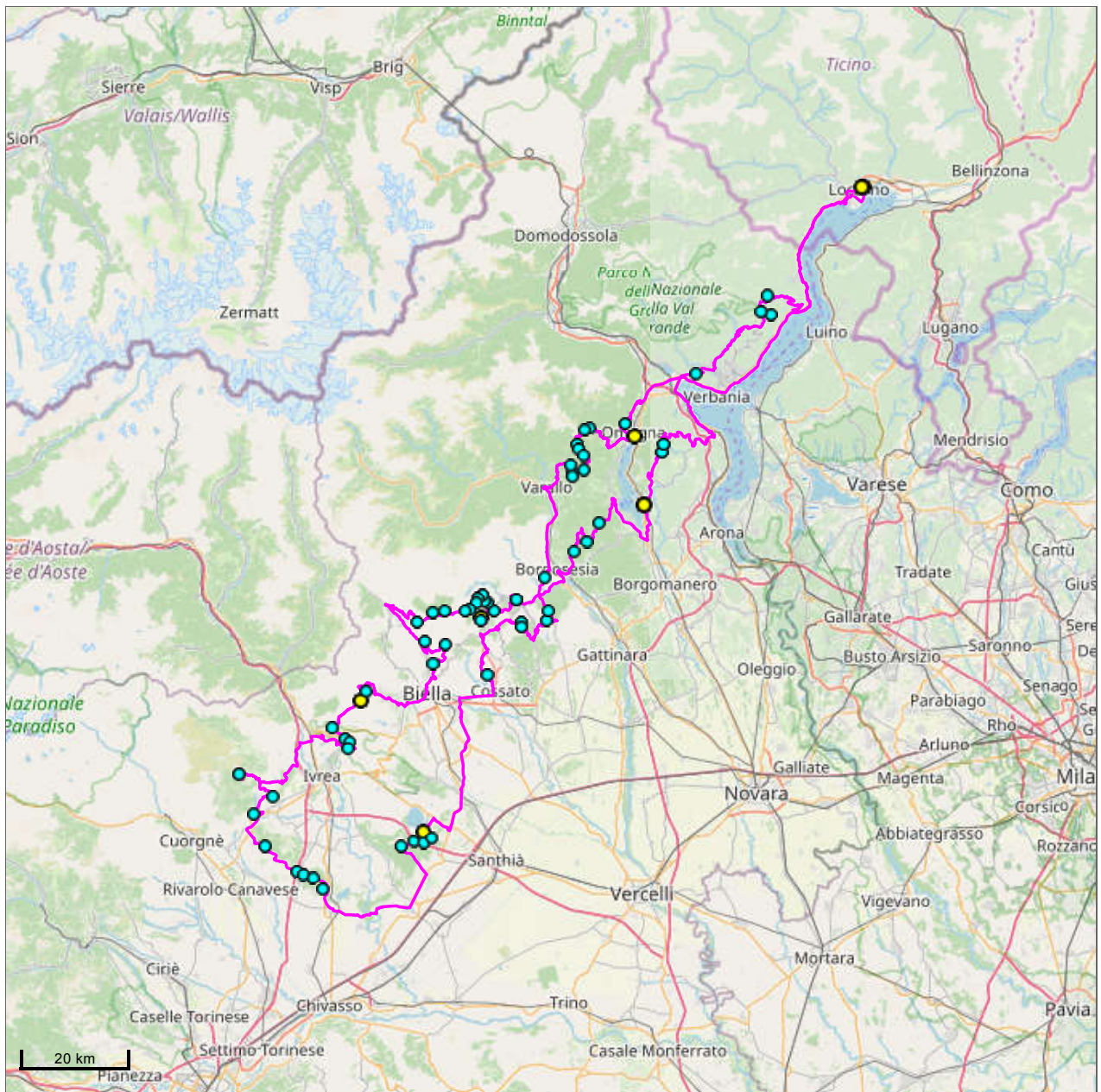
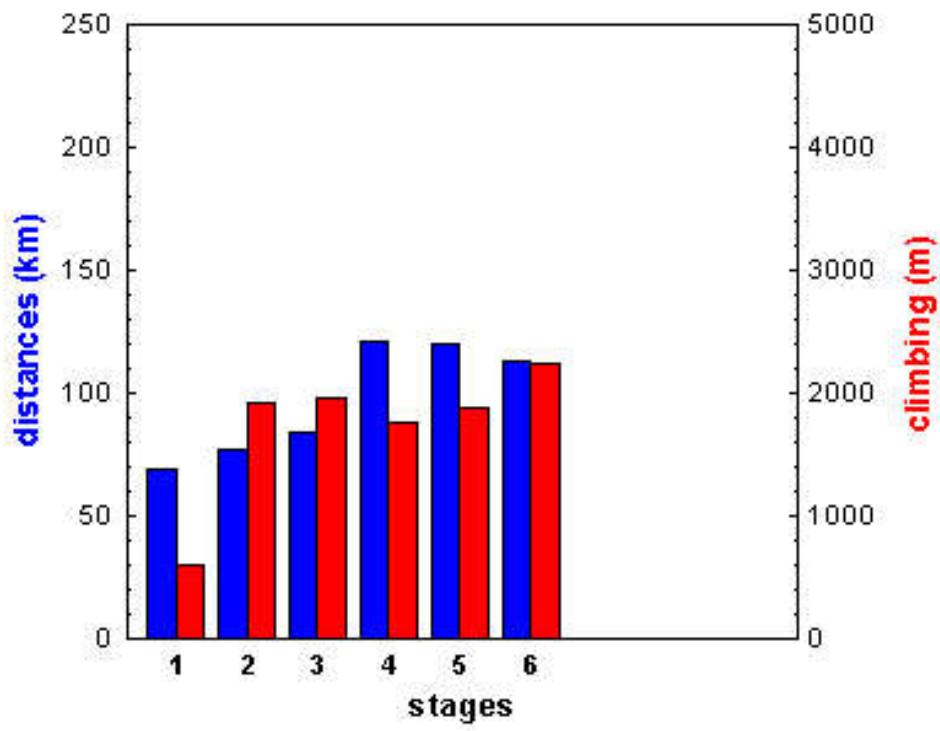


