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Guided walking holidays in the Liguria region of Italy



Welcome to Liguria, "The Land of Colours"

An enchanting and spectacular region surrounded by sea and mountains, the unspoilt Interior will surely transport you back in time.

Join Lorenzo Gariano to experience and savour the flavours of an ancient land bursting with culture and tradition. Combine history with pleasure by retracing some of the old Roman roads and even the ancient salt routes. All this framed by the clear blue Mediterranean and the intensely green mountains to make your holiday truly unforgettable.



There's wonderful architecture, many historic botanical gardens, a delightfully mild climate year-round and a mouth watering local gastronomy - among the best and healthiest in Italy - to draw you back time and time again.



This is a region still unspoilt by mass tourism - it will appeal particularly to the more discerning and adventurous traveller. Our holidays are not rushed - we like you to sample and savour the landscape; you may tailor your holiday to match your personal requirements. Allow us to guide you on a memorable walking experience in this enchanted land.





Your Guide



Meet Lorenzo Gariano

Lorenzo was brought up in Liguria until the age of 18.

He has spent the last 30 years in the UK in Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire where he has attended to his successful Interior Landscape business. Now back in his beloved Liguria, he leads outdoor activities in the area. His knowledge of Liguria is unsurpassed, having hit these trails since childhood. Lorenzo's passion for the outdoors has led him to exotic and remote locations of the world in pursuit of his passion for climbing high peaks.

He has summited distant mountains such as Denali in Alaska, Lhotse and Everest in the Himalayas, Carstensz Pyramid in Indonesia and the much closer Matterhorn.

He holds a valid British certificate in Mountain first aid and rescue.

With his perfect knowledge of both the English and Italian languages, and understanding of the local cultures and traditions you are assured of a very professional, caring and attentive guide.

Looking forward to meeting you in sunny Liguria.



Agritourism and Country Stays



Agritourism is synonymous with country stays in rural settings all over Italy. They provide a very good level of comfort coupled with local produce made or grown by the owners. Now well established and highly regarded, they are the perfect place to relax and stay for walkers and lovers of the outdoors.

Our main appointed country stay is in the pretty little village of Poggi on the Italian Riviera. Your guide Lorenzo grew up here where he still presently lives. The appointed accommodation is in the heart of the village, beautifully restored and offers apart from the excellent accommodation, a range of wonderful olive pates, oil and wines all genuinely grown and produced by the owners "Food tasting of these delicious



products are arranged by the owners as a means of introducing you to the wonderful flavours of Liguria which boast a very healthy and wholesome Mediterranean diet.

There are a number of otherwise very good alternative stays that offer the same level of comfort and lovely surroundings all at a short distance away should the above be unavailable at the time of your reservation.

We are confident that this type of stay is perfect for the kind of discerning holiday you require and will make your whole trip altogether an unforgettable and pleasant experience.

Full details of Enrico and Tiziana's agriturismo in Poggi, Imperia can be found on their own website - we are sure you will find it very appealing.





Villas, Gardens and Museums



The Abbey of San Gerolamo Della Cervara

San Gerolamo Della Cervara A visit to these wonderful gardens and abbey can be added to your visit to Eastern Liguria in combination with the five land walks or S. Fruttuoso near Portofino. A wonderful classical and formal garden, with box hedges, sixteenth century fountains and plants of great botanical interest such as the secular Pepper tree, the rare pink caper, and the coral tree amongst just some of the amazing wealth of species this garden

contains. Particular attention must be devoted to the imposing 500 year old wisteria in a stunning courtyard overlooking the romantic sea. The Benedictine monastery was built in 1364 on top of a steep rocky headland. It was to enjoy periods of glory and power together with dereliction and abandonment. Many great personalities of the past stayed here including the great thinker Francesco Petrarca, San Catherine of Siena, a number of Popes, Andrea Doria (whose tomb is in San Fruttuoso near Portofino) and inventor Guglielmo Marconi. The complex has been beautifully restored including the magnificent cloister and the great hall with it's ceiling decorated in the 15th century.

Visits can be arranged with at least 15 days notice.

Villa Durazzo - Santa Margherita Ligure

Villa Durazzo The Villa, set in a stunning park stands on a hill overlooking the gulf of Santa Margherita Ligure. The 17th century building is adorned with statues and rich paintings, tapestries, marbles, ceramics and Venetian chandeliers. It is enchanting to walk through these majestic rooms in the footsteps of the noble owners of the past: De Ferrari, Borzone and Piola are some of the great artists from the past whose precious canvases you can admire. You feel a magical sense of splendour outside too in the magnificent park that surrounds the house. The English wooded area, a small citrus grove, and the Romantic zone are some of the picturesque highlights. This garden is also twinned with the spectacular Hanbury Gardens of la Mortola on the opposite side of the Riviera.



