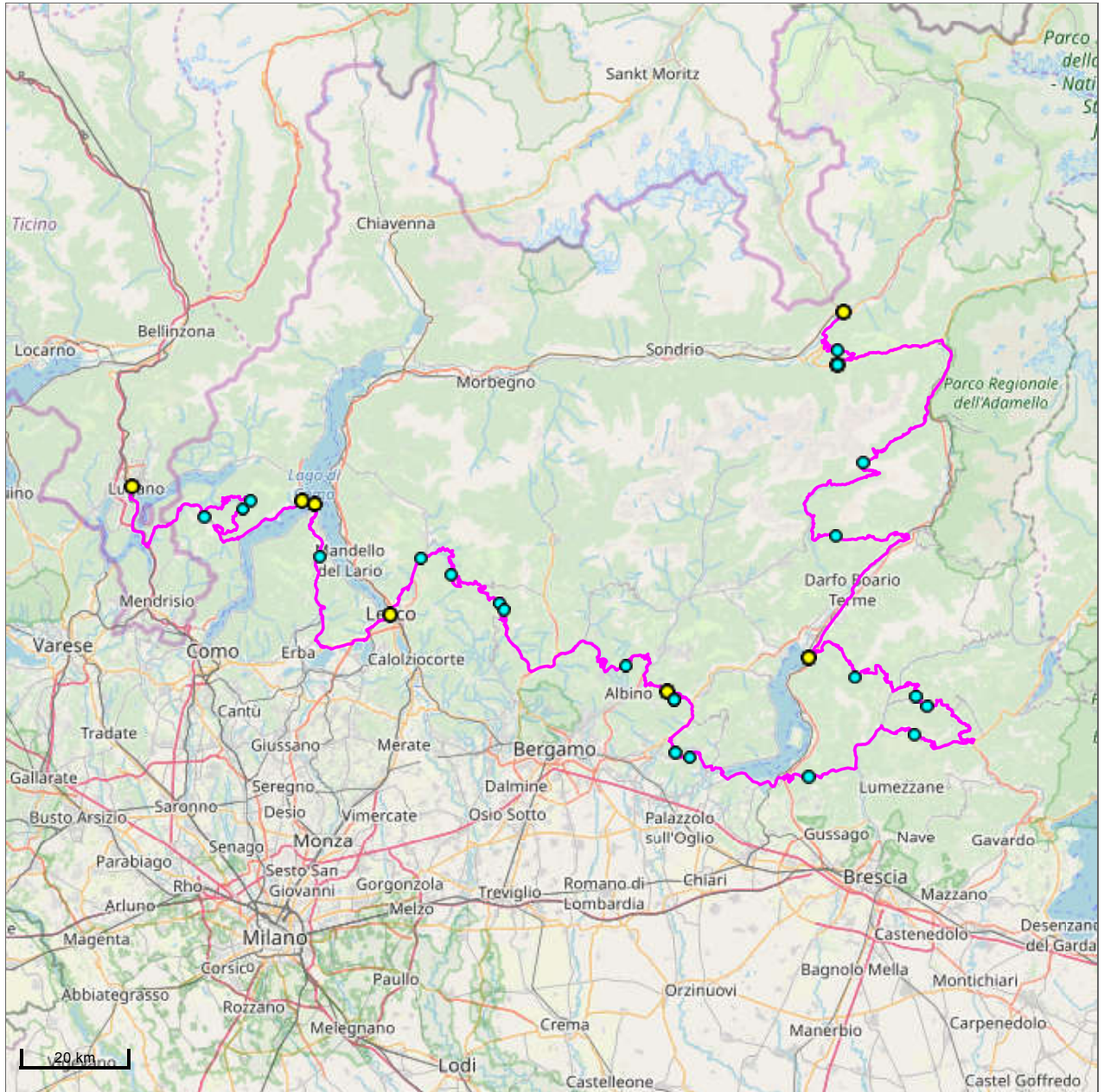
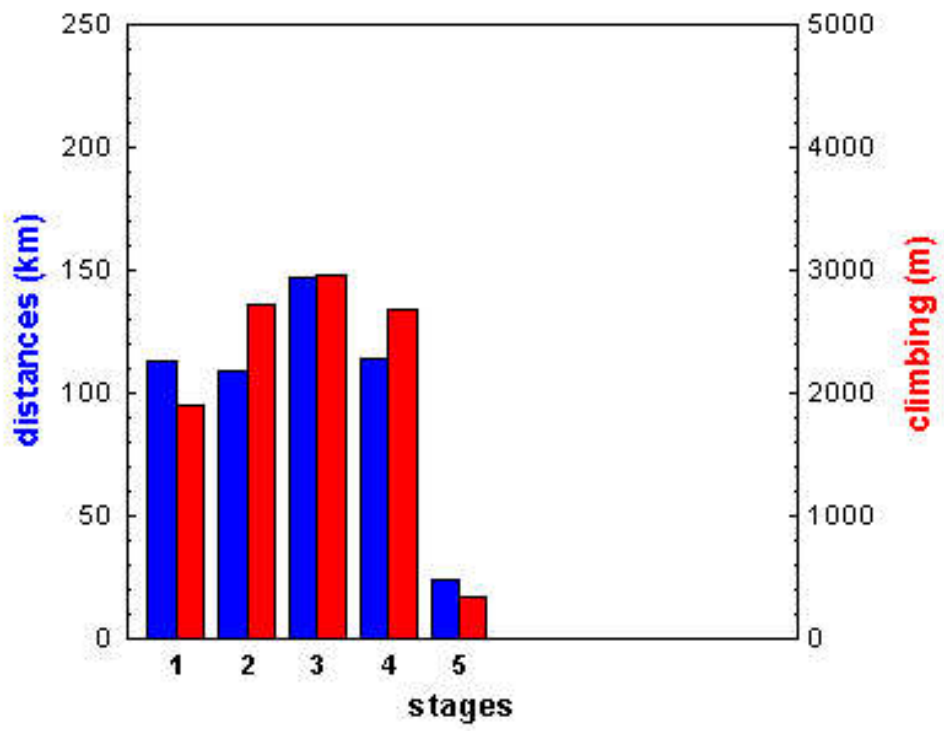


