



**LIGURIA**  
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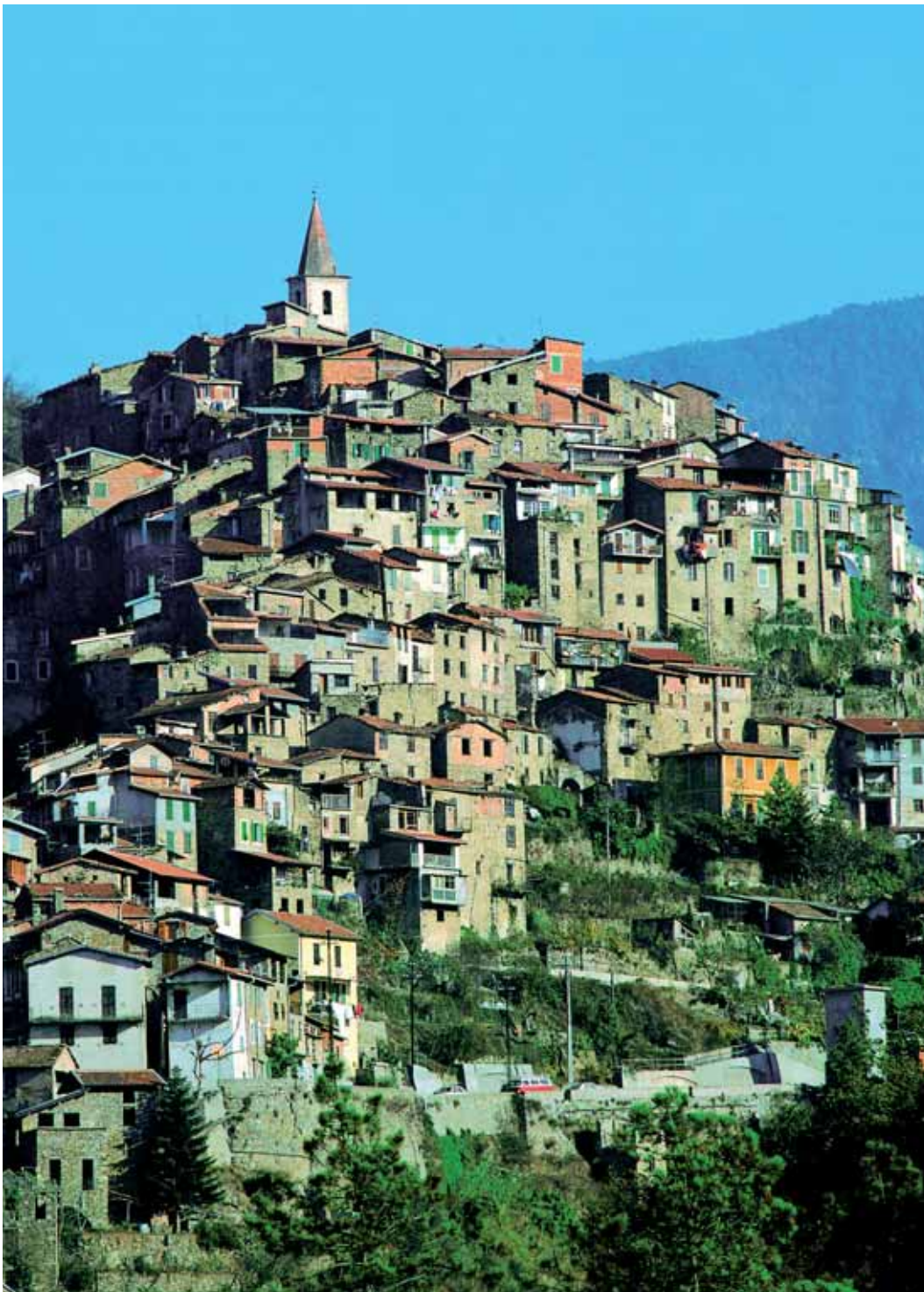
-  Seaside emotions
-  Art Settings
-  **History Trail**
-  Scents and flavours
-  Sports itineraries
-  A sea of gardens

A short walk along the edge of time among the small historic towns of Ligurian memory.



