



HEDONISTIC HIKING

The Jewels of Piedmont – 8 Days

A Celebration of Slow Food

Let your taste buds do the walking as we immerse you in the enogastronomic wonders of northwest Italy. Barolo wine, the legendary white truffle of Alba, porcini mushrooms, cured meats and hand-crafted cheeses. Beautiful hotels, stunning walks, fascinating history and culture plus exceptional food and wines. Superb and varied walking: Alpine pastures teeming with wildflowers in Spring, pristine lakes surrounded by mountains, pretty vineyards and delightful villages. A slow-paced itinerary staying in two delightful hotels. Opportunities to meet with chefs, winemakers and local producers.



Slow Food is a non-profit, eco-gastronomic member-supported organization that was founded in 1989 to counteract fast food and fast life, the disappearance of local food traditions and people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from, how it tastes and how our food choices affect the rest of the world

What is included?

- **7 night's accommodation** in 2 luxury hotels
- **Two experienced and knowledgeable guides** who will look after your every need and bring this stunning area to life
- **All meals including wine.**
- **Gourmet picnic lunches** each day and snacks en route
- Dinner in a variety of **superb restaurants.**
- **Support vehicle**, enabling you to walk as little or as much of the trail as you please
- **Transport to/from Turin** at start and end of holiday. We can also arrange transfers to/from Milan for those on intercontinental flights.
- Comprehensive **pre-trip information.**



"It was truly a celebration of Slow Food. The most magnificent foods I've ever tasted" A.B October 2008

Itinerary

The tour starts and ends in the elegant regional capital of **Turin**, home to the 2006 Winter Olympics.

Day 1

Meet Turin Airport at 1130am or Turin Central Station at 1230pm. Drive (1.5 hours) to the medieval town of Saluzzo, the artistic jewel of Piedmont nestled at the foot of Monviso (3841m). En route we stop to visit Racconigi, the summer palace of the Royal House of Savoy. We spend the next 4 nights in a very comfortable, and peaceful, restored Cascina (farmhouse), Antico Podere Propano, just on the edge of the town. Time to settle in before a welcome drink followed by dinner in a local restaurant.



Day 2



In the morning a gentle walk along quiet country lanes and farm tracks leads us to the 12th century Cistercian abbey at Staffarda. After a picnic lunch we drive to Manta and enjoy a fascinating tour of the 13th century Castle with its delightful frescoes. Optional walk back to Saluzzo in the afternoon, or return to the hotel by van. (7km/4.4miles + 7.3km/4.6miles). Fabulous dinner at the Abbey of Staffarda.

Day 3

A beautiful drive up the fertile Po valley takes us to the foot of Monviso and the pristine source of the river at 2020m. From a mountain refuge we follow good trails up past mountain lakes with impressive views of Monviso and the Ligurian Alps. Time to relax in the afternoon. (6.3km/4miles. Total ascent 360m). Time to explore the medieval town of Saluzzo before dinner in a local restaurant.



Day 4



We drive to the Colle di Sampeyre at 2285m from where we descend through open meadows, full of wildflowers in spring, to the 15th century church of Elva with its outstanding frescoes. Mountain and woodland tracks pass through dramatic scenery which is dotted with hamlets suspended in time and lead us down to the pretty Maira valley. (16.4km/10.4miles). We are welcomed for dinner at a farm in the hills near Saluzzo.

Day 5



A short drive takes us to the pretty medieval town of Cherasco - famous for its many churches, chocolates ... and snails. Continue to La Morra where we indulge in a leisurely lunch at an award-winning restaurant with views over the vineyards. We stay for 3 nights at the charming Corte Gondina hotel in La Morra. This evening we meet a local winemaker for an introduction to the fabulous wines of this region.



Day 6



Our walk leads us from La Morra, along a ridge with open views to the attractive villages of Vergne and Novello. We descend through vineyards to the village of Barolo where the world-class wine of the same name was created in the 19th century. Visit the cellars of one of the local producers and taste their range of wines. October trip: Later in the day we head into the woods with a local truffle hunter to search, with his dog, for the prized tuber. (9.5km/6miles)

Day 7

Starting from a village in the foothills of the Alta Langa, we walk through hazelnut groves and vineyards with panoramic views of the Langhe and the snow-capped Alps beyond. We are welcomed for lunch at a local farm producing wine and an incredible range of cheeses, near the town of Monforte d'Alba. Time to relax in the afternoon before visiting the pretty regional capital of Alba to experience the passeggiata and an aperitif followed by dinner at a local Slow Food restaurant. (10km/6.3miles)



Day 8

Return to Turin for 11am.

Walking

Shortest day: 6.3km/4miles; Longest day: 16.4km/10.4miles

There are 5 days of walking on this tour. We walk on farm and woodland tracks, through vineyards and along quiet tarmac roads. The walks on days 3 and 4 are on well graded mountain paths. We highly recommend you wear sturdy walking boots, with good ankle support.

Weather:

Average daytime temperature: June 20°-25°; October 13°-21°

Monthly rainfall average: June 70mm; October 150mm

Average sunshine: June 7hrs/day; October 5½hrs/day

Dates:

15th - 22nd June 2012

12th - 19th October 2012

Price:

€2425 per person

Single Supplement €175 (Double room for single occupancy)

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