

Two cities bonded by their productive history and connected by a hiking route “Via della Lana e della Seta” (the Wool and Silk Route) that enables you to immerse yourself in the natural beauty of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines filled with excellencies and tradition, and discover the territory's history and culture. The route passes through towns, peaks and valleys and links two historic centres that have grown over the centuries thanks to their wise management of water: Bologna, the city of the weir and canals and centuries' old silk capital, and Prato, the city of the Cavalciotto, millstreams and fulling mills, capital of the wool and textile district.

## ⊗ Hiking

### 1st stage

Length: **20 km**  
Difference in height:  
**+230 m; -200 m**  
Time: **6 hours**

● ● ● ● ● ●  
Difficulty: mainly flat stage with no particular difficulties

### 2nd stage

Length: **27 km**  
Difference in height:  
**+1400 m; -950 m**  
Time: **8-9 hours**

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●  
Difficulty: difficult stage due to overall length and change in elevation

### 3rd stage

Length: **22 km**  
Difference in height:  
**+1100 m; -1050 m**  
Time: **7 hours**

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●  
Difficulty: difficult stage due to overall length and change in elevation

### 4th stage

Length: **20 km**  
Difference in height:  
**+800 m; -1250m**  
Time: **7 hours**

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●  
Difficulty: stage of medium difficulty with changes in elevation throughout

### 5th stage

Length: **21 km**  
Difference in height:  
**+1000 m; -1100 m**  
Time: **7 hours**

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●  
Difficulty: stage with no particular difficulties

### 6th stage

Length: **22 km**  
Difference in height:  
**+900 m; -1000 m**  
Time: **7-8 hours**

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●  
Difficulty: in case of persistent or torrential rain pay attention to the downhill rocky segments

## Bologna

20 Km

## Sasso Marconi

27 Km

## Grizzana Morandi

22 Km

## Castiglione dei Pepoli

20 Km

## Vernio

21 Km

## Vaiano

22 Km

## Prato



## Bologna

Your journey's point of departure (or arrival) is Piazza Maggiore. You're in the heart of the city overlooked by important buildings such as the San Petronio Basilica, Palazzo Notai, Palazzo d'Accursio, Palazzo del Podestà and Palazzo dei Banchi. It became officially known with its current name of Piazza Maggiore only from 1945.



## Sluice of Casalecchio

Started between the 10th and 11th centuries, rebuilt in masonry in the middle of the 14th century and enhanced by Vignola from 1457 onwards, it is the oldest hydraulic work in Europe in operation and used continuously and without interruption. The impressive structure was declared by UNESCO a “Heritage to Promote a Culture of Peace for the Young Generations”.

## Monte Sole Park

The Historical Park of Monte Sole is above all a place that tells a story and bears witness to a dark past. Monte Sole is a place where history has left deep marks, and a silent warning not to forget. The park is mainly known for the events of the fall 1944, when the Nazi troops slaughtered hundreds of local inhabitants, erasing centuries of the quiet and laborious life of the local communities.



# Wool and Silk Route Via della Lana e della Seta



© Martino Viviani

Total km: 130  
Overall positive altitude difference: 5,430. Overall negative altitude difference: 5,550  
Maximum altitude: 931 above sea level. Minimum altitude: 54 above sea level  
Stops: 6. Municipalities: 12. Regions: 2

Parco di Monte Sole  
© Lab051



## Lakes Suviana and Brasimone Park

Santa Maria Lake is located in the Regional Park of Lakes Suviana and Brasimone. Oak and beech trees and reforested conifers almost entirely cover the slopes and sandstone of the main elevations in the western wall of the ridge and downstream of the Brasimone basin, forming the spectacular front of the Cinghi delle Mogne.



## Castiglione dei Pepoli

The recently-restored town centre maintains the characteristics designed by the Pepoli family, that controlled the territory between 1340 and 1796. The old Palazzo Comitale, the Clock tower and Palazzina overlook the square.