Bicycle tour 2015, 26 - 30 June

Patrick Schleppe

stage	distance (km)	climbing (m)
Lugano - Boffalora - Bellagio - Lecco	113	1910
Lecco - San Pietro - Ambria - Monte Altino	109	2730
Monte Altino - Iseo - Lodrino - San Zeno - Pisogne	147	2960
Pisogne - Borno - Vivione - Aprica	115	2670
Aprica - Santa Cristina - Tirano	24	330
total	508	10600

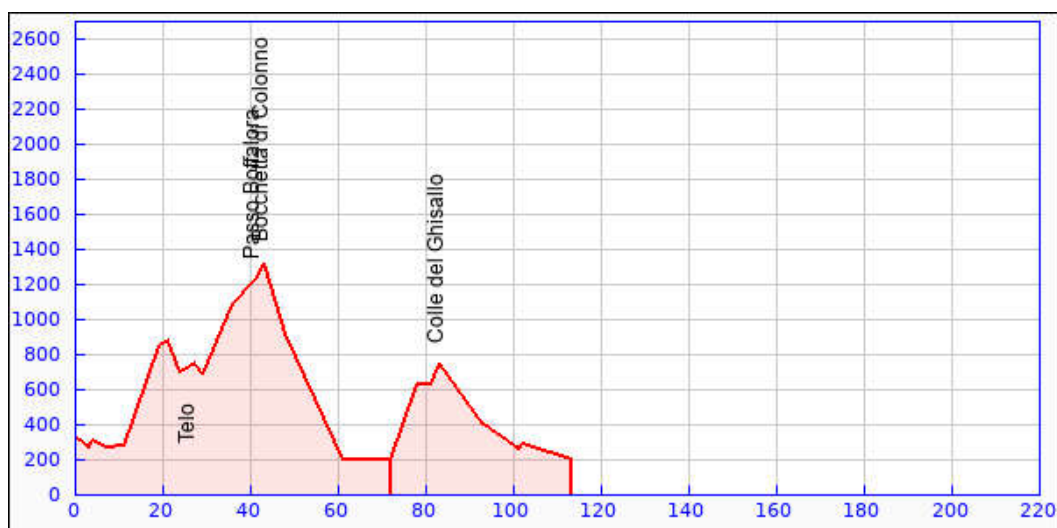




Stage 1 (26 June 2015): Lugano - Boffalora - Bellagio - Lecco

My plan was to make a tour in the French Alps. The day before, however, i heard that railway employees were striking there. The only possible connection was cancelled. Thus i completely changed my plans and took a train to Lugano, to make a tour in Italy. From Lugano, i went to Melide and over the dam to the other side of the lake. In Maroggia, i left the lake shore to climb to Arogno and then (after the Italian border) to Intelvi. The road was partly very steep. Then, instead of continuing straight to lake Como, i made a loop over [Boffalora](#) and [Colonno](#) passes. It was a very nice ride, even if roughly 2 km before Boffalora were not paved, but still perfectly rideable with a race bicycle. Then i had a long descent to Argegno. After a ride along the shore (with much traffic as one can imagine), i took a ferry boat from Cadennabia to Bellagio. Since courses are quite frequent, i did not have to wait long. Nevertheless, it was already 15 when i started to climb again. It was really warm and the road to the south was very steep up to Civenna. Further, the climb was easier and i reached the [Ghisallo](#) pass. This