The Park is open all year round.



Hanbury Botanical Gardens

Hanbury botanical gardens These beautiful gardens at la Mortola, close to the French border were founded in 1867 by Sir Thomas Hanbury, assisted by his brother Daniel who created his garden of exotic plants which came from all parts of the world. A Philanthropist and a Quaker, Thomas Hanbury until his death in 1907, helped the local population in every possible way. His great interests in the botanical world encouraged him to donate some land near London where the famous Wisley gardens were founded.

Bust of Sir Thomas Hanbury The Hanbury gardens were sold to the Italian State in 1960, and are presently managed by the University of Genoa.

Perched on an unspoilt promontory, on 18 Hectares, the gardens enjoy amazing views of the blue Mediterranean below and glorious panoramas of both the Italian and French coastlines. You will find architectural delights at every corner, with echoes of distant China in many parts, a legacy of Sir Thomas' journeys as a tea merchant. His mausoleum lies in the centre of the property constructed in a beautiful Moorish style. The vast collection of Agave and Cactus is really impressive, with huge mature specimens, as is the Australian and the cycad zone. The gardens are crossed by the wonderful ancient Roman road where Popes and Emperors have trodden its cobbles. Lorenzo your guide is a special member of this amazing and unique garden and clients have the rare privilege to visit the interior of the beautiful villa in its grounds (otherwise closed to the public). Inside you will find rare paintings and valuable period furniture. Marble of different tones beautifies all the floors and fittings. On the top floor there is an amazing veranda-balcony with stunning views and a well preserved fresco depicting an epic battle in Pavia.



Open all year except Monday.

Villa Nobel Villa Nobel - Sanremo

This was the residence of the famous Alfred Nobel after which the "Nobel Prize" was founded. The illustrious Swedish scientist chose to live in the mild climate of Sanremo because of ill health. The exterior of the villa looks like a rich tapestry - it displays various architectural elements enriched by many decorative features. It has been only recently beautifully and painstakingly restored, and the splendour of the past has finally returned. It is also surrounded by a manicured park with exotic plants and it is possible to view where Alfred Nobel conducted his experiments with dynamite by the sea pier. Inside we can visit



the laboratory where he carried a lot of research. Also a multimedia room with period screenings of the mid 19th century and a whole area showing a list and description of each Nobel Prize winner since the start.



The Olive Tree Museum - Imperia

The Olive Tree Museum This is a unique museum in the whole world dedicated to the history of the olive tree, which is so synonymous with this area. It was founded to honour and praise the olive, which has blessed the birth of successive civilisations of the Mediterranean coast. Of particular interest is the room showing the trading routes of the olive oil which in ancient times opened up the whole of the Mediterranean. The exhibits come from many different places

and are part of the Carli family who own the brand name of the well respected olive oil. The museum will stimulate the visitor and inspire a feeling for the history of this amazing tree whose praises are sung by the old Testament, the new Testament and the Koran, by Homer, Virgil, Dante, D'Annunzio, Pascoli and many other writers.

The Olive tree museum is open to visitors every day except Tuesday; entrance is free.

Parasio, Imperia

This is the nucleus of old Imperia, perched high on the hilltop with lovely views of the sea below. The fabric of the old town is medieval, yet very well preserved and restored. Of particular importance "Palazzo Pagliari" and the cloisters of the monastery of San Chiara. Lovely old cobbled alleyways, churches and small piazzas make this a fascinating place to visit and capture the past.



All year round due to mild conditions.

Villa Grock - Imperia



Adrian Wettach alias 'Grock' Imperia became the town of Adrian Wettach's heart. An amazing entertainer and artist who was sought after by kings and governors of the whole of Europe in the early 20th century. In 1951 he created his own travelling circus with which he travelled to every European city. Bewitched by the beauty of western Liguria he bought a large plot of uncultivated land in 1927 overlooking the sea. In just a few years he built a villa with fifty rooms, rich in marbles and precious decorations, called "Villa Bianca" after his adopted daughter. The building is an amazing

and imposing mixture of Persian, Baroque, Art Nouveau and Rococo elements. It is surrounded by a garden equally bizarre in design. In 1959 after the death of the

great artist, who spent the last years of his life there, Villa Bianca went into decline. In 1975 his daughter sold the whole property. The villa, which has recently been acquired by the Province, is to undergo careful restoration to return it to the town and it's people.

The Naval Museum - Imperia

Portrait of Christopher Columbus in the Naval Museum One of the most important maritime museums in Italy. Fourteen sections dedicated to every aspect of maritime life from map making to shipyards, etc.



The museum boasts the largest historical technical maritime library in Italy (currently being set up) with more than 115,000 volumes at the disposal of students, scholars and enthusiasts. The museum will be relocated soon to much larger premises by Imperia's harbour.

