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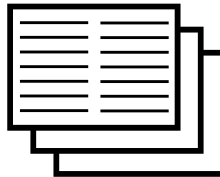
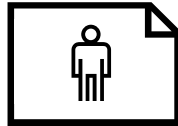
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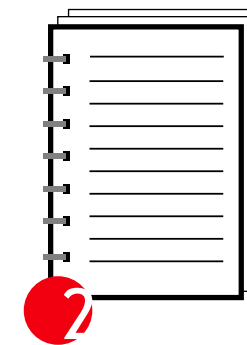
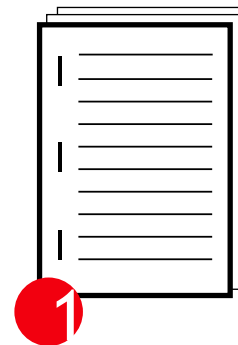
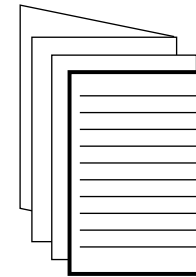
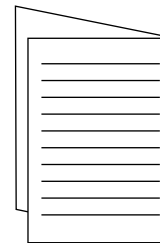
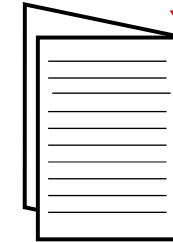
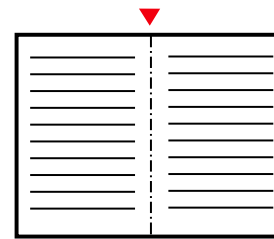
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assembling the guide



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THE GENOA CITY GUIDE



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Getting there and around



Genoa: view of port

By air

The Cristoforo Colombo airport is located about 6 km from the city center. It is serviced by a number of airlines, with connections to many Italian cities and European capitals. The closest alternative airports are Milan (MXP) and Genoa (PSA).

The airport is connected to the city and train stations by the Volabus, with routes leaving every half-hour from piazza Verdi, in front of the Brignole station. Flight information: telephone: +39 010 6015410

By car

Genoa is reachable by autostrade from four different directions.

From Rome or Florence, take the autostrada A11 "Firenze-mare", then follow the A12 to Genoa. From Milan take the A7 Milano-Genova. Coming from France or Ventimiglia, take the A10 to Genova Ovest. From Turin, take the A21 to Alessandria, then the A26 to Voltri, and finally get onto the A10 to Genoa. From Venice take the A4 to Brescia, then take the A21 to Tortona, and finally take the A7

until you reach Genova. From Bologna take the A1 Bologna-Milano to Parma, then take the A15 toward La Spezia and continue on A12 toward Genova.

By train

Genoa is an important railroad hub, with frequent connections for all the major Italian cities. You can find train schedules on Trenitalia website, or by calling info-number 89 20 21.

By sea

The ferryboat is another pleasant way to reach Genoa, and you can take your car along, too. From the Stazione Marittima, ferries run directly to and from Mediterranean ports.

Tirrenia (telephone: 147 899000 - 010 26981) - Connections with Sardinia

Moby Lines (telephone: 010 252755) - Lines for Corsica and Sardinia

Corsica Marittima ("CEMAR" telephone: 010 589595) Tunis

Tris (telephone: 010 5762411) - Corsica and Sardinia

Grimaldi (telephone: 010 55091): Sicily, Sardinia and Spain

During the summer (with increased service in August), a tour boat service operates, connecting Genoa to the Golfo del Tigullio (Rapallo and Saint Margherita).

History and culture



Genoa: Palazzo San Giorgio

The name Genova ("Genoa" in Italian), according to a Roman legend, originated from the Roman god Janus ("Giano" in Italian), protector god of all passageways, including the door to one's home or the gates of a city. This theory has some support in the importance that the Genoese placed on the entrances to their homes: every doorway was decorated with a bas-relief, often with a scene depicting Catholic saints. Historical surveys place the birth of the city at around the 3rd century B.C. Genoa, a Roman port, was destroyed in the Punic Wars, and then reconstructed as a military base for the war against the Carthaginians. During the late Roman Empire, and in the High Medieval period, Genoa suffered invasions from the north, and then came under the domination of the Byzantines, the Lombards, and the Franks. The Medieval period was the first great period of the city. In the 11th century, Genoa became an oligarchic Republic, governed by councils chosen from the various aristocratic families who divide up the city. As a result of this type of government, which guaranteed

the interests of the highest-ranked in society, Genoa expanded its territorial possessions throughout nearly 5 centuries, both in the form of commercial markets and actual colonies. The crusades also helped Genoa secure its role as the maritime leader in the Mediterranean during the centuries to follow. The alliance between the Genoese Admiral Andrea Doria and the Spanish Empire of Carlo V, in 1528, inaugurated the Golden Age of Genoa, during which the Genoese enjoyed great success throughout Europe, thanks to large-scale financial investments. The construction of sumptuous palazzos and magnificent villas also began during this period. From the 17th century on, Genoa started a period of decline, and fell under the dominion of various European powers. In 1815, the Congress of Vienna ruled that the ancient Republic of Genoa be annexed to the Kingdom of Savoy, which several decades later became part of a united Italy. It was from Genoa that Garibaldi started his expedition of the Thousand, which would eventually lead to the constitution of the Kingdom of Italy. Between the 19th and 20th centuries, Genoa experienced great urban development, assuming the role of industrial and port center within the industrial triangle of Genoa, Milan, and Turin. In the 1960's the population of Genoa doubled in size from the first half of the century. And yet its position as the great industrial city fell into crisis in the 1980's, when the model of traditional development based on large, state-sponsored industry became less relevant.

