

MANTOVA E SABBIONETA



unesco

Sito del
Patrimonio Mondiale

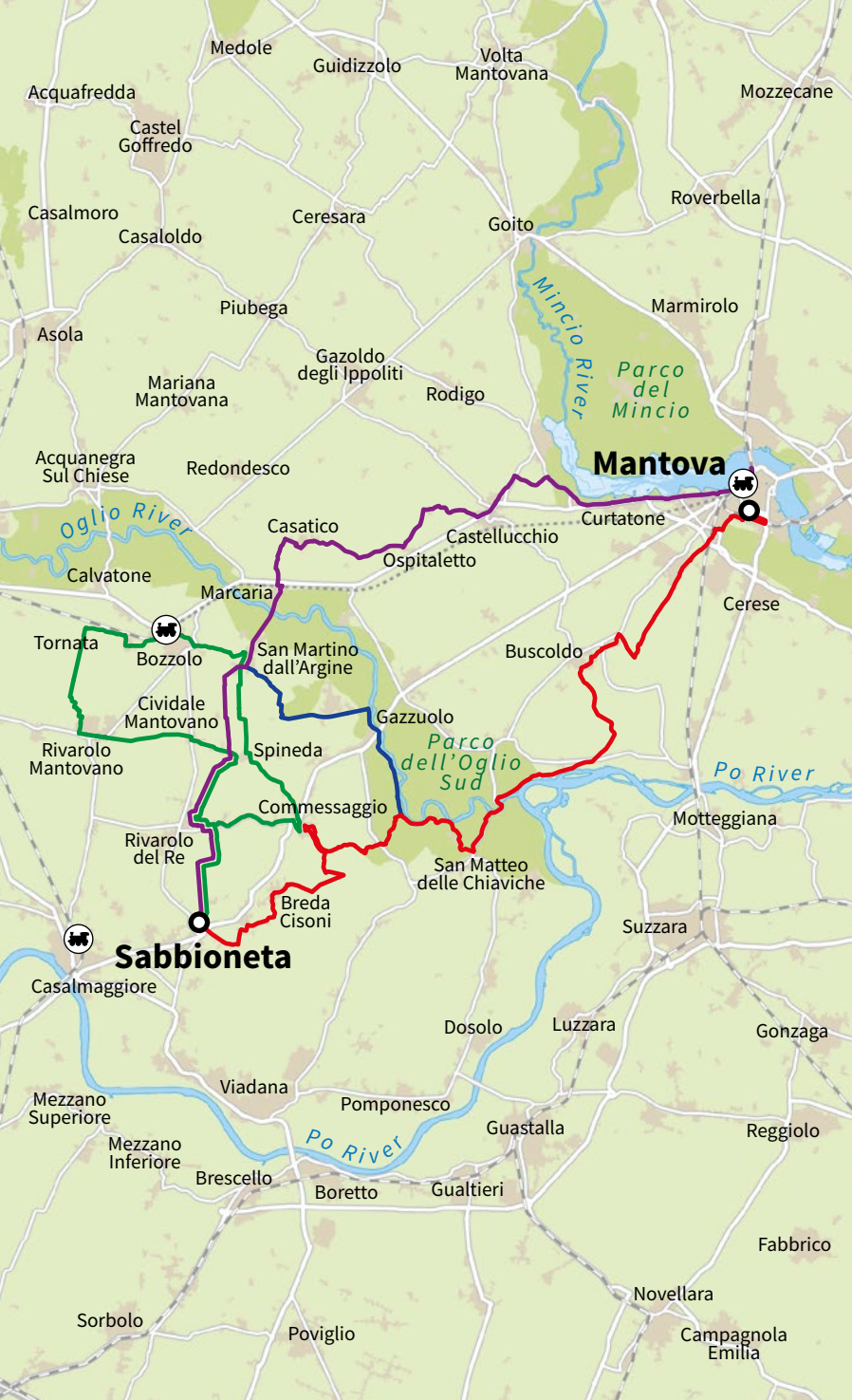
GPS

MANTOVA - SABBIONETA CYCLE ROUTE

An itinerary connecting
the two World Heritage Site cities



MANTOVASABBIONETA-UNESCO.IT



Mantova - Sabbioneta cycle route

An itinerary connecting
the two World Heritage Site cities

texts: Alberto Fiorin

images: Archivio Comune di Mantova, Alberto Fiorin

cartography and layout: Noemastudio

translations: Studio Blitz

editorial coordination: Vittorio Anastasia

We thank Daniele Mattioli from Fiab Mantova for his precious collaboration.

The texts of boxes at pages 7, 8 and 9 were taken from *Carta città e territorio MANTOVA E SABBIONETA*, SAGEP publishing house

GPS traces of the itineraries available at the following website
mantovasabbioneta-unesco.it

First edition: August 2025

© Ediciclo Editore s.r.l.

via Cesare Beccaria, 13/15 – 30026 Portogruaro (Ve) Italy

tel. 0421 74475 – fax 0421 280065

www.ediciclo.it – ufficio.stampa@ediciclo.it

The author and editor paid the utmost attention to filling out the routes and information included hereby and accept no liability for any damages or drawbacks deriving from the use of this guide.
The translation and electronic storage rights are reserved for all countries.
The total or partial reproduction, by any means, is strictly prohibited.



Project "Valorizzazione della ciclovía Mantova e Sabbioneta in un sistema diffuso di mobilità sostenibile" funded through funds pursuant to Law 20 February 2006, no. 77 "Misure speciali di tutela e fruizione dei siti e degli elementi italiani di interesse culturale, paesaggistico e ambientale, inseriti nella "lista del patrimonio mondiale", posti sotto la tutela dell'UNESCO"

Table of contents

Introduction	page 5
Mantova - Sabbioneta cycle route	page 13
Return to Mantova	page 27
Excursions	page 31
1. Variant Bocca Chiavica-Gazzuolo-San Martino dall'Argine	page 31
2. Ring-like circuit of Sabbioneta.	page 32



A sight of the Oglio Po landscape in Scorzarolo

Introduction

Come and cycle through the lands of Gonzaga!

This is an extremely stimulating environment from a historical, artistic, architectural, naturalistic and gastronomic standpoint, and is crossed by the Po, Oglio and Mincio rivers and the resulting irrigation canal network. The area includes two important cities, Mantova and Sabbioneta, both recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Site, and several places such as Rivarolo Mantovano, San Martino dall'Argine, Commessaggio, Bozzolo and Gazzuolo, which keep unexpected treasures. XVI-century city walls, monumental doors, decorated porches, Renaissance palaces, strongholds, churches, synagogues, agricultural courtyards, frescoed halls; unique testimonies to their past, based on which we can include them in the "Reggie dei Gonzaga" district.

We shouldn't forget gems such as the Sanctuary of the Beata Vergine delle Grazie, in the picturesque village of Grazie di Curtatone, recognized like Sabbioneta as one of the "most beautiful villages in Italy", or also places related to episodes of the XIX-century independence wars, such as Curtatone, Montanara and Belfiore.

All of this is included in an extremely fertile rural landscape with agricultural courtyards, farmland, orchards, vineyards and an extremely dense network of irrigation canals including sewers, boat bridges and embankments: furthermore, we cross interesting protected natural areas, wildlife reserves and peatlands, all of them located within the Parco dell'Oglio Sud. We mainly stay in the province of Mantova – with some deviations to the adjacent province of Cremona – in areas crossed by alternating stretches of protected and paved cycle routes, mixed and low-traffic roads and dirt roads.