Open Wednesday and Saturday.

The Village of the Painted Doors



A charming village nestling in the olive groves of the Prino Valley close to Imperia. From being an anonymous village, it has become an open picture gallery thanks to an imaginative idea of using the doors of houses as if they were canvasses. A project that has allowed the village to welcome more than 72 works of art painted over the years by well known artists that have earned the village the title "The Painted Village of Italy". Valloria is a maze of ancient alleyways, an incredible open air art gallery that can be visited *free every day of year*.

Villa Garnier

Villa Garnier Villa Garnier Situated just a few hundred meters from the sea, Villa Garnier is a stunning white building nestling amongst palm groves and is now run by an order of nuns. With its interesting portico and hallway full of object d'art, the villa is surrounded by lovely exotic gardens. The famous French architect Charles Garnier designed the Paris and Monte Carlo opera houses. The building, construction of which started in 1871, stylises with its high bell tower the whole panorama around the Arziglia area of Bordighera.

Visits are arranged by appointment.





The Flower Festival of Corpus Domini

A truly spectacular flower festival held every June in all of the surrounding Riviera towns and villages: Diano Marina and Imperia hold the largest and most impressive displays. Hundreds of people work hard through the night to cover the roads and alleyways with beautiful patterns of flower petals often depicting religious themes. The effect at first light is both dazzling and touching. Different varieties of flowers cover the road forming splendid multi coloured patterns destined to be destroyed when the traditional procession passes over them and young children in white receive their first communion. A real must see!





Guided Walks

The Old Bridge Trail Santa Brigida

Distance: approx 6 km | Time: 2 - 2.5 hours | Difficulty: easy | Height gain: 275 m



An easy and charming circular walk starting at 450 m above sea level amongst chestnut and oak trees with the backdrop of the Mediterranean. It begins at the chapel of St. Brigida dating back to 1425. Well signposted. It descends rapidly in the rio Merea valley. When we arrive close to a modern dwelling we immerse ourselves into the thick woodland and follow an old pathway which will lead, after a very pleasant walk, to the first of the old stone bridges built in the early 800 hundreds. From here looking down on the far left on the river bed we will see an old stone dwelling once used by a hermit called pre' Luigi. It has been often said that he was able to see into the future and would talk of flying men and carriages without horses. Nearby you will admire relaxing rockpools and a lovely little waterfall. The trail then starts a gentle rise and we will come across the typical old stone "caselle" these are often rectangular drystone dwellings used in the past by the shepherds for shelter and are found in this part of Liguria only, in the interior up to an altitude of approx a 1000m. We then descend on the left towards the valley and we come across the the cultivation of lavender, once very diffused in this area. We then come to the second stone bridge, this one older than the first and called Ponte Martelli, once used to connect the two villages of Dolcedo and Pietrabruna. Soon after the bridge the trail gets quite steep and we walk through the old olive groves which are so typical of this area. We will come across the "Casa", an old building now in ruins that was used by the shepherds to shelter the sheep. From here we follow the signs which will lead us back to the old chapel.

Note: this pleasant walk can be finished by an interesting visit to the old charming village of Dolcedo on the opposite valley famous for it's old bridges and fascinating medieval streets, here we can take a pleasant refreshment by one of the many delightful café bars.



The Small Athens Amongst the Olive Trees

Distance: 8 km | Time: 4 - 5 hours | Difficulty: Medium hike | Height gain: 400 m

Villa Faraldi is known as the small Athens because of it's well established and renowned Theatre festival held every July. The village has a small colony of International artists encouraged here by the arts. Poem tablet in Villa Faraldi Lovely extracts from poems hang on slate frames throughout the old alley ways. This mid mountain hike starts at the top of the village were we quickly gain height and leave behind the olive trees. The tiny chapel of St. Bernardo will greet us on the way and we will carry on north towards Pizzo Aguzzo.

After consistent steep walk with breathtaking views all around, including the blue

sea, we will arrive at the high point that separates the two valleys: one gentle towards the sea and the other steep. When we reach Pizzo Aguzzo (sharp peak), we can decide depending on the group and weather conditions: to carry on towards Pizzo Evigno, the highest point in the immediate area at over 1000 m (superb views); or to retrace our way back towards the small hamlet of Tovo. As we descend we will notice the predominance of the roverella which is the small Mediterranean oak. Another small rural chapel by the name of St. Sebastiano will be on our itinerary towards Tovo which is very characteristic for it's assembling of old buildings along the edge of the hilly crest. Here the old Roman fountain can be viewed. A brief walk on the secondary road will take us back to our starting point in Villa Faraldi where we can relax at one of the many charming trattorias.