**Publishing Info**

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## Riviera dei Fiori.

Green expanse and sea, a wonderful landscape entwined with history and ancient tradition, stretches from the coast towards the inland territory through an itinerary which leads back to the origins of this land. Experience Liguria, experience a journey across a territory rich in magical views, almost a fairy tale.

As in the best fairy tales, this itinerary tells of witches and stakes, of mysterious artists reviving old abandoned towns, tales of legends about the preparation of traditional dishes, of little alleys where houses are so close to one another they almost seem to touch, and it also tells of enchanted lands. And then of battles between Saracens and the proud people of Liguria, through hidden paths and sandy expanses.



Sanremo - Historic Centre "La Pigna" - Square "Piazza dei Dolori"



Dolceacqua

**Dolceacqua**, an enchanting little village starts from the far end of the Riviera dei Fiori - the perfect landscape for a journey back in time to the very origin of ancient traditions such as the preparation of **Michetta** (traditional cake) and the ancient “jus primae noctis”, revisited in a very popular festival, every 15th August. A hidden itinerary along the meandering alleys of the little town leads you to the spectacular Doria Castle that overlooks the town and the valley. Here you can have a fine glass of **Rossese** - DOC labelled wine, made from the vineyards of this land.

Along the Nervia Valley another little jewel is hidden in the mountains, with its bell tower standing out from the houses.

The picturesque medieval little town of **Apricale** dominates the winding road climbing up the valley. Take a walk among its little alleys to reach the wonderful Lucertola Castle and the Theatre Gallery, where you can admire the wonderful stage design of Emanuele Luzzati during the summer Festival **E le stelle stanno a guardare** (while stars are watching).

If you want to make the best of your visit, and enjoy some gastronomic specialities, the best time of the year to arrive here is the month of September, when you can join in the festivities of the **Festival of the Pansarola**, a traditional fried pastry served with hot zabaglione - delicious for those who have a sweet tooth!

Behind the city of Sanremo, sits a gem, **Bussana Vecchia** the artists' village, with its unique history. At the end of the 19th century a violent earthquake destroyed part of the town, forcing the inhabitants to leave their homes. For sixty years, Bussana was a ghost town. Then finally it was revived by artists who decided to open their ateliers there. It's very nice to browse among craftsman shops and works of art. Alternatively you can live the magical atmosphere of this little town joining some of the many events on stage all year .

Bussana Vecchia



**Triora**, little town in the Argentina Valley has a “noir” charm. It is also known as the **Witches Town** after a famous witchcraft trial in 1587. In Triora everything, in every single corner, recalls witches. However, the town is not just gnomes, elves, and esoteric or supernatural events, you can also find craftsman workshops and nice stores with plenty of traditional specialities on offer, a real joy for the palate, like cheese, chocolates (**Witch's Kiss** and **Devil's Balls**), jam, and elixirs, not to mention the famous **Bread of Triora**, traditionally cooked in a wood-oven on a bed of chestnut leaves.

You'll have to stop for a relaxing break in the Spa resort of **Pigna**, a little treasure built with a very peculiar architectural style, that evokes far away myths and traditional Ligurian stories of health and wellness. For those who love strong flavours, a stop at **Badalucco** is a must, better if in the middle of September, with its gastronomic festival where you can taste the original dried cod recipe called **Stoccafisso alla Badalucchese** - a tradition of this little town - that you can taste at its best with **taggiasche** olives.