Today, the port of Genoa has reassumed its position as one of the most important port cities in the Mediterranean. Il Porto Antico (the Old Port), reconstructed in 1992 by Renzo Piano, was transformed into a tourist attraction, the motor of a new tourist industry that has enveloped the entire city.

Churches



Genoa: Church of san Donato

San Lorenzo Cathedral

The Cathedral of San Lorenzo, reconstructed in Romanesque style during the 12th century, has since the time of the Crusades protected the ashes of Saint John the Baptist (San Giovanni Battista), the patron saint of Genoa.

The black and white edifice sits between two towers, and opening out from it are three richly decorated gothic doors. From the sides of the edifice emerge two stone lions and a statue of San Giovanni. The Museo del Tesoro is located in the basement of the Cathedral: it holds precious relics whose stories have passed into legend: the Sacro Catino, a relic of the Last Supper, the plate which held the head of the Baptist, the Croce degli Zaccaria, and the magnificent tabernacle containing the ashes of saints.

San Matteo

This 1125 church was the Cappella Gentilizia of the Doria family, located in the center of the Case Doria complex. The exterior is notable for its elegant edifice, crafted in

black and white marble. The interior was remodeled in the 1500's and adorned with precious sculptures by Montorsoli. Inside the crypt, visitors can view the tomb of Andrea Doria, sculpted by Montorsoli.

Church of Gesù

This church, finished in 1500 for the Jesuit fathers, is worth a visit for the works of art it contains: incredible sculptures and works in stucco, while standing out among the many paintings are two altar pieces by Rubens and one by Guido Reni.

San Giovanni Pré

San Giovanni Pré is a complex of two churches in Romanesque style, positioned one on top of the other, and founded in 1180 by the Knights of Malta. In ancient times, the building annex served as a hostel for pilgrims heading from Genoa to the Holy Land. It is one of the most striking churches of the city, with its great vaults, black stone walls and wood ceilings. The Romanesque bell tower is one of the few from this period surviving in Genoa.

Church of San Donato

The Chiesa di San Donato, built in the 11th and 12th centuries, is a masterpiece of Genoese Romanesque architecture, with its magnificent rose windows, protira on the façade, and octagonal bell tower. Inside are Roman columns and a gorgeous triptych, The Adoration of the Magi (16th century), by the Flemish painter Joos Veian Cleeve.

San Pietro in Banchi

This curiously-designed church was built in 1572 as a symbol of thanks for a narrowly-avoided epidemic. Construction took place with a kind of "self-financing". The church, with its single nave and octagonal cupola, is elevated above the piazza below, and overlooks a steep set of stairs. Located on the ground floor are a several shops, whose sales proceeds went to finance construction of the church.

Historical buildings and monuments



Agrigento: the Cathedral

La Lanterna

The ancient lighthouse of Genoa, symbol of the city, was erected in 1543.

The tower reaches a height of 117 meters, and the view from its pinnacle is one of the most beautiful in the city.

Villa Doria-Pamphilj

The construction of the Palazzo del Principe was begun by Andrea Doria in 1529, just outside the city walls. Influenced by the Renaissance culture of Rome, this palazzo signaled the architectural transition from the Medieval to the Renaissance in Genoa, pre-dating the palazzos of Strada Nuova. Still today the property of the Doria Pamphilj princes, the palazzo was opened to the public after a long period of restoration.

Among the many rooms open to visitors, some of the most notable are the Carità Romana hall, the Caduta dei Giganti salon, the Perseo room, the Sacrificio room, the Cadmo room and the Zodiac room. Make sure not to miss the Galleria Aurea, with its rare tapestry cycle. Information: +39 010 255509

Palazzo Reale (royal Palace)

The palazzo, built in the 17th century by the Balbi family, was transformed into a baroque edifice modeled on Roman palazzos. In 1825 it became the residence of the Reale Savoia family.

Today the palazzo is a museum-residence open to visitors, with a series of elegant furnished rooms and works of art which were set up by the Durazzo family in the 18th century and by the Reale family in the 19th century.

Outside the palazzo are lovely gardens, lush with greenery and exotic foliage.

Schedule: Tuesday and Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; Thursday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Closed Mondays.

Information: telephone: +39 010 2710236

The buildings at Strada Nuova

Strada Nuova (the present-day via Garibaldi) was opened in the 1500's in a peripheral urban area, not far from the commercial center.