Bicycle tour 2016, 30 June - 05 July

Patrick Schleppe

| stage | distance (km) | climbing (m) |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| Locarno - Verbania - Colletta - Omegna | 69 | 590 |
| Omegna - Camasco - Pray - Bulliana | 77 | 1930 |
| Bulliana - Biemonte - Biella - Campiglio | 84 | 1960 |
| Campiglio - Borgofranco - Strambinello - Masseria | 121 | 1770 |
| Masseria - Vigliano - Borgosesia - Miasino | 120 | 1880 |
| Miasino - Stresa - Il Colle - Locarno | 113 | 2240 |
| total | 584 | 10370 |

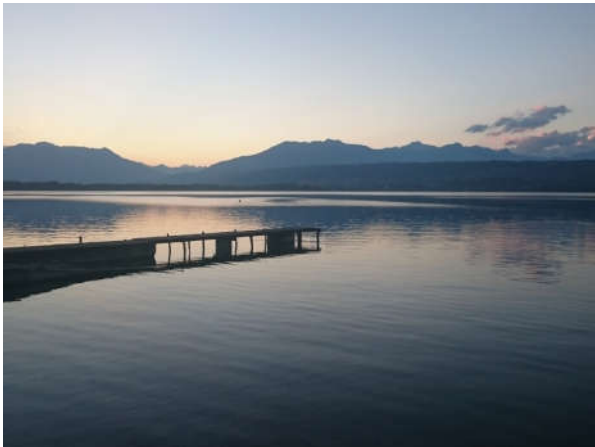




Ascona



Chiaverano and the back-country of Ivrea



Lago di Viverone



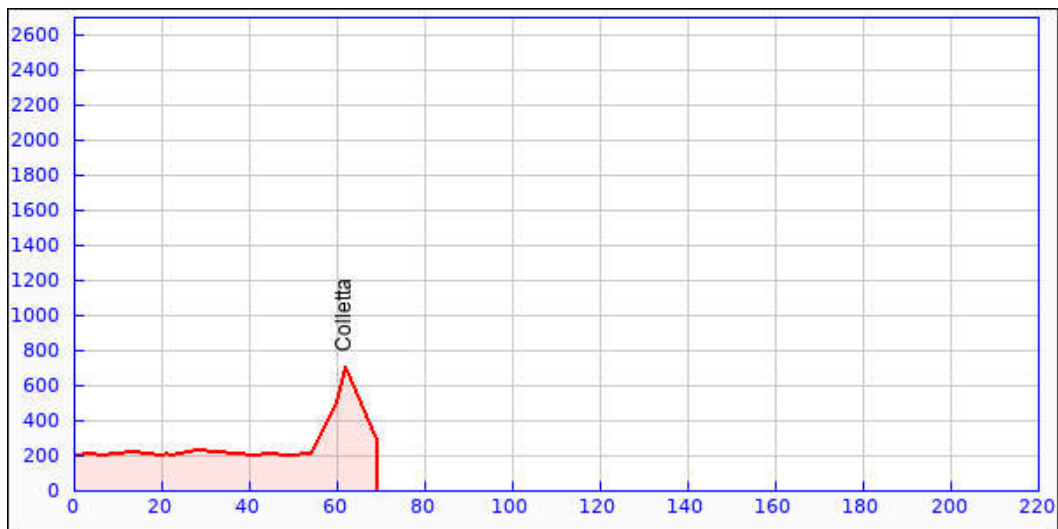
Alzo, Orta lake and San Giulio island

Stage 1 (30 June 2016): Locarno - Verbania - Colletta - Omegna

My 2016 tour was planned more or less like a mirror of the [previous year](#): starting from Ticino and riding along the southern part of the Alps. Only that this time i would go west. I started in Locarno, where i arrived by train in the beginning of the afternoon. The weather forecasts were a bit uncertain but finally correct: cloudy, warm and just a few rain drops. From Ascona on, i was riding along Lago Maggiore, which