

Land of Motors

9 Car and Motorcycle Tours



Percorsi turistici - Tourist routes

Circuits touristiques - Touristische Routen - Туристические маршруты



Turin, the Susa Valley and Canavese



Cuneo city and province



The Langhe, Monferrato and Roero areas



The Sesia Valley



Novara city and province



The Ossola Valley



Biella city and province

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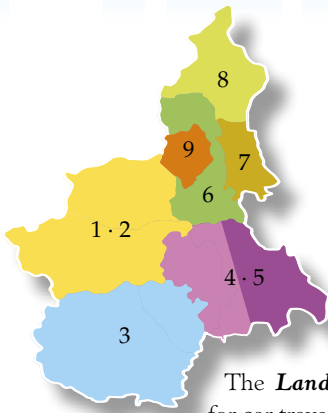
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Land of Motors

Piedmont, Land of Motors, offers enthusiasts of two and four-wheeled travel a must-see motoring and landscape heritage.

What better way to discover the wonders of this area than to take its roads, off the beaten track of mass tourism?

The **Land of Motors** guide offers a selection of **9 itineraries** for car travel, for those who love comfort, or motorcycle travel, for those who prefer freedom. It provides detailed route information, useful addresses and a road map to accompany you in your discovery of surprising, easy to explore itineraries. Spectacular panoramas stretch as far as the eye can see, from majestic Alpine peaks to gentle rolling hills, from the picturesque Po Valley to a series of enchanting lakes. The varied landscape is dotted with villages and towns rich in history and cultural activities, offering countless entertainment and relaxation activities, and providing the opportunity to sample the local food and wine, famous the world over. The routes, which can be covered within a day, wind through different road types, meeting the diverse needs of visitors.

Land of Motors also reveals a truly unparalleled motoring heritage, where traditional creativity and the most advanced technology combine in an array of **major collections, museums, racetracks** and **themed events** that make the region a true paradise for mechanics enthusiasts.

Piedmont is one of the main centres world-wide for motor production. It is the birthplace of some of the major Italian car makers, such as FIAT (Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino), founded in 1899 in Turin, and is home to renowned research centres that contribute to excellence in the automotive sector, such as Centro Ricerche FIAT (or GRF, the FIAT Research Centre). The region is also the home of world famous car stylists and designers, such as Gruppo Bertone, Italdesign-Giugiaro and Pininfarina. Among the most famous drivers are Achille Varzi and Vincenzo Lancia, the founder of the historic automaker Lancia.

This guide suggest numerous fascinating places to visit among the wide variety of regional treasures, sometimes hidden, that deserve a stop. It reveals a different side of Piedmont, in all its extraordinary authenticity.

Between the Susa Valley and the Chisone Valley

Colle delle Finestre and the Assietta Road

ITINERARY

147 km

ELEVATION FROM TURIN

1836 m

TYPE OF ROADS

Paved roads,
gravel roads

GPS FROM TURIN

Lat. 45°04'17"N

Long. 7°32'46"E

GPS FROM MEANA DI SUSÀ

Lat. 45°07'23"N

Long. 7°03'46"E



The route runs between the Susa Valley and the Chisone Valley, along a road known for the beauty of its landscapes and famous with cycling enthusiasts for the difficulty of the climb to the Colle delle Finestre from the Susa Valley.

Starting at Corso Francia, in **Turin**, follow the signs for Rivoli and SS 25 to reach **Avigliana**; then continue towards **Sant'Antonino di Susa** and continue along SS 24 Monginevro towards Bussoleno. From here, continue onto SP 207 to Mattie, until you arrive at **Meana di Susa** (730 m asl), where our real journey begins.

The road to **Colle delle Finestre** - which connects the Susa Valley with the Chisone Valley - covers 1700 m of altitude in 18.7 km (the last 8 are gravel road), and starts past the SS 24 junction, towards SP 172. After Traverse and Suffis, you will continue with numerous hairpin turns; upon reaching Colletto di Meana, a fountain marks the entrance to the Orsiera-Rocciavré Park. You then come to Bergeria Casetta, and after passing Piano del Tiraculo you arrive at the destination, **Colle delle Finestre** (2176 m asl), where a plaque indicates the stage of the 2005 Giro d'Italia. The hill is dominated by the **Fortress of Fenestrelle** (www.fortedifenestrelle.com), the largest fortified structure in Europe and the longest stone construction after the Great Wall of China.

Bordering the road of the Colle delle Finestre, along the ridge that connects the Pian dell'Alpe to Sestriere and Sauze d'Oulx and separates the Chisone Valley from the Susa Valley, a military carriageway stretches for over 60 km, almost entirely 2000 m asl. This is the **Assietta Road** (www.stradadellassietta.it). This road offers the unique opportunity to discover some of the most significant pages in the history of the Western Alps: from the Republic of the Escartons to the Kingdom of Savoy, this border area has always played a strategic role. Religious



conflicts have also long marked this territory, in which the Waldensian faith experienced heavy persecution, as revealed by the massive fortification system and numerous examples of sacred art. The route, however, is not only historic and artistic, but also recreational and of high environmental value, thanks to the rich biodiversity of the alpine protected areas of **Orsiera-Rocciavré** and **Gran Bosco di Salbertrand** [the Great Woods of Salbertrand], as well as the picturesque trails of the Via Alpina (www.via-alpina.com) and numerous cycling and horseback routes.

From Pian dell'Alpe the road climbs up, providing splendid views of the Chisone Valley, and crosses the Vallone dei Morti; it then reaches the branch that leads to **Fort Gran Serin**. Just prior to this junction is a road that descends for about 800 m and leads to the Assietta pasture, where you can buy local products.

Once at the **Testa dell'Assietta** [Head of Assietta] (2566 m asl) - on which stands an obelisk recalling the 1747 battle against the French during the War of Austrian Succession - the descent begins. The road leads to the former roadhouse adjacent to the Assietta Lake; on the right is the junction for Testa del Mottas, and on the left is the street leading to Gran Costa. Once you pass Colle Lauson you reach **Colle Blegier**; from here, continue to Mount Genevris, on top of which stands the Alpine Lighthouse, donated by the Italian Navy.

The route continues as far as the Colle di Costa Piana and Bourget, where it crosses the ski resorts of Sauze d'Oulx. In this beautiful setting, you will at last reach **Col Bourget** and **Col Basset**, crossed on the right by the fork that descends to Sportinia and **Sauze d'Oulx**.

▲ *Assietta Road*

The Fortress of Exilles

Town/Venue: Exilles (TO),
Via Roma 1

The Fortress of Exilles is a must-see when travelling through the Susa Valley. An example of French and Savoyard fortified architecture (the first evidence of defensive military structures on the rock that overlooks Exilles, dating back to the 7th century), the Fortress of Exilles is a fascinating and highly striking structure dominating the view from afar. Through the collaboration between Regione Piedmont and the Museo Nazionale della Montagna CAI-Torino [National Mountain Museum of CAI-Turin], it was returned to the public in 2000, and now offers two guided sightseeing routes.

www.fortiediexilles.it

Canavese

From the Canavese castles to the Gran Paradiso glaciers

ITINERARY

90 km

ELEVATION

2373 m

TYPE OF ROADS

Paved Roads

GPS START POINT

Lat. 45°06'43"N

Long. 7°42'24"E



Canavese is located in north-western Piedmont, on the border with the Aosta Valley. The area is dominated by the Gran Paradiso massif and dotted with numerous glacial lakes.

Leaving **Turin** on the SP 267, continue until you enter the former SS 460 towards **Rivarolo Canavese** (about 34 km). Here it is possible to visit the Malgrà Castle, of medieval origin (www.amicicastellomalgra.it). The manor was purchased in 1982 by the City, which opened it to the public, transforming it into a site for exhibitions, cultural events and concerts. Continuing along the former SS 460 you will reach the town of **Cuorgnè** (www.comune.cuorgne.to.it), where we suggest a detour to visit the old medieval village, the cotton factory (1872), extolled in scientific tests of the time, and the old bridge over the Orco river (1470). With a short detour you reach **Castellamonte** (www.comune.castellamonte.to.it), where you can admire the so-called Rotonda Antonelliana, or the perimeter walls and columns (12 m high) of the parish church designed in 1842 by Alessandro Antonelli; the church was never completed due to its excessive financial burden, and the walls, with their particularly rounded shape, are the only elements remaining today. Returning towards Cuorgnè, in a few minutes you reach **Pont Canavese**, known for the abundance of its waters and its wealth of bridges and towers. At the time, the town was known as Rordilitegna ("passage between two valleys"); in the Middle Ages it was renamed Ad Duos Pontes (At the Two Bridges), since it was necessary to cross two bridges and pay a toll before one could access the town. The centre, where you can appreciate Pont Canavese's many artistic, historical and gastronomic treasures, is not to be missed.

