



In & around Torino


Itinerari della fede

Itineraries of faith

2009/2010

Percorsi di spiritualità in provincia di Torino.
Spiritual itineraries in the province of Torino.





Torino: Chiese di S. Cristina e S. Carlo

Itinerari della fede. *Itineraries of faith.*

Torino: Santuario della Consolata

Sulle vie dei pellegrini.

Torino e la sua provincia vantano una lunga tradizione religiosa, testimoniata da imponenti abbazie e basiliche, numerosi santuari, un Sacro Monte e sicuramente dalla Sindone, che rappresenta nel mondo il “tesoro” più conosciuto. Oggi, allo stimolo religioso queste mete affiancano il piacere della scoperta di un patrimonio di storia, arte e architettura assolutamente straordinario. Nel cuore del Piemonte, la provincia di Torino offre decine di proposte suggestive. Questo territorio era un passaggio obbligato lungo la Via Francigena, l’itinerario dei pellegrinaggi, e di quei tempi lontani sono rimaste le chiese, le cattedrali e le abbazie medievali oggi più note, ma anche tracce meno conosciute che rappresentano ancora vere sorprese. Dove il Medioevo lascia il posto alle evoluzioni artistiche dei secoli successivi, nuovamente l’itinerario della fede si impone come una delle chiavi di lettura dell’intera provincia. Le strade che collegano i diversi edifici religiosi tagliano il territorio mostrandone tutte le dimensioni paesaggistiche. Fede, arte, storia: un viaggio senza confini di credo.

On the pilgrims’ way.

Torino and its province boast a long religious tradition. This fact is proven by the presence of imposing abbeys and basilicas, numerous sanctuaries, one Sacred Mountain and certainly by the Shroud, Torino’s most famous “treasure”. Today, alongside their religious interest, these places offer the pleasure of discovering an extraordinary heritage of history, art and architecture. The province of Torino, lying in the very heart of Piemonte, offers dozens of interesting proposals. This area was an obligatory passage for all those travelling along the Via Francigena, the pilgrims’ way to Roma. All that is left of those far off times are the churches, the cathedrals and the most well-known medieval abbeys. But there are also less known corners which still provide real surprises. Where the medieval style was superseded by the artistic development of later centuries, the road of the faithful again provides a key to the interpretation of the entire province. The roads which link the various religious buildings intersect the territory, revealing the multifaceted landscapes and view. Faith, art, history: a journey beyond the boundaries of creed.



Chiesa di S. Lorenzo - Cupola del Guarini

Chiesa di S. Lorenzo

Spirituality in Torino.

A chance not to be missed: after 10 years, the **Shroud of Torino** - perhaps the most discussed object in humanity's history - will be on display, forming the perfect starting point for discovering the most beautiful churches in the city of Baroque. An incomparable relic or an excellent icon? Answer unsolved for centuries, contrasting ideas that pave the way for doubts and mysteries.

The history of the Shroud of Torino.

First documented in the 14th century, the **Cloth** on which there is impressed the image of a "crucified Man" was owned by the knight Geoffroy de Charny, who gave it to the collegiate church at Lirey. Margaret, descendent of Geoffroy, appropriated the Holy Shroud and sold it to the **Savoy** family who held it at Chambéry. Here, in 1532, there was the famous fire that nearly destroyed the **Shroud**, damaging it in various points. Thereafter the cloth was taken to **Torino**, the new capital of the Duke of Savoy, putting it within easy reach of S. Carlo Borromeo when on pilgrimage; since then, it was never returned to Chambéry but stayed in the Piemonte city to the present day.

The Shroud of Torino and the Duomo.

The Ostension - from April 10 to May 23, 2010 - a moment of great importance for the faithful, will be held in the **Duomo of S. Giovanni Battista**, the city's most important Renaissance monument. While the dazzling Baroque chapel by Guarini is still closed for restoration after the serious fire in 1997 which jeopardized the safety of the relic, the **Diocesan Museum** is open for visiting the collection of sacred art shown in the lower church of the Duomo. The **Holy Shroud Museum**, in the **S. Sudario Church** in Via San Domenico, is the perfect choice for those who want to investigate every aspect of the Cloth.



