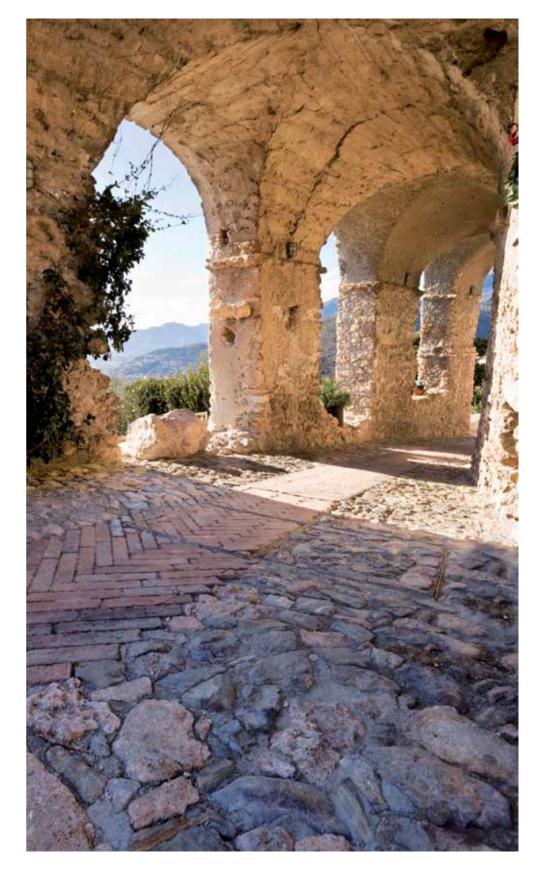
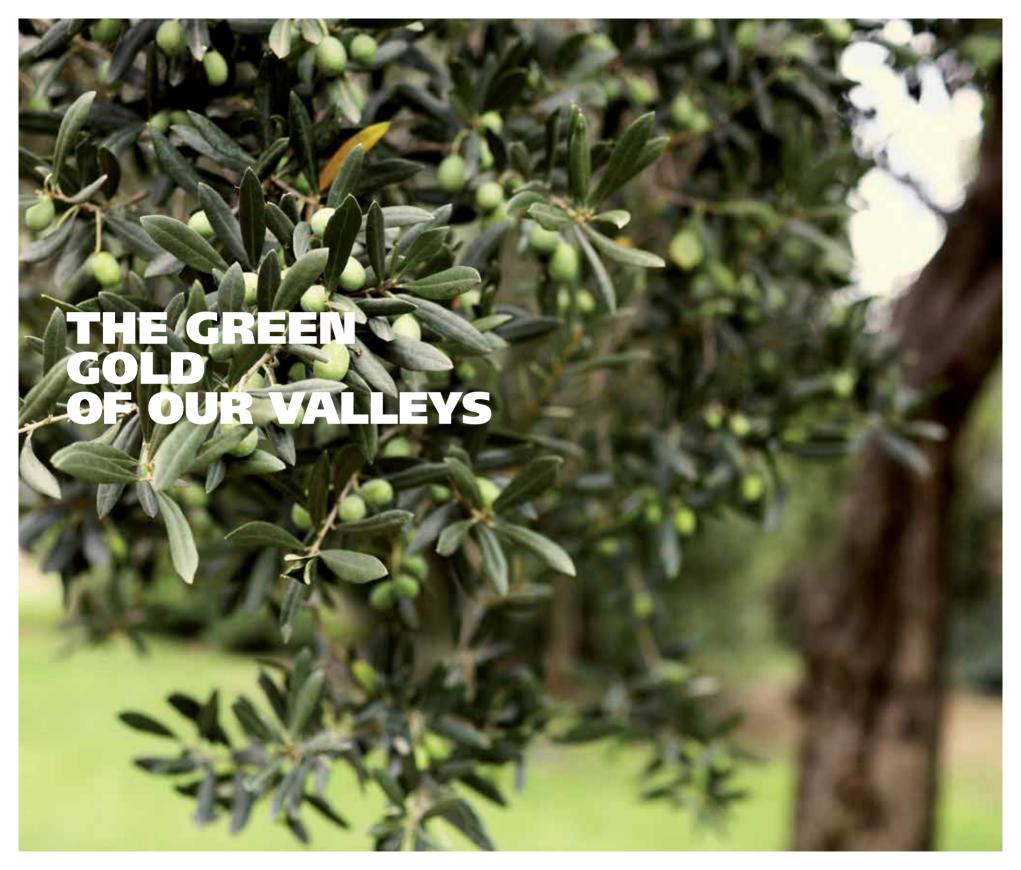


THE OTHER RIVIERA

The hinterland between Borgio Verezzi and Andora

"From up there on the narrow terrace of a towering mountain, I will look down over the sea; my body will be salt, the white of a sail or the yellow of a broom flower". Strolling along the cobbled streets of the villages in the valleys between Andora and Borgio Verezzi, admiring the pale stone houses overlooking the sea, you're reminded of the wonderful song by Joan Manuel Serrat and Gino Paoli, "Mediterraneo". Down below white sails bob on the sea; up on the hills the air is tinged yellow with broom flowers and perfumed with ilex trees; the old walls are decorated with delicate blue Italian bellflowers (Campanula isophylla, the delight of many a botanist); the ridges are lined with centuries-old beech trees... then there are vineyards, olive groves, panoramas... All this is the other Riviera.











VEREZZI

A village loved by poets

"Verezzi is best walked not from the street but from the rooftops, which are not rooftops at all but small terraces, baked and bent by the sun. An uneven expanse, with slight rises and falls, that takes you from one dwelling to the next... The main door, the first flight of a broken staircase, reveal that some of them are elegant old homes. On the ground floor, now... the donkey kicks its legs, on the first floor, pride of place is held by... an oil mill made of solid oak... Everything in Verezzi is made of Finale stone: a hard, rosy stone... the thresholds and the architraves, the niche with the statue of Our Lady, the millstones..." (From "Postilla a Verezzi" by Camillo Sbarbaro, published by kind permission of Lina Sbarbaro).





The Borgio Verezzi Theatre **Festival**

Verezzi's best-known cultural event is its theatre festival, held every summer in the enchanting Piazza Sant'Agostino. International theatre companies perform amidst the town's ancient low stone buildings, with the church of Sant'Agostino as a backdrop, whilst the summer sunset colours the sky. Nearby, before and after the performance...

Four hamlets make one of the **Most Beautiful Villages in Italy**

Their names are Piazza, Poggio, Roccaro, Crosa: they are groups of the so called "Saracen" houses on a hill of about 200 metres on the sea level; there are alleys, little squares, ancient wash-houses, San Martino church with its Romanesque belfry ... and even a mill called "Phoenician" for the technique used for its construction. All around there are terracecultivations with olives trees, vineyards and carobs; among the stones of the walls capers grow and bloom; here you can admire wide and warm panoramas. Not far the pinewood of Caprazoppa gives its dark green colour to the sunny and bright landscape.

A village festival for snails

The Roman historian Sallustio wrote in the I century b.C. that the rough Ligures really appreciated snails and this passion for gasteropods has never stopped. Once on July 22, Saint Mary Magdalen's Day, the families of Verezzi cooked snails; this tradition is still alive thanks to the village festival for snails. The "snails cooked in the Verezzi style" is a recipe of the most ancient Ligurian tradition. It requires a long time to prepare and it includes the aromatic herbs of the maquis, dry white wine and extra virgin olive oil.

TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

Verezzi

Affittacamere Svegliarsi

a Verezzi (rooms)

via Poggio 11, Ph. 019 617447 348 7769438

www.svegliarsiaverezzi.liguria.it

Agriturismo Cà du Gregorio via Ortari 12, Ph. 019 611952

www.agriturismocadugregorio.it

Antica Osteria Saracena del Bergallo

via Roma 17, Piazza Ph. 019 617783 www.hcaldana.com/ristorante_

verezzi/

Antica Società Caffè Teatro

piazza Gramsci 1, Ph. 019 618086 www.caffeteatro.verezzi.it

B&B A Creuza

via Alla Chiesa 39, Ph. 333 4630112

acreuzaverezzi@gmail.com

B&B Ca' Rosa

via Ortari 16, Ph. 019 612132

B&B L'Archivolto

via Roccaro 6, Ph. 019 611820 www.archivolto.net

B&B Le Terrazze del Borgo Antico

via Del Salto 3/2

Ph. 328 8764719

B&B Luci sul Mare via Verezzi 20, Ph. 019 610221

www.lucisulmare.it

Da U Ninnu

(apartments)

via Roma 16, Ph. 329 2955655

Ristorante American Bar Il Cappero

via Roma 23, Piazza Ph. 019 610958 www.ilcappero.com

Ristorante A Töpia

via Roma 16, Piazza Ph. 019 616905

Ristorante II Muma

via Cava Vecchia 2 Ph. 019 610788

www.ilmuma.com

Ristorante La Cantina dei 2 Amici

via Roma 2, Piazza Ph. 338 7004505

Torre Antica Jazz Café

piazza S. Agostino Ph. 019 610777

www.torreantica.net

Torre dei Sassetti

(music bar) via Barrili 12 Ph. 333 3129298





THE INLAND AREA OF PIETRA LIGURE

The valleys of Mount Carmo

Green in some areas, rocky in others, Mount Carmo casts its own unique spell that has made it one of the area's most attractive hiking destinations - not least because of its 1389-metre drop straight to the sea. This majestic deity dominates the coast, the panorama from its summit extends towards the French Riviera, the Cinque Terre, the Apuan Alps, Mount Rosa, the Lombardy plain and Mount Adamello. Countless torrents, including the Maremola and the Scarincio, flow through the woods and countryside down towards the sea.





Tovo San Giacomo

At the time of Charlemagne

The 2300 residents of Toyo San Giacomo live in various hamlets in the middle of the small but lush Maremola Valley. The valley is in the hilly inland area of Pietra Ligure, just a few kilometres from the coast and the wooded Melogno Pass that leads to the Bormida Valley. Bardino Vecchio is an ancient hamlet that may date as far back as the time of Charlemagne. The church of San Giovanni boasts a Gothic bell tower with several "bacini", ceramic plates produced by the Arabs. embedded in its walls.

The clock town

The highlight of Tovo San Giacomo is in Bardino Nuovo: the Tower Clock Museum was the first one of its kind opened in Italy. The monumental clockwork parts exhibited at the museum document over a century of work by the Bergallo family, nationally renowned artists and craftsmen who made clocks from 1860 to 1980. Their clocks mark time on the towers of several major Italian cities such as Albenga, Savona, Bologna and Taranto. The local vineyards yield excellent Pigato, Vermentino and Barbarossa, which are ideal with traditional dishes like snails and savoury pies.

Magliolo

The old Via della Ferriera

Magliolo, with its 800 inhabitants, is the other

municipality in the Maremola Valley. It has a history as an early industrial centre: the road along the valley floor was known as Via della Ferriera - the road to the ironworks - because ferrous minerals from Elba were processed in Isallo. one of the hamlets further uphill. The minerals were transported here by mules from Pietra Ligure. The ironworks operated from 1730 until the midnineteenth century. The lovely eighteenth-century sanctuary of Santi Cosma e Damiano is located along the road leading to the Melogno Pass, and a popular country festival is held here in September.

The modern Via Ferrata

Today the ironworks are gone, and instead

there is an "iron way", a 1200-metre Via Ferrata (climbing trail) that hikers and mountain climbers can take from Cà dell'Erscia to Bric dell'Agnellino, along the Balzi Rossi coast. Along the way adventurous hikers cross a Tibetan bridge stretched over a deep canyon. This is an Alpine environment just a stone's throw from the sea. Those who are afraid of heights can "settle" for a walk along the Terre Alte Trail, which starts in Toirano and intersects with the Alta Via dei Monti Liguri. The trail leads to the Melogno Pass (1028 meters high), along a wooded ridge with a marvellous view of the sea. Several nineteenth century military posts stand guard along the route. In the central fort, there is an enormous holly tree that is around 200 years old.

