

Third week | 6th day

Among valleys, beaches and pine woods

Comacchio - Sant'Alberto - Ravenna

Pedalling towards Ravenna, Byzantine art capital and Unesco heritage site



From Comacchio you head towards the famous valleys, one of the vastest humid areas in Italy with its 15,000 hectares. You ride round the perimeter observing the various fishing *casoni* and the look-out towers for the herons, egrets, terns, black winged stilts and pink flamingos.

You reach the Boscoforte peninsula – a narrow dune strip dating back to Etruscan times, about 6 kilometres long – which penetrates into the valleys: crossing the Reno river by ferry, you reach the Sant'Alberto Natural Museum, full of ornithological and entomological collections, where it is also possible to have a guided tour. You continue towards Mandriole to visit the former Guiccioli Farm, where Garibaldi sought refuge and Anita died.

Once you reach the coast of Ravenna, you find an extraordinary natural ecosystem: the Nature Reserve of the Reno river, the Nature Reserve of the Coastal Dunes of Porto Corsini and the Pialassa della Baiona. The beaches have an atmosphere of relaxation and holidays. It is time to reach the splendid **Ravenna**, the city of mosaics, on the Unesco Heritage list: enjoy the Mausoleum of Galla Placida, the Ari-an Baptistery, the Neonian Baptistery, the Mausoleum of Theodoric, the Church of St. Vitale, the Basilica of Saint Apollinaire Nuovo, the Basilica of Saint Apollinaire in Classe and the Archiepiscopal Chapel.

ROUTE INFORMATION

Starting point: Comacchio

Arrival: Ravenna

Length: 65 km

Conditions: easy route, mainly on secondary roads with light traffic, some stretches of dirt cycling paths in the Comacchio valley

Indications: present

Inter-modality: bike + ferry

USEFUL ADDRESSES

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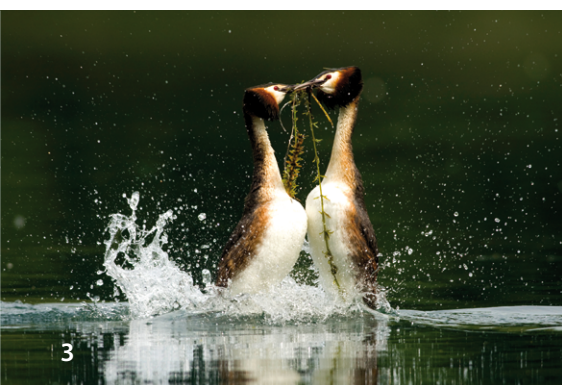
www.ravennaintorno.it



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1 Comacchio, Treponi or Pallotta Bridge

2 Ravenna, beach

3 Great crested grebe

4 Ravenna - Sant'Alberto ferry on the river Reno

5 Ravenna, Mausoleum of Galla Placidia

TRAVELLERS' DIARY

The route starts from the seventeenth century monumental complex Treponi, which with its five large stairways is the symbol of Comacchio, this lagoon city founded by the Etruscans, surrounded by water and canals which betray its origins as an island.

You start off on a journey through the famous valleys and the just as important former salt mines, for many centuries another great source of earnings. Using a pleasant asphalted road, which becomes gravel, you ride along the outskirts of Valle Campo, Fattibello, Fossa di Porto, Lido di Magnavacca observing little bridges, drop nets, *casoni*, accompanied by the flight of thousands of birds: it seems like a place suspended in space and in time...

Once you reach the Reno river, you can

take a ferry which gets you to the other side: you enter the province of Ravenna and shortly afterwards you get to Sant'Alberto, where there is the Nature tour centre dedicated to the particularities of this valley and coastal area (pine woods, marshland, valleys, hygrophilous woodland...).

Along the right bank of the reclamation of the river Reno canal you reach Mandriole, where there is the former Guiccioli Farmstead, with an interesting exhibition inside showing mementos from the Garibaldi period seeing as it was here in 1849 that Anita Garibaldi died. Then you head towards the beaches of Ravenna and splendid pine woods: you cross the river Reno Nature Reserve and then pass through Casalborsetti to go alongside the Porto Corsini Coastal Dune Nature

Reserve and the Pialassa della Baiona, also in Porto Corsini but this time on the right.

Then you pass through Marina di Ravenna and the Pineta di Ravenna National Nature Reserve until you reach Punta Marina di Ravenna, where you can continue with the alternative route towards the south which leads to the beaches of Adriano and Dante. The coveted goal of our journey remains the splendid Ravenna, which was the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, of the Ostrogothic Kingdom and the Byzantine Exarchate. The extraordinary traces of this great past, the famous Byzantine mosaics are in front of us and we must enjoy them to the full, remembering all the beauty that we have come across along the Upper Adriatic cycling route.