

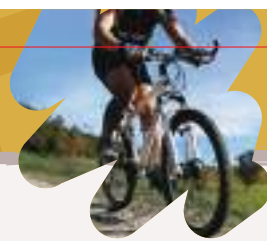
Welcome to Langhe Roero!

Langhe Roero, a well-kept secret

The network of hills that rises up from the Po river towards the Apennine mountain range to the south east, in a sort of musical crescendo, is known by three historical names that now encompass an area divided into multiple provinces. Those three names are Monferrato, Roero and, finally, Langhe. The Langhe region is the last bastion of an ancient world, separated from the rest of the Piedmont region by the Tanaro river and protected by the wall of the Apennines that rises above 1,000 metres (3,280 ft) throughout its length.

This cradle nestled between the mountains and the river has its own special microclimate and unique soil (with marine sediment carved away by rivers giving each hillside its own special strata) to produce some of the most desirable delicacies of Italian cuisine. This special corner of the country features products of unmatched excellence, some of which are closely kept secrets known only by gourmets around the world.

This is the realm of the Nebbiolo grape and its noble offspring, Barolo, Barbaresco and Roero wines, protected by castles, towers and walled villages that harken back to the battles and the splendor of the Middle Ages. Pilgrims, salt merchants, soldiers in the crusades and Benedictine monks have all walked these lands and left their mark on local culture and heritage. But it was





the lowly farmer, after centuries of hard work, who shaped these hills into the breathtaking landscape we see today.

And beneath these special hills lies the most secret of the region's treasures, the Alba White Truffle (*Tuber Magnatum Pico*), that "gray diamond" so loved by the likes of Cavour and Vittorio Emanuele II and made famous around the world by the youngest son of a family of poor sharecroppers, Giacomo Morra, inventor of the Alba White Truffle Fair and a sort of *deus ex machina* for the Langhe region.

But the Langhe Roero area is not just about food. It is a true haven for hikers, cyclists, and all lovers of the great outdoors. A maze of trails crisscrosses the hills providing a range of options for beginners and experts alike. You can go from strolling along the false flat of row after row of Barolo and Barbaresco vineyards on a quest to visit all of the most famous *crus* to following in the footsteps of "Johnny the Partisan" along the rugged trails described by Beppe Fenoglio; from the rolling hills of "The Moon and the Bonfires" steeped in the poetry of Cesare Pavese to the *Grande Traversata delle Langhe* (the Great Langhe Trail, or "GTL"), a three-day itinerary that will take you from Alba to the Ligurian sea along the same mule tracks travelled for centuries by merchants and smugglers alike. The bandits have long disappeared, but the spectacular landscapes and amazing flora made of rare orchids and age-old beech remain.

Another unexpectedly fascinating itinerary is that of the *Rocche del Roero* (literally: Roero rock formations), tour made of outdoor adventure and the

discovery of local flora, fauna and geology, interspersed with sudden streaks of sand bursting with marine fossils that tell the tale of millions of years ago, when this all was beneath the sea, only the tallest of the hills poking up through the surface of the water as islands in the Adriatic.

Explore on foot or by bike the ancient cart tracks, steep mule tracks, trails through the ravines or along the crests of the hills, all the other roadways that have taken people from the hills to the sea for thousands of years and experience the history here in your own unique way, as you stop in silence to focus on details or enjoy the landscapes and interact with the locals and with the local wildlife. Take in all the history, folklore, cuisine, geography and, of course, the heart and soul of these hills as you go.

Although some of these ancient roads have since become modern-day paved streets, others have been swallowed up by the woods and are referred to, collectively, as the “Salt Roads”. They often still run through ancient toll stations that once helped fill the pockets of the local squire with monies that he may have then used to pay an artist to paint a beautiful fresco on a local church and create a little corner of paradise. Here in the Langhe, frescos can be found in some unexpected places, far from major cities, in secluded valleys and on remote hilltops, almost all of which belong to the renowned Mondovì school and late Gothic style.

Castles and towers will take you back to the days of King Arthur and the Knights of the Roundtable (as there are few places that have better preserved medieval architecture than the Piedmont region). Because the enemy here was most frequently the Moors (in addition to the lord from the hilltop fiefdom across the way), pirates ✪





who pillaged lands near the sea, a system of watchtowers was built alongside the fortresses in order to sound the alarm from the sea on up to Asti, spreading word of an attack in just about an hour. Over the centuries, many of the medieval manors have been embellished and transformed into luxurious Baroque residences as a new power arose throughout the Piedmont region in the form of the House of Savoy, ruling over the region from the sumptuous Royal Palace of Turin beginning in 1631. It is here in the Langhe Roero region made of woodlands and ravines — the oak trees, hazelnuts and pasture lands making stone villages and rural churches uniquely fragrant — that the Piedmont of the House of Savoy preserves its more feral soul. It is a soul of age-old beauty that is reflected in the snowy, protective mountaintops of the Alps as the hills here are brushed by the wind from the sea, creating a microclimate that is just what it takes to produce the area's inimitable wines. But it is also a rugged soul made of hard work and sacrifice, poverty and emigration, resistance and resignation, as described in the works of Cesare Pavese and Beppe Fenoglio, two of Italy's greatest authors of the 20th century, both of whom grew up here in these hills.

So it was not by chance that all of this was named a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 2014, this vineyard landscape becoming the 50th Italian site to be so protected. Of course, we locals have always known we lived in particularly magical place.

Knock, say you're a friend, and all will be opened to you.

Welcome! ■

RBT - Roero Bike Tour

The **Roero Bike Tour (RBT)** is set in a section of hills known as the Roero region laying along the left bank of the Tanaro river, which separates it from the Langhe, on the confines with the provinces of Turin and Asti. Here, historical villages, cultivated fields and other signs of humanity are immersed in nature that remains largely untamed, featuring dense vegetation and harsh hillsides. It was the Roero Family from Asti that possessed most of the land and castles here and so gave the territory its name. It is a land of passage and maintains its age-old vocation to trade and to hospitality.

As you cycle along the Roero Bike Tour, you will move from village to village along nature trails or low-traffic roads on a journey through the one-of-a-kind landscapes and vistas, such as the *Rocche* (singular: *rocca*, a term that refers to local rock formations that are an unusual geological phenomenon and which protect a wealth of biodiversity), vineyards, truffle forests, cultivated groves, hilltop villages and castles.

The itinerary makes for a thrilling ride on a mountain bike or e-bike! It is a total of about 140 km (87 mi) long and is to be done in one specific direction. Its 7 sections are complemented by a number of variations, including both alternate and connecting routes, and encompasses the three major existing trails: the “Grande Sentiero del Roero”- S1 (Great Roero Trail); the “Sentiero del Roero Centrale”- S4 (Central Roero Trail); and the “Sentiero dell’Acino, Mulini e Castelli – Roero Orientale” - S3 (West Roero Trail of the Grape, Mills and Castles). ■

RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Presentation



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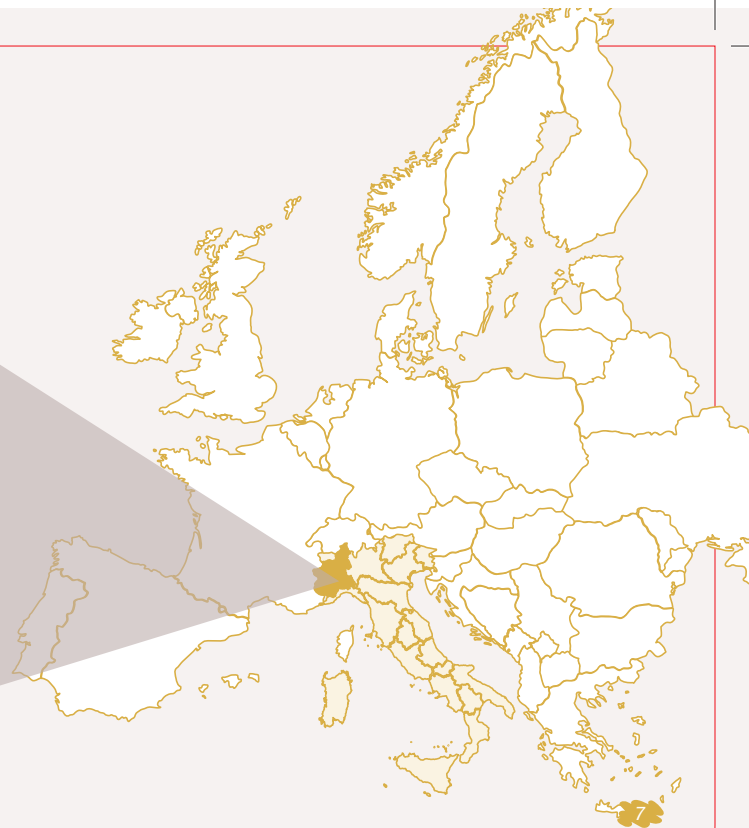
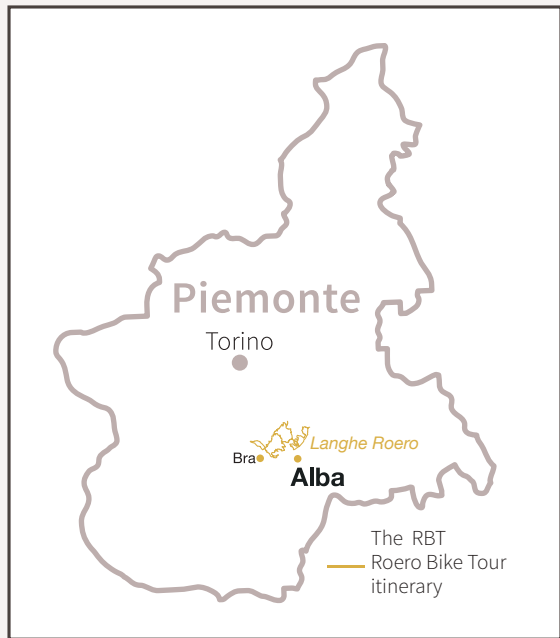
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RBT - Roero Bike Tour · Where we are

How to get here:

By car, motorways:

A6 – Torino Savona, Marene or Carmagnola exit

A21 – Torino Piacenza, Asti Est exit

A33 – Asti Cuneo, Alba exit

By plane:

Milano Malpensa and Linate – www.sea-aeroportimilano.it

Torino Caselle – www.aeroportoditorino.it

Cuneo Levaldigi – www.aeroporto.cuneo.it

By train:

Ferrovie dello Stato: www.trenitalia.com



Itinerary

The **Roero Bike Tour** has its own signage designed for cyclists. Search the diamond-shaped signs along the itinerary, that gives you information about the difficulty of the path: green - easy, yellow - medium, red - difficult.

Signs may fall down at times, but very often there are also the (red and white) markings on trees and rocks pointing you in the right direction, especially in the woods and far from paved roads. For any doubts, consult the GPS map that can be downloaded from the sites www.langheroero.it and www.ecomuseodellerocche.it.

There are technical sections in places, but these can always be overcome on foot, carrying or pushing your bike, or by making use of public transit between villages. Along the route, there are marked stations for charging e-bikes and for minor repairs that may be necessary along the way.



Notes

The **RBT** may be done in circuits, adapting the itinerary to suit your own specific preferences.

Ring 1

Composed of legs 1, 2, 2A, 5 (final section).
Length: 34 km (21 mi)

Ring 2

composed of legs 3, 4, 5 (up to the junction with the 2A), 2A.
Length: 48 km (30 mi)

Ring 3

Composed of the leg 3A.
Length: 15.5 km (9.5 mi)

Ring 4

Composed of legs 6 and 7. Length: 43 km (26.75 mi)





Leg 1

Borbore (Veza d'Alba) - Montà





Leg 1

Borbore (Veza d'Alba) - Montà

A route connecting the two hearts of the Roero region – one that looks out over the Langhe and the other that runs along the crest of the *Rocche* rock formations – this section will take you from Veza to Montà by way of Canale, to encounter a number of theme-based trails.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

11,5 km



ELEVATION

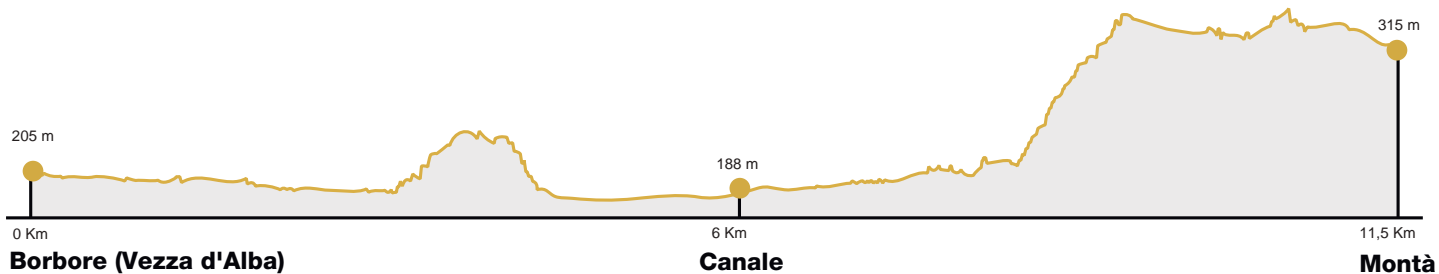
START 205 m | FINISH 315 m



DIFFICULTY

MC

Itinerary profile



Monta'