Giustenice

In the name of the law...

Jus Tenens was a village of the Ligurian Ingauni tribe. Destroyed and then rebuilt by the Romans as a mansio on the Via Julia Augusta, it developed under the Longobards. Today its 900 residents are divided between the hamlets of San Lorenzo and San Michele. The court was located in San Lorenzo: once a month, the podestà of Pietra

would sit on a stone seat and hand down his sentences. The seat is still there, but based on its appearance, the judge can't have been very comfortable! This is a land of olive groves and vineyards, and the town hall displays two ancient stone measures, dating from 1606, that were used for oil and wine. In San Michele the castle that belonged to the bishops of Albenga and the Marquises Del Carretto must have been very impressive, judging from the ruins on top of the cliff. The Romanesque church of San Michele is also fascinating. Built in the Middle Ages (the Longobards were very devoted to St Michael), it was enlarged during the sixteenth century and there are remains of fifteenth-century frescoes inside. In the same square there is Cà Comuna, the old Town Hall.

Back to the Middle Ages

At the end of July, the Palio dei Carri is held in San Michele square to commemorate the battle of 1448 between the Del Carretto family and the Republic of Genoa, which won after a long siege. Today this event is remembered with a banquet of medieval dishes, and with shows, duels and music as entertainment.

Ranzi

A village overlooking the sea

A peaceful hillside hamlet in the Pietra Ligure district, Ranzi is a village with a Mediterranean air sunny and bedecked with flowers – and a stunning view of the sea and the coast. Just up the hill there is a stone "casella", the ancient nuragheshaped shelter used by shepherds. From here there are several trails that cut through the dense Mediterranean maquis covering the slopes of Mount Carmo.

A star made of flowers

On Corpus Christi Day Ranzi is coloured by an ancient tradition: the "Ranzi star" decking with flowers; in the striking square of S. Concezione chapel, people realize a round drawing with diameter of seven meters; they change the scheme every year but they always start from the centre to deck it by hands with wild flowers. They use yellow broom, white daisies, violet orchids, pink canella, green heather and light blue hydrangea. The details of the realization are made clear by the colour contrast.

Good wine for everyone

At the middle of August, on the panoramic hill of the Madonnina di Ranzi, the Nostralino village festival attracts lots of





tourists and gourmets. It is one of the first rural village festivals of Liguria, as it was organized the first time just after World Wide War I and it is by now a fixed meeting in the summer of Pietra Ligure and its area.

TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

Tovo San Giacomo

Town Hall Ph. 019 637901 www.comune.tovo-san-giacomo.sv.it

Affittacamere Casa Nobile (rooms)

via Roma 59, Ph. 333 6940547 www.casanobilerooms.it

Affittacamere Relais

Ca' dei Frati (rooms) località Villa dei Frati Ph. 019 68111 relaiscadeifrati@yahoo.it

Azienda II Vecchio Castagno

(farm, cheese) via Portio 185, Ph. 019 648394

B&B Claro de Luna

via Rocca 34 Ph. 019 648409, 347 6946294 www.clarodeluna.liguria.it

B&B La Corte del Gallo

via Folchi 8/10 Bardino Vecchio Ph. 347 5964173

B&B La Luna e Sei Soldi

via Bosi 3, Bardino Nuovo Ph. 019 639225, 328 8738642 www.lunaeseisoldi.it

B&B Le Giare

via Rocca 4, Ph. 019 648372 www.mindrevolver.com/legiare

B&B Michela

via Nari 18, Bardino Nuovo Ph. 019 648200, 338 4659377 bandbmichelatovo@yahoo.it

Casa Vacanze Bosio

(apartments and restaurant) via San Sebastiano 71 Bardino Nuovo Ph. 019 637227 www.casavacanzebosio.com

Frantoio Rocca Danilo

(oil mill) via Ferrari, Bardino Vecchio Ph. 019 648102

Hotel Ristorante Bergallo

piazza San Carlo 10, Bardino Vecchio, Ph. 019 637226 www.bergallo.net

Hotel Ristorante Franzone

(typical products) piazza Umberto I 11 Ph. 019 637133 www.hotelfranzone.it

Museo dell'Orologio da Torre G.B. Bergallo

(Tower clocks Museum) piazza Can. G. Folco Bardino Nuovo Ph. 019 648545 Comune 019 637901 www.comune.tovo-sangiacomo.sv.it

Pizzeria II Caminetto

via San Sebastiano 162 Bardino Nuovo Ph. 019 648152 www.renzopizza.it

Rélais II Casale

(spa and beauty) via Briffi 22, Bardino Vecchio Ph. 019 6375014 www.ilcasale.it

Ristorante Pizzeria Cà di Giurni

via G.B. Accame 20 Ph. 019 648848

Ristorante Tex Mex

The Ranch

piazza Umberto I Ph. 349 8469852 www.theranch.it

Magliolo

Town Hall Ph. 019 634004 www.comune.magliolo.sv.it

Affittacamere La Tana del Tasso (rooms)

via Inavecchia 20, Canova Ph. 339 7225804 347 1268455 www.bbtanatasso.it

B&B Cà di Carobina

via Canova 5 Ph. 347 8416333 www.bbcadicarobina.it

Hotel Ristorante Picina

via Mazzini 17, Ph. 019 634146

Pizzeria La Genovese

via Mazzini 31 Ph. 019 634282

Rifugio Alpino Heidi

(alpine chalet) via Melogno 21 Ph. 019 64193, 333 6042341 www.altaviadeimontiliguri.it – rifuqioheidi@virqilio.it

Ristorante La Baita

via Melogno 3 Ph. 019 64180

Trattoria L'Oste di Campagna

via Canova 29, Ph. 019 634102

Giustenice

Town Hall Ph. 019 637145 www.comune.giustenice.sv.it

B&B L'Acacia

via San Michele 3 Ph. 335 1246303 bb.acacia.giustenice@gmail.com

B&B Mediterraneo

via D'Annunzio 2 Ph. 019 648861

II Mercatino (typical products) piazza V. Veneto 2 Ph. 019 637153

Osteria di San Lorenzo

via Trieste 18bis Ph. 019 6376703 www.osteriasanlorenzo.it

Ristorante Agriturismo Ai Serei

via Serrati Inf. 11 Ph. 019 637176 347 1207919

Ristorante Pizzeria Capalla

via Besso 4, Ph. 019 637152 www.capalla.it

Ranzi

Casa e Appartamenti per Vacanze Casa Santi

(apartments) via Cassanello 41 Ph. 019 627728 339 3809914 www.casasanti.it

Circolo Giovane Ranzi

(club) piazza della Chiesa www.ranzi.it

Hotel Cà Ligure

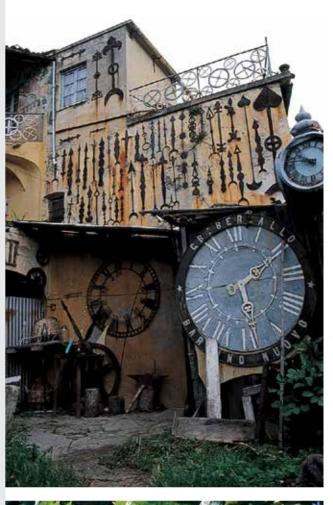
via Concezione 10 Ph. 019 625181 www.caligure.it

Ristorante II Capanno

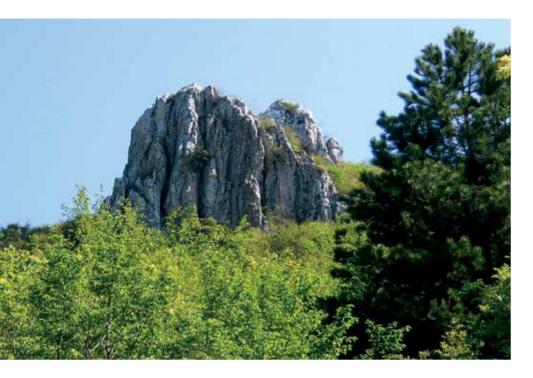
via Cappelletta 63 Ph. 019 625198 www.ristoranteilcapanno.com

Trattoria Pizzeria Da Piero

piazza della Chiesa 50 Ph. 019 625184







THE VARATELLA AND RIO NIMBALTO VALLEYS

Caves, hermitages and...

This Alpine landscape, which resembles the Dolomites in many respects, is as popular with the people of the twenty-first century as it was with our prehistoric ancestors of the Palaeolithic. It is easy to understand why: just look at the view of the mountains, the sea and the slopes dotted with olive groves... These valleys rising from Borghetto Santo Spirito and Loano may be small, but they are indubitably among the most stunning in Liquria.





Verzi

Rural Liguria

The fact that the people of Liguria are "country folk" at heart is clear the moment you head towards Verzi, one of the hamlets of Loano near the verdant lower slopes of Mount Carmo. The sea is just around the bend and yet, out of sight, it is also out of mind. This is a land of farmhouses, small cultivated fields and quiet country villages.

The Alta Via dei Monti Liguri and Mount Carmo

The star of Ligurian hiking is the Alta Via dei Monti Liquri, a superbly marked hiking trial with 43 stages, spanning the watershed from Ventimiglia, near the French border, to Ceparana, close to La Spezia. The trail runs through a spectacular sequence of forests, rocky summits and meadows with almost no traces of civilisation. You'll come across nineteenth-century military outposts, stone "caselle" that look like small nuraghi and were used by shepherds as shelters during bad weather, a handful of refuges where you can take shelter or even spend the night, crucifixes on the tallest peaks, chapels and little churches, and small hotels near the mountain passes, which are crisscrossed by roads rising from the coast and descending to the plains. On sunny days when the

north wind is blowing

and spring), the panorama seems endless, sweeping from the Maritime Alps to Mount Monviso, Mount Rosa, Mount Adamello. Genoa, the Apuan Alps, Elba. Corsica and the French Riviera. But when the wind gusts in from the sea, the ridge disappears in a fog worthy of the Po valley. A tangle of secondary trails connects the Alta Via to the coast and the valley floor. One of the most intriguing is the Terre Alte Trail, which crosses the Pietra and Loano valleys. At an altitude of 1389 metres. Mount Carmo is one of the main summits along the Alta Via – and indubitably the most scenic. As you gaze down from the top of this mountain, you can easily perceive the true essence of Liguria. It is first and foremost a land of mountains rather than a maritime region, a land of forests and boulders whose skies are crossed by windborne eagles.

(more frequent in winter

Boissano

Buizan, prufümmu de zærmi

Translated from the local dialect, this means "Boissano, the scent of olive trees in bloom". In fact olive trees characterise the landscape of the low hill by the sea where Boissano was built. Nearly 2000 people live in the ancient and modern hamlets on the slopes of Mount Ravinet (1061

m), with stone houses that have terraced roofs to collect rainwater, and several lovely buildings (including the town hall) with decorated facades painted in lively colours. The square, where the town hall and parish church are located, also has a beautiful well. The town is surrounded by Mediterranean maguis, which thrives alongside vegetable patches, orchards and vineyards. And on the horizon, the sapphire sea of Loano.

An ancient monastery dedicated to St Peter It is well worth hiking up

the trail towards Mount Ravinet to see San Pietro dei Monti (altitude 900 m), whose present state does not convey the importance of this monastery for a period of 600 years during the Middle Ages. What is striking is its silent ambience: scenic on sunny days, melancholy when the Scirocco wind blows and the coastline below is swallowed up by fog. Today there is a solitary, picturesque church in the woods, and it is the offshoot of the monastery of San Pietro in Varatella, founded in the ninth century under Charlemagne. As legend would have it. St Peter stopped here during his journey to Rome and built Liguria's first church. The monastery held enormous economic and political power in about the year 1000. The

18

19

monks from San Pietro civilised the region and owned property between Albenga and the Langhe area. They also helped to improve the region's living conditions by promoting agricultural and industrial development, introducing olive trees and vines and building flour and oil mills. The monastery was abandoned in 1495 and fell into ruin. All that remains today is a little church that, every year on 1st May, is visited by a procession of the faithful from Toirano.