The itinerary allows us to get in tune with the area and slowly discover it, to fully taste and appreciate its nuances and several gastronomic riches. Here we can indulge ourselves, from starters to desserts. Cold



Mantova, Basilica of Sant'Andrea

cuts served with fried cake, the other name of the so-called *gnocco fritto*, with a special mention for *culatello* (salted pork), cooked pork shoulder and Mantova salami flavoured with garlic. We shouldn't forget the *gras pistà*, lard chopped with garlic and parsley and *cotechino* (pork sausage),

also served with *polenta*. Then, it's time for first courses: pumpkin *tortelli*, *agnolli* and *marubini* in broth, pasta filled, with meat, *risotto alla pilota* (pilot's rice), seasoned with minced *salamella* sausage and with the possible addition of *puntèl*, i.e., stewed pork steak or rib, and rice with frogs. The most delicious main courses are the donkey stew, the pike in sauce and the *Cappone* (capon) *alla Stefani*, served on a bed of fresh salad, raisins and pine nuts. Mantova is the only province where both Grana Padano and Parmigiano Reggiano (Parmesan) are produced: both of them are perfect for the Mantuan *Campanina* orchard apple mostarda. We shouldn't forget desserts: the Sbrisolona cake, made with yellow flour, almonds and lard; the Elvezia cake, invented in Mantova by Swiss pastry chefs in the XVIII century; the *Anello di Monaco*, a typical Christmas dessert of German descent. As the highlight of the meal, we have the white and red wines from the Mantuan Morainic hills, which are gaining increasing recognition, and the Lambrusco Mantovano DOC. There's plenty of food to digest as we cycle...

We propose four different routes, all of which are fully flat: the **first one** is the classic Mantova - Sabbioneta cycle route (49 kms), accurately indicated by specific signage and identified with number 23. The **second one** is the way back to Mantova (42.5 kms) through Brugnolo, Spineda, San Martino dall'Argine, Marcaria, Casatico, Ospedaletto, Castellucchio, Grazie di Curtatone, Belfiore, with arrival in Mantova. The **third one** is the deviation on the main route (at km. 30.6) from Bocca Chiavica to Gazzuolo and back (24 kms more): by choosing this variation, we will

cover 73 kms overall. The **fourth one** is a ring-like circuit around Sabbioneta (46.5 kms) that crosses Brugnolo, Spineda, Rivarolo Mantovano, Bozzolo, San Martino dall'Argine. Furthermore, from here we can reach the interesting route through Sabbioneta's defensive embankments.

We shouldn't forget that the area is innervated by a dense network of high-traffic cycle routes: the Sun Route (EuroVelo 7, from the North Cape to Malta), the Mediterranean Route (EuroVelo 8, from Cádiz to Cyprus), the Ciclovia VENTO (from Venice to Turin), the Via Carolingia (from Aachen to Rome), the Via Matildica del Volto Santo (from Mantova to Lucca), the Ciclovia dell'Oglio (from Tonale Pass to Torre d'Oglio), the Ciclovia Basso Mincio, the Bike Food Valley.



Sabbioneta, Palazzo Ducale

Mantova and Sabbioneta: two cities, a UNESCO site

Mantova and Sabbioneta became UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008. They are examples of the two main urbanistic forms in the Renaissance: the transformation of an existing city and a newly-founded city. In fact, while in Mantova the Gonzaga family intervened several times on the existing urban core, changed it and made it compliant with the Renaissance parameters of perfection, Sabbioneta was fully built over a period of nearly thirty-five years, according to the project by Vespasiano Gonzaga. Some of the most important artists of the time worked in both cities: Giulio Romano, Leon Battista Alberti, Andrea Mantegna, Bernardino Campi and Vincenzo Scamozzi. Since its inclusion in the World Heritage List, the Mantova and Sabbioneta site became everyone's heritage, which should be protected and passed on to future generations.

Mantova: the transformed existing city

As we follow the so-called *Prince's Route*, the road axis that runs from north to south and connects Palazzo Ducale and Palazzo Te, we can perceive the evolution of Mantova. Along this route, we ideally cross the three city walls, now lost, which mark the urban development, from the most ancient area up to the Renaissance hub. Palazzo Ducale, one of the largest royal palaces in Europe, stretches between the shore of the Lago Superiore (Upper Lake) and Piazza Sordello: it's a palace in the shape of a city. This area corresponds to the most ancient part of the old town, of Etruscan-Roman origin. After becoming the lords of Mantova, in 1328 the Gonzaga family turned the city into a suitable stage for showcasing its power. From Piazza Sordello we take St. Peter's Vault, built in the XVI century with a medieval structure, which marks the limit of the *first city walls* and leads us to the area developed during the Medieval commune age and renovated during the Renaissance. Here we are immersed in the vital and commercial core of the city, consisting in the concatenation between Piazza Broletto, Piazza Erbe and Piazza Mantegna. The Renaissance porches overlook the square, and so do some of the most significant public and private buildings of the city: Palazzo del Podestà, Palazzo della Ragione with the Clock Tower, the Rotonda di San Lorenzo, the Casa del Mercante, the painted house. A little further on, the Rio delimits the *second city walls*, where the Renaissance expansion started. From here, we continue along Via Principe Amedeo up to the Southern limit of the Mantova of the Gonzaga, where we can find the Casa del Mantegna, the Tempio Leon Battista Alberti and the Palazzo San Sebastiano, in correspondence with the *third city walls*. Continuing past the third city walls, we arrive to Palazzo Te – a masterpiece suburban villa by Giulio Romano – built by will of Federico II of Gonzaga with functions of residence, leisure, hospitality and representation. At the time, Palazzo Te stood on the Island of Tejero, in the middle of the Paio-lo Lake; it was the fourth lake of Mantova, and now it's buried.

Sabbioneta: the newly-founded city

In Sabbioneta, we should follow a route that allows us to capture the city's architectural harmony. Sabbioneta, a newly-founded city (*urbs condita*), was built between 1556 and 1591 by will of Vespasiano Gonzaga. If we can, it's worth taking the time to cross the external line of the city walls, the border between the city and the surrounding area and a defense instrument against external attacks. For several centuries, Sabbioneta was regarded as a perfect model of military stronghold: the *Prince's city*, but also the *Fortress city*. The city walls around Sabbioneta, about 6-7 meters higher than the surrounding land, remind us of a six-pointed star with their arrowhead bastions.

Today, they're almost fully intact and surrounded by a moat, highlighting its defensive nature. The road axis is arranged according to the old pattern of the Roman campsite, with orthogonal streets demarcating 34 blocks.

In the old town, we can find all the typical buildings of an aristocratic court: the Palazzo Ducale for governing the city, the Palazzo Giardino with the Galleria degli Antichi for leisure purposes, the Teatro all'Antica for court spectacles.

A few measures were adopted by Vespasiano Gonzaga, who designed Sabbioneta's urban structure, such as the bayonet-shaped street pattern, proposed in the *De re aedificatoria* by Leon Battista Alberti. It was aimed at creating a perspective illusion effect, based on which streets looked virtually longer. Therefore, Sabbioneta looks like a complex labyrinth, studied to confuse enemies, make the defensive action more effective and, in particular, to dilate space, since it looks bigger than it actually is. If we go up towards Porta Vittoria, we can walk on the walls, on the embankments that form them and in the bastion area.