Duomo

Sindone - Il Sacro Volto



Basilica di Superga

Other sacred places.

The only example of Gothic building is the **Church of S. Domenico**, while the medieval origins of the **Shrine of the Consolata** are now masked by the extension works by **Guarini, Juvarra** and **Ceppi**. The talented Baroque architect Guarini planned the **Church of S. Lorenzo**, symbolised by its soaring dome which describes an eight point star within a perfect octagon. The same Juvarra was behind the styling of the **Church of S. Filippo Neri**, Torino's largest. Then there are two churches with twinned frontages - **S. Carlo** and **S. Cristina** - forming the backdrop to **Piazza S. Carlo**, one of the city's most celebrated spots. The **Church of Corpus Domini** was, instead, built in memory of what was known as the "Eucharistic miracle of Torino". Over the **River Po**, the **Church of the Gran Madre di Dio** stands out, its neoclassical appearance inspired by the forms of the Pantheon. Taking the quaint rack-tramway, one of the symbolic places of religion in Torino is reached: the **Basilica of Superga**. This sumptuous church, from which a unique view of Torino and the **Alps** can be enjoyed, is one of Juvarra's greatest masterpieces. Lastly, the most recent of Torino's religious buildings is the **Church of the S. Volto**, designed by the architect **Mario Botta**: the unusual structure of seven towers rises on a reclaimed former industrial site.

The "Social" Saints.

Torino and Piemonte are also home to some of the most venerated saints, loved for their work as educators and builders of works of charity. Among them **S. Giovanni Bosco**, the founder of the **Salesian** congregation and of the **Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians** «inventor» of Valdocco, forerunner of modern orators. And then **S. Giuseppe Benedetto Cottolengo** who found the religious community still today dedicated to welcoming and caring for the dispossessed. Also **S. Leonardo Murialdo**, founder of the **Congregation of S. Giuseppe**, **S. Giuseppe Cafasso**, master of the clergy and assistant to those condemned to death, and the **Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati**, who is remembered for his Catholic political activism and for his help to the needy.

Also not to be missed:

Mole Antonelliana, symbol of the city and home to the **National Museum of Cinema**
Egyptian Museum, Europe's most important
Piazza Castello, a thousand years of history centred on one place
Piazza San Carlo, Torino's centre of life
Quadrilatero romano
and **Murazzi**, Torino's dolce vita
Royal Residences, the Crown of Delights



Carignano: Duomo



S. Benigno Canavese: Abbazia di Fruttuaria

The crown around Torino.

The **Duomo of Chieri** and the **Abbey of Casanova** are the undisputed pearls of this itinerary which starts from Chivasso, just outside the Piemonte capital. Churches of regional importance and small hidden treasures abound between the banks of the **River Po** and the **gentle hills of Torino**.

Cavagnolo and Chivassese.

The starting point of the itinerary, **Chivasso** was in the past the capital of the Marquisate of Monferrato. Its strategic and political importance can be seen in the monumental appearance of **Duomo**. The Gothic references are mainly evident in the facade in terracotta with a soaring portal, busy with carved figures. Turning north-west, **S. Benigno Canavese** is reached, home to the **Abbey of Fruttuaria**, in the past one of the most powerful abbeys in the region and where **Arduino**, the first King of Italy died, whose mortal remains are now held in the Masino Castle. Founded in 1003, like many other sacred places by **Guglielmo da Volpiano**, it was restored to its original splendour in 2004, resulting in the discovery of a magnificent mosaic depicting two griffins, now visible along the tour route. Yet another brief digression leads to **Cavagnolo** to visit the **Church of S. Fede**, a testimony to what is known as “Asti Romanesque”.

The “capital” of the Torino hills.