pass is quite well known among Italian cyclists: it features a church dedicated to Madonna del Ghisallo as a patroness of cyclists. There is also a small museum about cycling. The descent was less steep, and much easier anyway. It brought me to populated areas between Erba and Lecco. There were further lakes along the way: Lambro, Segrino, Pusiano, Annone. As often in Italy, there were many road signs, but by far not all useful and it is not easy to find one's way. For cyclists it is, not astonishingly, even much harder than for motor vehicles. At some place, it was even necessary to follow the signs for a highway, to finally discover that there was a bicycle path parallel to it. Well, it was so narrow and in bad shape that there was a speed limit of 10 km/h. Can you imagine Italian race cyclists respecting this? Fortunately, nowadays there are GPS devices, otherwise i'd probably still be turning in circles searching for my way into Lecco, where i decided to stop for the night.

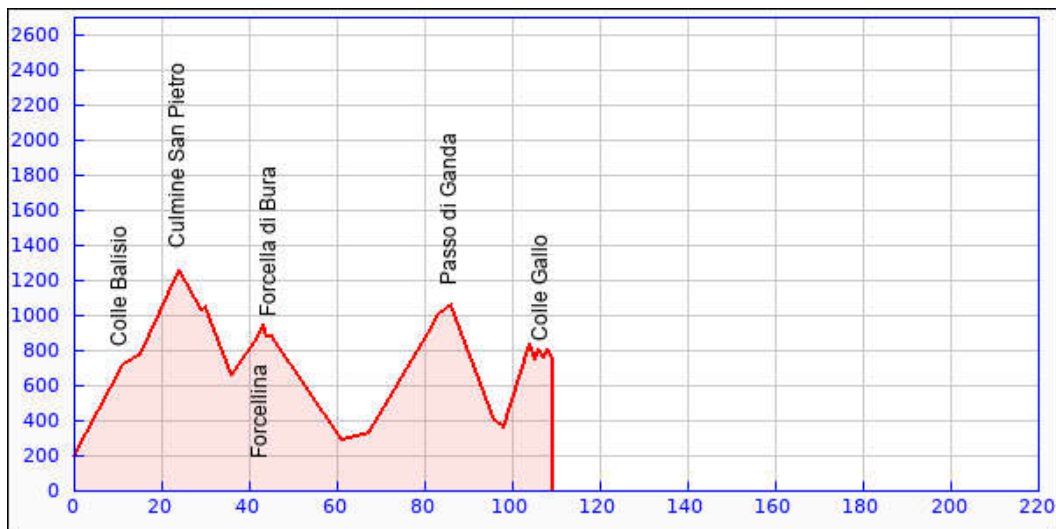
	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Lugano	0	330	
Paradiso	3	270	
San Martino	4	310	40
Melide	7	270	
Maroggia	11	280	10
Maru	19	850	570
Lanzo	21	880	30
Mora (Scaria)	24	700	
Telo	26	730	30
San Fedele	27	750	20
Laino	29	690	
Nigare	36	1090	400
Passo Boffalora	41	1230	140
Bocchetta di Colonno	43	1320	90
Pigra	48	920	
Argegno	61	200	
Cadenabbia	72	200	
>>> Bellagio	72	200	
Guello	78	630	430
Civenna	81	630	
Colle del Ghisallo	83	750	120
Canzo	93	400	
Pusiano	101	260	
San Giuseppe	102	290	30
Lecco	113	200	
total	113		1910



