



Turin, Piedmont & the Italian Riviera

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Why Go?

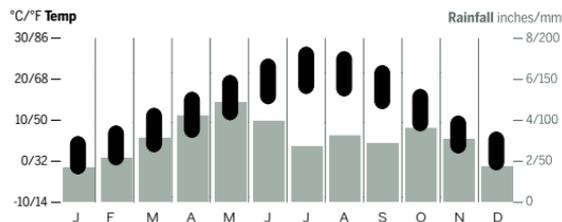
The beauty of northwestern Italy is its diversity. Piedmont's capital, Turin, is an elegant, easy city of baroque palaces, cutting-edge galleries and fittingly fabulous dining. While the region has been one of Italy's 20th-century industrial success stories, it has also retained deep, lasting links to the soil, its wines and culinary offerings earning it the name of the 'new Tuscany'.

To the south, Liguria's slim, often vertical, sliver is home to Italy's Riviera, the fabled port city of Genoa and the beguiling villages of Cinque Terre. Expect dramatic coastal topography, beautifully preserved architecture and one of Italy's most memorable cuisines.

Head north and you'll soon hit the Alps and the semi-autonomous region of Aosta, where you can ski or hike beneath Europe's highest mountains while discovering its delightful French-tinged traditions along the way.

When to Go

Turin



Jan-Mar Most reliable snow cover for skiing in the Alps.

Apr Fewer crowds and fine days on the Ligurian coast.

Sep & Oct Autumn food festivals in Turin and the Langhe.

THE ITALIAN RIVIERA

Italy's famed crescent of Mediterranean coast, where the Alps and the Apennines cascade into the sea, is defined by its sinuous, giddy landscapes. The region of Liguria is shaped by its extreme topography – its daily life is one of ascents and descents, always in the presence of a watery horizon.

Anchored beside the region's best natural harbour is noble Genoa. Known as *La Superba* (the Superb One) to biased locals, it's a city that ruled over one of the finest maritime empires in medieval Europe. Fanning out on either side is the Riviera (western 'Ponente', eastern 'Levante'), including the Portofino peninsula, along with legendary Cinque Terre.

This is both a deeply historic destination and a fabulously in-the-moment pleasure-seeking one, where you can explore lavish *palazzi* or humble village churches and then simply swim, eat, walk or stare at the sea.

Genoa

📍 010 / POP 594,750

Italy's largest sea port is indefatigably contradictory, full at once of grandeur, squalor, sparkling light and deep shade. But a gateway to the Riviera for many travellers today, a weighty architectural heritage speaks of its former glory – the Most Serene Republic of Genoa ruled over the Mediterranean waves during the 12th to the 13th centuries – and history feels alive in Genoa. No more is this true than in its extensive old city, an often confronting reminder of pre-modern life with its twisting maze of narrow *caruggi* (streets), largely intact. Emerge blinking from this thrillingly dank heart to Via Garibaldi and the splendid Enlightenment-era gold-leaf halls of the Unesco-listed *Palazzi dei Rolli*.

The city's once-tatty port area now hosts museums and a number of eating and drinking options. Its old town, too, has had its own far more organic revitalisation, with a bright new crop of fashionable shops, restaurants and bars lighting the way.

📍 Sights

Old City

AREA

(Centro Storico) The heart of medieval Genoa – bounded by ancient city gates *Porta dei Vacca* and *Porta Soprana*, and the streets of *Via Cairoli*, *Via Garibaldi* and *Via XXV Aprile* – is famed for its *caruggi* (narrow

lanes). Looking up at the washing pegged on lines everywhere, it becomes obvious that these dark, cave-like laneways and blind alleys are still largely residential, although the number of fashionable bars, shops and cafes continues to grow.

Parts of the *caruggi* can feel somewhat unnerving, especially after dark. Although it's not particularly dangerous, do take care in the zone west of *Via San Luca* and south to *Piazza Banchi*, where most street prostitution and accompanying vice concentrates. East of the piazza is *Via Orefici*, where you'll find **market** stalls.

★ Musei di Strada Nuova

MUSEUM

(*Palazzi dei Rolli*; 📍 010 557 21 93; www.museidigenova.it; *Via Garibaldi*; combined ticket adult/reduced €9/7; 🕒 9am-7pm Tue-Fri, 10am-7.30pm Sat & Sun summer, to 6.30pm winter) Skirting the northern edge of what was once the city limits, pedestrianised *Via Garibaldi* (formerly called the *Strada Nuova*) was planned by *Galeazzo Alessi* in the 16th century. It quickly became the city's most sought-after quarter, lined with the palaces of Genoa's wealthiest citizens. Three of these *palazzi* – *Rosso*, *Bianco* (p168) and *Doria-Tursi* (p168) – today comprise the *Musei di Strada Nuova*. Between them, they hold the city's finest collection of old masters. Whether you visit the actual museums or not, the street is a must to wander.

Buy tickets to the *Musei di Strada Nuova* at the bookshop inside *Palazzo Doria-Tursi*.

Palazzo Rosso

MUSEUM

(www.museidigenova.it; *Via Garibaldi* 18; combined ticket adult/reduced €9/7; 🕒 9am-7pm Tue-Fri, 10am-7.30pm Sat & Sun summer, to 6.30pm winter) Lavishly frescoed rooms in *Palazzo Rosso*, part of the *Musei di Strada Nuova*, provide the backdrop for several portraits by *Van Dyck* of the local *Brignole-Sale* family. Other standouts include *Guido Reni's San Sebastiano* and *Guercino's La morte di Cleopatra* (The Death of *Cleopatra*), as well as works by *Veronese*, *Dürer* and *Bernardo Strozzi*.

Franco Albini Apartment

ARCHITECTURE

(www.museidigenova.it; *Palazzo Rosso*, *Via Garibaldi* 18) One of Italy's best-loved 20th-century architects, *Franco Albini* was a key figure in the restoration of Genoa's *palazzi* in the post-war period. The third floor of the *Palazzo Rosso* hides an Italian mid-century gem – an apartment *Albini* designed for the