Going beyond the Torino hills you reach the lively, dynamic **Chieri**, surrounded by the green areas separating it from the capital. Art lovers know of it for the **Duomo of S. Maria della Scala**, an edifice which, alone, is worth the trip. The more recognisable element of the terracotta facade is the marble wimperg, a gable front with pinnacles typical of Gothic churches.



Carignano: Il Vallinotto



Carmagnola: Abbazia di Casanova



Chivasso: Duomo

In the land of the Counts.

From Chieri via Poirino to **Carmagnola**, the **Synagogue**, from the 18th century, is what remains of an ancient Jewish ghetto. In the **Casanova** area it is also possible to visit the **Abbey of S. Maria Assunta**, one of the main Cistercian places in Piemonte and a very important centre of farming land organisation by means of the system of “grange” (farms focused on cultivation and reclaiming). Of Gothic origin, the church now has the Baroque look given to it in the 17th century.

Carignano and Piobesi Torinese.

From Carmagnola, going over the River Po heading north-west, **Carignano** is reached, a hamlet of ancient origins and buildings of significant history, particularly the majestic **Church of S. Giovanni Battista**: built in the 16th century to a design by **Alfieri**, it has an exceptional Baroque facade of sinuous lines and an ingenious double ellipse layout. Isolated in the countryside, is the **Shrine of Vallinotto** whose bold dome recalls the lines of San Lorenzo in Torino.

Piobesi Torinese is home to one of the most beautiful Romanesque monuments of the province: the **Church of S. Giovanni ai Campi**. Of particular interest are the three apses, interspersed by pilasters

and crowned by small arches, and the frescoes of Ottonian derivation which decorate the apse.

Moncalieri and Testona.

A few kilometres separate Piobesi Torinese from **Moncalieri**; famous for its Castle, a UNESCO world heritage site together with the other Royal Residences, this town also offers the visitor a very ancient and surprising church, the **Collegiate Church of S. Maria della Scala**. Built in the 11th century in the Romanesque style, it was then modified in a Gothic key as seen by the beautiful terracotta facade. In the **Testona** district there is a place of mystical appeal, which refers to the period in which the pilgrims from the Val Susa passed through here on their way to Roma. This is the **Crypt of the Church of S. Maria**, dating back to the 11th century.

Also not to be missed:

Albugnano, S. Maria di Vezzolano Abbey
Carmagnola, Fair of Pepper
Castelnuovo Don Bosco
Moncalieri Castle
Pino T.se, Astronomical Observatory
Pralormo Castle, Messer Tulipano (flower display)
Royal Route of Torino Wines



The Canavese.

The same route taken by the Archbishop Sigerico returning to Canterbury after his pilgrimage to Roma in the year 990 goes through Ivrea. Lesser paths branch off this main route, often leading into verdant depths and interspersed by sacred places where people's devotions blend with artistic expressions of great importance.

Around Ivrea.

*From Torino, secondary roads crowned by medieval hamlets lead to **Ivrea**, the capital of Canavese. Founded by the Romans, a powerful county and*

*then a prosperous "Comune", the town retains traces of medieval glory in the isolated **Bell Tower** of the Abbey of S. Stefano as well as in many details of the **Duomo**: the two towers, the crypt, the dome cladding and some of the arches in the cloister reveal a very prosperous city in the Middle Ages. The **Seminario Maggiore** is noteworthy for its Baroque appearance, designed by **Juvarra**. Away from the old centre there is the **Church of S. Bernardino**, inside*



Settimo Vittone: Battistero di S. Giovanni e Pieve di S. Lorenzo





Santuario di S. Besso



Sacro Monte di Belmonte

of which is a magnificent roodscreen, frescoed in the 1400s by Giovanni Martino Spanzotti. A brief detour northwards leads to **Settimo Vittone** where the **Pieve di S. Lorenzo** and its attached **Baptistery of S. Giovanni** are monuments “signalled by FAI (Italian Trust for the Environment)”. This is a rare example of Piemonte pre-Romanesque art, dating back to the Carolingian period: the numerous frescoes contained inside range from the 13th to the 15th century.

