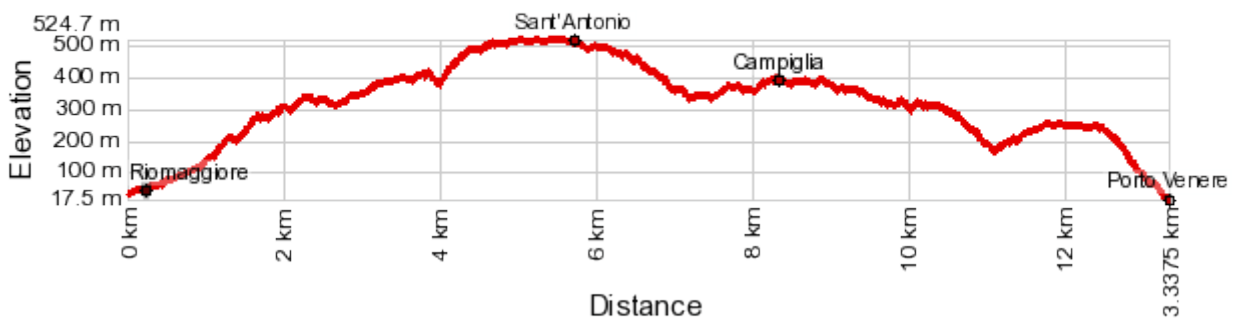




Leg 3 from Riomaggiore to Porto Venere

Total length	13,4 km
Hiking time	6h
Cumulative elevation gain	665 m
Uphill percentage	46,6 %
Downhill percentage	53,4 %
Percentage of hike on natural earth	59,9 %
Percentage of hike on asphalt	16,2 %
Percentage of hike on paved surface	23,9 %
Percentage of hike on other surface	0 %

Profilo altimetrico



General description:

This leg has a high scenic value and develops entirely inside the Unesco Site "PORTOVENERE – Cinque Terre and the Islands Tino, Tinetto and Palmaria". The trail passes through the hamlet of Campiglia and small detours allow to reach the small hamlets of Schiara and Monesteroli, with the typical cellars and the breath-taking staircases to the sea. The strenuous descend to Porto Venere offers gorgeous views. From Porto Venere it is possible to reach La Spezia by ferry (in the summer season) or by bus.



Description of the itinerary

Walking up the main ally of the centre until the bridge over the stream, you will intersect Via Grande (marked with SVA), which climbs gently up the valley until the Madonna di Montenero Sanctuary. The scenic overlook in front of the Sanctuary allows you to enjoy a gorgeous view of the Cinque Terre. The grandiose sandstone staircase testifies the devotion of the inhabitants to their Sanctuary.

On the back of the Sanctuary the trail continues first on the ridge and then halfway the slope (after the fork with the trail marked n° 530, which continues flat). You will walk gently up until the Telegrafo Pass, with beautiful views over the sea. Here you will intersect the AV5T trail, the High Trail that follows the watershed between the Vara Valley and the coastline. The Sentiero Liguria shortly follows this trail, until the Pass of Sant'Antonio, where you will cross the variant 3v to La Spezia, which you can follow if you like to join directly leg 2.

Proceeding towards Porto Venere, from Sant'Antonio, the Sentiero Liguria abandons the ridge by following the trail marked with n° 504, which descends, on an asphalt road first and then on a beautiful staircase, to the midline of the slope of Tramonti, gorgeous scenic balcony on the hamlets of Monesteroli and Schiara.

Through holm oak and maritime pine forests, and remains of old vineyards, the beautiful staircase reaches Fontana di Nozzano, before continuing on the trail marked with n° 535 until Campiglia.

Campiglia, small village on the ridge, seems to be in the middle of two worlds: the cool forested slope facing the Gulf and the sunny, terraced slope of Tramonti, running out to the sea. Campiglia is an important hiking crossroad: here you have the intersection of the mule track climbing up from Acquasanta-Marola with the one arriving from Biassa (marked AVG); from here departs even the amazing staircase of Persico, which allows to reach the sea through the narrow vineyards.

The Sentiero Liguria continues southwards on the ridge, and soon abandons the AVG (which bypasses Castellana on the inner Gulf side) to follow the coastal trail (AV5T). The section between Campiglia and Sella Derbi is one of the most spectacular, passing high on the cliffs and through the Mediterranean scrubland: this is the realm of the pilgrim falcon, as well as of the common raven, of the blue rock thrush and the crag martin, of the kestrel and the common buzzard.

From Sella Derbi to Porto Venere, the two trails AV5T and AVG coincide: you will first walk on asphalt and then on a dirt trail halfway the coast on the north slope of the Muzzerone Promontory. From this inner slope on the Gulf you can enjoy a beautiful view over the inlets and the promontories of the so called "Coast of the Pirates": Panigaglia, Le Grazie, Varignano, Punta Castagna.

The descent to Porto Venere is strenuous, but the Mediterranean colours and scents make worth the effort. Pine trees and holm oaks, that escaped the fires during the last decennia, provide relief with their shade. Mastic, tree spurge, curry plant, Montpellier cistus, myrtle, common broom, are just some of the many shrubs and bushes that you will encounter along the way.

Porto Venere is probably the place in Italy that more than others evokes the concept of Pillars of Hercules": a kind of "finis terrae"; an ideal starting point for a journey across the Ligurian arch. The descent to Porto Venere is spectacular: you pass along the city walls and the walls of Castle Doria. This imposing walls are perfectly integrated into the severe and wild nature: the steep cliffs of the Muzzerone Promontory (with its astonishing clung Aleppo pines), the sea and the Ampelodesmos plumes constantly wiped by the wind. The big squared rock blocks testify the past quarrying activity.