Centro Outdoor Bike Park

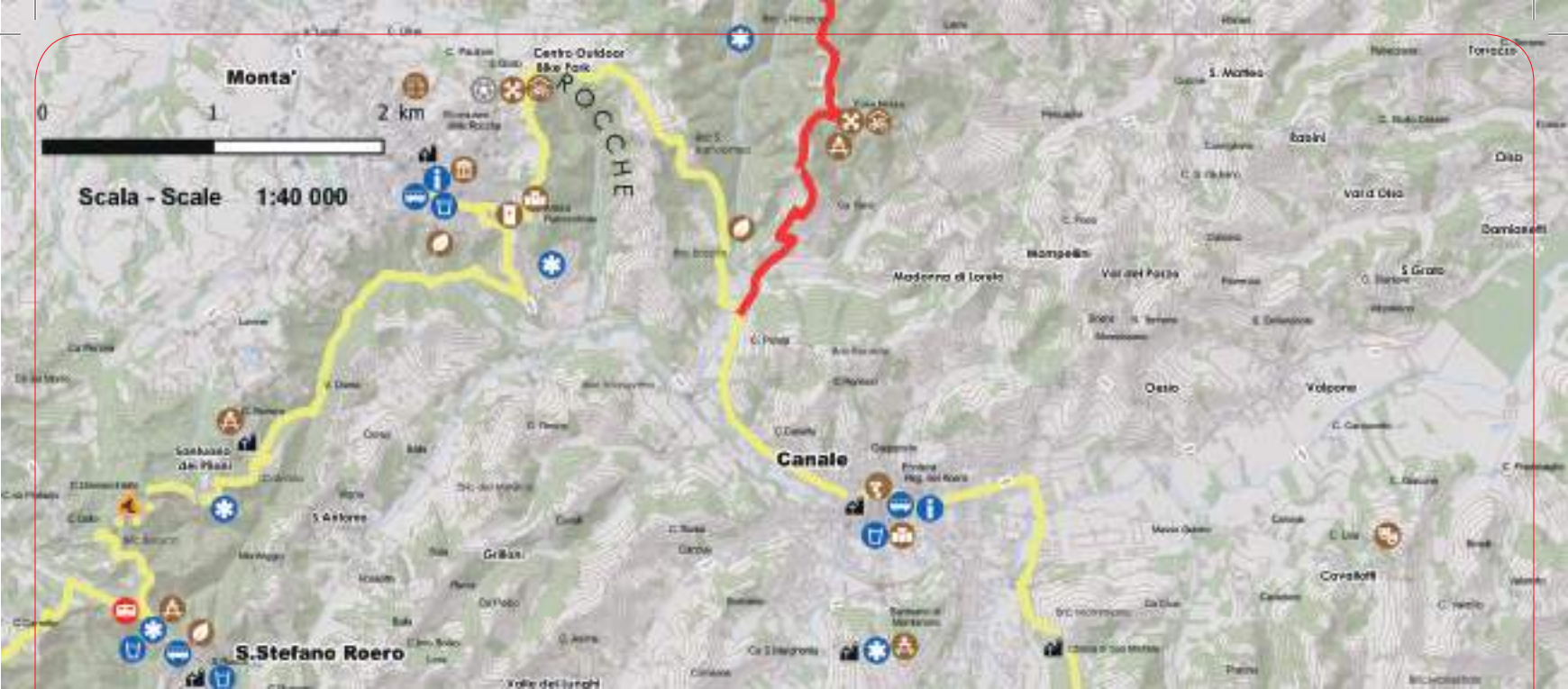
POCCHE

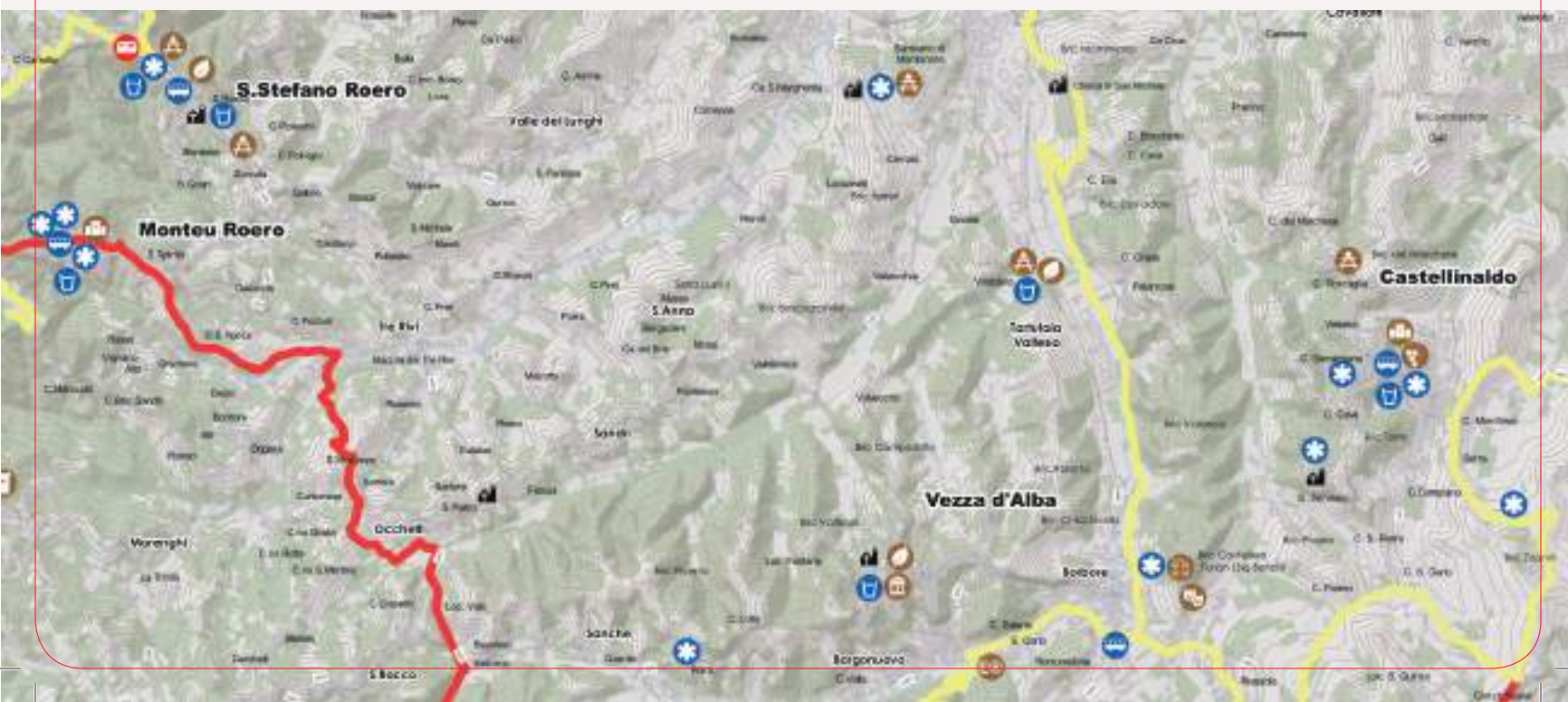
Canale

S.Stefano Roero



Scala - Scale 1:40 000





S. Stefano Roero

Monteu Roero

S. Angelo

Vezza d'Alba

Castellinaldo

The starting point is the parking lot of Banca d'Alba in **Borbore**, a hamlet of **Veza d'Alba**. From here, follow the markers for “Sentiero del *Torion*”, a ring trail dedicated to the eclectic *ciabòt* that can be seen atop the “del Castellero” hill. The feature of small building (of the sort typically found in the middle of a field, once used by farmers as a tool shed or other shelter) is its unique tower shape, from which it gets its name *torion*. There is also a large hole in the side of the building, which was created by a bombing in 1944 during one of the battles between the resistance fighters and members of the Repubblica Sociale Italiana.

From the parking lot, head up in the direction of Castagnito. After just a few metres, take Strada Varasca to your left. When you reach the buildings of a winemaker, turn right onto a flat road that soon turns to gravel. Continue along the flat, parallel to highway SP 29, through cultivated fields and hazelnut groves. You will then find orderly rows of poplar trees, which, in springtime, create a spectacular “snowfall” effect when the pappi fall from the trees and float through the air.

At a crossroads, you will find a small wayside shrine, one of the many that are found along the country roads of the Roero region. Continue straight here until you reach Patarrone. Here, before “Sentiero del *Torion*” takes a right and starts to ascend, continue straight along a flat road towards Canale. After about 450 metres, turn sharply to the right onto the gravel and head up the hillside. Just before the top, ✨





RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 1 Borbore (Veza d'Alba) - Montà

at a wide switchback to the left that passes the drive to a private home, continue along the crest in the direction of Canale, the tall bell tower of which can now be seen in the distance. Pass a raised *ciabòt* followed by the church of S. Michele nestled in a natural amphitheater of vineyards. Keeping to the left, you will begin heading down towards the new industrial zone of **Canale**, as the trail runs alongside the main highway. When you get to a large roundabout, continue along the service road of several industrial buildings. Pass the cemetery and continue in the direction of the centre of town. Continue along Corso Asti until you reach Canale's historic wine cellar Cantine Enrico Serafino, where Corso Asti meets Via Roma.

Here, a long series of shop windows run down both sides of the town's main street. The centre of town, with its orderly streets and porticoes along each side of the main street, maintains the typical *villanova* structure that the city of Asti established in 1260 for its neighboring settlements (including Anterisio, Loreto di Canale, Castelletto d'Astisio, the "old" Canale, and other minor settlements) after the defeat of the Biandrate Family. In 1379, dominion over Canale passed to the Roero Family and then gradually, beginning in 1512, shifted hands to the Malabaila Family, who inhabit the castle, with its park of old-growth trees, to this day.

Once you've reached Piazza della Vittoria, you'll not want to miss a trip to Enoteca Regionale del Roero, the institutional wine centre that provides information for tourists about the winemakers in the Roero region. »



Here, you will find a lovely garden in the building's inner courtyard, as well as a famous Michelin-starred chef on the upper floor. The 13th century Civic Tower, which you will pass along this route, is all that is left of this village's outer wall.

The square of the Church of San Bernardino has remained essentially unchanged since the early 1900s, when it was entirely occupied by a daily peach market. In those days, due to a number of diseases that affected the vineyards, peaches became the dominant agricultural product and Canale became known internationally as a producer of quality peaches. Today, there are far fewer peach groves than there once were, but a peach trade fair is still held here every July and a handful of *art nouveau* buildings with intriguing floral decor point to a period of economic boom for the entire town. One such building can be found at the start of Via Torino in the direction of Montà.

From here, turn right when you come to signs for "Agriturismo Le Querce del Vareglio" and continue along a narrow road, which starts out paved and then turns to gravel, until you cross a small stream. Turn left here into the fields, then soon head up to the right to gradually climb the San Bartolomeo hillside (which gets its name from the shrine at its summit) through a myriad of hazelnut groves, vineyards, woods and cultivated fields. You will come across the trail S1, that here correspond to the "Sentiero del Castagno" (literally: "Trail of the Chestnut", which you will follow in the opposite direction from what the signage indicates) in a

section between the high walls of the *Rocche*, steep vineyards and areas in the shade of the surrounding vegetation.

When you reach the summit, continue on until you reach the Centro Outdoor Valle delle Rocche in San Grato di Montà. This mountain bike park is situated at the junction of four trails and features a MTB/XC circuit, a lighted pump track and a dual-slalom run with loads of kickers and berms. Here, you will also find a range of services for cyclists, including a self-serve workshop, bike wash, locker rooms and restrooms.

Leaving the bike park behind you, continue along Via Morra, a dirt road that runs along the crest of the hill in the direction of the hilltop village of **Montà**, with a panoramic vista over the area's rock formations. Continue alongside the tranquil park of the 16th century Morra Lavriano Castle. When you reach Piazza di Sant'Antonio Abate with the village's main church behind you, head down into the historical centre along Via Roma. You will pass the Civic Tower (circa 1754) on your left, which marks the start of the trail "Strada delle Masche" (Street of the *Masche*), a brief, panoramic stroll to a natural balcony overlooking the surrounding hills. ■

An aerial photograph of a lush green vineyard in the foreground, with a two-story stone tower in the middle ground. The tower has a tiled roof and several windows, some of which are boarded up. In the background, there are rolling green hills with scattered houses and a small town on a hillside. The image is framed by a thin red border and a large yellow and white graphic overlay on the right side.

Variant 1A

Canale - Rocca Tagliata (Canale)



Variant 1A

Canale - Rocca Tagliata (Canale)

A variation of the previous section, this route takes you to the isolated hamlet of Rocca Tagliata along a section of the S1 trail and then a section of “Sentiero del Castagno”, while also extending into the territory of Cisterna d’Asti and with the option of going to Montà.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

2,7 km



ELEVATION

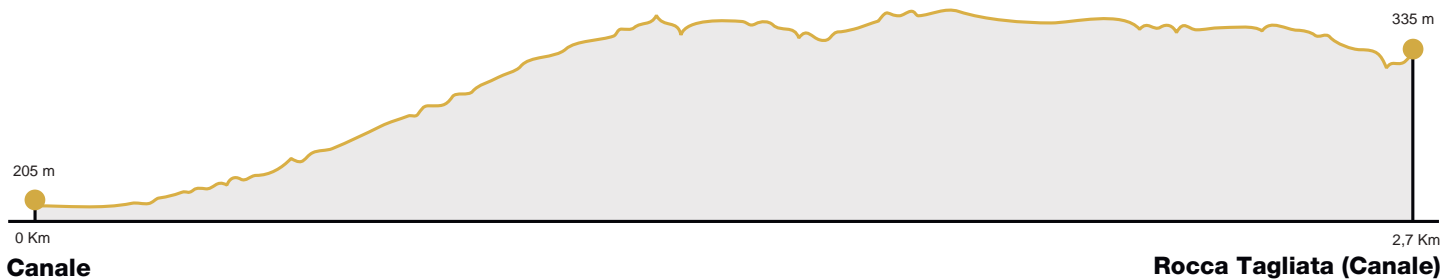
START	FINISH
205 m	335 m

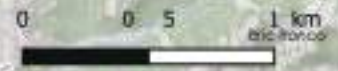


DIFFICULTY

MC

Itinerary profile





Scala - Scale 1:30 000
Roland

Zona Industriale



Monta'

Centro Outdoor
Bike Park

Canale

Cisterna d'Asti

ROCCHE

ROCCHE

Rocca Tagliata

Madonna di Loreto

S. Matteo

Rabini

Val d'Oisa

Mompellini
Val del Pozzo

Montamp



RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Variant 1A Canale - Rocca Tagliata (Canale)

From **Canale**, head along Via Torino (intersection with leg 1) past the last homes in the village. Turn right when you come to signs for “Agriturismo Le Querce del Vareglio” and continue along a narrow road, which starts out paved and then turns to gravel, until you cross a small stream. Here, instead of turning left as described for the previous section, continue straight until you reach the hamlet of Pecetto and a section of vineyards along the S1 trail. At this point, the route begins to ascend, gradually at first and then in a steep zigzag through hillside vineyards along a dusty road in the direction of Casa Natura, which you will reach after passing through a small wooded area. Home of Associazione Canale Ecologia, the building is situated on a plateau and was once the site of a skeet shooting range. It is now equipped with a small kitchen, restrooms, a classroom and is often used by associations and other groups as a meeting point for camping or other outings. There is also a self-serve workshop for cyclists. Beyond Casa Natura, turn sharply to the left and follow along the S1 trail for a long section along the crest of the hill, through vineyards and woodlands, in the direction of Montà and Cisterna d’Asti. This is the San Nicolao Nature Park, a protected oasis now owned by the non-profit Associazione Canale Ecologia, which works to maintain the area’s biodiversity for future generations. Continue along the crest until Rocca Tagliata, where you will meet up with “Sentiero del Castagno”. This trail can be followed for a section through town in the direction of Valle del Saretto. ➤

Rocca Tagliata, a pleasant hill far from residential areas, was selected as a base camp for the partisans' 23rd Canale Brigade, an aggregation of the groups from Canale, Magliano Alfieri, Santo Stefano Roero and Vezza d'Alba formed in August of 1944. This area served as the base for incursions against Fascist soldiers crossing through this area and through Cisterna d'Asti and it was here that the precious cargo of one of the Allied Forces' parachute supply runs was hidden.

From Rocca Tagliata, you can follow the signs for *Il Grande Sentiero del Roero* (Trail S1) to **Cisterna d'Asti**, the hilltop village at the end of the *Rocche* ridge. This is the only municipality of the province of Asti that is a part of the Roero region both geographically and geologically, and it is in a prevalently hilly area featuring woods and vineyards.

The village has ancient roots and was once enclosed within walls atop a natural escarpment. It features two main landmarks: its castle, which houses the storage tank (*cisterna* in Italian) which gave the village its name; and the main church. The oldest section of the castle dates back to the 12th century and features a medieval tower. The castle as it appears today is the result of a work that was done in the late 1500s and in the following century. Today, the castle is home to the Museo Arti e Mestieri di un Tempo (Museum of Ancient Arts and Trades), which houses over 5,000 artifacts from the 17th to the 20th centuries that embody the culture of the Piedmont region arranged in 20 shops that offer a detailed reconstruction of life as it once was. ■





 **Leg 2**
Montà - Monteu Roero



Leg 2

Montà - Monteu Roero

A route along the central crest of the *Rocche* rock formations to admire the “miracle” of how the Tanaro river was captured and what that event created.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

