

# Touring holidays of Italy

*Expressions*



Liguria, Piemonte and the Italian Alps fly-drive tour



## Liguria, Piemonte and the Italian Alps fly-drive tour

12 NIGHTS / 13 DAYS

Santa Margherita Ligure

Piemonte vineyards

Cogne in the Gran Paradiso National Park



Begin your touring holiday by flying into Pisa, where you collect a hire car and drive for just over one and a half hours north along the coast. Your first stop is in the charming seaside resort of Santa Margherita, which overlooks the waters of the Tigullian Gulf. Take a few days to explore the Ligurian Riviera, which has long been famed for its mild climate, luxuriant vegetation and colourful fishing villages. After five nights in Santa Margherita, continue further around the coast then head inland to Piemonte, a region of best known for its outstanding wine, Barolo. Other foodie things are famous here too including the prized, white truffles which feature on the menus of all the best restaurants. Spend two nights in Piemonte before driving two and a half hours northwards, past Turin, and into the Italian Alps. Your journey takes you to Cogne, a delightful mountain town nestling in a valley in the shadow of the Gran Paradiso Mountain not far from the Swiss and French borders. Relax and admire the mountain views, enjoy hiking in stunning surroundings and enjoy the superb hospitality and leisure facilities at your hotel. After spending five nights in the Italian Alps, end your touring holiday by driving two hours south to Turin airport where you return your hire-car and fly back to London.

### PRICES

**From £2,920 per person.**

Based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

Alternative hotel options can be offered in most locations as well as room upgrade supplements.

### DATES

This holiday can be arranged throughout the year, however some hotels may close during the winter season.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Scheduled flight with British Airways from London to Pisa, returning from Turin to London
- Group B hire-car for the duration of your holiday
- Five nights' bed and breakfast at the Grand Hotel Miramare in Santa Margherita on the Ligurian Riviera
- Two nights' bed and breakfast at the Villa d'Amelia near Alba in Piemonte
- Five nights' bed and breakfast at the Hotel Bellevue in Cogne in the Italian Alps
- Concierge service and Expressions Holidays regional helpful hints

### WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Early check-in or late check-out at any hotels (although we can arrange this on request at additional cost)
- Any other services not mentioned above, such as transfers and meals except breakfast at hotels
- Personal holiday insurance. This is essential and cover should be in place from when you book the holiday.
- Local tourist tax, usually between Euros 1 and 3 per person per night, and payable locally to the hotel

## Days one to five London to Pisa and drive to Santa Margherita

After your arrival in Pisa, collect your hire car and drive north to the seaside resort of Santa Margherita on the Ligurian Riviera. Spend a few hours observing the many historical and architectural delights of Pisa, such as the Torre Pendente, to make the most of this touring opportunity. Your hotel in Santa Margherita, however, is the Grand Hotel Miramare. Opened in 1903, the hotel occupies a privileged beach-front position in Santa Margherita Ligure on the Portofino Gulf, the views across which are mirrored in the blue hue of the shutters that frame the hotel windows. During your stay here you may want to visit the neighbouring village of Rapallo. Rapallo's iconic image is its waterfront Castello, built on a small rocky outcrop. Now used primarily for temporary exhibitions, the quirky castle is still open to the public. On the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of July, the Castello di Rapallo plays host to a fireworks display in honour of Rapallo's patron saint, Madonna of Montallegro. A vision of the Madonna was said to have appeared to a farmer on the site of the Santuario di Montallegro, a church built at the top of Monte Allegro. The Sanctuary is resplendent in its colourful Italian marble, with the Byzantine icon as its focus. The building has come to represent a real sense of community for Rapallo, with pictures of past residents decorating the walls. Rapallo's impressive connections contribute to its status as a favourite destination on the Ligurian Riviera; in the past it has attracted literary names such as Ezra Pound and Max Beerbohm, while the high-arched Ponte di Annibale bridge delineates the town's connections with Hannibal. Explore further along the coastline by taking one of the many trails from the Santuario di Montallegro, hiking across the Regional Park on the promontory of Portofino, or via a boat trip to Comogli or Portofino. Portofino's location offers a sense of exclusivity that across history has attracted painters and A-list stars alike. Its small port has a few bars and restaurants that are known across the continent, while the beauty of its historical landmarks incentivises a more active day out. The Castello Brown offers a quiet shady retreat from the Italian sun, as well as magnificent views from its hilltop position, and from here, you can walk along the coast to Faro Lighthouse, overlooking the Gulf of Tigullio and a vast pine forest. If time permits, drive down to the famous Cinque Terre to see the precariously perched fishing villages, with their undeniable authentic charm. Dine in the evening at the hotel's restaurant, tasting the refined but creative palate that they specialise in.