The route continues, passing through the beautiful **Orco Valley**, where the landscape becomes Alpine. After driving through a succession of curves and small villages, you will reach **Sparone**



(www.comune.sparone.to.it), whose Fortress, overlooking the road leading to the upper valley, dates to before the year 1000. Here, King Arduino suffered a historic siege by the Teutonic armies between 1004 and 1005.

The route continues in one of the most charming places that can be reached with a motorised vehicle. Proceed along the former SS 460 for a few kilometres until you reach **Locana**, the most populated town in our itinerary; it is followed by **Noasca** and **Ceresole Reale**, after which you will find yourself in the heart of the Gran Paradiso National Park. From here to Lake Serrù, the road becomes increasingly steep and climbs relentlessly to the imposing AEM dam, one of the greatest spectacles of the eternal **Gran Paradiso** glaciers and a truly poignant sight. Over Lake Serrù is Lake Agnel; then a last sequence of hairpin bends leads to a vantage point from which a breath-taking view opens up over the **Colle del Nivolet** (2612 m asl) with its small lakes.

www.pngp.it

▲ *Parco Nazionale Gran Paradiso*
[Gran Paradiso National Park],
Lakes Serrù and Agnel

i Traffic limitations for the Colle del Nivolet:

access is prohibited to private traffic on Sundays in July and August and on the 15th of August; at these times, however, entry is ensured by a shuttle service for the event "A piedi tra le nuvole" [Walking in the Clouds].

www.pngp.it

EVENTS

Automotoretro

Town/Venue: Lingotto Fiere, Turin

Time of year: February

International show dedicated to vintage car collecting.

www.automotoretro.it

"Made in Turin" guided tours

Possibility of guided tours of FIAT, Iveco, Pininfarina and Ied, subject to booking.

The calendar is at:

www.turismotorino.org/en/madeintorino

Motorcycle Rally in Ceresole

Town/Venue: Pian della Balma - Ceresole (TO)

Time of year: July

Rally of motorcycles from all over Italy, on the backdrop of the beautiful lake of Ceresole Reale.

Moto-concentriamoci

Town/Venue: Pra Catinat (TO)

Time of year: October

Eco-sustainable motorbike tourism event on the hills and roads of the Olympic mountains.

www.mcfinisterrae.it

MUSEUMS AND COLLECTIONS

MAUTO

Museo dell'Automobile di Torino [Automobile Museum of Turin]

Town/Venue: Turin, Corso Unità d'Italia 40

Returned, fully renovated, to the city of Turin in March 2011, the museum tells the fascinating story of the automobile through the exhibition of over 150 models of the most famous automotive manufacturers.

Info: open Mondays, 10.00-14.00; Tuesdays, 14.00-19.00; Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, 10.00-19.00; Fridays-Saturdays, 10.00-21.00.

www.museoauto.it

FIAT Industrial Village

Town/Venue: Turin, Strada Settimo 223

FIAT Industrial's first multipurpose centre in the world extends over a surface of 74,000 square meters. A special area of the spacious showroom dedicated to the display of vehicles illustrates the technological excellence and innovative solutions underlying the products.

Info: showroom open Mondays-Saturdays, 9.00-19.00.

www.fiatindustrialvillage.com

Mirafiori Motor Village

Town/Venue: Turin, Piazza Cattaneo

A centre of excellence in an area of the historic and completely renovated FIAT Mirafiori plant. With a surface area of 70,000 square meters, it is the largest automobile exhibition and commercial space in Europe.

Info: open Mondays-Saturdays, 9.00-20.30;

Sundays, 9.30-20.30. www.mirafiorimotorvillage.it

Centro Storico Fiat [Fiat Historical Centre]

Town/Venue: Turin, Via Chiabrera 20

The Centro Storico FIAT is located in an Art Nouveau building, the first expansion (1907) of the workshops on Corso Dante where the company was born. The centre currently hosts a collection of automobiles, memorabilia, models and posters covering the company's entire history.

Info: open all Sundays, 10.00-19.00.

www.fiatindustrial.com

Pista Lingotto [Lingotto Track] and Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli [Giovanni e Marella Agnelli Picture Gallery]

Town/Venue: Turin, Via Nizza 230

The historical seat of FIAT, developed by Giacomo Mattè-Trucco in 1921, was transformed into a great multipurpose centre by "starchitect" Renzo Piano. The building still houses the rooftop test track, currently closed to the public, which was accessed by two incredible spiral ramps. To the great delight of car racing enthusiasts, the track may be spied from the roof after a visit to the Giovanni and Marella Agnelli Picture Gallery. The gallery houses works by great painters of the calibre of Tiepolo, Canaletto, Canova, Manet, Renoir, Matisse, Balla and Modigliani; the entrance to the museum is in the A Book bookstore, near the UCI Cinemas.

Info: open Tuesdays-Sundays, 10.00-19.00 (the ticket office closes at 18.15).

www.pinacoteca-agnelli.it

▼ Turin, Museo dell'Automobile [Automobile Museum]



From Cuneo to Busca

Art, nature and good food

The first leg of the itinerary is the historic centre of Cuneo, and the last the San Barnaba di Busca go-kart track, a must for fans of karting and superbikes. This varied route passes through the beautiful alpine settings of Colle dell'Agnello and Monviso.

The itinerary starts in **Cuneo** (534 m asl), capital of the "Granda province", where a short walk under the medieval arcades of the historic centre brings you to some of the city's most important monuments: the Duomo, or cathedral, with its neoclassical façade and baroque interior, the Church of Sant'Amrogio, and the church complex and former convent of San Francesco, home to the Civic Museum, which preserves its original, and recently restored, medieval architecture. Travelling down Via Roma, take a detour to Contrada Mondovì, formerly the Jewish Contrada, a charming pedestrian area that deserves a visit, both for its synagogue and for its artisan shops.

From Piazza Galimberti, take Corso Soleri to leave the city, crossing the entire bridge over the Stura river as far as the roundabout. From here, take the SP 422 to Caraglio. Continuing in the direction of the Maira Valley, just outside the centre of **Caraglio**, on the left you will see the **Filatoio** [Spinning Mill], one of Europe's oldest remains of industrial archaeology. The building, which hosts contemporary art exhibitions and a small Silk Museum, has the appearance of a fortified dwelling. Massive throwing machines have been recreated inside the mill, and the spinning wheel and various rooms have been recovered.

Coming back from the centre of Caraglio, go towards the Grana Valley, taking the SP 23 as far as **Valgrana**, where you will turn right and climb up the hill that leads to the village of **Montemale**, to then descend to Dronero. For a worthwhile gastronomic experience, stop in Caraglio or Valgrana, to sample the tradi-

ITINERARY

184 km

ELEVATION

2195 m

TYPE OF ROADS

Paved roads,
panoramic roads

GPS START POINT

Lat. 44°23'22"N
Long. 7°32'52"E





© Gian Francesco Fantli - ATL del Cuneese

▲ Cuneo, Chiesa di San Francesco
[Church of Saint Francisco]

tional gnocchi with Castelmagno cheese, or in Montemale, at the foot of the hilltop castle by the same name, to taste a dish of tagliatelle with the black truffles that grow in the nearby woods. In **Dronero**, many buildings, such as the octagonal Foro Frumentario (early fifteenth century), are reminiscent of a flourishing Middle Age. Don't miss the crenelated bridge over the Maira river or the Mill on the Riviera. The Mallè Museum, housed in the elegant residence of Luigi Mallè, director of the Turin Civic Museum, has a vast collection of antique and contemporary art with works by great masters.

The Occitan language is spoken in the **Maira Valley**, and indeed several Occitan restaurants can be found along the road up the valley, offering hospitality and food with a menu inspired by the Occitan tradition. From Dronero, take the SP 422, a panoramic road that crosses the whole Maira Valley; once you pass the turnoff for Stroppio, turn right and continue on the winding road that leads to **Elva**, along a fascinating mixed narrow path. The small town preserves the ancient Church of Santa Maria Assunta, considered a jewel of Gothic painting, with the apse entirely frescoed by the late 15th century Flemish painter, Hans Clemer (www.vallemaira.cn.it).