Mendatica

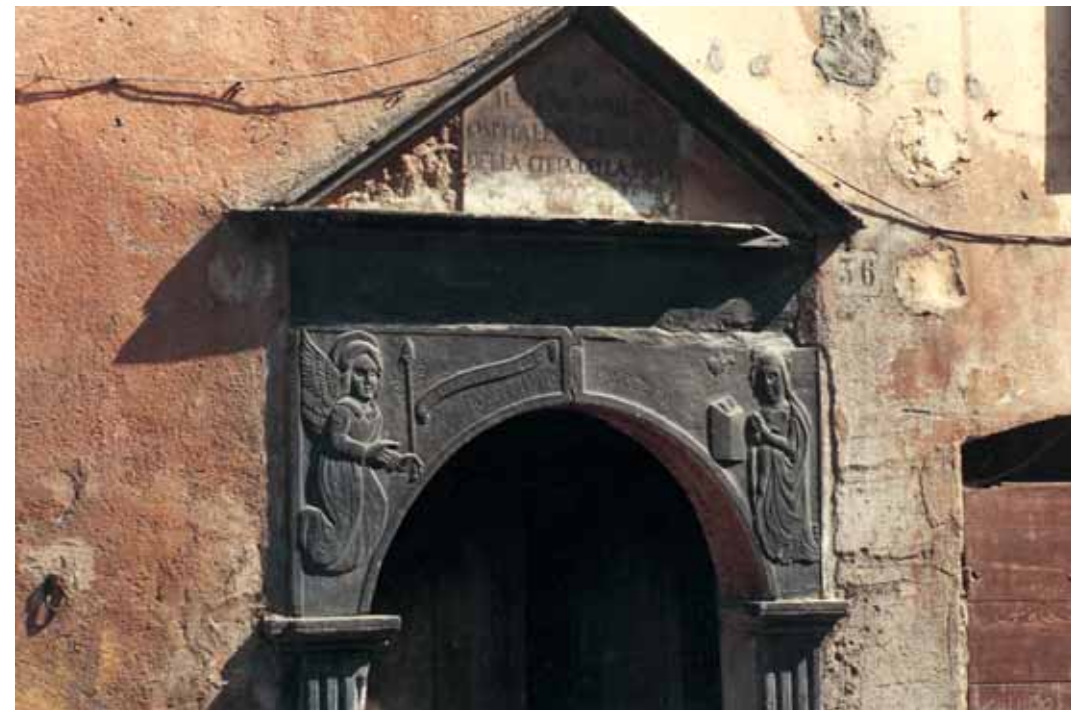
While following this gastronomic itinerary you should stop in the little town of **Mendatica**, famous for the much appreciated **white cuisine** closely linked to the mountain traditions and to the ritual of transhumance. This gastronomic culture brings the tasty malga cheese to your table. And among the most interesting recipes, the **Sciumette** are spoonfuls of whipped egg whites and sugar cooked in boiling milk.

Along the journey through the Crosia Valley you will find **Perinaldo**. An excellent opportunity for you to explore the stars

from the famous Observatory named after Gian Domenico Cassini, an important 17th century astronomer who was born here and was called by Louis XIV of France to work at the Palace of Versailles.

**Pieve di Tecò**, the medieval little town immersed in nature and located between the two regions of Liguria and Piemonte, has the strong smell and vivid colours of lavender. Another characteristic product of this area is the famous **Col di Nava soap** - made from the fragrant flower so easily found along the narrow streets of the Arroscia Valley villages.

Pieve di Tecò





If you start to miss the sea, you can visit the town of **Cervo**, a pleasant break especially for the music enthusiasts: between July and August, you can enjoy the famous **International Festival of Chamber Music**.

At this time the Church of the Corallini courtyard, made of the characteristic white and black sea pebbles, turns into a magnificent stage for gentle melodies performed in the natural setting offered by the sea and the stars.

Heading towards **Taggia**, this wonderful little town perched above the sea unveils the secret of the name of the most famous Ligurian olives - **taggiasche**: according to the legend, Benedictine Monks planted this cultivar in the 12th century and started to produce an **Extra Virgin Olive Oil** with an aroma unique in its kind.

