



ROUTE 5

CANAL AND WATERMILL TRAIL

Departure: Bagnacavallo

Route: Bagnacavallo - Lugo - Bagnara di Romagna

Length: km 17,60

Difficulty: low

This is a route of considerable historic, artistic and natural interest which passes some of the loveliest places in lower Romagna. Along the way you'll thread through some beautiful countryside steeped in silence and greenery. You'll see natural hedgerows of elder, hawthorn and dog rose, old canals that once brought water to the mills, villas and farmhouses, estates neatly planted with drills that endlessly recede into the distance, and towns with perfectly-preserved historic centres bursting with churches, museums, palazzi and castles. Two areas are of exceptional environmental interest: Canale dei Molini (Mill canal) and Parco del Loto (Lotus park).

Departure point for this route is piazza della Libertà in the heart of Bagnacavallo.¹ From here, take the cycle lane on via Garibaldi², alongside the town hall. Be careful to keep to the right on this street as all the traffic is oncoming. At the traffic lights, cross the junction and pick up the cycle lane on the right-hand side of via Pieve Masiera. Follow straight ahead and at the roundabout³ turn off at the third exit on the right, via Bagnoli inferiore, then turn right again into via Bruciamolina. After about two kilometres turn left into via Confini Levante. At the intersection with the San Vitale highway turn right and keep straight on until joining the cycle lane on the right-hand side of viale Dante. You're now coming into Lugo. At the roundabout head straight on along corso Matteotti⁴ until you get to piazza Baracca - piazza Martiri.⁵ On the other side of the two piazzas turn left, and then immediately right into vicolo del Teatro, and then into via Amendola. Follow this road as far as the junction with via Circondario Ponente. Here, turn left then right a little further along, into via Villa.⁶ Turn left into via Canale Superiore Sinistra and follow this road as far as the church. Here, turn right into via Zagonara and then left into via Castellazzo. Follow via Castellazzo until you come to via dei Grilli.⁷ Keep straight on until you enter via Rio Fantino. At the junction, pass the Gramola restaurant into via Canale. After about a kilometre turn right into via Peschiera and then left into via Lunga further on. Then turn right into via Giuliana and the town of Bagnara di Romagna.⁸



WHAT TO SEE

BAGNACAVALLO

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 it 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 Compagnia dei 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. Before arriving at **Porta Pieve**, rebuilt in 1836 on the site of a much older building, you'll see on your left the 17th-century **Palazzo Tesorieri**, formerly a convent of the Poor Clares.



3. Pieve di San Pietro in Sylvis

The Pieve of San Pietro in Sylvis dates from the 7th century. One of the best-preserved of such parish churches in the whole province, it's a classic example of the architecture of



the Byzantine exarchate. San Pietro in Sylvis has a simple façade of exposed brick. Inside, the crypt dates from the 11th century. In the apse are some impressive 14th-century frescoes by the Rimini school. The cippus altar is of Greek marble and dates from the late 6th century. In the crypt / oratory is a mensa altar, again of Greek marble, carried on colonettes and dating from the 6th/7th century.

Opening hours:

April: Friday and Saturday 4.30pm-6.30pm; Sunday 10am-noon, 4.30pm-6.30pm

May-September: Thursday, Friday and Saturday 4.30pm-6.30pm; Sunday 10am-noon, 4.30pm-6.30pm

October: Friday and Saturday 2.30pm-4.30pm; Sunday 10am-noon, 2.30pm-4.30pm

November-March: Friday 2.30pm-4.30pm, Sunday 10am-noon.



LUGO

4. Corso Matteotti

On the left as you enter corso Matteotti is **Santa Maria delle Grazie**, the church which introduced the Baroque style to Lugo. Behind its high and slender façade are some exceptional works of art by Ignatius Stern and Benedetto dal Buono. Further along the street (formerly the main thoroughfare of the *ghetto* which for centuries – until the Second World War – was home to a sizeable Jewish community) on the right stands **Casa Marangoni**, formerly the property of the counts of Barbiano and the dukes of Este: its richly-wrought façade combines medieval and Renaissance elements, although it owes its current appearance to a restoration of the 1930s. Further along on the same side of the street is one of Romagna's most historic buildings. Now the Hotel Ala d'Oro, this 18th-century palazzo originally belonged to the aristocratic **Rossi** family and was birthplace of **Cornelia Rossi Martinetti**, a noblewoman, lover of belles lettres and central figure of one of the leading literary salons of the early 19th century. Poet Ugo Foscolo dedicated one of his *Graces* to her. At the end of the street rises the 18th-century **church of the Suffragio**. Inside are paintings by Ignatius Stern and local artists Benedetto del Buono and Carlo Ruina.