If we look out from the loggia of Porta Vittoria, we can better understand the perspective effect implemented by Vespasiano.





Mantova, Parco Te

Mantova - Sabbioneta cycle route

Route length: 49.0 kms

Travel time: 4-5 hours

Difficulty: easy

Characteristics: flat, mostly paved road

We depart from one of the most iconic places in the city: **Palazzo Te**, a Renaissance jewel designed by the famous architect Giulio Romano and commissioned by Federico II Gonzaga, son of Isabella d'Este and Francesco II Gonzaga, a villa for idleness and leisure.

The cycle route starts at **km 0.0** under the **Portale delle Aquile**, dating back to the Habsburg period, and we venture into the beautiful Parco Te; as we start pedalling, we cross Viale Te and we immerse ourselves in the majestic tree rows that enrich this place, already filled with charm. We cycle through shadowy straightaways with a fascinating story: the Circuito del Te race was held here in the early XX century. It was a cross-town route where the first motorcyclists and motorists would challenge each other at the dawn of competitive motoring. Among them stands out Tazio Nuvolari, commemorated in Mantova through a museum bearing his name. While we imagine the rumble of those engines that paid tribute to the myth of speed, we silently cycle as we flank the suggestive exedra, then we go up the straight and tree-lined boulevards to circumvent the Mantova-Monselice railway. In late 2025, three cycle subways will allow to directly go through Via Gian Battista Visi and shorten the route; furthermore, a new rest area will be completed, with bike shed and electrical recharging stations (🚲🔌🔌).

Then, we pass under the "Danilo Martelli" **football stadium**, dedicated to the local glory who died in the Superga tragedy, where all the Grande Torino players passed away. At **km 1.1**, we keep to the right, cross the railway and go back, always curving to the right to head towards Via Gian Battista Visi, where we continue on a crosstown cycle route on the left



Mantova, Palazzo Te, Loggia di Davide

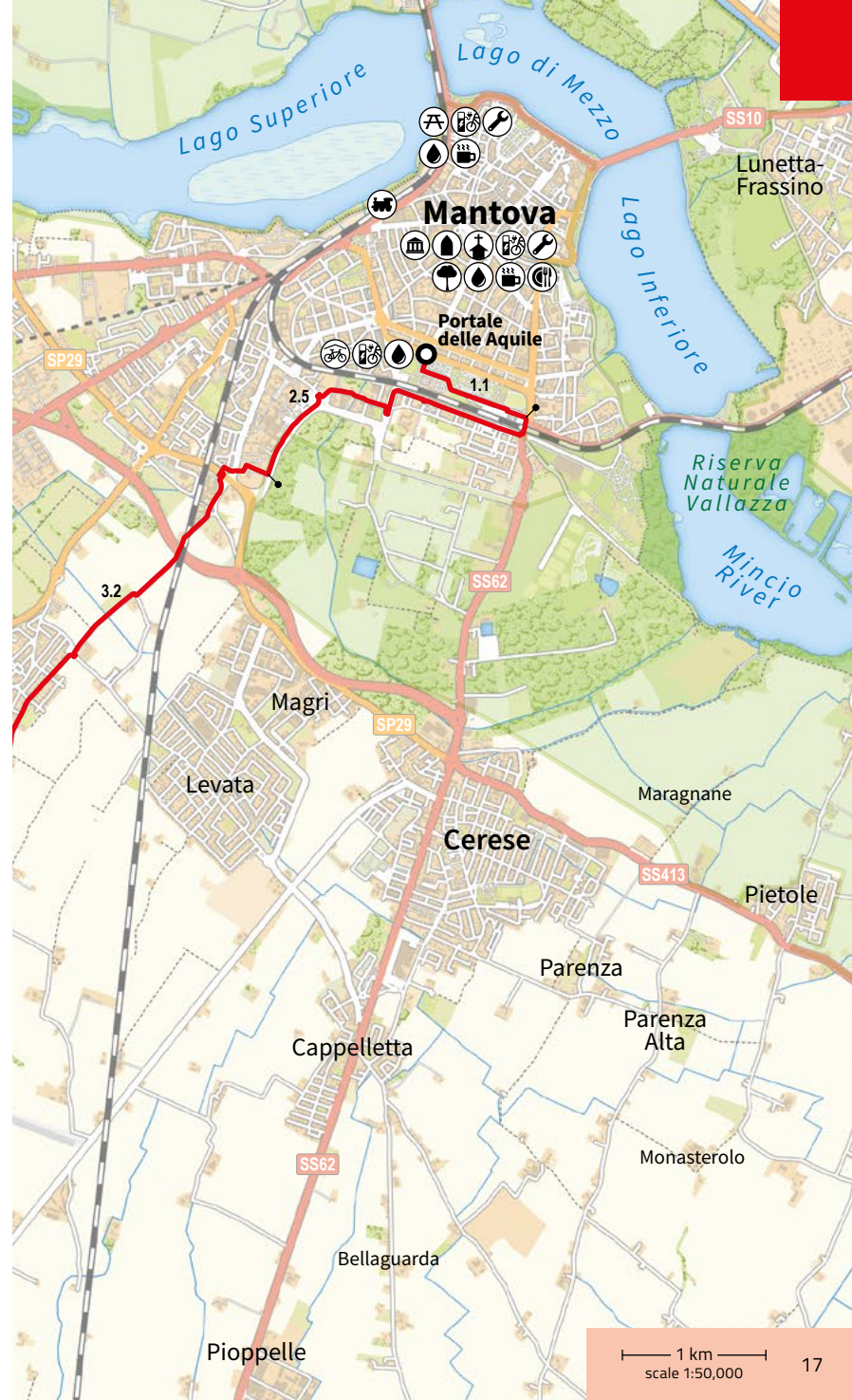
side of the street. Then, at **km 2.1**, we turn left to reach Via Bellonci; it is worth mentioning that throughout the route, including the crosstown part, we can find the cycle signage that will continue until Sabbioneta (the Mantova - Sabbioneta cycle route is indicated with number 23). At **km 2.3**, we cross the street on a cycle-pedestrian crossing and we slightly curve to the right, crossing the parking lot, and then to the left, on the cycle route, to reach Via Argentina Altobelli. Subsequently, we continue to Via Ilaria Alpi, still located in an urban environment; at **km 2.9**, we cross the street with pedestrian crossing and we keep to the left, along Strada Lago Paiolo. We continue to cycle through a separated cycle route, despite being next to a main road, and we are close to the city hospital. At **km 3.6**, we sharply curve to the right, following a lane in the municipal aqueduct area (where two slender piezometric towers stand out). Then, following the frequent bike lane arrows, we turn to Via Nevers (in the Due Pini neighbourhood) and, at **km 4.0**, we cross a pedestrian underpass, that safely leads us to the "Enrico Fermi High School" complex. At **km 4.4**, we pass in front of the "Leonardo Da Vinci" professional institute and we take the lane that ventures into the countryside, following the information plaque of the Mantova - Sabbioneta cycle route. Now we take the narrow and picturesque Strada Capilupia; at **km 4.6**, we cross the rails of the Mantova-Modena railway and we promptly go under the Tangenziale Sud. We're cycling in the open countryside, already at the mu-

nicipality borders of Mantova. At **km 5.2**, at the crossroads, we keep to the right and we continue to **San Silvestro**, hamlet of the Municipality of Curtatone; we reach it at **km 5.7**, leaving the graveyard on the left. We continue straight to Via Carlo Pisacane, still on a cycle route, then, at **km 6.3**, we pass in front of the small "Achille Zaniboni" sports ground, in San Silvestro. Now we enter a road with mixed, although limited, traffic. We peacefully continue through the green, with extremely limited traffic (however, we should keep in mind that this isn't a specific cycle route) and some sinuous small curves, taking us outside the residential area. At **km 7.6**, we continue straight to **Buscoldo** through Via Cantalupa and we cycle through the fields and cultivated areas, on an extremely narrow road with a slightly uneven surface, with some picturesque tree rows along the edge.