Toirano

A town with 12,000 years of history

Toirano is one of the oldest towns in Italy. Its population of 2000 boasts a history dating back at least 12,000 years. How many caves are there in the Varatella Valley? As many as fifty, and some of them are where the prehistoric Ligurians lived, prayed and socialised – as early as the last Ice Age.

Caves of witches and saints

The Toirano caves are among the most important in Italy, and they are famous around the world. They were used as dwellings by Palaeolithic peoples, and for shelter by cave bears. Today visitors can take a 1300-metre tour through the caves. The Grotta della Bàsura (Witch Cave) is home to the bear cemetery, with

Ursus spaeleus (cave bear) bones. Nearby there is a corridor with footprints left by bears and the men who hunted them, and the hall of mysteries, where our ancestors hurled clay balls against the cave walls, for some social or religious reason that has yet to be understood. The itinerary then goes to the lower grotto of Santa Lucia, with its remarkable stalactites and stalagmites, and the upper one, with a fifteenthcentury sanctuary that was carved into the rock face and has a miraculous spring. St Lucy is the patron saint of those with eye trouble.

Narrow streets and museums And then we came out

to see the stars again... After visiting the caves, why not wander through the mediaeval town of Toirano that was recently awarded the "Orange Flag" by the Italian Touring Club. The Byzantines fortified the town during the sixth century, and what remains of the walls are two gates, the tower houses, the moat and the battlemented tower that is now the bell tower of the church of San Martino. The mediaeval threearched bridge over the Varatella is virtually intact. The town also has brightly coloured twentieth-century murals, as well as the Val Varatella Ethnographic Museum, housed in the ancient stables of the Palazzo Del Carretto. At the museum,

you will find everything you want to know about Toirano.

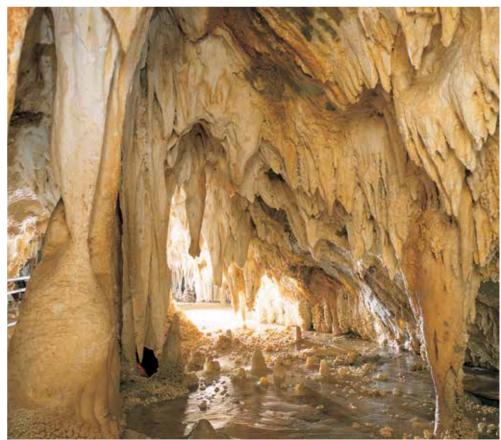
The Toirano Pass

There is more than narrow mediaeval streets and prehistoric caves. The municipality of Toirano rises – or rather, climbs up the Varatella Valley to Giogo di Toirano (the Toirano Pass, altitude 807 m), which links the area to the Bormida Valley, on the Po side of the Riviera delle Palme. Steep, winding and full of hairpin bends, this 15-kilometre road is breathtaking with vistas of the barren, rocky valley and of the Ligurian Sea, from Loano to Corsica. It is well worth the trip to enjoy the scenery, visit the mountain town of Carpe halfway up the road, and then hike to the summit of Mount Carmo or go mushroom picking in the woods on the ridge overlooking the Bormida Valley.

The Wine and Oil Road

The road less travelled... through a landscape of green olive trees and yellow clusters of ripe grapes. This is the Strada del Vino e dell'Olio (Wine and Oil Road) that sets out from the olive groves of the province of Imperia, crosses these valleys, to wind its way through the area's most picturesque hill towns, with stone oil mills and row after row of grapevines. Taggiasca and, above all, Pignola are the olive varieties used to make "Riviera Liqure





del Ponente Savonese" DOP extra-virgin olive oil, which has a slightly bitter flavour with an aftertaste reminiscent of pine nuts. Pigato and Vermentino are the kings of the local vineyards: Pigato owes its name to the word pigau, which means "stained" in the local dialect. Pigato is a white wine that is perfect throughout the meal, with a distinctive musky bouquet, straw-yellow colour, and a dry, slightly bitter palate. Vermentino is a dry white with a delicate bouquet. It is ideal as an aperitif, but it can also be served with Ligurian seafood appetisers and fish dishes, as well as frittata and vegetable dishes with cheese. Both wines should be served chilled but not icy cold.

The "Gumbi" Festival

In the nineteenth century Toirano had 25 oil mills, known locally as "gumbi". There were industrial water-powered gumbi, and smaller domestic gumbetti driven by donkeys. The "Gumbi" Festival, held at the beginning of August, is the most popular event in Toirano. Visitors can stroll through the village and taste oil, wine and farinata, and purchase locally made items at the crafts show. Typical Toirano products include focaccia di San Pietro, a variety of the Genoese pandolce cake, soft torrone nougat, and orange wine, which is wine fermented with orange peel.

Trekking through the mountains: the Terre Alte Trail

The Terre Alte Trial leads

trekkers from Toirano up

to Melogno Hill (altitude 1028 m), through the mountain refuge of Pian delle Bosse (altitude 841 m) in the Upper Nimbalto Valley, and passing by the Maremola Valley. At Melogno Hill, the trail merges with the Alta Via dei Monti Liguri – the "motorway" of the Ligurian mountains – and the main road connecting Finale with the Upper Bormida Valley, crossing the marvellous beech forest of Calizzano. It is divided into three stages: Toirano-Balestrino-Toirano, which takes about 3 1/2 hours; Toirano-Pian delle Bosse, about 4 1/2 hours; and Pian delle Bosse-Melogno, about 6 hours. After your trek, if you still have plenty of energy left and have fallen in love with the mountain scenery, you can continue along the Alta Via to Melogno Hill, a three-hour hike through the quiet woods along the ridge of the Upper Bormida Valley.

Climbing near Toirano

In the Varatella Valley, not far from the town of Toirano, there are numerous Dolomia rock towers, characterised by impressive karst formations. The erosion of limestone has created natural caverns, modelling the stone and creating evident and intriguing cliffs. This is a rough, wild and tormented area, but it is ideal for rock climbing. Since the rocks are located at an altitude of just 150 to 460 metres above sea level. climbing is also possible in winter. The Municipality of Toirano has set up a project that includes ten cliffs and 225 different climbing routes, for a range of different levels of difficulty, from the rock gym to very demanding climbing facilities. This is a fascinating way to enjoy Alpine sports just a few kilometres from the sea: the perfect way to combine a seaside holiday with the opportunity to experience the "Ligurian Dolomites".

Balestrino

The Marquis' castle

The tangle of administrative structures that governed the cities and towns of Liguria, both within and outside the boundaries of the Republic of Genoa, also included the independent marquisate of Balestrino. It was a "concentric state", that is, a completely autonomous entity surrounded by the Genoese republic. The Bava family, followed by the Del Carrettos, ruled this small feudal state until 1796, when Napoleon's soldiers wiped it off the map after pillaging the town and oppressing the population. Nevertheless the small but long-lived marquisate of Balestrino left a legacy to the modern-day 500

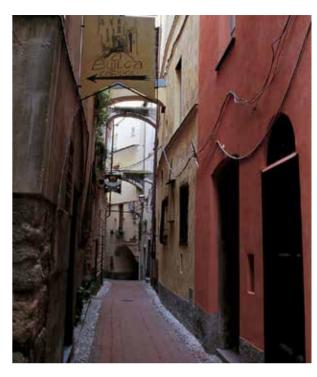
inhabitants of the hamlet: the majestic castle-fortress that dominates the village and valley. According to local legend, wrongdoers who managed to cling to the bars on its windows were acquitted of their crimes. Who knows? Maybe this is the origin of the term "everybody out"!

Romantic ruins, crafty cats

It looks like a Romantic painting of ancient Roman ruins set in a clearing, with young shepherds playing the flute. We're talking about the ancient Burgus Plebis of Balestrino, built at the foot of the castle. It was abandoned because of its unstable terrain, and is not open to visitors due to the risk of collapse. Silent and bucolic, it has a disquieting air to it, even when viewed from above without setting foot into it. Like true Roman ruins, it is full of cats that appear and then disappear, ghosts or patron saints of the town and its history.

Trails and sanctuaries

Balestrino is part of the Environmental Area of Poggio Grande, which encompasses the municipalities, territories and trails of the Varatella and Neva Valleys. These hills are covered with scenic trails that are perfect for trekking and mountain biking. The Terre Alte Trail goes through the historical and archaeological sites in the valley, and there are also numerous spots





for paragliding. The modern sanctuary of Monte Croce is located in an extraordinarily scenic setting, on top of a 760-metre hill. On 5 October 1949, Our Lady appeared here to nineyear-old Caterina Richero. The sanctuary can be reached on foot or by car, via a road that branches off from the main road to Castelvecchio di Rocca Barbena. The nineteenthcentury fort of Poggio Grande, located nearby, also affords a lovely view.

Cooking the products of kitchen gardens and terrace-cultivations

terrace-cultivations Even if the restaurants of the hinterland often prepare good fish dishes (as they are required by tourists), the typical food of the hamlets on the hills is a "country" cooking that takes its ingredients from the kitchen gardens realized on the terraces among olive trees. In this way you obtain tasty salad pies based on chards, artichokes, spinach, courgettes and flavoured wild herbs picked in the fields. The same vegetables and herbs are used for the stuffing of ravioli – excellent to start a meal - and can be a side dish for the rabbit "alla liqure", that is stewed with olives. A perfect meal cannot end without a slice of "formaggetta", a fresh and soft cheese, with a gentle but intense flavour. It is served seasoned with local extra virgin olive oil.

TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

Verzi

Pizzeria L'Agricola via Verzi 30, Ph. 019 670633 Rifugio Pian delle Bosse (Refuge alpin) Ph. 019 671790 www.cailoano.com/italia/ rifugiolT.htm

Boissano

www.comune.boissano.sv.it **Agriturismo Peter Pan**(only accomodation)
via Coste Rosse 8
Ph. 347 5001050

Town Hall Ph. 0182 98010

www.agriturismopeterpan.it **B&B Agrodolce**

via Marici 143/2 Ph. 0182 98675 agrodolce.xoom.it

B&B II Mandarancio

via Carre 12 Ph. 333 4102577 www.ilmandarancio.it

B&B Luce d'Oro

via Losano 55 Ph. 0182 98794 www.bblucedoro.it

Casa e Appartamenti per Vacanze Villa Graziella

(apartments) via Rive 41, Ph. 0182 989511

Ristorante A Funtanetta

piazza Gilberto Govi 6 Ph. 0182 989635

Ristorante Pizzeria Le Querce

via Rive 3, Ph. 0182 989229

Trattoria Pizzeria Lo Schicchero

via Cappella Nuova 11 Ph. 0182 98511

Toirano

Town Hall Ph. 0182 989909 www.comune.toirano.sv.it

Affittacamere Ristorante Mare e Monti

(rooms and restaurant) via Mainero 33 Ph. 0182 922029

Agriturismo La Ferla via Provinciale 53

Ph. 0182 98279 333 3071690 www.agriturismolaferla.it

Agriturismo Monte Acuto

regione Leade 8 Ph. 0182 989097 340 9823393

www.aziendaagrituristica monteacuto.com

B&B Ai Gatti di Barescione

via Cavour 27, Barescione Ph. 0182 989525 333 3554933

www.aigattidibarescione. wordpress.com

B&B Domo de Aste

via G.B. Parodi 8/1 Ph. 347 4374201 www.domodeaste.it

B&B Il Giardino degli Aranci

via Balestrino 4 Ph. 0182 98422 giardinoaranci.toirano@alice.it B&B Profumo di Dolci

a C D Done of 24/5

via G.B. Parodi 24/5 Ph. 338 3195953 www.profumodidolci.it

B&B Relais The One

via Cavour 43, Ph. 0182 921838 338 3140169

www.relaistheone.com

Bar Enoteca dei Capitani (wine shop) piazza San Martino 13 Ph. 349 4919100

Bar Pasticceria Gelateria Tasso

(pastries and ice creams) piazza Rosciano 6 Ph. 0182 98706

Brasserie Pizzeria Visconti

via Urivei 15/B Ph. 0182 989104

Frantoio Polla Nicolò

(oil mill) via alle Mura 1 Ph. 019 668027 www.oliopolla.it

Grotte di Toirano

Strada Provinciale per Bardineto / Calizzano Ph. 0182 98062 www.toiranogrotte.it

Le Delizie del Frantoio di S. Rosciano

(oil mill products)
via Provinciale 1
Ph. 0182 98204
www.frantoiorosciano.it

Museo Etnografico della Val Varatella

(Ethnographic Museum) via Polla, Ph. 0182 989968

Pizzeria Toulà

via Mainero 47, Ph. 0182 989283

Ristorante Agriturismo Ca' di Sappi

via Certosa 25, Ph. 0182 921887 338 3957948

www.agriturismocadisappi.it

Ristorante Al Ravanello Incoronato

via G.B.Parodi 27 Ph. 0182 921991 www.alravanelloincoronato.it **Ristorante II Cappello**