8,5 km



ELEVATION

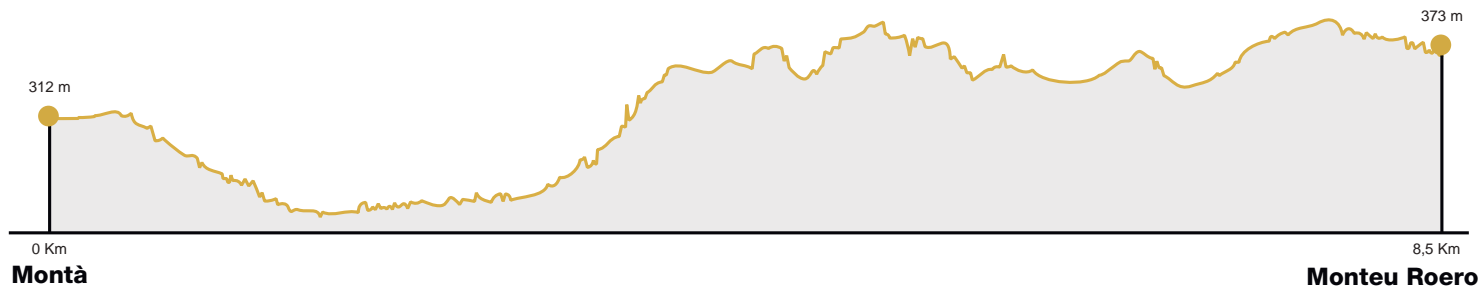
START 312 m | FINISH 373 m



DIFFICULTY

MC

Itinerary profile



0 0 5 1 km



Scala - Scale 1:25 000

Varegio

C. Delvino

Cas. Sesto C. Bianca

Lanzardo

Ca' Cere

Ca' Perrina

C. Sarnocci

Ca' del Moro

Madonna delle Grazie

C. Bezzione

C. ra Pedate

C. Garandotto

C. Galle

Lalona

C. Eozio

Santuario
del Piloni

Cofvino

Gorra

Bala

Vigna

S. Antonio

C. Rassi

Bic. del Medico

Cavali

ROCCHE

ROCCHE

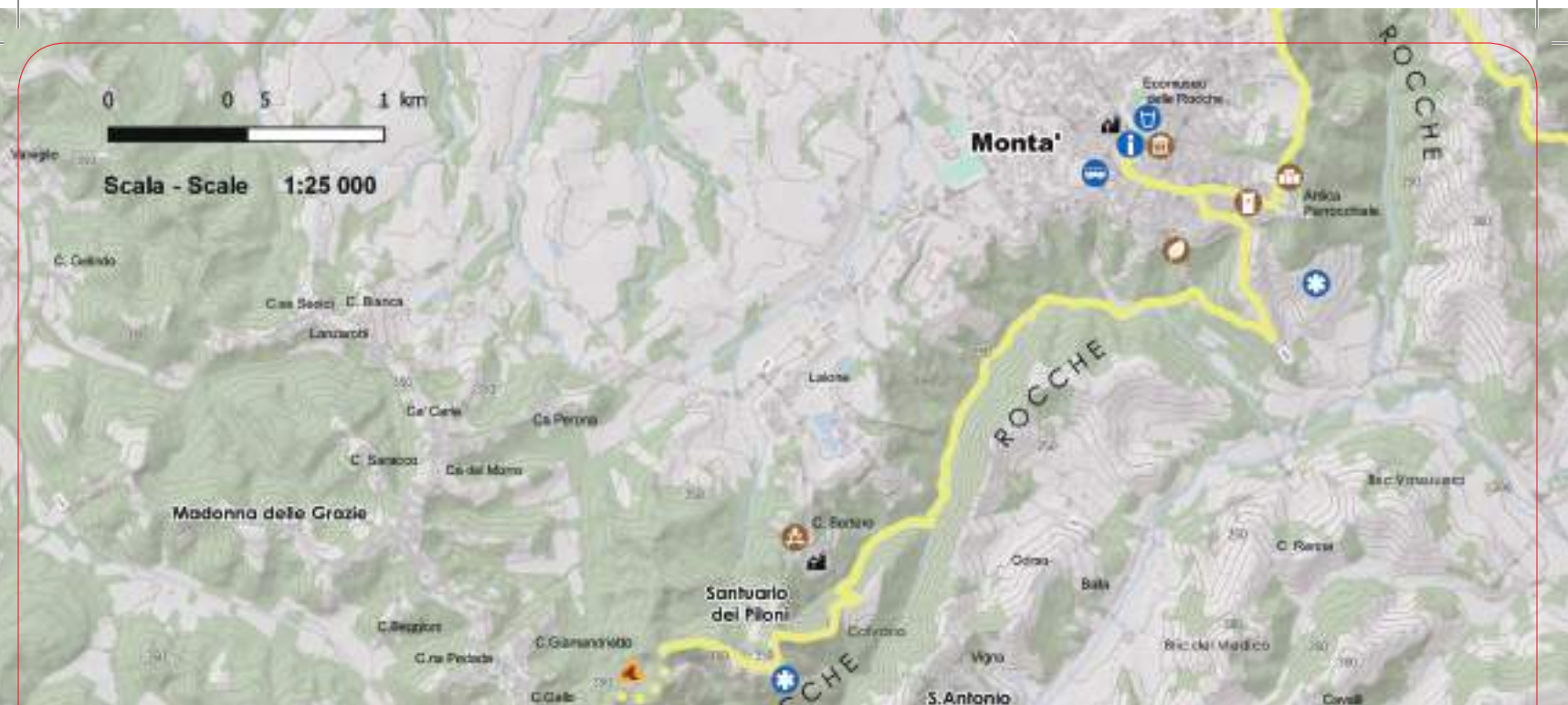
Bic. Vmazzato

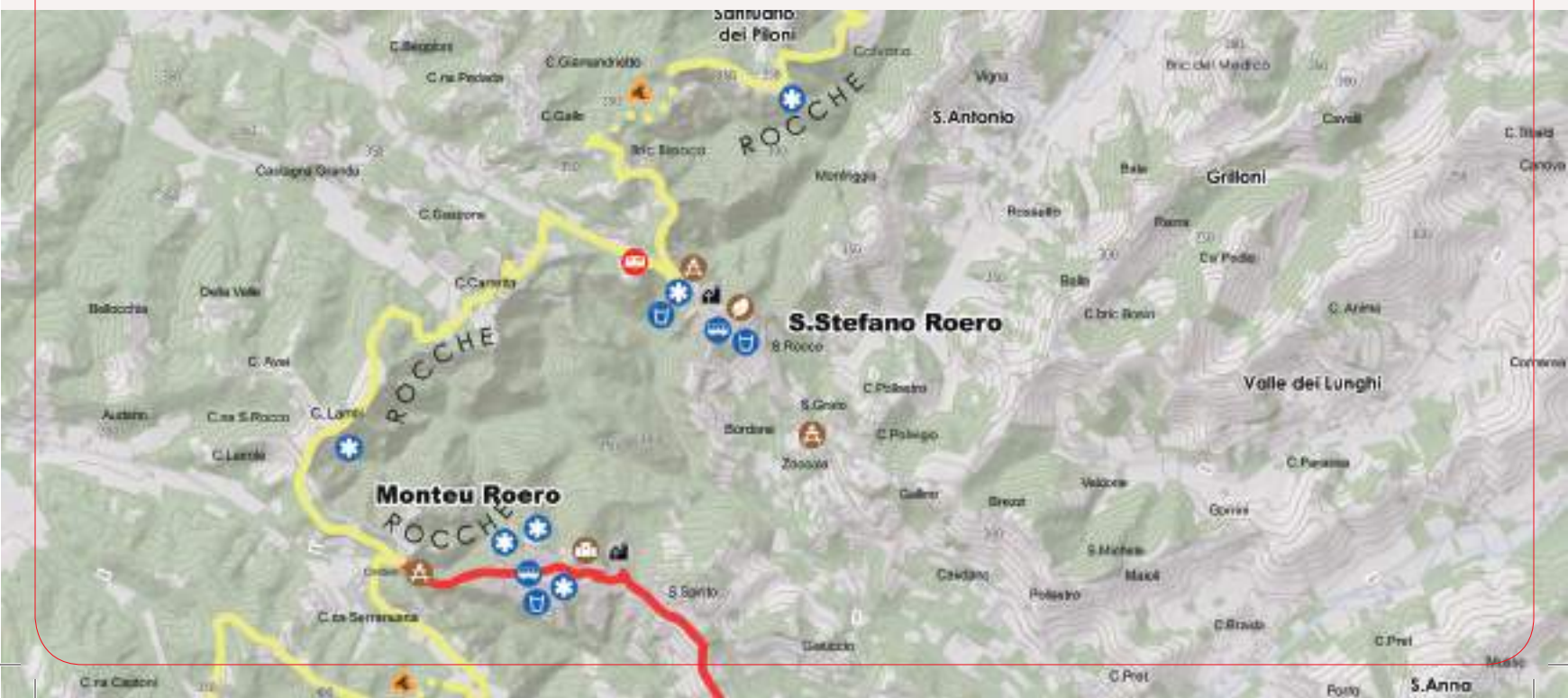
Monta'

Ecomuseo
delle Rocche

Antica
Parrucchiale

ROCCHE





Santuario
dei Piloni

ROCCHES

S. Stefano Roero

Monteu Roero

ROCCHES

S. Anna

The starting point for this leg is **Montà**, which is famous for the Alba White Truffles that enjoy an ideal habitat in the Rio Canneto and Mornaldo areas. In the village, you can experience a simulated truffle hunt with local experts or purchase truffles in the local shops. There are also a great many wine cellars in which to sample and purchase the local Roero and Roero Arneis DOCG wines, as well as apiaries that produce acacia, chestnut and wildflower honey. The centre of the village also features a great many quality shops and two open-air markets each week, on Thursday and Sunday mornings, for shopping fun.

Start from Vecchia Segheria, home to the Ecomuseo delle Rocche del Roero, which is open for information on trails and outings in the area. Here, the itinerary coincides with the “Grande Sentiero del Roero” (Trail S1), the signposts of which may be followed as a guide. Follow along Via Cavour, the main street of town, past Piazza San Michele, where you will find the Town Hall. Continue along the first section of Via Roma, then turn onto Via Maccallè, which heads slightly downhill. At the end of this street, on a building at the edge of the roadway, you will see a large fresco of Benito Mussolini, which was executed in 1936 and is one of the most significant surviving examples of Fascist art in the Piedmont region. Continue downhill along Via Genova to the last few homes in the village, then follow a dirt trail through the vineyards, which runs parallel to highway SP 29. An abrupt crossing will take you to another valley and in another direction as you descend beneath dense vegetation in the ☺





RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 2 Montà - Monteu Roero

direction of Val Diana (*Vallis Dianae*), an area of woods and gorges they say was blessed by a pagan goddess of the hunt.

The itinerary continues winding along the base of this damp valley as it follows the Rio Canneto through lush habitats for truffles and the occasional muddy stretch where rain water tends to gather. The trail then heads back up through hillside vineyards with a final steep section of climb to the last few hexagonal chapels of the Stations of the Cross of Santuario dei Piloni, which was a place of pagan worship during the pre-Roman era before being converted to use by Christians. It is an evocative setting with a 360° view of the surrounding hills and is certainly worth a leisurely visit. The chapels, records of which date back to 1774 and which were rebuilt in their current hexagonal shape in 1897, contain groups of statues depicting scenes from the Passion of Christ. By taking a brief detour along the “Sentiero Religioso” (Religious Trail), you will reach the Church of SS. Giacomo e Filippo Minore, which features two marble heads from the late-Roman era and the remains of brickwork from the 13th century.

Returning to the main itinerary, stay along the crest of the hill in the direction of Santo Stefano Roero as you enjoy, to your left, a panorama of untamed, natural amphitheatres of cliffs and other rock formations. You will also note the typical flora found on Roero hilltops, including chestnut trees, Scots pine, and steep hillside vineyards. The *Rocche* rock formations are a constant feature of this section of the itinerary

and throughout the “Grande Sentiero del Roero”, a trail that crosses the sandy landscapes of this geological phenomenon that extends for over 40 kilometres (25 miles). The origin of these rock formations dates back some 250,000 years ago and certain geological changes to the area due to erosion caused by a phenomenon known as the “Capture of the Tanaro”. The Tanaro river originally flowed from south to north, reaching the Po river near Carmagnola. As a result of erosion caused by another river, the Tanaro changed course and began flowing towards Alba, hence the “capture” of the Tanaro river, which caused great changes to the soil in the valleys affected. The streams and rivers of the Roero area began shifting towards the new Tanaro Valley, carving deep gorges and picturesque ravines into the sandy soil. The tributaries inherited by the former watershed adapted to this new situation and the result of all this was truly unique; cliffs and spires, fossils and pyramids of yellow sand can still be seen amid the rolling Roero hills, which are so fragile that landslides and mudslides continue to alter the landscape from one year to the next.

Once at Bricco Bissoca, at an altitude of 405 metres (1,330 ft) where you will find an impressive, cylindrical aqueduct, the trail begins to fall steeply back down the hill with a stunning view of the village of **Santo Stefano Roero**. When you reach Piazza Santa Maria del Podio, with its characteristic ridge of rock decorating the square, you can take a break here or in the local *trattoria*, or you can continue the itinerary along

highway SP 110. Continue alongside the town cemetery, then turn left in the direction of Carretta. On March 8, 1945, this tiny hamlet was the site of a victorious battle of the resistance fighters, who had a base here, against Fascist troops returning to Turin after several days of violent skirmishes in Cisterna d’Asti. It is said that so many shots were fired on that day that the trunks of the large chestnut trees alongside the road here are still riddled with bullets.

After climbing past the homes in Carretta, the trail winds down through the cool of old-growth chestnut trees, crosses the “Sentiero della Castagna Granda”, (Big Chestnut Trail) and reaches the hamlet of Lambi, where you will find a breathtaking view of the medieval Monteu Roero Castle overlooking the valley of pristine woodlands. It is an image from another time, one that evokes stories of the robbers and bandits who, in the 19th century, sought escape routes along these isolated trails, such as the infamously ferocious Delpero, who once terrorized this area.

Once back on the asphalt, continue in the direction of **Monteu Roero**. When you reach highway SP 29 at the entrance to the village, turn immediately right towards the cemetery. ■



Variant 2A

Monteu Roero - Battagli (Veza d'Alba)



Variant 2A

Monteu Roero - Battagli (Vezza d'Alba)

A variation of the RBT itinerary, this section connects the two central crests of the Roero region as you ride alongside the crest of the *Rocche* rock formations, descend into the valley, then head back up towards Vezza d'Alba.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

7 km



ELEVATION

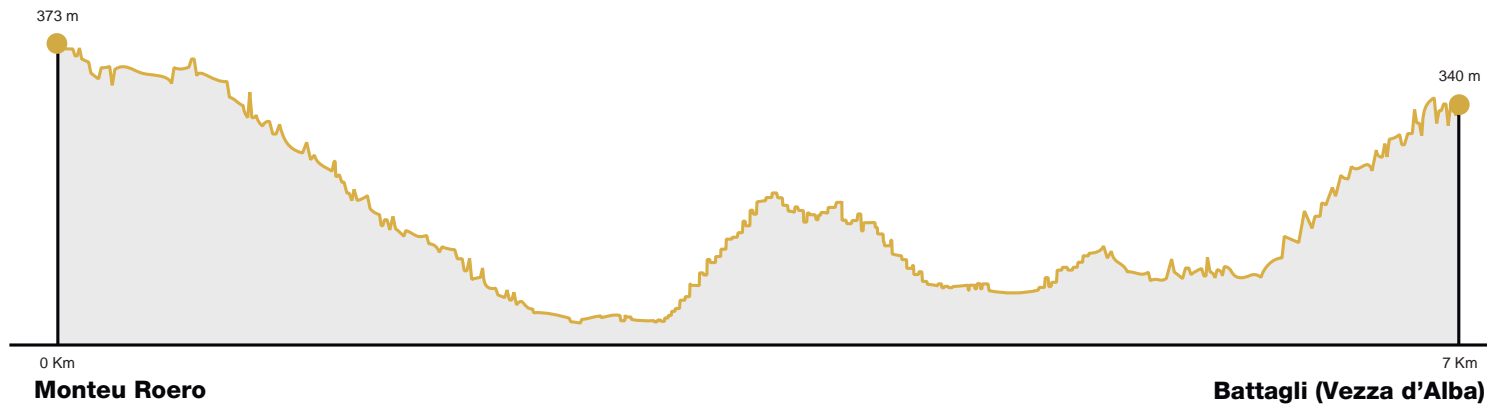
START	FINISH
373 m	340 m

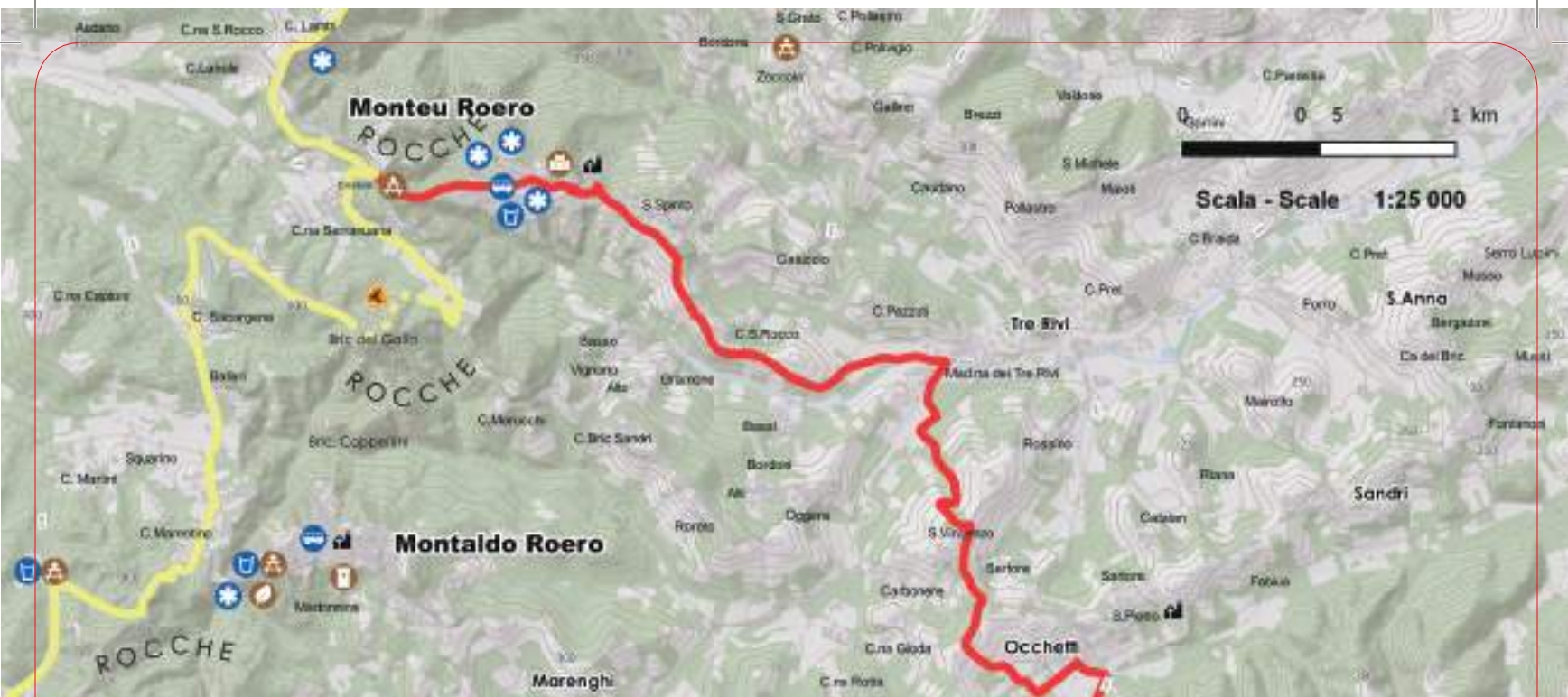


DIFFICULTY

MC

Itinerary profile





RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Variant 2A Monteu Roero - Battagli (Veza d'Alba)

Start in **Monteu Roero's** Piazza Roma, where you can enjoy one of the most spectacular views of the area's *Rocche* in a stunning, natural amphitheater just outside the village. The town actually rests on a strip of friable rock, so the homes closest to the ledges require regular work on their foundations to ensure that they are safe.

Follow along Via Umberto I in the direction of Canale, leaving the Church of San Nicolao behind you, and continue along the wall of the medieval Monteu Roero Castle, which rises up from atop *Mons Acutus*, the tallest of the hills here, and for which the village was named. This privately-owned castle is opened for tours during "Castelli Aperti" (Open Castles) and other local events when the village opens its doors to visits of its network of underground wine cellars. A visit to the castle is a great opportunity to get a feel for what life must have been like in the Middle Ages, especially in the manor's inner courtyard, and to admire the wonderful frescoes on the main floor.

As the road narrows, you will come to the Church of San Bernardino, facing the climb up to the castle. Continue along the road, then turn right after a few steps at a downhill switchback, where you will see a frescoed shrine on your right surrounded by a hedge, whereas to your left there is an impressive rock wall. Here, you will begin following "Sentiero dei Fossili" (Fossil Trail) in the opposite direction along highway SP 29 in the direction of Tre Rivi. Before a sharp switchback, take a narrow, paved road to the right, which soon turns to dirt and takes you 📍





RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Variant 2A Monteu Roero - Battagli (Veza d'Alba)

through vineyards, cultivated fields and strawberry farms to the base of the valley at Tre Rivi. A large *ciabôt* clinging to a hill, surrounded by vineyards, guards this section of the trail. The structure was built over the remains of the Pulciano Castle, which was lost nearly a millennium ago and was replaced by the current medieval manor, and is one of the most photographed scenes in the entire area.

Once back at highway SP 29, near an information panel, leave the “Sentiero dei Fossili” to the right in the direction of Montaldo Roero. After about 50 metres, leave the paved road again to follow a dirt road to the left, which briefly runs parallel to the main highway through the fields, before heading up gradually through the vineyards as it zigzags through small hamlets and past lovely farmhouses to the top of the hill and the houses of S. Vincenzo and Occhetti. When you reach highway SP 257, turn right onto the paved road and continue on until you reach “Sentiero del Tasso” (Badger Trail) near the hamlet of Cà Violi.