From Elva you will reach the **Colle di Sampeyre**, which connects the Maira Valley to the Varaita Valley through a stunning high-elevation panoramic road (touching 2200 m), and descend to the village of **Sampeyre**.

From Sampeyre, continue to climb along the SP 105 to **Casteldelfino**, where a mixed route starts, with wide curves and straight stretches of road that lead to the foot of Col Agnel. A detour to the left in the Bellino Valley allows you to

▼ Surf in Pontechianale



© ATL del Cuneese

visit the mountain village, with its ancient sundials painted on religious buildings and houses.

Returning to Casteldelfino, take the SP 105 to reach Pontechianale and Chianale. **Sampeyre, Casteldelfino** and **Pontechianale** (where there is also a scenic chairlift) conserve ancient churches with richly adorned doors and frescoed interiors. In particular, **Chianale**, a hamlet near Pontechianale, ranks among the "Most Beautiful Villages of Italy" for its Alpine architecture, Roman Bridge and ancient churches. Among the wonders of the **Varaita Valley**, there are delicious gastronomic specialties such as *ravioles*, elongated dumplings served with cream and butter, and the tasty *tumin del Mel*, a fresh cheese produced in Melle (www.vallevaraita.cn.it).

Climb back up the valley until you come to **Colle dell'Agnello**, or Col Agnel (2748 m asl), the third highest hill in Europe, "climbed" several times by the cyclists of the Giro d'Italia and Tour de France. Here you are faced with a mixed narrow path with an 18% gradient, offering a beautiful view of **Monviso** (3841 m asl), known as the "King of Stone", a significant tourist attraction in summer and winter alike. In the summer months the pass leads to the French region of Queyras. From Col Agnel, descend the Varaita Valley to **Piasco**, where the Museo dell'Arpa [Harp Museum] is located, housing interesting historical harps. The collection includes many pieces from around the globe, dating from the 1700s to the first half of the 1900s.

From Piasco continue until **Costigliole Saluzzo** to then reach **Busca** on the SP 589. Continue towards the village of St. Barnaba di Busca, where the **Kart Planet** go-kart track, a must for budding petrol heads, is located.

Kart Planet

Town/Venue: San Barnaba di Busca (CN), via San Benigno 32
Built in 1999, this modern kart and motorcycle track meets all national and international requirements in terms of safety and escape routes. It has hosted the World Superbike Championship for four years. In addition to the World, European and Italian Superbike and Kart Championships, the Kart Planet hosts other sporting events in the world of engines, including the International Kart Race (the last Sunday in May), the Minimotard World Championship (the first Sunday in June) and the Malossi Italian Scooter Championship (the first Sunday in July).

Info: open daily except Wednesdays
(9.00 -12.00 and 13.30 - 17.10).
+39 0171 946644
info@kartplanet.it
www.kartplanet.it

EVENTS

Traditional rallies in the Cuneo Valleys

Town/Venue: Dronero, Saluzzo (CN)

Time of year: March, August, September

Every year, Dronero hosts the **International Rally of the Cuneo Valleys** (late August/early September), a high-level sporting event with the addition of

the **Historic Rally of the Cuneo Valleys** (late August/early September). Both are organised by Sport Rally Team, which also puts on the Saluzzo Master Show (March), a rally car exhibition taking place on a circuit set up in the city of Saluzzo.

www.sportrallyteam.it



From Alba to Acqui Terme, via Asti

Vineyards, castles and hot springs



ITINERARY

365 km

The route can be split into 3 distinct loops.

For further information:

www.motorbikeinitaly.it

ELEVATION

499 m

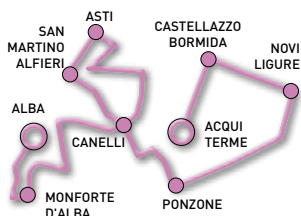
TYPE OF ROADS

Paved roads, mostly scenic

GPS START POINT

Lat. 44°42'03"N

Long. 8°02'07"E



From the “City of the Hundred Towers” to Piedmont’s spa capital: the itinerary starts in Alba and reaches Acqui Terme through a succession of curves, climbs and descents, winding through vineyard-dotted hills, spectacular views and brief tastes of history.

The departure point for this itinerary is **Alba** (172 m asl), the economic and cultural capital of the Langhe, also known as the “City of the Hundred Towers”, evidence of its past importance. Before departing, it is absolutely worth while taking a walk in the historic centre, amidst Roman ruins, medieval towers and Roman vestiges. From Alba, set off on a “Langhe wine tour”, starting in the direction of La Morra: take the ring road southwest and just outside of town, exit and turn right onto the road for Pollenzo and La Morra. On the left you can admire the 12th century Castle of Roddi. Once you reach **La Morra**, a stop at the Viewpoint is a must, to enjoy a spectacular view of the Langhe hills cloaked in vineyards. Continue towards **Barolo**, for a visit to the renowned Falletti Castle, today the seat of the Wi.Mu Wine Museum: a stop for lovers of the culture and tradition of wine. (www.wimubarolo.it). Continuing your journey through zones famed for the truffle and for great wines, you will reach Novello, Monchiero and **Monforte d’Alba**, with its hill-top village. Travelling north along stunning hilly roads you will then reach Castiglione Falletto. Just past Castiglione Falletto lies **Grinzane Cavour**, with its splendid must-see castle, symbol of the Langhe and seat of the Regional Wine Cellar.

Take the road to **Diano d’Alba**, offering an incomparable 180 degree view of the Langa and the Roero territories, to then climb up to **Benevello** (m 671 asl). After reaching the SP 429, turn off for Treiso, in the heart of the Langa del **Barbaresco**. To fully enjoy the atmosphere of this territory, we recommend a small detour to Barbaresco, a village nestled in the vineyard from which the

fine wine of the same wine is made. Continue towards **Neive**, part of the circuit of the Most Beautiful Villages in Italy, to then move south towards Mango, and then east towards Canelli, passing by **Santo Stefano Belbo**, in the heart of the Moscato hills extolled by Cesare Pavese. This is the homeland of the great writer, and indeed you can sense his permeating presence. Picture post-card perfect landscape takes us to **Canelli**, a village dominated by the imposing seventeenth-century villa of the Gancia family and housing historic cellars known as "underground cathedrals". Heading north for **Calosso**, the country of the *crutin* - ancient cellars dug into the tuff - you reach Castagnole delle Lanze, and **Costigliole d'Asti**, with its spectacular castle with a drawbridge and massive corner towers. From this part of Asti you can enjoy uniquely picturesque scenery, characterised by a succession of extraordinarily beautiful hills and vineyards.

Heading northeast towards SS 231, which you will need to cross to reach **San Martino Alfieri**, you may admire the Marchesi Alfieri Castle, before continuing for **Antignano**. It is also worth stopping at the nearby San Damiano d'Asti, which conserves its medieval urban structure, and Cisterna d'Asti, with its castle home to a very important ethnographic museum – the Museo delle Arti e dei Mestieri di un Tempo [Museum of Arts and Past Trades] – created to preserve objects and traditions of local rural life (www.museoartiemestieri.it). From Antignano you will soon reach **Asti**, whose name immediately conjures up the wines and cuisine of the Monferrato district. The town boasts one of the most beautiful and best preserved historical centres of Piedmont.



© ATL Asti Turismo

▲ Asti

▼ Grinzane Cavour



© Ente Turismo Langhe Roero



© ATL Alexata

▲ Castellazzo Bormida,
Chiesa della Madonna della Creta
[Church of Our Lady of Crete]

Our itinerary continues towards the south of the province, passing through **Azzano d'Asti**, **Montegrosso d'Asti**, **Montaldo Scarampi**, **Belveglio** and **Cortiglione**.

A visit to the **Rocchetta Tanaro park** is an absolute must. Known as the Forest of the Marquis, it is an area of great natural worth and an ideal place for a stopover. Next, head back towards Canelli, passing through **Nizza Monferrato** and Calamandrana (SS 592). From Canelli, first proceed south towards Bubbio, then east towards **Monastero Bormida**, with its beautiful Romanesque bridge that gives access to the town's castle-dominated historic centre. Having reached Bistagno, take the SS 30 to Ponti, where you will turn left towards Melazzo; continue on the SS 334 southbound and exit to reach **Ponzone**, an incomparable viewpoint overlooking the Hautes Alpes and Monviso.

