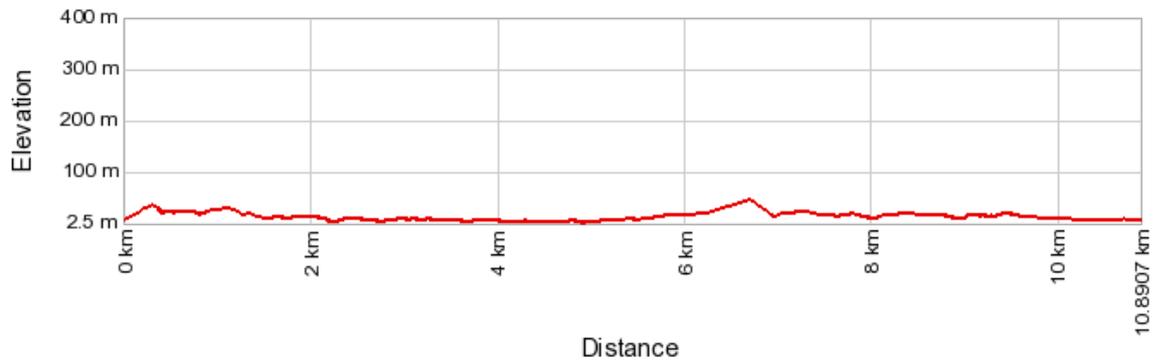




## Leg 15 from Arenzano to Varazze

Total length	11,250 km
Hiking time	2h 30'
Cumulative elevation gain	Zero
Uphill percentage	0%
Downhill percentage	0%
Percentage of hike on natural earth	0 %
Percentage of hike on asphalt	100 %
Percentage of hike on paved surface	0 %
Percentage of hike on other surface	19,5% through tunnels





## General description

The leg develops along a pleasant cycle path, that follows the old coastal railway track between Arenzano and Varazze, passing through Cogoleto. The path is mostly flat and runs partially in tunnels, partially outside, with gorgeous views over the sea. Here the coast is characterised by small pebble stone beaches and rocky cliffs that plunge steeply into the sea. The itinerary, that develops in the territory of Beigua Geopark, is remarkable for the geological characteristics of the area, as well as for the vegetation, interesting for the presence of numerous aromatic species typical of the Mediterranean scrubland.

## Description of the itinerary

From the marina of Arenzano take the cycle and walking path which passes under the “Pine tree grove” of Arenzano and reaches the sport field. Continue along the promenade flanking the Via Aurelia and, continuing westwards, pass through Cogoleto.

At the end of the promenade, cross the Arrestra Stream. From here on you will walk in the Province of Savona. Continue flat on the cycle and walking path Lungomare Europa until Varazze, circa 6 km further.

Along the route you will be able to see different plants of the Mediterranean scrubland. This kind of vegetation is characterised by drought tolerant species which rarely grow taller than 4/5 metres.

Among the most common plants we mention mastic (*Pistacia lentiscus*), strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*), Mediterranean buckthorn (*Rhamnus alaternus*), myrtle (*Myrtus comunis*) and sarsaparilla (*Smilax asper*). Among the trees you can admire holm oaks (*Quercus ilex*), Aleppo pines (*Pinus halepensis*) and maritime pines (*Pinus pinaster*).

The holm oak, in particular, is the best adapted plant to the Mediterranean conditions, reaching a steady state in the biological community (climax). Unfortunately, nowadays, there are no more holm oak forests worthy of the name. In fact this tree has been overexploited in the past and due to the heavy deforestation, only some isolated plants survived.

A remarkable species among the herbs is the sea fennel (*Crithmum maritimum*), a halophyte plant, able to grow in an environment with high salinity, which colonizes the steep cliffs that plunge into the sea. During the summer months you can admire its white-yellowish umbrella shaped flowers. Sea fennel is an edible plant, used in some traditional recipes.

This area is included in the Beigua Geopark and is interesting even from a geological point of view. Characteristic and noteworthy is the “change in colour” of the cliffs, that can be observed between Varazze and Cogoleto. This is a contact area between two different kinds of rock: metamorphosed metagabbro rocks (white colour) and serpentines (dark colour).

This itinerary can be followed the whole year round, but it is advisable to walk it between September and June. It is not advisable during the hottest hours of the summer days, even if the proximity to the sea allows a refreshing plunge into the water from one of the many coves and beaches.