means that it was almost flat. The lake itself was gray under the gray sky. In Verbania, i turned right towards Gravelona Toce. After crossing that town, i went up towards Casale Corte Cerro. The small road became very steep as i entered the forest after Germagno. I was glad about the smaller chain ring that i had mounted on my bicycle. The lesson from last year had been learnt: small passes are sometimes the steepest ones!

I did not have much sight over the valley since i was riding in the woods. The climb brought me to the pass [La Coletta](#). From there, there was only a short ride down to reach Omegna, the goal of this half-day ride.

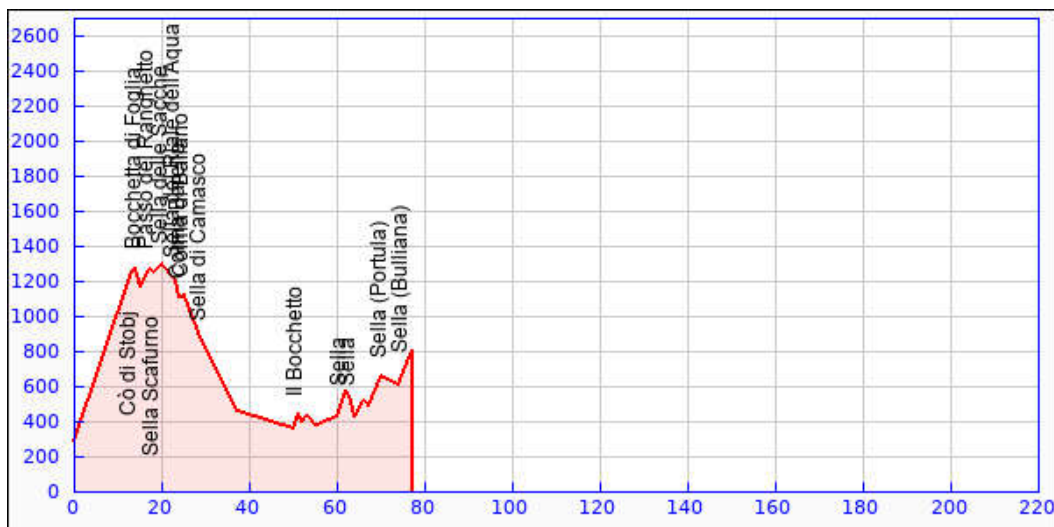
| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Locarno | 0 | 200 | |
| Morettina (Locarno) | 4 | 210 | 10 |
| Ascona | 6 | 200 | |
| Brissago | 13 | 220 | 20 |
| Dàrbedo (Cannobio) | 20 | 200 | |
| Cannobio | 21 | 210 | 10 |
| Punta Creda (Cannobio) | 22 | 200 | |
| Cannero | 28 | 230 | 30 |
| Intra | 41 | 200 | |
| Verbania | 44 | 210 | 10 |
| Fondotoce | 49 | 200 | |
| Gravellona | 54 | 210 | 10 |
| Gallugno | 60 | 500 | 290 |
| Colletta | 62 | 710 | 210 |
| Omegna | 69 | 290 | |
| total | 69 | | 590 |



