

## CHOOSING THE TIME IN MONFERRATO

Art, in its all forms, is the most sublime means of compensation from the fatigues and realism of time, and represents an attempt to re-establish unity between what man desires and what he possesses, between what should be and what is, between soul and nature, between body and spirit.

The turreted and castled countryside in the southern area of Piedmont presents a fine example of what art has created, including medieval castles, noble villas, manors, parks and gardens, forts, museums and galleries. Built on hilly summits, on the plain or mountain, isolated within the greenery of their parks or suffocated by dwellings, they remain a living monument to the past and a privileged testimony in order to understand the territory, always offering new stimuli which can be applied to the present.

## WELLNESS AND HISTORICAL RESIDENCES

### 3 days/ 2 nights

#### **DAY 1:**

Arrival in Acqui Terme. Spend the day at the Terme di Acqui thermal spa and its Beauty Farm.

Roman way: spa bath, Turkish bath and sauna

Spa bath with aromatherapy, music therapy and chromo-therapy

Relaxing massages and face treatments

Lunch in restaurant. *Since the days of the Roman Empire, Acqui Terme has been renowned as a spa centre due to the therapeutic potential of its waters, known and extolled by Plinius, Seneca and Tacito. The main source is "La Bollente" spring, where the water bubbles out at a temperature of 75° C, flowing at 560 litres a minute.*

Pre-dinner drink in the historical Villa Ottolenghi in Acqui Terme.

This will be followed by dinner in the elegant setting of a castle on the hills of the Monferrato zone

Accommodation in boutique hotel/historical manor/hotel.

#### **DAY 2:**

Continue your relaxing stay in the Acqui thermal spa or if you like, visit the historical centre of this distinctive spa town.

Lunch in restaurant/farm stay.

Free afternoon, choose a tour if you like.

Drinks and dinner at the Castle of Morsasco.

*The castle dates back to the XIII century and is of considerable strategic importance; over the centuries it has lost its military connotations and nowadays you will find an elegant residence with large halls and pleasant rooms. The Pallacorda games room is extremely beautiful* Accommodation in boutique hotel/historical manor/hotel.

#### **DAY 3:**

Visit to the castle of Cremolino and lunch there.

*This castle was mentioned for the first time in 1316; apparently the oldest part dates back to the XI century. Tommaso Malaspina left his residence Molare and moved into this new fortress that became the centre of the township, and was then fortified by a second circle of wall in 1460. A drawbridge provides access to the castle, and notwithstanding the numerous building and defensive alterations, it still retains its medieval mark with a massive keep and the fourteenth century polygonal tower.*

**INDIVIDUAL TARIFF BASED ON GROUP OF 20 PERSONS**

**STARTING FROM EURO 660.00**

Other quotes on request

The price includes: ✦ 2 nights accommodation in a boutique hotel/historical manor/hotel in double room B&B ✦ health treatments in beauty spa ✦ 3 lunches ✦ 2 dinners ✦ guided tours, entries to castles as programmed ✦ tastings ✦ insurance ✦ logistics

The price does not include: ✦ transport ✦ drinks at meals ✦ personal extras and tips ✦ anything not specifically stated in "The price includes"

**TOUR OF THE OVADESE AREA CASTLES**

**2 DAYS / 1 NIGHT**

**1st Day:** gathering with the local guide in Ovada in the afternoon, brief introduction to the medieval history of the area and start of the visit to the celebrated Castello Wine Cellars in Tagliolo Monferrato and to the picturesque medieval hamlet. Winemaking has been performed in these cellars since remote 1500. The visit continues with the transfer to the Castle of Roccagrimalda. The settlement, with its distinctive medieval structure, stands on the top of crag dominating the left bank of River Orba and can be reached thanks to a road that follows a narrow ridge. According to tradition, around the end of 1200 a young bridegroom from Rocca succeeded in rising the population against tyrant Isnardo Malaspina, who wanted to exercise the "right of the first night" (jus primae noctis) on the brides of the feud: during the bridal procession the young boy, with a group of friends, did not only oppose to the soldiers who were supposed to abduct the bride but also killed the feudatory, putting an end to that absurd privilege. Since then, every year, the people of Rocca celebrate such anniversary dancing the "Lachera" (Carnival period). Visit to the Lachera museum and to the evocative castle and its circular tower which is 22 meters tall. The latter once hosted the prisons and the torture chamber. At the end of the visit, dinner at Trisobbio castle. Arrival at the hotel and overnight stay.

**2nd Day:** breakfast, gathering with the guide and start of the tour of well preserved castles which are not opened to the public. From Ovada the itinerary leads to Molare and then Cremolino, Trisobbio and Carpeneto. Stop at an agriturismo for a tasting session of typical products. The guided tour then continues crossing the following localities: San Giacono, Capriata d'Orba, Silvano d' Orba, Castelletto d' Orba, Montaldeo, Mornese and Lerma. Stops along the way for gastronomic samplings and guided visits. END OF SERVICES.

