

Third week | 1<sup>st</sup> day

# The Riviera del Brenta

## Venezia - Padova

*The ancient road of the Burchiello where the villas of the nobles are reflected in the river*



The **Riviera del Brenta** has been mentioned by many travellers and writers, first of all Carlo Goldoni, as an ideal place for a holiday where the Venetian nobility between the XV and XVIII centuries built luxurious summer homes, transforming it into the fashionable canal, ideal extension of the Grand Canal itself.

You can still breathe in an idyllic atmosphere along the canal, that is the old riverbed before it was deviated by the Serenissima outside the lagoon, to avoid it being covered.

You pedal amongst willows, secular parks, dozens of historical villas (even monumental ones, such as **Villa Widmann and Villa Foscari "La Malcontenta" in Mira**) which are reflected in the calm waters of the waterway which for centuries has seen the passage of the famous Burchiello, the boat which every day connected the Serenissima to Padua, the well-known university town.

You continue to **Stra**, in front of the splendid National Villa, you leave the canal and follow the Piovego canal which leads into **Padua the city of the Saint**, with its numerous jewels: the Scrovegni Chapel frescoed by Giotto, the old palace of the university (the Bò), St. Anthony's Cathedral, the Regional Palace, the central piazze delle Erbe e della Frutta, the huge Prato della Valle. You can visit all these on your saddle.

### ROUTE INFORMATION

**Starting point:** Venezia

**Arrival:** Padova

**Length:** 50 km

**Conditions:** mixed traffic route on light traffic B roads, dirt cycle path from Stra but easy, up to the centre of Padua, where it is asphalted

**Indications:** present

**Inter-modality:** bike + boat

### USEFUL ADDRESSES

**IAT Tourist Information Office Padova**

tel. +39 049 8752077, [info@turismopadova.it](mailto:info@turismopadova.it)

**IAT Tourist Information Office Venezia**

tel. +39 041 5298711, [info@turismovenezia.it](mailto:info@turismovenezia.it)

**Regional Institute Venetian Villas, Villa Venier Contarini**

via Capitello Albrizzi 3, 30034 Mira

tel. +39 041 5235606, [www.irvv.net](http://www.irvv.net)

[villevenete@pecveneto.it](mailto:villevenete@pecveneto.it)

**Supervised bike parking:**

Padova, piazzale Stazione, tel. +39 049 8759608

**Bike hire and repair in Padua:**

list of bike services on the website

[www.turismopadova.it](http://www.turismopadova.it), [www.padovainbici.it](http://www.padovainbici.it)

**Railway stations:** Venezia S. Lucia, Venezia-Mestre, Mira-Mirano, Dolo, Vigonza-Pianiga, Ponte di Brenta, Padova



- 1 Padua, Scrovegni Chapel
- 2 Padua, Prato della Valle
- 3 Villa Giovanelli-Colonna

## TRAVELLERS' DIARY

From Venice you go over the bridge – Ponte della Libertà (while waiting for the opening of the cycling path) passing by Mestre train station and the centre of Marghera on urban cycling lanes; then you cycle along the winding and pleasant via Colombara, next to the old towers – Torre Colombara – the nineteenth century Tron Fortress to reach Oriago, a town mentioned by Dante in the V canto of his *Purgatory*. Here you go to the orographic right of the Brenta canal and the numerous and famous villas start to appear: it is certainly one of the most famous river towns in Italy and the light traffic allows you to enjoy it. You go past the

pleasant towns along the river which are reflected in its waters, characterised by the presence of many locks and also a fair movement of boats, not only touristic. The towns are vivacious, there is no lack of squares and shops and the factories remind us that we are in the famous shoe-making area of the Riviera del Brenta.

Passing through Mira and Dolo, you reach Villa Pisani in Stra, “The Queen of the Venetian Villas”, a national monument which contains among others some of Giambattista Tiepolo’s famous frescoes. Don’t miss the large park, with a maze, orangery and green houses. Now leave the flow of the Naviglio and

– following the precise cycling indications – head towards Padua, riding alongside the Piovego canal, which is part of the network of canals around Padua.

Keeping the canal on your left you pedal on a dirt road and reach Noventa Padovana, in front of the eighteenth century villa Giovanelli-Colonna, with a monumental staircase and Classic pronaos. Then you pass the outskirts of the town up to the cycling path built on the banks of the San Gregorio and Scaricatore canal, which leads into the centre of Padua. You enter the city through Prato della Valle, one of the biggest squares in Europe.