" (a red made from grapes of the indigenous Longanesi grapes), and "L'uva dora" (a dry red made from Fortana vineyard). Also sold directly from the farm are fruit and vegetables, ornamental plants, cereals and grain.  
Tel. +39 0545 69303 – +39 349-3006430

## 8. Via Argine Lamone – the legend of Il Passator Cortese

On the left after the rise leading to via Argine Lamone is the landing stage where the father of celebrated bandit Stefano Pelloni (1824 – 1851) operated his ferry service. Pelloni was known as *Il Passatore* ("the ferryman") after his father's occupation. After his imprisonment for stealing lucerne, Pelloni became an outlaw and assembled a large band of fellow brigands. Though there's no evidence to substantiate the legend that he took from the rich to give to the poor, Pelloni was given the honorific title of Cortese in Giovanni Pascoli's poem Romagna, written thirty years after the bandit was gunned down by the papal militia. The name has stuck ever since, and Pelloni's exploits are now part of the popular imagination. Novels, poems, plays, and films continue to fuel the legend. *Il Passatore* has left his mark on the local wine trade too, and in the second fortnight of April every year Boncellino holds a festival known as the Festa del Passatore.



## 9. The river Lamone

The ancient "Anemo" cited by Pliny the Elder (23 – 79 AD) in his *Naturalis Historia*, the Lamone rises near Colla di Casaglia in the Apennines and drains into the Adriatic over a course of some 100 kilometres. On its way across the plain of Romagna to the sea it passes Casalborsetti, Marina Romea, Marradi, Brisighella, Faenza, Bagnacavallo and Russi. And it's namechecked in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, where the poet describes Faenza as "the city of the Lamone".



## 10. Il Muraglione

In the 1950s the waterfalls of the Muraglione were known as "the beach of Bagnacavallo". In feast days in summer the inhabitants of the town would meet here in the shadow of the 19th-century watermill to swim, sunbathe and socialize. Today, it's still a popular place for fishing and walking.



## 11. Zini Aliero farm

The Zini Aliero farm (via Sottofiume, 15) is another member of "Il Bagnacavallo" co-operative and, like the others, is open to visitors. Most of the farm is planted with vines and orchards, and wine and fruit are available for sale. The wines produced here include whites such as "Passito del Lamone" and "Bianco del Mulino", and reds including "Sangiovese Ravenna" and "Bursòn", available in "etichetta Blu" and "etichetta Nera" versions. Tel. +39 0545 63490 – +39 347 1365833

## 12. Traversara – the tower

The tower of Traversara was built in 1371 by the Ercolani family. When the Ercolani later built their own palazzo in the centre of Bagnacavallo, the tower became their summer retreat, a function which it continued to perform right through to the 19th century. It was modified in 1717 and again in 1736. Badly damaged by the bombardments of 1944, the tower has since been partially rebuilt.



## 13. The "Bucolica Domus" Liverani farm

The small family-run farm known as "Bucolica Domus" (via Destra Canale Inferiore, 4) is a member of Bagnacavallo co-operative and is open to visitors. The estate produces some quality wines which can be bought on the premises: reds include a "Cabernet Sauvignon" and "Petit Verdot", while "Donna Bruna" is a sweet rose wine obtained from Cabernet grapes whose skins are removed from the must almost immediately after vinification begins. Tel. +39 0545-62092