Towards the Valle Orco.

Moving west, along the roads leading to the **Gran Paradiso National Park**, there is an area full of architectural buildings. In the municipality of **Pont Canavese**, isolated on a rocky spur, there is the **Church of S. Maria in Doblazio** which, according to tradition, was founded by Arduino himself; the first church built in Italy in honour of the Mother of God features a curious parallelogram shape with two adjoining high altars. Taking a picturesque route through the woods reach the **Shrine of Prascondù** in **Ribordone** built in 1620 after a miracle. North of Castellamonte there is the **Valle Sacra** (Sacred Valley), so called due to the presence of numerous chapels and sanctuaries: the most famous, particularly for the magnificent panorama over

Canavese, is that of **S. Elisabetta**. The **Valle Soana** holds the **Shrine of S. Besso**, immersed in the **Gran Paradiso National Park**, and which can only be reached by a 2-hour walk from Campiglia Soana. Returning to the valley in the municipality of **Valperga**, the **Sacro Monte di Belmonte** is one of the main religious centres of the province and, since 2003, it has been included in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The Belmonte hill is crossed by this sacred route, where each stage is marked by a chapel: a spiritual path made even more beautiful by the natural wooded environment through which it wends. The route ends at the **Shrine of Belmonte**, which is largely 19th century in style, and from which an incomparable view over the Canavese can be gained.

Also not to be missed:

Alpette, Astronomical Observatory
 Anfiteatro Morenico of Ivrea
 Castles of Agliè, Ivrea, Masino, Mazzé, Rivara,
 Rivarolo C.se, S. Giorgio C.se, Valperga
 Gran Paradiso National Park
 and Nivolet Plateau
 Ivrea, Historic Carnival and Battle of Oranges
 Royal Route of Torino Wines

The Valli di Lanzo.

From Ciriè to the mountain sanctuaries, a powerful religiousness characterises the Lanzo Valleys, not just as a refuge of nature away from the hectic city, but above all a microcosm where each community has always been strongly attached to its patron saint and its own anniversaries.

The Plebana Church of S. Maurizio Canavese.

Just a few kilometres from Torino, in the ancient village of **S. Maurizio Canavese**, a small white church has stood since the Middle Ages. In contrast to the restrained exterior, there is a fresco within of exceptional visual impact, dating back to the end of the 15th century.

S. Maurizio Canavese: Chiesa Plebana

Ciriè.

In a favourable position between Lanzo T.se and Canavese, **Ciriè** has a prosperous past as testified by the aristocratic palaces in the centre and the wealth of its churches, first among all the **Duomo**. Gothic in style, it has a soaring wimperg (gable) on the facade and two and three-opening windows in the bell-tower. The faith buildings include **S. Martino in Liramo**, a Romanesque church noted for its apse and the massive bell tower, and **S. Maria di Spinerano** featuring 15th century frescoes in the near **S. Carlo C.se**.

S. Maurizio Canavese: affreschi della Chiesa Plebana





Santuario della Madonna degli Olmetti



Santuario della Madonna del Ciavanis

Between Lanzo Torinese and Ceres.

The 'antechamber' to the three side valleys, this area offers considerable points of interest and a picturesque railway line. Around Lanzo T.se there are two important places of pilgrimage: the **Shrine of Loreto** dated 1618, while the **Shrine of S. Ignazio** is the largest and best known of the Valli di Lanzo, both for its spectacular location and for its intensely religious life. Worth a visit are the **Shrine of Marsaglia** in **Monastero di Lanzo**, set at an elevation of 1350 metres within a glorious environment, and the **Madonna dei Martiri** in **Balangero**, perfectly fitting into its natural setting due to its elegant 18th century lines and the harmonious shapes. One of the most interesting churches of **Ceres** is the most isolated, the **Shrine of S. Cristina**: a small and delightful little church clinging to the top of a rock providing an exceptional overlook.

The three valleys.