Stage 2 (1 July 2016): Omega - Camasco - Pray - Bulliana

After thunderstorms in the evening, the weather was nice again in the morning, but clouds still hang around the mountains. They would remain there the whole day. First, i went up to Quarna, a nice climb mostly in the forest. From Quarna up to Alpe Camasca, the road was very ssteep. Further on, a gravel road followed for some 8 km. At the same time as smaller gears, i have mounted 28 mm tires, precisely to be able to ride on such gravel roads. Well, it was partly more stony than i had hoped and i had to dismount my bicycle several times. Still, the thicker tires helped a lot without noticeably more rolling resistance on better roads. The first two passes on that way were [Stobj](#) and [Foglia](#)... after which the road was closed because it would be repaired. Since there was actually no construction work, i decided that i'd be allowed to go on. After a longer part in the forest, i reached the [Ranghetto](#) pass, from where i could finally have a good view over the mountains and villages around. The next pass on the same crest was [Scafurno](#). Then things became more difficult: for about 1 km there was no road, just a path over stones and rocks. For short stretches i had to carry the bicycle. Back on gravel roads, i arrived near Alpe Sacchi and turned right to find the [Sacche](#) pass, have a glimpse over the Camasco valley, and ride back towards Alpe Sacchi. It is only close to the next pass, [Riale dell'Aqua](#), that the road was surfaced again. Now, it was faster to reach the next three passes: [Barella](#), [Ballano](#) and [Camasco](#). Riding down into the Camasco valley, i reached Varallo, and a big road with quite some traffic. This road would have brought me to Borgosesia, but just before i turned right to go over yet another gravel-road pass, [Il Bocchetto](#). Small but also steep. In Crevacuore, i stopped to have a drink, and refill my bottles. I went further towards Pray and climbed to [Sella](#). I wanted to ride further to Piletta and then down to the valley. However, the road was closed because of a landslide, so i had to go back to Pray. The remaining of this day's ride was in the hills of Trivero, nothing vers high, but full of ups and downs, some of then really steep. This brought me over a [Sella](#) and another [Sella](#) and finally to a nice, calm and cheap hotel.

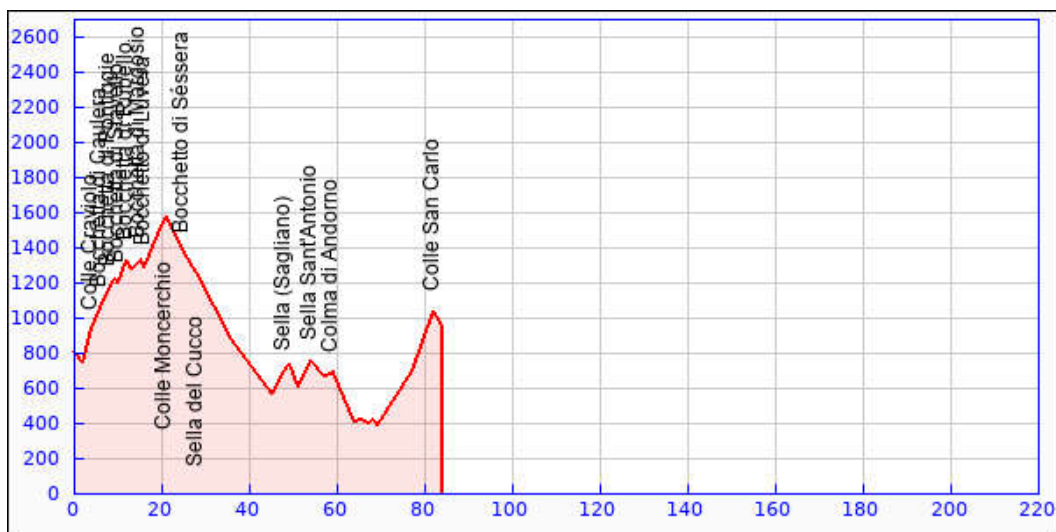
| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|---|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Omegna | 0 | 290 | |
| Cò di Stobj | 13 | 1260 | 970 |
| Bocchetta di Foglia | 14 | 1270 | 10 |
| Alpe Selvetta | 15 | 1170 | |
| Passo del Ranghetto | 17 | 1270 | 100 |
| Sella Scafurno | 18 | 1250 | |
| Sella delle Sacche | 20 | 1300 | 50 |
| Sella del Riale dell'Aqua | 23 | 1210 | |
| Colma Barella | 24 | 1110 | |
| Colma di Ballano | 25 | 1120 | 10 |
| Sella di Camasco | 29 | 860 | |
| Varallo | 37 | 460 | |
| Cascine | 50 | 360 | |
| Il Bocchetto | 51 | 450 | 90 |
| Rio Venenza | 52 | 400 | |
| Guardabosone | 53 | 440 | 40 |
| Crevacuore | 55 | 380 | |
| Pray | 60 | 430 | 50 |
| Sella | 61 | 520 | 90 |
| Piletta | 62 | 580 | 60 |
| Sella | 63 | 520 | |
| Pray | 64 | 430 | |
| Flechchia | 66 | 520 | 90 |
| Scoldo | 67 | 490 | |
| Sella (Portula) | 70 | 660 | 170 |
| Bonde (Crocemosso) | 74 | 610 | |
| Sella (Bulliana) | 75 | 690 | 80 |
| Mad. d. Brughiera (Bulliana) | 77 | 810 | 120 |
| total | 77 | | 1930 |