We overcome a few agricultural courtyards then, at **km 10.6**, the road sharply turns to the right and we reach the still narrow Via Zaitina. We continue straight until **km 11.8** where, just a few moments before entering provincial road 57, we turn left to Strada S. Salmaso and we go through an extremely small village, Serraglio. The name of this village preserves the memory of the **Serraglio Mantovano** defensive system, created in the first half of the XIII century by the Gonzaga family to oppose Visconti and Estensi. At **km 12.8**, we reach the traffic light on provincial road 55: here we keep to the left, then we immediately curve to the right and we reach Via Marconi, in the direction of Buscoldo.

We continue through Via Marconi and, straight afterwards, we can see the road sign of **Buscoldo**, with a chapel on the right side of the road. At **km 13.4**, we can see the XVIII-century **Church of San Marco Evangelista**, in the centre of the village. Here once stood a castle with two towers, belonging to the Serraglio defensive system. Before reaching the elegant, late baroque Church of San Marco, we turn left (one-way) to Via Bertani and we cross the small residential area, hosting the **Teatro Verdi**, founded in the early XX century by will of the People's Cooperative linked to the Peasants' League.

We continue on Via Brentani which, at **km 13.9**, enters the main road of the village, Via Guglielmo Marconi. We slowly get out of the populous hamlet of Buscoldo, Municipality of Curtatone; now, at **km 14.5**, the lane goes through the small hamlet of San Luigi and we continue straight to Via Chiarella Senga, a sinuous and quite pleasant route im-





Comessaggio and its Torrazzo

mersed in the green of the fertile Mantuan countryside.

At **km 17.9**, we reach a Y-shaped junction: on the left, we would go towards Borgoforte, but we actually go straight to Scorzarolo and soon afterwards, at **km 18.3**, we go past a small brick bridge that crosses the Scolo Senga. Then, at **km 18.9**, we reach provincial road 56 and we cut it across as we continue straight on a dirt, slightly uphill road, that takes us until the Po embankments, where we keep to the right. Here there are several cycle route directions: on the right Viadana and Sabbioneta, on the left Borgonovo, Ostiglia and Ciclovía Sinistra Po EuroVelo 8.

We continue on a paved road along Via Argine Sinistro, overlooking the surrounding countryside: on the left there's a huge floodplain wood, but we can't see the river yet. It's a small stretch of road where the Mantova - Sabbioneta cycle route overlaps with the well-known Ciclovía Sinistra Po EuroVelo 8. We continue straight and, after a while, we start to see the reflection of the Po river water; then, at **km 20.3**, we encounter the residential area of **Scorzarolo** and we continue straight on a nice paved embankment, with some rare cars belonging to residents.

We immediately continue until **km 22.6**, where we reach the confluence of the Oglio river and the Po river; here we can observe the monumental Corte Motta, a wonderful example of rural architecture selected by Ber-

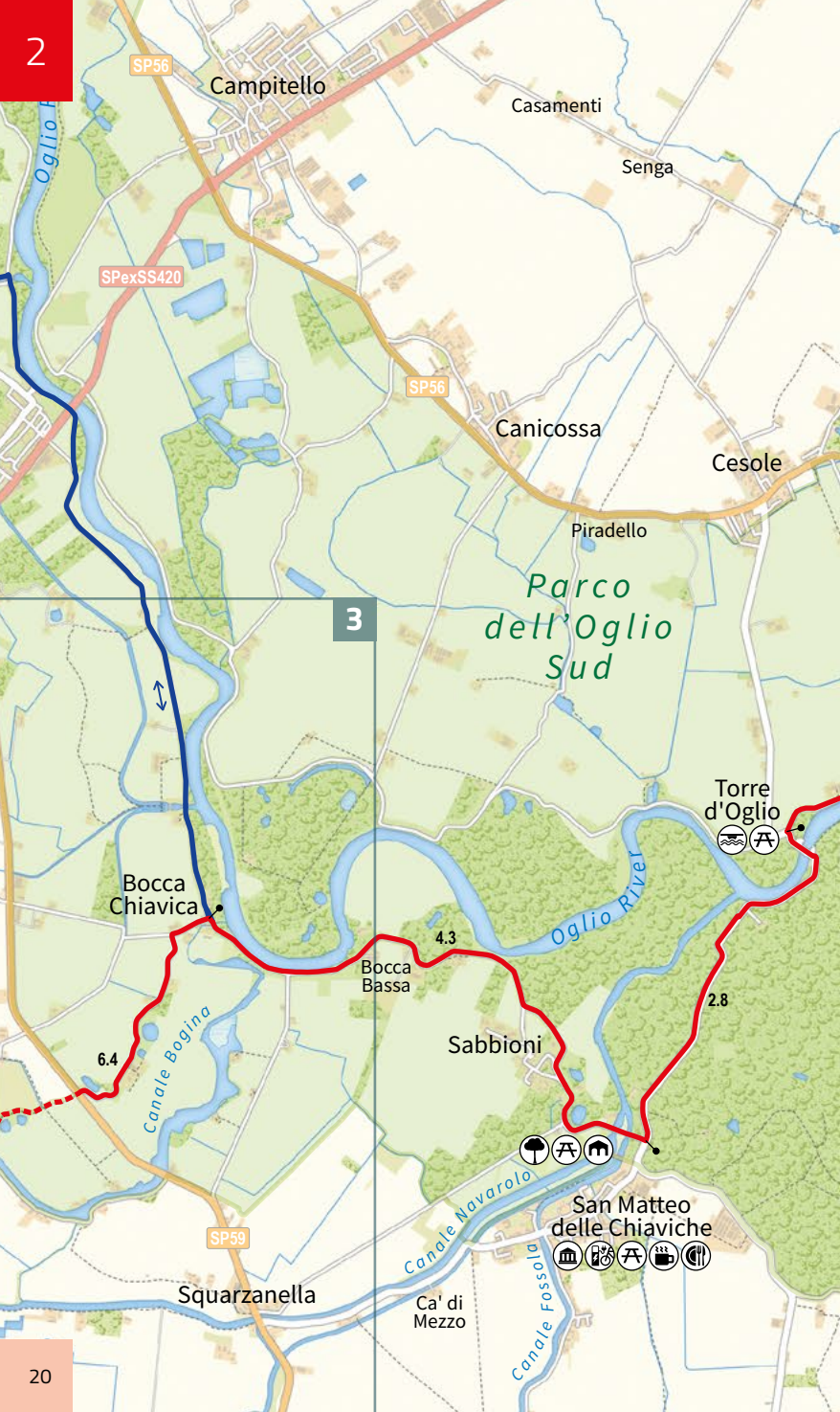
tolucci as the location of his movie *1900*. We continue for a few hundred meters and, at **km 23.5**, we reach **Torre d'Oglio**, home to a well-known pontoon bridge on the Oglio river. Here, at the height of a small image of the Virgin Mary dedicated to the flood of the two rivers, ((A)) we head downhill towards the pontoon bridge and we leave the left shore of the Po river and, with it, also the Ciclovía EuroVelo 8. The artifact is primordial and is made up of wooden boards, staggering as cars and bicycles pass by; it is recommendable to get off the bike and walk past it. Furthermore, the bridge is especially narrow, with an alternating one-way system; we should pay due attention, also when going up and down the embankments. However, it's an absolutely iconic landscape!