5. The town centre and Lotus park

The best architecture in Lugo is to be found in the old town around piazza Martiri, piazza Baracca and piazza Trisi. Most imposing is the fortress, **Rocca Estense**, whose current appearance dates largely from the late 16th century when Alfonso II demolished the citadel to make way for a marketplace. Now the headquarters of the municipal government, its *Assembly halls* are of considerable historic interest. The magnificent *roof garden* on the south-west bastion dates from the late 18th/early 19th centuries. Open for group visits by prior appointment only (+39 0545 38411). Opposite the Rocca is the **Pavaglione**, an impressive four-sided portico completed in 1784 to accommodate the

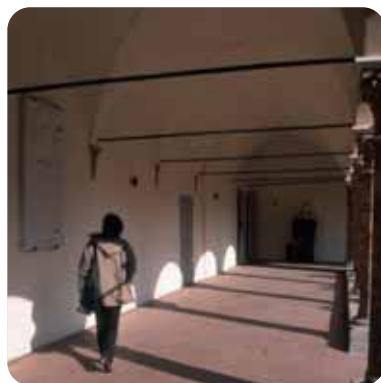


then-flourishing market for silkworm cocoons. The weekly market (Wednesdays) now held in the Pavaglione is one of the oldest in the region. It's also one of the largest, and spills out onto the adjacent streets and squares. The precinct is also the venue for a biennial fair, all kinds of events and happenings and, on the second Sunday of every month, an antiques market. In the immediate vicinity of the Pavaglione is the **monument to Francesco Baracca** by sculptor Domenico Rambelli, unveiled in 1936 by the duke of Aosta. The monument features a bronze statue set on a pedestal commemorating the dates and locations of the victories of the Italian Air Ace. The backdrop is an enormous, 27-metre high fin of travertine in the form of an aeroplane's wing. At the base of the wing are sculptures of a gryphon and a *rampant colt* – this latter now world famous since its adoption as the logo of Ferrari. A short distance away in largo Baruzzi is the **S. Onofrio oratory**: of interest here are the scagliola cartouches with scenes from the life of St Onofrio painted by Ignatius Stern (also known as Ignazio Stella, a pupil of Cignani). The apse too is impressive for the works of art it contains. Opposite the Oratorio, in piazza Trisi, is another important religious building: the **church of the Carmine**, adjacent to the Carmelite monastery and dedicated to St Hilarus, patron of Lugo. Inside the church is a famous organ, built in 1797 by Gaetano Callido and once used for keyboard practice by the young Rossini. On the corner with via Emaldi is **Palazzo Trisi**, built in the second half of the 18th century and now home to a library whose collections number over 150,000 volumes. Nearby stands the **Rossini theatre**, built between 1757 and 1761 by architect Francesco Petrocchi with some assistance from Antonio Galli Bibiena. The sober neoclassical interior dates from 1821.

In piazza Savonarola stands the **Collegiate church**, also known as **San Francesco**, built by architect Cosimo Morelli da Imola on the site of an earlier church dedicated to St Francis of Assisi. The interior of the church is neoclassical, while the adjacent cloister, formerly a part of the old monastery, dates from 1471. In the centre of the cloister is the original well head from 1425. The **museum dedicated to Francesco Baracca** (on via Baracca), one of the pioneers of Italian aviation, is now home to the SPAD VII, the aircraft built in 1917 in which Baracca bagged one of his 34 aerial victories. Also on display are a number of the aviator's personal effects and period documents. Open every day except Monday: 10am-noon / 4pm-6pm (tel. +39 0545/24821 – 38556). Closed August.

The building on the corner of via Sassoli and corso Garibaldi is the **A.N.G.E.L.O. vintage palace**, which contains a museum of clothing and accessories.

But Lugo has one more surprise in store, and it's a delightful one. Halfway down via Brignani is the entrance to the **Lotus park**: an oasis on the fringes of the town, it's named after the lotus that grows there. Not far from the entrance you'll find yourself immersed in a dense tangle of vegetation. Press on towards the centre of the park to see the lotus pond –



it's best appreciated in July and August when the plant is in bloom. For information call + 39 0545 38444. The gardens on via Brignani are open all year: Opening hours: summer 8am-11pm, winter 8am-6pm. The Lotus park proper is open from May to January 31: summer 8am-9pm, winter 8am-6pm.