Continue along the main highway, then in a few hundred metres, at a sharp curve to the left, turn right onto a flat dirt road, where there is a wayside shrine that is now half buried by the raised surface of the road. From here, you can follow the markers for “Sentiero del Tasso”, dedicated to the badgers that enjoy an ideal habitat in these woods and numerous dens of which have been sighted along this trail. Continue through the cool of this trail for about 300 metres, then turn left up a lovely climb through shady woods and vineyards. This area, known as Vadolmo, is

RBT - Roero Bike Tour - Variant 2A Monteu Roero - Battagli (Veza d'Alba)

important for the fossil of a mastodon's leg bone that was found here and which dates back to the Pleistocene era. This fossil is now kept at the Roero Nature Museum in Veza d'Alba. The trail then passes through characteristically dry woods of downy oak and Scots pine to reach the crest of the hill. This section ends near **Cascina Battagli**, where "Sentiero del Tasso" meets "Sentiero del Roero Centrale" (S4) on the Monticello-Veza d'Alba leg of the Roero Bike Tour (Leg 5). ■





Leg 3
Monteu Roero - Pocapaglia



Leg 3

Monteu Roero - Pocapaglia

This leg of the itinerary takes you along the historic “Grande Sentiero del Roero”, which winds along the crest of the *Rocche* rock formations through the *Silva Popularis*, old-growth woods of the Po Valley. From Pocapaglia, you can also reach the centre of Bra by following the signage for Trail S1.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

14 km



ELEVATION

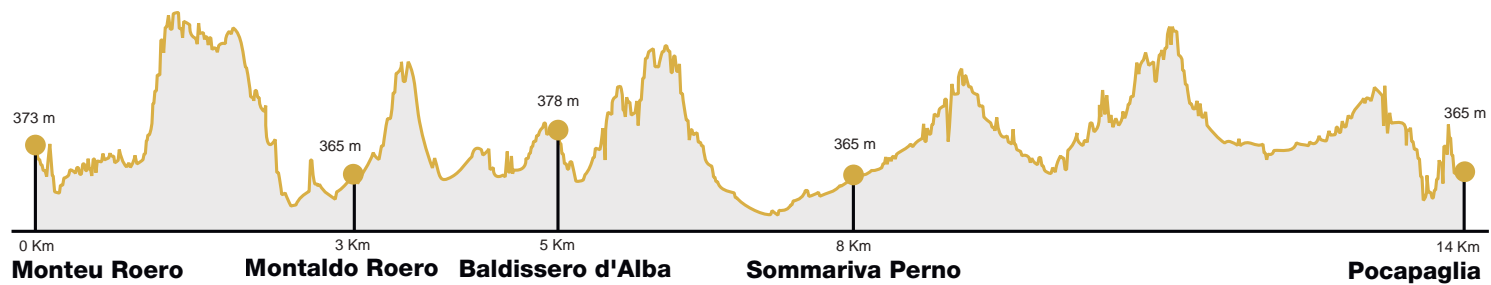
START 373 m
FINISH 365 m



DIFFICULTY

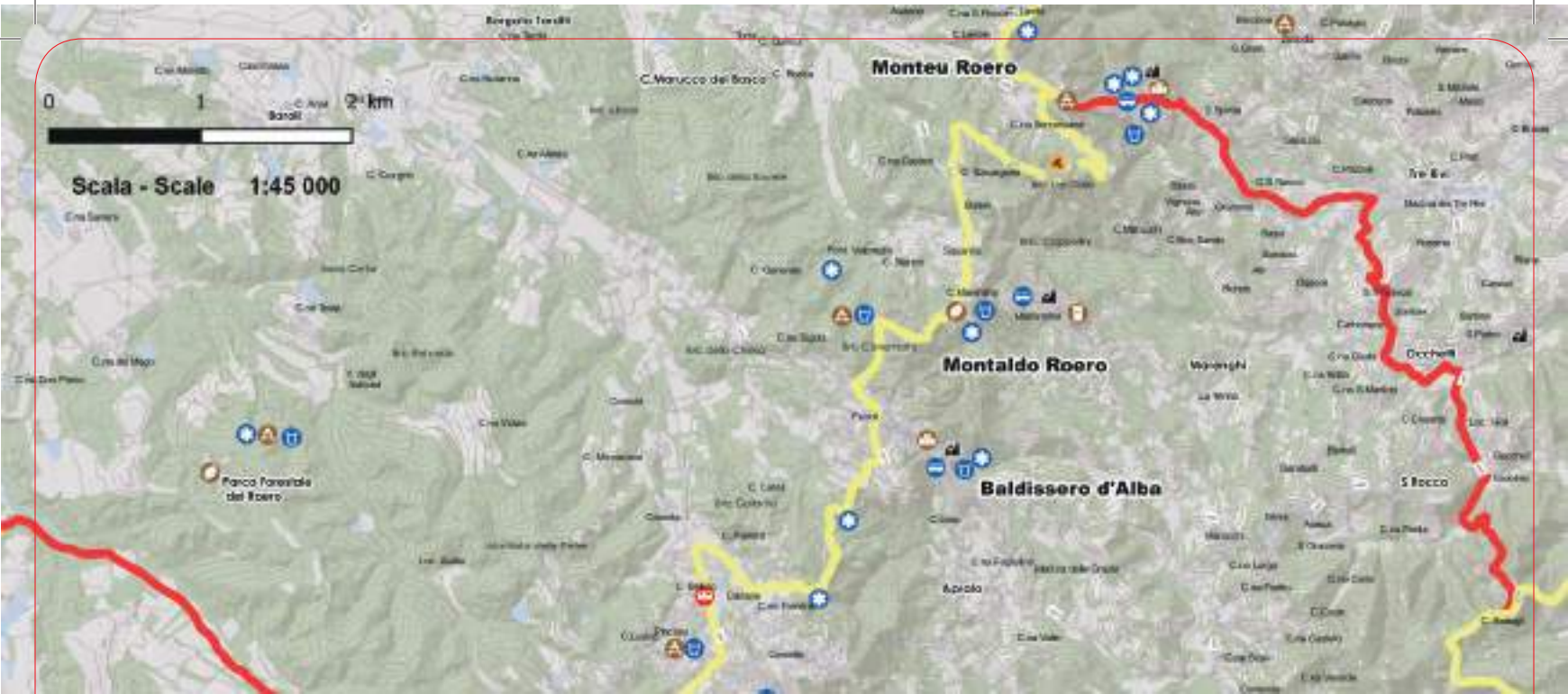
MC

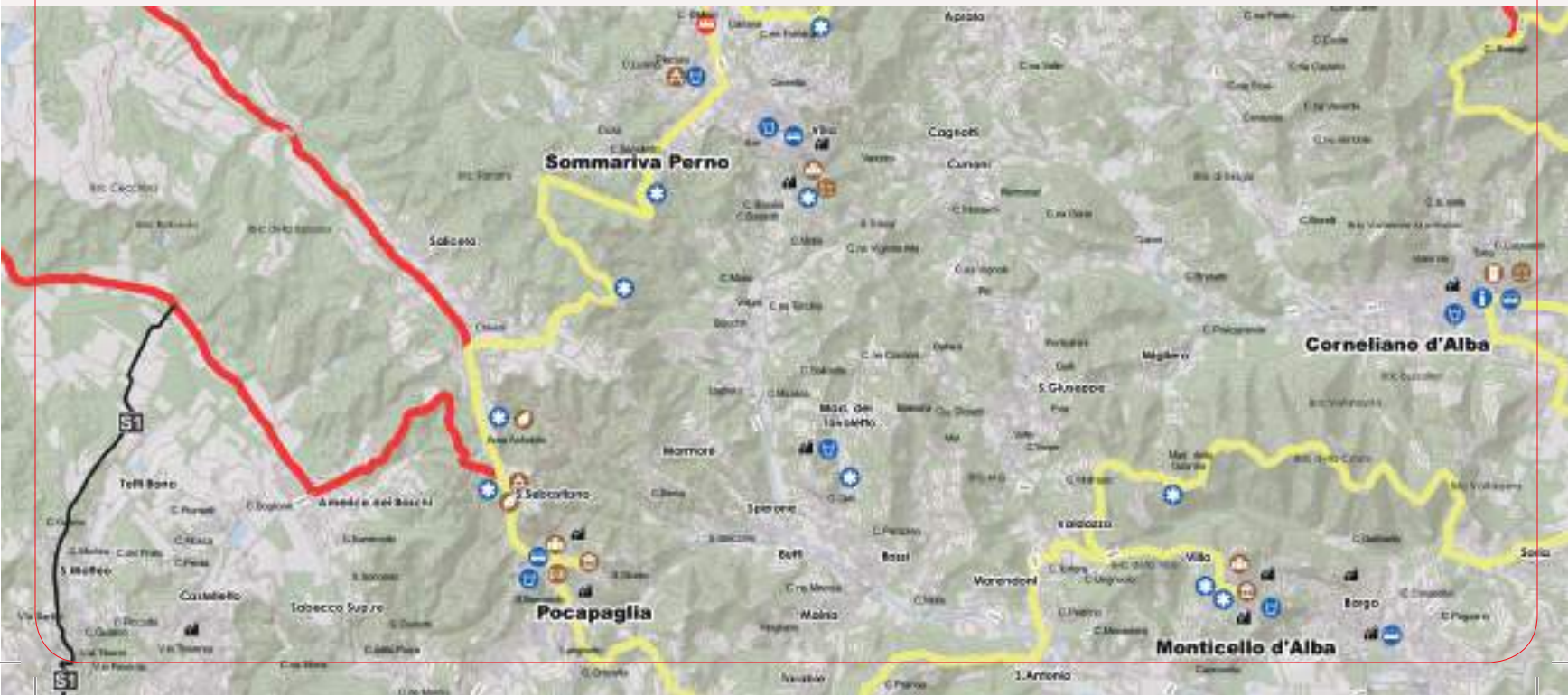
Itinerary profile



0 1 2 km

Scala - Scale 1:45 000





From Piazza Roma in **Monteu Roero**, follow the signs for the “Grande Sentiero del Roero” (S1). Cross the bridge over the gorge, then turn left in the direction of the town cemetery. Past the cemetery, the paved road continues along the flat past cultivated fields, greenhouses and hazelnut groves to Serramuana. After an abrupt deviation to the left, you will be immersed in the woods as you descend back down towards Cascina Sacargena, just outside **Montaldo Roero**, the smallest of the hilltop villages in this area, but you will not actually enter the village unless you choose to make a slight detour. The trail runs along the edges of this municipality and its woods, vineyards, groves (of apricots in particular, so there is an apricot festival held here every year in June), its cylindrical, medieval tower rising up above it all. A symbol of the village, this tower rises up an impressive thirty metres (98 ft) and has a diameter of more than 8.5 metres (27 ft). It was commissioned by the Roero Family circa 1374 alongside the older castle, which previously belonged to the De Montaldo Family and was lost in the 1700s.

From Cascina Sacargena, the itinerary continues along highway SP 253 in the direction of Montaldo Roero. Near a wide crossroads, turn right onto highway SP 119 in the direction of Baldissero d’Alba. You will follow this highway for about two kilometres, so it will be best to keep to the right-hand edge of the road. The highway doesn’t see a lot of traffic, but better safe than sorry! It is also possible to cut ●



the length of this highway section in half by following the S1 trail, which heads into the woods past the *Rocche* and joins up with highway SP 119 after about a kilometre. This flat highway will first pass by wheat fields and hazelnut groves and then run alongside old-growth chestnut groves, its majestic trees creating welcome shade for your journey.

Brought to the area by the ancient Romans, the chestnut tree was once quite common throughout Roero, but is now only found in significant numbers here on the *Rocche*. The peculiarity of these distinctive trees here is that they grow at an altitude of 300 metres (985 ft), which is much lower than in other areas dedicated to the cultivation of chestnuts. The local variety is known as the “castagna della Madonna” (chestnut of the Virgin Mary) because its harvest begins around the time of the Nativity of Mary (September 8th) and such an early harvest enables these chestnuts to be sold as the “first fruits” of the season. As the farmers here have always said, “It was the only crop that didn’t cost anything. All you had to do was go out and collect it, like manna from heaven.” Today, chestnut cultivation is being threatened by disease, but there are still vast areas of old-growth chestnut trees whose trunks can reach circumferences of greater than 5-6 metres (15-20 ft).

Returning to the itinerary, once you have reached **Baldissero d’Alba**, turn left at the first houses and continue to the roundabout at the intersection with Via Roma. Looking up, you can see the silhouette of the neo-Gothic castle of the Colonna Family and its crenellated towers.

RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 3 Monteu Roero - Pocapaglia

Continue slightly uphill to the right along highway SP 119, then turn right after a few hundred metres near an information panel. From here, the route follows the S1 trail along a dirt road through cultivated fields and back into the woods. The views along this section are breathtaking as you pass numerous natural balconies overlooking gorges protected by wood fencing. The elevation gain here is significant and the edge of the trail—held together by the strong roots of oak trees and Scots pine clinging to the sand—overlooks the ravines in places.

Once you have left the woods, fields of isolated farmhouses will accompany you to an outlying residential area of the village of **Sommariva Perno**. Continue alongside a hotel complex, then turn left near Centro Sportivo del Roero onto highway SP 10, which will take you into town. At the intersection with Strada Sappelletto, leave the main road that would take you into the hilltop centre of the village (with its majestic castle, which was once the residence of Rosa Vercellana, the first Countess of Mirafiori and Fontanafredda and wife of Victor Emmanuel II, King of Italy), then turn right along a straight road, past homes with well-groomed yards.

This narrow, paved road continues through the countryside then turns to dirt and gravel after a few kilometres. Head back up the hillside and back into woods that stretch for many miles along the base of this damp valley alongside the Roero cliffs. These woods are a part of what locals refer to as the “*fini superiori*”, an important, protected forest that the ancient Romans referred to as *silva popularis* (from *populus*, poplar) ❁

and which features oak, poplar, Scots pine, and a rich undergrowth of periwinkle and asphodel.

As the trail leaves the woods, it becomes paved again and takes you to Saliceto/Cravioli in the village of **Pocapaglia**. At the roundabout, turn left in the direction of Pocapaglia, which you will reach after a long, straight stretch of road that runs along the rest area Asfodelo and descends gradually into the village. Past the small picnic area of San Sebastiano with its view over spectacular gorges on both sides, the road begins to climb up towards the Pocapaglia Castle, its walls draped in caper plants. Pass the castle's magnificent outer gate with its warlike high-relief details, which are said to be the work of Jacopo Sansovino, and continue on into the central Piazza Principessa Maria Pia. ■



A landscape photograph showing a steep, rocky cliff on the left side, partially covered with trees. In the middle ground, a hilltop is covered with dense green and autumn-colored trees, with a small village or castle ruins visible on top. The background shows rolling hills under a blue sky with light clouds. The image is framed by a red border and overlaid with a white banner and yellow geometric shapes.

Variant 3A
Saliceto (Pocapaglia) - San Sebastiano (Pocapaglia)



Variant 3A

Saliceto (Pocapaglia) - San Sebastiano (Pocapaglia)

A variation of the main RBT itinerary, this is a flat ring loop through the woods that reaches out to the village of Sanfrè and its impressive castle, with possibility to reach, with a brief detour, the centre of Bra.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