After crossing the pontoon bridge, we continue through the cycle route next to provincial road 57, immersed in a luxuriant and fascinating floodplain area. At **km 26.3** – at the intersection – we sharply curve to the right, following the indications of Sabbioni and Boccabassa, next to the sewers; just after turning right, we can see the impressive water pumping plant. If we go straight, instead, we would quickly reach the centre of San Matteo delle Chiaviche, a hamlet of the Municipality of Viadana ((A)). Just before entering the village, on the right, we find the entrance to the extremely interesting "Terre d'Acqua tra Oglio e Po" Ecomuseum, located within the water pumping plant.

"Terre d'Acqua tra Oglio e Po" Ecomuseum

The "Terre d'Acqua tra Oglio e Po" Ecomuseum is dedicated to the area between the Oglio river and the Po river, identified and distinguished by proper and homogeneous landscape, environmental, social-economic, historical and cultural identity characteristics, whose common element is water.

Its headquarters and documentation center consist of the huge former thermoelectric power plant of San Matteo delle Chiaviche, built between 1920 and 1939 and made up of nine buildings with three water pumping plants and two electric cabins. We should add to them two buildings of the thermoelectric power plant, within which are the imposing electric pumps by Marelli.



At **km 27.4**, we cross the residential area of **Sabbioni** and then we continue in this floodplain area, characterized by the implacable geometry of poplar groves, an example of rationalistic, human-made green architecture. We are within the Parco dell'Oglio Sud.

At **km 30.6**, we are close to **Bocca Chiavica**, a small village located on the shores of the Oglio River and at the border between the three municipalities of Commessaggio, Gazzuolo and Viadana: here we turn left (if we continue straight, we can make an interesting deviation to Gazzuolo and San Martino dell'Argine, see page 31) and we abandon the river's course for a sinuous, quite pleasant road. Via Bocca Chiavica is picturesque and raised on small embankments; at **km 32.4**, it meets provincial road 59. We cross it as we continue straight on the dirt Via Santa Maria.

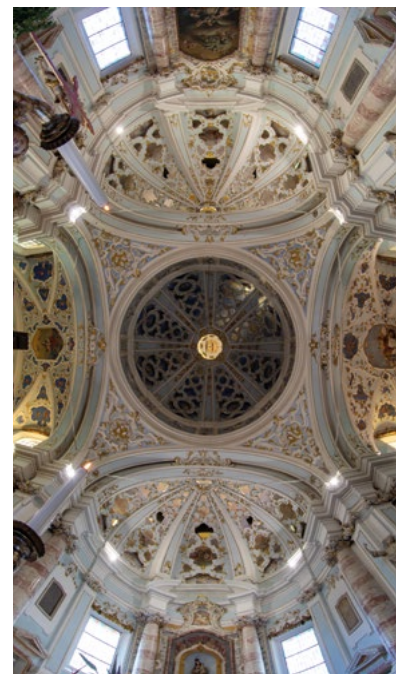
The narrow lane sneaks into the green: at **km 32.9**, it touches two waterholes and, finally, it takes us along the embankment of Canale Bogina. We pleasantly continue to cycle, keeping the watercourse on our left. We continue on this narrow, raised embankment with panoramic views until **km 34.0**, then we go past a group of houses and we continue straight to the embankment of Canale Bogina, now on a paved road. Then, at **km 34.2**, we disregard the road bridge on the left and we continue straight to Via Santa Maria, following the directions of the Commessaggio/Sabbioneta cycle route.

Now we cycle on the embankment of Canale Novarolo, that takes us next to **Commessaggio**; at **km 36.3**, we enter provincial road 73 and, keeping to the left, we arrive at **km 37.0** under the **Torrazzo**, the symbol of this town built by Vespasiano Gonzaga, duke of Sabbioneta (⌘).

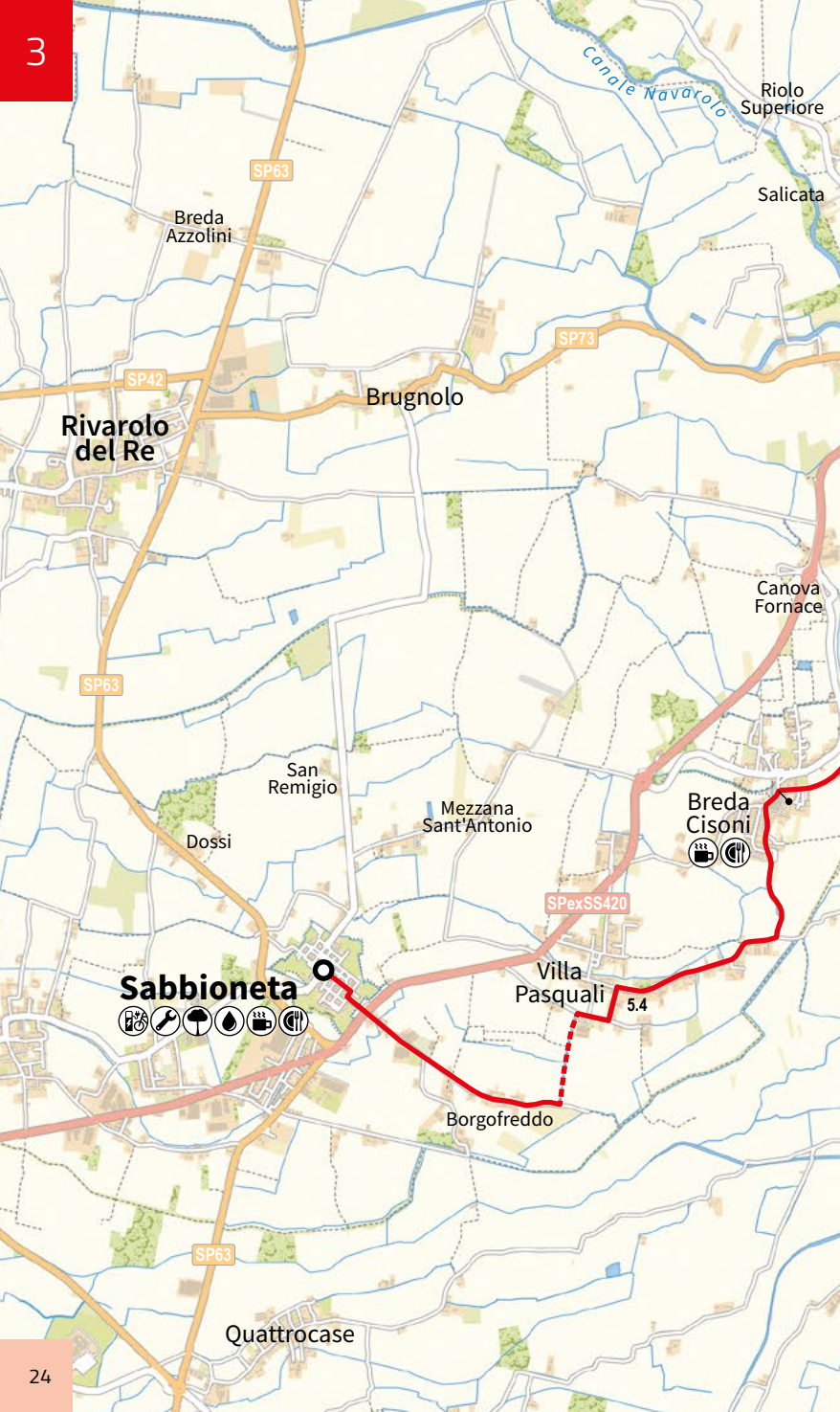
Then, we cross the pontoon bridge (currently being renovated, therefore we must make a 1.2 km deviation and use the bridge on provincial road 420, on a separated cycle route, double pedestrian crossing) and we cycle along Via Commessaggio Inferiore, with mixed traffic. We go back along the Canale Navarolo on the opposite shore; we are still immersed in nature, and we can see the namesake natural oasis. At **km 38.6**, we reach the intersection between Canale Navarolo and Canale Bogina; we follow the shore of the first canal as we sharply curve to the right, then we continue to cycle next to water, along the narrow lane which becomes dirt. After going past a couple of sewers, at **km 39.5** we continue to follow the canal, which curves to the left and then, at **km 40.2**,