## Riviera delle Palme.

**Riviera delle Palme** means long sandy beaches and seaside fun for the whole family, but not only... you can find an artistic hinterland with plenty of culture, ancient traditions, and tasty specialities!



Borgio Verezzi



Sassello

While travelling across the region don't miss out on the opportunity to taste a wide variety of traditional dishes: discover the sweet and savoury specialities of this side of Liguria.

If you are travelling in October, we suggest a stop at **Calizzano** to enjoy **Funghinpiazza**, the Mushroom Festival, especially dedicated to porcini. A tasty chance for all food lovers to get to know the cuisine and the recipes dedicated to this precious ingredient.

Our ideal itinerary across the jewels of the Ligurian hinterland leads to the slopes of the Apennines among the arcades of the little town of **Millesimo**.

Here in September the **Truffle National Festival** takes place, the pride of the inhabitants of the Bormida Valley. If you don't want to miss the rich traditions of these lands, in the green Ligurian mountains, you should visit the **Glass Museum** in the town of **Altare**, where glass masterpieces are on display, along with a clear explanation of the

development and the uniqueness of the ancient craftsman workshops.

Not far from here, the little town of **Sassello** is worth a gastronomic stop. Here in fact you will find the famous sweets named after the town, the renowned **Amaretti** of Sassello. These soft almond treats, are celebrated in the month of September in a Festival called **Love Amaretto**. You can be sure you'll love them at first bite!





Castelvecchio di Rocca Barbena

The wonderful historic centre of **Albenga** shows examples of open-air art: the main square, Piazza S. Michele, is the heart of the city with the Cathedral and its bell tower, considered one of the most valuable late Gothic monuments in the region. A few steps away, the decagonal shaped Baptistery still remains intact since the 5th century.

THIS town is unique in Liguria for the distinctive presence of four stately medieval towers that stand out against the skies - a very impressive view. You can roam across the alleys looking for unexpected beauties, or you may browse around the coloured craftsman workshops and the stores selling traditional products. In the famous plain of Albenga you can discover produce like the **trumpet courgette** and the **ox heart beef tomatoes** a tasty way to go back to nature and its authentic flavours.

Once you've left Albenga and its sea, heading towards other historic centres, you can follow a circular itinerary through the flourishing nature of the Mediterranean

maquis, where you will encounter little towns that evoke ancient fairy tales. Here you can also try delicious recipes that reflect the culinary tradition of these lands. **Zuccarello** is the first town along the way: a true bounce-back in the Medieval Times, it is one of the extremely rare little towns left almost intact since their foundation; a wonderful place full of charm, with its ruins, hidden spots, and green nature. A family day out and a nice experience for those who wish to learn and try ancient amusements, is offered by "**Toyland**" in **Castelvecchio di Rocca Barbena**, a festival where you can listen to original fairy tales and play group games: a pleasant way to satisfy your children's curiosity in the first weekend of June.

This little town on the mountains is dominated by its ancient stronghold, and, while walking around the alleys of its historic centre, you will have the opportunity to try dishes like **Rabbit Steccadò**, a traditional Ligurian recipe, well seasoned with local herbs.



A tour to **Colletta di Castelbianco** could be quite interesting. Thanks to a project of architectural upgrading, each single stone house of this little medieval town has been provided with an internet connection.

**Cherry** lovers will be happy to know that delicious cherries are used to produce invaluable jams here. In a landscape surrounded by white limestone rocks, this little town hidden in the wonderful Rio Pennavaira Valley is a real treasure.

Passing from the mountain heights to the depths of the earth - **Toirano** is a wonderful journey through prehistory, where you can discover signs of the primitive inhabitants of these lands. Parents and children will enjoy a breathtaking tour around the famous caves of Toirano. Stalactites and stalagmites have peculiar shapes and unique colours. Once you come back to the sunlight you can roam around the enchanting alleys of this town, also famous for the **Festival of Gunbi** (dialect term for oil mills) - a very good chance to access private wine cellars which become taverns, offering a wide range of local products and eating areas where you will find so many specialities, from **michettin** (fried bread), to bruschettas with **green and black olives'** paste, **anchovies, bruss** and much more.