The Orchid Paradise Trail

Distance: 7 km approx | Time: 2.5 - 3 hours | Difficulty: easy-moderate | Height gain: 350m



This circular scenic walk circumnavigates the beautiful and most preserved medieval hamlet of Cervo (officially classified as one of the most beautiful in Italy). We will walk through different vegetation environment that constitute the "Mediterranean macchia". The walk starts in the square at the top of Cervo by the old Feudal Castle and descends rapidly down a footpath towards the sea and the famous beach of "Porte ghetto". At the bottom a sharp turn to the left will take us on the historic old Roman road, a remnant of this ancient route that conducted to Gaulle. Another sharp left leaves the road and climbs steeply amongst olive trees - an abandoned land which is being recolonized by spontaneous vegetation such as the maritime broom and the Aleppo pine. We then enter the small country park of Ciapa, with thick woodland of Maritime Pine. We keep on the right and reach the promontory that separates Cervo from Andora. Here the view is truly stunning of the sea below and on very clear

days, which is often, you can admire the Tuscan coastline. We take a sharp left and arrive on the "colle of Castellareto" which is the first nucleus of the local inhabitants even before the Romans. We keep walking through lovely countryside and it is here that in Spring, the flowers of rare wild orchids can be spotted in the grassland. We walk past the masts on top of the hill and take the sharp road heading south in thick woodland. Eventually the olive groves recolonize the land and we eventually come past some ruins from which the old chapel of San Giuseppe stands proud. Here we leave trail marked 1 and we take no 21 where further down we cross an old bridge and through olive terraces we reach the old square at Cervo. A visit to this medieval village is a must with it's impressive church of St. John the Baptist, beautiful historic palaces, a small museum of the olive oil, and of course lovely trattorias and bars perched high up with fantastic vistas over the dramatic sea below.

Le Cinque Terre (The 5 Lands Trail)

Distance: 13.5 km | Time: 5 hours + | Difficulty: Moderate | Height gain: 220 m



This area of Liguria is by excellence one of the best in Italy for it's wonderful walks and not surprisingly very popular. In this area we have a wonderful choice of coastal and high level routes depending on the requirement of the party and almost anything can be customized to suit accordingly.

We begin with the classic "Sentiero Azzurro" or blue trail since it follows all along the sea from Riomaggiore, the first of the famous villages perched on the clifftops above the sea, to the fifth and last called Monterosso (hence the 5 lands). We begin in Riomaggiore in the quaint station square and

walk on to the lovers trail (couples beware: many here have asked for marriage vows overwhelmed by the beauty of the landscape and the blue sea below) we walk it's entirety with the stunning views around. We then reach Manarola and cross through the pretty centre towards the direction of the cemetery where we start a steep section and then level out for a nice walk to Corniglia amongst the scent of the local Mediterranean herbs.



We descend on a series of long sections of steps to the village where a drink or ice cream is most welcome and then we carry on to Vernazza on a series of lovely bridges and stunning scenery. Here begins the most involved part of the route and the steepest, where care must be exercised on some of the narrow paths. We eventually reach Monterosso crossing through cultivated orchards and vineyards.

This walk is an absolute must for coastal path lovers and ideal if arriving to Genoa Airport where we will arrange to pick you up and drive the short distance away where we can stay in one of the local pensiones (bed and breakfast) on the coast. A wonderful way to start your exciting holiday in Liguria. Trips to the elegant resorts of world famous Portofino and S. Margherita Ligure nearby can of course be arranged at your request, with equally stunning walks in the regional Natural Park of Monte Portofino, to reach the stunning location of S.Fruttuoso.

Portovenere To Punta Mesco - The Ultimate Hike

Distance: 35 km | Time 10 hr + | Difficulty: strenuous | Height gain: 750m

A most spectacular traverse on the main ridge from one main promontory to the other. It follows the whole coastline below with immeasurable beauty and views. Please note this is a major hike requiring anything



from 10 hours and beyond with a distance of 35 km. Although incredibly rewarding, it requires a good level of endurance and fitness, allowing for unforeseen delays and possible camping. More details are available for serious participants.

Carpasio: Hiking Through History

Distance: 10 km | Time: 5-6 hours | Difficulty: medium-hard | Height gain: 425 m



This is a really lovely hike in the Argentina valley along the old borders of the then Republic of Genoa and the Piedmont Reign. We leave the car in the pretty village of Carpasio and walk to the top where the old chapel is. We cross the B-road and immerse ourselves in lovely woods on an old muletrack. This section is quite steep and will require a good level of fitness. The path carries on through the welcome shade of woodland and then peters out to grassland where we arrive at the proximity of a spring water site. We then carry on north-west and eventually arrive at Passo Caranche, situated at 962 m a.s.l. We then enter beautiful thick beech and hornbeam woodland and after a long pleasant descent we reach the tiny hamlet of Fontanili. Here the view

is truly stunning of the valley around. There is a fountain and bench, ideal for a welcome break. From here we then take a steep muletrack directing us to the village of Glori.

