

## Len's 33rd letter from the Via

Date: 9 and 10/08/17

Location

Fornovo di  
Taro

KM's to  
Rome

731

Steps Today

65,387

I was determined to have a very quiet day in Fidenza. The morning's task was to put all the clothes through the self-serve laundromat, visit the Duomo and the information centre, then have an afternoon reading to rest my feet. My room did not have a view so it was not that pleasant sitting in there reading. As I glanced out the window I saw a shuttle bus go past with Fidenza Village painted on the side. Wondering what this was I looked it up and it's one of those shopping centres that have all the major brands on sale. I love a bit of a shop so I went and hopped on the bus and travelled the four kilometres to the centre. I managed to buy some new shorts as mine though good servants have seen their day and spent a pleasant two hours wandering around the other shops.

The walk out of Fidenza was the perfect walk. An early morning start where the sun showed



off the old buildings to their best advantage. Then an easy navigation out of the city before there was any traffic, followed by a flat walk through countryside to loosen the joints and warm up the injuries. This was then followed by a climb up a ridge giving views back to Fidenza, into valleys and the unfolding mountain range ahead. The route then took me through some nice little farm settlements (which were all immaculately maintained) and then delivered me into a village at lunchtime to buy lunch provisions and water along with a nice place to consume the

items purchased. After lunch, aware of the problem of walking on a full stomach, the route took me around the side of a hill and I finished up at a river. I then walked along the river for six kms. with a cooling breeze blowing off the water. At the end there was a pedestrian bridge over the river so no fighting with traffic and to top it all off at the end of the bridge a shop selling ice cold drinks. All the ingredients for a perfect walk.

Perhaps it was my lucky day as I passed the half way mark of 744 kms. today, this is a photo



at the exact spot. Do I look like a pilgrim or just an elderly middle class man out for a morning stroll, I need to have some sort of identifier so that I can be instantly recognized as a pilgrim and receive the benefits of that recognition, especially the kudos people give you when they find out you are walking to Roma. The usual response is a repeat of the destination then raised eyebrows then Roma is said again in an impressed tone. I must remember to celebrate this milestone as I prepare for the road ahead.

At times the first part of the walk has been tough going and I have been tested both mentally and physically, but happily have not had a major injury or anything seriously go wrong in respect of getting lost or troubles with

hotels only with dogs. Hopefully this will continue for the rest of the walk (sans dogs).

Walking in the hills again has made it much more interesting even though it is challenging. The walk through the rice paddies is notoriously difficult for all pilgrims and all are glad when it's over. Although I have just been reading about the walk at dinner and the author suggests that the chequered patterns of the rice fields matches the terrace planting of vines in Tuscany, I don't think so.

As I was walking up the ridge this morning I thought that this would be a good place for a holiday home and I passed this one. It has superb views back to Fidenza and you could sit outside on the porch in the evening watching the sun set. As a one room house maintenance would be very easy.

Today I meet six fellow walkers all headed to Rome. We all agreed that the walking is so much better since Carpaneto.

This is a photo I took of the countryside above Fidenza, you will notice the spaceship circles on



the third hill, other than the circles it is typical of the country I have walked in today.

#### Pilgrim Tips:

The last thing you should do before leaving your hotel for the days walk is to force yourself to drink a half litre of water, it is easier to carry it in your stomach than on your back.