Colletta di Castelbianco

In summer nights you can enjoy magical theatre performances under the stars offered by the open air theatre of **Borgio Verezzi**. A nice walk from the inland views to the coastal landscapes will turn your evening promenade into a pleasant cultural experience.

**Finalborgo** is a nice little town, enclosed in well preserved walls with semi-circular towers.

The characteristic features of this place are its net of perpendicular roads, the Renaissance and Baroque buildings, the Basilica of San Biagio, the complex of Santa Caterina, Fort San Giovanni and the Gavone Castle. If you'd like to have a tasty break you can stop in one of the characteristic restaurants in the city centre, where you can try a pasta dish like **ravioli di boragine**, little hand-made pastry squares stuffed with local greens.

For another dip into history, you can stop in the ancient Maritime Republic of **Noli**, surrounded by high walls that lead to the Castle. A summer festival celebrates the legend according to which the Saracen attack to the city was avoided by the inhabitants who lit fire pyres on the beach. As the enemy saw the flames apparently destroying the city, they did not even want to stop and conquer it. Food lovers should taste the delicious **cicciarelli**, fried little fish, well deserved after an enthralling itinerary and long walks.



## Tigullio and Genovesato.

Travelling around the Ligurian capital city, you'll find new places to explore. The adventure continues in the inland areas and along the Riviera.

You can start from Genoa, where the city offers a wonderful sea spot where fishermen's tradition still lives, among boats, nets, fish and trucks: **Bocadasse**.

A picturesque little town set among the cliffs, right in the middle of the city, where you can take a breathtaking walk to the far end - called Capo Santa Chiara - and back, and taste dishes prepared with the fish catch from the previous night, or maybe try the characteristic **Genoise Focaccia**.



Camogli



Valle d'Aveto

An ancient tradition is revived in **Campo Ligure** with the characteristic working of filigree. In the shops of this delicious little town in the Genoese inland masters skilled in the working of precious golden and silver threads are at work. The Stura Valley, famous for its pastures, offers a tasty experience to the visitors, with local cheese and milk tasting: a bounce back in time, to a simpler lifestyle. And if you are

serious about experiencing the past, you can't miss the **Tiglieto** Abbey, a Romanesque building, located in a cool valley among the sweet-smelling lindens (bot. Tilia) from which the abbey derived its name. And for a pleasant end to your visit, wild berries, honey, and goat cheese are simple but rich flavours for the pleasure of your palate.

At Christmas time the wonderful live nativity of **Pentema** is an unmissable chance to experience a performance in traditional costumes that captures the spirit of Christmas in the unique setting of a medieval little town! In the nearby area, you can visit the ancient stone ruins of the Stone Castle of **Vobbia**, which was built along the Salt Road.

Stone Castle of Vobbia



An interesting tour among sports, culture, and relaxation is what **Santo Stefano d'Aveto** has to offer.

This is the only little town located on the mountains, while being only 20 km away from the seaside. A spectacular combination of pine groves, mountain lakes, and high summits.

The narrow alleys and astonishing views from the town are complimented, in the surrounding area, by pastures and wide beechwoods that guarantee refreshing summers and give you the opportunity to practice active sports during your holiday. And in the snowy winters, you can walk along the many itineraries, wearing snowshoes or cross-country skis, to see Monviso and Monte Rosa, beyond the Po Valley.





*Abbey of San Fruttuoso di Camogli*

You simply can't miss the famous little sea town of **Camogli**. Here you can walk among coloured boats where the fishermen mend their nets, immersed in the nice smell of focaccia. This spot of Liguria is perfect for winter or summer excursions, and from here you can also easily reach the beautiful harbour by the Abbey of **San Fruttuoso di Camogli**. A real gem along the coast, and a good excuse for a pleasant fish meal after a nice boat tour.