After a visit to Morbello Castle, head south and then east to Prasco and Cremolino on the SS 456. Having passed Molare, you reach **Ovada**, an important commercial and artisan centre bathed by the Orba River.

Exit Ovada, heading east towards **Tagliolo Monferrato**, to travel on one of the most "castled" roads in the world, lined with the characteristic castles of Tagliolo, Lerma, Casaleggio Boiro and Mornese, until you arrive in **Gavi**, with its imposing fortress and white wine by the same name, made from Cortese grapes. From here, proceed north and you will soon reach **Novi Ligure**, home of cycling greats Fausto Coppi and Costante Girardengo. From here continue to **Bosco Marengo**, which boasts the Complesso Monumentale di Santa Croce [Monumental Complex of Santa Croce] commissioned by Pope Pius V, until you reach **Castellazzo Bormida**, where the Santuario della Madonna della Creta [Sanctuary of Our Lady of Crete], patron saint of Motorcyclists, stands.

The signs will lead us quickly to **Acqui Terme**, Piedmont's spa capital and a city of many attractions. Founded by the Romans in the second century BC, its Archaeological Museum houses interesting Roman artefacts. Equally worth seeing are the ancient cathedral, or Duomo, the city hall and the Robellini Palace. However, the city is best known for its **spa complex**, with the La Bollente springs, with 540 litres of water per minute at 74°C, and the Acqua Marcia springs, with its four imposing front columns. Moreover, the modern Lago delle Sorgenti, with 400 litres of water per minute at 45°C, is the perfect place for a relaxing break. In addition to enjoying the beneficial effects of hot springs and classic spa services, here you can "Regenerate with Water, Rebalance with Sounds" (www.lagodellesorgenti.it).



© ATL Alexata

▼ Acqui Terme, La Bollente

The UNESCO Hills

A sweet landscape to be savoured

From Pollenzo to Casale Monferrato through soft rolling hills and artistic-historical UNESCO world heritage treasures. An itinerary full of charm, made even more tempting by a variety of culinary treats comprising amaretto biscuits, truffles and fine wines.

The route starts in **Pollenzo** (190 m asl), a Roman village that today is the home of the Slow Food University of Gastronomic Sciences and the Banca del Vino [Wine Bank] (www.bancadelvino.it). It is worth stopping at the beautiful square, protected by UNESCO since 1997, when the Pollenzo Castle was recognised a World Heritage Site, together with other royal residences in the region.

The route continues on to **Bra**, where you can admire the town's unique historical centre, rich in examples of Piedmont Baroque, and be tempted by local culinary specialties, including the Bra PDO cheese and sausage. The route continues south along the SP 661, in the direction of Cherasco, crossing the river and moving into the Langhe district. Located in a spot that dominates the surrounding plain, **Cherasco** is also known as the "city of peace treaties," by virtue of the seven pacts that were signed here, such as the surrender of Napoleon to the House of Savoy in 1796, known as the "Peace Treaty of Cherasco". The centre is rich in precious artistic monuments, and the city represents a point of reference for its antique markets, as well as for snail farming and the production of chocolate.

After Cherasco, take to the Dolcetto hills, in the direction of **Dogliani**, birthplace of the second President of the Italian Republic Luigi Einaudi, to admire works by the eclectic architect Giovanni Battista Schellino. From Dogliani, proceed north and climb back up the Langa until we reach **Monforte d'Alba** (m 480 asl), with its charming historic centre. From here, travel east and then head north to arrive in **Serralunga d'Alba**, to admire the striking manor at the heart of the village, around which the life of the town revolves.

Following the road to Gallo Grinzane, proceed towards Langa del

ITINERARY

253 km

ELEVATION

290 m

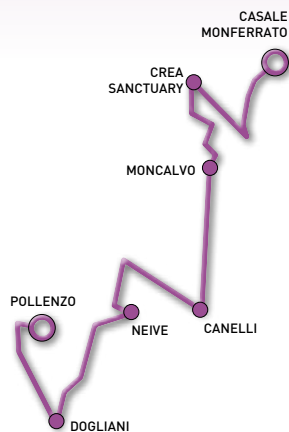
TYPE OF ROADS

Paved roads, mostly scenic

GPS START POINT

Lat. 44° 41'12"N

Long. 8° 53'45"E





▲ *Canelli, Historical Cellars*

Barbaresco, with a quick stop in **Alba**, worth a visit for its artistic and gastronomic treasures. Our itinerary continues to **Neive**, counted among the “Most Beautiful Villages of Italy”, passing through **Barbaresco** and its Regional Wine Cellar, which definitely warrants a stop (www.enotecadelbarbaresco.it).

From Neive you will reach the SS 231 and climb towards Castagnito and the village of Castellinaldo: this is the wildest and best preserved road of the Roero area.

The next stop is **Govone**, gateway to the Langhe, with its Royal Castle (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and its viewpoints. Continue on to **San Martino Alfieri** and cross back over the SS 231 to reach **Costigliole d'Asti**, with its majestic castle, Castagnole delle Lanze, Boglietto, Bionzo and **Calosso**. From here, descend the Piana del Salto road towards the picturesque village of Canelli, with its Historical Wine Cellars and Regional Wine Cellar (www.enotecaregionaleedicanelli.it). This area represents the door to the Langa Astigiana, with its high hills, beautiful and quiet stone villages, woods, ravines and traditional products.

▼ *Alba*

From Canelli, head north towards Castelnuovo Calcea and Mombercelli; keeping west you reach **Montegrosso d'Asti**. Possible variations in the route include a break at the Valle Sarmassa Natural Reserve, or a visit to Nizza Monferrato with its historic centre, Regional Wine Cellar (www.enotecanizza.it) and Palazzo del Gusto, or Palace of Flavours (www.palazzodelgusto.it), to then continue towards Mombaruzzo, where you can savour some deliciously soft amaretto biscuits.

From Montegrosso d'Asti, proceed northeast to reach Rocca d'Arazzo, Castello d'Annone and Quarto, heading toward the northeast part of the province of Asti. The first stop is **Castagnole**



Monferrato, the land of the Ruché grape, as well as of the largest sundial in Europe, the elegant “La Mercantile” estate, the Ricetto and a castle in ruins. You then reach Montemagno, worth a stop for its medieval structure dominated by castle battlements and for its parish church with a spectacular eighteenth-century staircase. Next are the towns of **Grana**, which boasts an impressive church full of paintings and a small Museum of Sacred Art, Casorzo, known for its excellent Malvasia wine, and **Grazzano Badoglio**, whose Chiesa dei SS. Vittore e Corona [Church of Saints Victor and Corona] houses the tomb of the legendary Aleramo, founder of the dynasty of Marquis of Monferrato.

From Grazzano Badoglio you will reach the SR 457 and, shortly after, **Moncalvo**, the last leg of a journey that has as passed through and touched on areas of scenic excellence, such as Asti, Loazzolo, Barbera, Moscato and Grignolino. Moncalvo, the smallest city in Italy (a title granted by the Gonzagas and then confirmed by the Savoy in the 1700s), has a quaint historic centre and is home to the famous Fiera Nazionale del Tartufo Bianco [National White Truffle Fair] and the Fiera del Bue Grasso [Fat Ox Fair]. Here, the Italian painter Guglielmo Caccia, known as “the Moncalvo”, lived and worked.

Just north of Moncalvo, exit the SR 457 to arrive in Ponzano Monferrato, where, in the outlying hamlet of Salabue, you can admire the castle by the same name. **The Sacro Monte di Crea Park** (www.parcocrea.com), a UNESCO World Heritage Site together with the other Sacred Mountains of Piedmont and Lombardy, extends between Ponzano and Serralunga di Crea. Taking the SR 457 once again, you will reach Cereseto with its castle – a beautiful neo-Gothic imitation rebuilt starting in 1911 – and Sala Monferrato. Here, tuff was once quarried from the caves of nearby Moleto, giving the local houses their characteristic white colour. Legend has it that the fleeing Saracens hid an unparalleled treasure in this village.