These are the heart of Lanzo's landscape, an entrancing mix of snowy peaks topping 3000 metres height and specific features distinguishing each of them. The **Val Grande** is the most northerly and largest. There are two main shrines in the area, both in an upper mountain setting. The **Shrine of the Madonna del Ciavanis** takes its name from the word

"ciavanes" (cabins) and can only be reached on foot in about 1½ hours: an effort well paid by the panoramas enjoyed from this location's 1800 metres' height. From **Forno Alpi Graie**, the last village in the valley, there can be reached the **Shrine of Nostra Signora di Loreto** which has a stairway of some 366 steps, climbed on knee by the faithful as a sign of penitence. The **Val d'Ala** is the steepest with precipitous walls and narrow gorges which only open up in the pastures of the Pian della Mussa. Among the churches, the 20th century **Shrine of Lourdes** in **Martassina**. The southernmost valley is the **Val di Viù**, marked by steep ravines interspersed with verdant hollows. Between Lemie and Usseglio there is the 18th century **Shrine of the Madonna degli Olmetti**, encircled by an elegant portico.

Also not to be missed:

Ala di Stura, Sundials Tour
Balme, Alpine Guides Ecomuseum
and Pian della Mussa
Lanzo T.se, Devil's Bridge
and "Trekking in città"
Usseglio, Anthropological Museum



Certosa di Banda



Susa: Cattedrale e Porta Savoia

The Val Susa.

A crossroads at which all the main communication routes have converged for centuries, the Val Susa has attracted armies, merchants and, above all, pilgrims to whom were dedicated the exceptional sacred places scattered around one of the Alpine valleys with the greatest wealth of art and culture.

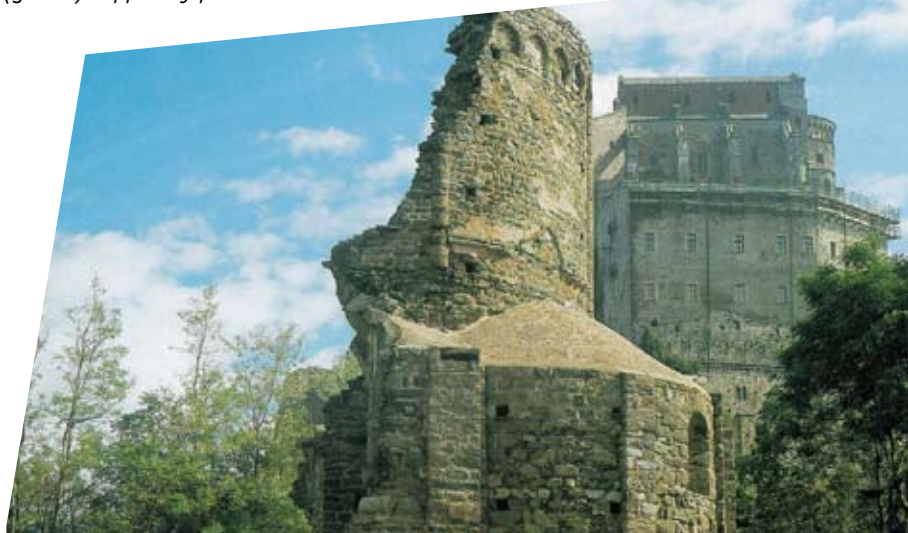
A stone's throw from the city.

So close to the city yet so remote and peaceful: the churches of the Bassa Val Susa, treasures of national importance, are easily reached from Torino.

*The first is the **Abbey of S. Antonio di Ranverso**, symbolic place of medieval Piemonte: built in Romanesque form, it was then altered to Gothic style, particularly the facade with steep wimpergs (gables) topped by pinnacles.*

*In the vestry can be found the 15th century frescoes by **Jaquero**, the leading light of Piemonte late-Gothic painting. To the west, a short distance from the lakes of the same name, is the medieval hamlet of **Avigliana** where the churches of **S. Giovanni** and **S. Pietro** stand out: while the first church shows signs of its Romanesque past in the two and three-opening windows of the bell tower, the second is a good example of the transition from Romanesque to Gothic. Close to the lakes there is the **Shrine of the Madonna dei Laghi**, one of the most venerated in the area.*

Sacra di S. Michele: Sepolcro dei Monaci





Susa: campanile della Cattedrale di S. Giusto



Abbazia di S. Antonio di Ranverso:
Ospedalino dei Monaci

Piemonte sentinel.

