



THE LANDS OF THE PRIMARO From Ferrara to Argenta



Po di Primaro

A long journey through the heart of the ancient delta of the Po river, that goes deep into the classic countryside to the south of **Ferrara**, along the course of the Po di Primaro as far as Tragheto, where the Primaro flows into the River Reno. The route goes as far as **Argenta**, the 6th 'station' of the Po Delta Park, with its nature reserves and Ecomuseo, its lagoons, and its museums dedicated to the relationship between the inhabitants and the waters that have for so long surrounded it.

4 GPS + ROAD BOOK www.ferrarabike.com Technical notes

Depart: Ferrara, Piazza Savonarola

Arrive: Argenta, Centro Culturale Mercato

Length: 41,660 km

Difficulty level: suitable for everyone.
Level route mainly along minor roads.

Railways

Ferrara/Ravenna

Bicycle transport available.

Please check timetables and availability.

Info: 892021 • www.trenitalia.com



www.ferrarainfo.com

Ferrara:

Castello Estense • tel. 0532 299303

Argenta:

Piazza Marconi, 1 • tel. 0532 330276

Connections with other routes

8 Ostellato - Argenta

9 Argenta - Comacchio



TRACES OF AN ANCIENT RIVER

At the time when Ferrara was founded, the **Po di Primaro** was one of the two principal branches of the Po along with the Po di Volano.

In the 12th Century a series of floods near Ficarolo sent the water north, and the Primaro began a slow decline followed by increased height of the river-bed. Today it is a relief canal for water from land reclamation, a modest watercourse that ends its course at Traghetto at a pumping station beneath the embankment of the river Reno, to which it has given over its own bed as far as the Adriatic.

The **River Reno** marks the southern boundary of the province of Ferrara. This watercourse, mostly active after storms, was for centuries the source of terrible floods due above all to it flowing into the plain without a way out to the sea, it now has a mouth in the Adriatic along the bed of the former Po di Primaro.

From the Este castle at **Ferrara** proceed via Via Bologna to the south of the city and turn onto the path beneath the walls; after the cycle/pedestrian bridge over the Po di Volano, turn left into Via Putinati towards Torre Fossa. The road winds tortuously along the former course of the Po di Primaro, through places whose names come from being on the river, eg. **Torre Fossa** and **Fossanova**. Near the village of Sant'Egidio there is the sanctuary of the *Beata Vergine del Poggetto*, a modest and graceful building that houses a venerated image of the Madonna. Numerous aristocratic homes of some architectural merit border the route as far as **Marrara**, then Bova. After the hamlet of Bova, we cross the river



Argenta, Pieve di San Giorgio

and proceed along the left-hand side of the Primaro as far as **Ospital Monacale**, where we turn onto a stretch of the main road as far as **Traghetto**, there to climb up onto the embankment of the Reno which we follow as far as the cycleable bridge over the river. At this point, we switch to the minor road at the base of the embankment, reaching Argenta along Via Cardinale.



Argenta, Salarino Water Works

Final destination of this route, **Argenta** is a town, probably Roman in origin, which in the middle ages passed from the Archbishop of Ravenna to the Este family. Today it is a modern thriving tourist centre. Towards Campotto you pass in front of the atmospheric *Pieve di San Giorgio*, the oldest church in the province (6th Century); in the immediate vicinity there is a museum of land reclamation (*Museo della*

Bonifica) inside the Salarino Water Works, which demonstrates, through the machines and descriptions of their use, the history of the works to drain the area of Argenta. About 4 km further on is the nature reserve *Oasi delle Valli di Argenta e Marmorta*, which extends over an area of 1600 hectares with grand lakes and the Traversante woodlands, typical of the hygrophilous woodlands of the region, and home to numerous species of animals and especially birds. The main part of the Ecomuseum is situated here in the Casino di Campotto at the entrance to the reserve, and it is an unmissable part of this voyage of discovery into the nature and countryside of Ferrara.



The Ecobus is a gas-powered shuttle bus which runs excursions into the Val Campotto reserves in full respect for the environment and sustainable ecology.