



ROUTE 3

IN SEARCH OF THE OLD ROMAGNA COUNTRYSIDE

Departure: Bagnacavallo

Route: Bagnacavallo - Villa Prati - Rossetta

Length: km 13,91

Difficulty: low

This is an easy route which combines nature, art and a touch of watersports. It's suitable for everyone, from mountain bikers and hardened cyclists to families with young children. The route takes in Bagnacavallo's museum, which has an extensive art collection and an interesting natural history section, before heading out into the open country. Not far from the centre of town is Podere Pantaleone, an old farm estate which has been converted into an environmental rehabilitation zone. It's easy to spend hours just communing with nature here, immersed in the luxuriant greenery of the estate. Another attraction on this route is the swimming pool of Rossetta, which is great for a refreshing dip on sticky summer afternoons.

Departure point for this route is piazza della Libertà in the heart of Bagnacavallo.¹ From here, take via Garibaldi.² Before reaching Porta Pieve turn left into via Vittorio Veneto, where the town's museum and cultural centre, Le Cappuccine,³ stands on the left. Head straight on across the junction with via Fossa and into via Guarno. From here the route enters the open countryside. A little further on, via Guarno turns right; ignore this junction and keep straight on via Rotondi. At the junction with via Stradello⁴ turn right and then, a little further on, left in the direction of Podere Pantaleone.⁵ After visiting the nature reserve head back down via Pantaleone and turn left into via Stradello. About four kilometres further on, turn right into via Sinistra Fosso Munio, then left into via Abbadesse and follow this road as far as the junction with via Chiara. Here, turn right in the direction of Villa Prati. At the junction with via Sinistra Canale Inferiore turn right in the direction of Bagnacavallo, and then immediately left. Cross the wooden bridge over Canale Naviglio then turn left again to pick up the pleasant and shady Naviglio cycle lane. At the junction with via Cocchi turn right then immediately left to rejoin the road along the canal. After about a kilometre turn left and cross via Sinistra Canale Inferiore into via Bellaria. Follow this road as far as the junction with via Rossetta. Cross the junction and take via Rossetta Sottofiume. When you come to the town of Rossetta turn left to reach the swimming pool.⁶



1. Piazza della Libertà

On piazza della Libertà is the neoclassical **town hall**, built in 1791 to a design by Cosimo Morelli. Beside the palazzo is the impressive **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 paintings. On the west side of the piazza stand **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. Curiously, the large nails driven into the wall at the base of the tower functioned 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 Garibaldi

On the left as we head along via Garibaldi in the direction of Porta Pieve is the 13th-century **Torraccia**, one of the oldest buildings in Bagnacavallo's historic centre. A little further along on the same side of the street are the **church and monastery of San Giovanni**, founded in 1336 by the Camaldolensian order. Rebuilt after the earthquake of 1688, in 1816 the monastery came into the possession of its current owners, the nuns of the Capuchin order. In the early 19th century the monastery housed a renowned girls' school. Lord Byron's daughter, Allegra, was an inmate of the school and died here while still a young child. A little further on, on the right, is the **Memorial to the war dead**. Founded by the friars of the Battuti Bianchi in 1399, this church was rebuilt in the 18th century. Inside, the interesting painting of the Immaculate Conception dates from the same period.



3. "Le Cappuccine" museum and cultural centre

This cultural centre occupies a former 18th-century convent of the Capuchin Sisters, hence its name. The kitchen garden of the convent is now a public park. The centre is home to an impressive collection of antique and modern art, and has a library and important historical archive. Well worth seeing are the rooms containing the works of contemporary artist Enzo Morelli – a native of Bagnacavallo – and the sections



dedicated to two important men of letters and also natives of Bagnacavallo: Tomaso Garzoni and Leo Longanesi. "Le Cappuccine" is also home to a prints library with an exceptionally rich collection of engravings and a busy exhibition schedule. Most of the museum, however, is dedicated to contemporary painting. Opening hours: 10am-noon / 4pm-7pm (April to September); 10am-noon / 3pm-6pm (October to March). Closed Mondays and days after public holidays, 1-20 August, Christmas day and New Year's day. Admission is free. Tel. + 39 0545-280912



4. Golfari farm

Golfari farm (via Stradello, 9/a) is a member of "Il Bagnacavallo" co-operative and is open to visitors. A family-run farm, it's mainly planted with vines and fruit trees. Available for sale directly on the premises are peaches, honey and wine both red (Bursón, etichetta Blu and etichetta Nera) and white (Passito degli Stradelli). Tel. +39 0545-63468

5. Podere Pantaleone environmental reserve

Podere Pantaleone is a kind of open-air museum of nature: extending over an area of six hectares, it's an environmental reserve in which the idea is to allow the natural ecology of the region to re-establish itself. The reserve is on the site of an old farm which lay abandoned for several decades. During this time the resident vegetation has sprawled freely over the estate, and the result is an oasis of exceptionally luxuriant greenery punctuated here and there with grassy clearings. It all makes an ideal environment for the local fauna to flourish unchallenged by human encroachment, and Podere Pantaleone is now a happy breeding ground for hundreds of species of birds, beetles, butterflies, amphibians, reptiles and mammals.



The reserve is open to visitors from early spring through late autumn; for information and guided visits contact the local tourist information bureau on Tel. + 39 0545.280898

6. Rossetta swimming pool

This pool, at via Rossetta Traversa, 7, Fusignano, is part of a sports and leisure complex complete with solarium, green spaces with football pitches (including floodlit 5-a-side), tennis courts, beach volleyball, court volleyball and table tennis. There's also a bar, restaurant, and a fully-serviced park for camper vans. The complex offers classes in swimming, gymnastics, aerobics, water aerobics and dancing, and regularly hosts music, sports and theatre events. Open June to September.



For more information call Tel. + 39 0545 58316

