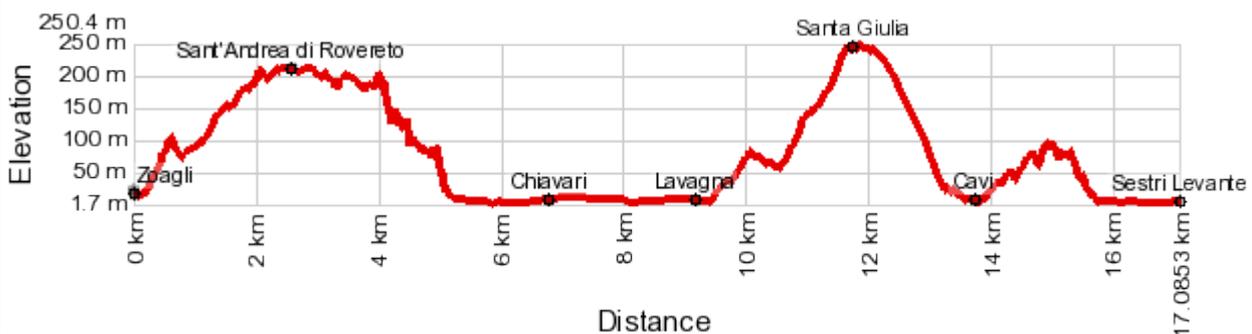




Leg 8 from Zoagli to Sestri Levante

Total length	17 km
Hiking time	6h
Cumulative elevation gain	543 m
Uphill percentage	36 %
Downhill percentage	38 %
Percentage of hike on natural earth	18 %
Percentage of hike on asphalt	49 %
Percentage of hike on paved surface	33%
Percentage of hike on other surface	

Profilo altimetrico



General description:

The leg runs through the municipalities of Sestri Levante, Lavagna, Chiavari and Zoagli, with rich and varied landscapes: from the Mediterranean scrubland to farmed land, from the riverine environment of the Natural Oasis of the Entella River to the alleys of Chiavari, from the old pine tree groves to the steep over the sea hanging rocky cliffs. A long up and down along the ancient road connects the hamlets of the Eastern Tigullio.



Description of the itinerary

From the main square of Zoagli, on its Eastern side, walk up the long staircase to the railway station. Continue up, cross the Via Aurelia in a turn and follow the path that climbs towards San Pietro di Rovereto. Follow Via Solari e Queirolo on the right for a few hundred meters and take the road that leads further up to the left (Via San Pietro), until a short staircase to the left again, that ends up at the beautiful church of San Pietro di Rovereto. The oldest houses you will see along the walk, have a wider window. This is related to the local traditional silk velvet weaving: many families had a loom at home, and the workroom has to catch as much light as possible. Still nowadays silk velvet is woven by hand in the two remaining factories. Among the many gorgeous views you will notice the unique silhouette of the Castel of Sem Benelli, built in 1914 on behalf of the famous playwright, now divided in luxury apartments. The vegetation is characterised by an alternation of olive groves, farmed terraces and mixed woods. The typical traditional paving on the square in front of the Church of San Pietro, called “risseu”, a decoration made of polychrome pebbles used to form beautiful mosaics, is still in good status of preservation. Continuing eastwards along the plane road, you’ll reach the Church of S. Andrea di Rovereto, from where you can enjoy a marvellous view over the Promontory of Portofino and the coast. You go on walking eastwards on the not too busy road, until you encounter the much busier Via Aurelia, that you will have to follow for a few hundred metres to the East, paying attention to the traffic, as there’s no sidewalk. Just before the tunnel, bare right up to the Sanctuary delle Grazie, from where you can enjoy a gorgeous view over the Tigullio Gulf.

Passed the Sanctuary, descend the stairs and take the trail on the right of the Via Aurelia (marked with “red and white dots”) that will lead you rapidly down through the SCI (Site of Community Interest) Pineta - Lecceta di Chiavari. This very interesting trail, from a naturalistic point of view, allows to pass through a thick holm oak forest and to appreciate a patch of old pine grove, still in good condition.

From the eastern outskirts of Chiavari, follow Corso Buenos Aires that will soon lead you into the old centre, characterised by a maze of regularly intricate arcades, surrounding the old marketplace and overlooked by the old Castle located on the hill.

Cross the old centre of Chiavari and the Entella River through the Maddalena Bridge, that has been for centuries the only save bridge over the “fiumana bella” (beautiful river) described by Dante in Canto XIX of his Purgatory.

Walk on the cycle path along the left riverside towards the mountains and take Via Garibaldi to reach the old centre of Lavagna, with the imposing Church of San Michele and the monumental cemetery that encloses the city on the North side.

Follow Via Dante Alighieri, Via Sanguineti and a short segment of Via Tedisio, until the fork with Via Monte, where you will see the sign to Santa Giulia – Monte Capenardo (path marked with a “red dot”). Passed the fence of Castello Foti walk up the paved path. Gaining height the view opens on the valley of the Entella River and on the seaside. The itinerary becomes easy, on paths and quiet roads and the landscape is pleasant and various: country houses and villas, olive groves, vegetable gardens, little chapels and orchards, framed by the view over the Tigullio Gulf.

After passing some houses, you continue flat to the East, on a not too busy road, (Via San Benedetto) until a paved path running along Via Rigone. At the end of the paved path, cross the road and take the way up to the Church of Santa Giulia, near the bus stop. The square in front of the Church is a beautiful lookout on the



Tigullio Gulf, the Promontory of Portofino to the West and the Peninsula of Sestri Levante and the Promontory of Punta Manara to the East.

In old times, the first slate was quarried from Mount Santa Giulia and Mount San Giacomo, behind it. You will see different accesses to big or small quarries and signs of the working and the use of this beautiful versatile black stone.

The quarried material, foliated in big layers, was carried to the port of Lavagna, by women on their head. From Lavagna it was shipped to Genova or to other Ligurian destinations.

From the square of the Church you continue eastwards on the road and, passed the school, you take Via Costa on the right to descend to Cavi Borgo through alleys and staircases, crossing a beautiful farmed landscape. Then you continue circa 200 metres eastwards along the Via Aurelia and pass through the small centre of Cavi. From here you follow the indications to Sant'Anna and start climbing the slope. After the last houses, the path flattens offering a gorgeous view on the Tigullio Gulf, with its blue sea and the cliffs overlooking the road and the railway: From the remains of the Church of Sant'Anna, in a dominant position on a lookout, you will see the trail to the Mount Capenardo.

The route comes to a fork. On the right, an old steep paved path leads straight down to the sea. The left branch is less steep, and follows the old "bridges path" (built by the Republic of Genova during the XVIII) that, following a small stream, enters the Fico Valley before joining the straight variant, nearby the Chapel di San Sebastiano in Pietra Calante.

You will soon walk on the promenade of Sestri Levante and through its old centre.

Sure enough the old "Segesta Tigulliorium" was a position, an ancient Roman port, even if the origin of the settlement in the area might have been more ancient.

The old communication routes followed the mountain ridges, far from the coast, but in Sestri Levante they reached the sea, before running up again the slopes towards Moneglia, along the coast, and Castiglione Chiavarese to the hinterland.