



Cycling from the Dolomites to Venice

*Cycling through fairytale landscapes along the trail
of the old Dolomites railway line*

*Cortina d'Ampezzo, the Three Peaks of Lavaredo, Monte Cristallo, Pieve di Cadore,
Belluno, Feltre and Lake Corlo, Bassano del Grappa, Treviso and Venice*



TRIP NOTES 2019

© Genius Loci Travel. All rights reserved.



booking@genius-loci.it | www.genius-loci.it

GENIUS LOCI TRAVEL - The Real Spirit Of Italy



INTRODUCTION

The mountain range of the Dolomites includes some of the most spectacular and well-known peaks in the whole world. Resounding names like the Three Peaks of Lavarredo, the Pale di San Martino and the Marmolada have written mountaineering history. There are several luxurious ski resorts all over the Dolomites, but small characteristic villages can still be found as well. A fairyland where lush meadows nestle against towering limestone peaks, of all different colours, with beautiful little lakes and wooden houses in the valleys. Small family-run hotels and comfortable 'rifugi' (mountain huts) welcome grateful cyclists with delectable cuisine, the ubiquitous grappa and steaming cappuccino. Drink in this dramatic limestone setting as you make your way through the different parts of this beautiful mountain range. Because there isn't just one 'Dolomites' - on this special tour we show you the different ranges and the different cultures: Italian, Tyrolean and 'Ladino'. Meanwhile, closer to the Adriatic Coast, the Veneto region also offers wide plains and famous art cities - first of all the amazing Venice, but also smaller towns such as Treviso and Bassano del Grappa.

This tour will take you from the spectacular scenery of the Dolomites' highest peaks, through deeply incised lush valleys and high mountain plateaus to the sweet Veneto plain. You will cycle on easy bike paths and along tree-lined country lanes, through ample forests and past high mountain lakes, through cultivated fields and vineyards producing well-known and globally appreciated wines. Along your way you will have the opportunity to sample honest Italian cuisine, made even more interesting by several surprising influences, such as the Austrian accents in the Alto Val Pusteria. You will also be able to admire a wealth of architectural and cultural highlights, such as the villas of Palladio, the birthplace of Titian and the art cities of Treviso and Venice.

In the first few days you will make your way from the Dolomite village of Dobbiaco to the fine resort of Cortina d'Ampezzo and then to the splendid little town of Belluno, all the while cycling through breathtaking alpine scenery. Your evenings' bases are well chosen, allowing you to explore some of the prettiest cities of the region, walking through their historical centres and enjoying local cuisine in cosy restaurants of your choice. While heading for Feltre and Bassano del Grappa in the next couple of days you will slowly leave the Dolomites behind and start entering the Veneto plain, one of Italy's most productive areas. Now you will cycle on quiet country roads through hilly land, following the Piave and Brenta Rivers to Treviso. On your way you will visit some of the regions' marvels such as the beautifully preserved hamlet of Asolo. From Treviso you will then make your way to Mestre and Venice, which needs no introduction and may well be worth an extension of your stay.

Making your way from north to south through the Veneto region you will discover two quite different, but equally unforgettable faces of this wonderful part of Italy where both the spectacular nature of the Dolomites and the cultural wealth of the art cities of Treviso and Venice are listed as UNESCO World Heritage. During your cycling adventure you will learn to know and love them equally.



Please note: this is an easy tour suitable even for those with just a basic level of fitness. Rides are not very long and generally involve very few climbs, leaving plenty of time for sightseeing. Average cycling times: approx. 2,5-4 hours each day.



#GeniusItaly

booking@genius-loci.it | www.genius-loci.it

GENIUS LOCI TRAVEL - The Real Spirit Of Italy



DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAMME

Day 0 Venice/Treviso (or Innsbruck, Austria)

Arrival in Venice/Treviso (or Innsbruck, Austria) in case you arrive a day earlier. All three cities have an international airport. Venice Airport has daily flights from Milan and Rome, while the Treviso (and Innsbruck) airports are served by several low-cost companies. From Venice and Treviso, several trains a day go to the city of Dobbiaco/Toblach in the Pusteria Valley. However, they take quite a long time (up to 5 hours) and require you to change more than once. From Innsbruck station there are direct trains to Dobbiaco/Toblach, with a travel time of around 2 hours. In all of these cities, several hotels can be booked according to your wishes (either 'downtown' centrally located, or near the train station, ranging from 3- to 5-star).