**Participation fee per person from Euro 130.00**

(basic fee for 25 paying participants).

**The fee includes:** accommodation in 3/4 star hotel, guided visits as per programme, full board (drinks included), tour leader for the whole duration of the stay, enogastronomic samplings, entrance fees when required.

**Fees do not include:** The coach, extras in general and anything not expressly specified under the heading "fee includes".

### MINI TOUR OF THE OVADESE AREA CASTLES

Gathering with the local guide in Ovada, brief introduction to the medieval history of the area and start of the visit to the celebrated Castello Wine Cellars in Tagliolo Monferrato and to the picturesque medieval hamlet. Winemaking has been performed in these cellars since remote 1500. The visit continues with the transfer to the Castle of Roccagrimalda. The settlement, with its distinctive medieval structure, stands on the top of crag dominating the left bank of River Orba and can be reached thanks to a road that follows a narrow ridge. According to tradition, around the end of 1200 a young bridegroom from Rocca succeeded in rising the population against tyrant Isnardo Malaspina, who wanted to exercise the "right of the first night" (jus primae noctis) on the brides of the feud: during the bridal procession the young boy, with a group of friends, did not only oppose to the soldiers who were supposed to abduct the bride but also killed the feudatory, putting an end to that absurd privilege. Since then, every year, the people of Rocca celebrate such anniversary dancing the "Lachera" (Carnival period). Visit to the Lachera museum and to the evocative castle and its circular tower which is 22 meters tall. The latter once hosted the prisons and the torture chamber. At the end of the visit, lunch at a typical venue serving local dishes and abundant good wine. In the afternoon the visit continues with a discovery tour of well preserved castles which are not opened to the public. From Ovada the itinerary leads to Molare and then Cremolino, Trisobbio and Carpeneto. Stop at an agriturismo for a last tasting session of typical products. END OF SERVICES.

**Participation fee per person from Euro 55.00  
(basic fee for 25 paying participant).**

**Fee includes:** guided visits as per programme, lunch as per programme, drinks included, tour leader for the whole duration of the stay, enogastronomic samplings, entrance fees when required.

**Fee does not include:** the coach, extras in general and anything not expressly specified under the heading "fee includes".

### FROM WEAPONS TO THE ARTS IN PIEDMONT CASTLES

**3 DAYS/2 NIGHTS**

#### **DAY 1:**

Group arrival during the day. Welcome drink.

Accommodation in boutique facility/historical manor/hotel and dinner.

#### **DAY 2:**

Guided tour of Casale Monferrato, a city with a wealth of art, history, traditions and culture. The historical centre testifies to an illustrious past: the castle of the Paleologo family, the XI century civic tower, the cathedral, grand example of Romanesque-Gothic architecture, the palazzos, the Synagogue in the Jewish ghetto ... and an important collection housed in the civic museum: collection of plaster casts by Leonardo Bistolfi, picture gallery and S. Croce Cloister.

Lunch in the Camino castle.

*The Camino castle is immersed in a wonderful park full of centuries-old trees and it dominates the hills of the Lower Monferrato area, covered in woods and vineyards. This castle has a rich history, and was built around the year 1000 for defensive purposes then extended in subsequent stages until the XVIII century; it is still now one of the most beautiful castles in Italy, as well as one of the prides of the Monferrato, both due to its architecture and because of its perfect state of preservation. Vittorio Emanuele II, Umberto I and Vittorio Emanuele III all stayed in the Castle, honouring it with their presence.*

Visit to the Giarole Castle. Drinks and dinner, as guests of Counts Conti Sannazzaro in Giarole.

In 1163, the knights Guido, Burgundio, Assalito and Raineri of Sannazzaro, in Pavia, received permission from the emperor Federico Barbarossa to "construct a castle wherever they liked on their properties", and this led to the construction of the Giarole castle. This castle has always belonged to the Sannazzaro family, and has hosted famous guests including the Gonzaga princes and the Savoy kings. Accommodation

### **DAY 3:**

Creative art workshop as guests of Count Nicolò Calvi di Bergolo in the castle of Piovera.