*One of the most famous and picturesque sacred places in Italy: no half-measures are needed for describing the Abbey of S. Michele alla Chiusa, better known as **Sacra di S. Michele**. Majestically clinging to Mount Pirchiriano which dominates over the Val Susa, the Sacra is a group of buildings of ancient appeal, alternating between Romanesque in its first structures and Gothic in the abbey's golden period. Plunge into the past by going through the "Portale dello Zodiaco" with its 12th century sculptures, in atmospheres made profound by silence and soft light. The Church of S. Michele is the heart of the complex and is decorated by old frescoes and sculptures.*

Protected charterhouses.

*The wild **Orsiera Rocciavrè Regional Park** protects two charterhouses, still unknown to mass tourism due to their isolation. In the **Certosa di Monte Benedetto**, abandoned in the 15th century and recently restored, the anthropomorphic capitals are remarkable, as are the remains of the cloister. Even more out of the way is the **Certosa di Banda**, an authentic mirror of monastic life of the past.*

The capital of the valley.

***Susa**, in the direction of the skiing districts of Sestriere, Bardonecchia and Sauze d'Oulx, is a hamlet of Roman origins which has much to offer visitors, starting with the **Duomo**: the first impact with the monument is impressive, whose facade is next to the ancient Porta Savoia in a curious blend of the sacred and profane. Although restyled several times, particularly in the Gothic period, the building maintains its original solemn atmosphere of the grand Romanesque churches, of which it forms one of the leading expressions in the province. The **Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art** features work of considerable historical and artistic prestige. From Susa it is possible to go up the **Val Cenischia** where there is the **Abbey of Novalesa** which deserves a separate description.*

Also not to be missed:

Alpi Winter Resort

Bramafam Fort

Exilles Fort

Gran Bosco di Salbertand Natural Park

Royal Route of Torino Wines



Particolare del Chiostro

The Abbey of Novalesa.



Scena della vita di S. Eldrado

Withstanding periods of plundering, crises and decline, the **Abbey of Novalesa** has been, for almost 13 centuries, a bulwark of Christianity and of the art embedded in the wild environment of the **Val Cenischia**, just a few kilometres from Susa. The main road for the Moncenisio Pass, built in the early 19th century by Napoleon, runs today in a high position, distant from the course of the Cenischia river. But, at one time, this important route ran along the valley floor, going through the villages of Venaus and Novalesa. The abbey which rises in the second of these was, therefore, a fundamental point of transit and rest for the numerous **pilgrims** who came from **France** on their way to **Roma**.

Its history.

Built in 726 by the aristocrat Abbone, it immediately became an active centre of culture: the rich library held more than 6,000 works, but was then tragically lost when plundered by the Saracens in 906. A century later, the abbot Gezone and the architect Bruningo ensured the rebirth of this place of faith, works which lasted until the 15th century. From this moment until the 20th century, the abbey has been through periods of abandonment and decline, but this has now been reversed by recent restoration

work. Today, Novalesa, owned by the Provincia di Torino, has been returned to the monks who have opened it to the public. Once again it has the role to which it is best suited: a centre of culture and art, perfectly harmonising with its environmental and social setting of the Torino Alps. The workshop for restoring antique books is also one of the best esteemed in the sector.



Chiostro dell'Abbazia



Particolare dell'interno



Cappella di S. Eldrado

The church.

The current appearance of the building, dedicated to the **SS. Pietro e Paolo**, is due to an 18th century reconstruction in Baroque style, going back to the period in which the abbey was inhabited by Cistercian monks. However, there are also the remains of previous periods, such as the **frescoes of Romanesque** origin that decorate the **presbytery** or those of the **15th century in the vestry**.

