

Second week | 2<sup>nd</sup> day

# Between the Karst and the sea

**Trieste - Duino - Monfalcone - Grado**

*Pedalling between land and water, sea and lagoon, canals and groves of reeds*



From Unità Square, heart of the city, you reach the San Giacomo district, where the Giordano Cottur cycling path starts from, a constant, gentle uphill ride, it leads to the Karst overlooking the **Rosandra Valley**, one of the most interesting nature sites in the territory.

Then you go to Draga Sant'Elia, you leave the cycling path which you followed here from **Trieste** to go towards Basovizza; continue alongside the Karst Plateau and then easily ride down to **Duino**, where there is the famous castle, also celebrated by Rainer Maria Rilke. You soon reach **Monfalcone**: for those who are not so well trained we advise catching the train from Trieste to Monfalcone.

From here a splendid route starts along the estuary of the Soča, among nature parks, reeds, valleys, gulfs, canals, lagoons, little islands (the sanctuary of the Madonna di Barbana), a paradise for nature lovers and birdwatchers.

You then arrive in the historical centre of **Grado**, enhanced by its insularity and the presence of extraordinary monuments such as the Cathedral of Saint Euphemia, the baptistery and cathedral of St. Mary of Graces.

## ROUTE INFORMATION

**Starting point:** Trieste

**Arrival:** Grado

**Length:** 100 km from Trieste (40 km from Monfalcone using the train service from Trieste to Monfalcone)

**Conditions:** some long stretches are on protected cycling paths (Trieste – Draga S. Elia and Punta Sdobba – Grado), others on mixed traffic roads

**Indications:** present from Monfalcone to Grado route FVG 2

**Inter-modality:** bike + train

## USEFUL ADDRESSES

**Tourist Office FVG - Grado,**

Viale D. Alighieri, 66 tel. +39 0431 877111  
info.grado@turismo.fvg.it;

**Trieste Railway Station**

piazza della Libertà 8, Trieste  
www.trenitalia.com

**Monfalcone Railway Station**

piazza della Stazione 1  
Monfalcone - www.trenitalia.com



1 Trieste, Audace pier



2 Duino, view of the Karst towards Slovenia



3 Grado, lagoon

## TRAVELLERS' DIARY

This route starts from the spectacular cycling-walking path, named after the champion from Trieste Giordano Cottur, from Trieste it leads to the Karst using the nineteenth century Trieste-Hrpelje railway line, using the narrow viaducts and tunnels. At the start from the San Giacomo district, there is also an information centre. You go back up the wild Rosandra valley, the route of an ancient spice and salt road, dominated by a picturesque little church, Holy Mary in Siaris – clinging to a rock spur. At Draga Saint Elijah at the Slovenian border, go towards the left in the direction of Basovizza; you pass through Opicina, Borgo Grotta Gigante, Rupinpiccolo and Sgonico, on the far side of the Karst

Plateau, to then descend to the sea at Sistiana and Duino, a well-known resort for its castle as well as the wonderful Falesie di Duino Nature Reserve and for the panoramic “Rilke Path”. Having crossed the Timav, you enter Bisiacaria, (an unconfirmed word origin says it derives from the Latin *bis aquaei*), a historical region between the estuaries of the Timav and the Soča with its traditions, history, culture and language. You then arrive in Monfalcone: we advise this route only for those who are well trained, while we suggest that all the others catch the train from Trieste to Monfalcone. From Monfalcone a pleasant cycling path starts which touches three very

important nature areas: the Regional Nature Reserve Estuary of the Soča, the Nature Oasis of Caneo and the Cavanata Valley Regional Nature Reserve. When you reach Punta Sdobba and the huge reed beds among mudflats and sandbanks at the estuary of the Soča, you cycle along a spectacular river bank where there is a blending of the sounds of the backwash, the smell of the sea, the view of the Istrian coast and the never-ending expanse of the Bonifica della Vittoria (Victory Land Reclamation). Remaining on a cycling path you reach the splendid town of Grado, a jewel of art and history.