This new, lovely and elegant street reflected brightly upon the most wealthy and powerful families of Genoa, who made it their own residential quarter.

This long road winds alongside luxurious palazzos, with their grand atriums, staircases, courtyards, outdoor halls and hanging gardens -- innovations never before seen in the Genoa of that time.

Today, via Garibaldi is home to the most outstanding set of museums in Genoa, including exceptionally important picture galleries such as Palazzo Rosso, Palazzo Bianco, and Palazzo Spinola. See Museums and Galleries.

Piazza San Matteo

Located in this small piazza in the heart of the medieval center are the palazzos of the Doria family, leaders of political life in Genoa for centuries.

These include: the Palazzo di Branca Doria (street address 13), the Palazzo che Lamba Doria (street address 15), the Palazzo Domenicaccio Doria (street address 16),

and finally the home of Andrea Doria (street address 17), gifted to him by the Senate of the Republic for his role as "Salvatore della Patria" -- savior of the nation. These palazzos are all highly decorated, and display distinctive white and grey bands of marble.

Palazzo San Giorgio

Palazzo San Giorgio, unfortunately disfigured by an ugly elevated highway, was the fulcrum of commercial and maritime activity in Genoa for centuries.

The original edifice was built in 1260 as a Palazzo del Comune (town hall). In 1451, the palazzo became the home of Banco di S. Giorgio, one of the most powerful banks in Europe, which managed the finances of the Republic of Genoa until the 17th century. According to tradition, Marco Polo, confined in the prison that was once located in this palazzo, dictated "Il Milione" to Rustichello da Pisa, his cellmate, after the victory of the Genoese at the Battle of Meloria.

Porta Soprana and Columbus' House

This city gate, which was built in the same era as its twin, Porta dei Vacca (1161), is enclosed between two battlement towers. The port was the main entryway into the Medieval city from the east. Right next to Porta Soprana lies the building known as the Casa di Colombo (Columbus's House).

In reality, this moniker is historically inaccurate.

The building was constructed at the end of the 17th century, having been built upon the remains of Christopher Columbus' real house, which was destroyed in a naval bombardment by the French in 1684.

The votive tabernacles

These religious objects are numerous, scattered throughout the historic center of the city.

Since Medieval times, the Genoese have been fond of protecting their homes and their work with sacred images, depicted on slate or

sculpted from marble, and placed in niches or tabernacles.

Some of these were commissioned to famous artists, who created true works of art from these religious objects.

More than 330 were constructed in Genoa, and today many of them have been restored.

Museums



Genoa: Genoa Aquarium

La Card dei Musei: grants entry to all participating Genoa museums, as well as discounts and special deals at the Acquario and many local theatres.

The museums at the Porto Antico:

Genoa Aquarium

The Acquario di Genova (Genoa Aquarium), designed by architects Renzo Piano and Peter Chermayeff, is one of the biggest aquariums in Europe, covering 10,000 square meters and containing 71 display tanks.

These tanks recreate the habitat of the Mediterranean and other oceans, the North and South Poles, and the tropics, and contains over 500 sea and ocean-dwelling species, which live and reproduce here in the Aquarium.

Visitors get the chance to see close-up the secret lives of fish, mollusks, sharks, dolphins, jellyfish, and many other creatures such as crocodiles, frogs, snakes, penguins, and seals.

The mission of the Acquario di Genova is

to educate and inform the public about the responsible management of aquatic environments.

Information: www.acquario.ge.it/

Galata - Seafaring Museum

With its 10,000 square meters of displays, this museum combines ancient tradition and modern technological innovation.

Fascinating reconstructions of shipyards and harbor environments, multimedia presentations, and incredible visual and sound effects take the visitor through the history of navigation, from the oar to the sail, and from the steamboat to the luxurious cruise ship.

On display at the museum are nautical maps and instruments, atlases, weapons, and antique paintings.

Schedule: March through October: 10:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; November through February: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Closed Mondays. Information: +39 010 2345655

National Museum for Antarctica

This museum was created to raise awareness about the Antarctic region and the research conducted by Italian expeditions to Antarctica. The exhibits make use of an interactive and dynamic set-up.

The museum's displays offer visitors Antarctic artifacts (glaciological, geological, mineralogical and paleontological), interesting films, and environmental recreations, all geared toward learning about and understanding a region that is not well-known, yet has much to offer.

Where: Porto Antico and Expo area. Information: +39-010-2543690

The museums of Strada Nuova:

Palazzo Bianco Gallery

An important collection of European, Italian, and Genoese paintings from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries: masterpieces and paintings from Italy (Caravaggio, Veronese), the Flemish school (Hans Memling, Gerard

David, Jean Provost, Rubens, Van Dyck), Holland (Steen), France (Vouet, Lancret) and Spain (Zurbarán, Murillo). The museum also contains a vast collection of the works of Genoese painters from the 16th and 17th centuries.

