

CYCLING TOURISM IN NOVARA

Every season is good to discover the territory of Novara and its varied province. Riding on two wheels, our journey reveals its capital city, its landscapes and cycling routes throughout the territory.

Novara, lively Piedmontese capital, rich in culture and art, but also of typical traditional products that have made the history of this territory. Arriving in the city, the view is immediately captured by the Dome of San Gaudenzio, the symbol of Novara and the territory and wonderful work of the architect Alessandro Antonelli, born in Ghemme. The very high structure of 121 meters can be visited with an experiential climb up to 100 meters equipped with helmet and harness; the dome rests on the XVIIth-century basilica that houses baroque works and the relics of the patron. But Novara is much more. In the center you can recognize the signs and passages of the history of a city that has its roots in Roman times and is transformed over the centuries, to become a real XIXth-century salon. A pleasant walk will make you discover the Monumental Complex of Broletto, heart of the civil life of the town and now home to the renovated Giannoni Gallery; the Duomo, another work of the same Antonelli, or the ancient Paleochristian Baptistery, one of the oldest in northern Italy. And also the Castle, container of temporary exhibitions, home of the Tourist Office of Novara; a must with children is the Museum Faraggiana-Ferrandi, where their attention will be captured by many stuffed animals from around the world. And then the cloister of the Canonica, a quiet place immersed in history and art, and the pretty Piazza delle Erbe, where it is worth looking for a triangular stone in the pavement. And the typical products? Novara will certainly not disappoint its visitors: it is the city of rice and gorgonzola and here was also invented the bitter Campari... there really is something for everyone!

Just outside the capital, then the Novara countryside is a succession of canals and streams, an endless series of compartments of land and water, which changes colour with the passing of the seasons. In winter the frost whitens them, in spring the water reflects the sky and the massif of the Monte Rosa, which so influences the climate of the territory; in summer the bright green then gives way to the gold of autumn, the time when the rice is ripe and is ready for harvesting. Here the cycling routes wind on low-traffic roads or white roads, in the Bassa (the plain) where many stories are still told, where there are historic farmhouses and beautiful secular architecture with ancient charm, such as the wonderful Abbey of San Nazzaro Sesia, or the Castle of Galliate. You are then immersed in the nature of the Ticino Park, with its itineraries to follow, even in stages, along the course of the river and that develops for about 60 km, from Cerano to Castelletto Ticino at the

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exit of the river from Lake Maggiore. The route is of great charm because it touches all the environments of the park, now in the woods, now in the cultivated countryside, now along the river and numerous canals. The route winds for the most part on existing dirt roads and only a few sections is a mixed circulation. Villa Picchetta, the institutional headquarters of the park, in Cameri and the Old Mill of Bellinzago are worth a visit.

The territory begins to change and rise gently, along a road that smells of wine, history, nature, authentic flavours and laborious hands that take care of an ancient tradition and deliver it, in a glass, to those who want to discover the wonderful Nebbioli of Alto Piemonte. The hills of Novara are between the rivers Ticino and Sesia, and the roads through the vineyards are all accessible with a gravel or MTB. As you go north the territory rises, the slopes become more important and the roads more tortuous, nothing that cannot be addressed even with an ebike, or for those who have the good leg even with normal bikes. Here once again you meet Antonelli, with 3 cycling itineraries dedicated to him: *BicinVigna with Antonelli* allows you to combine physical activity to visits of cultural sites with those more fun in the cellars. We are in the land of Nebbioli of Alto Piemonte, where robust wines such as Ghemme Docg, Boca Doc, Fara Doc or Sizzano Doc are produced. Among the most iconic places of this part of the province we find the Castle-Ricetto of Ghemme, or the Museum of Romagnano Sesia inserted in the Antonellian Villa Caccia.

All the GPX tracks of the Novara cycling routes can be downloaded at this section of the web site

<https://www.turismonovara.it/it/CategorieGuida?idmacro=7>

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