6. Mill Canal - Washerwomen's Bridge

Heading out of town along via Villa you come to the intersection with Canale dei Molini ("Mill canal") and the **Ponte delle Lavandaie** ("Washerwomen's bridge") one of the most characteristic spots in Lugo. Right into the 1950s, the women of the town could be seen washing their linen on the specially-built stairs at the base of the bridge. The vicinity of the bridge is a pleasant spot, with some unusual species of trees and shrubs. **Mill canal** was excavated between 1393 and 1396 with the objective of bringing water to the mills of Castel Bolognese. It was extended to Solarolo in 1446 and to Bagnara in 1468; not until much later did it reach Lugo and Fusignano.

7. Via dei Grilli

This road is fringed by a large and distinctively Romagnol hedgerow of a type which has largely disappeared from the local countryside. It's a composite of various shrubs, including elder, hawthorn, dog rose and Jerusalem thorn (*Paliurus spina-christi*). The **Podere Gagliardi** estate is an agricultural area with typical drill cultivation methods which is well worth a look. The countryside is particularly vivid here with its orchards, wheat fields and vines grown according to the local *viti maritate* method, meaning they're trained on live "trellises" (i.e. other vegetation).



BAGNARA DI ROMAGNA

8. The town centre and environs

The walls of Bagnara are well preserved and well worth checking out. The foundations and accompanying ditch which fully encircle the town were the work of Barnabò Visconti, who conquered the village in 1354. In piazza IV Novembre stand the **Sforza fortress** and the **Dean church**, dedicated to St John the Baptist and St Andrew. The recently-restored fortress still retains its 14th-



century defences, which were later strengthened under the dominion of the Manfredi dynasty and completed under Caterina Sforza at the end of the 15th century. Among the interesting features here are the keep, the central courtyard (now restored to its Renaissance aspect), the loggias which run round three quarters of the perimeter of the walls, and the cellars. Guided tours of the fortress are available by prior appointment. Call the Bagnara tourist information desk on +39 0545.76733. Right across from the Rocca stands the **Dean church**, built on the site of the oratory of San Giovanni in 1484. With a single central nave, no aisles and a vaulted ceiling, the church was built in three different periods: remains of the original church (13th and 14th centuries) are still visible at the base of the walls. The second phase of building dates from 1653, when the eight side chapels were added. In the third phase (1752-1774), under Cosimo Morelli the side chapels were redesigned and an alcove and altar were added to the apse and presbytery. The façade and campanile were restored after damage during the Second World War. There are two **museums** in the church: one dedicated to composer **Pietro Mascagni**, the other to **religious art**. Visits to the museums can be arranged by calling the parish priest on +39 0545.76054.

In the recently-repaved piazza Marconi are a number of buildings of historical interest, first of which is the **Porta del Paese** in the west side of the castle walls. Built in 1494, the gate was completely rebuilt after the Second World War. On the east side of the piazza is the 19th-century **Palazzo Fabbri**. Since recent rebuitressing and restoration work the palazzo has been converted into a hotel, "Locanda di Bagnara". On the north side of the piazza stands the **town hall**. Like the nearby Porta del Paese, it was rebuilt almost from scratch after the Second World War. Over in piazza della Repubblica is **Villa Beltrani-Rinaldi**, built in the late 18th century and still intact with its original complement of house, stables and private chapel. Another important monument is the **oratory of San Luigi Gonzaga**, after which the adjacent piazza (Borgo di San Luigi) is named.

