



ROUTE 6

ART AND NATURE TOUR

Departure: Bagnacavallo

Arrival: Penisola di Boscoforte

Route: Bagnacavallo - Fusignano - Alfonsine - Boscoforte

Length: km 30

Difficulty: medium

You'll need a good pair of legs for this route, which starts in the centre of Bagnacavallo and ends in Boscoforte, the peninsula which stretches for six kilometres into the marshes of Valli di Comacchio, one of the loveliest wetland areas in the Po delta. On the way it takes in Fusignano, native city of composer Arcangelo Corelli, and Alfonsine, birthplace of poet Vincenzo Monti, whose house now accommodates the visitors' centre for the Po Delta nature Reserve.

From piazza della Libertà¹ in the heart of Bagnacavallo take the cycle lane in via Garibaldi² (careful, as the normal direction of traffic is in the opposite direction) towards the junction with via Vittorio Veneto.³ Head across the junction to via Fossa, cross this road and pick up via Guarno. Follow this road into via Rotondi, then turn left into via Stradello,⁴ in the direction of Podere Pantaleone.⁵ At the end of via Stradello turn right towards via Pieve Masiera. Follow this road all the way to the bridge at Fusignano⁶ (be careful here, as there's no cycle lane on the bridge). As you come off the bridge over the Senio turn right into via dei Martiri, which leads into via Fiume di Sotto, a pleasant little road which runs along the bank of the Senio. Keep on the riverbank until you get to Alfonsine, where via Fiume di Sotto changes name to via Mameli.⁷ From via Mameli turn left into via Borse and then right into via Pisacane. Cross the bridge to the right bank of the Senio and take the dirt track in the direction of the Adriatica highway. After crossing the main road follow via Destra Senio to Fornace Violani, the first of three stations which comprise the Alfonsine nature reserve.⁸ Keep on via Destra Reno until you come to the ramp which leads to the riverbank. Keep on the bank until descending to the picturesque ferry crossing to the other side of the Reno, and you're now in the wetlands of the Po Delta nature reserve and the lovely peninsula of Boscoforte.⁹



WHAT TO SEE

BAGNACAVALLO

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, who was imprisoned here in 1849.



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. 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. "Le Cappuccine" 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: Thomaso 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.

Open Tuesday to Sunday

Opening hours: April-September: 10am-noon / 4pm-7pm;

October-March: 10am-noon / 3pm-6pm

Closed Mondays and days after public holidays, 1-20 August, Christmas day and New Year's day.

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 (Bursòn, "etichetta Blu" and "etichetta Nera") and white ("Passito degli Stradelli"). Tel. +39 0545-63468

5. Podere Pantaleone environmental reserve

Not far from the centre of Bagnacavallo is Podere Pantaleone, 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



FUSIGNANO

6. The town centre and environs

The birthplace of composer Arcangelo Corelli (1653 – 1713), Fusignano numbers among its places of interest the **town museum San Rocco** (Via Monti 5/a, in the centre of town). This 16th-century building was originally a pilgrim's hospice before later becoming an infirmary for the poor. The museum has a particularly interesting collection of ceramic devotional plaques dating from the 16th to the 20th centuries. Over 200 plaques from Italy, Spain and France are on show. The plaques from central Italy are of particular interest, especially those from Deruta and Castelli. Also exceptional are the specimens from Tuscany and from Romagna, which is represented with pieces from the celebrated Fabbrica Ferniani in Faenza. The museum is open from 3pm to 6pm on



Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Closed on Christmas day, New Year's day and 15 August. Guided visits are available by prior appointment. Tel. +39 0545/955611.

At the junction of Mill canal with the road leading from Fusignano to the village of Maiano Monti is **Calcagnini mill**. This mill, which probably dates from the 14th century, was supplied with water via a conduit from the river Senio. Nowadays the mill is the property and workshop of wrought iron craftsman Giovanni Martini. Sights worth seeing in Maiano include the **parish church of Santa Maria del Pilaro** and **Villa Monti**.