Just before the village there is a sign marking the old border. We can take an optional short visit to Glori, and then turn left in the opposite direction where, after crossing a nice wooden bridge we arrive soon after to the pretty sanctuary of the Madonna of Lourdes: this is another lovely spot for a rest.

We then climb up a clearly defined path through lovely water features and rock formations, until we reach a fairly flat summit and take one of the paths that in about an hour will lead us back to Carpasio.



Please note that this is quite a strenuous walk with paths that at times will require clearing from overgrown vegetation, but has it's rewards with the peace and remoteness of the area.

Bordighera to Seborga

Distance: 7 km | Time: 2.5 - 3 hours | Difficulty: easy but steep | Height Gain: 400m

We start at the lovely old citadel of Bordighera alta. The lovely old part of this chic resort once the place of many illustrious visitors. It is here that Monet was inspired to paint many of his masterpieces of the Riviera. We take the well marked out path and then join for a while a road admiring the dramatic sea below and exotic cultivations



of flowers which are exported throughout Northern Europe in the winter months. After approximately 40 mins. we reach the truly stunning hamlet of Sasso all built in stone, here it's really worth looking around the ancient alleys and absorbing the medieval atmosphere.

We carry on the incline out of the village and follow the path that will lead us after an hour or so to the very unusual principality of Seborga. This fabulous location has enjoyed Principality status (not recognized

by the State) since very ancient times. Once we reach this airy location at above 500 m above s.l. we can wonder the maze of intricate and interesting streets and spend some time here. Villa Garnier Swallows nest here in vast numbers and the skies seem to be always full of their cheerful and amazing acrobatics. You will also find a Post Office and a Mint in Seborga where they issue their own stamps and coins. Mimosa trees abound around the hills which at this altitude grow extremely well, and in the winter the whole the area is a riot of fabulous yellow with the foliage used commercially in the flower industry. There are many wonderful trattorias with stunning views overlooking the Cote d'Azur and in the foreground Montecarlo. A recommended place to eat and rest for the views is on the veranda of the "Principe" restaurant. From Seborga many paths lead to further scenic walks in the mid mountain range above and the possibilities to walk and hike in the area are endless amongst woods and invigorating air. Our transport will then take us back down to Bordighera alta and depending on time we can visit Villa Garnier, erected by the famous French Architect in 1873, a stunning white building nestling amongst palm groves and now run by an order of nuns which by appointment are happy to let us visit the interesting portico and hallway full of object d'art and the lovely exotic gardens with the sea below.



Please note that another day could easily be spent in Bordighera by visiting other gardens and villas. This place was known in the past century as the paradise of the English who used to spend their whole winter in this remarkably mild winter location and it is said that they used to outnumber the local population. Some of the streets are still named in English and Bordighera houses the Bicknell museum on local history, the first tennis courts in Italy, and a British cemetery to name but a few.

Gouta: The most beautiful Alpine forest in Liguria

Distance: 6 km | Time: 3 hours | Difficulty: Easy | Height gain: 180 m

Alpine trail This walk, apart from it's sheer beauty, goes to show the remarkable variety of landscape that exists in this region from the subtropical vegetation at sea level below, only just over an hour away, to the full Alpine environment here. We start at 1200 m a.s.l. at the Restaurant and refuge Gola di Gouta (on clear days here you



can see right over to the distant sea) and amongst lush green meadows, we take the short piece of road down to then start our pleasant circular walk. Then suddenly we leave the open meadows and enter the magical world of the white abies fir trees in a totally alpine environment. We follow a lovely and practically flat route into the woods where deer abound, in the refreshing and pungent air. It's worth noting the effects of light and shade the sun plays through the thick woods. We eventually reach a stream and veer left on a brief incline and then after a short descent we arrive at the lovely open meadows that mark "Margheria dei boschi" - an ideal spot for a picnic. After a brief walk back on the provincial road, we reach our starting point at the restaurant. This walk is particularly recommended on hot days where you can relax in the fresh Alpine air.

