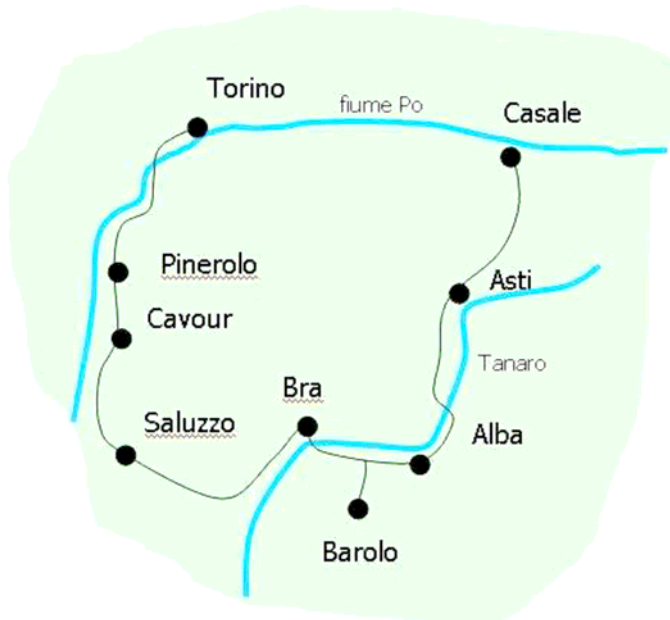


Cycling Safaris

PIEDMONT 2010



Bordering on France and Switzerland, Piedmont is renowned for its truffles, superb food and some of the best wines in Italy - a true paradise for gourmets!

The region also encompasses truly magnificent scenery of gentle green hills and lovely valleys with picturesque villages tucked away. We cycle along quiet roads surrounded by green fields, rolling hills and imposing mountains.

Piedmont was also home to the House of Savoy, the royal family that ruled Italy from Unification in 1870 until abdication in 1946.

Our safari starts in Turin, a beautiful city with something for everyone - from museums and fine art to some of Italy's best shopping....

Throughout the week we explore castles and medieval villages and take in stunning views en route. We stay in Bra, "the gourmet capital", and there is also the opportunity to sample fine wines and truffles in Alba to ensure you don't miss out on the true Piedmont experience!

This cycling safari is the perfect way to enjoy plenty of fresh air, breath-taking scenery and well-earned Italian dinners!

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 **Individual arrival Turin**

The tour starts with a meeting of the group at 6.30pm in our first hotel. We then spend our first night in the vibrant city of Turin. The rich history and culture of Turin is evident in the breathtaking Baroque architecture, ornate palaces and churches.

Day 2 **Turin - Pinerolo** **45km**

Today we cycle on flat roads along the river Po. We ride on cycle paths or small roads to the foot of the mountains. A highlight of today's cycle is the spectacular hunting palace at Stupinigi, a masterpiece by the architect Fillippo Juvarra and royal residence of the Savoy Family. A cycle through lovely parkland along the river brings us to our overnight stop - Pinerolo.

Day 3 **Pinerolo - Cavour - Saluzzo** **55km**

Today's cycle brings us along flat country roads through orchards and vineyards to Cavour with its curious "Rocca", a morainic hill rising from the centre of this otherwise flat region. Today we will visit a small castle where we taste some typical regional food. We spend the night in the small medieval town of Saluzzo.

Day 4 **Saluzzo - Fossano - Benevagienna - Bra** **60km**

Today we cycle towards Fossano with some uphill stages along the way. There are a lot of historic sights along the way - from the 15th Century frescoes in the castle at Manta to the ancient Roman town of Benevagienna. Our evening meal is bound to be treat as Bra is know as the "the gourmet capital" of the region!

Day 5 **Bra - Pollenzo - Barolo - Alba** **45km**

We are now in the Langhe wine-growing region, characterized by rolling hills, vineyards and winding roads. We stop in Pollentia on the bank of the river Tanaro and pedal on flat roads beside the river with some up hills to Barolo. As a reward for the climb we enjoy some fine wine tasting in Barolo Castle (included in the tour package). We spend the night in Alba, home of the white truffle.

