

Venue Guide – Riva Del Garda

www.fragliavelariva.com

Location:

Fraglia Vela Riva is situated in Riva Del Garda, located in Riva, which is in the North West corner of Lake Garda in Northern Italy. This has been a fixture on the 4000 calendar over the last few years due to the excellent conditions, sunshine and 'holiday nature' of the trip.

The club has been in existence for some 80 years or so, and has a deserved reputation for hosting events to a World Championship level including the Match Race Worlds in 2003. You can be sure that the staff will be very welcoming and race management really spot on. The support staff are used to dealing with foreign competitors with registration / briefings etc in English as well as Italian.



(Photo of the club (yellow building with white canopy) marina, Dinghy Park and the beaches/swimming areas beyond the club)

The town of Riva is particularly attractive and has a wide range of shops, bars and interesting restaurants.



(photo is taken from the main square in Riva looking out onto the lake)

For non-sailing friends there's a lot to do on holiday including mountain biking, windsurfing, hill-climbing, canyoning, beach activities (pebbly), canoeing etc. The majority of which are all available within a short walk of the town centre. One of the features of this end of the lake (in Trentino) is that no motorboats are allowed (other than ferries or rescue boats) which helps to keep the noise levels down and the dreaded jet-skiers out of the picture. So if you have friends or relatives interested in "sharing" your holiday – bring them along

To see the lake/club on google maps goto - <http://tinyurl.com/fragliariva>

Wind / Racing

Garda is well known for being a "windsurfing" mecca, largely due to the thermally generated "Ora" wind that kicks in from the south usually around 12-1pm, and builds regularly up to a F4 and occasionally up to a F6-F7. This places an emphasis on strong boat handling as well as speed in these conditions. Conventional theory is that "there's more breeze nearer the cliffs" but that only holds true some of the time and also depends on the racing area you use.

Occasionally you get thunderstorms rolling around the mountains and the clouds and drop in temperature can prevent the "Ora" from kicking in and if the light northerly or "Peler" is in place racing does sometimes take place in the 'wrong direction' that emphasises a range of different skill sets.

The racing often runs from the Wednesday to the Saturday afternoon, but check the dates on the NOR on the club website. It's worth getting out there by the Monday at the latest to acclimatise to the heat and get in tune with the conditions – plus as it's a holiday you might as well give yourself the time to enjoy it.

There are a number of key things to consider about you/your boat if going to Garda for the first time

- 1) Water Bottles – you'll need at least 2 litres a day out on the water – potentially more if you're working hard and it's really hot. Best option is to fit cycling water bottles to the rear racks, and also on the front port rack, under the spinnaker sock.
- 2) Boat Preparation is key – anything that can break will break due to the wind, short chop and the potential for capsizing. Make sure you've checked the boat over carefully before going out there and replace any ropes that look dodgy – especially halyards and the entire spinnaker related ropes (wing wang lines, downhaul etc). You might well not have time to get back to the club between races if there is a problem.
- 3) It can get really hot, so take suntan lotion out in the boat and top up between races. Also think about a baseball cap or sunhat and sunglasses, although these can get quite wet if the wind is "on form"

The other thing you **must bring** is a copy of the boat insurance certificate. Unlike in the UK in Italy if you want to enter an event, then you need to present the insurance docs at registration – no papers then no entry – until you get Mr. Noble to fax them a copy.

Socials

The social side of Garda is part of the charm of the regatta – with the Ora turning up at lunchtime, there's no need to get to the dinghy park until 10:30, so this helps to encourage later nights. Evening entertainment usually consists of finding a restaurant that can seat 10-15 at short notice (the Golden Lion is one of my favourites) and then decamping to a bar somewhere to discuss the days racing. If you're on holiday with your partner there are some lovely romantic venues (well so I'm told!) – but try and avoid the same joint as 12 other 4000 sailors as some of the romance could be lost!

Al fresco is definitely the order of the day, and it's usually warm enough to leave the jumpers behind. The popular spots include the "Italian Yachting Bar" in the corner of the main square on the front, and for cocktails the "real yachting bar aka the 'leafy' bar" (on account of the ivy on the walls outside) tucked up the hill, about 3 streets above Hotel Centrale.

The club usually runs a meal evening for all competitors which is worth going too as (a) it's free, and you can meet up with everyone, and in 2003 this was combined with a live band, which turned into a really cracking night of entertainment and general shenanigans.

Getting There

This is one of the more interesting challenges, as it is a little further away than the average UK series event. It's not impossible or overly hard, but just needs a little more thought and preparation, and hopefully the following suggestions will help

Get your boat delivered

This is clearly the best way to go especially if you are time poor. Either arrange for a friend to take the boat out on a double trailer and offer to share costs / driving or alternatively every year there are a number of multi-stack trailers that come over from the UK usually run by

www.sailboatdeliveries.com

Ian Jubb

Emsworth

www.ainsworthdeliveries.com

Tony Ainsworth

Newcastle on Tyne



4K's being delivered courtesy of Sailboat Deliveries

The cost of booking your boat on a multi-stack should be budgeted at around £450. You can drop your boat at the Sailboat Deliveries depot in Emsworth or previously they have arranged a trailer to be at the UK Series event immediately preceding Garda and collected the boats directly from there. Obviously this will be dependent on their/our class schedules so keep your eyes on the class chat page for more details on their services and confirmation of their dates and prices.