Ristorante II Cappel di Guguzza

via Polla 22, Ph. 0182 922074 www.ilcappellodiguguzza.com

Ristorante Pizzeria La Rosa dei Venti

via Polla 42, Ph. 0182 98574 www.ristoranterosadeiventi.org

Ristorante Scià Bacana

via P. Mainero 44 Ph. 0182 989140, 347 7839830 www.sciabacana.it

Spaghetteria Pizzeria Il Portico

piazza della Libertà 10 Ph. 0182 989769

Balestrino

Town Hall Ph. 0182 988004 www.comune.balestrino.sv.it

B&B Cavigiotti da Ileana via Groa 3, Ph. 0182 988140

B&B II Poggio

loc. Poggio Vecchia via Piemonte 11 Ph. 0182 988020

Frantoio Lotus

(oil mill, oil and organic products) via Panizzi 10, Ph. 0182 988078

Hotel Ca' de Berna e Ristorante Pastorino

via Lucifredi 6 e via Mazzini 4 Ph. 0182 988166, 988109 www.cadeberna.it

Hotel Ristorante Cecchin

via Provinciale 1 Ph. 0182 988001

Residence Belbea Tourist Resort

via Provinciale 59 loc. Ca' de Berna Ph. 02 866901 gatewai@tin.it

Ristorante La Greppia via Lucifredi 9

Ph. 0182 988020 www.ristorante-lagreppia.com







THE NEVA VALLEY

Welcome in the Maritime Alps

The motorway tollgate of Albenga acts as a border between the coastal plain and the network of the four valleys where water from the Maritime Alps flows down to the river Centa and the city. Towards the sea lies Albenga with its Roman and Medieval old centre, the agricultural plain, a beach with bathing establishments, hotels and campsites, which join the towns of Ceriale at one side and Alassio at the other. An upwards direction takes you towards the Neva Valley and the Pennavaire Valley, which rise towards the limestone crest of Mount Galero and the San Bernardo pass. Beyond them, the Tànaro Valley extends towards Piedmont.





Cisano sul Neva

A bell tower among ancient alleys

Past the motorway tollgate you enter Provincial Road no. 582 that quickly leads to Cisano sul Neva, a stop on the "Road of Wine and Oil". Further inland and leaving the main road you enter the old centre of Cisano, with the Romanesque bell tower of the 17th century church of Santa Maria Maddalena. Park in the square in front of the town hall, Piazza del Municipio, in order to stroll among the alleys. A short distance away from the centre is the Romanesque church of San Calogero, originating from the 11th century.

A castle among olive groves

The hamlet of Conscente is dominated by the perfectly

preserved 15th century castle of the Del Carretto family, built high upon the hill.

It was the year 1280...

...when Cisano was founded by the city-state of Albenga to contrast the expansionism of the marquis of Clavesana, who dominated the nearby Pennavaire Valley.

The Poggio Grande Naturalistic Area

Cisano lies on the western boundary of the Poggio Grande Naturalistic Area, which extends towards Toirano and the town of Borghetto Santo Spirito in a typically Ligurian landscape of terraced slopes, cultivated or recaptured by woods, olive groves, Mediterranean maquis and 19th century military forts. All with a sea view.

On foot around Cisano

From the centre of Cisano you can arrive at the panoramic holy shrine of Monte Croce, passing by Pizzo Ceresa and the 19th century fort of Poggio Grande. The fort of Rocca Liverna, situated on the opposite side of the valley, is reachable by a path that leaves from Martinetto, the last hamlet of the municipality beyond Conscente: it is a "military" itinerary, which runs alongside former barracks and an ancient gunpowder magazine.

Zuccarello

Its walls and its porticoes

Past Martinetto the valley spreads and the main road continues beside the river Neva. After about 2 km appear the stone ruins of a medieval castle high on the hill and, low and to the side of the road, a small frescoed chapel. This is the road for Zuccarello, which won the title of "Most Beautiful Villages in Italy". It is necessary to leave your car in the car park opposite the door in the city walls and walk into the village, crossed by two lines of low porticoes in the Piedmontese-Ligurian style, which have remained almost intact for over six hundred years.

The ancient capital of the marquis

Zuccarello was founded by the marquis of Clavesana in 1248. In 1326 the marquis Del Carretto made the town the capital of his family's domain and seat of their palace. The castle at the top of the hill is even more ancient and its ruins are reached by a twenty minute walk from the centre.

A Roman medieval bridge

Zuccarello is famous for its Roman bridge, reachable from the centre by a curving path. The bridge is perhaps not Roman but certainly medieval and among the most beautiful in Liguria; it was made famous some years ago by a cover of Time magazine.

She was so young, she was so beautiful...

llaria Del Carretto was born in Zuccarello. She became the young wife of Paolo Guinigi, Lord of Lucca in 1403 and died in labour only two years later: the monument by Jacopo della Quercia in the cathedral of the Tuscan city is dedicated to her. A historical celebration each year commemorates the wedding of llaria and the event is associated with an art exhibition.

The path of Ilaria...

...is an excursion itinerary that connects Zuccarello to Castelvecchio di Rocca Barbena crossing Mediterranean maquis, vegetable gardens, cultivated terraces, olive groves, chestnut groves and spring flowers. It is a gentle, easy walk, about 3 kilometres long, and it can be undertaken by all.

Castelvecchio di Rocca Barbena

An eagle's nest between rocks and sky

Going up in an increasingly mountainous landscape, after a small ruined and abandoned village in the brush, Castelvecchio di Rocca Barbena appears almost by surprise. Clinging to the limestone sides of Rocca Barbena (1142m), Castelvecchio is a walled village that has remained intact since medieval times. Stronghold of the Clavesana and Del Carretto families, in the 17th century it was fought over by Savoy and Genoa.

A Mediterranean village

Castelvecchio is foremost a Mediterranean village, even before it is Ligurian: to grasp all of its beauty it is necessary to wander through the "carruggi", or cobbled alleys, passing under vaults and stone arches, descending to Piazza delle Erbe and observing the cluster of buildings, in brown-grey stone that rise towards the castle, then admiring from up high the maze of roofs and terraces.

"Il Paese dei Balocchi" (Tovland)

In summer Castelvecchio turns into a single, free playground with the traditional festival "II Paese dei Balocchi" - ideal for children, but not only: games from the past, workshops and performances in the various squares of the village.

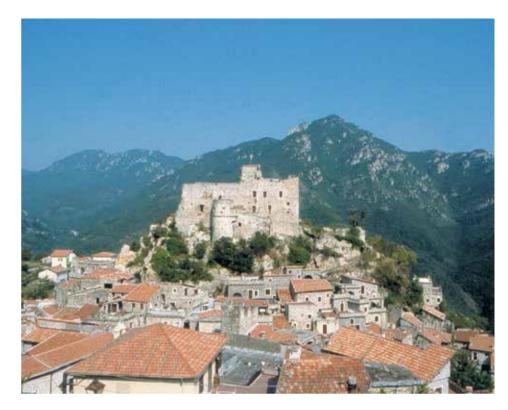
Among the most beautiful villages of Italy

Castelvecchio belongs to an association called "The Most Beautiful Villages of Italy", which unites resorts of artistic and environmental value with limited populations and a well kept urban environment. It also obtained the "Orange Flag" from the Italian Touring Club, a certificate of quality that rewards a varied choice of tourism opportunities and environmental friendliness.

Erli

Land of mushrooms and chestnuts

Past Castelvecchio, Provincial Road 582 ascends to the territory of the municipality of Erli,





towards the watershed of the Po river and the 957 metres of Piedmont's San Bernardo pass. Its 250 inhabitants live in 14 hamlets scattered among chestnut groves, orchards and cultivated terraces; now and again a bell tower rises through the green vegetation, here and there lie groups of abandoned stone houses.

Barbarians and Romans

Founded along the ancient salt road, of which remains a Romanesque bridge, Erli was probably a station for the changing of horses.

The salt roads

The salt roads were the ancient ways: mule tracks that departed from the Riviera, ascending the Apennines and descending towards the centres of the Po Valley plain. On the coast salt, iron, anchovies and oil were loaded. These goods were traded in the markets of the Po Valley for grain, cloth, tools, wine and meat.

Fruits for every taste

Here we are at the high standards of Pigato DOC, but even more than a land of wine, this is the land of vegetable gardens and orchards, where some special varieties grow. For example "pelandroni" beans, "siccardi" apricots, small and with flecked skin, or "michelin" peaches with white pulp. It is not so easy to find these delicacies, but by asking around in the 14 hamlets you can find the right farmer to buy some from.

TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

Cisano sul Neva

Town Hall Ph. 0182 595026 www.comune.cisanosulneva.sv.it

Agriturismo Gli Angeli

via Moglia 11, Cenesi Ph. 0182 20706 www.gliangeliagriturismo.it

Agriturismo Ultimo Tiro via Colombo 5

Ph. 0182 595033 **Bar Neva** (snack bar) via Colombo 33

Ph. 0182 595024 **B&B A Casa di MI**

via Poggio della Croce 6/1 Ph. 0182 590041 348 7664997 www.acasadimi.it

B&B Gli Ulivi

via Nuova 69 Ph. 329 6017807 392 9776183

B&B El Quijote

piazza G. Gollo 22 Ph. 0182 595469 348 4507575 www.bb-elquijote.eu **Felice Michero** (wine)

via Moraire 54 Ph. 0182 595000

Felice Noberasco

(eggs and wine) via Roma 50 Ph. 0182 595025 348 8133174

Frantoio Fratelli Pozzo

(oil, products in oil and pickled olives) via Amedeo 31, Conscente Ph. 0182 595047 www.oliopozzo.it

Pizzeria Braceria Il Peperoncino Rosso

via Pineta 1, Cènesi Ph. 0182 20853

Ristorante Bar Sport

via Colombo 35 Ph. 0182 595323 www.barsportcisano.com

Ristorante Brasserie U Rundò

via Gombo 39, Conscente Ph. 0182 595207

Ristorante Pizzeria Osteria della Fenice

via Nuova 87 Ph. 0182 595547

Ristorante Le Cascate

via Piemonte 35, Martinetto Ph. 0182 594069

Ristorante Pizzeria Torre Pernice

loc. Torre Pernice Ph. 0182 20065

Zuccarello

Town Hall Ph. 0182 79022 www.comunezuccarello.it

Affittacamere Ristorante Podere La Villa

(rooms and restaurant) via Nazionale 39 Ph. 0182 79123 347 0077702 www.poderelavilla.com