Day 1 Arrival in Hochpustertal/Toblach

After your arrival in Dobbiaco you can settle in at your hotel, situated at 1200m, and then take the opportunity to visit the centre of this alpine town, dominated by the castle and the so-called 'Red Tower'. In the evening you can go out and enjoy a quiet dinner in a typical restaurant, serving local specialities such as 'Stanga' cheese and, of course, the famous 'speck'.

Accommodation: Hotel in Dobbiaco or surroundings – BB

Day 2 From Dobbiaco/Toblach to Cortina d'Ampezzo

From the town of Dobbiaco you start on a well-maintained bike path, which was built on a disused train track from Dobbiaco to Calolzo di Cadore. The bike path, over 50 km long, first takes you through the Höhlenstein Valley, past Lake Dobbiaco/Toblach, which was formed after a massive landslide closed off part of the valley head of the Rienza River. Shortly after, you cycle past the war cemetery, testimony to the World War I heritage of the area. While passing Dürren Lake you will be able to admire the imposing Three Peaks of Lavaredo, one of the Dolomites' most famous mountains. Soon after you enter the province of Belluno, home to the National Park of the 'Dolomiti Bellunesi', and you will arrive at the famous ski resort of Cortina d'Ampezzo. Outside of the winter months, this little town is quite laidback and an ideal spot for a peaceful stroll through the town centre or around its immediate vicinity. In the evening you may well find a nice place to sample local specialties such as 'benedi', 'casunzeiei' or 'pestariei'.

Accommodation: Hotel in Cortina d'Ampezzo – BB

Distance : 35 km – Cycling time : 3,5 hours

Day 3 From Cortina d'Ampezzo a Belluno

Today you will mainly be following the old train track leading down towards Belluno. Along the first part of your path you will keep the peaks of the Marmolada to your left while cycling towards the little town of Pieve di Cadore, birthplace of the great 15th-century Italian painter Titian. You can stop for a visit to the artist's old house after which you can enjoy a cold drink or a cup of coffee at a local bar. You then continue to Calolzo di Cadore and to Longarone along a new cycling path. The last meters uphill and you are arrived to Belluno.

Accommodation: Hotel in Belluno - BB

Distance : 60 km – Cycling time : 4,5 hours



booking@genius-loci.it | www.genius-loci.it

GENIUS LOCI TRAVEL - The Real Spirit Of Italy



Day 4 From Belluno to Feltre

This morning you will transfer by train to Ponte nelle Alpi, near Belluno. After visiting the city, with its nicely preserved historic city centre, you cycle along the River Piave towards the town of Feltre. While cycling you will keep the 'Dolomiti Bellunesi' to your right, offering magnificent views of the high limestone crags and peaks. The tour now follows tree-lined avenues through a hilly landscape. A nice idea might be to stop at Cesiomaggiore to visit the 'Museo della Bicicletta' (bicycle museum), where bicycles throughout the ages are on display next to the iron steeds of Italian cycling champions such as Fausto Coppi and Gino Bartali. At the end of the day you will arrive at Feltre, known as the birthplace of the famous Italian architect Palladio. After settling in at your hotel you could go for a walk through the town, admiring its many churches and old 'palazzini'.

Accommodation: Hotel in Feltre - BB

Distance : 40 km – Cycling time : 3 /4 hours

Day 5 From Feltre to Bassano del Grappa

Today's trip will take you from Feltre to Bassano del Grappa, passing by the romantic Corlo Lake. You will now go through the valley of the Brenta River, running underneath Monte Grappa, from which the city of Bassano takes its name. During the First World War Monte Grappa was an Italian stronghold protecting the Veneto plain, attacked in vain by the Austrians on a number of occasions. The mountain is also famous as one of the hardest climbs of the annual 'Giro d'Italia' cycling race. Your day's trip ends at Bassano del Grappa. Here you have the time to visit the centre of the town with its magnificent 'Piazza dell Libertà'. Not to miss is the *Villa Angarano*, designed by Palladio. The evening's dinner can of course be followed only by a 'grappa', the local liquor made from wine must.