Stage 2 (27 June 2015): Lecco - San Pietro - Ambria - Monte Altino

For the second day, i started to climb Ballabio and further to the pass of **Balisio**. In the second part, after the junction of the highway, there was much traffic, but after the pass i turned right into the upper Valsassina and it was quieter again. A small road with very few motor vehicles brought me south to the **San Pietro** pass. It was Saturday and there were numerous cyclists who climbed up there from either side. In the descent i came into the Tallegio valley. I crossed it to its right-hand side towards the next passes. There was first **Forcellina**, on a steep and unpaved small road which required me to push the bicylce for a short distance. Back on the normal road, i was soon at the **Bura** pass. After this easy climb, there was quite a long descent along the Valle Brembilla. In Sedrina, i took left into the Brembo valley, which i left again in Ambria to climb towards Serina. The sky was a bit hazy, temperatures agreeable and the climb quite easy. From Selvino, i went further up along the main crest then to the **Ganda** pass. The descent brought me to yet another valley, Valle Seriana. The last climb of the day was again a very steep one. From Cene it went into the slopes of Monte Altino and towards the **Gallo** pass. Like the day before, this last pass had a church related to cycling (Madonna dei ciclisti) and a small museum. There was an hotel very close to it, but it had closed down. Instad of riding down into the valley, i preferred to stay in the mountains, even if it meant going back roughly 2 km to an hotel i has seen on the way.

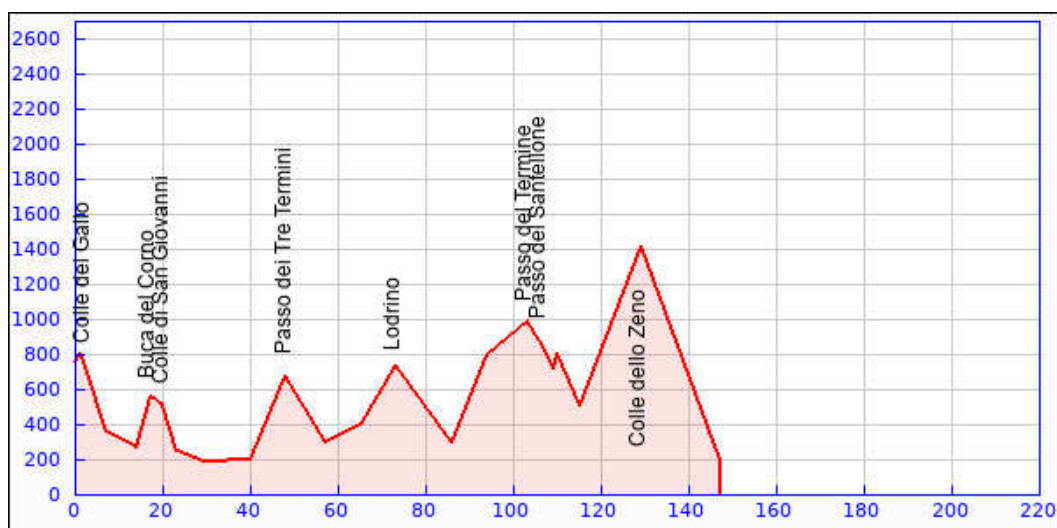
	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Lecco	0	200	
Colle Balisio	11	720	520
Cremeno	15	780	60
Culmine San Pietro	24	1260	480
Valle Bordesiglio	29	1030	
Avolasio	30	1050	20
Ponte Enna	36	660	
Incrocio Forcellina	42	880	220
Forcellina	43	950	70
Incrocio Forcellina	44	880	
Forcella di Bura	45	880	
Ponti (Sedrina)	61	290	
Ambria	67	330	40
Selvino	82	950	620
Cantul	83	1010	60
Passo di Ganda	86	1060	50
Gazzaniga	96	400	
Cene	98	360	
Ospizio Altino	104	840	480
Prati Moletti	105	750	
Monte Gallo	106	810	60
Colle Gallo	107	760	
Monte Gallo	108	810	50
Monte Altino	109	760	
total	109		2730