Stage 3 (2 July 2016): Bulliana - Bielmonte - Biella - Campiglie

I started around 8 o'clock for this third stage. My road went up to the long crest of the Bielmonte. This is a small paradise for collectors of passes. Including the initial climb, i could find 10 passes within less than three hours. Some were on the road, some required detours over gravel roads or even foot paths, but all were unproblematic with my newly equipped old race bicycle. These passes were [Craviolo](#) (on the road), [Caulera](#) (a short, partly unpaved loop), [Pontiggie](#) (a loop on forest road and foot path), [Stavello](#) (back on the main road), [Rubello](#) (a medium-quality gravel road just after the San Bernardo chapel, forth and back), [Margosio](#) (on the road), [Luvera](#) (also), [Moncerchio](#) (gravel road, dirt track, then foot path, [Sessera](#) (on the road) and finally [Cucco](#) (on the road). In the upper parts of the crest, unfortunately, there was fog and i couldn't enjoy much sight. From Sessera onwards, there was a long, nice descent to Rosazza, then (less nice) along the Cervo valley. I left this main road to climb to Tavigliano and make a loop over the hamlet [Sella](#), which, as the name tells, in on a pass. A very small road between fields and houses led me then to Cerruti where... the rain began. The next two passes were thus wet ones, [San Antonio](#) and [Colma](#). The thunderstorm was quite heavy, but stopped as i arrived in Biella, where there were many streets with cobble stones. Riding out of Biella to the west, i took a road to the right just after crossing the Elvo river. Up to Montepennone, it was no problem. Then the way to Bagneri was unpaved, later paved but very steep, and after Bagneri it was unpaved and steep. It was only after joining the road coming from Oropa that the climb was easy again, leading me to the [San Carlo](#) pass. And there it started to rain again. I stopped therefore at the next auberge that i found. I did not have so many kilometres or many metres of climbing on my accoount, but enough (partly not so easy) passes.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mad. d. Brughiera (Bulliana) | 0 | 810 | |
| Trivero | 2 | 750 | |
| Colle Craviolo | 4 | 940 | 190 |
| Bocchetta di Caulera | 6 | 1060 | 120 |
| Bocchetta di Pontiggie | 8 | 1170 | 110 |
| Alpe Pontiggie | 9 | 1220 | 50 |
| Bocchetta di Stavello | 10 | 1200 | |
| Bocchetta di Rubello | 12 | 1330 | 130 |
| K 26 | 13 | 1280 | |
| Bocchetta di Margosio | 15 | 1330 | 50 |
| Bocchetto di Luvera | 16 | 1290 | |
| Moncerchio | 19 | 1480 | 190 |
| Colle Moncerchio | 21 | 1580 | 100 |
| Bocchetto di S ssera | 25 | 1370 | |
| Sella del Cucco | 28 | 1260 | |
| Rosazza | 36 | 880 | |
| Sagliano | 45 | 570 | |
| Sella (Sagliano) | 48 | 700 | 130 |
| Tavigliano | 49 | 740 | 40 |
| S. Rocco (Andorno) | 51 | 610 | |
| Sella Sant'Antonio | 54 | 760 | 150 |
| Vaglio | 57 | 670 | |
| Colma di Andorno | 59 | 690 | 20 |
| Ponte Cervo (Biella) | 64 | 410 | |
| Biella | 65 | 420 | 10 |
| Vernato | 67 | 400 | |
| Occhieppo | 68 | 420 | 20 |
| Cascine Rosse | 69 | 390 | |
| Torrente lanca | 77 | 700 | 310 |
| Colle San Carlo | 82 | 1040 | 340 |
| Bossola (Campiglie) | 84 | 960 | |
| total | 84 | | 1960 |