Continue until **Altavilla Monferrato**, which, aside from the Parish Church of San Giulio, home to works by Moncalvo, offers the Museo della Grappa Mazzetti [Mazzetti Grappa Museum] and the Museo dei Tramways a Vapore ed Elettrici [Steam and Electric Tramway Museum]. In nearby Vignale Monferrato, the Callori Palace, built entirely of tuff, deserves a stop, as does the castle above the church. Starting a northward ascent towards Casale Monferrato, you will first reach **Frassinello Monferrato**, near which the medieval castle of Lignano stands, probably one of the oldest of the Monferrato district, and then Cella Monte, where, in addition to the Eco-Museo della Pietra da Cantoni [Pietra da Cantoni Eco-Museum] and the Parish Church of Saints Quirico and Giulitta



© Ente Turismo Langhe-Roero

▲ Vineyards on the
"Strada del Vino" [Wine Road]

Pista Winner

Town/Venue: Nizza Monferrato (AT) Località Piana San Pietro, 1

Pista Winner combines sports and entertainment, emotions and competitiveness. Modern and well-equipped, the karting track is world famous; fully-fledged kart driving lessons are organised at the structure. It is open all year round, with the exception of the Christmas season, but it is necessary to inquire about the procedures and possibility of use by telephone or e-mail.

Info: +39 0141 726188
info@pista-winner.com
www.pista-winner.com



© ATL Alexata

▲ Casale Monferrato,
Gipsoteca Bistolfi
[Bistolfi Plaster Gallery]

(1610), it is possible to see beautiful *infernots*: wine cellar structures dug out of tuff with deep niches in which to store red wine. Continuing, you'll stop in **Rosignano Monferrato**, which offers a breath-taking view from the summit of a tuff rock, as well as a twelfth century castle, the contemporary Roman church of St. Anthony and the village of Colma, from which guided tours depart for the villa of the divisionist painter Angelo Morbelli. You will then reach **San Giorgio Monferrato**, dominated by a castle whose original nucleus dates back to the tenth century.

Casale Monferrato is a worthy culmination of a journey through picturesque hills, ever a source of inspiration for the modern and contemporary artists who have drawn, and lived in, these areas.

Casale is considered the capital of the Monferrato district, and the majestic Paleologi Castle, today the home of the Monferrato Regional Wine Cellar (www.enotecadelmonferrato.it), is well suited to a city of such importance. Roads branch out from the castle's large square, leading to the heart of the city, which boasts many attractions: the Museo Civico e Pinacoteca Gipsoteca Bistolfi [Civic Museum and Bistolfi Plaster Art Gallery] with its prestigious collections; the beautiful synagogue (1595) with the adjoining Museo d'Arte e Storia Antica Ebraica [Museum of Ancient Hebrew Art and History]; the cathedral (eleventh century) dedicated to St. Evasius; and numerous churches and noble residences.

EVENTS

Raduno Internazionale Madonnina dei Centauri

[Madonnina of the Motorcyclists
International Rally]

Town/Venue: Alessandria and Castellazzo
Bormida (AL)

Time of year: 2nd Sunday in July

The "Madonnina" – the name given to Our Lady of Crete by her faithful motorcyclists – was proclaimed "Heavenly Patroness of Motorcyclists" by Pope Pius XII on 11 February 1947. Since then, every year thousands of bikers from all over the world go on a "pilgrimage" to Alessandria, to take part in the exciting International Rally dedicated to the "Madonnina".

www.mcmadonnina.it

<http://mccastellazzobormida.it>

Trade show of vintage motorcycles and cars

Town/Venue: Nizza Monferrato (AT)

Time of year: 1st weekend in September

The success achieved over the years, confirmed by the high number of visitors registered, has made this one of the leading events in the industry.

www.comune.nizza.at.it

<http://nuke.veteran-nizza.com>

Rally del Tartufo [Truffle Rally]

Town/Venue: Asti

Time of year: July-August

One of the most beautiful rally races, along the picturesque trails of Asti.

www.comune.asti.it

From Varallo Sesia to Fobello

Along the Via Lancia to the Emerald Basin

In the footsteps of Vincenzo Lancia, amidst museums, sanctuaries and "record" stops: the oldest Sacred Mountain of Northern Italy, the highest Park in Europe, and the most ancient Walser settlement in the Sesia Valley. An artistic itinerary in a luxuriant natural setting of forests, mountains and streams.

The departure point is **Varallo Sesia** (452 m asl), a town in the heart of the Sesia Valley, with a first stop at Santa Maria delle Grazie [Holy Mother of Grace], a fifteenth church with the famous "Parete Gaudenziana" (1513): twenty-one frescoes by Gaudenzio Ferrari depicting the life and death of Christ. Just a few metres away is the starting station of the cableway leading to the **Sacred Mountain of Varallo** (1491), the oldest of the Sacred Mountains of Northern Italy. Sometimes referred to as the "New Jerusalem", its Basilica and 45 chapels are adorned by 800 life-size wooden and terracotta statues and 4000 frescoes by prominent Lombard artists of the 1500s and 1600s, depicting the life, passion and death of Christ; and all this, immersed in the greenery of a Special Nature Reserve with views of Monte Rosa, Varallo and the Sesia Valley (www.sacromontevallo.eu). The Palazzo dei Musei [Museum Palace], which houses an art gallery with works by Gaudenzio Ferrari and Tanzio da Varallo and other distinguished 15th century masters from the Sacred Mountain of Varallo, is also worth a visit. For lovers of handicrafts, a stop at the Bottega dell'Artigianato, or Artisan Workshop, is a must, to see the famous "puncetto", a precious lace from the Sesia Valley, and other products in wood and typical local fabrics (www.comune.varallo.vc.it). Following the signs for **Val Mastellone**, continue towards Fobello.



© ATL Valsesia Vercelli



ITINERARY

23 km

ELEVATION

421 m

TYPE OF ROADS

Scenic provincial road

GPS START POINT

Lat. 45° 48'50"N

Long. 8° 15'25"E

◀ Varallo, square
and church of San Gaudenzio



Ice Rosa Ring

Town/Venue: Riva Valdobbia (VC)

The Ice Rosa Ring is a car circuit on ice, unique of its kind, at the foot of Monte Rosa. The new homologated CSAI track is operational only in winter. The circuit, 960 m long and 10-12 m wide, offers safe driving courses and day-long mini-courses on track, as well as races and events dedicated to cars. At the go kart ice rink (on average, 300 m long and 8 m wide) it is also possible to rent a go kart (there are 12 motorised 2-stroke Comer 80 karts, equipped with studded snow tires and related protection devices); all necessary equipment is also available. A catering service is available.

Info: holidays and holiday eves, 9.00 to 12.00 and 13.00 to 17.00. Evening hours: Fridays and Saturdays, 8.00 to 11.00. From December to the end of February, depending on snow conditions.

+39 345 6407041
info@icerosaring.it
www.icerosaring.it

The provincial road that connects Varallo to Fobello was called the “**Via Lancia**” on 14 September 2008, signifying the strong connection that Vincenzo Lancia, founder of the famous car manufacturing company, had with the territory. Strongly desired by the Valsesia Lancia Story, the Via Lancia is one of the symbols of the Lancia rallies, during which the road is travelled by Lancia fans in their beautiful vintage cars (www.vialancia.it). Shortly after Varallo, the impressive **Ponte della Gula** [Gula Bridge], which crosses a gorge overlooking the Mastallone stream and is visible from the provincial road, deserves a stop. **Sabbia** is the first town you approach as you travel up the Sesia Valley; to reach the village, nestled on a hill surrounded by woods and dotted with numerous scattered hamlets, a short detour from the main road is required. According to historians, the village of **Cra-vagliana**, which you will pass through further along, is the oldest in the Mastallone Valley. The Parish Church of the Assumption, fifteenth-century in origin but reworked in the Baroque era, is particularly interesting. It contains the Stations of the Cross by Peracino, numerous works of intaglio, two excellent 17th century wooden altarpieces and a beautiful 16th-century panel by Giulio Cesare Luini, a pupil of Gaudenzio Ferrari. Continuing for Fobello, make a detour to **Rimella** (1157 m asl, www.comune.rimella.vc.it), in the **Alta Valsesia Nature Reserve**, the highest park in Europe. With its many hamlets, it represents the most ancient walser settlement

EVENTS

Valsesia in Lancia

Town/Venue: Gattinara (VC)

Time of year: July

A traditional rally offering the opportunity to check out Gattinara, a city that boasts a century-old history and is famous for its prized wine, exported worldwide. During the rally you will be able to visit a winery that has kept alive the traditional process of harvesting and producing Gattinara wine, and roam the hills where the renowned vineyards are located.

www.valsesialanciastory.com
www.atlvalsesiavercelli.it

Premio Vincenzo Lancia

Town/Venue: Varallo (VC)