Stage 3 (28 June 2015): Monte Altino - Iseo - Lodrino - San Zeno - Pisogne

After a restorative night in the bergamesque prealps, my tour would lead me further to the east. I had first to ride again to [Passo del Gallo](#). After this 'pass of the cock', i went down to the valley of the horses (Val Cavallina), which i followed for a while to the south-west. Reaching the town of Entratico, i turned left to a narrow road climbing to the small pass of [Buca del Corno](#). Small by its elevation, but not by its slope, again a very steep one. I had a view towards the city of Bergamo to the west. After this, i continued towards the lake of Iseo, then along its south shore to the city of Iseo. There were many people and much traffic. There were some bicycle paths, but full of pedestrians and cyclotourists, and anyway unsuitable to ride at the normal speed of a race bicycle. All sportive cyclists (and they were numerous on this Sunday morning) were thus riding on the main roads. From Iseo, i rode again uphill. The next pass, [Passo dei Tre Termini](#) was a gentle climb, nevertheless with a gain of about 500 m in elevation and it was quite hot in the sun. After the descent, i turned left towards Gardone Val Trompia. I rode across this city and along the valley up to Brozzo, then i took a side valley up to [Lodrino](#). The road was quieter and i could enjoy the ride. After Lodrino, it was going down again and i reached so what was more or less the turning point of my journey: from Nozza, my main direction would no longer be to the east but to the north. This meant first going up again. Fortunately there were some forests and thus shade, and always again some fountains so that i never had to fear thirst during the whole tour. I came so to the municipality of Pertica Alta, which is made of several picturesque hamlets. After them two passes were crowning this part of the ride: the [Termine](#) and [Santellone](#) passes. These were again nice little roads with few traffic. I descended back into the Trompia valley and retrieved there the route of my [tour 2002](#). The next pass appeared to be a longer ride than 13 years before, but this time it was at the end of the stage, not in the morning. As i reached [San Zeno](#) pass, there were many people there who had enjoyed a Sunday in the mountains. And the last descent of the day brought me to those who had enjoyed a Sunday at the lake. It was lake Iseo again, its north end at Pisogne to be more precise. The day had been quite long, almost 10 hours including pauses, but i still had time for a beer on a terrace at the shore before dinner.

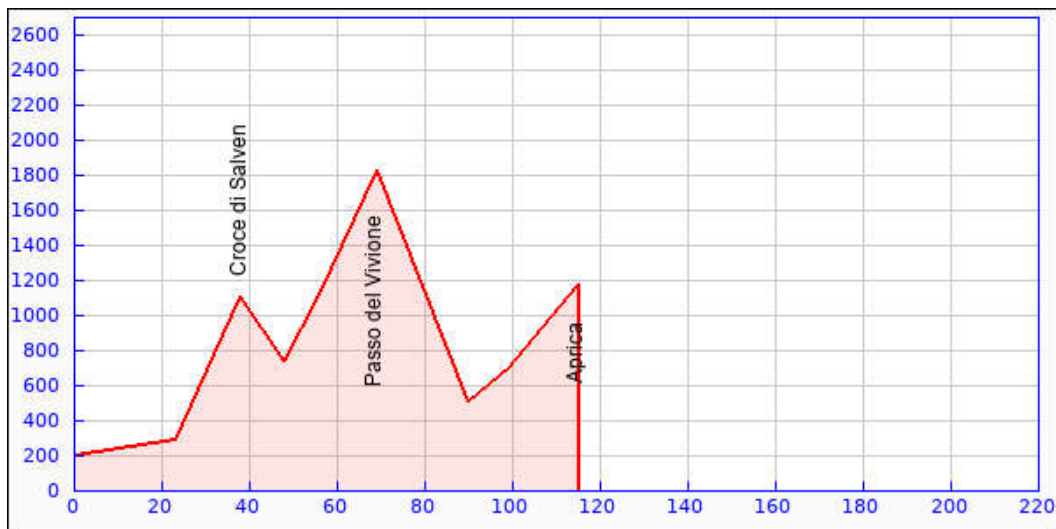
	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Monte Altino	0	760	
Monte Gallo	1	810	50
Colle del Gallo	2	760	
Mologno	7	360	
Entratico	14	270	
Buca del Corno	17	560	290
Colle di San Giovanni	20	510	
Tremellini	23	250	
Sarnico	29	190	
Iseo	40	200	10
Passo dei Tre Termini	48	680	480
Ponte Zanano	57	300	
Brozzo	65	400	100
Lodrino	73	740	340
Nozza	86	300	
Belprato	94	800	500
Passo del Termine	103	990	190
Passo del Santellone	106	880	
Bagatta	109	720	
Irma	110	810	90
Lavone	115	510	
Colle dello Zeno	129	1420	910
Pisogne	147	200	
total	147		2960