The church is at the junction of via Maiano and via Marocche. Inside are paintings and frescoes by Bergamini (for visits contact Lucia Bellosi on +39 0545.52480). Not far from the church is Villa Monti, set in a pleasant park. Built in 1717, it was bought in 1769 by Fedele Monti, father of the poet Vincenzo Monti. Inside, the walls of the villa are decorated with tempera landscapes painted in 1812 by Giovanni Monti, nephew of Vincenzo, before his move to Rome where he fraternized with Gianbattista Bassi and Massimo D'Azeglio (for visits contact Giovanni Tazzari on +39 0545.51921). Out in the green countryside at via Canale 12 is **La Marchesa riding centre**, a riding school offering classes in horsemanship and show jumping. The villa on the estate has a collection of horse-drawn carriages. Tel. +39 0545.52815. **Randi farm** in via San Savino 113 is a member of "Il Bagnacavallo" wine co-operative and produces Bursón red ("etichetta Blu" and "etichetta Nera") and Passito Randi, a white. Tel. +39 054558231



ALFONSINE

7. The town centre and environs

Alfonsine was heavily bombarded during the Second World War. Its **museum of the Battle on the Senio** in piazza della Resistenza documents the bloody battle for the river Senio of 10 April 1945, with pictures and testimonies of the resistance struggle and the last year of the war in Romagna. Opening hours: Monday-Friday 9am-noon, 3pm-6pm. Tel. +39 0544 83585.

Also open at weekends from March to May. Closed August.

Just outside Alfonsine at via Passetto 1 is the **birthplace of poet Vincenzo Monti** (Alfonsine 1754 – Milan 1828). Casa Monti is a fine example of 18th century architecture and has been open to the public since 1998 after careful restoration. On the ground floor is an environmental education office while upstairs is the museum dedicated to the poet, one of the greats of Italian neoclassicism. Included among its artefacts are period furnishings, including a cradle, paintings, personal effects and some first editions of the poet's works. Downstairs, the environmental education office serves as a visitors' centre for the Alfonsine nature reserve and information desk for the Delta del Po natural park; inside the centre is a small permanent exhibition dedicated to the



landscape and scenery of the Romagna plain.

Opening hours – November-March:

Monday-Friday 9am-1pm.

April-October:

Tuesday-Friday 9am-1pm, 2.30pm-5pm;

Saturday 9am-1pm.

Tel./fax +39 0544.869808

8. Alfonsine nature reserve

Alfonsine nature reserve is a refuge for marshland flora and fauna occupying an area of around 12 hectares. The reserve is divided into three different "stations" in which the natural ecology is being encouraged to return since the departure of their human occupants: the *Fornace Violani pond* is a former clay quarry which is now home to marsh turtles, herons and moor hens; the *grove of the three Canals* is a small wood of white poplars and marsh spurge; and the *Mill canal* wood is a strip of vegetation between an 18th-century canal sluice called "chiavicone" and the Reno river, along which grow some beautiful wide orchids.

9. Boscoforte peninsula

Boscoforte peninsula is a narrow tongue of sand no more than a stone's throw wide and one of the most spectacular places in the whole Po delta, projecting for six kilometres into the Adriatic from the bank of the Reno. The local vegetation is an exuberant tangle of tamarisks and many other species found in salty environments: broom, limonium, purselane, fen star sedge, alkaligrass and black poplars. Among the bird species which nest here are black-winged stilts, avocets, spoonbills, sheldrakes, shovelers, garganeys, redshanks, godwits and coral seagulls. Migratory species include coots by the thousand and ducks such as the tufted duck, pochard, teal, pin-tail and gadwalls.