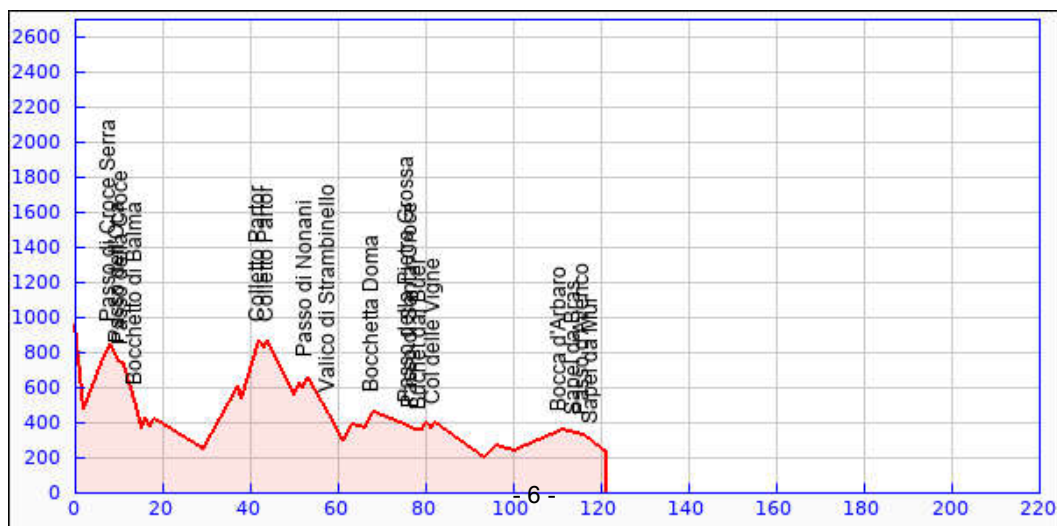


Stage 4 (3 July 2016): Campiglie - Borgofranco - Strambinello - Masseria

The fourth day had to be the turning point of the tour, in this case turning around Ivrea. I had first a very nice descent, but then it was a gravel road for a short while. After coming down north of Donato, i climbed again to reach a pass over the long Serra crest, the [Crocce Serra](#) pass. If a crest is long, then there is a chance that there are several passes across it. Here also, indeed, and thus i followed the crest to the south-east. There was first a road, then forest tracks. Mountain bikers appear to like these tracks since i encountered several of them. My bicycle was perhaps less optimal, but still quite good to ride to the [Oca](#) and [Crocce](#) passes. Further, the descent to the valley was harder because of bigger stones on the way. I went then over the [Balma](#) pass, which brought me back to villages and roads. I went to Borgofranco and crossed the Dora Baltea river, which comes down from the Aosta valley. On the other side, i took a very small and partly very steep road to [Colletto Partor](#). After this pass, however, the road that i had planned to take did no longer exist in reality. There was another passage cut across big ferns, but would it go down to the right place? Land abandonment can lead to such surprises. I preferred to go back to the road and to ride the same way down.