Time of year: September

The award named after Vincenzo Lancia was established in 1996, stemming from an awareness that to promote a territory it is important to give prominence to its most distinguishing figures: and who better than Vincenzo Lancia. Since then, every two years an illustrious Valsesian is awarded the prestigious prize, in the splendid setting of the Sesia Valley.

www.valsesialanciastory.com
www.atlvalsesiavercelli.it

of the Sesia Valley, founded in the early thirteenth century. A typical walser home houses the Museo Etnografico Walser [Walser Ethnographic Museum] of Rimella, which reconstructs – through objects, explanatory panels, materials and documents – the traditions, crafts, diets and natural remedies adopted by the walser people. The parish church of San Michele Arcangelo is also worth a visit. Back on the main road, after a few kilometres you will get to **Fobello** (m 873 asl, www.comune.fobello.vc.it). Its thirty picturesque hamlets were a 19th century elite tourist destination, and traces of this former glory remain in the form of stately villas (Villa Musy, Villa Lancia, Villa Lanza, Villa Rizzetti, Villa Rossi). Fobello is also known as the birthplace of Vincenzo Lancia, who is buried here in the family tomb. Located, like Rimella, in the Alta Valsesia Nature Reserve, Fobello offers numerous excursion destinations, such as Alpe Sasso San Giovanni, Alpe del Cardone, Alpe del Cortese, Alpe Solivo, and Colle d'Egua, following the GTA (Grand Tour Des Alpes) route. The parish church of San Giacomo – erected in 1545, destroyed after two floods (in 1781 and 1923) and completely rebuilt in 1931 – preserves many works of merit: 16th and 17th century panels, an inlaid choir, and stained glass windows. Near the Church, the ancient Oratorio della Visitazione [Oratory of the Visitation] preserves a polyptych from 1585. Fobello is also home to three small but important museums: the permanent Vincenzo Lancia exhibition, the permanent exhibition of the Puncetto and the Carestia-Tirozzo Herbarium. Shortly after Fobello, make a short detour to the left to reach **Cervatto**, a pleasant village overlooking the Mastallone Valley and the Cervo Valley, surrounded by dense forests and steep cliffs. Numerous excursions are possible, the most classic of which is on the path that leads up to the sanctuary of the Madonna del Balmone. The area surrounding Fobello and Cervatto is referred to as the "Emerald Basin" due to the beauty and richness of its woods.

Vincenzo Lancia

The family of Giuseppe Lancia used to spend its summer holidays in Fobello, a renowned resort of the *belle époque*. It is here that the fourth son, Vincenzo, "Censin" for short, was born, on 24 August 1881. His father dreamed of a law career for him, but Vincenzo loved to visit the workshop that the Ceirano brothers had opened in the courtyard of their home: he became a skilled mechanic and in 1899, at only eighteen years of age, he became a tester at Fiat. The turning point came on 19 November 1906, when, at just 25 years of age, "Censin" created, along with his friend Claudio Fogolin, a car manufacturing company: the Lancia. Thus began one of the most interesting chapters in automotive history, driven by the passion and boldness of the firm's founder. Each model stands for modernity and innovation. Vincenzo's dynamism and lively intelligence are mirrored in his cars, as modern at the time as they are today: think of the Aprilia, created in 1937, which boasted an unimaginable penetration coefficient for that time.

MUSEUMS AND COLLECTIONS

Permanent Vincenzo Lancia Exhibition

Town/Venue: Fobello (VC),
Via G. Lancia

The exhibition is held in Palazzo Giuseppe Lancia, which Vincenzo had built as a schoolhouse. Documents, photographs, newspapers and objects retrace the history of the prestigious Turin

automaker and the life of its founder. The museum tour is spans across four halls that bear the names of famous Lancia cars: Augusta, Ardena, Astura and Aprilia.

Info: open subject to bookings.
+39 347 7568519



Among the plains and the hills

Nature, art, rice and wine in the land of Alessandro Antonelli



ITINERARY

120 km

ELEVATION

144 m

TYPE OF ROADS

Main roads, secondary roads with climbs and descents in the area of the Novara hills

GPS START POINT

Lat. 45°26'55"N
Long. 8°37'07"E



The loop route departs from the capital of the province and eventually re-enters it, crossing through ever-changing plains and hilly landscapes and towns rich in history. An itinerary that combines tradition, culture, art, environment, food and wine.

The tour begins in the heart of **Novara**, at the Basilica of San Gaudenzio, a precious testimony of Novara's Baroque art, with works by Tanzio da Varallo and Gaudenzio Ferrari. Relics of the city's Patron Saint are preserved in the church. The structure of the basilica is topped by a brick dome by Alessandro Antonelli, which towers over the city from its great height of 121 metres. The centre of civic life is represented by the Broletto, consisting of four buildings built between the 13th and the 18th century. The ancient seat of the city guilds and court, today it houses the Galleria d'Arte Moderna Paolo e Adele Giannoni [Paolo and Adele Giannoni Museum of Modern Art], a collection of Italian art from the late 19th and early 20th century. Opposite, stands Antonelli's Cathedral with a mosaic floor in the presbytery area dating back to the ancient Romanesque building. Inside there are valuable works of art by Gaudenzio Ferrari and Lanino and a Romanesque chapel with frescoes dedicated to the life of San Siro. The baptistery (open on Saturday and Sunday afternoons) is the oldest monument in the city and dates back to the early Christian era. Octagonal in shape, it contains a rare cycle of frescos from the 11th century representing the Apocalypse of St. John. Leaving the city, follow the directions for Lake Maggiore on the SS 32; at the height of the village of Cavagliano, take the road to **Badia di Dulzago**, a charming medieval Abbey complex nestled in the countryside. Here, the Romanesque church of San Giulio is worth a visit. Continue towards **Bellinzago Novarese**; in the centre of the town, be sure to see the neoclassical monuments created by Alessandro Antonelli, the Parish Church of St. Clement, the De Medici nursery and the Baroque church of St. Anna. Continuing northwards, you will reach **Oleggio**, where it is possible to visit the parish church

of Saints Peter and Paul built in the style of Antonelli. The Basilica of San Michele is also of great charm. Located at the cemetery, it is one of the oldest examples of Romanesque architecture in Piedmont, with a cycle of frescoes dating back to the year 1000. The route continues on to **Mezzomerico**, which is part of the Cities of Wine in the Novara territory, situated on hills strewn with vineyards. The route continues through a charming road, lined with vineyards and bird snares, that leads to **Suno**, also a centre of wine production, in whose cellars you can taste and buy local wines. Also of note is the Osservatorio Astronomico [Astronomic Observatory], an important research centre and conference venue.

The next stop is **Fontaneto d'Agogna**, where Antonelli designed the St. Alexander crypt of the parish church, based on a singular plan that incorporates elements of Roman classicism. The route continues North to **Cureggio** (289 m asl), where you can admire the Church of Maria Assunta and the octagonal Romanesque baptistery, the church's ancient baptismal font. Continue to Baraggia del Piano Rosa, a vast hilly area crossed by easy trails on horseback or mountain bike. From here, travelling along the SR 142, you will reach **Romagnano Sesia**, dominated by another building by Antonelli: Villa Caccia, of the Caccia Counts of Romentino. This monumental neoclassical resort surrounded by a luxuriant park currently houses the Museo Etnografico della Bassa Valsesia [Ethnographic Museum of Lower Valsesia] and hosts a vast exhibition devoted to the history of wine-growing in the hills of Novara. Also in Romagnano, you can admire the Torrione del Pretorio [Praetorian Tower], originally part of a castle or fortress, in the centre of the town, while along the road to the Sesia Valley stands a medieval bridge dating back to the 12th century, formerly connecting Romagnano to Gattinara across the Sesia River (www.comune.romagnano-sesia.no.it).