Palazzo Rosso Gallery

Within the sumptuous confines of the ancient Genoese residence of Brignole-Sale is a gallery flush with paintings, collected by the Rosso family over the course of two centuries. Some of the artists on display include: Veronese, Guercino, Strozzi, Grechetto, Carbone, Van Dyck, Dürer and many others.

National Gallery at Palazzo Spinola

Inside the beautiful surroundings of a 16th century palazzo is a vast exhibit which combines the collections accumulated by the 4 families who lived in the palazzo: Grimaldi, Pallavicino, Doria and Spinola. The gallery boasts works by the major Genoese, Flemish, and European artists, as well as an important ceramics collection. Among the paintings on display are works by Rubens, Van Dyck, Grechetto, Valerio Castello, and many others.

Schedule: Tuesday through Saturday: 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Sunday: 1:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Closed: Mondays.

Information: +39 010 2705300

Palazzo Ducale

In the 14th century, the Palazzo Ducale (Ducal Palace) was the residence of the first Doge of Genoa, Simon Boccanegra. From that time on, it became the Doges' seat of power. In the centuries that followed, it suffered severe damage and underwent many modifications, completely changing its appearance.

Restored in 1992 for the Columbus Celebration, it has become the most important site in Genoa for shows, cultural events, and conventions.

Information: www.palazzoducale.genova.it - "Villa Croce" Museum of contemporary art

This museum contains a collection of more than 3,000 works of abstract art by both Italian and foreign artists.

One of the most memorable permanent collections in the museum is the Maria Cernuschi Ghiringhelli collection. Of particular interest are the core works of the first Italian Abstract painters: Licini, Soldati, Fontana, Magnelli Reggiani, Radice, Ghiringhelli, Munari, and Melotti.

The evolution of abstract art between the 1950s and the 1980s is represented by artists such as Consagra, Manzoni, Agnetti, Icaro, Aricò, Bonalumi, Calderara, Colla, Uncini, Megert, Martini, Olivieri, Nigro, and Verna.

Where: via J. Ruffini 3. Information: Telephone: 010-580069

Museum of Sant'Agostino

This fantastic museum is housed in a 13th century Augustinian convent, made up of a Gothic church and the areas surrounding two cloisters. The Museo di Sant'Agostino is a large museum of Genoese sculpture, a fully-enclosed exhibit displaying pieces from the high Medieval period to the 18th century. These collections include detached frescos and monumental paintings, as well as sections of the museum dedicated exclusively to wood and ivory sculpture.

Schedule: Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Closed Monday.

Information: telephone: +39 010 2511263

Castello D'Albertis - Museum of world cultures

Housed within a neo-Gothic castle which looms over the city of Genoa, this museum is a display of the ethnographic and archeological artifacts collected by Captain D'Albertis during his many voyages to America, Africa, Oceania, and Asia. It is a vast collection of handmade, archeological artifacts, utensils and ritual objects made out of clay and cloth.

Where: from Via Balbi, take the Castello

D'Albertis-Montegalletto elevator

Schedule: October through March: Tuesday to Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. April through September: Tuesday to Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Information: +39 010 2723820

Museum of asian art "E. Chiossone"

This museum exhibits the incredibly rich heritage of Japanese and Oriental art, collected in Japan by Edoardo Chiossone. On display are Japanese works from various periods: painting, arms and armature, enamels, ceramics, porcelains, printing, musical instruments, theater masks, costumes and fabrics, and a rich collection of great sculpture from Japan, China, and Thailand.

Schedule: Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Closed Mondays.

Information: telephone: +39 010 542285

Places and charmes



Genoa: Fort Diamante

Porto Antico

For the Columbus Celebration of 1992, Renzo Piano redesigned the oldest part of the port, with the idea of "restoring the sea to Genoa". Thus was born a large venue for cultural events, conventions, museums, exhibitions, shows, and entertainment.

Tourists and locals both enjoy beautiful walks along the sea, venues for festivals and concerts, the panoramic Bigo elevator, the Città dei Bambini, the ice skating rink, a multi-theatre Cineplex, the Acquario, and so much more.

La Bolla is a glass sphere 20.5 meters in diameter, which holds a miniature rainforest, including native plant and animal life.

The porticos of Sottoripa

A once-controversial area, Via Sottoripa was constructed in 1135, when a verdict handed down by the Comune forced the proprietor of the nearby houses on the port to build a colonnade strictly for commercial activities. Today, it's a must to walk along these porticos to take in that which remains of the ancient

atmosphere of the port: colored shops full of spices and dried fruits, and the old fried fish shops, where you can find Genoese specialties and a lively multiethnic atmosphere. Continue your walk alongside the harbors, and mingle with visitors from exotic lands.

Piazza dei Banchi

The area of i Banchi, behind via Sottoripa, took its name from the "Banchieri", the money-exchanges of the Medieval period, with banks located under the houses surrounding the piazza. This piazza was the commercial center of Genoa until the 19th century, and it was the home of one of the three biggest markets of the city, the grain market. The piazza is dominated by the Loggia dei Mercanti, built at the end of the 16th century, which became in 1855 the home of the first Borsa Merci in Italy.