15,5 km



ELEVATION

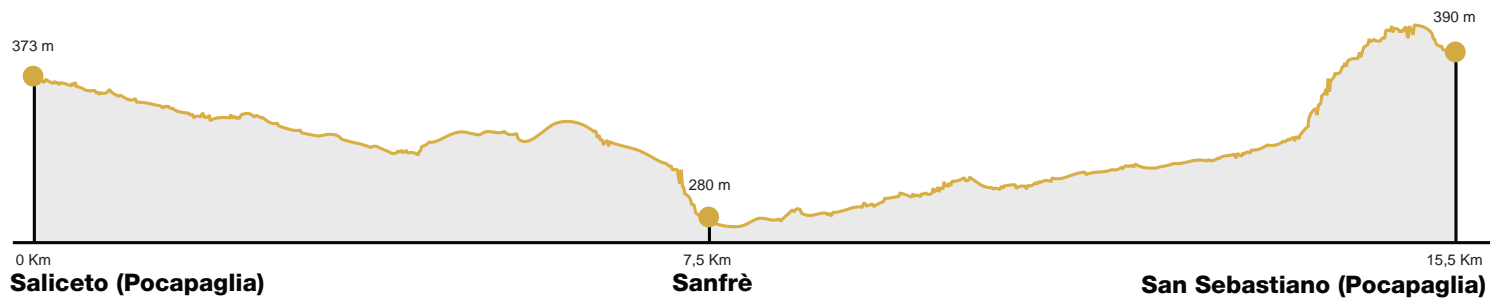
START	FINISH
373 m	390 m

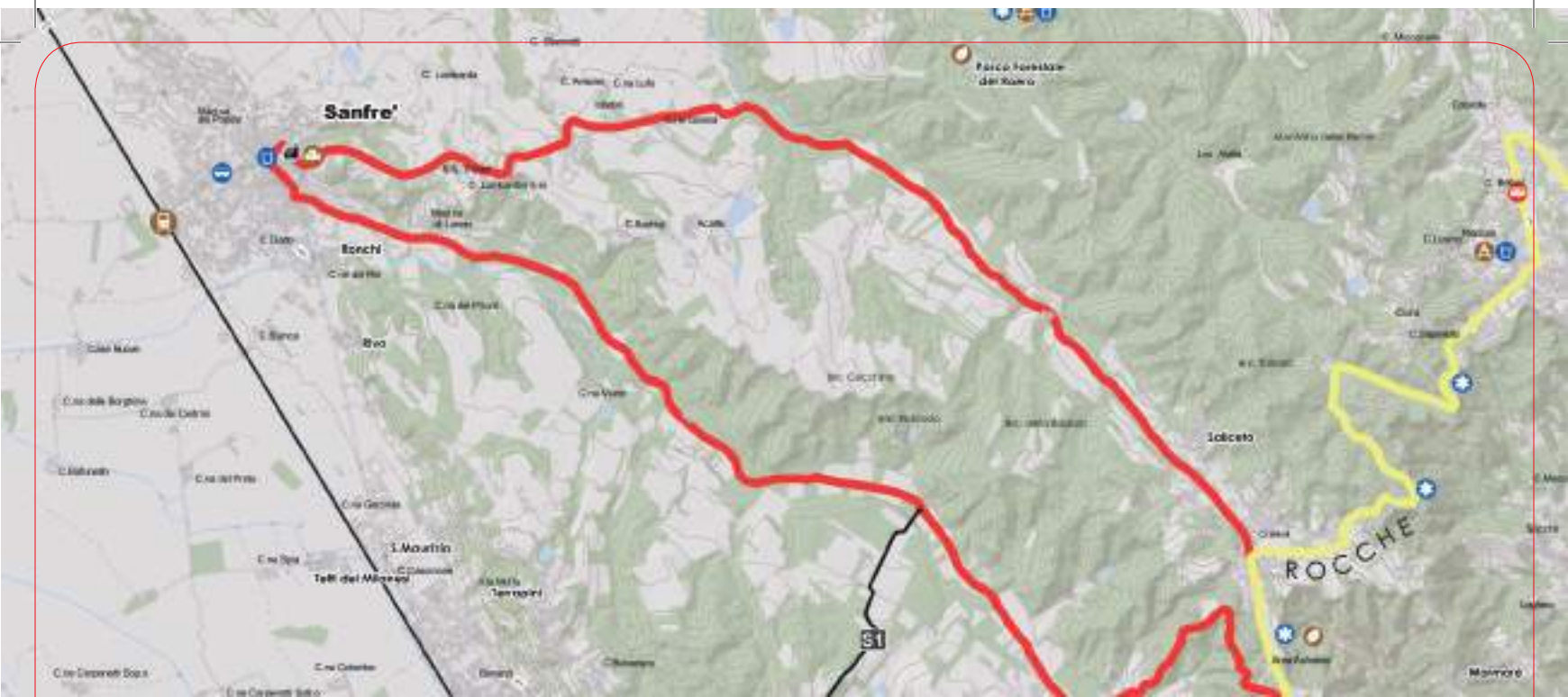


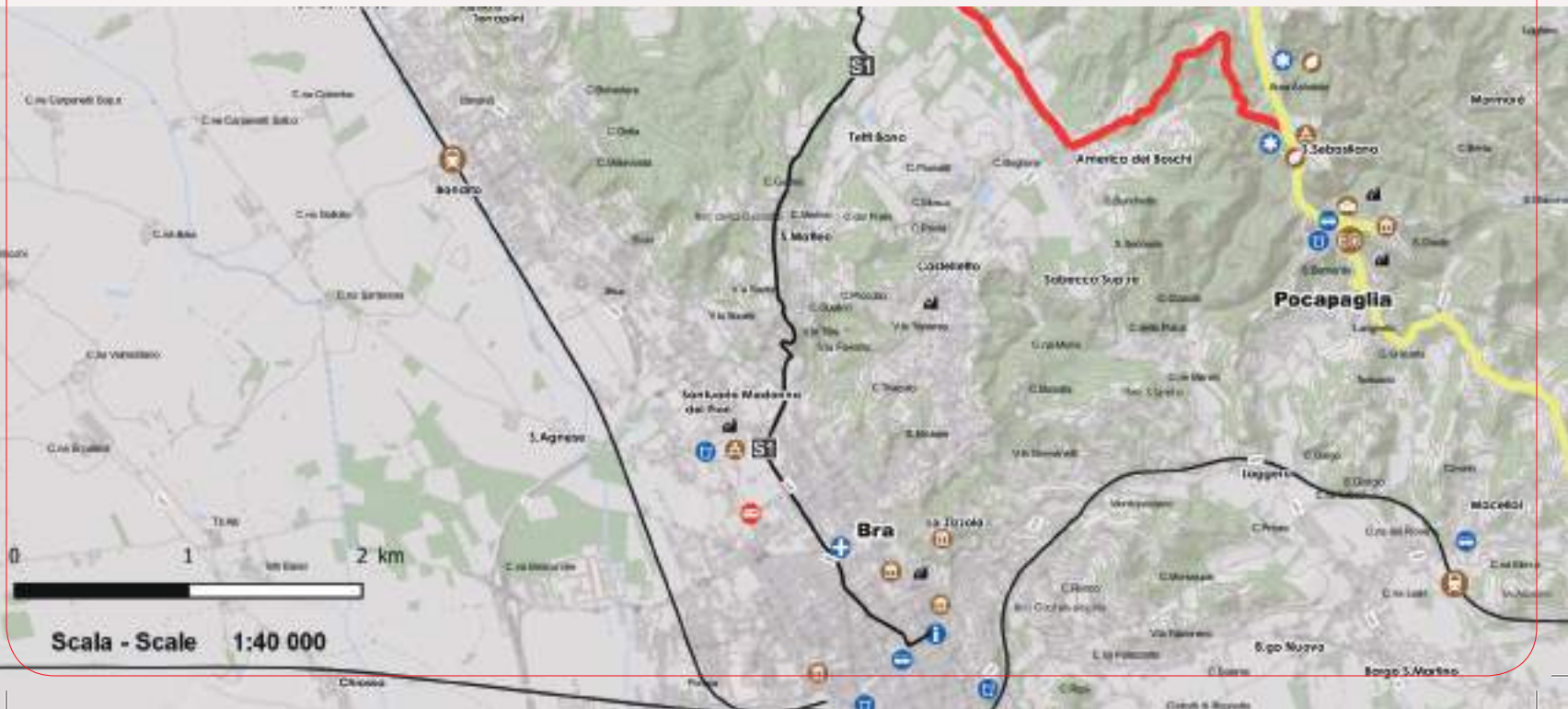
DIFFICULTY

TC

Itinerary profile







RBT - Roero Bike Tour - Variant 3A Saliceto (Pocapaglia) - San Sebastiano (Pocapaglia)

The loop starts at the **Saliceto**/Cravioli roundabout in **Pocapaglia**. From here, turn right onto Strada Boschi, a leisurely road that passes a few homes and then fields and woods. When you reach the crossroads for “Sentiero Botanico della Verna” (Verna’s Botanical Trail), follow the signs inviting you to continue straight in the direction of Sanfrè. Past some homes in Borgata Martini and then Cascina Gioiosa, the road becomes the paved Via delle Chiese, one of the village’s oldest roads, which takes you to the historic centre of **Sanfrè**. Continue through a peaceful residential area until you reach the main entrance to the Isnardi Castle.

This manor dates back to the early 1200s, but nothing remains of the original building, which was burned by the Spanish in the mid-16th century. It was rebuilt as an impressive aristocratic residence, complete with ramparts and a protected passageway that connects it to the village’s main church. In 1630, Christine Marie of France, Duchess of Savoy and wife of Victor Amadeus I, stayed here for a few months when she had fled Turin to escape the plague. At the end of the Isnardi dynasty, the castle was the home to a group of missionary nuns before it was purchased by its current owners, who open the residence to the public for guided tours and public or private events.

Continue along past the walls of the castle beneath the watchtower, then head down towards the centre of the village. As you descend down Via delle Chiese, you will see important monuments such as the Church of SS. Pietro and Paolo, designed in Baroque style by Francesco Gallo 🍷





RBT - Roero Bike Tour - Variant 3A Saliceto (Pocapaglia) - San Sebastiano (Pocapaglia)

(who also designed the impressive elliptical cupola of the Santuario di Vicoforte), the Sant'Agostino Confraternity, and the 18th century Villa Rambaudi. When you reach Piazza De Zardo across from the Town Hall, turn left onto Via Oscar Milano, which runs along the flat to the intersection with Via della Valle. Follow this street for its entire length as it leaves the centre and heads out to the residential area at the edge of town.

Once you have passed the final homes, the road turns to dirt and continues through an ample valley of cultivated fields and tranquil woods. Cross a stream and continue along the trail to America dei Boschi, where you will again find the S1 trail ("Grande Sentiero del Roero"). This area features a vast forest of flora that enjoys these drier conditions, such as the European oak (*Quercus robur*), the European hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), the small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*), the European aspen (*Populus tremula*), the field maple (*Acer campestre*), the sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), as well as the invasive "false acacia" (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and, in the driest and sunniest areas, the Scots pine, downy oak, juniper, hawthorn, and viburnum.

When you reach Strada Salimau, which becomes paved at the edge of the first of the area's homes, continue on to a church of recent construction. Turn left here onto highway SP 340, then keep to the right after a few hundred metres to follow along a gravel road that passes through woods and hazelnut groves before joining back

RBT - Roero Bike Tour - Variant 3A Saliceto (Pocapaglia) - San Sebastiano (Pocapaglia)

up again with highway SP 340. Continue along this highway to Saliceto/ Cravioli and on to the village of **Pocapaglia** near the **San Sebastiano** picnic area, where there is a grassy field overlooking a vast natural amphitheater of rock formations that is considered one of the most beautiful views of the entire area.

From here, you can take a brief detour to **Bra**, at the head of *Il Grande Sentiero del Roero* (Trail S1), by following the signs for Trail S1. This town is at the crossroads of history, culture and cuisine. Its ancient origins are rooted in the Neolithic age and reach back to both the Roman Empire and the Savoy dynasty. As you stroll through its streets and squares, you will see important examples of Piedmont Baroque architecture and the hilltop villa La Zizzola, a symbol of the city.

Bra is the town where the international Slow Food movement got its start and is also known for its own culinary delicacies, including: the Bra veal sausage, which is to be enjoyed raw and Bra cheese (PDO), which is celebrated together with cheeses from around the world as part of the international event “Cheese: *Le Forme del Latte*”. Add some fresh local produce to Bra sausage and cheese and enclose it all between two slices of artisanal bread for a slow-food sandwich that encapsulates all the flavors of this region. ■





Leg 4

Pocapaglia - Monticello d'Alba





Leg 4

Pocapaglia - Monticello d'Alba

Leg 4 of the Roero Bike Tour connects the area of the *Rocche* rock formations to the central series of Roero villages, winding along paved, low-traffic country roads for about the first half of the route.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

16 km



ELEVATION

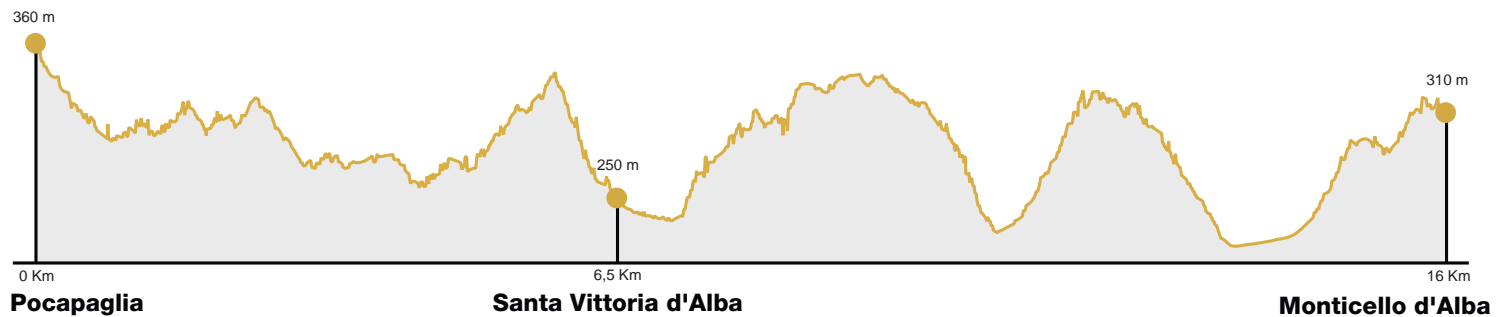
START 360 m
FINISH 310 m

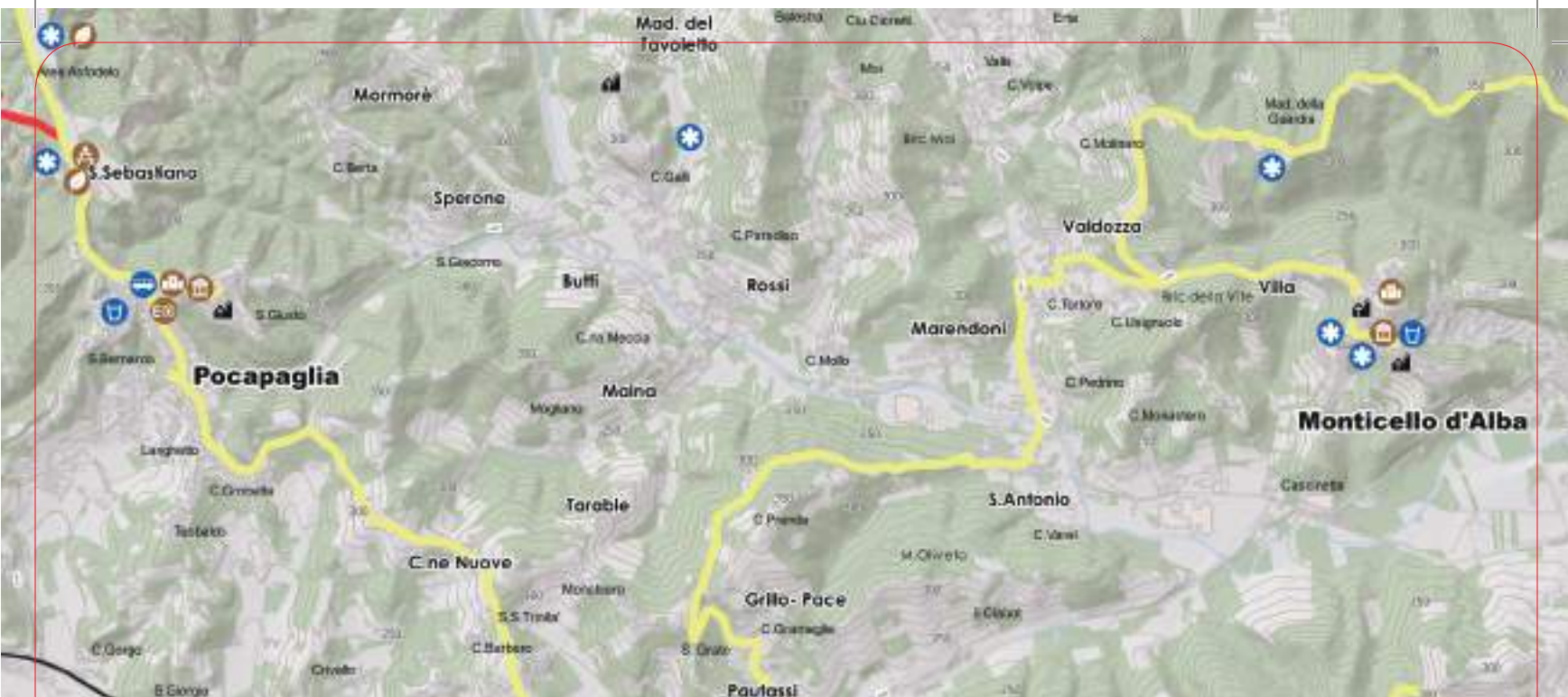


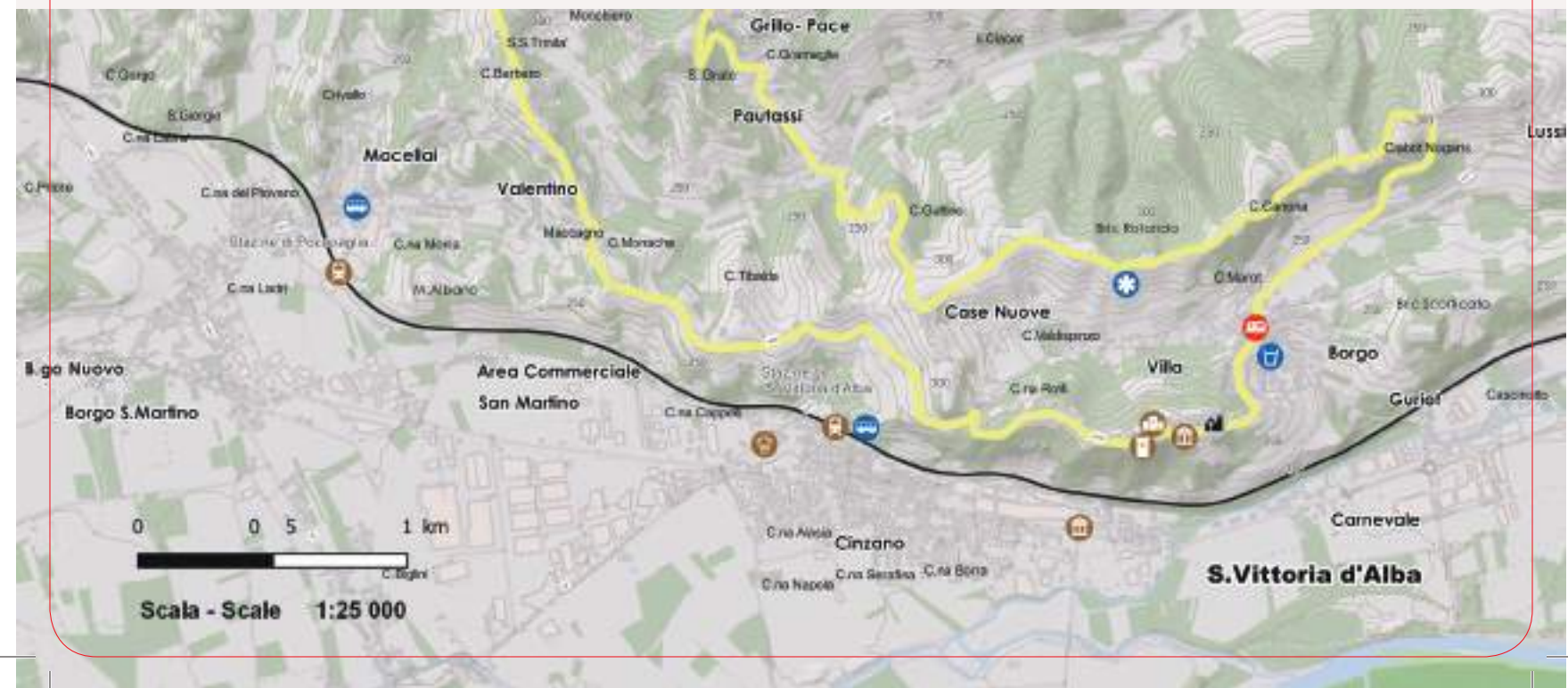
DIFFICULTY

MC

Itinerary profile









This section starts in **Pocapaglia**, set in one of wildest, least accessible parts of this area. Landslides and mudslides over the years, caused by snowfall and bad weather, have transformed this area into a series of impassable gorges, giving the landscape a harshness that inspired the many legends of the *masche* (singular: *masca*), mythical witches who would lie in wait to cast their spells and curses on the unfortunate passers-by. The most famous *masca* is Micilina, who legend has it was burned at the stake right outside the castle here.