we leave it by sharply turning right, along the dirt Via Campetti, a long straightaway cutting through fields. At **km 41.8**, after reaching a rural quadrivium with a small capital, we keep to the right and we reach Via IV Novembre; it's a paved and extremely narrow road, surrounded by two drains. After an initial straight stretch, it draws some soft curves until **km 43.6**, when we reach the intersection with Via Mazzini. It's in front of the big, late-Baroque style **Church of San Giorgio Martire**, in **Breda Cisoni**, a hamlet of Sabbioneta. We continue left as we cycle through Via Enrico

Fermi, still flanked by a canal; at **km 44.7**, it enters Via Motta, in correspondence of an aedicule dedicated to Our Lady of Caravaggio. Now we turn right, following the sinuous pattern of the paved lane, and we approach the residential area of **Villa Pasquali**, another hamlet of Sabbioneta crossed by the 45th parallel, an equidistant line between the North Pole and the equator. At **km 45.9** we turn left to Via Sant'Antonio, right nearby the magnificent **Church of Sant'Antonio Abate**, another masterpiece work by Antonio Bibiena, from the Mantuan late Baroque period. We continue through secondary lanes as we turn right to Via Viazzola, at **km 46.1**. Just afterwards, we turn left to Via Borgofreddo; at **km 48.0**, the road flanks Sabbioneta's Jewish Cemetery and subsequently, at **km 48.6**, we are under the monumental **Porta imperiale** of **Sabbioneta**. As we turn right to Via Colonna and then left to Via Vespasiano Gonzaga, we reach **km 49.0** with the huge **Piazza D'Armi**, the **Palazzo Giardino** and the scenic **Galleria degli Antichi**.



Villa Pasquali, Church of Sant'Antonio Abate





Sabbioneta, Palazzo del Cavaleggero

Return to Mantova





Route length: 44.2 kms **Travel time:** 4-4.5 hours **Difficulty:** easy
Characteristics: some stretches on provincial roads (please be careful)

We depart from Piazza Ducale, leaving the namesake palace behind us and curving to the left on the cobblestone Via Pesenti, which takes us immediately outside the old town. We continue on Via San Remigio; at **km 1.5**, we meet the **Hermitage of San Remigio**, built in the 17th century for pilgrims on their way to Rome. From here on the route becomes dirt: we follow the road pattern until **km 4.5**, when we reach the residential area of **Brugnolo**, a hamlet of Rivarolo del Re, in the province of Cremona. At the intersection we turn left and we pass in front of the **Church of Santa Maria Nascente**; then, we take the first road on the right, Via Azzolini, and we continue to Via Pezzini and Strada Ca' Nova. Both roads are dirt and, at **km 9.0**, they take us to Spineda, where we can find the **Church of San Salvatore** and – not too far away – the magnificent **Villa Cavalcabò**. We reach provincial road 9 (Via Palazzo), we keep to the left on the cycle route and, shortly afterwards, we turn right on Via Monsignor Bellini, which pleasantly takes us to **San Martino dall'Argine**, at **km 14.0**. It's worth admiring Piazza Castello – surrounded by the characteristic bichrome porticoes from the Gonzaga period – with the XVI-century **Church of Castello**.

As we continue straight to provincial road 78, we go past the Oglio river and at **km 17.0** we reach **Marcaria**, located in the Parco dell'Oglio Sud. After going past the railway, in correspondence of the graveyard, we turn left to Via Agretto, where we meet the main road and, after curving to Via Giare at **km 19.5**, we reach the hamlet of **Casatico**, at **km 21.0**. Here stands out the imposing structure of **Corte Castiglioni**, a XV-century rural complex and birthplace of the humanist Baldassarre Castiglioni. We continue to Via Tartaro and Strada Ca' Vecchie, reaching **Ospedaletto** at **km 25.1**; after the graveyard, we keep to the left, following the Sarginesco/Cimbrìolo indications. At **km 27.0**, at the intersection, we keep to the right and at **km 30.0** we reach **Castellucchio**,



We cross the village along state road 10 Padana Inferiore, then we leave it by slightly turning left along provincial road 23, equipped with cycle route. We go past a roundabout and we continue straight, then we curve to the right at **km 32.0** and to the left at **km 33.5**, where we enter a separated cycle route, at **km 35.0** it takes us to **Grazie**, a suggestive hamlet of Curtatone and one of the most beautiful villages in Italy. The suggestive **Sanctuary of the Beata Vergine delle Grazie**, overlooking the Mincio river, and the **Madonnari Museum** are a must-see.

Now we leave Grazie and – still on a separated cycle route – we safely cycle to Mantova; at **km 40.0**, we go through **Belfiore**, famous for its martyrs (the XIX-century monument, in Carrara marble, is a must-see). We continue along the Arlecchino lakefront (   ) until **km 43.3**, when we reach a big roundabout; here we take the cycle route next to Viale Pitentino, until **km 44.2**, when we reach **Mantova** railway station.