Via Orefici

Vie degli Orefici is always alive with a colorful and varied crowd. It is blessed with one of the most beautiful portals of the historic center, and by various votive tabernacles.

Don't miss the old Confetteria di Pietro Romanengo, a sweet shop which opened in 1780 and continues to be family-operated through seven generations. This part of the city, noted for the prevalence of precious marble and wood, has its origins in the early 19th century, and has remained intact up until the present day.

From Corso Italia to Boccadasse

Among the Genoese, Corso Italia is a favorite walking route to the sea, made incredibly lively on sunny days by roller skaters, bicyclists, joggers, and those who simply enjoy a nice walk, admiring the splendor of the sea. In the warm season, the Genoese flock to bathing establishments and nightclubs located just 3 kilometers from Corso Italia.

Located in the easternmost part of Corso Italia is Boccadasse, an old fisherman's village, which remains untouched by the tumultuous

development of the city. Boccadasse is truly a peaceful oasis within the city: a small piazza, the tiny port with its fishing boats, a small beach, and a grand panorama from the promontory of Portofino.

The park of Genoa's walls

Located in the hills behind the city of Genoa is a long chain of 17th century walls, enclosing a large part of the city. This defensive structure was fortified in the 18th and 19th centuries by powerful fortresses, one of the vastest systems of fortifications in Europe. Some of the fortifications are well-preserved and open to visitors, allowing gorgeous panoramas of the city:

Fort Sperone: an articulated compound of fortifications on three levels, with officer's quarters, ammunition and other features.

Fort Diamante: at 670 meters high, this fort is the highest in Genoa, and unique with its star-shaped configuration of walls.

Fort Puin: One of the best-preserved forts in Genoa. From here, you can look out over the entire Parco delle Mura.

Fort Castellaccio: the easiest fort to reach, thanks to funicular that leaves from Largo Zecca. There are paths and streets leading out from the Stazione a Monte which lead to the other forts.

Eating and drinking



Genoa: Ravioli

The cuisine of Genoa is based on traditional Mediterranean cooking. It is very rich in ingredients and flavors, and often very labor-intensive. The Ligurians use very simple ingredients, which by themselves seem insignificant, but when combined together, they truly accentuate and bring out each ingredient's individual qualities to produce a final result of superb flavor harmony: mushrooms, pine nuts, walnuts, and a great variety of aromatic herbs.

At the base of all recipes is Ligurian olive oil, delicately flavored and perfect for preparing tasty sauces. The most famous of these is pesto, a sauce made of basil, pine nuts, garlic, olive oil, and parmesan cheese. The best choice to accompany meat dishes is "salsa verde" (green sauce), made of parsley and pine nuts, while salsa di noci (walnut sauce) goes perfectly with pasta and ravioli. Different kinds of focacce and torte salate (a kind of vegetable and cheese pie) are characteristically Genoese treats. These dishes are eaten both as meals and as appetizing snacks: from the simple focaccia

all'olio (focaccia with olive oil) to focaccia filled with cheese, no one can resist the tempting smell of this Ligurian specialty! You can't leave without having tried the farinata, a unique kind of focaccia made from chick-pea flour.

Among the primi piatti (main courses), there are different kinds of pasta, flavored with the famous pesto or with meat juices, for example, troffie, trenette, and taglierini. One must-try from Ligurian cuisine is pansotti, huge ravioli stuffed with vegetables and herbs, and excellent with walnut sauce.

Among the various meat dishes, one of the most distinctive is tomaselle, veal roulades filled with meat, eggs, and aromatic herbs. Don't forget to try lamb stew with carciofi (artichokes). One quintessentially Genoese dish is the cima, a pocket of pancetta stuffed with various ingredients, then served cold, in slices. Mushrooms are featured in the cuisine of the Ligurian hinterlands, flavoring meat dishes and complementing fish dishes as well.

Fish truly occupies an honored place on the menus of Genoese restaurants. A true masterpiece of Ligurian cuisine is the cappon magro: a very elaborate dish made of various kinds of fish and boiled vegetables, and seasoned with a sauce of herbs and pine nuts.

Other popular recipes are the fritto misto (mixed deep-fried seafood), l'insalata di pesce (seafood salad), triglie (mullet) alle genovesi, stoccafisso in agrodolce (cod in sweet and sour sauce), with pine nuts and raisins. Mussels are omnipresent, alla marinara or stuffed with meat, cheese, eggs, or marjoram. Finally, the queen of the Ligurian sea; the anchovy, which can be eaten cold, but is best when stuffed.

Among the desserts, one of the most distinctive is "pandolce", a treat found on every table at Christmastime. Genoa is famous for its pastries: Canestrelli, amaretti, Baci di Dama (little walnut pastries), and Gobeletti, little short breads filled with quince jam.

Shopping



Genoa: Galleria Mazzini

The main shopping corridors of Genoa are the streets that radiate out from Piazza De Ferrasi. The best boutiques and fashionable shops are found on via XX Settembre, via Roma, and in the elegant Galleria Mazzini.