Piemonte

## Days six and seven Santa Margherita to Benevello

To reach your next port of call on this touring holiday, drive from Santa Margherita along the coast and through Genoa, a city famous for its exquisite lace. Head inland from seaside Savona, and observe the countryside change as the horizon becomes mountainous. Situated in the Langhe wine region of the Cuneo province, near the vineyards of Barolo and Barbaresco, your next stop is Monforte d'Alba. Spend two nights in the Villa d'Amelia, sampling the best wines of Piemonte and Northern Italy by venturing out into the surrounding vineyards and taking a wine tour. Stop off at the elaborately decorative Parrocchia Madonna della Neve, in Monforte d'Alba, to see its intriguing exterior as well as its interior blue ceilings and ornate golden decoration. Whilst you are there ramble around the ancient walls of Palazzo Scarampi, a somewhat quaint Italian castello, with the appearance of a manor house, which dates back to the 13th century. Take advantage of the lively community spirit that the summer months bring, and watch a jazz concert or theatre performance at the outdoor Horszowski Auditorium, exclusive and private due to its small size. For a fulfilling day-time excursion, perhaps drive up to the wine town of La Morra for a wine-tasting experience, or drive the short distance to Serralunga d'Alba to explore its atmospheric central castello. The larger city of Torino, or Turin, is just an hour and a half northwards. Spend a morning browsing the shops and cafes under

the arcades of the Piazza San Carlo, before taking the glass floating lift up to the top of the Mole Antonelliana, famous for its size, with a pointed roof that reaches high above Torino. Just outside the city sits the Basilica di Superga, an 18th century basilica painted a shade of gold, with spectacular views of both the Alps and the city below. Travel below the city in the underground Pietro Micca Museum, which features nine miles of underground tunnels and the detailed story of the 1706 siege and battle of Torino. Aside from this, the pleasure of Torino, Monforte d'Alba, and the other neighbouring villages comes with walking along their streets and becoming acquainted with the Northern Italian way of life.

## Days eight to twelve Benevello to Cogne

Leave Monforte d'Alba on your eighth day and drive north through Torino, perhaps using this day to explore the city, before skirting around the Gran Paradiso National Park and entering the surreal settlement of Cogne. The Hotel Bellevue in Cogne is in a charming rustic building, surrounded by green countryside, the rising grey faces of the Alps, and their snow-capped peaks. Recognised as a building of historic interest, your Alpine chalet hotel is packed full of character. It offers a wide range of spa facilities and treatments in the quirky but enchanting spa, by the pool's own waterfall. Dine in the evenings in the hotel's gourmet restaurant, which has a widely-known reputation for excellence. This landscape is ideal for the more active

traveller, offering sports such as mountain-biking, mountaineering, horse-riding, and fishing among others. In the winter, Cogne is a popular destination for skiing or skating holidays. For those looking to relax in Cogne, perhaps take a stroll through along the Torrente Grand' Eyvia, or seek out the ponds and mountain refuges of the Gran Paradiso National Park. Take the light walk along the Lillaz Waterfalls trails, exceptional in any weather, and experience the wonder of having such abundant wildlife so close. The Alps are known for their rare flora and fauna, and the range of plant and flower species that flourish in the area can be seen in the highly interesting Giardino Botanico Alpino Paradisia. In the evenings, venture out to see the beauty of the town and landscape as the light fails. To experience even more of the Aosta Valley and Alpine landscape, drive north to Mont Blanc and, unless you are afraid of heights, take the skyway to its peak and see the French and Italian landscape from a new angle. The Aosta Valley's torrents and rivers are considered to be some of the most exciting in Europe, providing some un-paralleled opportunities for kayaking, canoeing, or rafting. Whatever activities you choose to partake in during your five night stay, Cogne is the ideal base for an exciting and varied holiday, and offers an important and intriguing insight into the treasures of northern Italy.

**Day thirteen Cogne to Turin then back to London**

Stay in Cogne for as long as you can on your final day in Italy, before heading south to Turin. Return your hire car, and then embark on your return flight to London.

**DRIVING TIMES**

- Pisa to Santa Margherita: 1 hour 30 minutes
- Santa Margherita to Benevello: 2 hours 25 minutes
- Benevello to Cogne: 3 hours
- Cogne to Turin: 2 hours



Italian Alps



Turin

## HOTELS

These are the characterful hotels that are featured in this touring holiday through Northern Italy. Alternative hotels are available in some destinations - please contact us for full details.