The route starts in Piazza Principessa Maria Pia, outside the Church of SS. Giorgio and Donato. Head down in the direction of the Pocapaglia Castle past the Ecomuseo Rocche e Masche and the S. Agostino Confraternity. The castle, the first mentions of which date back to 1197 as the fortress of the “*domini de Paucapalea*”, is located on Via Cavour. Head down from Via Cavour to highway SP 134, then turn left in the direction of Sommariva Perno. After about 400 metres, turn right onto Strada Sant’Ignazio, a paved country road that sees very little vehicle traffic and which winds gradually downhill through vineyards, hazelnut and other groves in the direction of Macellai. To your right, you can enjoy the view of Orti di Bra and the Pollenzo plain (*Pollentia* to the ancient Romans), where once were held the markets of the terracotta vases and amphoras produced in the nearby area of Anforiano, the name of which hearkens back to that glorious past.

Pass through Valentino and continue in the direction of **Santa Vittoria** ➤

d'Alba until you reach highway SP 153. After about 200 metres, at a tight switchback, turn right onto Via Cagna, which winds past the homes of the centre of the village to the top of the hill, where you will find the impressive bell tower. From here, take "Sentiero del Roero Centrale" (trail S4), which will take you to Vezza d'Alba. Pass the castle (which is now a hotel), with its impressive ramparts and characteristic square tower (12th to 15th century), and head back down into the valley along the panoramic Via Castello overlooking the city of Alba, the valley of the winding Tanaro river and the Langhe hills in the distance. Along the way, we recommend a visit to the San Francesco Confraternity, particularly for its series of frescoes, which are the oldest and best preserved of the entire Roero region dating back to around the mid-16th century, which depict scenes from the Passion of Christ.

When you reach Piazza Bertero, continue along highway SP 171 in the direction of Monticello d'Alba. After about 500 metres, turn left onto a gravel road that heads up towards Ciabot Nogaris. At the top of the hill, go around the hotel and turn to the west along the hill-crest road through sunny vineyards and woodlands and past a few fruit trees. Head down to Case Nuove, then turn right in the direction of Pautassi and continue on to the intersection with highway SP 261. Follow the highway for about 100 metres, then turn right in the direction of Gramaglia-Pautassi to descend gradually past farmhouses, vineyards and farmland. At the crossroads with Strada San Grato, turn to the right again in the

RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 4 Pocapaglia - Monticello d'Alba





direction of Sant'Antonio di Monticello and enter the shade of the Lunero woods. Continue along the paved road through the inhabited part of the village. When you reach a wide roundabout, turn onto highway SP 241 and follow this road for about 500 metres, then turn right and head back up the other side of the valley past the houses of Valdozza and the chapel of Santa Maria Ausiliatrice. Dense woodlands run along both sides of the road here, and through the trees you can catch glimpses of the towers of the medieval Monticello castle or the surrounding rolling hills.

This leg ends in the hamlet of Villa of **Monticello d'Alba**, near the Church of San Bernardino, but we definitely recommend a brief detour to visit the castle and its park. It is one of the area's best-preserved castles and, despite various works done to it over the centuries, maintains the impressive shape it was given circa 1376, the year in which it passed to the Roero Family, who run it to this day for tours and events. ■



Leg 5

Monticello d'Alba – Borbore (Veza d'Alba)



Leg 5

Monticello d'Alba – Borbore (Vezza d'Alba)

A route that follows “Sentiero del Roero Centrale” (trail S4) through hilltop villages as you admire castles, towers and groves.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

18,5 km



ELEVATION

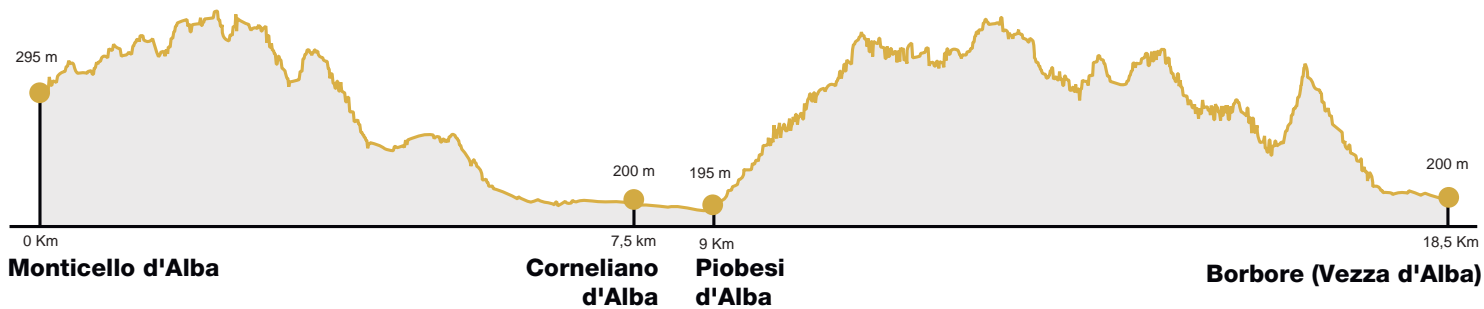
START	FINISH
295 m	200 m



DIFFICULTY

MC

Itinerary profile



Montaldo Roero

Baldissero d'Alba

Veza d'Alba

Dalcastello

S. Rocco

Altoveggiare

Bogonovo

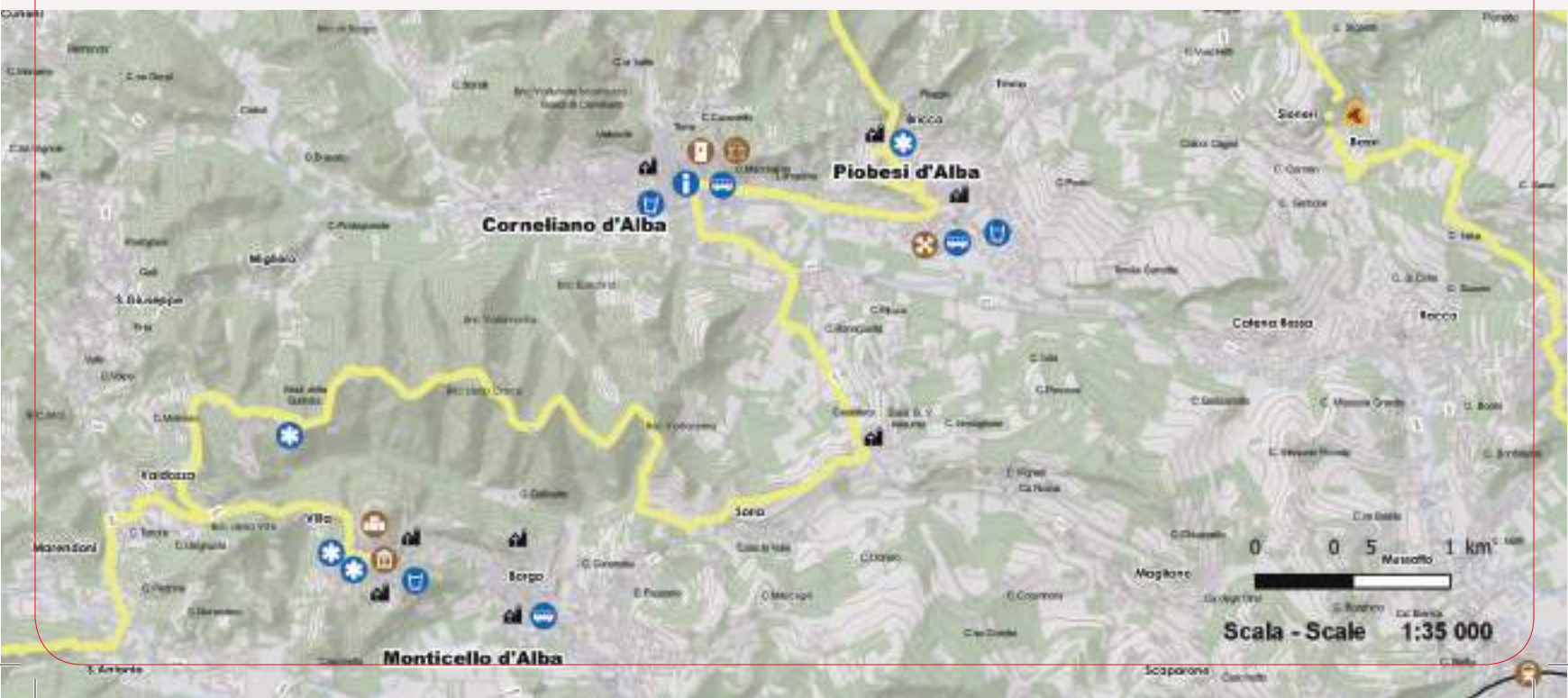
Torri Mastromei
dei Bosch

Resio

Mantaballo

Senari

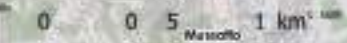




Cornigliano d'Alba

Piobesi d'Alba

Monticello d'Alba



Scala - Scale 1:35 000

RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 5 Monticello d'Alba – Borbore (Veza d'Alba)

70

This leg starts in Villa (**Monticello d'Alba**), where you will retrace a portion of the previous leg along highway SP 241 and then, turning right before the first homes of Valdozza, along a slightly uphill country road that branches off just after a wayside shrine to San Giacomo Maggiore. The road soon turns to gravel and continues along the crest of the hill through sunny vineyards with a view, to the right, of Monticello Castle. Continue through vineyards and a few sections of shade, created by the invasive false acacia, on to a crossroads. Turn right here and follow the signs for the S4 trail and for “Rifugio dell’Anima”, which you will come to after about 500 metres.

From here, you will continue along a long up-and-down section through hilltop woods known as “Bosco di Corneliano”, featuring oak and chestnut trees. Once you have passed a modern chapel dedicated to Madonna della Guardia, head toward the hills Bric della Croce (altitude: 392 m / 1286 ft) and Bric Valtassera (altitude: 339 m / 1112 ft) until you exit the woods. Turn left out of the woods onto a country road that runs along the hillside parallel to highway SP 171 through the hamlet of Soria. The trail continues through ample vineyards to Corneliano d’Alba and its Santuario del Castellero, a solitary structure that houses over 200 restored *ex votos*. From here, turn left along highway SP 171. After about 600 metres, turn left again onto highway SP 275, which runs along the base of the valley through an area of strategic importance that once belonged to the *gens* Cornelia during the Roman Empire.

This will take you to **Corneliano d’Alba**, a historical trading village for local produce, including peaches and Corneliano’s Favorita grape, which, in





RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 5 Monticello d'Alba – Borbore (Veza d'Alba)

turn, supported a longstanding tradition of basket makers who remained widely famous clear into the 1930s. The central Piazza Cottolengo features the Town Hall, the 18th century Church of SS. Gallo and Nicolao, a curious archway with the Savoy coat of arms, which was erected in 1814 in honor of the return of the House of Savoy and provides access to the climb up to the historic centre of Corneliano, and its 22-metre-tall (72 ft), 15th century decagonal tower.

From the centre of the village, take highway SP 10 in the direction of Alba until you reach **Piobesi d'Alba** after a virtually uninterrupted series of homes, shops and other buildings. Once you reach the village, turn left at the weigh station and continue on past the Church of San Pietro in Vincoli. Turn left here onto Via Marconi, and in few metres you will begin the climb up Via Mezza Montà, along a series of switchbacks past houses and hazelnut groves. At one of the final switchbacks, before you reach the hilltop Church of Santa Maria al Bricco, turn off onto a secondary road following the signage for the S4 trail, which heads up a different side of the hill in the direction of Cascina Battagli. You will come across “Sentiero del Tasso”, which coincides with the RBT until you reach your destination of Borbore (Veza d'Alba). Follow the entire crest of the hill in the direction of Valmaggione through a breathtaking valley that has been known for its wine production for centuries. Indeed, it was 1473 when a visiting bishop noted: “The place is sandy and infertile and struggles to produce wheat, but when it comes to wine, it provides a respectable income.” It was in



RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 5 Monticello d'Alba – Borbore (Veza d'Alba)

72

Veza, too, that the Favorita grape got its name, as it was cited here for the first time in the wine cellar books of the Roero Family in 1676.

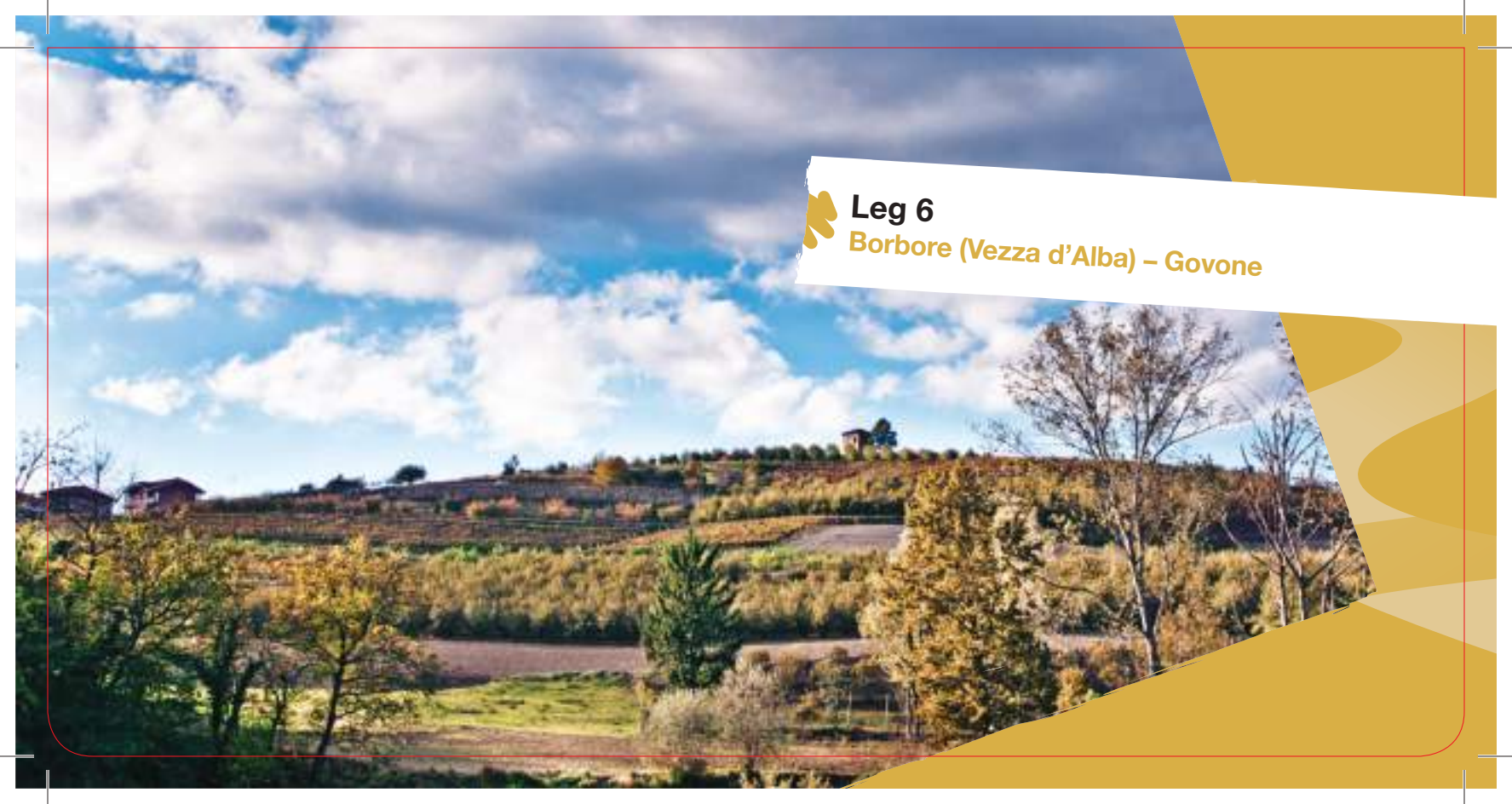
After crossing through the residential part of Valmaggiore, head down along a paved road for about 400 metres, then turn left onto a dirt road that will take you along a false flat to Santuario di Madonna dei Boschi. To get there, you will need to take a brief, uphill detour of about 300 metres, but the sheer beauty of the landscapes here will make the extra effort worth it. The church, with its Romanesque nave, was erected in the 12th century and features Gothic fresco of the Annunciation executed towards the end of the 15th century. Here, there are also the tombs of the Roero Family, buried here from 1608 to the end of the 19th century. Past the sanctuary and its picnic area, descend again and take the “Sentiero del Tasso”, which gets its name from the many badger dens that are found here. When you reach Piazzale San Carlo in **Borbore**, take highway SP 152 until you reach the parking area at the roundabout with SP 29, where you will also cross “Sentiero della Pera Madernassa” (Trail of the Madernassa Pear). ■





Leg 6

Borbore (Veza d'Alba) – Govone





Leg 6

Borbore (Veza d'Alba) – Govone

The ideal continuation of the previous leg, you will now ride to Govone through the Asti countryside and its hillside vineyards, right through the heart of Langhe Roero wine region where one of the youngest DOCG wines are produced.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