The system of alleyways offers a huge selection of starting points for every kind of shopping: the porticos of Sottoripa, in Porto Vecchio, have maintained the atmosphere of an old bazaar in the days when ships loaded with every kind of merchandise used to dock here: quaint shops selling spices, dried fruits, and the famous fried fish shops.

Via San Luca and via Orefici feature shops with clothing and shoes available at attractive prices. Making your way to the city center by way of via Orefici and via Luccoli brings you across little shops exemplifying the spirit of old Genoa, with its artisan studios and antique shops. Don't miss the old pastry shop Pietro Romanengo fu Stefano. This area originates from the beginning of the 19th century and has remained intact up until the

present day. Here you can find Queen Elena of Savoy's famous confectionary treat, Pistachio Torrone.

For the gourmet, we advise a stroll between Via San Vincenzo and Via Colombo, near Brignole Station, where you can explore a variety of bakeries, pastry shops, and food specialty shops. Not far from here is the Mercato Orientale (Oriental Market) -- enter from via Galata and via XX Settembre. This covered market is a noisy explosion of people, colors, and smells, a fabulous place to stock up on olives, herbs, fruits, and other Ligurian products (open Monday through Saturday, closed Wednesday afternoon).

Curiosities: the English word "jeans" is a mangling of the word "Gênes", which is the French word for "Genoa". In times past, denim, a very strong and economical cloth, was used to make the aprons worn by port laborers.

Hotels and lodgings



Genoa: Porta Siberia

Genoa offers a wide selection of lodgings at every level. According to your needs and your budget, you can choose from among the many 1 to 4 star hotels, or try a comfortable bed-and-breakfast.

If you prefer the comfort of staying in the city with all its conveniences, choose from one of the many hotels in Genoa; for a less formal alternative, there are many bed and breakfasts or guest houses throughout the city.

If you seek contact with nature, your only problem will be in making a decision: there is an incredible amount of agritourism in the province of Genoa; or you can relive the charm of ancient times by opting for an historic residence in Genoa.

Events



Genoa: Gezmatz Festival

Holy Week. From the previous Thursday to Holy Friday the traditional ritual processions of Holy Week take place in the historic center of the city. The most impressive is the evening procession of Giovedì Santo (Holy Thursday). During this time, the Genoese carry on the tradition of entering churches (the number of churches visited must always be an odd number) in the historic center to visit the "Sepolcri", altars richly decorated for the occasion.

Euroflora - end of April, every 5 years. This is the most important Italian flower nursery exposition (800 exhibitors), attracting more than 500,000 visitors over the 11 days of the exposition. It's a fantastic voyage through the colors, shapes, and scents of plants and flowers from every corner of Italy and the world. The next expo is scheduled for 2011.

Palio delle Antiche Repubbliche Marinare - in June. Since 1955, this race has evoked the ancient rivalry between the Medieval maritime cities that once dominated the

Mediterranean: Genoa, Amalfi, Pisa, and Genoa. The boats are identical in type, each with 8 rowers, and differentiated only by color and insignia. The competition takes place every year, rotating among each of the four cities in turn. In 2008, the event will return to Genoa.

Suq a Genova - in June, at the Porto Antico. Suq a Genova is a 10-day festival of multiethnic cultures in a unique setting. It has an exotic market, classes in ethnic dance and cuisine, workshops for kids, and best of all, shows and literary events.

International Poetry Festival - in June. This is the principal Italian poetry festival (Genoa and the city of Montale): packed with meetings, lectures, performances and conferences, and held in impressive locations around Genoa. Well-known names and new voices participate in poetry from around the world, with a program that tends more toward experimentation than tradition.

San Giovanni Battista. June 24 marks the beginning of the celebrations in honor of Genoa's patron saint: Saint John the Baptist. On the eve of the festival, Genoa comes alive with games in the piazzas and fireworks. On the day of the 24th, a solemn procession begins from the Cathedral to the Porto Antico, where the Cardinal blesses the sea with relics of the saint.

Goa Boa Festival - starting in July. The biggest rock and hip hop festival in Liguria. The cast of Goa Boa is always large and incredibly varied -- three days of concerts with high-profile performers, Italian and international.

Gezmatz Festival - end of July. A jazz improvisation festival. These concerts are held at the Arena del Mare, on the Piazza di Genoa sul Mediterraneo, which was designed and built by Renzo Piano.

Festival Musicale del Mediterraneo between July and August.

An incredible gathering, bringing together popular music and traditions, and an abundance of shows and concerts from different parts of the world. Each year the event is centered on a specific theme.

The concerts are held in the Porto Antico in Genoa, near the Aquarium.

Festival teatrale "In Una Notte d'Estate" - between July and August.

The piazza San Matteo and the ancient cloister in the heart of the historic city center are the setting for this rich theatrical program, set around a different theme each year.

Festa dell'Unità Every year, between the end of August and September, the Fiera del Mare di Genoa hosts the traditional festival of the Italian Left.

This event is well-known among the Genoese, and its main strength is in its music and performances.

