

LESSER KNOWN SPLENDOURS OF ITALY

A 6-days' tour of Torino and the Piemonte

Our tour will have as its base **Torino (Turin)**, where we shall be lodged in the elegant **Grand Hotel Sitea** in the centre of the city. Torino has a very rich culture and history, and is well known for its numerous and important museums, churches and palaces, the opera house, its piazzas, parks and gardens, theatres, libraries, art galleries and many other venues. Turin is an Italian icon of baroque, neo-classical, and Art Nouveau architecture. Much of the city's attractive public squares, castles, gardens and elegant palaces, were built by the Sicilian architect Filippo Juvarra. Apart from extensively touring this absorbing **capital of Piemonte**, we shall also visit some of the most important **residences of the Royal House of Savoy** (collectively these 15 residences have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site) and other places of interest in the scenically attractive regions (south of Torino) of **Langhe and Monferrato**, which are also famous for their production of some of Italy's best wines.

After checking into the hotel, the tour will start on Tuesday at 15.30 hrs with a walk to the extraordinary setting of **Palazzo Madama**, a never completed edifice with 14th to 18th century features. It houses the important Museo Civico d'Arte Antica with its valuable collection of artifacts. At the **Whist Circle**, Italy's most beautiful private club, dinner will be hosted by Marchese Carlo del Carretto.

The next morning we shall first go on foot to the huge **Royal Palace of the House of Savoy**, a beautiful and stunning downtown structure. From there we proceed by coach to the 17th century **Strambino Castle**, where lunch will be offered by the Marchesi Sallier de la Tour. Thereafter we shall visit the imposing **Aglié Castle**, another of the Royal Residences. After returning to the hotel in Turin, we have been invited by Signora Sofia Rignon for dinner at her **private residence**.

As a third example of the wealth of the House of Savoy we shall visit on Thursday the **Palace of Venaria**, one of the largest royal residences in the world. After a short stroll through the village of Venaria Reale, a light lunch will be taken at the well-known **Cascina di Corte** restaurant. In the afternoon we shall visit the essential **Museo Egizio** at Torino, containing the world's largest and most comprehensive collection of Egyptian antiquities outside the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. After a short pause at one of Torino's famous tearooms, we shall visit the city's probably best known landmark, the **Mole Antonelliana**, which contains the fascinating National Museum of Cinema. In the evening we shall go for dinner to Countess Arcangela Balbo Bertone di Sambuy at her **private residence**.



Our tour of royal palaces would be incomplete without a visit the next day to the magnificent 18th century **Royal Hunting Residence of Stupinigi** and its outstanding park, located in the outskirts of Torino. Lunch will be at the restaurant of the elegant **Villa I Berroni**. The afternoon will be spent visiting the dignified 17th century **Royal Castle at Raconigi** and its unusual Serre. Return to Torino is foreseen at around 17.30. The evening will be free.

Saturday morning the coach will take us to **Saluzzo** for a visit of this superb example of a Piemonte medieval town, perched on a hill overlooking a vast, well cultivated plain. Lunch will be hosted by the Marchesi del Carretto at their **palace**. In the afternoon we go to the **Castle at Manta**, a noble residence, where the Baronial Hall has a glorious 14th century fresco cycle decorating its walls, a rare masterpiece of late Gothic painting in northern Italy, and where the Sala delle Grottesche is decorated in Mannerist style of the 16th century. Thereafter a visit will be paid to the important, well preserved **Staffarda Abbey**, a 12th century Cistercian monastery. For dinner we shall go to Torino's 250 years old **Restaurant del Cambio**, an institution in Italy.

On the final morning we shall visit the Contemporary Art Museum of Torino situated in the spectacular setting of the 12th century **Castle of Rivoli** (again a former Royal Residence). Subsequently we go to the comely **Villa della Regina** (previously also a Royal Residence) to see its stylish interior. Our farewell lunch will be offered by the nobles Marco and Franca Brignone at their **private house**. The tour will end at **Torino Airport** at 15.00 hrs.



Royal Hunting Residence of Stupinigi © Wikipedia



Palazzo Madama, photo: Veronica Rossi © Turismo Torino



Monferrato Region © Wikipedia

PRICE: € 1,990
SINGLE ROOM SUPPLEMENT:
 € 190 (in a double room
 for single use: € 390)

The tour price is based on a minimum of 20 participants. There will be a surcharge of € 140 if only 16 - 19 persons take

part, whilst for 12 - 15 persons the surcharge will be € 370. Should you not wish to pay a surcharge if the minimum of 20 is not reached, you may cancel your booking without penalty.

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THE PRICE INCLUDES:

- Accommodation in a first-class hotel
- All meals (except one dinner) with drinks during the meals
- Transport by private coach
- Guides
- Entrance fees
- Taxes
- Tips