## Santa Maria Abbey in Montepiano

Built starting from the 11th century in a clearing along Setta Creek near the Beato Pietro hermitage, it was entrusted to the Vallombrosan monks that managed a hospice for pilgrims in Mugello and the Bolognese Apennines. The interior of the building features important frescoes from the 12th century.



## San Salvatore Abbey (Vaiano)

Built by the Benedictine monks of Cassino in the 9th and 10th centuries and rebuilt in the 11th and 12th centuries, it has three naves. The Renaissance cloister is surrounded by monastic rooms that now host the museum, and the tanks and canals of the ancient fulling mill for processing wool are still visible.



## Cavalciotto di Santa Lucia

Dating back to the 11th century, it is one of the main examples of Prato's rich industrial archaeology heritage. It is the levee of Bisenzio river that feeds into the water system consisting of 53 km of millstreams that cross the city and powered the textile factories before flowing into the Ombrone river.

Castiglione dei Pepoli  
© Lab051

Cavalciotto di Santa Lucia  
© Lab051

Massiccio della Calvana  
© Lab051

Prato, Piazza Duomo  
© Lab051



## Calvana Massif

Its rounded peaks create a typical karst setting dotted with caves, sinkholes and springs, recognisable for the meadows on the slopes. Here you can see rare flower species, specimens of the native Calvana cattle and through the low vegetation typical of this area you can find wild horses.



## Prato, Piazza Duomo

You have arrived at your destination (or you're getting ready to start your journey). Here in Piazza Duomo is where the oldest settlement of Prato – Borgo del Cornio – was located. Its existence was documented as early as the 9th century and the cathedral is houses the frescoes by Filippo Lippi. Ever since the 14th century, the square is where the Sacred Belt has been displayed from the pulpit designed by Donatello.

### Why (Wool and Silk Route) Via della Lana e della Seta?

The route physically and ideally connects Bologna, the city of the Lock, canals and spinning mills – for centuries the silk capital – to Prato, the city of the Weir, millstreams and fulling mills, the wool and textile district.

### How many days does it take to travel the Via della Lana e della Seta?

It is a medium difficulty route that can be covered on foot in six or more days. If you have no experience, sense of direction or mountaineering skills, we strongly recommend that you contact an expert guide.

### When should I travel the (Wool and Silk Route) Via della Lana e della Seta?

The route is open all year round, but special attention is required during the summer (high temperatures) and winter (low temperatures and snow).

### How to find us

Bologna and Prato are within easy reach using the main means of transport.

Bologna

- ✈ Bologna G. Marconi Airport
- 🚉 Bologna Centrale Railway Station
- 🛣 Motorways (A1-A14)

Florence

- ✈ Firenze A. Vespucci Airport
- 🚉 Prato Centrale Railway Station
- 🛣 Motorways (A1-A11)

### Essential travel equipment

#### Footwear:

- Ankle boots recommended, preferably already worn and well fitted to your feet.
- Anti-blister technical socks

#### Clothing:

- 2-3 microfibre T-shirts and cotton T-shirts for the night
- Technical trousers, preferably long
- A sweater or sweatshirt or fleece
- A breathable windproof and waterproof jacket
- Underwear
- Gloves
- Hat in winter
- Cap
- Sunglasses
- Microfibre towel or bathrobe

#### Essentials:

- Trail manual and map (Fusta Editore, Italian and English, 1:25,000 scale)
- 40-50 l backpack, better if weighing less than 10 kg (water included)
- Sunscreen
- Water (at least 3 l per day in summer)
- First aid kit with: bandages, plasters, anti-blister patches, etc.
- A GPS system for orientation (optional)
- Products for personal hygiene

#### Other:

- Telephone and recharger
- Portable charger
- Camera
- Telescopic poles (optional)
- Rainproof canvas for your backpack
- Snack

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