

Cult tour around the Lake and the Isle of San Giulio

It is a very well-known and popular ride, especially among foreign guests.

The reasons for its success are diverse, from lake to island, from tower to sanctuary...along an arterial road with low road traffic.

The proposed departure is from the **Omegna Train Station** and the travel **direction counterclockwise**: from North to West to taste more slowly the lake at the foot of **Monte Zuoli**, from where the rainbows of **the Giardini della Torta in Cielo** of Rodarian memory can be seen. Heading up toward Nonio, the traditional and enchanting view of the lake is joined by the novelty of the **ZIPLine**, which, starting from the first hairpin bend toward the cat town, dives down to the lake at "**la Boschina**," offering enthusiasts seconds of pure adrenaline.

Upon reaching **Brolo**, the first part of the climb ends, as does the view of the lake.

After a short flat section, we resume a gentle climb to the entrance of **Nonio**, passing at the foot of the always joyful kindergarten.

Downhill near the church and a short descent to the soccer field, a flat section followed by a small climb to Cesara with a fountain on the right. Before reaching **Cesara**, we notice signs praising **Filippo Ganna**, the champion everyone knows whose mother is from Omegna and his relatives from these areas.

Leaving Cesara, a town of peace (in name and fact), we descend to the **Valley of the Plin (Pellino)**, the stream that runs down from Arola to the border with Valsesia.

Here, besides cows, wild boars, and foxes, it is easy to come across the grey heron, which checks the fish level in the stream.

The Plin Valley enjoys only a few hours of sunshine a day, and because of this, there is always a negative temperature swing of a few degrees: pleasant in good weather, a little less so in winter. As the Pellino drops steeply over Pella and Lake Orta, the road continues toward **Alzo**. At the entrance to the village, we recommend the **ring road** on the right. Still, for those who want to get to know the small village and its central square with a view of the lake better, we recommend going straight ahead, descending to the main town, taking a detour to Ronco, returning to Pella and continuing on to **San Maurizio d'Opaglio**, the **capital of the tap**.

Here, the upstream road rejoins the lake road. Toward the exit of the village, at a couple of roundabouts, we get a sense of how much attention the local community devotes to the object that has given it so much prosperity, even to the point of dedicating an exciting museum to it.

As we leave San Maurizio d'Opaglio, the charming **little church of Santa Maria di Luzzara** stands out in a small clearing on the left.

The road continues flat until **Gozzano**, passing alongside the local soccer field, passing two roundabouts, flanking a large brownfield site, and finally coming to a third roundabout that is the turning point of our route. From here, the direction of travel changes, going up toward Lake Orta from south to north.

The descent to the lake begins shortly after the junction with another attraction: the **Buccione Tower**, which requires a small detour of 3 km on a slight incline.

Continuing straight on, after a series of downhill curves tackled with due caution, one enters the territory of Orta San Giulio, passing through the localities of **Miami** (beach area) and **Imolo** before tackling the little climb made famous by the stage finish of the **Giro d'Italia** won by Bertoglio in **1975**.

At the roundabout (which you didn't have in Bertoglio's days) placed at the end of the short ascent, we have a choice between a few hours to devote to the nearby **Sacro Monte**, a UNESCO heritage site, Orta and its island, or to continue straight on to the other riparian town of **Pettenasco**.

The one that leads from the Orta roundabout to **Tortirogno** (the lake outlet of Miasino) is the last section with variations in gradients of the entire tour; from now on, it is just a flat path between lake and mountain, with several lakeside cottages (one above all the one at **Punta di Crabbia** of the great chef Antonino Cannavacciuolo), docks and landings for boats and divers.

After this latter location, the road continues close to the **Domodossola-Novara railway line**, just a few meters from the lake.

The arrival in Omegna takes place near the roundabout in **Borca**, where for several years, some characters from the stories of **Gianni Rodari**, who was born in the Cusio capital from a modest family of bakers and is known throughout the world above all for his writings aimed at young children, full of imagination, irony and much more. Over the years, the city has dedicated a park, a toy library, and, from 2021, a museum to him, all of which are worth visiting by young and old alike.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Cycling tour, well known to enthusiasts for its undulating route close to Lake Orta, in a natural and cultural environment full of charm and attractions.

Favorite training area of professional cycling champions such as Filippo Ganna. A 52/24 is more than enough.

POINTS OF INTEREST

If a critical issue should be highlighted, it is the **short descent** from the **Buccione junction** to the lake to be approached with some caution, mainly the first curve that is blind.

TECHNICAL DATA

Relevant geographical area:	Cusio /Lower Cusio
Place of departure and arrival:	Omegna Railway Station
Number of legs:	1
Length:	36.2 km
Height difference:	192m
Total ascent:	265 m indicative
Difficulty:	EASY
Average duration:	2 hours
Minimum altitude:	293 m.a.s.l.
Highest altitude reached:	485 m.a.s.l.
Degree of cyclability:	total
Recommended period:	all year-round
Presence of dedicated signage:	no
Target audience:	amateur cyclist/cyclotourist

SCENIC POINTS

Buccione Tower (Orta), Madonna del Sasso Sanctuary (Boleto)

REFRESHMENT POINTS

In the different villages we cross, there are bars, clubs, restaurants, and stores that can satisfy every need. Just as there is no shortage of fountains to refill our water bottles.

TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

OMEGNA - Piazza XXV Aprile 17 - 28887 Omegna (VB) - +39 0323 61930/+39 338 8870913 -
info@proloco.omegna.vb.it

PETTENASCO - Via Vittorio Veneto c/o Museo dell'Arte della Tornitura del Legno - 28028
Pettenasco (NO) - +39 345 9956357 - proloco.pettenasco@tiscali.it

ORTA SAN GIULIO - Via Panoramica - 28016 Orta San Giulio (NO) - +39 0322 905163 -
infoturismo@comune.ortasangiulio.no.it

BIKE SERVICE

Sport è bike - Knutti Massimo, **Sale-Repair shop-Rental**, Via Fratelli di Dio 61, 28887
OMEGNA (VB), (+39) 339 5924089, massimoknutti@gmail.com,
<http://knuttibike.com/index.php/en/>

Bike Store Omegna, **Sale-Repair shop**, Via Tito Speri 3, 28887 OMEGNA (VB), (+39) 0323
350295, bikestoreomegna@gmail.com, <https://www.facebook.com/BikeStoreOmegna>
E-Traction, **Rental**, Via Borca 6, 28887 OMEGNA (VB), (+39) 392 4899480,
info@etraction.it, <https://www.etraction.it/>

Centraggio New Bike Lab Officina, **Sale-Repair shop**, Via Pianelli 32, 28017
SAN MAURIZIO D'OPAGLIO (NO), (+39) 339 129 3866, info.officina@centraggio.com,
[https://m.facebook.com/pages/category/Sports---Recreation/Centraggio-New-Bike-Lab-
108912768035363/](https://m.facebook.com/pages/category/Sports---Recreation/Centraggio-New-Bike-Lab-108912768035363/)

Ebike Lago d'Orta, **Rental**, Via Domodossola 9, 28016 ORTA SAN GIULIO (NO), (+39) 348
2618416, ebikelagodorta@gmail.com, <https://www.ebikelagodorta.com/>

Cicobikes, **Sale-Repair shop**, Via 25 Aprile 29, 28024 GOZZANO (NO), (+39) 0322
956439, info@cicobikes.com, <https://www.cicobikes.com/>

CHARGING STATIONS

Etraction, Via Borca, 6 - 28887 OMEGNA (VB)

Bar Ristorante Salera, Piazza Salera, 16 - 28887 OMEGNA (VB)

Canottieri, Lungolago Buozzi, 37 - 28887 OMEGNA (VB)

Sport è Knutti, Via Fratelli Di Dio, 61 - 28887 OMEGNA (VB)

Public baths, gardens Lungolago A. Gramsci - 28887 OMEGNA (VB)

Oasi della vita, Via Fucine, 7 - Bagnella - 28887 OMEGNA (VB)

Circolo Operaio, Piazza Guglielmo Marconi - 28891 CESARA (VB)

Piazza del Municipio - 28891 NONIO (VB)

Camping Cusio, Via San Giovanni Bosco, 5 - 28016 ORTA SAN GIULIO (NO)

PLACES OF INTEREST

OMEGNA

Birthplace of Gianni Rodari, Fantasy Park, Nursery Rhymes on the Streets, Forum Arts and Industry Museum Foundation, Sant'Ambrogio Collegiate Church, De Angeli-Frua Area, Vatican District, Porta Romana, Old Bridge, Giardini della Torta in Cielo and Rock Engravings (Monte Zuoli), the Morta di Agrano, Crusinallo Castle, Agrano Agricultural Nature Center Alpe Selviana.

NONIO

Brolo "the cats'village" (paintings, sculptures, bas-reliefs inspired by the four-legged pet, Laghetti di Nonio), Portal of Vicolo Tavola, San Rocco Oratory.

CESARA

San Clemente Parish Church 16th century, San Lorenzo Chapel 11th century, Chinese-style pagoda nestled in the forest.

PELLA

Washhouse, Bridge over the Pellino, Old Hospital, San Filiberto Complex, Scalpellini Monument, former Sonzogno Paper Mill.

SAN MAURIZIO D'OPAGLIO

Tap Museum, Bettoja Palace, Brioschi House, Santa Maria Church in Luzzara.

GOZZANO

Basilica of San Giuliano, Bishop's Palace, Colle della Guardia.

ORTA SAN GIULIO

Painted village (hamlet of Legro), Sacro Monte, dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi and UNESCO heritage site, Island with Roman basilica and Benedictine abbey, Motta Square and "Broletto," Buccione Tower.

MIASINO

Villa Nigra, Sperati Palace, churches of San Gottardo (hamlet of Pisogno) 16th century, San Pietro (hamlet of Carcegna) 17th century, San Rocco 16th century.

PETTENASCO

Museum of the Art of Woodturning, Medieval House, Parish Church of Saints Audenzio and Caterina 17th century.