



The city of Scandiano, home of the Boiardo's stronghold, a centre of art and culture during the Renaissance, will be the starting and end point and the end of this adventure; it will lead you from the foothills of Reggio Emilia until the Apennines ridge, which links the regions Emilia Romagna and Tuscany. This is a land of historical, natural and culinary importance, with the castles of the Matildic area, the national park of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines and the production of Parmigiano Reggiano and Lambrusco. The National Park of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines, to where the wolf has recently returned, has also been declared in 2015 a biosphere reserve by Unesco.

Point Of Interest (P.O.I.) –

The 7 P.O.I represent the natural and cultural heritage of this area and they are mandatory stops that have to be included in the route:

Bianello Castle : Bianello is the second hill starting from east of the 4 hills surrounding the city of Quattro Castella; a medieval castle has been built above each of these hills, but nowadays the Bianello one is surely the best preserved.

Canossa Castle: The excellent strategic position of the castle, on top of a white sandstone crag, has made a natural stronghold since ancient times. It was able to communicate with beacons and send messages to all of the other castles in the fief, which extended well past the current area of Reggio Emilia. The famous meeting between Emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII took place here in 1077. The museum was recently renovated and is worth visiting.

Pietra di Bismantova: Pietra di Bismantova is a ship-shaped geological formation that shatters the mellow profile of the mid Apennines here in Emilia with the visual arrogance of one of the best known “rocks” in the world; it measures a length of 1 km, a width of 240 meters and an height of 300 meters and is a well-known destination for tourists and climbers. The Pietra has the extra appeal of its links to events in history and literature, the old Byzantine castle that once stood on the top and the verses by Dante where he compares it to Mount Purgatorio.

Cerreto Laghi: This is not only one of the most modern and equipped ski resorts of the center-north Italy, but is also popular destination among hikers. The area includes a system of lakes formed from the melting of ancient glaciers among which the

most well known lake is Cerretano.

Abetina Reale e Monte Cusna (rifugio Battisti): The Cai Path #633- also known as Decouville and previously used as railway to transport goods- leads to the fairy-tale coniferous forest Abetina Reale, which extends with its ancient white spruces and norway spruces to the Apennine ridge. The Monte Cusna is the highest peak in the Apennines of Reggio Emilia and it is also known as “Sleeping Giant” for its appearance, resembling a lying man. Here the required stop is at the refuge Rifugio Battisti.

San Pellegrino in Alpe: San Pellegrino in Alpe, a little village at 1525 mt a.s.l., is the southeast point of the Re-Trail and has a really ancient history due to his sanctuary, one of the oldest and most well-known in Italy.

Castello di Carpineti: This castle is one of Matilde’s stronghold and is situated in a strategic position near the typical Baiso’s Calanchi, an italian type of badlands. The lands on the hills are designated for cattle farming and to the production of the treasure of this area: the Parmigiano Reggiano.

According to the GPS track provided, to reach each point of interest the rider will have to cover between 220 km and 270 km with an elevation gain from 6000 mt to 7000 mt. 50% of the route on secondary paved roads and 50% on unpaved and gravel roads .