The Alpine Trail

Distance: 9-11 km | Time: 5-6 hours | Difficulty: Medium hard | Height gain: 530m

This is by far the most beautiful trail in Liguria and one of the best in Europe, for the diversity of the Landscape, the beauty of the rocks, very comparable to the Dolomites, abundance of fauna, flora and history. The Alpine trail was hacked through the rocks in between the two World Wars. Our hike begins at Colle Melosa at approx 1600 m a.s.l. near the new refuge F. Allavena. A very well-run establishment, open all hours and offering food and accommodation should you want to extend your stay in this beautiful part of the Region. We take a sharp left turn at the Fontana Italo and start the defined trail. We will instantly notice extensive rhododendron plants which cover entire slopes and that in late spring provide a fantastic riot of colour. We then reach



the connection to the Alpine trail itself. The trail has literally been hacked by hand through the steep rock, an amazing human feat. The route will take us through rock tunnels on exposed (but safe) ground, where beautiful dried stone walls support the steep descent. The deepest cave in the whole region is present, making the area an attraction for pot-holers. Via Ferrata The rock faces around us are very impressive: another source of interest for seasoned rock climbers. These limestone faces are very similar to the Dolomites in aspect, and not for nothing they are known as the "small Dolomites". Here we also have two excellent "Via Ferrata" routes of a very difficult grade and we can also include these in the itinerary for those keen on tackling them.



On our steep descent amongst spectacular views, we arrive at a lovely old fountain fed by cool spring water: wonderful refreshment on a hot day. We then reach the crux of the hike, arriving at the base of a deep and impressive gully called Gola dell'Incisa. To reach the top, a series of beautiful twisting tracks

have been made, supported by dry stone walling built with the aid of the Region and the Alpine Club (some of it has been recently covered by a landslide). We reach the top with a height gain of some 100 m. Here we have a choice to take a left turn and include in the hike the summit of M.Toraggio at just less than 2000m a.s.l. (approx 1 hour extra) which joins this point again on a circular route. Having reached the top and turn left, we enter French territory and follow the north eastern side of Mount Pietravecchia: 2038 m. We walk through a wood of larix and note again the low growing rhododendron shrubs and pick the wonderful sweet and juicy fruit of the wild raspberry bushes (August to September).



We then rapidly reach, on easy meadows, the Valletta Pass which will then take us down a lovely path to our original starting point. The beauty of this long trail is of course both from the spectacular panoramas and botanical aspects. The particular position of these mountains in an Alpine setting, but yet so close to the Mediterranean, have produced amazing endemism such as the spectacular flowering of the peony officinalis, unique to this area, and of the saxifrage lingulata. I have had the privilege to also spot chamois, marmot and many birds of prey such as falcon.

Viozene to Mount Mongioie (2630m)

Distance: 10-12 km | Time: 6 hours+ | Difficulty: Hard - Strenuous | Height Gain: 1345m



A truly spectacular high mountain trail starting in the pretty hamlet of Viozene with it's pretty wooden cabins and houses. A good bar- restaurant here where we can take time to relax before and after hike.

We start just after the village church and take the steep but easy (not exposed) trail up the mountain. Walking through shady woodland we reach after approx 30-40 mins a turn to the left that

will quickly take us to the direction of the Mongioie Refuge (accommodation can be arranged here in the summer months if you prefer to stay in this pretty area) situated at 1500 m. We then take a steady hike north on well beaten and signposted track towards a plateau called: Piano dell'Olio at 2000 m. We then carry on with spectacular views of the deep valley below to eventually reach a col at the base of Mt.Mongioie called: Bocchino dell'Aseo. This area at 2300 m. was a passing through point for many traders and pilgrims that in the distant past used this route to Enter Liguria and the sea from Piedmont where we presently are. This is an excellent spot for a rest and a picnic plus a scenic area for photographs. We can then carry on if we feel more



adventurous and fit to reach the summit of Mt. Mongioie via a steep and impressive gully where good footwear and a steady head for heights is required. (easy scrambling) having reached the top after an approximate 80m gain, we then head left towards the summit which we can see directly in front of us some 300m above. The ascent is steep and steady but does not present technical problems. We reach an outcrop of rocks just before the summit, and can choose through a series of different routes easy or more demanding how to reach the top. Having arrived at summit where a large metal cross is placed, we can see the breathtaking views on a clear day that stretch south to the sea and north to the distant Alps. There is also a small booklet where comments and names can be put down as a record. We then turn back to rapidly descend to Viozene.

** Can also be done in the generally clear and pleasant days of Winter. Last section requires the possible use of crampons.*

Quarzina - Pizzo d'Ormea (2480m)

Distance: 8-10 km | Time: 6-hours | Difficulty: Hard | Height gain: 1130m



Pizzo d'Ormea Another spectacular high mountain trail starting from the hamlet of Quarzina at 1350m. We start on a path that zig zags it's way steadily up until we reach the symbolic chapel in memory of the Partisans in the World War II. Here at 1500 m we take a turning at the side which takes us up a series of gentle undulating meadows steadily and progressively up. May and June are wonderful times in this area to spot a beautiful wealth of wild flowers including the

orchid. We carry on slowly gaining height, and after a series of grassy mounds and rests (steep but easy walking on grass) we reach a plateau where a large military dish is positioned. We can then decide if we want to reach the rocky summit at about 130 m above. Please note that this last section will require some previous scrambling skills and a head for heights is definitely required for some exposed sections. (no rope is necessary however) as we reach the top where a metal spike is positioned, the view on a clear day is just awesome. However unbelievable it may seem, on crystal clear winter days I have seen the distinctive feature of the Matterhorn from this point (hundreds of kilometers away) and the marvellous coastline of Corsica to the south. We slowly descend and make our way back on the gentle grassy slopes.