**BAGNACAVALLO - BONCELLINO - TRAVERSARA -  
BAGNACAVALLO / THE MANY COLOURS OF ROMAGNA**

| DIRECTION<br>(km count)      | NAME OF ROAD   | KM<br>of stretch | ROAD<br>SURFACE       | NOTES<br>_ WHAT TO SEE   |
|------------------------------|--|------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Departure point</b>       | Bagnacavallo piazza della Libertà  | 00,00            | flagstones            | departure point<br>- <b>n. 1</b> buildings on piazza della Libertà   |
| Straight ahead ↑<br>km 00,00 | from piazza della Libertà towards via Matteotti  | 00,25            | asphalt               | - <b>n. 2</b> Palazzo Capra  |
| R →<br>km 00,25              | enter cycle lane from roundabout on via Matteotti                                      | 00,10            | paving tile           | traffic lights at S. Vitale highway visible ahead  |
| L ←<br>km 00,35              | leave cycle track at traffic lights / pedestrian crossing and cross S. Vitale highway  | 00,05            | asphalt               | reduce speed, careful at junction, press button at traffic lights  |
| Straight ahead ↑<br>km 00,40 | cross S. Vitale highway to enter via Boncellino  | 00,75            | asphalt               | - <b>n. 3</b> The Mario Verna winery   |
| L ←<br>km 01,15              | follow signs for via Boncellino  | 00,05            | asphalt               | - <b>n. 4</b> Casa Conti Guidi - "Il Bagnacavallo" cooperative   |
| R →<br>km 01,20              | turn into via Reda   | 00,15            | asphalt               | bridge across motorway visible from here   |
| R →<br>km 01,35              | follow signs for via Reda at end of motorway bridge                                    | 00,55            | asphalt               |  |
| L ←<br>km 01,90              | keep left to enter via Ponte Nuovo   | 01,40            | asphalt               |  |
| L ←<br>km 3,30               | turn into via Malpeli  | 01,35            | asphalt and gravel    |  |
| R →<br>km 04,65              | via Boncellino   | 01,25            | asphalt               | - <b>n. 5</b> Casa Baldini<br>- <b>n. 6</b> "La Rondine" study farm<br>- <b>n. 7</b> Ballardini-Ricci farm     |
| R →<br>km 05,90              | via Sottofiume Boncellino  | 00,20            | asphalt               |  |
| L ←<br>km 06,10              | via Argine Lamone  | 00,19            | asphalt               |  |
| L ←<br>km 6,29               | the asphalt road continues right; turn left along the river bank                       | 02,22            | grass and earth trail | - <b>n. 8</b> the legend of the bandit Il Passator Cortese   |
| Straight ahead ↑<br>km 8,51  | continue along the river bank, ignoring the broad ramp that descends towards the river | 00,67            | dirt                  | the earth track is not always visible<br>- <b>n. 9</b> the river Lamone<br>- <b>n. 10</b> Muraglione waterfall |
| L ←<br>km 9,18               | downhill near a brick-coloured house   | 00,07            | dirt                  | careful at the barrier; from spring 2006 it will be possible to follow the Lamone as far                       |

| DIRECTION<br>(km count)      | NAME OF ROAD   | KM<br>of stretch | ROAD<br>SURFACE | NOTES<br>_ WHAT TO SEE  |
|------------------------------|--|------------------|-----------------|---|
|                              |  |                  |                 | as Marina Romea without having to leave the river bank  |
| Straight ahead ↑<br>km 9,25  | via Sottofiume Boncellino  | 01,85            | asphalt         | heavy traffic and narrow road (no cycle lane)<br>- <b>n. 11</b> Zini Aliero farm  |
| Straight ahead ↑<br>km 11,10 | intersection with S. Vitale highway (SP 253), level crossing via Torri SP 25 | 01,30            | asphalt         | dangerous intersection with poor visibility heavy traffic – keep your wits about you!<br>- <b>n. 12</b> Torre Hercolani |
| L ←<br>km 12,40              | junction with via Centro Traversara  | 00,30            | asphalt         | fountain in church square   |
| R →<br>km 12,70              | on the other side of the village of Traversara take via Longanesi            | 00,40            | asphalt         |   |
| L ←<br>km 13,10              | turn left remaining on via Longanesi, ignoring carraia Zorli                 | 00,70            | asphalt         |   |
| R →<br>km 13,80              | via Vecchia Traversara   | 01,80            | asphalt         |   |
| R →<br>km 15,60              | carraia Blondina   | 00,60            | asphalt         |   |
| Straight ahead ↑<br>km 16,20 | continue across via Cogollo  | 00,40            | dirt, patchy    |   |
| L ←<br>km 16,60              | Naviglio cycle lane  | 00,70            | asphalt         | - <b>n. 13</b> the "Bucolica Domus" Liverani farm   |
| Straight ahead ↑<br>km 17,30 | along Naviglio cycle lane as far as wooden bridge                            | 01,50            | asphalt         |   |
| R →<br>km 18,80              | cross bridge to rejoin cycle lane  | 00,60            | paving tile     |   |
| R →<br>km 19,40              | cycle lane on via Matteotti back to departure point                          | 00,25            | asphalt         |   |
| <b>Arrival</b>               | <b>piazza della Libertà</b>  | --               | --              | <b>end of route km 19,65</b>  |