After a short detour to the [Nonani](#) pass, i came to the Chiusella stream and, just after a dam on this stream, to the [Strambinello](#) pass. With that, i was leaving the mountains, coming to a plain with just some low hills. A pass that i found on such a hill was [Bocchetta Doma](#), reachable by forest tracks. In this regard, the next pass, [Pietra Grossa](#), was completely different since it is crossed by a highway, itself crossed by a road over a bridge. And then, nearby, a main road parallel to the highway crossed another pass, [Santa Croce](#). After this, back onto forest tracks for [Buchet dal Buer](#) and [Col delle Vigne](#). There were three small difficulties on that way: deep tracks and branches left by forestry operations, discrepancies between maps and reality, and... mosquitos that took advantage of times i had to slow down to challenge me. Back on proper roads, i rode in the plain, just interrupted by the notch of the Dora Baltea. Further to the north, i found again hills with several passes: [Bocca d'Arbaro](#) (on the road), [Sapel da Bras](#) (forest track), [Passo d'Avenco](#) (forest track) and finally [Sapel da Mur](#). By then i was close to the Viverone lake. I found a room in an hotel along its shores.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|---|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Bossola (Campiglie) | 0 | 960 | |
| La Barca | 2 | 480 | |
| Ruzzolo (Donato) | 6 | 740 | 260 |
| Passo di Croce Serra | 8 | 850 | 110 |
| Passo dell'Oca | 10 | 750 | |
| Passo della Croce | 11 | 730 | |
| Bocchetto di Balma | 14 | 500 | |
| Ravera (Chiaverano) | 15 | 370 | |
| Bugliacco | 16 | 430 | 60 |
| Sarravigliasca | 17 | 380 | |
| Bienca | 18 | 420 | 40 |
| Magnus | 29 | 250 | |
| Alice Superiore | 37 | 610 | 360 |
| Torbiera | 38 | 540 | |
| Colletto Partor | 42 | 870 | 330 |
| Vigna | 43 | 830 | |
| Colletto Partor | 44 | 870 | 40 |
| Gàuna | 50 | 560 | |
| Pecco | 51 | 630 | 70 |
| Buracco | 52 | 600 | |
| Passo di Nonani | 53 | 660 | 60 |
| Valico di Strambinello | 58 | 450 | |
| Ponte Preti | 61 | 300 | |
| Pramonico | 63 | 390 | 90 |
| Bairo | 66 | 370 | |
| Bocchetta Doma | 68 | 460 | 90 |
| Passo della Pietra Grossa | 76 | 380 | |
| Passo di Santa Croce | 77 | 360 | |
| Buchet dal Buer | 79 | 360 | |
| Costa di S. Stefano | 80 | 400 | 40 |
| | 81 | 370 | |
| Col delle Vigne | 82 | 400 | 30 |
| Moriondo | 93 | 200 | |
| Villareggia | 96 | 270 | 70 |
| Cigliano | 100 | 240 | |
| Bocca d'Arbaro | 111 | 360 | 120 |
| Sapel da Bras | 114 | 340 | |
| Passo d'Avenco | 116 | 330 | |
| Sapel da Mur | 118 | 290 | |
| Masseria | 121 | 230 | |
| total | 121 | | 1770 |



Stage 5 (4 July 2016): Masseria - Vigliano - Borgosesia - Miasino

This 5th day began in the plain, almost completely flat. The first noticeable climb was from Cossato to the [Barda](#) pass. Then i was back in the foothills of the Alps, close to where i had been on Friday. And it began to go up and down. The next pass that was on my route could not be reached as planned because the road was closed for some urgent works. Fortunately, only a small detour was necessary to reach this [La Sella](#) and, at the same height on the same crest, [Colma](#). The road was narrow, but the next one, over [Dosso di San Bernardo](#) towards Sostegno, was even narrower. In Sostegno, i wanted to check how the way over two further passes looked like. As the day before, however, the way i had on my map did not exit in the terrain. I went thus back to the main road towards [Valico di San Rocco](#), further to Crevacuore and Borgosesia. The next thing to do was to ride from the Sesia valley to the Orta lake. The road i took had few traffic and was very nice. It went over three passes: [Forcola](#), [Sella](#) and [Colma di Valpiana](#). The last one was a more serious climb and i enjoyed it very much, also in the descent towards San Maurizio. Finally, i rode around the south part of the Orta lake and ended the ride near Ameno. Quite thirsty because there had been very few fountains along the way.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Masseria | 0 | 230 | |
| Stra (Cavaglià) | 4 | 300 | 70 |
| Bastia | 12 | 230 | |
| Candelo | 24 | 330 | 100 |
| Cerreto Castello | 32 | 240 | |
| Colle della Barba | 34 | 360 | 120 |
| Foglia | 38 | 470 | 110 |
| Strona | 40 | 380 | |
| Torello (Crocemosso) | 44 | 540 | 160 |
| Polto (Trivero) | 46 | 530 | |
| Rivarolo (Trivero) | 47 | 570 | 40 |
| Ponzone | 50 | 480 | |
| La Sella | 53 | 670 | 190 |
| Colma | 54 | 670 | |
| Curino | 58 | 360 | |
| Colmo | 62 | 550 | 190 |
| Rovasanello | 64 | 380 | |
| Dosso di S. Bernardo | 65 | 420 | 40 |
| Sostegno | 66 | 400 | |
| S. Lorenzo (Sostegno) | 67 | 430 | 30 |
| Sostegno | 68 | 400 | |
| Valico di San Rocco | 69 | 470 | 70 |
| Borgosesia | 79 | 340 | |
| Forcola | 84 | 480 | 140 |
| Cellio | 88 | 700 | 220 |
| Medana (Cellio) | 90 | 620 | |
| Sella (Cellio) | 92 | 650 | 30 |
| Colma di Valpiana | 98 | 870 | 220 |
| Alzo | 106 | 390 | |
| Gozzano | 113 | 360 | |
| Borzaga (Ameno) | 118 | 510 | 150 |
| Miasino | 120 | 470 | |
| total | 120 | | 1880 |