The chapels.

The heart of any visit is the four chapels dotted around in the surrounding park. The **Chapel of S. Salvatore** dates back to the 11th century and has a plain, unadorned look, with a few pilasters forming the only ornament. Equally simple is the **Chapel of S. Pietro**, with

a three-arched facade and barrel vault. The **Chapel of S. Maria Maddalena** is richer, embellished by 15th century frescoes showing stories of the saint to whom the building is dedicated. The real masterpiece of the complex, however, is the **Chapel of S. Eldrado** (abbot of Novalesa between 820 and 840), whose restrained external appearance belies the magnificence within.

Interno dell'Abbazia





Cavour

The Pinerolo area.



Pinerolo: Chiesa di S. Maurizio

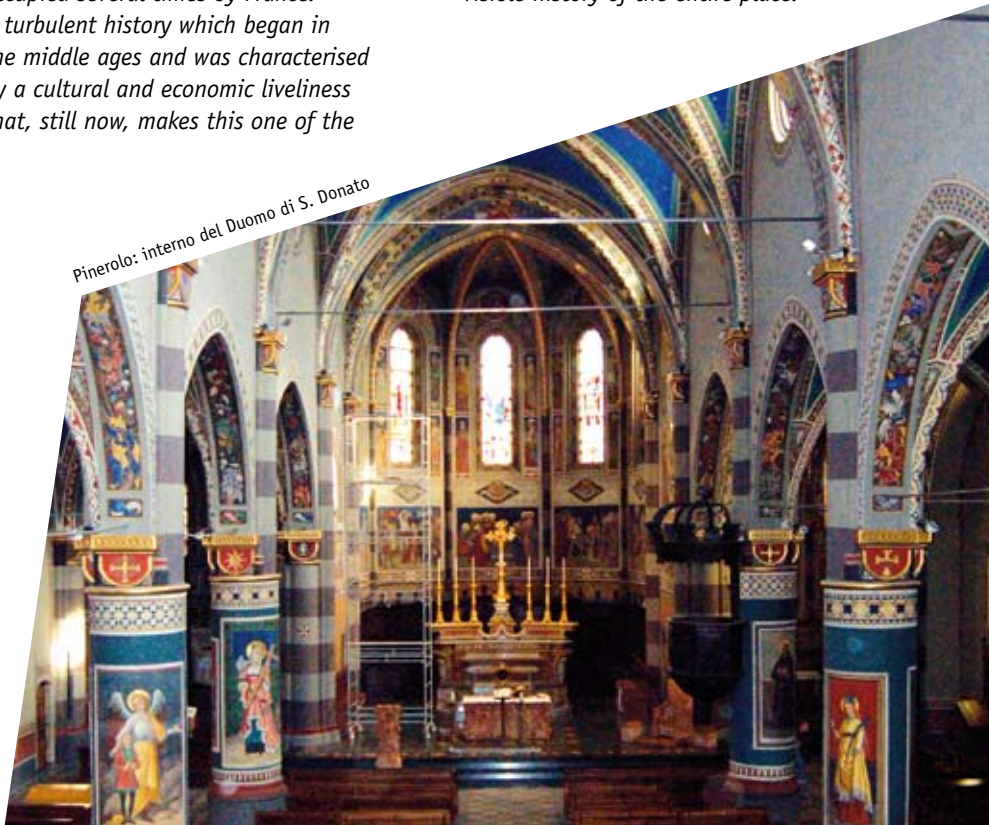
*Bordering between the Torino plain and the hills of **Val Chisone**, Pinerolo is the lively centre of a territory that circles the provincial capital without losing its own specific cultural features.*


Pinerolo.