Accommodation: Hotel in Bassano del Grappa - BB

Distance : 55 km – Cycling time : 4 hours

Day 6 From Bassano del Grappa to Treviso

After leaving Bassano del Grappa you will cycle along quiet country roads to Treviso, now and then passing by villas designed by Palladio. You are now leaving the mountainous area of the Dolomites and entering the plain of Treviso. On your way you will pass several small villages, one of which is Asolo, considered to be one of Italy's most beautiful hamlets. It goes without saying that this is an ideal spot for a short stroll through the centre, and possibly an early lunch, or at least a cup of coffee or a cappuccino. You then continue through the Veneto plain to the city of Treviso, where you will be staying during the night. Treviso is rightly known for its wonderful historic town centre where you can wander through little back alleys and along narrow canals, and you are sure to find a nice spot for dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel in Treviso - BB

Distance : 57 km – Cycling time : 4,5 hours

Day 7 From Treviso to Venice

The last day of your tour takes you from Treviso to the 'Serinissima', world-famous Venice. During your trip you will cycle on quiet back roads, through cultivated fields and vineyards producing world-famous wines, such as the Bardolino and Valpolicella wines. After arriving at your hotel in Mestre you can freshen up, and then visit the great city of Venice, known for its canals lined with old renaissance 'palazzini' and splendid churches, as well as for its traditional carnival. While walking through the city you mustn't miss 'Piazza San Marco', the 'Palazzo Ducale' (ducal palace), or the 'Ponte di Rialto' (Rialto bridge). You shouldn't miss out on a boat ride either, perhaps in a



#GeniusItaly

booking@genius-loci.it | www.genius-loci.it

GENIUS LOCI TRAVEL - The Real Spirit Of Italy



'gondola' on the Canal Grande and through the many smaller side canals. You can also stroll through some less well-known parts of the city, such as the Jewish ghetto, where the sudden lack of tourists can make you wonder if you've left the 'Serenissima' without realising. Art lovers will want to visit one of the many museums, galleries or 'pinoteca' in the town. In the evening you can enjoy a pre-dinner 'aperitivo' and after-dinner stroll, immersed in Venice's romantic atmosphere.

Accommodation: Hotel in Mestre - BB

Distance : 45 km – Cycling time : 3 hours

Day 8 End of the tour

The tour ends today after breakfast in Mestre . A train transfer can take you to Venice or Treviso Airport. A taxi transfer to other destinations can be arranged on request.



LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Moderately easy (2/3): Mostly easy rides, with only a few moderate climbs. Most rides are no longer than 50 km. All roads are well paved and mostly quiet with little traffic. Extensions or shortcuts are possible on some days.

Fitness: The trip requires a basic level of fitness. Some rides may be a bit longer (up to 60 km) but usually involve few climbs. Easy, flat roads mean you have plenty of time for sightseeing and sampling local culture, and cuisine.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Arrival: The tour starts in DOBBIACO, which can be reached by train from Venice, Treviso and Innsbruck (Austria), all of which have international airports, served by several low-cost companies. Arrival every Wednesday and Saturday (from April to September), with a minimum of 2 participants.

Departure: The tour ends after breakfast in MESTRE. From the local train station Venice and Treviso airports are easily reached.



TOUR DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

All nights are spent in beautiful, characteristic hotels (generally 3-star). All rooms have en-suite facilities. No dinners or picnic lunches are included. You will have plenty of opportunities to eat out each evening, choosing from several typical restaurants. Picnic lunches can be prepared for you by the accommodation holders, or materials for picnics can be purchased in the villages you pass through.

UPGRADE/CHANGES IN ACCOMMODATION

It is possible to book an upgrade in some of the places en route. Details and prices on request.

INCLUDED

- Accommodation: 1 night Dobbiaco, 1 night Cortina d'Ampezzo, 1 night Belluno, 1 night Feltre, 1 night Bassano del Grappa, 1 night Treviso and 1 night Mestre in good *** hotels
- Meals: 7 breakfasts
- Extensive route notes, with description of the route & tourist information
- Transfer by train from Calalzo to Longarone (bicycles included)
- Maps at 1 : 50.000 scale (or better)
- 24/7 assistance
- Luggage transport
- Private transfers as specified

Not Included

- Departure taxes & Visas
- Travel Insurance
- Drinks and meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Optional additional tours or activities
- Tourist tax - if requested
- Tips
- Items of personal nature
- Bicycle rental (available on request)

TOUR VARIATIONS

EXTRA NIGHTS

It is possible to include extra nights in any of the accommodations 'en route'. Extra cycling and/or sightseeing options can be provided! It is also possible to extend your tour with a few days in the Veneto region or in Venice itself. Details and prices on request.

© Genius Loci Travel. All rights reserved.



booking@genius-loci.it | www.genius-loci.it

GENIUS LOCI TRAVEL - The Real Spirit Of Italy