B&B La Zagara

via Castello 7, Ph. 327 8618096 lazagarazuccarello@libero.it

Borgo d'Ilaria

(oil, jams and typical products) via Tornatore 71 Ph. 338 8880195

Ristorante II Torchio

via Tornatore 184 Ph. 0182 79000

Ristorante Pizzeria La Cittadella

via Tornatore 194 Ph. 0182 79074 335 6098566

Usteria du Burgu

via Tornatore, 195 Ph. 0182 79100

Castelvecchio di Rocca Barbena

Town Hall Ph. 0182 78042 www.comune.castelvecchio.sv.it

A Butea (grocer's) via Provinciale 3 Ph. 380 7194879

Affittacamere Casa Cambi

(rooms) via Roma 42 Ph. 0182 78009 www.casacambi.it

Agriturismo Antico Melo with Museum

via Campo 12 Ph. 329 3143795 www.anticomelo.it

Antica Osteria Alla Posta

via Colombera 3 Ph. 0182 78282 www.anticaosteriaallaposta.it

Prodotti Tipici II Pensiero

(oil, wine and preserves)
via Aratro 10
Ph. 0182 78204 338 1659790

Ph. 0182 78204, 338 1659790 **Ristorante Pizzeria**

Anna ed Eber

via Maggiore 2, Vecersio Ph. 0182 78111

Trattoria Malco

via Roma 7 Ph. 0182 78181

Erli

Town Hall Ph. 0182 78030 www.comunedierli.it

Hotel Ristorante Da Lisetta

via Piemonte 21 Ph. 0182 78032

Negozio di commestibili

(grocer's) via Piemonte 21a Ph. 0182 78032

Panificio Eddio Basso

(bakery and amaretti, typical biscuits) via Roma 2, Ph. 0182 78058







THE PENNAVAIRE VALLEY

The Dolomites of Liguria

Go back to Martinetto where to the orographic right the main tributary of the Neva, the Pennavaire stream, flows into it, descending from the 1708 m high Mount Galero and the 1739 m high Mount Armetta in Piedmont. Pennavaire is a wonderful alpine valley, in whose woods alder, oak and chestnut trees rise at an increasing height before giving up to beech and larch trees, while berries and mushrooms thrive in the undergrowth. The fossil-rich, limestone cliffs form a landscape similar to the Dolomites: and like the Dolomites it was created by the accumulation of sponges, coral and madrepores that lived in the tropical sea covering this region 200 million years ago.





Castelbianco

White like cherry blossoms

The lower Pennavaire Valley is part of the scattered municipality of Castelbianco, with about 270 inhabitants living in about ten hamlets. Castelbianco is renowned for its cherries, wonderful fresh or as jam. The farmers gladly sell their produce to passing tourists along the main road and in the hamlets.

Mountain sports

The rocky mountain faces around the town are a delight for free climbers; Mount Alpe (1056 m high) is also reachable by mountain bike leaving from the hamlet of Veravo. Another itinerary from the hamlet of Vesallo arrives at Zuccarello, in the Neva Valley.

The computerized medieval village

Colletta, the "computerized medieval village" is one of "The Most Beautiful Villages of Italy"; a beautiful hamlet of stone houses, narrow alleys, curved arches and short flights of steps. Colletta has been completely restructured: on the outside it maintains its old appearance but, inside, the houses are absolutely modern, connected to the world across the Internet and equipped with the comforts of swimming pools, saunas and solariums. An open amphitheatre makes the most of the terraces built by farmers in the past. The "Laboratory of Historic Anthropology of the Maritime Alps" is housed in an ancient tower.

Nasino

Where eagles dare

Almost at the border with the Cuneo province (a large part of the upper Pennavaire Valley is in Piedmont) lies Nasino with its 10 hamlets, some of which have roofs covered with ancient stone slabs, or "ciappe", where 240 inhabitants live among terraces planted with olive trees and the first chestnut groves of Mount Galero. All around are the true Alps, where the limestone that forms the mountains created karst caves where pre-historic man lived (the Arma di Nasino, one of the more than fifty caves of the Pennavaire Valley, bears human traces starting from 7000 b.C.) and where birds of prey nest upon steep mountain faces (some say that there are even eagles).

Where the pasture is higher...

You can take one of the paths, which from Nasino climb Mount Alpe (1056 m) or Mount Castell'Ermo (1092 m), to the Penne peak (1405 m) or Mount Galero (1708 m) and go in search of herds, flocks and shepherds. Enjoy the view, which on clear days allows you to see the curved arch of the Ligurian coast, the Apuan Alps and Corsica.

TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

Castelbianco

Town Hall Ph. 0182 77006 www.comune.castelbianco.sv.it Agriturismo A Ca' du Ricci via Pennavaire 69, Ph. 0182 77033 www.acaduricci.com

Agriturismo Casa dei Nonni via Vesallo 18 Ph. 0182 77030, 339 6933994 www.casadeinonni.it

Agriturismo Da Ferruccio via Pennavaire 48

Ph. 0182 77013 www.agriturismodaferruccio.it

B&B Fuori di Zucca via V. Veneto 39, Veravo

Ph. 0182 77242 www.artigianodelsuono.com

B&B Rosso Ciliegia

via Pennavaire 51 Ph. 0182 779006, 338 2197425 www.rossociliegia.it

Castelbianco Colletta (rooms and apartments in the

village), via Santa Lucia 2 Ph. 0182 778380, www.colletta.it **Hotel Ristorante Gin**

via Pennavaire 99 Ph. 0182 77001, www.dagin.it **Hotel Ristorante Scola**

via Pennavaire 166 Ph. 0182 77015, 335 5919085 www.scolarist.it

Locanda delle Antiche Pietre via Muntà du Bricchettu 3, Colletta, Ph. 0182 778244

Nasino

Town Hall Ph. 0182 77017 www.comune.nasino.sv.it Antica Osteria Costa

via Roma 22 Ph. 0182 77002, 338 6683961 www.osteriacosta.it

Azienda Agricola di Graziella Silvestri

(farm) via Roma 67 Ph. 0182 779003, 333 4651709

Azienda Agricola di Loredana Bellotoma (farm) via Montello 2A, Borgo Ph. 0182 77138

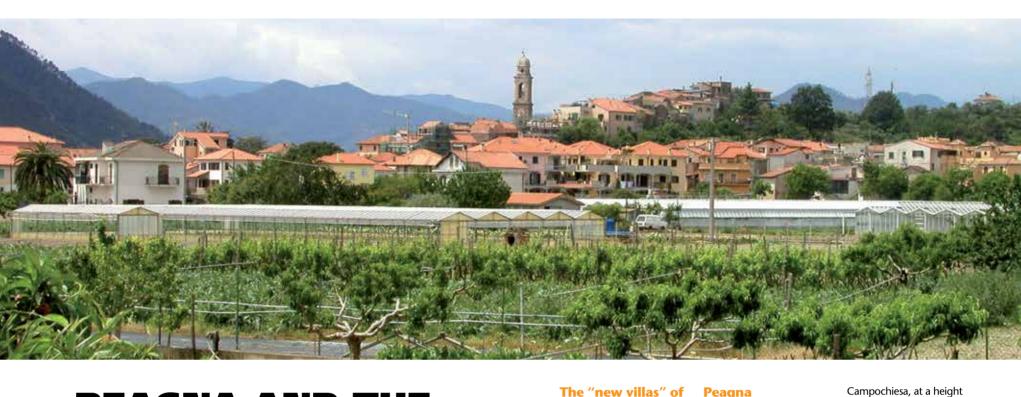
Azienda Olearia L'Ulivo di De Andreis G. e C. (pickled olives and extravirgin olive oil) via Roma 91/1, Ph. 0182 77213

B&B II Portichetto

via Diaz 24 Ph. 0182 77173, 339 8418449 www.bebilportichetto.it

Frantoio da Olive di Armando Garello (oil mill) via Roma 13 Ph. 0182 77020

www.frantoiogarello.it



PEAGNA AND THE ALBENGA PLAIN

Behind Albenga and Ceriale

Some pretty and scenic hamlets look out over the not so distant beaches; places where the night is fresher and you can breathe in the fragrance of the countryside: they are the sea front of the other Riviera, sheltered from the lively frenzy of the coast and already offering the pleasure of inland nature.





The "new villas" of the plain

The present hamlets of Albenga were founded in the medieval period as "borghi" (villages surrounded by a wall) or "ville" (agricultural centres) by the city-state of Albenga to cultivate the Centa plain and to defend the territory from threat. In each there is a clear medieval structure, made up of narrow alleys, stone or brightly coloured houses and many olive groves. They are surrounded by fertile countryside punctuated with greenhouses and the cultivation of purple asparagus, a Slow Food Presidium (quality mark), spiky artichokes, trombetta courgettes, cuore di bue tomatoes, open fields, Pigato DOC vineyards and large bushes of yellow broom.

Salea

Houses with flat roofs. terraced land, tranquil elegant corners and all the charm of the Liqurian hills: this is Sàlea, at 60 metres above sea level, the land of Pigato DOC wine. Each year in September the wine festival "Sagralea" is dedicated to the wine Pigato.

Peagna

Peagna forms part of the municipality of Ceriale and is a medieval village of colourful houses and narrow alleys situated 120 metres above sea level at the limits of the Albenga Plain. At the end of summer it holds the Ligurian Book Show, which displays new books from Liguria and rare books. The "Silvio Lai" Palaeontological Museum allows the discovery of the geologic history of the region and is connected to the nearby regional nature reserve of Rio Torsero, with a rich fossil deposit of the Pliocene era in a small, dense wood.

Campochiesa

The first hamlet of Albenga which you meet coming from the east is

village, in the cemetery: the Romanesque-Gothic church of Saint George preserves important frescoes including the Last Judgement from 1446 where Dante, Virgil and other characters from the Divine Comedy are depicted.

of 30 metres: it is a small

secluded. Its artistic jewel,

hamlet, delightful and

however, is outside the

Leca

This is one of the main "villas" of Albenga, a large, level village next to the Neva stream. It preserves some ancient buildings such as the XVI century villa d'Aste with its powerful tower. Above all, it is the capital of Albenga olive oil.

Bastia

At 25 metres above sea level this village lies in a line upon the ridge of a hill. It rose around a military fortification whose remains are today part of the villa Anfossi. Here too there are alleys, stone walls, silent small squares, vineyards, olive-mills...

Lusignano

To the right of the Arroscia stream, Lusignano is a "villa" of 16th century houses lined up on a small ridge with small vegetable gardens behind them, its alleys and walls are warmed by the light colour of the local stone.

San Fedele

Moving towards the coast is the "villa" of San Fedele also with a linear layout up on a hill ridge. Lower down, the beautiful church of Saint Simon and Saint Judas stands out with its Romanesque bell tower and the high cypress tree that watches on it.

TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

Peagna

B&B Locanda di Anthia

piazza G. Battista 3/2 Ph. 329 7068154 www.locandadianthia.com

Camping Alì Babà

(with restaurant and pizzeria) via N.S. delle Grazie 80 Ph. 0182 990182 restaurant Ph. 0182 931703 www.campingalibaba.it

Casa per Ferie Santa Maria Belfiore

(holiday home) via Santa Maria Belfiore 12 Ph. 0182 990885 393 0350330 www.santamariabelfiore.it

Museo paleontologico Silvio Lai e Riserva Naturale Regionale del Rio Torsero

(Paleontological Museum and Natural Reserve) strada Nuova di Peagna 209 Ph. 0182 990208 0182 990024 www.riotorsero.it

Ristorante II Faro strada nuova di Peagna 130 Ph. 0182 990176

Campochiesa

Agriturismo II Colletto

via Cavour 34 Ph. 0182 21858 335 260254 www.aqriturismoilcolletto.it

Agriturismo Signola regione Signola 4

Ph. 0182 555643 www.agriturismosignola.com

Azienda Agricola
Il Pitosforo
(farm, organic sage)

Ph. 0182 542843

Camping Bellavista regione Campore 23

Ph. 0182 540213 329 5923684 www.campingbellavista.it

Elena Ranch

regione Veirano 1 Ph. 338 8046059 www.elenaranch.it

Ristorante le Rapalline regione Rapalline Ph. 0182 20340

Salea

Azienda Agricola La Vecchia Cantina di Umberto Calleri

(farm) via Corta 3 Ph. 0182 559881 lavecchiacantina@yahoo.it

Azienda Vitivinicola Le Rocche del Gatto

(wine) regione Ruato 4 Ph. 348 2627094 www.lerocchedelgatto.it

Camping la Pineta

regione Roberti 17 Ph. 0182 20493 www.lapinetavacanze.it

Cantine Calleri (wine) regione Frati 2

Ph. 0182 21710, 349 2809630 www.cantinecalleri.com

Hotel Cà di Berta Ristorante Carlotta

regione Case di Berta Ph. 0182 559930 www.hotelcadiberta.it

Leca

Agriturismo Villa Rubra

via Al Piemonte 242 Ph. 334 2542083 www.agriturismovillarubra.it

Azienda Vitivinicola Luigi Sartori

(wine bar, DOC wines and agriturismo) regione Torre Pernice 3 Ph. 0182 20042 www.sartoripiqato.it

Frantoio da Olive Marco (oil, products in oil and pickled

olives)
via Piemonte 152
Ph. 0182 20055

www.frantoiomarco.com
Frantoio Delfino Gorlero

(oil mill) loc. Cime di Leca 7 Ph. 0182 20305

Frantoio Fratelli Revello

(oil mill) loc. Cime di Leca via al Piemonte 5b Ph. 0182 20197

Pizzeria Mammamia

via Piemonte 103 Ph. 0182 20564

Bastia

Agriturismo Alla Mal Parata

regione Fierè 1 Ph. 335 7048045 www.allamalparata.it Agriturismo I Ciclamini

regione Martinassi, 1 Ph. 335 6450765 www.ciclamini.eu

Agriturismo Il Nostro Oliveto

via Becchignoli, 51 Ph. 348 2451655 347 2845663 www.ilnostroliyeto.it

Azienda Agricola Anfossi

(wine, oil and vegetables) via Paccini 39 Ph. 0182 20024 www.aziendaagrariaanfossi.it

Bartolomeo Maglione

(wine and oil) via Becchignoli 18 Ph. 0182 20729 340 6268679

Bed & Breakfast II Campanile

piazza Annunziata 3 Ph. 0182 21823

Bio Vio Aimone

(wine, oil, organic aromatic herbs), via Crociata 24 Ph. 0182 21856 www.biovio.it

Cascina Feipu (wine) regione Massaretti 7 Ph. 0182 20131 www.aziendamassaretti.it

I Formaggi del Boschetto (cheese) regione Boschetto Ph. 0182 20687 339 4167938

Pizzeria Brasserie il Torchietto via Massari 18. Ph. 0182 21395

Pizzeria Ristorante Cà du Ghilla

via degli Oddi 2 Ph. 0182 630600 331 7482671

Ristorante Lì per Lì

via Paccini 34 Ph. 0182 20772

Ph. 0182 20510

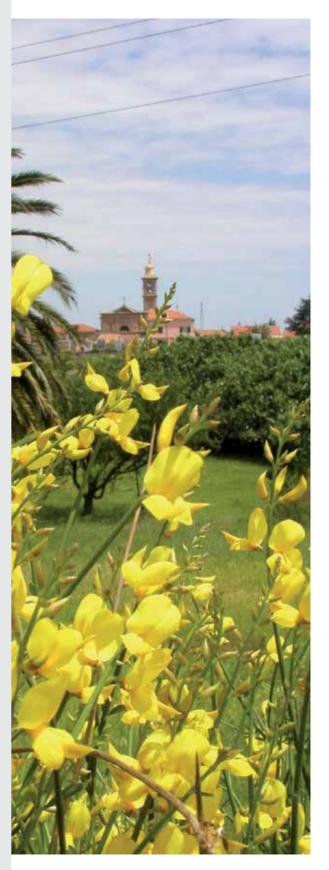
RistoBar Ortofrutticola

regione Massaretti 32 Ph. 0182 589038 www.ristobarortofrutticola.it

Trattoria tipica con camere La Vecchia (with rooms) via Paccini 81

Vitivinicola Enrico Dario e il Negozio del Borgo

(wine and more) via Massari 4 Ph. 0182 20548 www.enricodario.it





THE ARROSCIA VALLEY

From the sea, towards the Alps

The motorway tollgate of Albenga acts as the point of departure towards the longest of the four valleys of the Albenga region, although the province of Savona takes up only its lower section. The Arroscia Valley takes water born on the snowfields of the Maritime Alps to the sea, rising across cultivated countryside, vineyards and woods, pushing the salty air and the smell of the sea and of the Riviera towards the mountains.





Ortovero

The Romans among peaches and roses

The ancient Romans enjoyed the wine and fruit of the Arroscia Valley, ripened in the sun of Ortovero, which today has 1400 inhabitants. The peaches of Ortovero are also appreciated in Piedmont. In addition to orchards there are rose gardens: surrounding the fortified village of Pogli, founded in 1288, roses of special characteristics are cultivated in greenhouses.

A Greek vine naturalized in Liguria

The Pigato arrived in Liguria in the Middle Ages from Greece, from one of the Genoese colonies in Aegean Sea. It is a white wine with a golden colour and the flavours and tastes of Ligurian sun. In Ortovero the vines were planted in 1830 by the archpriest Francesco Gagliolo, it is important as an "ambassador" of Ligurian wines, because it is a DOC wine made from a vine cultivated only in Liguria.

A little art and history

The hamlet of Pozzo preserves the remains of an ancient village, a 13th century castle of the Clavesana family and a tower. Behind the remains of the castle the elliptical and baroque oratory of Saint John the Baptist stands out, with its churchyard in black and white cobbles, known locally as risseu. The entire village of Pogli is interesting, with its fortified structure; still visible are five towers and parts of the original

surrounding walls. Near the parish church of San Silvestro Papa, the theatre Teatro Casone is to be found.

The sea once reigned here ...

Evidence of the local geologic events is the Argille (clay) of Ortovero, which comes to the surface near Borgo Fasceo and is known as "terin gianchi" (white soil); it dates back millions of years to a period (Pliocene) when the sea moved very far inland. This clay is rather rich in fossils of micro and macrofauna.

Onzo

On the slopes of Castell'Ermo

Continuing onwards from Ortovero towards the

upper Arroscia Valley, the church of San Calocero is the scene of a festival every five years: three processions join here from the neighbouring villages. A winding route climbs the hills of the valley, which soon becomes a rocky, rugged and extremely scenic mountain: Castell'Ermo, from its height of 1092 metres, dominates the territory of the municipality of Onzo and its hamlets scattered among olive groves and copse woods; the 240 inhabitants cultivate olives, chestnuts and grapes, used to produce Pigato DOC.

The route of the partisans

Through the Onzo territory passes a section of the route known as "Fischia il vento" (the wind is blowing), after the opening words of a famous partisan song. This path is dedicated to the partisan Felice Cascione, who fought among the valleys of Mèrula, Lerrone and Arroscia and was the author of the famous song. Eighteen kilometres of hill pathway cross the municipalities of Tèstico, Casanova Lerrone, Onzo, Vendone and Alto. The view is wonderful, looking over the Maritime Alps and the sea, farming villages and the countryside.

Fishing and walking in the woods

Hikers who walk up from

Onzo to Castell'Ermo can visit the remains of the ancient castle. From the summit, a beautiful view of the surrounding valley, of Albenga and of the coast can be enjoyed. Those who travel (by car or on foot) to Menezzo, at an altitude of 600 metres, can go fishing at the artificial lake.

Vendone

A scenic and open road

From Onzo, it is nice to return towards the coast following an itinerary cut into the hill-side, in a setting that winds along the small valleys of tributary streams of the Arroscia and through the hamlets of the municipality of Vendone. This scenic route offers the possibility to take short breaks for local wine, cuisine and culture.

A castle here and there

The 390 inhabitants of Vendone have their town hall in Lèuso, however, Castellaro and Curenna are the most interesting villages. The castle of Curenna takes advantage of the natural ruggedness of the rocks upon which it is built, and so do the fortified houses at the entrance to the medieval village. The powerful fortress of Castellaro has a triangular plan in order to make the most of the shape of the rocky buttress upon which it was erected.

Olives, olives, olives... and a few ancient churches

The landscape of the hills around Vendone is characterized by the presence of olive trees. Low down, far below the bends of the main road, rises the isolated church of Migliarina. Higher up, towards the summit of Castell'Ermo, you can reach the sanctuary of San Calocero, dedicated to a Roman soldier who died as a martyr in Albenga.

The "Garden of Stones"

In the shadow of the Castellaro tower there are about twenty large standing stones, rosy-white and decorated with lines and geometric figures. They are sculptures by Reiner Kriester, who lived and worked in Vendone for many years; an open-air museum in the Mediterranean countryside.

Arnasco

A balcony looking out over the valley

550 inhabitants are distributed halfway up the slope in various hamlets, a landscape rich in olive groves, a tranquil road that rises through pine trees to a radiant view of the open plain of Albenga: this is Arnasco, in the small valley of the Aibeglia stream. Arnasco probably dates back to Roman times, and its first







populated centre rose in the valley bottom in the vicinity of the small church of San Dalmazzo (12th century), perhaps the oldest church in the Albenga region.

Trails

A hiking route takes you to an ancient Napoleonic fort at a height of 800 metres. From Arnasco many paths lead to the other villages of the Arroscia Valley, the Pennavaire Valley and the Neva Valley.

"Pignola" olives

The cultivation of Pignola olives, named after the Italian word for pine nuts due to their distinctive taste, dates back to the 17th century. Grafting is required for cultivation, because of the stony and dry soil of this terraced land. The Cooperativa Olivicola Arnasco (olive growers' cooperative) is the sole producer of the extra virgin olive oil made with Pignola olives, locally called Arnasca.

The Museum of our history

The Museo dell'Ulivo e della Civiltà Contadina (Museum of the olive tree and of rural culture), run by the cooperative as the adjoining typical products shop, is right in the centre of the village. It tells the story of the life of this land, in which olives have always characterized the economy. Inside the museum is an old restored olive press.

Murals and dry-stone walls

People had the idea at the end of the XX century: thanks to the work of professional and amateur artists, the walls along the provincial road that goes through the hamlet has been covered by dozens of coloured murals that represent subjects of country culture, Ligurian land and olive trees cultivation: a successful initiative that still goes on. The annual "International Course of Dry-stone Wallls" is a clever idea with the aim to preserve these walls that are a basic element of the Ligurian rural landscape (basic as they are indispensable to support the terrace-cultivations) and the techniques of construction. As important is the activity of valorization of traditional rural constructions as the "caselle" of shepherds.



TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

Ortovero

Town Hall Ph. 0182 547388 www.comuneortovero.it

Azienda Agricola Durin

(wine and oil) via Roma 92 Ph. 0182 547007 www.durin.it

Azienda Agricola Frantoio Pasqua

(farm and oil mill) fraz.Campi 46 Ph. 0182 76239, 333 9676991 www.frantoiopasqua.com

Azienda Agricola e Cantina Franco Pisano

(farm and wineshop) via Nazionale 22, Pogli Ph. 0182 547029

Bar d'Utué (snack bar) via Roma 99

Ph. 0182 547303 B&B il Frutteto

reg. Villa 2, Ph. 339 7397592

Centro Enologico Enoteca Regionale

(regional oenological centre) viale alla Chiesa 18 Ph. 0182 547388 (Town Hall)

Cooperativa Viticoltori Ingauni

(vine-growers cooperative) via Roma 1, Ph. 0182 547127 www.viticoltoriingauni.it



via Fasceo 1 e via Villa 1 Ph. 0182 547310 www.borgofasceo.it

Hotel Ristorante Tripoli via Roma 42

Ph. 0182 547017

Osteria della Ciccia

via Roma 65 Ph. 0182 547275 329 4330530

Ristorante Grani di Pepe via Roma 5, Ph. 0182 547245

via Roma 5, Ph. 0182 54724 www.granidipepe.biz

Ristorante Pizzeria Olive e Lavanda

vico Arroscia 5 Ph. 0182 547236 339 4890714 munuv@hotmail.it

Ristorante Wine Bar La Cantina di Sonia

piazza IV Novembre 11 Ph. 333 1312045 lacantinadisonia@alice.it

Teatro Casone

(theatre) via alla Chiesa 26 Ph. 0182 547338 (Town Hall)

Trattoria Vignola

via Nazionale 2, Pogli Ph. 0182 559877

Onzo

Town Hall Ph. 0182 766004 www.comuneonzo.net

Agriturismo Vignola Mariangela

(apartments) fraz. Costa 15 Ph. 339 4416077

Associazione Sportiva Dilettantistica Tiro al Volo

(clay-pigeon shooting) loc. Colla, Ph. 338 6152784

Pesca turistica nel lago di Menezzo

(fishing in a lake) Ph. 0182 766004 (Town Hall)

Vendone

Town Hall Ph. 0182 76248 www.comunedivendone.it

Agriturismo La Crosa

fraz. Crosa 10 Ph. 0182 76331 www.lacrosa.it

Azienda Agricola di Claudio Vio

(farm) fraz. Crosa 16 Ph. 0182 76338 **Azienda Agricola**

Renzo Bronda (farm) fraz. Cantone 16

Ph. 0182 76253 Azienda Agricola

Revello

(farm) fraz. Leuso 22 Ph. 0182 766501 www.oliorevello.it

Trattoria Pizzeria l'Alpino

fraz. Léuso, Ph. 0182 76435

Arnasco

Town Hall Ph. 0182 761020 www.comunearnasco.it

Agriturismo il Carruggio

via Gallizzi 6, Ph. 0182 761031 0182 761182, 335 7051625

B&B Serendipiti

fraz. Menosio, via Genova 14 Ph. 0182 761130 339 6065121

Cooperativa Olivicola e Museo dell'Olivo e della Civiltà Contadina

(Oil Cooperative and Museum for olive-culture and country life) piazza IV Novembre 8 Ph. 0182 761178 www.coopolivicolarnasco.it

Hotel Collina

piazza IV Novembre 7 Ph. 0182 761008

www.albergocollina.it Ristorante Agriturismo

Gumbu du Camallu via XXV Aprile 3/4

Ph. 0182 761564 338 2747920

www.gumbuducamallu.it

Trattoria da Bianca via Stefano Viaggio 10

via Stefano Viaggio 10 Ph. 0182 761016



THE LERRONE VALLEY

A ring-road among olive trees and chestnuts

The two most western valleys of the Riviera delle Palme are reachable with a single itinerary, which from Albenga climbs the Lerrone Valley, descends into the Mèrula Valley and ends in Andora. It passes hamlets among woods or city walls, watched over by churches and castles, surrounded by hills covered with olive and chestnut trees.





Villanova d'albenga

A "new" town surrounded by walls

Villanova is the most important of the walled towns that the city-state of Albenga founded in the 13th century to guard access from the inland. It is surrounded by walls and numerous towers. Of the original "villa nova" (Latin for "new villa"), a covered well with ancient chain and top also remains at the centre of the main street.

An agricultural town

For over a century violets have been cultivated in the countryside of Villanova, packaged including their leaves and sent all over Europe.

A beautiful round church

A worthy visit in Villanova (1940 inhabitants) is to the church of Santa Maria Rotonda or del Soccorso, dating to 1520. It is one of the few Italian churches with a round shape and layout.

An airport town

A road that runs to the right of Nostra Signora delle Grazie church leads to the international airport "C. Panero", now fully operational for private and public air service. The airport has a field for model aircraft and organizes flying and parachuting courses. Continuing along the same road you reach the "Ippodromo dei Fiori" racetrack.

Garlenda

Country village or an élite tourist spot?

Both of these things: Garlenda, is an international tourist centre but at the same time a charming village, where 880 inhabitants live immersed in a luxuriant countryside of orchards, olive groves and vinevards producing Pigato and Rossese. Here perfectly renovated hamlets with stone houses and with flowers along the roads, such as the hamlet of Castelli, are to be found next to elegant modern residential areas hidden among the greenery.

The Golf Club

Garlenda's Golf Club has an 18-hole golf course, varied and perfectly fitted into the landscape. The course is open throughout the year and is almost 6 km long, Par 71; the Club House is equipped with bar, restaurant and guest house.

A monumental tree

Close to the small church of San Rocco, stands the majestic "u Ruve de San Roccu", an oak tree entered in the list of monumental trees of Liguria; it is 250-300 years old and 24.5 metres high; its trunk has a circumference of more than 4 and a half metres.

Vintage cars and old calendars

A gathering of car enthusiasts from all over the world, all in love with the Fiat 500, comes together each summer for the "Raduno Fiat 500". The multimedia-museum Museo Multimediale della 500 Dante Giacosa is dedicated to the legendary economy car. With the help of modern media, it shows a cross-section of Italian life. Calendars and almanacs in dialect and Italian from all over Liguria are displayed at the Costa - Del Carretto castle.

Casanova Lerrone

Immersed in a sea of hills 840 inhabitants scattered

in different hamlets at various altitudes upon the hill slopes covered with olive groves and woods. This is Casanova Lerrone, whose territory includes almost all of the upper Lerrone Valley. It has the typical scenery of interior Liguria, a territory of beautiful excursions towards the coast or towards the province of Imperia, among pine trees and olive groves or the meadows and oak tree woods of the Ginestro pass. Among the old houses rises the castle of the Doria family, while in the hamlet of Bossanico, among cypress and eucalyptus trees, is the castle Poggiolo, with 17th century rooms and furnishings. One of the hamlets is Marmòreo, with stone houses of a beige-grey tone, scattered along the open ridge towards the Arroscia Valley and the first peaks of the Maritime Alps. Degna is a village of ancient houses grouped together in the form of a cross under the tall bell tower of the parish church.

TASTE. DISCOVER. SLEEP

Villanova d'Albenga

Town Hall Ph. 0182 582913 www.villanovadalbenga.com

Aeroporto Internazionale Clemente Panero

(airport) loc. Aeroporto Ph. 0182 582033 www.rivierairport.it

Affittacamere Borgo delle Viole

(rooms) via Martiri 6 Ph. 0182 582499 www.borgodelleviole.it

Agriturismo La Ramera

loc. Torlai (near regione San Rocco Garlenda) Ph. 392 5953088 www.laramera.it

Agriturismo Le Collinette

fraz. Coasco 86 Ph. 0182 582812 392 9359624 www.agriturismolecollinette.it

Agriturismo Le Giare

via Roma 231 Ph. 0182 580008 335 6856509 www.legiareagriturismo.it

Agriturismo Ligasole

piazza della Chiesa 7, Ligo Ph. 338 6039007 gdanio@tiscali.it

Agriturismo Mantica

fraz. Bossoleto 39 Ph. 0182 582824 338 9858139 angelomantica@alice.it

B&B Relax

fraz. Marta 13bis Ph. 0182 582269 392 5518907

B&B Ligo

fraz. Ligo 24 Ph. 0182 582479 392 3258747 www.bebligo.it

B&B Salvia e Rosmarino

via Crose 51, Ph. 0182 582961 338 7340259 www.salviaerosmarino.com

Frantoio Baglietto

& Secco (oil, products in oil and pickled olives) via Roma 137 Ph. 0182 582838 www.baqliettoesecco.it

Hotel Ristorante Hermitage

via Roma 152 Ph. 0182 582976 www.hotelhermitage.info

Ippodromo dei Fiori e Ristorante Pizzeria Zachiky

(racetrack and restaurant) strada per Ligo 4 Ph. 0182 582666 0182 580641 www.ippodromodeifiori.com

Maneggio Country Club

(riding school) loc. San Rocco 7 Strada Villanova - Garlenda Ph. 0182 580640

Osteria La Madia

loc. Coasco 24, sulla SP 453 Ph. 0182 585084

Pasta fresca Poggio

(homemade pasta), via Roma 51 Ph. 0182 582953

Pizzeria Le Dieci Torri

via Roma 17H Ph. 0182 582697 www.ristorantele10torrivillanova.com

Ristorante Osteria del Sì

vico Ponte 9/11 Ph. 0182 585006

Ristorante dell'Aeroporto

loc. Aeroporto Ph. 0182 585027

Ristorante II Boschetto

Strada per Ligo 1 Ph. 0182 580348 www.ilboschettoinvillanova.it

Ristorante Pizzeria Claro de Luna

fraz. Bossoleto 6 Ph. 0182 580553

Villaggio Turistico

C'era una Volta

(camping with restaurant) regione Fascetti 5 Strada per Ligo Ph. 0182 580461 www.villaggioceraunavolta.it

Garlenda

Town Hall Ph. 0182 580056 www.comune.garlenda.sv.it

Agriturismo A Veggia Vigna

borgata Villa 28 Ph. 338 5235177 www.aveggiavigna.it

Agriturismo I Re Fenean

borgo Praglione 67 (near the golf) Ph. 388 3478386 www.irefenean.com

Agriturismo Il Giardino del Sole

via Praglione 27 Ph. 0182 580069 www.ilgiardinodelsole.net

Agriturismo Ristorante Le Serrette

regione Brà 23 Ph. 0182 583886 www.serrette.it

B&B Rosalina

Golf Club

via Delle Rocche 4 Ph. 0182 580064 377 2424953

www.bedandbreak fast-rosalina. it

via del Golf 7, Ph. 0182 580012 www.garlendagolf.it

Hotel e Ristorante Golf Club

via del Golf 7, Ph. 0182 583813 www.garlendagolfhotel.com

Hotel La Meridiana Relais & Chateaux e Ristorante Il Rosmarino

via ai Castelli 11 Ph. 0182 580271 www.lameridianaresort.com

Indios Ranch (trekking and horse riding, school and

shelter) borgata Cantone Ph. 339 4480866

Museo Multimediale della 500 Dante Giacosa

(Museum of Fiat 500 car) via Roma 90, Ph. 0182 582282 www.500clubitalia.it

Osteria Trattoria Da Luciano

via Roma 11 Ph. 0182 582481, 335 6909374

Ristorante Antichi Sapori

via Roma 76 Ph. 0182 582201 339 1764650 www.ristoranteantichisapori.info

Ristorante Garilinda via Roma 121

Ph. 0182 580059 **Ristorante Pizzeria**

da Ingaro borgo Ponte 21 Ph. 0182 580525

Ristorante Pizzeria Il Frantoio

via Lerrone 56, Ph. 0182 582046

Taverna Henry La Viande

borgata Chiappa 23 Ph. 0182 582599 335 6959757

Tennis Club Garlenda con Ristorante

borgo Ponte 31 Ph. 0182 585028

Casanova Lerrone

Town Hall

Ph. 0182 74014 www.comunedicasanovalerrone.net

Agriturismo A Canonica

fraz. Bassanico 24 Ph. 0182 74343, 339 6333692

Agriturismo Au Campu

fraz. Degna 7, Ph. 347 3224475 www.aucampu.it

Agriturismo Borgo Ameno

via Case Soprane 4 Ph. 0182 74318 www.borgoameno.it

Agriturismo Borgo Degli Ulivi

fraz. Vellego 39 Ph. 338 2211362

Agriturismo Gli Ulivi

fraz. Maremo Sottano 9 Ph. 0182 74149 www.agrigliulivi.it

Agriturismo II Poggio

fraz. Marmòreo, via Poggio 97 Ph. 0182 74040 agri.cascinailpoggio@libero.it

Agriturismo La Casa della Nonna

fraz. Poggio 26 Ph. 0182 74164, 328 9590455

Agriturismo Maligù

via F.lli Cassiano, Marmoreo Ph. 339 6329191 www.maliqu.it

Hotel Ristorante La Pineta

fraz. Marmoreo 75 Ph. 0182 74053

Hotel Ristorante Primosole

loc. Castellaro 40, Marmoreo Ph. 0182 74025

Ristorante Agriturismo Pinocchio

piazza Giardino 70/A Vèllego, Ph. 0182 74168 www.agripinocchio.it









THE ALASSIO HILL

A cascade of olive groves, pine trees and vineyards

The hill that surrounds the scenic Alassio bay is extremely steep. Steep and green, covered with elegant villas and rows of olive groves and vineyards, not to mention the woods of chestnut and pine trees. Among woods and cultivated land some small villages are like red spots amid the expanse of green vegetation.





