

First week | 6<sup>th</sup> day

# Along the Parenzana

## Portorož - Koper - Trieste

*Along the Istrian coast to the Gulf of Trieste*



From **Portorož (Portorose)** – the best known seaside resort in Slovenia, specialised in spas and situated in the Piran (Pirano) peninsula – the wonderful cycling path passes by the Štrungan (Strugnano) salt mines, now a nature reserve. We must point out the presence in this coastal town of the important sanctuary of the Vision of Saint Mary, where many pilgrimages end.

At Izola (Isola) the Venetian dominion which lasted for centuries left its mark, not only with the lions of St. Mark which can still be seen but also in the urban structure, in the XVI century Town Hall and other prestigious private villas.

Then you reach **Koper (Capodistria)**, where the town centre looks like a little Venice, with paved streets, the Praetorian Palace in Gothic-Renaissance style, the town loggia, the Carmine Baptistery and the cathedral of the Assumption of Mary.

Leaving the city, you go along the **Rižana** valley among cultivated fields and vineyards, going gently up towards Škofije where you cross the border into Italy. From here you soon arrive in **Trieste** on mixed traffic roads.

### ROUTE INFORMATION

**Starting point:** Portorož (Portorose)

**Arrival:** Trieste

**Length:** 43 km (Portorož-Trieste)

**Conditions:** almost everywhere there are good separate cycling lanes, with a few stretches of mixed traffic near Trieste

**Indications:** present

**Inter-modality:** bike + boat (Muggia-Trieste)

### USEFUL ADDRESSES

#### Tourist Office Portorož

Obala 16, 6320 Portorož, tel. +386 05 6742220  
ticpo@portoroz.si, www.portoroz.si

#### Tourist Office Piran, Tartinijev trg 2

6330 Piran, tel. +386 05 6734440  
ticpi@portoroz.si, www.portoroz.si

#### Tourist Office Izola, Ljubljanska ulica 17

6310 Izola, tel. +386 05 6401050  
tic.izola@izola.si, www.izola.eu

#### Tourist Office Koper, Titov trg 3

6000 Koper, tel. +386 05 6646403  
tic@koper.si, www.koper.si

#### IAT Muggia

via Roma 20, Muggia, tel. + 39 04 0273259

#### Tourist Office FVG - Trieste

Via dell'Orologio, 1 tel. +39 040 3478312  
nfo.trieste@turismo.fvg.it

**Ferries:** the Muggia-Trieste line is active every day (limited number of bikes)



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1 Koper - Capodistria, former salt warehouse  
2 Trieste, Grand Canal

3 Koper - Capodistria, Praetorian Palace  
4 Sečovlje salt mines, the Parezana cycling path

5 Strunjan - Strugnano, tunnel on the Parezana cycling path

## TRAVELLERS' DIARY

Leaving Portorož (Portorose), an illuminated tunnel leads us to the Štrungan (Strugnano) salt mines – included in the beautiful coastal nature park – and from here the cycling path leads us towards the town of Izola (isola) pedalling along the foot of the hills.

Having visited the wonderful historical centre you arrive near the coast and can enjoy the panorama from above, with a vast spectacular view over the cobalt blue of the Gulf of Trieste. The time has come to make a triumphant

entrance into Koper (Capodistria), which is announced by its high bell-tower: it is one of the most characteristic historical centres in Istria and the only commercial port in Slovenia, as well as being one of the most important in the Upper Adriatic.

After visiting the town carefully – not only the splendid Tito Square but also the smaller squares, the wells, the lions of St. Mark, the majestic gates, the old port – you continue cycling and immediately come to the Strunjan (Strugnano)

Nature Reserve, a stretch of sea captured by the mainland which reminds us how Koper (Capodistria) was an island in the past. It is the largest salt mars area in Slovenia, known for the abundance of its flora and fauna.

From here it is only a short distance to the border: you go back up the Rižana valley and, slightly uphill, you are already in Škofije and at the Rabula border. Then you head towards Trieste on a mixed traffic road, cutting transversally across the headland where Muggia rises.