



# 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 at the Hotel Concord in Via Lagrange close to Porta Nuova station at 11.30am or Turin Airport at 12.30pm. Drive (1.5hrs) 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, peaceful, restored Cascina (farmhouse), Antico Podere Propano, just on the edge of town. Dinner this evening is at an elegant restaurant at the Abbey of Staffarda.



### Day 2



In the morning we visit the medieval town of Saluzzo before a gentle walk along quiet country lanes and through chestnut woods leads us to the 13th century castle at Manta. After a picnic lunch enjoy a private guided tour of the castle with its delightful frescoes. Later in the day we visit the Cistercian Abbey at Staffarda before dinner in town. (7.3km/4.6miles)

### Day 3

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 towards the pretty Maira valley. Dinner in a local restaurant. (12km/7.6miles)



### Day 4



A beautiful drive up the fertile Po valley takes us to the foot of Monviso and the source of the river at 2020m. From a mountain refuge we climb up on mountain trails past pristine lakes enjoying magnificent views of Monviso and the Alps. (6.5km/4.1miles). Dinner in a local restaurant in Saluzzo this evening.

### 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. Time to relax by the pool or indulge in the new Spa in the afternoon. 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 pretty 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. Dinner this evening in a local restaurant. (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. Later in the day we visit the pretty regional capital Alba to experience the passeggiata and an aperitif followed by dinner in a renowned restaurant. (10km/6.3miles)



### Day 8

Return first to the Porta Nuova train station in Turin for 11.00 am and, if required, the airport for 11.30 am.

**Walking**

Shortest day: 6.5km/4.1miles

Longest day: 12km/7.6miles

There are 5 half-day walks offered on the trip and one free day. This is one of our more gentle itineraries except for the hike near Monviso on day 4. We walk on farm and woodland tracks, through vineyards and along quiet tarmac roads. The hills of the Langhe region are undulating with occasional steeper sections. Since we are in an agricultural area the trails can be very muddy after rain so it is important to have hiking boots/shoes with a good grip. The hike on Day 4 is very challenging in terms of terrain. We hike on rocky mountain trails, which are exposed in some sections, climbing and descending approximately 400m. We recommend you wear sturdy walking boots, with good ankle support. Hiking poles are always helpful.

**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:**

17th - 24th June 2016

7th - 14th October 2016

**Price: €2,695** per person    Single Supplement: **€200**

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