20,5 km



ELEVATION

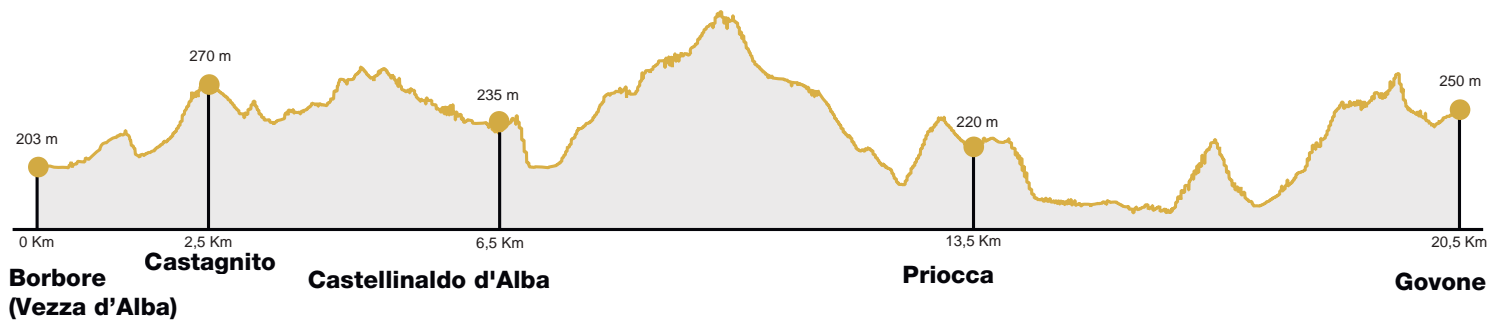
START	FINISH
203 m	250 m

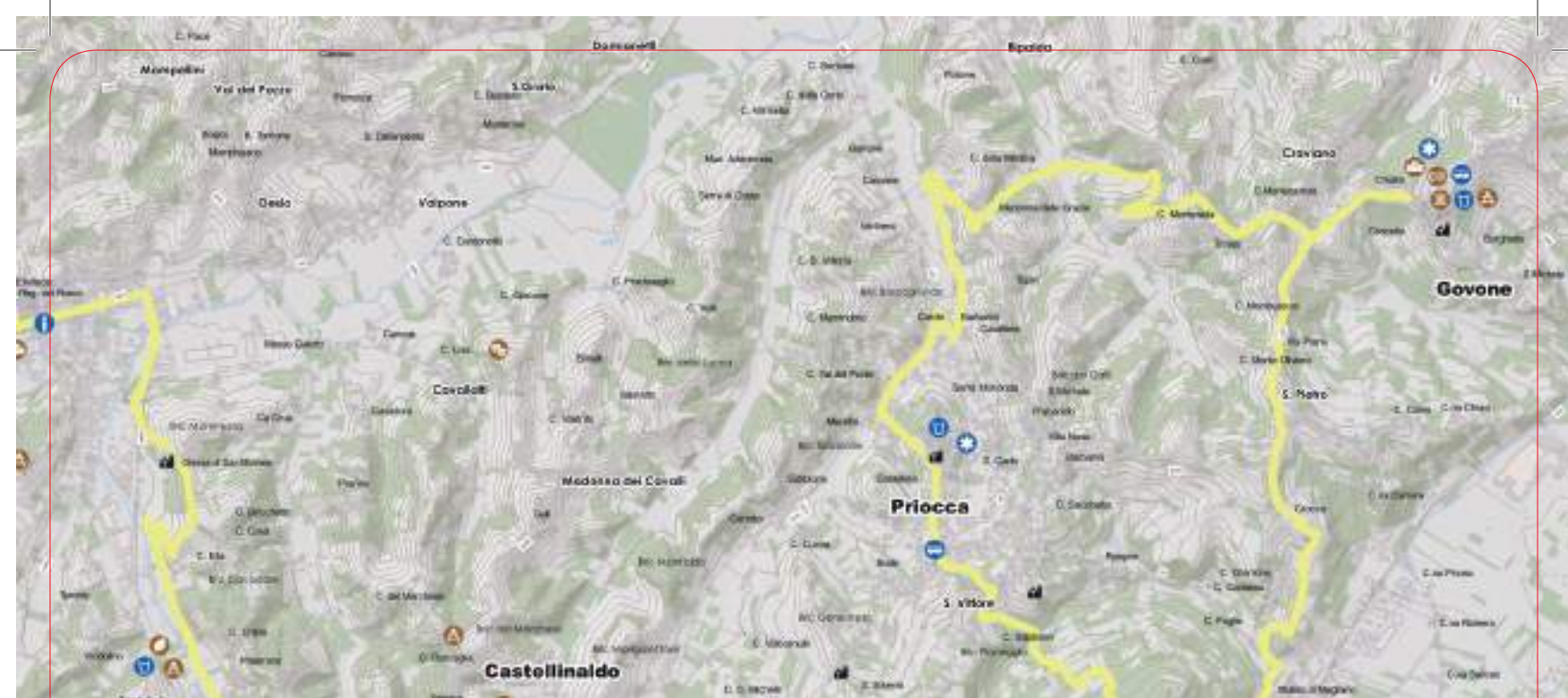


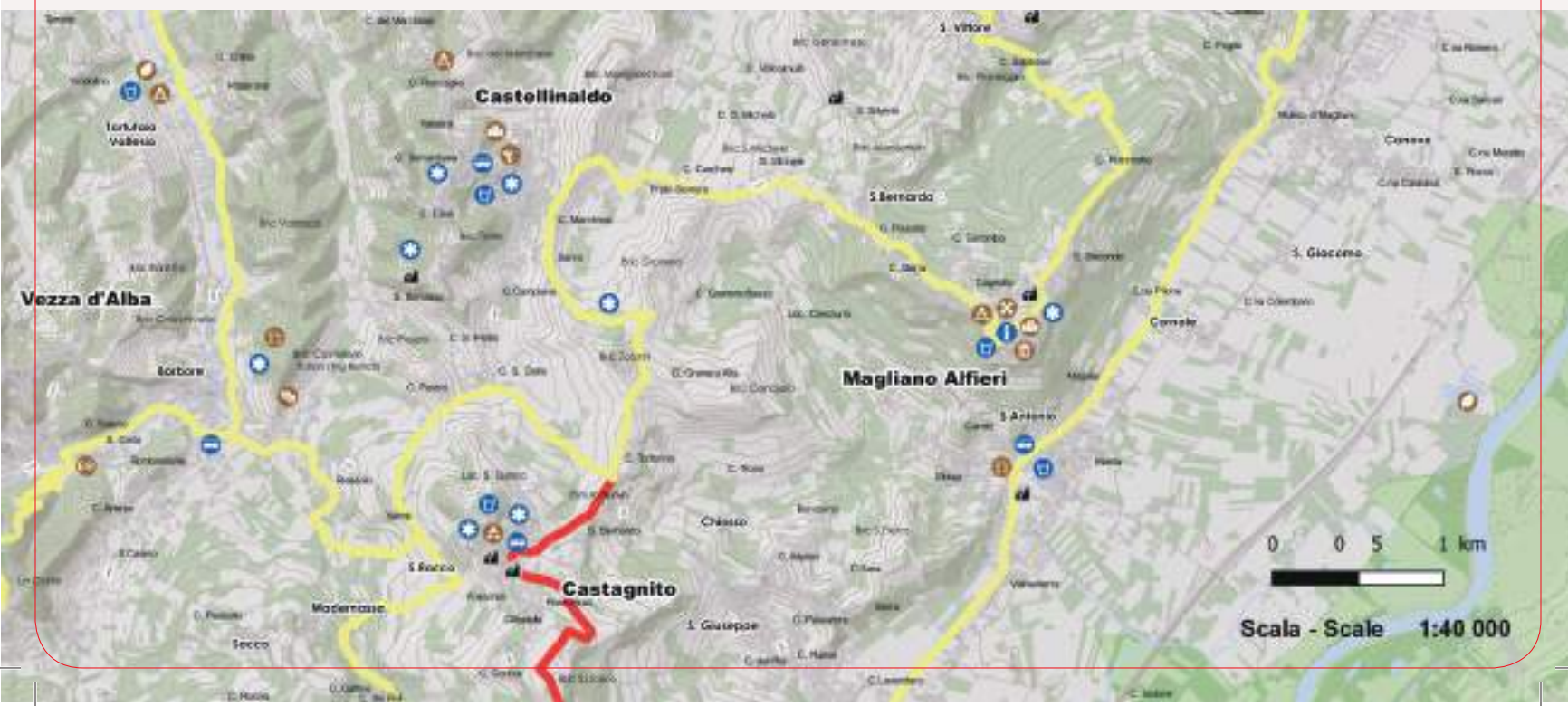
DIFFICULTY

MC

Itinerary profile





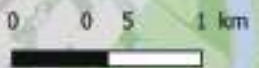


Veza d'Alba

Castellinaldo

Magliano Alfieri

Castagnito



Scala - Scale 1:40 000

From Borbore (**Veza d'Alba**), follow the “Sentiero della Pera Madernassa” along highway SP 50 in the direction of Castagnito for about 600 metres, then turn right through the residential area of Riassolo. Continue down to the base of the Rio Gavel valley, where you will leave the “Sentiero della Pera Madernassa” as you turn left and begin to follow a section that connects with “Sentiero dell’Acino” (Trail of the Grape) in about 1 kilometre. Continue along this section past hazelnut groves, cultivated fields and a few pear trees, which give us the precious Madernassa pear from which the trail you are leaving gets its name. This indigenous variety of pear originated not far from here, in Madernassa, in 1784, as a natural cross between a wild pear and the “Martin sec” cultivar. This crisp, sweet fruit are great cooked and when used to make cakes and pies.

When you get to Vernè, turn left when you see an information panel and return to highway SP 50. Follow the highway for a few metres, then turn immediately to the right onto a dirt road that is a part of the “Sentiero dell’Acino”. Follow the rolling ups and downs of this road through this dense grouping of vineyards, the plots of land marked off by just a few tall trees. At the top of the hill, you will come to the intersection with the paved Via Castellinaldo. At this point, the RBT itinerary heads right along highway SP 50, then, at the first curve in 200 metres, turn left onto a dirt road that crosses a valley of vineyards and wheat fields up to the summit near the Castagnito cemetery in Tortorini.

Turn left onto a wide, panoramic road that starts out gravel and is then

paved as it winds through a vast area simply packed with vineyards, given that **Castellinaldo d'Alba** is the Roero municipality with the greatest surface area of vineyards. Here, we can begin to see the upper part of the village with its typical hillside layout, Damiano Castle dominating over the village, surrounded by an intricate mosaic of vineyards.

Roero DOCG and Roero Arneis DOCG are the typical wines in this region and are the focus of many festivals, awards and other events. Like Barolo and Barbaresco, Roero is produced from Nebbiolo grapes and has seven centuries of history behind it, as the first mention of Roero wine from Nebbiolo grapes dates back to 1303. Roero obtained its “DOC” (protected designation of origin) in 1985, and 2005 was the first vintage to boast “DOCG” (protected and guaranteed designation of origin) status. Roero Arneis, a fruity white wine with an acidic finish, has been cited among the Roero wines since the 1400s. The name comes from a *crù* in the area of Canale, “Renesio”, that dates back to the Roman Empire. As languages morphed over the centuries, the musical name “Arneis” became established in popular culture and was also used to describe a unique, extroverted individual, a friendly person but a bit of a rebel. Throughout the RBT, there are a great many vineyards where you can take a break for a tour and a bit of wine tasting.

When you reach the Via Serra residential area, cross highway SP 176 and continue along the crest of the hill past an *agriturismo*. In a few metres, turn right onto a steep headland trail through the vineyards, which will



RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 6 Borbore (Veza d'Alba) – Govone

take you to an intersection with highway SP 177 to Magliano Alfieri. Turn right and go to **Magliano Alfieri** along a steep section of the highway, where you will have a panoramic view of the valley, its vineyards and the hilltop villages of Guarene and Castagnito. At the crossroads for Priocca, turn right onto highway SP 2, then turn left after about 600 metres onto Via Asilo Alfieri, which will take you into the centre of Magliano Alfieri, with its impressive castle, Belvedere park and a leg of “Strada Romantica delle Langhe e del Roero”. A grand residence erected by the Alfieri Family in the 17th century, the castle was a vacation home for the Italian dramatist and poet Vittorio Alfieri and is now home to both the Museo dei Soffitti in Gesso e delle Tradizioni Popolari (Museum of Plaster Ceilings and other Folk Traditions) and the museum “Teatro del Paesaggio” (Landscape Theater), which is an interactive, multimedia space dedicated to hills and rivers of the Langhe-Roero region. The RBT heads down along Via Vincenzo Troya and Via San Secondo. As you pass the last few houses, follow along the panoramic trail past vineyards and hazelnut groves overlooking the fertile Tanaro Valley, the Langhe wine region and the province of Asti. When you reach Rocchetto, take Via Magliano and then Strada San Vittore into the centre of **Priocca** on Via Umberto I. Just after reaching the main square, with its impressive, neo-Gothic Church of Santo Stefano, turn left onto Via Cavour to go around the highest part of the village, then take a road that descends steeply past the houses to Val del Ponte. At the ✪

intersection with highway SP 2, turn right in the direction of Priocca. After less than 200 metres, turn left onto Via Val Cravera and continue along a dirt road across the hillside until you reach the intersection with Via Santuario, a paved road that heads up steeply towards Serra Moriondo. At the first of the houses, the RBT bends to the right on a brief ramp of paved road that will take you to dirt road where the view opens up onto a new valley of mixed agriculture and a few sections of woodlands. Continue down to the base of the valley, where you will find pastures and fields of grain, and on to Ponte del Re (literally: King's Bridge), so named because King Charles Felix of Sardinia had a bridge built here in the 1800s to facilitate his carriage rides from Turin to his summer residence in Govone. When you reach Piano Vaneschia, turn right in the direction of Trinità, then leave the main road near Chiesetta to descend through woods and cultivated fields to the parking area of the Govone cemetery. Turn left here onto highway SP 235 and continue on to the centre of **Govone.** ■





Variant 6A

Castagnito - Guarene



Variant 6A

Castagnito - Guarene

A variation of the official RBT itinerary, this section connects the Castagnito and Guarene crests for one-of-a-kind vistas of the Roero and Langhe regions.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

2,5 km



ELEVATION

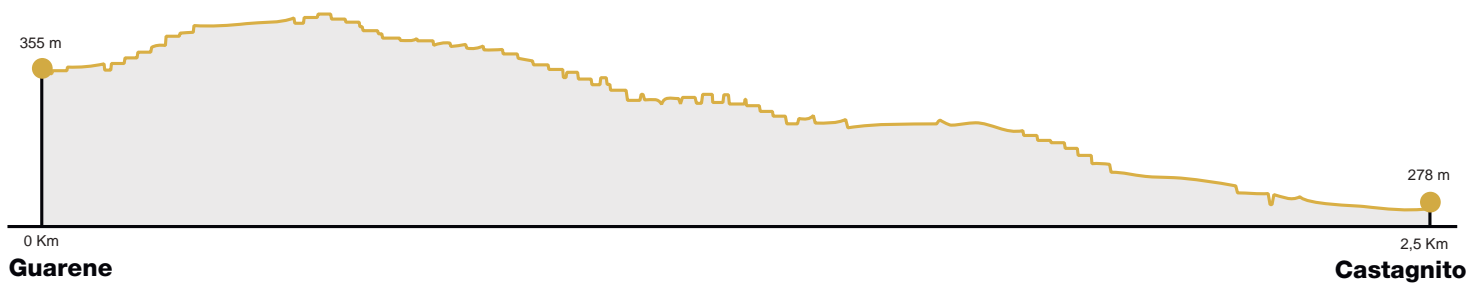
START	FINISH
355 m	278 m

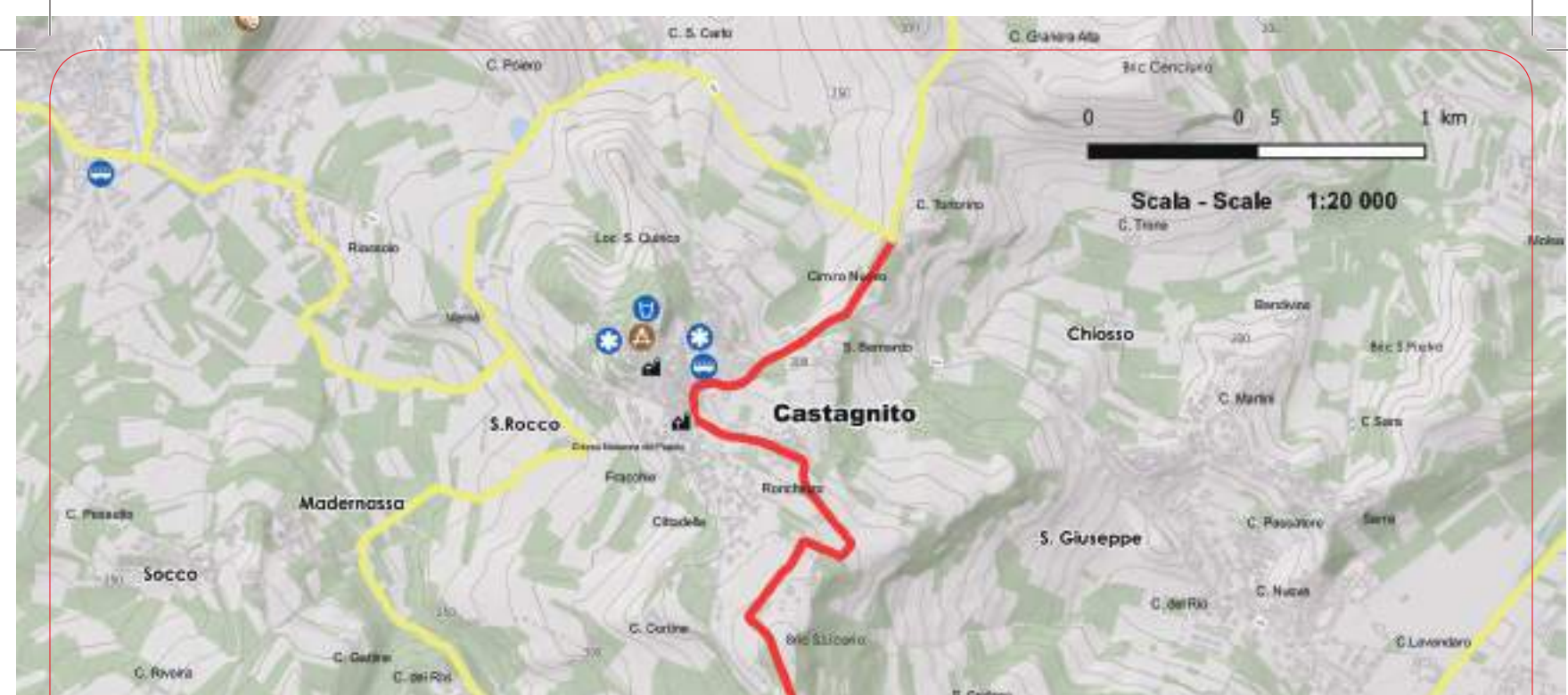


DIFFICULTY

TC

Itinerary profile








Start near the **Castagnito** cemetery in Tortorini, where three country roads meet. From the cemetery's parking area, turn right onto highway SP 50, then left after 300 metres onto Via delle Fontane. From here, get back on highway SP 50 and turn left onto a narrow road through the centre of town, which comes out onto a crossroads where you will find the Church of Madonna del Popolo.

