

## Len's 36th letter from the Via

Date:13/08/17

Location

Pontremoli

KM's to  
Rome

657

Steps Today

24,913

Last night was a wonderful stay in the Eremo Gioioso B & B in Previde. With hosts like the owners Mrs Basil Fawltly is long forgotten. You might wonder who Eremo Gioioso is, well I did. Apparently it means Happy or Joyful Hermitage, a good name for a place like this. The room was large and even though the bathroom had the standard bidet there was still sufficient room to use the bathroom, unlike a lot of other hotels. Who uses the bidet anyway? I suspect that the Anglo-Saxons who do use it only use it for washing their clothes so who would want to use it after dirty clothes (and possibly muddy shoes) have been washed in the bidet. Today's walk was a short 12 km. around the side of the mountains, with only one small up, then a gentle walk into the village. It turned out to be a nice easy walk through forest and woodlands with a couple of diversions through small rural villages. I met a few locals out for a Sunday stroll on the track.

This bridge below is considered to be the finest example of its type (keystone arch) in



Tuscany, its span is only about thirty meters but it is about seventy-five meters above the river. It is in fine condition and although an old bridge you didn't feel vulnerable when crossing it. It however did give me a bit of vertigo when I looked over the edge.

On the walk I crossed over several bridges with the same design as this one, but none so grand or spanning such a big creek valley.

The dogs are a persistent problem on this walk, they are mostly behind locked gates but one gets a little nervous with a couple of German shepherds barking furiously at you only meters from your neck. I wish there was some kind of whistle you could blow that would send a signal to the dogs that you were more powerful than them. As I walked down a lane in a village today towards the church, a big boxer hound came out of the alleyway behaving in a very threatening

way, I usually when confronted by this situation try to bluff the dog into believing I am its boss., I want to believe that dogs never bite me, just humans but today it seemed that discretion was called for, so I backed up the lane and took an alternative route. It turned out that I had gone off the Via and the dog was only warning me that I was going the wrong way how could I have misjudged the dog kingdom so badly.

I took this photo on the via today to demonstrate that I am not doing a virtual walk. In the background you can see the peaks of the mountain range I crossed yesterday.

