



## CANTÙ – PATH 2 – THE WALK OF THE WALLS

### STAGE 2 – From Argenti public park to the churchyard of St.Paul's Basilica

#### INFORMATION

**Point of departure** Cantù, Argenti public garden (Parco Argenti)

**Point of arrival** Cantù, churchyard of St.Paul's Basilica

**Path type** urban

**Environment** urban area

**Total length approx.** 2 Km

**Travel time on foot approx.** 30 minutes

**Difficulty** tourist

**Rise** 60 m

**Maximum height** 369 m

**Paving** asphalt, porphyry cubes and tiles, cobbled stone, gravel

**Public transport to the point of departure** bus ASF in via Volta

**Public transport from the point of arrival** bus ASF in Piazza Parini

**Parking at the point of departure** some parking for a fee along via Volta; free parking close by the carabinieri in via Murazzo

**Points of interest**

\* building lost, completely or in part

#### DESCRIPTION

Starting from the large pavement and parking lot in porphyry cubes turn to your left, keeping on for some thirty meters bordering the park fence. Cross the street on the pedestrian crossing alongside the end of the "Asilo Infantile Argenti" [Children's school "Argenti"], built at the beginning of the XX century on a side of the park of the Villa Argenti, that had been sold previously to the Comune; mount the pavement on the opposite side, also paved in porphyry cubes, turn left and keep on for forty meters, then turn right into Via Tommaso Grossi, also paved in porphyry cubes, between ancient palaces. Having reached Via Volta, turn right onto another pavement in porphyry cubes; keep on this street and later on Via dei Mille for about ninety meters until you reach the pedestrian crossing in front of the real estate agency. This position was approximately where the old **Porta Pianella**\* stood; this gate, of medieval origin, opened onto the road to Intimiano, at the northern end of the circle of walls around Cantù. Cross Via dei Mille and continue for a few meters on the sidewalk to then turn left onto Via Malchi. This asphalted street has no sidewalk; stay on the left side, passing by some recent residential buildings. After about 100 meters the street is obstructed by 2 + 1 staggered iron barriers, 1,2 meters high, and becomes for pedestrian only for about 60 meters, where further 2 + 1 staggered barriers are placed; after another ten meters the street ends in Piazza Sirtori, once called Fontana [fountain]. The old **Fontana gate**\* was placed just after this square, where now is via Daverio; of medieval origin, it opened at the north-western part of the circle of walls, onto the old via Canturina, coming from Como. From this square starts via Corbetta, that, with some nearby streets, was named in the Middle Age the **Contrada delle Torri**. At about 100 meters from the square, the square of the churchyard of **S. Teodoro** opens on the left; the construction of this church probably dates to the XII century. After having walked the length of Via Corbetta on the left side up to Piazza Garibaldi, retrace your steps on the opposite side of the street, and take, after 60 meters, the asphalted Via Chiavelli, passing

through ancient houses. Here the medieval circle of walls was positioned a little bit south, tracing what is now via Murazzo. After 80 meters turn left and enter Via Santa Maria, follow it until you reach an enlargement of the pavement, that in this stretch runs along Via Manzoni. Cross this latter street on the pedestrian crossing and climb the large sidewalk in porphyry cubes and slabs of stone, alongside the church of **S. Maria**, of the XVII century. Take the right and follow the pavement that flanks the building of the annexed former Cluniac Benedictine **monastery**, reserved for women, founded in 1086, that soon became rich and flourishing; a part of the monastic structure is now the seat of the offices of the Municipality of Cantù. At the end of the block turn left on the asphalted Piazza Marconi, or market square, occupied by a large parking lot on non-market days. If you look towards the south side of the square, on your left, you can see the rampart supporting the square, along the direction of Via Murazzo below: here probably ran the western part of the wall circle in the Middle Age, placed on a steep terrain. Keep to the left of Piazza Marconi, bypassing at first the congress hall "XXV Aprile", then the public library "Ugo Bernasconi". At the bottom of the square is the XV century former church of **S. Ambrogio**, also called the church of Transfiguration, which had an annexed monastery of Augustinian nuns, demolished in 1936 to make room for the current Piazza Marconi. Formerly, the monastery had been a community of pious women, probably of the Humiliates order, who in this place managed the Hospital of Saint Ambrogio (mentioned in documents of the XIII century). Along the stretch of walls between the monasteries of St.Maria and St.Ambrogio, the **Pusterla of Sant'Ambrogio\*** was probably opened in the XVII century, alongside the road to Cucciago.

From Piazza Marconi, turning left, close to the fence of the public library (take care not to bump into the three concrete blocks that obstruct access to the square), enter into Via Cavour, asphalted as well, that was very likely the internal lane on the eastern side of the circle of walls, in the area once called «*Contrada delli monasteri*». Stay on your left and start climbing the first part, with no pavement. When entering Piazza Parini, cross the street on the pedestrian crossing and go on the left pavement, bordering the fence of the public park of Villa Calvi, dedicated, since 2018, to the Martyrs of the Foibe (sinkholes). Take the pedestrian crossing to cross Via Roma, and keep straight on, taking Via Cavour again; walk on this street for a further 80 meters, until you enter Via Matteotti, reserved for pedestrians and paved with porphyry tiles. Right here, by the Pharmacy, at street number 34, the remains of a tower can still be seen. This is the place where the ancient **Coldonico Gate** or **St.Roch's Gate\*** stood, at the extreme southern end of the village, the end of the Contrada Colle di Vico, on the road to Milan. After 1537, the gate took the name of St.Roch's Gate, probably on the occasion of the construction of the oratory close by, dedicated to the Saint, that stood about forty meters further on, turning on the right, where now stands a baker's shop (Piazza Volontari della Libertà 1), on the corner with Via Brambilla. Turn left into the asphalted Via Brambilla, better known locally as "*Strà levà*", "higher street", along the circle of the walls, bordered by houses and gardens. After 220 meters, on the right, on a fencing wall, the association *Charturium* had commissioned two wall paintings. Walk down the whole street; for the last 30 meters take the pavement and, staying on the right to bypass the space occupied by the tables of a nearby bar, go back in via Ariberto da Intimiano, traverse it on the pedestrian crossing and turn left.

Now you can choose to walk over via Ariberto and reach again Piazza Garibaldi, or, better still, to take Via Fiammenghini a few meters on the right, keep straight on for 150 meters, until you turn left into the narrow via Pietrasanta, asphalted, climbing which, a few minutes later, you'll be back on St.Paul's hill, thus completing the circular path.