Stage 4 (29 June 2015): Pisogne - Borno - Vivione - Aprica

Monday morning, the weather was overcast but it did not look like it would be raining. Perfect riding weather. I went first along the Camonica valley almost up to Breno. Turning left let me then climb towards the town of Borno. The slope was not steep, and after Borno even less. I reached thus easily the pass of [Croce di Salven](#). Riding this way not only brought me to this pass (new for me) but it also let me avoid the tunnels of the road along the lower Valle di Scalve, which i had taken in [2002](#). After the descent to Dezzo, i went to the upper part of this Scalve valley, first to the touristic town of Schilpario, then up to the highest point of this tour, [Passo del Vivione](#). The road became very narrow, but well maintained. Probably because it would be hard to cross, there were barely any cars on the way, just a handful of bicycles or motorcycles. The slopes of the valley were becoming steeper and steeper up to the point where the forest ended and the road arrived on the small plain surrounding the pass (and itself surrounded by gentle mountain peaks). It was not only the highest but also one of the most beautiful locations of this tour. Just on time, the clouds retreated and the sun appeared. The descent from this pass was long and very nice, bringing me back into the Camonica valley. The next stretch was not nice at all, with a lot of traffic including lorries, but i got help from a good tailwind. After a short stop at Édolo, i rode up to Aprica, which was the last stop of this tour.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Pisogne	0	200	
Malegno	23	290	90
Borno	34	890	600
Croce di Salven	38	1110	220
Dezzo di Scalve	48	740	
Schilpario	56	1120	380
Passo del Vivione	69	1830	710
Malonno	90	510	
Édolo	99	700	190
Aprica	115	1180	480
total	115		2670



Stage 5 (30 June 2015): Aprica - Santa Cristina - Tirano

The last stage of this tour would have to be short because i needed to be back home in the evening. The bicycle would thus have to go into the train. Still, even if short, it was a very nice ride. Instead of just riding down into the Valtellina valley, i took the small road over the [Santa Cristina](#) pass. This short climb was on the same road as we came down to Aprica in [2003](#). It was almost entirely in the forest, but i could still have some glimpses over the Valtellina before coming down at Stazzona. From there, there were just a few kilometres left to

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Aprica	0	1180	
San Pietro	2	1160	
Passo di S. Cristina	7	1450	290
Stazzona	20	400	
Tirano	24	440	40
total	24		330

reach Tirano and to go to the station of the Rhetic railways. It was the second time that i took the train over the Bernina pass and it was so beautiful that i did not regret too much not to have time to climb by bicycle. I'd recommend this train ride to anybody who did not yet have had a chance to enjoy it (or who did not have the chance to do it by such a good weather as i had).

This tour had started as a second choice because of strikes in France, but it turned out to be first choice. The only mistake was to think that all passes would be easy because none was really high: some were really steep and a triple chainring would not have been useless!