Stage 6 (5 July 2016): Miasino - Stresa - Il Colle - Locarno

The sixth and last day of this tour started with a nice view over the lake Orta. Unfortunately, this view degraded as i climbed from Armeno to [Colle Cortano](#) because the weather was a bit hazy. After reaching this pass (just a few metres off the road), i continued to [Faggio dela Barchetta](#). I had Lago d'Orta on one side and Lago Maggiore on the other, but could not see them because of the fog. The road continued to climb after the pass to reach a toll station. On the east slope, indeed, the road is private... but cyclists don't have to pay. The long descent brought me to Stresa, from where i continued along the lake (Lago Maggiore) to the north, until i crossed the road i had taken the first day, at Fondo Toce. I went over [Bieno](#) to reach Trobaso, in the valley behind Intra. I took the nice little road climbing into this valley. Up to the crossing of Ponte Laura it was an easy ride, but then the climb towards Aurano and further to Piancavallo was steeper. In Piancavallo, i left the road, taking a gravel way to the right just after the clinic. This way leads to the [Morissolo](#) pass and offers a splendid view over Lago Maggiore... except that it was agsin a bit hazy. Nevertheless, i enjoyed this part very much. After this pass, an easy single track brought me back to the surfaced road at [Il Colle](#). By then it was past noon. From Il Colle, the narrow road goes first down then up again. At the lowest point, there is a gravel road that goes up to the left and soon reaches the [Piazza](#) pass and its chapel. This would be the last pass of this tour. After a short climb and a long descent, i came back to the lake shore at Canéro, then had just to ride back to Locarno to take a train back to Zurich.

This tour had led me over many small passes, quite a number of which on unsurfaced roads or tracks. Unfortunately, those that would offer the best views over the landscape were passed as there was haze or even fog, but except for that it had been a nice tour.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Miasino | 0 | 470 | |
| Colle Cortano | 10 | 1040 | 570 |
| Faggio della Barchetta | 13 | 1210 | 170 |
| Bosco dei Ratti | 15 | 1340 | 130 |
| Alpe Scoccia | 21 | 870 | |
| Alpe Arbol | 22 | 890 | 20 |
| Stresa | 33 | 220 | |
| Feriolo | 40 | 200 | |
| Bieno | 45 | 340 | 140 |
| Trobaso | 49 | 240 | |
| Ponte Laura | 56 | 450 | 210 |
| Piancavallo | 66 | 1250 | 800 |
| Selletta Morissolo | 68 | 1270 | 20 |
| Il Colle | 69 | 1240 | |
| Passo Piazza | 74 | 1060 | |
| Pt. 1048 | 75 | 1050 | |
| Pt. 1184 | 76 | 1180 | 130 |
| Cannero | 87 | 230 | |
| Punta Creda (Cannobio) | 93 | 200 | |
| Cannobio | 94 | 210 | 10 |
| Dàrbedo (Cannobio) | 95 | 200 | |
| Brissago | 102 | 220 | 20 |
| Ascona | 109 | 200 | |
| Solduno | 111 | 220 | 20 |
| Locarno | 113 | 200 | |
| total | 113 | | 2240 |