*In the XIV century, the castle was the property of the Viscounts who turned it into a mighty fortress. It then passed on to the Balbi family. At the moment it is a complex and quite stagy building, parts of it still bearing the mourning paint for the death of Napoleon Bonaparte.*

*Apart from the visit to the castle, the art workshops that Count Conte Niccolò Calvi Di Bergolo personally supervises are of special interest. Lunch in the Castle.*

### **INDIVIDUAL TARIFF BASED ON GROUP OF 20 PERSONS STARTING FROM EURO 475.00**

Other quotes on request

The price includes: ✦ 2 nights accommodation in a boutique hotel/historical manor/hotel in double room B&B ✦ creative workshop ✦ 2 lunches + tastings ✦ 2 dinners ✦ guided tours, entries to castles as programmed ✦ insurance ✦ logistics

The price does not include: ✦ transport ✦ drinks at meals ✦ personal extras and tips ✦ anything not specifically stated in "The price includes"

### **TOURS TO CHOOSE FROM:**

#### **SHOPPING**

**Valenza:** visit to the gold working Showrooms and artisans' workshops

Valenza is world-renowned for its gold work and for its important gold producers and the small craftsmen who set precious stones. Gold and gems are cut and set by artisans who have inherited the ancient tradition. The gold-making craft began developing in the early Nineteenth century.

**The Serravalle Scrivia outlet:** More than 150 of the leading designer brands of clothing, footwear and accessories. Top fashion products at discounted prices, year-round.

#### **GOLF**

Villa Carolina in Capriata d'Orba: 18 holes; gym; beauty treatments

Golf & Country Val Curone in Momperone: 18 holes, DAY SPA

La Serra Golf Club in Valenza: 9 holes

GOLF COLLINE DEL GAVI: 18 holes

Golf Club Margara in Fubine: 18 holes

### **BEAUTY DAY**

The Acqui Thermal spa and Beauty Farm

Roman way: thermal pool, Turkish bath and sauna

Spa bath with aromatherapy, music therapy and chromo-therapy

Relaxing massages and facial treatments

Lunch in the restaurant of the Grand Hotel Nuove Terme

Beauty day also in the new BELLAVITA Relax Center

16.000 mq of Wellness and Relaxion divided into 5 Areas:

AQUA Tropical weather for the whole year

RELAX Thermarium in Grottos

BEAUTY Science applied to beauty

FLOW RIDER The only Indoor Surfing in Italy

FITNESS Latest generation Pool and Gym courses

### **SIGHT-SEEING TOUR IN VINTAGE CAR**

The hills of the Upper Monferrato and Langa areas along the famous "vie del Sale" in vintage cars and motorbikes.

### **DINNER WITH THE NOBLES**

A suggestfull dinner with the owners and Nobles of the Monferrato Castles

### **WEDDINGS IN VILLAS AND CASTLES OF MONFERRATO**

The soul of Monferrato is made of castles, towers, villas, abbeys surrounded by ancient gardens that take you back to the past, and today are a classy and elegant background for weddings and charming events.

From medieval castles to eighteenth century palaces, from abbeys to ancient monasteries, you will be offered a unique opportunity to celebrate an unforgettable and unrepeatable event. Getting married in Monferrato means finding out the discreet charms of ancient nobility, the bride and groom will be treated like royalty.

### **FLIGHT IN A HOT-AIR BALLOON**

The adventure of rising up for a never-ending bird's eye view over the vineyards of the Langhe and the Monferrato zones

### **HUNTING TRUFFLE... BY DAY AND BY NIGHT**

An expert "trifulao" or truffle hunter, with his faithful truffle dog, will lead the group on an evocative walk on the hunt for truffle, revealing some of the secrets of his craft.

## FLY OVER THE MONFERRATO

Alessandria countryside, is catering especially to tourism and also General Aviation. The privileged position at the center between Turin, Milan and Genoa makes it a must stop for European private pilots who want to fly to visit the northern part of Italy or continue on to other marvelous destinations like Toscana, Isola d'Elba or the French coast Riviera which is less than an hour flight away. Many airfield like Alessandria, Novi Ligure, Casale Monferrato,

Acqui Terme or Voghera offer, radio assistance, fuel and fire extinguishers and make your arrival to our country a safe and pleasant one. For those who appreciate good cuisine as well as flying, staying at the Alessandria countryside is one more reason to enjoy the refined specialties of the Monferrato aristocracy and the wide range of Piedmont wines from our cellars. We organize tours not only for pilots, we can also organize specific tours for guest that wish to discover our countryside by fly over it. (tour by airplane and then discover the land by car with overnight and enogastronomic taste)

## FLYING TOURS

### Scenic Tours

- The Monferrato Castle Tour
- Royal tour (Castle and places of the Savoia Family)



Flying tours can be done either by the Guests' private aircrafts with a guide-pilote attending them; Orava Travel also puts at the Guests' disposal the airplanes of the Flying Club of the Countryside with pilots and assistance. It is important to underline that it is possible to fly only when weather is perfectly fine; therefore booked flying tours always depend on the Safety Responsible's descretion.

Programs and cost upon request

### FOR INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS

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