Day 6 **Alba - Asti** **45km**

A magnificent route through vineyards and along panoramic paths takes us to Asti, in the heart of Monferrato. You have the opportunity to visit the historical centre with its famous towers, the romantic monuments and the splendid gothic cathedral.

Day 7 **Asti - Casale** **60km**

Today we cycle over the charming Monferrato hills to Moncalvo, where we enjoy beautiful scenery. In the afternoon we reach our final destination - Casale, located on the left bank of river Po. We can celebrate the end of the tour by exploring this wonderful town with its many churches, castles and ancient courtyards, or simply sit back and toast a great week with a glass of local wine!

Day 8 **Homeward Bound**

Tour ends after breakfast.

GROUP TOUR DATES

Saturday

April 17

May 15

June 12

July 10

August 7

September 11

GROUP TOUR PRICE

€930.00 per person sharing

€1,090.00 for single occupancy

INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE

- 7 nights accommodation in 3 & 4 star hotels, with breakfast
- 7 dinners
- Bike hire
- English speaking guide cycling with the group
- Luggage transfer with support van
- Wine and food tasting

Extra's available on request:

- Additional accommodation
- Transfers

BIKE INFORMATION



We provide 21 gear bikes
Equipped with:
bags, locks and a repair-kit including
a pump and a water bottle.

PIEDMONT - GENERAL INFORMATION

THE TERRITORY

Piedmont borders with France in the west, with the Aosta Valley and Switzerland in the north, with Lombardy in the east, with Emilia-Romagna in the south-east and with Liguria in the south. It is divided into the provinces of Alessandria, Asti, Biella, Cuneo, Novara, Turin, Verbania and Vercelli; the regional capital is Turin. The name Piedmont derives from its dominant geographical characteristic, the fact that it is situated "at the foot of the mountains", the Alps. In Piedmont there are no Pre-alps. The territory is 44% mountainous, formed by an arch of mountains extending down to the Po Valley from the Alps and the Appennines. It is crossed by the confluents of the Po.

CLIMATE

Piedmont is characterised by three types of climate. However, since it is not subject to maritime influences, the climate is generally considered continental, with pronounced thermal ranges. Winters are cold and dry; summers are cool in the hills and rather hot down in the plain. For further information, consult the website www.arpa.piemonte.it

CLOTHING

We advise you to wear comfortable shoes and various layers of practical clothing to be prepared for sudden changes of climate and temperature; don't forget a K-Way or a poncho, both indispensable in the event of rain, besides a light jacket for cold days and evenings. Sunglasses, a light-coloured hat, protective suntan cream and insect repellent sprays are important, especially in summer. Cycling trousers and gloves are advisable but not essential. Helmet: Italian law does not require cyclists to wear a helmet, but we consider it important to wear one for safer travelling. During the tour you will have the chance to visit various religious institutions, such as churches and convents, where you must be appropriately dressed (covered shoulders, shoes or sandals, etc.). Also remember to bring a first aid kit with you.

FOOD AND SHOPS

In Piedmont you will discover that the regional cuisine is full of tasty dishes starting from the first courses (agnolotti, cold cuts, soups and rice) to main meat dishes with boiled meat, accompanied by seasonal vegetables and local specialities like Alba truffles, mushrooms, etc., excellent cheeses, to end with desserts such as Krumiri biscuits. One famous dish is "Bagna Cauda", a hot dip for raw vegetables made of oil, garlic and anchovies. Another is cheese fondue. The region is also famous for its excellent wine production, for example Barolo, Barbera, Dolcetto, Nebbiolo, Moscato and Brachetto.

In hotels, international breakfast with a varied buffet is usually served. However, we point out that the typical Italian breakfast served in bars is just a cup of coffee and a cream-filled or jam-filled croissant.