A satisfying program of concerts, theatrical shows, children's entertainment, ballo liscio (ballroom dancing)...

Make sure not to miss the politics and culture area, with exhibits, conferences, and a substantial schedule of films.

La Paganiniana - in October. This is a revue of concerts and other events centered on the most celebrated Genoese violinist in history: Niccolò Paganini.

Each year, the biggest international names in violin take part.

Genoa Boat Show - in October. This is the most important exposition in the city: displayed on 290 thousand square meters are boats, accessories, instrumentation, clothing, and everything that makes the nautical world go 'round.

More than 400 ships are displayed in the water, including 50 superyachts.

Science Festival - end of October. Over the last several years, Genoa, in collaboration with important European scientific institutes, inaugurated a grand festival dedicated to scientific knowledge, which has been a major success with the public. The festival includes around 250 events in 70 locations. This rich and varied program offers a 360 degree exploration of the world of science: interactive displays, workshops, conferences, shows, performances, special events and an incredible number of laboratories.

Circumnavigando. Festival of Clowns - in December. A huge festival dedicated to Nouveau Cirque and the art of the clown. Artists from around the world inhabit the piazzas of the historic city center, making passersby part of their urban theatre performances.

Also scheduled are shows in a huge circular tent set up at the Porto Antico.

La Dolce Vita



Genoa: the old port by night

It's easy to go out and enjoy yourself in Genoa. There is an abundance of restaurants and eating establishments in the historical city center to satisfy every taste, from traditional Ligurian cuisine to more exotic ethnic and fusion culinary creations. In addition, the musical scene is always in a ferment, not to mention the summertime, when the city explodes into festivals and the seaside areas fill up with crowds.

Nozio recommends 4 areas where you can spend just the cocktail hour, or the entire evening:

Near the Piazza De Ferrarsi, there is a excellent selection of trattorias, restaurants and lounge bars in the area of via San Lorenzo, Piazza delle Erbe, Piazza San Donato and via Ravecca.

for a more "alternative" atmosphere, find your way to the area around via Garibaldi, on via Maddalena and all the adjacent alleyways.

The third alternative is still in the historic city center -- Porto Antico (the old port): here

you will find the most "modern" version of Genoa: the multi-screen Cineplex, ice skating rink and abundant shops, restaurants and the most fashionable nightclubs, like the Fronte del Porto or the Banano Tsunami.

Corso Italia: many destinations for cocktails, dinner, and after-dinner along the promenade: Mako, BBQ, Mae Ma, Mucca Bar, or some romantic little restaurant at Boccadasse.

Theatre: the Teatro Carlo Felice is Genoa's temple of classical music, opera, and ballet. For spoken-word theatre, there are many other theatres in Genoa with programs ranging from the classics to experimental theatre.

To listen to good live music in Genoa, try these excellent venues: for the world of jazz, try the Louisiana Jazz Club and the Borgoclub. For rock, pop, and indie, go to the Madeleine Cafe or the Senhor do Bonfim (at Genova Nervi).

A special day



Genoa: marine town of Nervi

Here we suggest some two day-trip itineraries for exploring the immediate surroundings of Genoa. At the end of your trip, you can make a reservation in a Genoese hotel of your liking, and enjoy a real Genoese evening marked by good food and the joy of being alive, without having to worry about getting back to the place you started from.

The first itinerary

This itinerary takes you to Nervi, the picturesque marine town of ancient origins, just to the east of Genoa. From the city center, Nervi is reachable by trains leaving frequently from Piazza Principe or Brignole, or by bus 15 or 17.

Our point of departure is Nervi's bijoux harbor. The harbor is the historic heart of the town, with its lively-colored houses, little beaches, and small boats arranged on the quay between two rock spurs.

From the marina begins the romantic Anita Garibaldi path, which extends for two

kilometers out to the cliffs above the sea, set among agave plants, olive and tamarisk trees. The scenery is spectacular, with a view extending along the coast all the way out to the promontory of Portofino. In fair weather, you can relax outside, enjoying the villas surrounded by olive trees and lawns, and perhaps enjoy a luncheon against the backdrop of a tranquil panorama.

Toward the end of the path, right alongside the famous Nervi parks, you will see a large, 10-hectare green swathe, created from the joining of the gardens of the Villa Grimaldi, Villa Serra, and Villa Groppallo. It's a marvelous stroll along the paths among large English meadows, maritime pine trees, exotic plants and a rose garden, in flower from April to November.

Villa Serra, from the 17th century, houses the Galleria di Arte Moderna, with works by Italian artists from the 1800's and 1900's. Nearby is the splendid Villa Grimaldi Fassio, which houses an art collection by the Frugone brothers.

The second itinerary

This itinerary takes you to the charming little towns of the Genoese valley by way of the Genova-Casella train, a narrow-gauge railway which has run a limited schedule since 1929. The departure station is located in the high region of Genoa, on Piazza Manin (from the city center, take bus 33 or 34).

The train climbs up the inside of the valley, offering a lovely view of the cimiterio monumentale (monumental cemetery) of Staglieno. Above you loom the shapes of the Sperone, Puin, and Diamante Forts. Getting off at Campi, you can hike your way to the Forts of Genoa.