Excursion 1. Variant Bocca Chiavica-Gazzuolo- San Martino dall'Argine

Route length: 24 kms (back and forth) **Travel time:** 2 hours

Difficulty: easy **Characteristics:** some dirt stretches

After reaching **Bocca Chiavica**, we can make a deviation (24 kms, back and forth) to admire two more villages belonging to the "Regge dei Gonzaga" district: Gazzuolo and San Martino dall'Argine. Rather than leaving the Oglio river behind us, we continue straight as we cycle along the paved, raised and sinuous embankment, on a narrow roadway. At **km 0.8**, we go past a large plumbing system and we continue along the river until **km 3.5**, when the embankment turns dirt. We are close to Gazzuolo: in the XVI century, it was the headquarters of the Marquisate of **Gazzuolo**, a feud of a cadet branch of the Gonzaga family. We continue straight and, at **km 3.8**, we go under the bridge until, at **km 4.1**, when we reach **Piazza Garibaldi** and the **Town Hall**, raised on the embankment (Ⓐ). At this point, we recommend going down to visit the beautiful old town, home to the XVII-century **Church of Santa Maria Nascente** and the 120-meter **Gonzaga portico**, which also hosts the **Giacometti Theatre** (nowadays, it's a library).

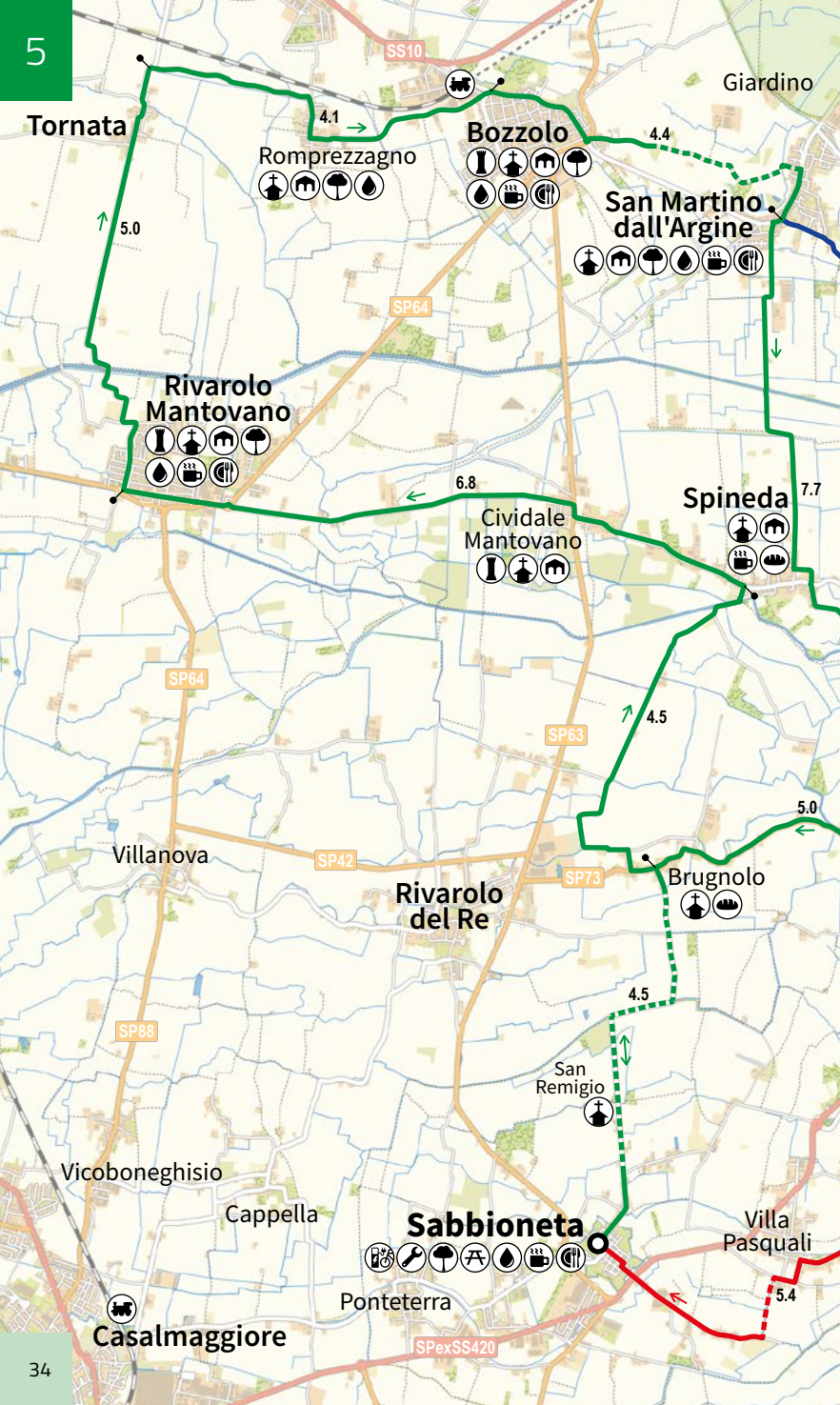
After the visit, we go back to the dirt embankment and, at **km 5.0**, at the eight of the **Chiavica Gasparetti** building (Ⓐ), we leave the river behind as we curve to the left for the second dirt lane. At **km 5.5**, it cuts through provincial road 58 and we continue straight along the canal on a grassy road, leaving Belforte on the right until **km 8.6**, when we turn right to Via Ca' dei Marcotti, flanking the green **Oasi Margonare**, a small natural area. We continue on a paved road, keeping to the left to Via Spinata Valle until **km 12.0**, when we reach the old town of **San Martino dall'Argine**, a beautiful city hosting some amazing **porticos from the Gonzaga period** and the XVI-century **Church of Castello**, that stands isolated. It's the birthplace of the XVIII-century educator Ferrante Aporti, a pioneer of early childhood education. After visiting the village, we go back to the same route until reaching Bocca Chiavica, where we take again the cycle route to Sabbioneta.

Excursion 2. Ring-like circuit of Sabbioneta

Route length: 46.5 kms **Travel time:** 4-5 hours **Difficulty:** easy
Characteristics: stretches on provincial roads (please be careful)

Leaving Palazzo Ducale behind, we turn left on the cobblestone Via Pesenti, which takes us immediately outside the old town. We continue on Via San Remigio, which turns dirt, then we follow the road until **km 4.5**, where we reach **Brugnolo**; it's a hamlet of Rivarolo del Re, in the province of Cremona. At the intersection we turn left and we go past the **Church of Santa Maria Nascente**; then, we take the first road on the right, Via Azzolini, and we continue to Via Pezzini and Strada Ca' Nova. Both roads are dirt and, at **km 9.0**, they take us close to **Spineda**, where we can find the **Church of San Salvatore** and – not too far away – the magnificent **Villa Cavalcabò**. Here we turn left on provincial road 9, with separated cycle route, and we reach **km 10.5**, in front of the **Church of Santa Giulia**, in **Civiale Mantovano**. At **km 10.9**, at the intersection, we continue straight to Via Vittorio Veneto until we reach **Corte Cascina Stella**, summer residence of Vespasiano Gonzaga, with a watch tower at the entrance. Here we turn right and then we immediately turn left. At **km 15.0**, we can see the spectacular walls of **Rivarolo Mantovano**: we are at the turreted **Porta Mantova**. We continue straight under the gate, admiring this ancient village whose urban plan was redesigned in the XVI century by Vespasiano Gonzaga; then, at **km 15.5** we go through the elegant **Piazza Finzi**, overlooked by the most important buildings such as **Palazzo Pretorio**, **Palazzo Penci** and the **synagogue**. At **km 15.8**, we turn right to Via Circonvallazione Ovest and, at **km 16.1**, we keep to the right in correspondence with the spectacular **Porta Brescia** as we continue straight to provincial road 66. We follow its sinuous pattern until we reach **km 20.0**, in the small village of **Tornata** (CR), home to the **Church of Sant'Antonio Abate and Sant'Ambrogio Vescovo**. We cycle straight on provincial road 31 until **km 20.8**, when we curve to the right to provincial road 77, whose sinuous pattern takes us in front of the **Madonnina di Rompezzagno** (**km 22.5**), at the intersection; here we keep to the right, going through the residential area of **Rompezzagno**. Then, at **km 22.9**, close to the **Church of San Francesco d'Assisi**, we keep to the