** Can also be done in Winter as above. Last section requires the use of crampons.*

Saccarello Monesi to Mt Saccarello (2200m)

Distance 8-10 km | Time: 5-6 hours | Difficulty: Medium Hard | Height Gain: 830m

A hike to the tallest mountain in Western Liguria. We start from the small ski resort of Monesi above 1300m. A series of gentle and sloping meadows will follow our route with pretty areas of woodland pine trees providing an impressive contrast to the lush meadows which abound with many species of wildflowers. The hike progresses through steeper meadows where traditional Alpine cows are often visible near the drinking troughs. We then arrive at the attractive Rifugio Sanremo at just over 2000m where a rest and lunch is welcome. Then we follow the well defined path and arrive after some 40 mins to the imposing statue of the Christ Redentor overlooking the

distant sea below. Amazing views from here with Corsica well visible on crisp clear mornings in winter. A short walk takes us to the round summit at 2200m.

An ideal hike even in winter (crampons may be necessary for brief sections at top).





Prices and what is included

Prices for guided walks, held at 2008 levels for another year, are inclusive of country stays:

- from 600.00 Euro per person per week sharing an apartment sleeping 2 people. 15% discount for out of season (mid November to mid March)
- from 550.00 Euro per person per week sharing an apartment for 4 people (generally 2 double beds with sharing facilities, ideal for friends or couples that don't mind sharing). 15% discount for out of season

Please note that all apartments are self catering.

Note: To provide you with a high level of service and personal care we limit groups to six people per trip. Individual walkers are very welcome! Please let us know if you wish to stay for a longer or shorter period than stated above. All stays can be tailored to the individual's requirement.

If you wish to visit the "Cinque Terre" region you are strongly advised to fly to Genova Airport and not Nice. We can then arrange to pick you up in our comfortable vehicle and take you to the destination required. You will stay in a very pleasant three star hotel near one of the 5 villages where the trail starts. You can then decide whether to stay in the region or move on and complete your holiday on the Western Riviera of flowers where most other walks are based. For this more distant trip please add 25% to relevant price above. This area is particularly recommended for winter walking.

If you wish to mix the accommodation for your stay between country stay (Agriturismo) and mountain refuge, just let us know and we can tailor your holiday and cost accordingly.

Please remember: You can tailor the choice of walks to suit your personal preference and abilities.

Booking and Payment Terms

After you have signed and returned the booking form and we have agreed that we can accommodate your requirements, we will arrange payment of a 20% deposit via cheque or credit card. You undertake to pay the remaining balance no later than 4 weeks of departure date.

As soon as we have your booking we will forward to you our confirmation invoice with full details of the holiday that has been booked.

If you are resident outside the EEC countries, we reserve the right to add a reasonable administrative charge to cover expenses incurred for overseas communications or correspondence (i.e: visas or couriers).

Your right to cancel

If you wish to cancel your booking, your request must be given in writing. To compensate us for administrative charges and mainly the country stay booking, the following scale applies:

- Cancellation more than 28 days before departure: loss of deposit.
- Cancellation 10-28 days before departure: 50% Total Price
- Cancellation less than 10 days before departure: 80% Total Price

NB: you are advised to check your Policy Insurance.

What is included in the price

- Pick up from Imperia train station or coach point. Genoa and Nice are both equidistant airports (80-90 kms) and a regular train and coach service is available for Imperia. (please ask for details on time table when booking) We can of course pick you up from Airport (Nice and Genoa only) for small additional fee.
- Driving from the UK is also a popular option. Having your own car in Liguria can enhance your stay and give you of course additional freedom. Drive times vary from 15-17 hours (from Calais) through France on the Auto route to the South of France and cross into Italy. The Drive through the Black Forest, Switzerland and the St. Bernard tunnel To Val d'Aosta in Italy is both spectacular and delightful. It takes longer but can easily be broken with an overnight stop.
- Accommodation in one of designated country stays for the period required (preferably in Poggi).
- All guiding and transfers to each walk-hike including pick up from country stay where necessary.
- Packed lunches for during day of hikes (consisting of home-made local specialities). You are responsible for bringing your own liquid refreshments of choice. Please state if you have any special requirements or allergies.
- Accommodation in refuge where requested and wanting to extend walk in area of choice. Evening meals are generally between 10-15 euros in these establishments for generous servings of local cuisine.
- Transfer to any local evening fetes and village celebrations, including visits to any museum and or botanical gardens (entry fee not included).