Continuing by train, you will climb into the mountains of the hinterlands, zigzagging between blooming chestnut trees and

meadows; you'll also pass by some picturesque mountain villages. Among these villages, Sant'Olcese is famous for its artisanal salami. Getting off at the S. Olcese Chiesa station, you can visit the Salumificio Parodi (Parodi Salami Factory; for reservations call 010 709827 or 010 709945), which has produced traditional Sant'Olcese salami for more than 10 years.

The last stop on the railway is Casella, where it's worthwhile to take a walk through the piazza and admire the 16th century castle of the Fieschi. In front of the station, train passengers can rent a mountain bike and pedal through the greenery of the wild and unspoiled Alta Valle Scrivia.

For information: www.ferroviagenovacasella.it

The western Riviera



Riviera delle Palme: the beach in Varigotti

This itinerary takes you southwest to explore the Riviera della Palme (Palms Riviera), a long coastline measuring over 100 kilometers, extending west from Genoa out to Alassio. For several decades, this tract of coastline has been a tourist center for sunbathing and swimming; the consistently mild climate makes it enjoyable to visit this area even out of season, thereby avoiding the summer crowds.

How to get there: all the cities along the Riviera are easily reachable by train from Genoa, or by car by way of the autostrada A10 Genova-Ventimiglia. However, the best way to get there is by taking the SP 1 coastal road, where you can enjoy the tranquil panorama of the coastline.

This itinerary requires at least two days. There are a great number of hotels on the Riviera delle Palme, from 4-star hotels to family-owned pensiones, but if you want something different, there is also an excellent selection of bed and breakfasts on the Riviera

delle Palme. For those who wish to stay a bit longer, one excellent idea is to rent an apartment in one of the residences of Riviera delle Palme.

Albissola

This is a fashionable sunbathing and swimming spot, but it is also famous for its traditional production of polychrome ceramics. Take a walk along the Lungomare degli Artisti, paved with a ceramic-tile mosaic, then take a peek at the artisanal shops scattered among the alleyways of the old town, Albissola Superiore. You can also visit the Villa Gavotti, a sumptuous noble residence surrounded by a beautiful garden.

Bergeggi

This little place is set within one of the most beautiful sections of the Riviera delle Palme. Year after year, Bergeggi has earned the European Blue Flag award for the quality of its beaches.

Between Bergeggi and Spotorno extends the Bergeggi natural reserve: the cliffs open up to lovely little beaches, surrounded by Mediterranean scrub.

Noli

A marine town of ancient origins, Noli contains a marvelous historic city center, surrounded by walls and dominated by castle ruins. A walk through the town is a delight for the eyes: alleyways, arcades, lively little piazzas, medieval houses and the famous tower houses. At one time there were 82 tower houses; today only 8 remain.

Varigotti

This picturesque town faces onto the Baia dei Saraceni (Saracen Bay). Immediately eye-catching are its red, yellow, and ochre colored-houses along the beach. Its alleyways inspired the stories of Hemingway and Cesare Pavese. Here the sea is one of the most beautiful along the Riviera.

Finale Ligure

This city was formed from the union of three towns: Pia, Maria, and Borgo. Final Marina is a popular sunbathing and swimming area with a lovely 18th century historic center. Final Borgo, which is located closer inland, has preserved intact the look of the medieval town.

Entering the walls of the city opens up a world of palazzos and antique churches; be sure to visit the beautiful Chiesa di San Biagio and the former convent of Saint Caterina, today a city museum.

Pietra Ligure

Pietra Ligure has one of the most lovely paths to the sea in the Liguria, as well as modern bathing establishments. Behind the beach, Pietra hides an ancient city center with a medieval section -- Borgo Vecchio -- and a renaissance section -- Borgo Nuovo, with an airy and elegant look. Along the seashore are the antique naval shipyards, still in use today.

Not far from here, rising into the valley from Borghetto S. Spirito, is Tirano, where you can find the complex of the Grotte di Toirano. These are considered to be among the ten most beautiful grottos in Italy.

Albenga

The "city of towers" is the most important historic city center in the entire Riviera di Ponente. In its historic center, where you can see the characteristic plan of the Roman castrum, there are numerous monuments of the Medieval and Renaissance eras. The Piazza San Michele is a fabulous concentration of civil and religious architecture. Don't forget to visit the Romanesque Cathedral and the Paleo-Christian baptistry.

Albenga also offers several interesting museums: located in the Palazzo Peloso-Cepolla is the Roman Ship Museum where you can find the remains of the biggest Roman ship ever uncovered (60 meters in length).

Laigueglia

The itinerary concludes shortly after Alassio with a little secret: Laigueglia. This is an ancient marine town surrounded by an amphitheatre of lovely hills sloping toward the sea. This is one of the most poetic places on the Riviera della Palme for its location and design. At the end of June, Laigueglia hosts an important jazz and percussion festival: Laigueglia Jazz & PercFest.



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