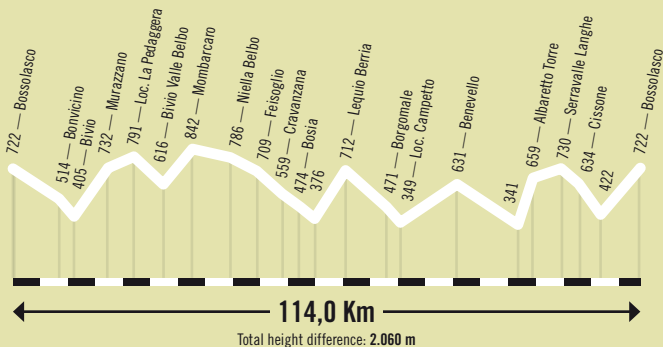


The Champions' Ascents

cicloturismo
Langheroero



This is a route dedicated to expert cyclists who will enjoy testing their prowess on some of the hills; these steeps are voted to famous past cycling champions. The route begins in Bossolasco, one of the most famous villages in the Alta Langa (High Langa) area, renowned for its flowery balconies and borders and for its attractive historical centre. From here, you continue through some of the most sparsely populated and untouched countryside of the entire area until you reach the village of Murazzano, via the first of the 'Champion's Ascents', dedicated to Jacques Anquetil, with its 318 metres difference in altitude, and an average gradient of 5% for 6.3 km. Once in Murazzano, the cyclist might well choose to take a short break to refresh him or herself with some of the delicious locally produced cheese (also known as 'Murazzano') in order to continue refreshed along the challenging route that awaits.



The route now takes the visitor through tranquil pasture land until the village of Mombarcaro, reached only after grappling with the ascent 'Fausto Coppi' with its 7.2% average gradient for 3 km and difference in altitude of 261 metres. Mombarcaro is known as 'the peak of the Langa' for its height above sea level and is



also renowned for its 'strada romantica' – or 'romantic road' – which forms part of an entire system of clearly indicated 'romantic roads' distributed throughout the Langa, all possessing a series of breathtaking views. Once through Mombarcaro, the cultivation of hazelnuts, here known as the 'tonda e gentile delle Langhe' ('round and sweet hazel of the Langa') predominates. The route offers a welcome relatively flat stretch to Niella Belbo, then on to Feisoglio, Cravanzana and Bosia. After Bosia, the road takes an upward turn once again and the section which will take you to the village of Lequio Berria is dedicated to Marco Pantani with a change in altitude of 361 metres and average gradient of 5,1% for around 7 km. Along the way, the road leads you through some of the places around the village of San Bovo di Castino mentioned in Beppe Fenoglio's novels, especially his most famous work 'La Malora' ('Hard Times'). It isn't difficult to imagine the kind of hardships that local 'contadini' or subsistence farmers faced only 50 or 60 years ago as they eked out a living on these hills. The next stop is Sinio, which includes other stretches of 'strada romantica', and is where the next taxing stretch of road begins. This part is dedicated to Gino Bartali and runs between Sinio and Albaretto della Torre, with 326 metres difference in altitude and a 10% gradient for 3 km. This is the most gruelling stretch of road of the whole trail where expert cyclists will really put their skill and endurance to the test: a gradient of 18% at the most crucial point will surely sort the sheep from the goats! After this heroic enterprise... the extraordinary beauty of the landscape will reward all your efforts. But not before a final hill is overcome: the one dedicated to Louison Bobet with a difference in altitude of 310 metres and 2% gradient for 6 km. This last stretch of road runs between the villages of Cissone and Bossolasco and will take you back to where you started out, among the roses of Bossolasco.