Solva

Sun-kissed Solva clings at a height of 110 metres on the hill overlooking Alassio and the sea.

Sweet little snakes

They are called "biscette" because they have the shape of little snakes. They are typical biscuits of Solva; they are prepared in march to celebrate Ss. Annunziata, in order to remember a medieval legend. It's the story of vipers and snakes invading beaches and olive groves of the area, finally turned away by the prayers of a hermit.

Moglio

Moglio is similar to Solva, apart from the slightly more rural tone of its houses and alleys which look down upon Alassio from a height of 200 metres. Along the road to Moglio, rising up between vineyards and woods, there is the crossroads for Madonna delle Grazie church and hamlet.

Tuna delightful portion

At the end of July the traditional village festival of "Ventre" is organized in Moglio. Ventre is a traditional dish as it's realized with the dried stomach of tuna that, till the first half of XX century, the "tonnarotti", the Ligurians working in the areas for tunny-fishing of Sardinia, received in addition to the pay. At Moglio ventre is stewed and served with a good glass of local Vermentino wine.

Vegliasco

In the charming hamlet of Vegliasco the ancient tower, symbol of the town of Alassio.

The Guardia of Alassio

On the top of Mount Tirasso (586 m high) there is the shrine of Our Lady of the Guardia overlooking Alassio and its gulf; it was built on the site of an Early Middle Ages guard tower of Albenga; inside there are some seafaring ex voto. The large square before the church offers a wonderful view.

TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

The hills upon Alassio

Agriturismo Garumba (typical products) strada Interpoderale Garumba loc. Garumba Ph. 348 4490262

Agriturismo Palmero

www.garumba.eu

regione Palmero Ph. 0182 645504 388 6159118 www.agriturismopalmero.it

Parco Avventura Solleone

(Adventure Park) loc. San Bernardo Ph. 0182 645953 www.parcosolleone.it

Pizzeria Ristorante Crocetta

via Ottone I 115 Moglio Ph. 0182 469220

Ristorante Al Castello

loc. Madonna delle Grazie 27 Ph. 0182 642873 www.ristorantecastello.net

Ristorante La Vigna

via Lepanto 1 Solva Ph. 0182 644744 349 8903907 www.ristorantelavigna.it

Ristorante Locanda della Torre Antica

regione Vegliasco 29, Moglio Ph. 328 9767731 www.locandadellatorreantica.com

Trattoria degli Amici

via F. Airaldi 165 Moglio Ph. 347 8565789 www.ritrovodeqliamici.com



VAL MÈRULA

The most western of the valleys of Riviera delle Palme

At the western boundary of the Riviera delle Palme there is a nice valley covered by the green of olive trees and woods; there are hills where you can see tapered belfries among the leafage of trees as proof of the presence of ancient and hospitable villages; these hamlets are linked by roads and trails that are really pleasant for bikers not in hurry.





Testico This hill, always dear to me...

Tèstico has little more than 200 inhabitants, it is a hill village stretched along the ridge that separates the Lerrone Valley and the Mèrula Valley, reachable from Alassio by a scenic climbing route or from Casanova Lerrone by crossing the Ginestro pass. Its history began with the Romans, then the village was governed by the bishop of Albenga, by the Doria family and by Savoy until it reached the present, with olive and chestnut groves to colour its landscape.

On foot and by bicycle on the battle fields

The mountains of Tèstico are not short of trekking and mountain bike trails: from Tèstico you can climb to the pass of San Giacomo di Cesio, to the Ginestro pass (677 m), to the peak Pizzo d'Evigno (989 m), or Mount Arosio (839 m). The nearby Guerra pass was once the ancient border between the Republic of Genoa and the Kingdom of Sardinia. The territories of Tèstico and Casanova Lerrone are crossed by the route "Fischia il vento", dedicated to the partisan Felice Cascione.

Stellanello

Five parishes for a star

A five-pointed star is the coat of arms of Stellanello, a rural village of the upper Mèrula Valley with almost 700 inhabitants: in 1305 it was granted the statutes of a city-state and a government composed of five consuls, one for each parish. Its territory is dominated by the peak Pizzo d'Evigno (989 m) and by Mount Ceresa (913 m); from the higher meadows, covered with flowered broom at the start of summer, you can paraglide or fly by motor driven hang-glider. There are also good tracks

A monumental oak tree

for mountain bikes and

horseback riding.

In the woods of Stellanello, near the church of Santa Maria del Bosco, towers a majestic 200-year-old oak tree, included in the list of monumental trees of Liquria.

The countryside of Andora

From the sea to the Alps

Around the lower course of the Mèrula stream stretches a flat country landscape surrounded by scenic hills rich in history.

The villages of Andora

Castello di Andora stands upon a hill to the left side of the stream: it is a fascinating place. The small ancient houses, the impressive remains of the castle, the small early Romanesque church of San Nicolò and the beautiful large Romanesque-Gothic church of Santi Giacomo e Filippo create one of the most attractive places in Liguria. The ancient hamlet of Colla Micheri is situated on the Laigueglia hill, which can also be reached from Andora. The Norwegian navigator Thor Heyerdahl lived here for over thirty years. Conna has a medieval structure surrounded by olive groves, holm oaks and vineyards. Rollo is a hamlet that rises along the Andora hill. It has a wonderful view of the sea and the plain.

The plain of the Mèrula stream

Leave the coast behind and, before confronting the hills of the upper valley, you will find the Mèrula plain, a fresh and peaceful environment, crossed by a clear blue stream, where frogs croak and birds nest.

TASTE, DISCOVER, SLEEP

Testico

Town Hall: Ph. 0182 668 091 www.comune.testico.sv.it

Azienda Agricola Castellana

Federico (farm, oil) borgata Cà del Rosso 4 Ph. 338 6824886

Azienda Agricola e Agriturismo II Poggio

(oil, fruit and vegetables) fraz. Ginestro, loc. Poggio 6 Ph. 0183 273177 328 2211304 www.agriturismoilpoggioginestro.it

Azienda Agricola Montanaro Corrado

(farm, oil) fraz. Dani 14, Ph. 339 7711068 ilnidodellerondini@uno.it

Azienda Agricola di Riccardo Aicardi

(oil, decorated bottles, ceramics) via della Vittoria 3 Ph. 338 3749404

Azienda Agricola Ricci Licia (oil)

via G. Marconi 2 Ph. 338 6039007 gdanio@tiscali.it

Bar Ristorante U Baccan

piazza IV Novembre 7bis Ph. 0182 668166 338 6039007, gdanio@tiscali.it

Frantoio di Vittorio Sibelli

(oil mill) borgo Caselle 4 Ph. 0182 668039

Ristorante Al Frantoio

loc. Dani, via delle Ville Ph. 0182 668034 ilnidodellerondini@uno.it

Ristorante Degli Amici

piazza IV Novembre 6 Ph. 0182 668074

Stellanello

Town Hall: Ph. 0182 668 476 www.comune.stellanello.sv.it

Agriturismo La Cicala loc. Ciantà 2/3

Ph. 0182 86194 338 3855018 www.agriturismolacicala.com

Agriturismo La Taggiasca

località Chiesa 14 Ph. 0182 86343 www.agriturismolataggiasca.eu

Angela Durante

(honey, oil), fraz. Duranti 12 loc. Santa Maria Ph. 0182 668076

Azienda Agricola Barnato Francesca

(farm, oil) loc. Caio 12, San Damiano Ph. 0182 668101 380 9049045

Azienda Agricola Gagliolo Sandro (oil mill)

loc. Casabianca 1 San Damiano Ph. 0182 668148 338 3216315

Azienda Agricola Ghigliazza Giulio (oil mill)

fraz. San Lorenzo 33/1 Ph. 338 3643736 giulioghigliazza@tiscali.it

Bar Trattoria Merula

via San Lorenzo 36 Ph. 0182 668010

B&B Da Giò del Merula

frazione San Lorenzo Ph. 346 9433167 bbdaqio.stellanello@gmail.com

B&B L'Iris

via Borgofiorito 14 Ph. 0182 1966224

beb.iris.stellanello@gmail.com Club Ippico Cavallo George

(horse club), loc. Bossaneto, Ph. 0182 668979

Divizia Francesco

(oil, products in oil) regione Borgonuovo 10 Ph. 0182 668374

Frantoio Artigianale di Mauro Mantello

(oil mill) frazione Albareto 19 Ph. 0182 668318

Frantoio da Olive di Domenico Bestoso

(oil mill) fraz. Borgo Nuovo 26 Ph. 0182 668031 www.frantoiobestoso.it

Frantoio da Olive

di Simone Rossi (oil mill) fraz. San Damiano/Pilone Ph. 0182 668085

338 1275544, www.oliorossi.it

Ristorante Bar Al Cardellino Rosso

fraz. Ciccioni, loc. S. Maria 21 Ph. 0182 668520 348 0345856

Ristorante Bar Laureri

via Roma 9, Ph. 0182 668012 **Ristorante El Trocadero** via Roma 3, Ph. 0182 668021

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Azienda Agricola Cascina Praié

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Bar Osteria Colla Micheri

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B&B II Corbezzolo

loc. Garassini 13, Conna Ph. 333 2769683 www.ilcorbezzolo.info

B&B La Collina sul Mare

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Pizzeria il Grillo Parlante

castello di Andora via Castello 1 Ph. 0182 85109

Ristorante e Brasserie la Casa del Priore

via Castello 34, loc. Castello Ph. 0182 87330 (brasserie) 0182 684377 (restaurant) www.casadelpriore.com

Ristorante l'Alpino

via P. Cavassa 51, Conna Ph. 0182 80037

Piana del Mèrula

Affittacamere Villa Cristina

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Agriturismo Gli Aromi

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via Merula 57e, Ph. 0182 85821 www.il-frutteto.eu

B&B La Ferraia

via Merula 57d, Ph. 0182 89256 www.laferraia.com

B&B San Pietro

loc. Metta 1A, Ph. 0182 80507 339 1292011 www.bbsanpietroandora.com

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Frantoio Artigianale Risso (oil mill) via Divizia 114 a

San Bartolomeo, Ph. 0182 86150 Fratelli Morro

(oil mill)

via Divizia 33, San Bartolomeo Ph. 0182 80079

La Madrugada (riding school, dressage centre, Spanish school) loc. Piazza, Ph. 338 1214624 lamadrugada@virgilio.it

Ristorante Agriturismo La Tana

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via Molineri 52a San Giovanni, Ph. 0182 80187

Ristorante braceria birreria Italo's

via Divizia 15, San Bartolomeo Ph. 0182 680601 www.italosandora.com

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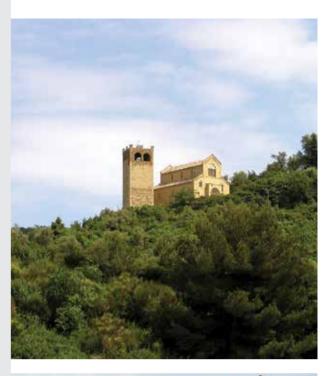
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