To the east is the little "caruggio" of **Chiavari**, a street famous for its medieval colonnade, and ideal for shopping too. All year round you can take a walk in this warm climate, and maybe stop in the elegant patisseries decorated in Liberty Style, that give the city a very charming touch.

Finally, those who would like to visit one of the world famous Ligurian little towns can not miss **Portofino**.

You can walk or drive, through beautiful **Santa Margherita Ligure** and **Paraggi**, along the wooden promenade recently built above the sea. Portofino is immersed in a dream setting, shopping here is a luxury. And you'll easily meet celebrities along the streets and see dream yachts in the background...

*Portofino*



## Cinque Terre and Golfo dei Poeti.

If you continue towards the eastern end of Liguria, in the area of **Cinque Terre** and **Golfo dei Poeti**, you will find various types of little towns, immersed in vivid green spots or reflecting off the blue sea.

**Brugnato** and **Castelnuovo Magra**, are two wonderful treasures where you can visit spectacular spots. Thanks to their cultural heritage and tradition they have been listed among the **Most Beautiful Italian Little Towns**.



On the occasion of the traditional celebrations of Corpus Domini, the little town of **Brugnato**, goes back in time with its **Corpus Domini Infiorata** - a triumph of magnificent flower decorations that fill the town alleys with intense fragrances.

**Castelnuovo Magra** is well known for its production of salami, and in particular of the **Castelnovese Ham**, a real delicacy served in the little restaurants of this area. A tourist attraction of this town is also the traditional **Procession of the Recollection**, which takes place every last Saturday of August, and recalls the visit of the world famous poet Dante Alighieri on the occasion of the signature of the peace treaty between the Bishops of Luni and the Malaspina Marquises.

All nature lovers will appreciate the **Botanical Garden of Montemarcello**, a wonderful garden showing the characteristic features of the Caprione promontory and of the Mediterranean in general. A cultural visit that will allow you to learn about scientific curiosities of this varied territory.





The itinerary becomes “organic” when you start crossing Valle del Biologico, located in the Upper part of the Vara Valley in the direction of **Varese Ligure**, the so called “**round little town**” due to the characteristic layout of the houses radiating off the main square. This town, and the entire valley, are famous as they have chosen to continue producing their traditional products, with an environmental friendly approach. Here you can taste organic **meat** and **cheese**, the pride of all the farmers of the valley.

Varese Ligure



Porto Venere

On the coast, little towns like the small harbour of **Porto Venere** can be a special destination for a day trip, or the base for a long relaxing holiday, far from the city crowd - a step back to an ancient maritime life style! The crystal clear waters of **Tellaro**, can not be missed!

You will enjoy a tour among wonderful sandy bays hidden among the rocks and only accessible from the sea. An adventure for sea lovers who will discover secluded spots in close contact with nature.



Sarzana

Heading towards the far eastern side of the region you will reach **Lerici**, with its enchanted gulf dominated by the San Giorgio Castle. Here cultural events, festivals and concerts are constantly offered. Behind the sea, almost in the Luni area, the city of **Sarzana** with its stately **Stronghold of Firmafede**, is a wonderful place where you can enjoy a well-deserved prize after this long journey across our Ligurian little towns. A traditional delicacy of these places is **spungata**, a baked cake stuffed with jam, dried fruit, raisins and spices.

These are the last two destinations of our itinerary through history, culture, art, legends, and strong emotions. Breathtaking landscapes, where the beauty of the sea is complimented by the varied enchanting inland territory, with its gentle Mediterranean maquis hills, and its inaccessible rocks which falls sheer to the sea. **Traces of history intertwined with a fine gastronomic tradition. An enchanting itinerary in search of forgotten flavours and fantastic spots!**



*Albenga - Savona*

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