The route continues to the left along Via Ronchesio past homes of recent construction and a small playground with a drinking fountain. The road turns to dirt and bends sharply to the right to head up along the most panoramic section of "Sentiero dell'Acino", a natural vista point overlooking the Asti hills with the villages of Magliano Alfieri and Govone in the background and then, further out, towards the Langhe wine region. Continue along the crest of the hill past orderly vineyards on both sides until you reach San Licerio hill (altitude: 387 m / 1270 ft), where you will again have a view of Vezza and central Roero.

The trail heads back down steeply, winding past homes with well-groomed yards to the **Guarene** sports complex. Turn left here onto highway SP 50, which will take you to Via Alessandro Roero. Here, we recommend a visit of the historical centre of Guarene and its winding streets that take you to the heart of the village in Piazza Roma for a stunning view of the Tanaro Valley. We also recommend a stroll along the *paramuro*, a corridor along the ancient system of defensive walls beneath the castle, to the *poggiolo*, a vista point that is ideal for a shot of Alba

and the Tanaro Valley. The village's Baroque churches are also of interest, particularly the Church of SS. Annunziata with its spectacular frescoes and an altar piece depicting the Annunciation (an early work by Guglielmo "il Moncalvo" Caccia), Palazzo Re Rebaudengo, home to the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, and the 18th century Castle of the Roero Family, designed in 1726 by Carlo Giacinto Roero and erected atop the hill.

Finally, the Pinacoteca Comunale del Roero, with its contemporary art collections, is also very much worth a visit. ■



Leg 7 and Variant 7A
Govone – Castagnito



Leg 7

Govone – Castagnito

Together with Leg 6, this leg forms a loop connecting all of the hilltop villages of this part of the Roero region to discover the secrets of the mills and of the crossings of the Tanaro river.



DISTANCE/PROFILE

22,5 km
+ variant 2 km



ELEVATION

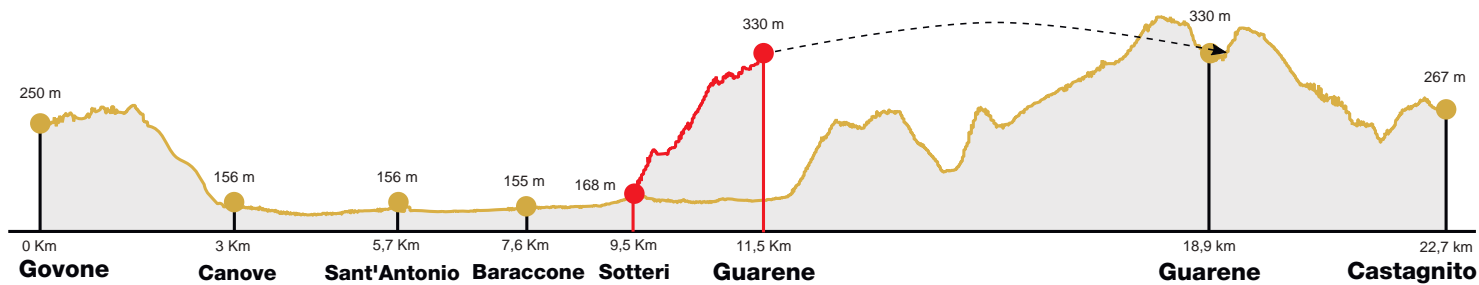
START 250 m | FINISH 267 m

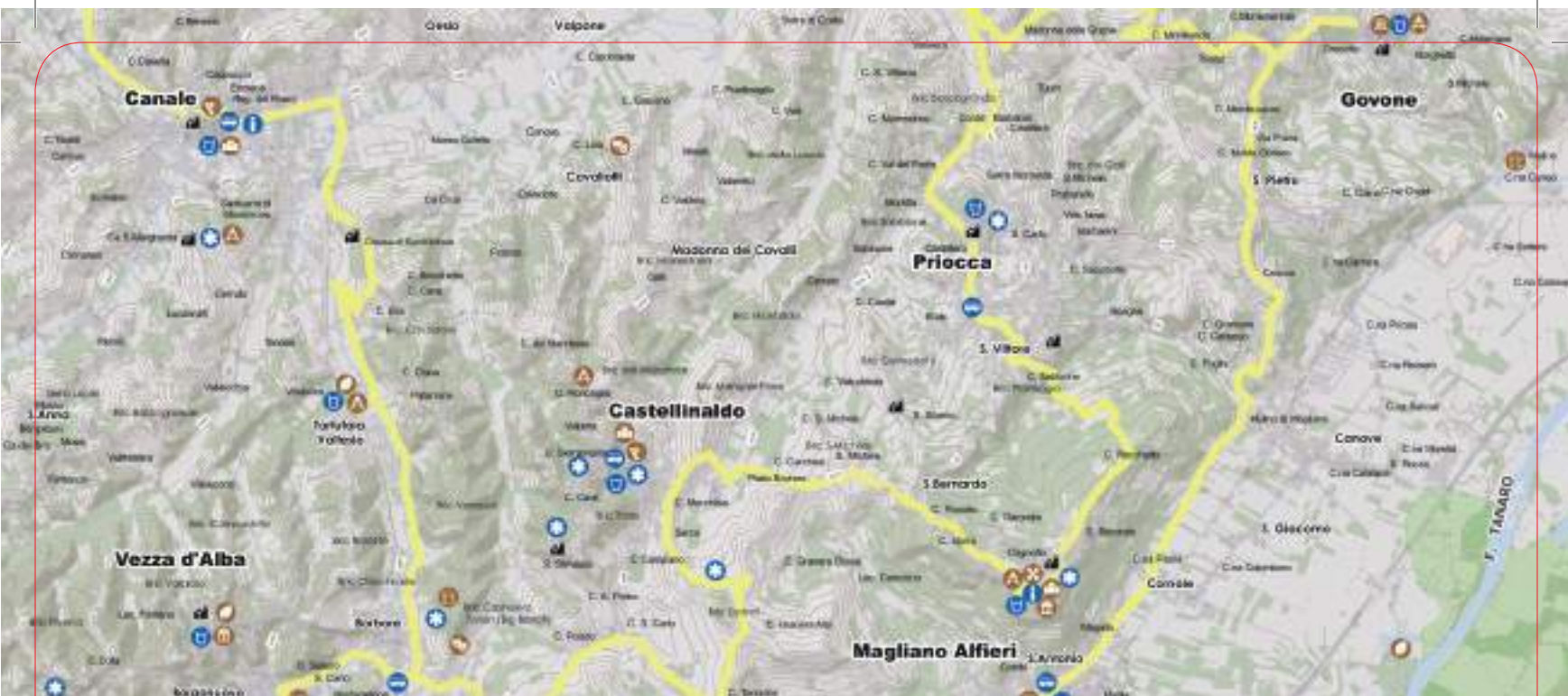


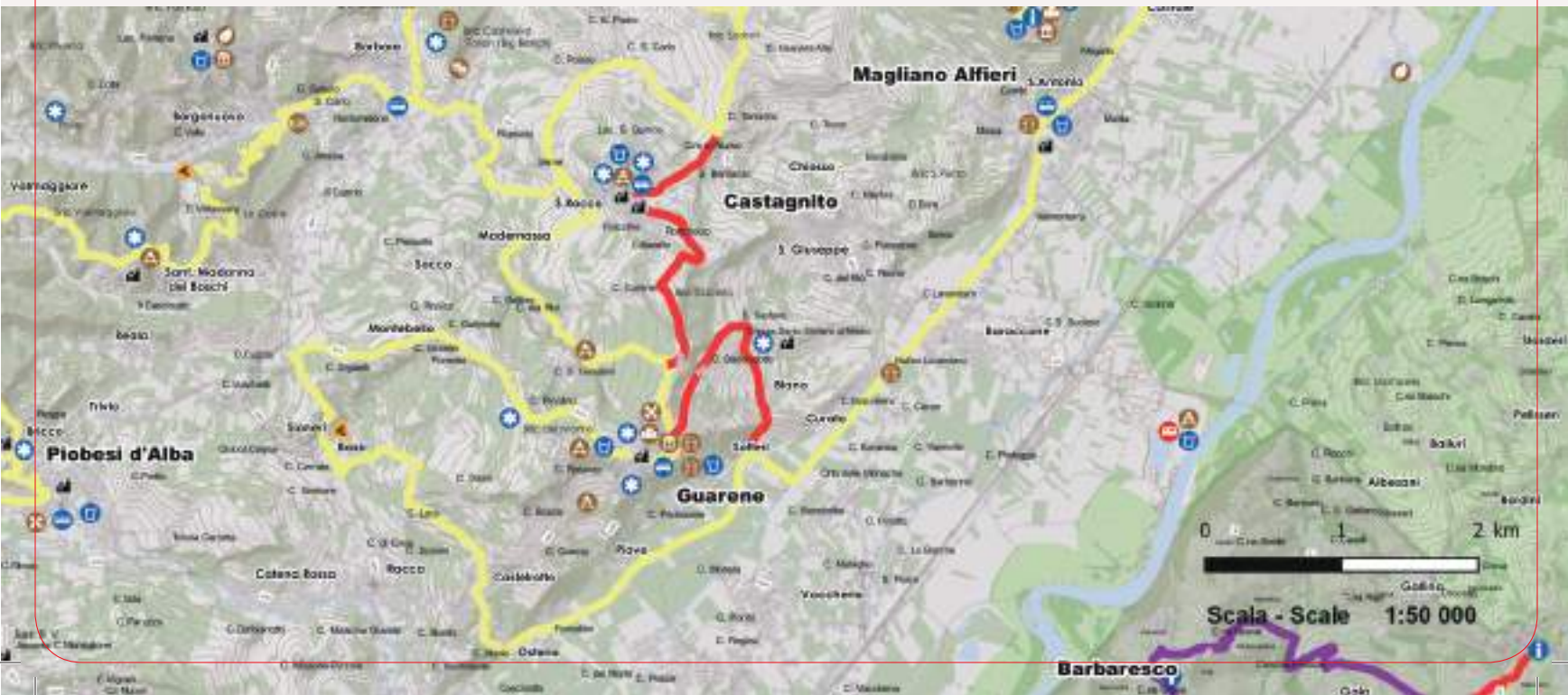
DIFFICULTY

MC

Itinerary profile







The starting point is the centre of **Govone**, beneath its royal castle, the residence of the House of Savoy that was declared a World Heritage site in 1997. The current structure is the result of a transformation of the 14th century medieval castle held by Guarino Guarini and then by Benedetto Alfieri. Owned by the Solaro Family until 1792, the castle was acquired in 1795 by the House of Savoy and remained under its control until 1850. Acquired in 1897 by the municipality of Govone, both the castle and its grounds are open to public visits. Of particular note within the castle are its main stairway with sculptures and relief details from the Royal Palace of Venaria, the Chinese wallpaper in the various rooms depicting the making of porcelain and the stowage of tea, silk and rice and the interesting example of neo-classical *trompe-l'oeil* painting in the ballroom. The Church of Spirito Santo (1767) is also of remarkable artistic value and was, with the arrival of the House of Savoy to Govone, connected to the castle by way of a gallery. As you stroll along the narrow lane around the castle walls, you can also see the house where the Swiss philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau lived during his time in Govone.

When you are ready to get back on your bike, follow the route of the previous leg in reverse taking highway SP 235 from Via XX Settembre in the direction of San Pietro di Govone. Just before you leave San Pietro, take Strada Crocco on your left. From here, the itinerary descends gradually past the houses in the direction of Canove along a narrow, paved road with a lovely view of Govone and the Tanaro Valley. When ☺



you reach the base of the valley, turn left onto highway SP 2, then turn right in just over 200 metres in the direction of Mulini. Here, near Rio Sorso, you will cross “Sentiero dei Mulini” (Trail of Mills) and one of the trail’s most significant mills, Mulino Gallo, an 18th century mill owned by the Alfieri and Visconti Families that was actually functional until the 1970s.

From here, the RBT becomes a leisurely ride along the old valley road parallel to highway SS 231 for about 9 kilometres, alternating between asphalt and brief sections of gravel. The road is not far from the Tanaro rivers and its canals, where there are numerous, abandoned city mills, which point to the historical importance of grain in this fertile valley, rich as it is in alluvial sediments. You will first come to the hamlet of Sant’Antonio of **Magliano Alfieri** that is of Roman origin. Indeed, many relics from the *fundus Mallianus*, a mandatory passage between the Roman cities of Alba and Asti, have been found here.

Pass the Church of Sant’Antonio on your right and continue along Via Moisa, which runs alongside the mill canal and which takes the name Strada Valmorterra for a lengthy section, then Strada Comunale del Lavandaro and Via Sotteri for the section that falls within the territory of Guarene. This will take you to another mill of historical importance, Mulino Lavandaro, owned by the Roero Family and active until 1980. After about a kilometre, turn right in the direction of the hilltop village of Guarene, then turn left after 400 metres to stay on Via Sotteri. Continue

RBT - Roero Bike Tour • Leg 7 Govone – Castagnito

along this flat road for the last 3 kilometres as it passes through Forcellini/Osteria, an area known as the place of origin of the Piedmontese cattle, Italy’s most important indigenous breed of cattle, by way of a natural mutation of this exceptionally muscular breed.

As you ride past groves and fields of grain, you will see Guarene on the crest of the hill to your right, with its characteristic erosion furrows covered with woods above and steep hillside vineyards below. When you reach a small roundabout amongst the houses, the RBT heads to the right to climb gradually up to Castelrotto. Continue on through the residential area to the top of the hill, then turn left onto highway SP 50 to Lora along a panoramic stretch of road past groves of Madernassa pears, peaches and hazelnuts. Two hundred metres past the La Madernassa hotel, turn left and head downhill in the direction of Bassi, where you will have a lovely view of the villages and hills of central Roero. The descent continues past the houses, then turn right near a greenhouse just before you cross highway SP 29. This road will turn to dirt and climb up through fields and woods along the crest of the hill overlooking the Vezza d’Alba vineyards and countryside.

Turn right here onto highway SP 171, which heads up to Mombelli. Continue along the crest of the hill for about 4 kilometres past Montebello and on to **Guarene**. Pass the cemetery and turn right on to Via Gorizia to reach the centre of Guarene, one of the most beautiful, monument-rich villages of the entire Roero region. Cross Piazza Roma and follow Via

Martiri per la Libertà and Via Garibaldi to Via Alessandro Roero and the intersection with highway SP 50. Follow the highway in the direction of Castagnito to the sports complex. Here, the route turns to the left along a downhill, gravel road through the wheat fields and on to a privately owned recreational fishing pond. Continue alongside the pond for about 200 metres, then turn right towards the cool valley where the Rio Borbore begins. Continue slightly downhill along a rocky country road in the woods, past hazelnut groves, gardens and other cultivated fields. When you reach the first isolated farmhouses in Madernassa, turn right again downhill along a panoramic gravel road with a view of the historical village of **Castagnito** with its impressive churches. The descent winds past apple and pear groves and vineyards to Vernè at an intersection with highway SP 50. ■

Variant 7A Sotteri (Guarene) - Guarene

A variation to the official RBT itinerary, this brief section takes you directly to Guarene more quickly than the longer route, making a loop around the village of Guarene.

Starting from the base of the valley at the intersection with Via Sotteri, which is already in the municipality of **Guarene**, for this variation turn right before reaching the first homes of the village and follow along the panoramic crest of the hill towards Bianco. When you reach the intersection with Via Luccio, continue straight leaving the last few homes behind you. Head up the steep climb through the vineyards in the direction of the rural church of Santo Stefano del Maso, a quaint Baroque structure at a sort of crossroads between the vineyards. Its dedication to Saint Stephen, the first Christian martyr, executed in 36 AD, points to the ancient origins of the name of this place. The current structure was erected circa 1759.

From the church, turn uphill to the left and continue up through vineyards and woods along Via Santo Stefano, which will take you to the historic centre of **Guarene** with its castle, once the residence of the Roero Family and which has since been transformed into a luxury hotel.

Continue along Via Luccio and then Via Garibaldi to Via Alessandro Roero to complete this alternative route in the centre of the village. ■

Not to be missed!

Along the way, take some time to set your bikes aside and enjoy some good wine and visit the castles, museums, churches and historical wine cellars.

For further information, visit the site

www.langheroero.it

or call the offices of the Alba Bra Langhe Roero Tourist Board for help planning your tour.

We're certain you won't be disappointed!



Colophon

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