What is not included in the price

- Drinks, breakfast and evening meals (the area offers a wonderful selection of local restaurants, trattorias and pizzerias with local produce - prices vary from 15-20 euros for two people in a pizzeria to 20-30 euro each in other eating establishments). Lorenzo will accompany you to a restaurant one evening in three - transport on the remaining evenings can be made available but at extra cost.
- Winter heating in the accommodation (the winters are so mild, you may not need any).
- All entry fees to museums, villas, botanical gardens where requested.
- Transfers to and from Airports (Genoa and Nice only) - small additional fee if requested.
- Flights. Low-cost flights are available from a number of different airports, eg: Easyjet fly Luton to Nice, Ryan Air fly Stansted to Genoa.

What you are advised to bring

- Your European Health Insurance Card (the replacement for the E111 - available through <http://www.dh.gov.uk/travellers>) valid in EEC countries for equivalent NHS treatment and hospital care.
- Your own personal insurance to cover activity of walking-hiking etc. (Harrison Beaumont seems to be a popular choice for walkers). Please note that Liguria is a steep region with at times exposed paths. We do not assume any responsibility for any accidental slip or fall that will result in an injury. Other easier and flatter routes are however also available.
- Sun protection for at least 8 months of the year, long trousers for routes with a lot of vegetation on paths and plenty of liquids for warm days (2-3 litres on long sustained hikes).
- Your own basic first aid to include compeed blister kits (your guide will carry a more comprehensive kit).

Our Obligations

Walking Liguria accepts responsibility that all itineraries described are as closely and detailed as possible on paper as they are in the countryside. In case of bad weather on any given day we will endeavour to find an alternative walk/hike (i.e. a coastal route) or visit other places of interest such as those listed on Villas, Gardens and Museums page. You accept and understand that due the nature of some of the paths in higher mountain regions and the more changeable weather conditions, the final decision rests within your personal guide on whether to undertake the walk or not. This decision will be purely made with your own personal safety in mind. In the case of any amendments made due to force majeure, no refunds are possible.

We also reserve the right in our discretion to restrict or exclude from any activity at any time, any person or persons whose behaviour is such that it is likely to cause distress, danger, damage or annoyance to any other client or property. In the event that you have committed act of misconduct or damage to property, you undertake to indemnify and hold harmless Walking Liguria Tours.

Your Obligations

You undertake to consult with your doctor in connection with any existing and previous illness or disability which may affect your ability to take part on the walk-hikes, and any physical exertion that may induce illness or otherwise prevent you from taking further part in any walking activity. To notify us if you suffer from any food allergies or any other type of allergy your guide needs to be informed about. By signing the booking form, you undertake and confirm that your mental and physical condition are sufficient and fit for the purpose of joining and participating in the walks that you have booked.

Booking and Payment Terms

Payment of your deposit via UK debit or credit card is now possible via a secure connection to PayPal (this method attracts a 5% surcharge) - please visit the website for a link.

Personal cheques are also perfectly acceptable, or bank transfers can be made to:
HSBC Bank

Account name: Mr.Lorenzo Gariano

Sort code: 40-35-04

Account: 21284770

After you have signed and returned the booking form with your cheque or credit card authorisation in respect of the 20% deposit, you undertake to pay the remaining balance within 4 weeks prior to the date of departure. As soon as we have your booking, we will forward to you our confirmation invoice with full details of the holiday that has been booked.

If you are resident outside the EEC countries, we reserve the right to add a reasonable administrative charge to cover expenses incurred for overseas communications or correspondence (ie: visas or couriers).

UK address:

Lorenzo Gariano
102 The Elms Colwick
Nottingham
NG4 2GW

Italian address:

Lorenzo Gariano
Piazza Roma 2
Poggi
Imperia
18100 Italy

Telephone Italy: 0039 0183 666465
or mobile (07860) 919217

email: info@walkingliguria.co.uk



Booking form

Name:
Address:
Town:
Postcode:
Country:
Telephone: (office | evenings | any time | mobile)
email:

Dates of your visit (dd/mm/yy):

Start:

Finish:

Please state which airport you will be flying to:

Tick if you require transport to/from the indicated airport (extra cost):

How many, including you, will be in your party:

(the most we can accomodate is 8)

Names of other party members:

Please indicate your level walking/hiking experience and abilities:

(beginner | regular walker | long-distance trekker | experienced mountaineer)

Indicate any of our walks you would be particularly interested in doing (you don't have to decide now):

Please list any pre-existing medical conditions (eg: allergies, required medication) - state 'none' if you are confident you have none that are relevant to your stay:

Indicate any of the villas, gardens and museums you would be particularly interested to visit (you don't have to decide now):

If you have any comments or questions, please enter them here:

Where did you first hear about walkingliguria.co.uk ?