Travelling south towards Ghemme, you will approach the Romanesque oratory of St. Martin, near the ancient Castrum of Breclema. You will then reach **Ghemme**, birthplace of Alessandro Antonelli and the main centre of wine production in the area, with the Nebbiolo-based DOCG wine of the same name. In the centre stands an old medieval castle, or Ricetto, whose walls are still visible and surround a rectangle of 12,000 sqm with small courtyards and characteristic houses featuring terracotta decorations. In the parish church, Antonelli designed and built the crypt to the Blessed Panacea, patron saint of the village. Continuing south you will reach **Sizzano**, another City of Wine, where you may admire the church of St. Victor, which houses ruins from Roman, early Christian and medieval times. Nearby stands an irregular ring-shaped castle, with rustic walls formed by pebbles arranged in a herringbone pattern. Nearby is **Fara Novarese**,



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▲ *Novara, Cupola della Basilica di San Gaudenzio [Dome of the Basilica of San Gaudenzio]*



© ATL Novara

▲ *Oleggio, Basilica of San Michele*



© ATL Novara

▲ *Bird snare among the vineyards of the Novara Hills*



▲ *Briona, Solaroli Castle*

castle of the Marquis Solaroli; the building, now a private residence, is surrounded by a park and masterfully restored cottages. Also in Briona, within the cemetery, you can visit the Romanesque church of St. Alexander, with its fine frescos. You will then leave the hills to enter the lower province, characterised by its rice fields. Cross **Castellazzo Novarese**, with its fifteenth-century Gaccia Fortress, and you will reach **Mandello Vitta**, where the tower is the only surviving element of a military building on the ancient Biandrina Road - a medieval road that was of great strategic and economic importance, linking the Valsesia to Biandrate along the north-south axis; the Romanesque church of San Lorenzo, decorated with ancient frescoes, is worth noting. Following the Biandrina road you arrive in **Vicolungo**, where the castle and the medieval stronghold stand in the main

whose cemetery comprises the Romanesque chapel of St. Peter, which contains a cycle of frescoes from the 1400s depicting the seasons. Do not miss the Cantina Sociale dei Colli Novaresi, which was founded in Oleggio (the first cooperative wine cellar of Italy in 1800s), and then moved here in the 1950s. Finally, you must taste the Baci di Fara, traditional and delicious chocolate-based cookies. Continuing towards Novara you reach

EVENTS

Motocross World Championship Grand Prix d'Italia

Town/Venue: Maggiore (NO) – Mottaccio del Balmone

Time of year: June (from 2013)

The most important motocross race in the world, hosted, starting in 2013, on the historical Maggiore route, restored to its former splendour.

Italian autocross land speed championship

Town/Venue: Maggiore (NO) – Autodromo Pragiariolo

Time of year: Easter Monday

European Autocross Championship

Town/Venue: Maggiore (NO) – Autodromo Pragiariolo

Time of year: September

www.sportclubmaggiora.it

Italian Enduro Championship Group 5

Town/Venue: Galliate (NO)

Time of year: March, even years

Organised by Galliate Pro Loco with the Galliate Motorcycle Club, this enduro race takes place in just one day. It takes place every two years and there are around 250 participants for each edition.

Prato Rally

Town/Venue: Prato Sesia (NO)

Time of year: October

A vintage motorcycle gathering in the country, organised by the Prato Sesia Pro Loco during the local chestnut festival and in the context of the food and wine festival, "Flavours of Prato."

For events in the Novara area: www.turismonovara.it

square; also of note: the parish church with the Lanino altarpiece and the ancient complex of buildings. Leaving the village, the oratory of St. Martin is one of the most important examples of Romanesque architecture in Novara; nearby, shoppers can stop at The Style Outlet in Vicolungo, with over 150 shops selling clothing, accessories and household items; the Outlet also hosts exhibitions, events and initiatives throughout the year (www.vicolungo.thestyleoutlets.it). Continuing south and crossing Biandrate, we travel towards **San Nazzaro Sesia**; here Piedmont's Romanesque heritage finds one of its most significant examples in the Abbey of Saints Nazario and Celso, a monastery founded around the year 1000 by the Bishop of Novara and Counts of Biandrate, built in a strategic position near the ford of the Sesia. Built in an area where in the thirteenth century the lords confronted each other, backed by the municipalities, the complex had the dual function of monastery and fortress. The narthex and the bell are Romanesque, while the church was rebuilt in Gothic style in the early 1400s; inside, the frescoes of the fifteenth century are of great value, as well as those that adorn the walls of the cloister, telling the life of San Benedict. Returning towards Biandrate and continuing southward, we encounter **Casalbeltrame**, one of the most important rice growing centres of Piedmont, awarded the mark of Slow City for its production of the black Venere rice, a variety of Eastern origin that has found an ideal habitat in the Novarese. Here, a visit is a must to the new L.Civel Ethnographic Museum of Agricultural Tools, located in an old restored farmhouse, and the Natural Reserve of the Casalbeltrame Marsh, an ideal ecosystem for migratory and resident birds, is located inside a shed for naturalistic observations and educational activities. **Gionzana**, a fraction of Novara, is the last stop of the tour; do not miss the oratory dedicated to the Madonna del Latte, with frescoes dating to the late 1400s, attributed to Daniel De Bosis and Tommaso Cagnola. We return finally to Novara, where the itinerary loop is complete.



© ATL Novara

▲ *San Nazzaro Sesia, Benedictine abbey*

▼ *Casalbeltrame, L.Civel Ethnographic Museum of Agricultural Tools*



© ATL Novara

MUSEUMS AND COLLECTIONS

Museo Achille Varzi

Town/Venue: Galliate (NO) Visconteo-Sforzesco Castle
The museum dedicated to Achille Varzi collects numerous testimonies and exhibits relating to the galliate driver, who tragically perished during practice trials for the GP of Bern in 1948. Visits can be requested by groups, all year round, upon reservation by calling the Galliate Municipal Culture

Bureau; the tour takes about 90 minutes. The castle (northeast tower) is also home to the museum space dedicated to local artist Angelo Bozzola.

Info: the hours and dates for guided tours are prepared annually but the Culture Bureau (+39 0321 800761 / +39 0321 800763), from Monday to Friday 10:00 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoon 3:00 pm-5:00 pm. sociocult@comune.galliate.no.it

The Ossola Valley

The majestic Toce Waterfall



ITINERARY

76 km

ELEVATION

1193 m

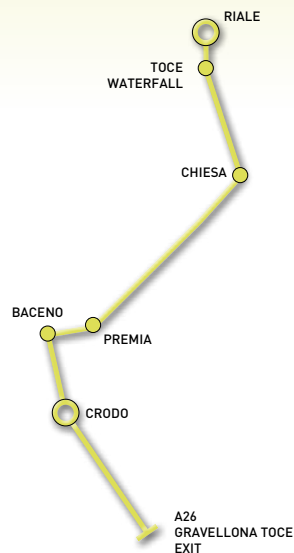
TYPE OF ROADS

Paved and panoramic roads

GPS START POINT

Lat. 45°56'01"N

Long. 8°26'24"E



The itinerary winds along the road that follows the Formazza Valley and reaches Riale, the northernmost settlement in Piedmont. Along the way it is possible to admire one of the most majestic waterfalls in Europe, the Toce Waterfall.

Leave the A26 motorway at the **Gravellona Toce** exit and take the SS 33 “Sempione” towards Domodossola. After Domodossola continue to the “Crodo, Valli Antigorio, Divedro, Formazza” exit and after the intersection head towards Crodo. This is where the Provincial road climb to the Formazza Valley begins. After the Pontemaglio tunnel you will reach **Crodo**, from which you will continue along the ring road to **Baceno**, where it is possible to admire the Parish church, a national monument. From here you will continue to **Premia** where, in the Cadarese area, the “Premia Terme” spa and wellness centre is located; the centre is the most important in High Piedmont and really deserves a reinvigorating stop. The climb then continues: after the new **Foppiano** helical tunnel you will reach the valley bottom; after driving past the localities Chiesa, San Michele e Valdo you will arrive at **Ponte**

EVENTS

Ossola Valley Rally

Location: Cusio-Ossola area

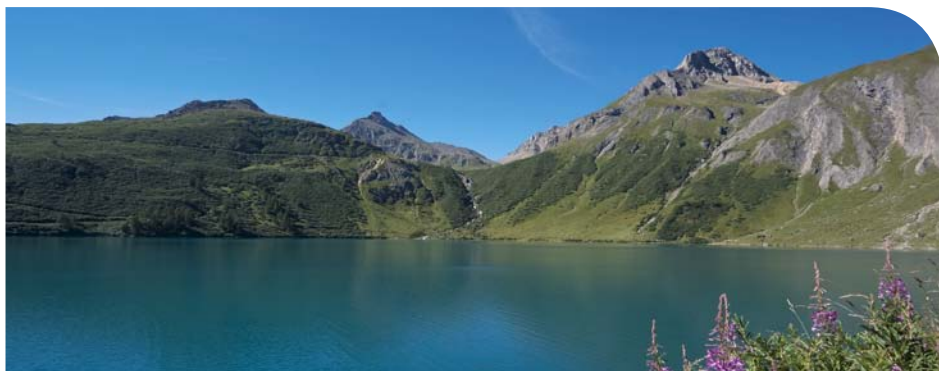
Time of year: June

Born in the month of September 1965, second-oldest in Italy and with an average attendance of about 160 racers each edition, the Ossola Valley Rally, entirely

run within the Verbanio-Cusio-Ossola Province, is a well-established race that is followed at national level.