*Expressions*

### LIGURIAN RIVIERA

#### **Grand Hotel Miramare 4 star**

Grand Hotel Miramare in Santa Margherita is a 5-star built in Art Nouveau style, with distinctive blue-green shutters, in a park of palms and Mediterranean flowers overlooking the sea. There are 78 rooms and suites, some with balconies and many with sea view. Stucco work and wooden floors have been restored and together with pastel shades of furnishings, the tone is restrained and elegant. The seawater swimming pool is in the grounds and there is a public beach just below the hotel.



*Grand Hotel Miramare, Santa Margherita*

### PIEMONTE

#### **Villa d'Amelia 4 star**

In the heart of the Langhe region is the 4-star Relais Villa d'Amelia, on a hill surrounded by woods, hazelnut groves and vines. Decorated in the deep pink of the region, with green shutters, this villa-hotel exudes a welcoming warmth. The interior is elegant and tasteful, the gardens carefully tended and the gourmet restaurant, DaMa, has a Michelin star. There are 37 rooms and suites, comfortable and restrained in colour-theme and style, with some deluxe rooms having vineyard views. Much appreciated by our clients.

### ITALIAN ALPS

#### **Hotel Bellevue Cogne 4 star**

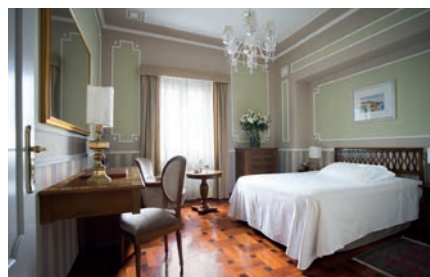
Hotel Bellevue in Cogne is a Relais & Chateaux hotel located in the Gran Paradiso National Park, ideal for a relaxing stay in the Italian Alps or as part of a touring holiday. The hotel has the feel of an elegant, historic alpine chalet. You will enjoy getting out and about amongst the fabulous scenery and could opt for a guided walk, horse-riding, cycling or fishing. Back at the Hotel Bellevue, relax in the sauna and swimming pool or have a soothing massage.



*Hotel Bellevue, Cogne*



*Villa d'Amelia, Benevello*



*Grand Hotel Miramare, Santa Margherita*



*Villa d'Amelia, Benevello*

# MAP OF TOUR OF LIGURIA, PIEMONTE AND THE ITALIAN ALPS



The map below illustrates the route outlined in this touring itinerary, with overnight stops and places of interest highlighted.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

This tailor-made touring holiday is one of several suggested touring holidays we can offer you exactly as it is but also with any alterations you might want including extra nights in one or more places or adding in extra places. All our tours can be extended so that you can include a longer stay in one mountain or lake resort too, perhaps at the end of the itinerary. Do call to discuss the options with our travel consultants.

### OUR TOURS

**Our tailor-made touring holidays are suggested itineraries which can be adapted in numerous ways. They can be fly-drive (with flight and hire-car included), self-drive (with ferry or Eurotunnel included with your own car) or rail and hire-car.**

### FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS

Our arrangements are very flexible in that you choose to travel on any day you want, subject to availability of your chosen transport and hotels. As mentioned above, additional nights can be added at any point.

### OUR PRICES

The sample prices mentioned in this leaflet are generally a 'from' price based on the cheapest season of travel. However, train fares and hotel rates can change (up and down depending on offers), so we give you an accurate price for your holiday when we provide you with a quotation. Our sample prices should be used as an indication of how much a particular combination will cost and to show the differences on average between the hotel categories on offer.

### PRICE INFORMATION IN MORE DETAIL

Prices from **£2,920 per person** based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

### TOUR CODE

ITFDO

The logo for Expressions Holidays, featuring the word "Expressions" in a white, elegant script font on a dark blue rectangular background.

### BOOKING CONDITIONS

Our booking conditions apply to all holidays. A copy can be found on our website and a copy is also sent to you with a written quotation and when you make a booking.

### FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Expressions Holidays offers full financial protection for all holidays you book with us. If your holiday includes a flight, the ATOL (3076) covers the costs of the holiday. If the holiday does not include a flight, it is the ABTOT bond that protects the cost of the holiday. We are also members of AITO (the Association of Independent Tour Operators).

Expressions Holidays  
Lynx House, Pynes Hill, Exeter EX2 5JL



## HOW TO BOOK

To make a booking, just phone us on

**01392 441250**

and we can take you through the details we need and start the booking process.