Flying

If you get your boat delivered then you need to arrange to fly out. Airports to head for are either Verona-Brescia or Milan Bergamo, both of which can be reached from a number of cheap airlines e.g. Ryanair or FlyBe. Depending on when you book it can cost £50-£120 for a return. On arrival at the airport the next issue is transport to / from Riva. Options include

- hire car for the week,
- taxi to Sirmione (bottom of the lake) and then ferry all the way to Riva (pretty but time consuming)
- Train to Rovereto and bus to Riva (every hour)
- Bus down the East Coast of the lake to Verona and then taxi (slow!)

If driving from the Airport then follow the A4 east to the A22 North signposted Brennero, and exit at the Roteverto Sud exit (toll fee payable). Follow signs to Torbole and then Riva. After the tunnel from Torbole you will enter Riva itself, continue on the main road until you get to a roundabout, turn left here and the sailing club is at the end of this road. It takes about 75

minutes from Brescia via this route, but you can also go up the western side of the lake which is much prettier but takes around 150 minutes going this way.

Driving

Driving either a single trailer or a double is quite possible. Depending on your car/speed/trailer/route/traffic/pit stop strategy it can be done in about 14 hours from Calais. There is any number of possible routes, but the two main ways are: -

- Switzerland – Aim for Basle and then head south through Switzerland through the St. Gotthard Tunnel (scary!). Drop down to Milan and pick up the A4 heading east signposted Verona or Venice. Go along past the bottom of the lake and pick up the A22 North signposted Brennero, and exit at the Roteverto Sud exit (toll fee payable). Follow signs to Torbole and then Riva. After the tunnel from Torbole you will enter Riva itself, continue on the main road until you get to a roundabout, turn left here and the sailing club is at the end of this road.
- Austria – Head into Germany and go south aiming for Munich. Follow the A8 to Salzburg, but turn off onto the A93 (South) which becomes the A12, following signs to Innsbruck. At Innsbruck pick up signs to the Brenner Pass (A13) and take that South towards Italy. Follow signs south for Trento, then Roteverto and turn off at Rotervertto Sud and follow directions as above.

Carnets / Tolls / Fines

Travelling through France and Italy you will have to pay road tolls on the motorways, with barriers every now and again. In Switzerland / Austria its slightly different, as you stop at the border and buy a 'carnet' that covers you to drive on the motorways. This is around €40 in Switzerland to cover both car and trailer.

Getting stopped for speeding is an occupational hazard of this trip. Note that in Germany the speed limit when towing is only 80 km/h which is rubbish. However having been stopped I was fined only around €25 for doing close to 125 km/h. In Switzerland the fines are *significantly* larger – e.g. €300 in previous years.

Other Driving Tips

- Is the car up to it – it's a 2000-mile round trip or thereabouts with the pedal on the max for the most of us. Make sure the car won't overheat or breakdown etc, as this definitely takes the gloss off the holiday. If you're a poor student then beg/steal/borrow the parents nice company car.
- Trailer Bearings – get them checked, a break at 4am in the middle of France is not what the doctor ordered.
- Spare Wheel, and check you have a spanner that works on these wheel nuts
- Lighting board is there and all works
- Emergency Kit – warning triangle, first aid kit, headlamp deflectors – all legal requirements in certain countries you might pass through
- Insurance & Recovery – need to get sorted. Currently the only European breakdown service that seems to cover trailers is Direct Line Rescue
- Make sure you have nothing out behind the trailer boards as the Italian Police might well stop you, as this is a trivial matter they are very hot on!

On Arrival

On arrival at Garda, park the boat in any spot you like, but make sure it's facing the lake so that when you rig up in the Ora you boat doesn't fly away. Also note that the club must keep the main road through the dinghy park clear as it's the coastal path. The other hazard to watch for is a nice shady spot, but where you can't put the mast up due to overhead trees.

It's definitely worth checking the mast boat over before rigging, and making sure nothings going to break – boom goosenecks and main/ kite halyards seem to be favourites. Then get out there and enjoy what you came for!

Launching

Launching is quite tricky given the narrowness of the ramps and the prevailing wind direction which is onshore when the Ora kicks in. The photo below is of the main slipway which as you can see is quite narrow and close to the rocks.



You need to have tied a long rope in a loop onto your trolley before attempting to launch. Then with a little help from your friends push the boat down the slip nose first, crew gets in and sorts the centreboard, then push the trolley wheels over the edge. The trolley then drops away but is held firm by your friends on the rope. Leap over the back end and sheet in / sail away. Try to go off on starboard tack as this maximises the time you have before crashing onto the rocks.

At the end of the day, drop the main and come under jib. Helm hops off the back to slow down and simply run up onto the carpeted bit of the slipway to stop. With help from friends then lift the boat onto the trolley and quickly clear the launching area. During the event there's not enough time to try and get everyone back onto their own trolley, so just grab the nearest one that you like!

Club Amenities

The club amenities are very good with a nice bar and lounge area. There's an upper level sundeck and a smaller one for a post race beer in front of the club. Water, Coffee, and rolls are all available from the bar in the morning, and usually after racing there's free pasta for all competitors – to refuel after a blast.

In terms of chandlery then there usually support from Pietro Negri (Laser Italian Rep) and Sailboat Deliveries usually provide a supporting service in addition.

Accommodation

There is an accommodation list on the club website, which provides extensive details of the accommodation that's available. Typically the best options are either hotels or self-catering apartments.

If you go for a hotel in the town, it's nearer the club and the evening entertainment. The Apartments tend to be along the road away from the town towards Torbole, but this will leave you with a maximum of a 20-minute walk to the club in the morning. In 2003 hotels were around £30-£40 per person per night, and reasonable apartments were £130 per person for the week based on 4 sharing.