Pinerolo has always been a fundamental strategic point, to the extent of being involved in many wars and being occupied several times by France. A turbulent history which began in the middle ages and was characterised by a cultural and economic liveliness that, still now, makes this one of the

*most important centres in the province. Easily reached by train or from the motorway, Pinerolo has at least a couple of important churches, religious centres whose influence extends to the entire surrounding territory. This is the case, for instance, of the **Duomo of S. Donato**, built in the far back 11th century, but whose frequent transformations provide a living and visible history of the entire place.*

Pinerolo: interno del Duomo di S. Donato





Pinerolo: Duomo


*The most significant part of the complex is probably the bell-tower dating back to the 15th century and embellished by terracotta decorations. The facade is curious since its appearance is the result of an “imaginative” 19th century restoration in neo-Gothic style, particularly in the soaring wimperg (gables). The inside, on the other hand, is a fine example of Piemonte Baroque. At the top of the Pinerolo hill there is the **Church of S. Maurizio**, a characterising element of the landscape due to its panoramic position. Its Romanesque bell-tower with three orders of two and three-opening windows can be considered one of the town’s principle emblems. Baroque decorations embellish the inside, where there are also frescoes of previous periods, particularly the 15th century.*

Cavour.

*The outstanding feature of this delightful town is the massive bulk of the Rocca, high ground rising isolated in the Torino plain. Right at the foot of the hill there is the **Abbey of S. Maria**, built on the spot of previous places of worship, both pagan and Christian. Constructed in 1307 by inspiration of the bishop Landolfo, it was inhabited by Benedictine monks who were particularly*

active in organising the agriculture of the land: the way the Pinerolo countryside now looks is largely due to the tireless work of the men who gave their lives to God and to work. The Abbey’s dependence on the Sacra di San Michele reduced its political importance, which resulted in periods of decline and even closure. The current appearance of the church is due to a reconstruction in the 18th century aiming to restore the former importance to this sacred place; however, the original Landolfo crypt is retained, a precious example of Piemonte Romanesque. This small room has three apsidal naves, with columns topped by floral capitals: the communion altar is very ancient, made from fragments dating back to Roman times.

Also not to be missed:
Cumiana, Zoom Torino Biopark
Frossasco, Museo del Gusto
Pinerolo, Handcraft Fair
and Historic Museum of the Cavalry Corps
Royal Route of Torino Wines



Stele di Sibaud

The Waldenses.

Luserna S. Giovanni: Tempio

The **Valli Pellice and Germanasca** are home to the most important Protestant community in Italy, surviving the many attempts to repress them. Temples, schools and museums provide an inside view of a population that has strenuously defended its freedom of worship.

Their history.

Begun in the 12th century by the work of Peter Waldo, a merchant from Lyons, this denomination rapidly spread through the Alpine valleys, preaching of a return to poverty. Its members, followers of the Protestant Reform in 1532, were harshly persecuted; in Piemonte, the repression of 1686 forced them into exile, which ended three years later with the “**Glorious Repatriation**” in the Torino valleys. Since 1848, they have enjoyed civil freedom as a result of the Royal Bill signed by Charles Albert of Sardegna.

A Waldensian itinerary.

At **Torre Pellice** there is the Historic Museum, fundamental for understanding the tormented past of the Waldenses, also testified by the grandiose 19th century **Temple**, by the Collegio Valdese and the Casa Valdese, whose library houses over 50,000 volumes.

Both in Val Pellice and in Val Germanasca, there are many other temples for visiting, often nestling in delightful mountain settings: the oldest are rather bare but, since the 19th century, more elaborate styles became widespread. Lastly there are also many Beckwith Schools, built in the 19th century under the aegis of General Beckwith whose efforts allowed the valley peoples to enjoy a widespread level of basic education.

Inoltre da non perdere:

Forte di Fenestrelle
Parco Naturale della Val Troncea
Prati, Ecomuseo Scopriminiera
Strada Reale dei Vini Torinesi









Also not to be missed:

Fenestrelle Fort
Prati, Scopriminiera Ecomuseum
Royal Route of Torino Wines
Val Troncea Natural Park

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Itineraries of faith

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