Route 6

BAGNACAVALLO - FUSIGNANO - ALFONSINE -
PENISOLA DI BOSCOFORTE / ART AND NATURE TOUR

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 00,00	towards via Garibaldi	00,10	flagstones	
L ← km 00,10	follow via Garibaldi	00,02	asphalt	- n. 2 buildings on via Garibaldi
R → km 00,12	towards via Vittorio Veneto	00,18	asphalt	- n. 3 "Le Cappuccine" cultural centre
Straight ahead ↑ km 00,30	at junction with via Fossa cross in the direction of via Guarno	00,20	asphalt	
Straight ahead ↑ km 00,50	follow via Rotondi	00,40	asphalt	
R → km 00,90	turn into via Stradello towards Podere Pantaleone	04,10	asphalt	- n. 4 Golfari farm - n. 5 Podere Pantaleone
L ← km 05,00	at the junction with via Sinistra Fosso Munio take via Stradello in the direction of Masiera	01,60	asphalt	
R → km 06,60	at the end of via Stradello take via Pieve Masiera (SP 09)	01,10	asphalt	dangerous crossing at SP 09
Straight ahead ↑ km 07,70	cross the bridge in the direction of Fusignano (via Pieve Masiera SP 09) from here you can leave the route to take a look around Fusignano	00,30	asphalt	dangerous junction; no cycle lane on bridge - n. 6 Fusignano
R → km 08,00	after you come off the bridge cut back into via dei Martiri	00,30	asphalt	
Straight ahead ↑ km 08,30	now follow via Fiume al di Sotto along the Senio	00,70	asphalt	
Straight ahead ↑ km 09,00	fountain on left side of road	00,50	asphalt	fountain on left side of road
R → km 09,50	keep on via Fiume al di Sotto (at Alfonsine it becomes via Mameli), ignoring via Stroppata	06,90	asphalt	
L ← km 16,40	turn into via Borse from here you can leave the route to take a look around Alfonsine	00,10	asphalt	- n. 7 Alfonsine
R → km 16,50	turn into via Pisacane	00,21	asphalt	
L ← km 16,71	cross the bridge and take the right bank of the Senio in the direction of the SS Adriatica highway	00,79	grit / dirt	

DIRECTION (km count)	NAME OF ROAD	KM of stretch	ROAD SURFACE	NOTES _ WHAT TO SEE
Straight ahead ↑ km 17,50	crossing on highway (SS 16 Adriatica)	00,10	asphalt	
R → km 17,60	keep on the verge	00,10	asphalt	
L ← km 17,70	cycle lane in the direction of via Destra Senio	01,40	asphalt	hazardous crossing
Straight ahead ↑ km 19,10	Alfonsine nature reserve station, Fornace Violani, 1	02,10	asphalt	- n. 8 Alfonsine nature reserve
Straight ahead ↑ km 21,20	junction with via Destra Senio go straight ahead, ignoring the signs for Conventello and Sant'Alberto	02,40	asphalt	
Straight ahead ↑ km 23,60	follow via Destra Senio towards the river bank and the bridge over Destra Reno canal	00,70	asphalt	gravel surface begins
Straight ahead ↑ km 24,30	follow via Destra Reno to the ramp leading to the river Reno	00,40	gravel	
Straight ahead ↑ km 24,70	follow the bank of the river Reno on the left the rivers Senio and Reno join up	00,20	gravel	
Straight ahead ↑ km 24,90	follow the bank of the river Reno	02,00	gravel	
Straight ahead ↑ km 26,90	follow the bank of the river Reno	01,50	gravel	barrier on the river bank
Straight ahead ↑ km 28,40	end of the riverside path	00,10	dirt	barrier on the river bank
L ← km 28,50	path descends to ferry over the Reno	00,10	asphalt and gravel	
km 28,60	take the ferry across the Reno			
R → km 28,60	ramp leading up to river bank (Valli di Comacchio)	00,10	asphalt	
R → km 29,30	start of Valli di Comacchio bank towards sea	00,60	gravel	- n. 9 Boscoforte peninsula
L ← km 29,90	ramp leading off river bank Valli to Boscoforte	00,10	gravel	
Arrival	Boscoforte peninsula	--	--	end of route km 30,00