left and, at **km 24.9**, we reach **Bozzolo**, an important village fortified by the Gonzaga family, a feud of the cadet branch of the Gonzaga family in Sabbioneta and Bozzolo. In the extremely central **Piazza Europa**, we must see the **Town Hall** with a beautiful porch and civic tower and the neoclassic social theatre, whereas the **Church of San Francesco** stands not too far away; it was built by Giulio Cesare Gonzaga as a palatine chapel. In the old town, we can also find the **arch-priest Church of San Pietro Apostolo**, with the tomb of Don Primo Mazzolari built by Giacomo Manzù, the **Palazzo del Monte di Pietà**, the **former Palazzo del Tribunale**, the small **Jewish cemetery**, a section of the **walls from the Gonzaga period**, **Porta San Martino** and **Porta Mantova**. As we cycle through the central Via Arino and Via Giuseppe Garibaldi, at **km 26.0**, we pass next to Porta San Martino and immediately afterwards, at the roundabout, we keep left to Via Bassa San Martino. At **km 28.6** we turn right and we cross **San Martino dall'Argine's** old town, with the scenic **porticos from the Gonzaga period**, also close to the **Church of Castello**. We pass in front of the **Church of Saints Fabiano and Sebastiano**, also known as **Friars' Church** (a mausoleum of the Gonzaga family) and, at **km 29.3**, we turn left to Via Brede, venturing into the open countryside. At **km 31.5**, at the intersection, we turn left to Spineda and, just afterwards, we take the first road on the right, Via San Martino, entering the province of Cremona. We continue straight until **km 33.2**, where we reach the old town of **Spineda** – we already passed it by on the way out – and we keep to the left in Via Marcora. We continue to follow the road and we go straight on Via Casotta, where stand the **ancient XIX-century spinning mill** and the **Chapel of Beata Vergine del Carmine**. We continue along provincial road 62 which, at **km 37.0**, takes us to the beautiful village of **Commessaggio**, where Vespasiano Gonzaga had the massive **Torrazzo** built to protect the Canale Navarolo. We cross it thanks to the characteristic pontoon bridge; in case it's not feasible, we must use the bridge on provincial road 420 (equipped with separated cycle route) and then keep provincial road 73 to the right (towards Rivarolo del Re/Brugnolo). At **km 38.5**, we cross Cavo Riglio with a bridge, then we go through the small hamlet of **Ca' de Cessi** and we continue to follow the route's sinuous pattern. At **km 42.0**, we reach **Brugnolo** (we already encountered it on the way out). At this point, we go back to the route and after 4.5 kms we reach **Sabbioneta**, a wonderful Renaissance jewel, at **km 46.5** (🚲🚶). It's worth mentioning that an interesting, nearly 24-km ring-like circuit develops around the city and its defensive embankments, that we encountered in the final part of the route.



- Mantova - Sabbioneta
- Variant Bocca Chiavica - Gazzuolo - San Martino dall'Argine
- Ring-like circuit of Sabbioneta

1.5 km
scale 1:75,000

Tourist Information Offices

TOURIST INFOPOINT INLOMBARDIA

Piazza Mantegna, 6 – 46100 Mantova
0376 432432
turismo.mantova.it
info@turismo.mantova.it



INFOPOINT CASA DI RIGOLETTO



Piazza Sordello, 23 – 46100 Mantova
0376 288208
info@infopointmantova.it



INFOPOINT SABBIONETA

Piazza D'Armi, 1 – 46018 Sabbioneta
0375 221044
info@visitsabbioneta.it

comune.mantova.it
mantovasabbioneta-unesco.it
mantovadestinationsostenibile.it
museimantova.it
visitsabbioneta.it

 Mantova e Sabbioneta Patrimonio Mondiale
 mantova_e_sabbioneta_unesco

 Mantova città d'arte e di cultura
 cittadimantova

 Visit Sabbioneta
 Visit Sabbioneta

Mantova and Sabbioneta World Heritage Office

info@mantovasabbioneta-unesco.it

"Le Regge dei Gonzaga" Cultural District

reggedeigonzaga.it

Mantova Sabbioneta Card

It allows free entrance to the main museums of Mantova and Sabbioneta, as well as the use of free transport service between the two cities.
www.mantovacard.it

E-bike rental service

In Mantova you can find an e-bike rental service at the Pradella Parking in Piazzale Mondadori 1 and the camper van area Sparafucile in Via Legnago 1.
Info: 338 3592688 – sharingmobility@aster.mn.it
www.mantovadestinationsostenibile.it/progetto/

Connections between Mantova and Sabbioneta

Bike&Bus Service

active on public holidays until 2 November 2025

Information and bookings

www.apam.it/it/bik-bus-mantova-sabbioneta
0376 230339
customer.care@apam.it
 www.facebook.com/apam.mn
 @apam_mn
 348 2317678

How to reach Mantova and Sabbioneta

By plane

"Valerio Catullo" Airport of Villafranca Verona – 33 kms away from Mantova
www.aeroporto.verona.it
"Giuseppe Verdi" Airport of Parma – 30 kms away from Sabbioneta
www.parma-airport.it

By train

You can easily reach Mantova from Verona (45 minutes), Modena (55 minutes) and Milan (2 hours).
Sabbioneta isn't served by a train station and is located 8 kms away from Casalmaggiore station and 14 kms away from Bozzolo station.

By car

Mantova: A22 Motorway Modena-Brennero, exits of Mantova Nord (4 kms) and Mantova Sud (11.5 kms) / A4 Motorway Milan-Venice, exits of Desenzano, Sirmione, Peschiera and Verona Sud.
Sabbioneta: A1 Milan-Naples motorway, exit of Parma (30 km) / A21 Motorway Turin-Piacenza-Brescia, exit of Cremona (47 kms).

Key



Paved routes



Unpaved routes



Bakery



Monument



Bar



Museum



Bike shed



Palace



Church



Park



Diner/restaurant



Pontoon bridge



E-bike recharging station



Railway station



Fountain



Rest areas



Mechanical assistance service



Stronghold, castle, walls



Mantova



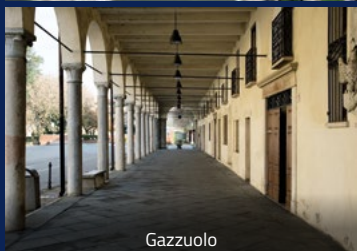
Torre d'Oglio



San Matteo delle Chiaviche



Commessaggio



Gazzuolo



San Martino dall'Argine



Bozzolo



Rivarolo Mantovano



Villa Pasquali



Sabbioneta