Info: psarally@aruba.it

www.psarally.com



© Giancarlo Parazzoli - Distretto Turistico Laghi

Formazza from where the road continues in the direction of the **Toce Waterfall** (www.valformazza.it): after a few kms of hairpin turns, once you reach Sottofrua, you can see the majestic waterfall on the left. You will park the car to find yourself in one of the best observation points from which to admire it in all its grandiosity, thanks to the wooden bridge suspended on the precipice. The Frua, as it also known, is the second-highest waterfall in Europe (143 metres); it can only be seen from June to September: its waters are collected upstream, in the Lake Morasco basin and through a tunnel, piped to the Ponte hydroelectric power plant, where they are used for the production of electricity.

The journey continues along the pleasant paved secondary road, that after a few soft bends leads to **Riale**, the northernmost settlement of Piedmont, where our trip comes to an end.

Tourism is the main resource of the area, both in Winter – it is a heaven for cross-country skiing – and in Summer, thanks to the numberless possible hikes; a particularly pleasant hike is the walk on the gravel road that leads forward to the wonderful lush plateau up to the Riale church or, even further up, to the **Lake Morasco** dam.

525 metres long and 55 metres tall, the dam has a maximum capacity of 17,320,000 cubic metres of water. Lastly, as an appropriate ending to our trip, nothing can be better than a pause in one of the typical restaurants; not to be missed is a taste of the local cold cuts and of the delicious Bettlemat cheese.

▲ Lake Morasco

▼ Formazza Valley,
Toce Waterfall

© Scenari srl - Andrea Lazzarini Editore - Siresa (VB)

MUSEUMS AND COLLECTIONS

Gottardo Park Museum

Town/Venue: Castelletto Ticino (NO) via Sempione, 172
Born of Alfio Gottardo's passion for mechanics and technology, the Museum is the result of a long and patient research of hundreds of vehicles and tools from all epochs and from all the

countries in the world (cars, motorcycles, tourism aeroplanes, helicopters, lorries, tractors, snow ploughs...). The museum has an ample car park.

Info: +39 0331923080

+39 340 6716093

info@museogottardpark.it

www.museogottardpark.it

From Viverone to the Valsesia

Traces of history and dreamlike landscapes

ITINERARY

95 km

ELEVATION

1213 m

TYPE OF ROADS

Paved roads with little traffic

GPS START POINT

Lat. 45°25'32"N

Long. 8°03'04"E



Mountain sceneries, spectacular lake sights, art trails and great wines. An exciting cocktail, from Lake Viverone to the historical Serra wineries, from the Romanic churches to the historic centre of Biella, to the industrial sites along the Cervo river. And to top it off worthily, the lush vegetation of the Bessa Natural Reserve and the enchanting scenery of the Zegna panoramic road.

The starting point of the itinerary is **Viverone** (287 metres asl), that deserves a pause for the lake, an oasis of relaxation and distraction. A boat ride around this 6 square kilometre stretch of water allows you to discover the North area, where hotels, bars, restaurants and lakeside resorts can be found, and the Southern area, richer in vegetation and definitely wilder (www.navigazioneviverone.it).

From Viverone, heading towards Cavaglia, you will make a detour to the settlement of **Roppolo** where, inside the castle, you can visit the **Serra Regional Wine Cellar**: evocative cellars with brick vaults and stone walls that host 165 types of wine and 20,000 selected bottles (www.enotecadelalserra.it).

You will return to the SS 228 and you will head Northwest to Piverone, from where an interesting track to the discovery of the Serra

© ATL Biella



hills starts, among wonderful panoramas and numerous Romanesque churches. You will cross Zimone and then reach **Magnano**; here, by the **Bose monastery** (www.monasterodibose.it), you will find the Romanesque San Secondo church, dating back to the XI century.

From Magnano you will reach **Zubiena** easily, where the nature lovers will have the possibility to take hikes in the **Bessa Natural Reserve** (www.bessa.it), an ancient Roman goldmine with a mysterious charm and of a great archaeological interest.

And that is not all: it is also possible to act as gold hunters in the Elvo creek waters, an activity that is still practised by the amateurs of the Biella Gold Hunters Association (www.cercatoridoro.it). Zubiena is located along the long and panoramic **Serra** ridge, the biggest European morainal formation, a remnant of the glaciations. Through the villages of Mongrando and Occhieppo Inferiore you will reach **Biella**, where it will be possible to indulge in a walk in the central Via Italia and visit the main monuments of Biella Piano: the XI century Baptistery, and the Santo Stefano bell tower, the Duomo (built starting from the XIV century) and the San Sebastiano Basilica, richly decorated and considered one of the most interesting Renaissance buildings in Piedmont. The cable railway visit to the Biella Piazza medieval centre, with its paved street and nobility palaces, is not to be missed.

You will resume the journey on the street that runs alongside the Cervo creek to admire the rich industrial archaeology heritage. The XIX century manufacturing complexes, today restored, are more and more often used as premises for cultural initiatives. Examples of this are the **Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto** (www.cittadellarte.it), a centre for art exhibits and happenings, sited in a XIX century wool factory the restructuring of which has kept the original features untouched, and the **Spazio Pria** (www.archiviopria.it), one of the most ancient industrial settlements of Biella, dating back to 1842: today it is a space for exhibitions and theatre performances, as well as for celebrations and trade shows.

Particularly interesting is the **Fondazione Sella**, built in 1980 with the aim to preserve and promote the memoirs that are kept in the Sella family's archives; the building is the headquarters of the "Vittorio Sella" Institute of Alpine Photography.

The itinerary continues along the Cervo Valley. Through the towns of Tollegno, Andorno Micca, Miagliano, Sagliano Micca and San Paolo Cervo you will reach **Rosazza**: shortly before the town it is possible to take the **Zegna Panoramic Road**, a mountain road from which you will enjoy extraordinary glimpses – on a sunny



© ATL Biella

▲ Biella, the Baptistery

▼ Magnano
San Secondo church



© ATL Biella



▲ *Zegna Oasis,
Panoramic view*

day the sight can reach as far as the Monviso and enter the **Zegna Oasis**, the surrounding nature reserve financed by Ermenegildo Zegna in the Thirties. This protected area is 26 km long between the Cervo Valley and Trivero; it gives breathless sights over the plain and endless outdoor sporting possibilities to visitors. At the centre of the Zegna Panoramic Road, halfway between the Cervo Valley and Trivero you can find **Bielmonte** (1500 metres asl), a renowned winter sport resort. (www.oasizegna).

Once you will have reached the end of the panoramic road, you will drive through Trivero, Coggiola, **Pray** and Crevacuore, final stage of the “Wool Road”: an itinerary that connects the cities of Biella and **Borgosesia** through a road dotted with historical industrial sites, with diverse characteristics both in the building style and in the state of preservation (www.docbi.it/stradalana.htm). From here, through Borgosesia, you will enter the Valsesia.

EVENTS

Wool Historical [Lana Storico]

Town/Venue: road in the Biella area

Time of year: June

The Wool Historical [Lana Storico] brings back on the Biella roads the cars and the protagonists of the best editions of the Wool Rally, the race that from 1973 to 2001 has brought excitement to speed.

The race is run as Historical Rally, Regolarità Sport e All Star CSAI.

Info: +39 339 2328543

www.psarally.com

3rd “Wool Ball” [“Gomitolo di Lana”] Rally

Town/Venue: from Camandona to Andorno Micca (BI)

Time of year: September

The “Wool Ball” [“Gomitolo di Lana”] Rally is part of the Official Rally Series CSAI 218 km, the national championship in seven trials. Following the “Ronde” formula, it schedules a single 9000m special trial to be run four times (36 kms overall). It is run on the “Romanina” track, that goes from Camandona to Andorno Micca, legendary trial of the Wool Rally.

Info: +39 339 2328543

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