If you're investigating the surrounding countryside, one place that's well worth a visit is **Federici farm** (via Cappelle, 1), whose extensive range of produce can be bought directly on the premises: choose from fruit (apples, cantaloupes and watermelons, plums, grapes, peaches and pears) or vegetables (e.g. shallots). Also on sale at the farm is a highly-prized local variety of pork, *mora romagnola*. All produce is IGP-certified, which attests to its local production. At via Pigno 7 is **Beltrani farm**, where fruit and vegetables are also on sale. At no. 36/A on the same road is a rural hotel adjacent to "**Passo Regina**" farm and selling a variety of farm produce, such as jams and peaches in syrup. Still on via Pigno, at no. 18 (about two kilometres outside Bagnara) is **Palazzo Morsiani-Bernardi** in its extensive grounds. Originally a fortified building dating from the 15th century, it was modified in the 18th century and on several later occasions. Since the post-war period it has been an



internationally reputed breeding farm for Saint Bernard dogs. Turning right into via Molinello after Palazzo Morsiani-Bernardi, a dirt track which can only be negotiated by cycle leads to the **sanctuary of Madonna del Soccorso**. Built to plans by Cosimo Morelli in 1766, the sanctuary is now a place of pilgrimage thanks to its terracotta statue of Madonna and Child standing above a pool whose waters are believed to work miracles. Restoration work in 1999 added a park, a classical garden and a water spout reminiscent of the aquatic artifices of the 18th century on the southern confines of the sanctuary.



DIRECTION (km count)	NAME OF ROAD	KM of stretch	ROAD SURFACE	NOTES _ WHAT TO SEE
Departure point km 00,00	Bagnacavallo piazza della Libertà	00,00	flagstones	departure point - n. 1 buildings on piazza della Libertà
L ← km 0,12	via Garibaldi, where the cycle lane starts	0,31	asphalt	careful: oncoming traffic - n. 2 buildings on via Garibaldi
Straight ahead ↑ km 0,43	traffic lights at La Pieve shopping centre cycle lane on pavement	0,72	asphalt	
L ← km 1,15	from Pieve roundabout take via Bagnoli Inferiore	0,46	asphalt	careful: no cycle lane - n. 3 Pieve di San Pietro in Silvis
R → km 1,61	via Bruciamolina	1,83	asphalt	not a busy road
L ← km 3,44	via Confini Levante	0,97	asphalt	
R → km 4,41	junction with S. Vitale highway	0,34	asphalt	dangerous intersection with no cycle lane on bridge - monument commemorating the offensive of 10 April 1945 which liberated Lugo
Straight ahead ↑ km 4,75	viale Dante start of cycle lane	1,39	asphalt	be careful when joining viale Dante as there is no cycle lane
Straight ahead ↑ km 6,14	at the hospital roundabout follow corso Matteotti	0,68	asphalt	- n. 4 buildings on corso Matteotti
Straight ahead ↑ km 6,82	piazza Baracca and piazza dei Martiri (restricted traffic zone) at this point you might like to take a tour of the centre of Lugo before continuing towards Bagnara	0,12	flagstones	fountain beside Pavaglione next to the news kiosk - n. 5 historic centre of Lugo and Parco del Loto
L ← km 6,94	leave piazza	0,08	asphalt	careful with the traffic
R → km 7,02	vicolo del Teatro and via Amendola	0,48	flagstones asphalt	no cycle lane but the road is quite wide
L ← km 7,50	via Circondario Ponente	0,62	asphalt	last stretch of the cycle lane is unmetalled. Careful with the cross-streets as cyclists have no priority

DIRECTION (km count)	NAME OF ROAD	KM of stretch	ROAD SURFACE	NOTES _ WHAT TO SEE
R → km 8,12	via Villa towards bridge	0,23	asphalt	- n. 6 Canale dei Molini, ponte delle lavandaie
L ← km 8,35	via Canale Superiore Sinistra	1,42	asphalt grit	
Straight ahead ↑ km 9,77	via Canale Superiore Sinistra	0,72	asphalt grit	dangerous junction!
R → km 10,49	towards Zagonara church on via Zagonara	0,30	asphalt	fountain
L ← km 10,79	via Castellazzo - via Grilli	1,94	asphalt	- n. 7 Podere Gagliardi
Straight ahead ↑ km 12,73	via Rio Fantino	1,38	asphalt grit	
Straight ahead ↑ km 14,11	junction at Gramola restaurant, go past restaurant on via Canale	0,76	asphalt grit	some unmetalled stretches (careful with the uneven surface)
Straight ahead ↑ km 14,87	junction	0,47	grit	
R → km 15,34	via Peschiera	1,39	asphalt	
L ← km 16,73	via Lunga	0,22	asphalt	
R → km 16,95	via Giuliana direzione Bagnara	0,65	asphalt	
Arrival	Bagnara di Romagna - via Matteotti from here you can take a look around Bagnara and environs	--	asphalt	end of route km 17,60 - n. 8 historic centre and countryside of Bagnara