

Things to do around...

la Meridiana

ALBERGO IN GARLENDAL DAL 1978



This small guide offers a few suggestions to invite you to the part of Liguria around “La Meridiana”. Garlenda is a small, lovely village amid a countryside that is still rich in atmosphere and charm of the genuine Liguria. The region is criss-crossed by age-old roads, like the monumental Roman road “Julia Augusta” or the alpine path called “the salt road” that linked the coast to the plain: itineraries that offer the vacationer the charm of history combined with the enchantment of the Mediterranean wilderness. Roaming amid terraced olive groves facing the sea and vineyards laboriously carved out of stony hills, it is still possible to find ancient villages that have miraculously resisted the siege of concrete. Stop for a while in this oasis of peacefulness simply to enjoy the sunshine, the red of the geraniums, the light air scented with rosemary. Then go off again, searching for other treasures hidden in this land: its local products, now world famous. If you travel along the “Road of Wine and Oil from the Sea to the Mountains” you can shop straight from nature and take home our best souvenirs: extravirgin olive oil, tasty black olives, delicious “pesto”, fresh and fruity wines. This land, rustic and gentle, is the most secret Liguria, the real one. Come and discover it. We will be waiting for you here, “far from the madding crowd”, in the shade of “La Meridiana”.

Edmondo and Alessandra Segre

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Golf



A short walk from “La Meridiana”, Garlenda Golf Club offers golfers an 18-hole course, spread over more than 6 km, par 72. From the championship tees, the course provides skillful players with a hard test and offers a pleasant challenge for those playing at a higher handicap from normal tees.

Garlenda Golf Club is beautifully located in the typical Ligurian countryside. The pleasant course rolls among ancient olive trees and pine woods. From the highest holes the players can enjoy some moments of rest admiring the wonderful view of the hills sloping down towards the sea.

At the Club House, the golfers will find a very warm atmosphere, a game room and a restaurant to enjoy lunch without leaving the Club.

Our Reception will gladly arrange your sporting day by booking tee-off times, private lessons and practice sessions at the Club and renting trolleys and golf carts. Upon returning to the Hotel after a long day on the course, you can refresh yourself with a plunge in the swimming pool, a sauna or a relaxing massage.

Golf Club Garlenda
Tel. 0182-580012 - Fax 0182-580561
E-mail: info@garlendagolf.it
www.garlendagolf.it



The Swimming Pool

Throughout the summer the swimming pool of “La Meridiana” is at the disposal of our guests, who also have available a warm spa. Our life-guard will gladly give you bath towels and arrange your sun-bathing beds. If at noon you do not feel like moving for lunch, our barman Franco will serve you drinks with some tasty little things or a light lunch chosen from the fresh summer dishes prepared by our Restaurant “Il rosmarino”.

Bicycles

Guests can freely use our bicycles and mountain-bikes. You can choose one of the many itineraries starting right from the Hotel door and you'll discover how pleasant it can be to ride in the mediterranean woods, scented with broom in spring and spotted with pink oleanders in summer. There are no cycling lanes, but the road to Albenga and further on to Alassio is almost entirely level and panoramic. For your bike excursion please visit: www.altaviadeimontiliguri.it.

Horse-Back Riding

“Le Giare Country Club”, just a short walk away from “La Meridiana”, offers riding lessons in its training centre. Experienced riders can enjoy relaxing rides along the quiet lanes of the valley of the Lerrone river, under the supervision of qualified trainers.



“Le Giare” Country Club - Garlenda
Tel./Fax 0182-580640 - Closed on Mondays
Mr. Italo Bianco, Trainer

Horse Races

At the Villanova d'Albenga Hippodrome, there are horse shows from spring through to autumn. In the summer months, there is late night racing, and the riding events are often combined with fashion shows.

Ippodromo dei Fiori - Strada per Ligo - Villanova d'Albenga
Tel.0182-582666
www.ippodromodeifiori.it

Tennis Clubs

• *Garlenda Tennis Club* has two out-door and one in-door tennis courts. Advance bookings are recommended and can be requested at our Reception. Only 2 kms from “La Meridiana”, the tennis courts can be reached by bicycle.

Tennis Club Garlenda
Tel.0182-585028 - Closed on Mondays

• *The Hanbury Tennis Club* in Alassio, only 6 km from “La Meridiana”, has 8 clay courts in a magnificent English tennis lodge. Booking required.

Hanbury Tennis Club Alassio
Tel. 0182-640174
E-mail: info@hanburytennisclub.it
www.hanburytennisclub.it

The Riviera Airport

The Airport of Villanova d'Albenga, which is only 2 km from “La Meridiana”, is perfectly equipped for various flying activities: the Aero Club offers flying lessons and also welcomes fans of model aeronautics. You can fly over our region with a panoramic flight in a tourist plane or helicopter. Every morning, a scheduled flight to Rome Fiumicino with the airline “AirOne” is available, with the return flight in the evening. **Ask at the reception for our special “One day in Rome” programmes.**



For tourist flights and sports
Aero Club - International Airport of Villanova d'Albenga
Tel. 0182-582919
Fax 0182-582695
For helicopter flights
Contact Mr. Antonello Russo
Mob. 338-2339914

Free-climbing - Hang-gliding - Mountain Bike

The region of Finale Ligure, with its rocky hills is especially suited for free climbing. Really, this is an alpine sport, but here you can climb with a view of the seashore. On the Altopiano delle Manie, a hilly plateau close to Finale, it is also possible to try hang-gliding and mountain-bike tracks are especially panoramic as they zig-zag up and down the hills facing the sea.



Free-climbing: c/o Rockstore – Finalborgo

Opening hours: 9.00-12.30 / 16.30-19.30

Closed on Mondays - Tel.019-690208 - www.rockstore.it

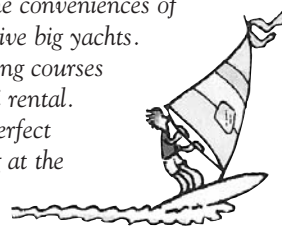
The Alta via dei monti liguri (High Way of the Liguria Mountains), a trekking route that winds for 400 km like a terrace onto the Gulf of Tirreno, is extraordinarily beautiful for lovers of never-ending views from the mountains to the sea, and of nature trails on foot, on mountain bike or on horseback. www.altaviadeimontiliguri.it

Sailing - Water sports

The port of Alassio offers all the conveniences of a tourist port and can also receive big yachts.

The local Yacht club offers sailing courses at all levels as well as water-ski rental.

At Albenga, deep waters are perfect for windsurfing or scuba-diving at the local Naval League.



Circolo Nautico

“Al Mare” - Alassio

Tel. 0182-642516 / 0182-644186 (quay)

E-mail: info@cnamalassio.it – www.cnamalassio.it

Lega Navale Italiana - Lungomare Doria - Albenga

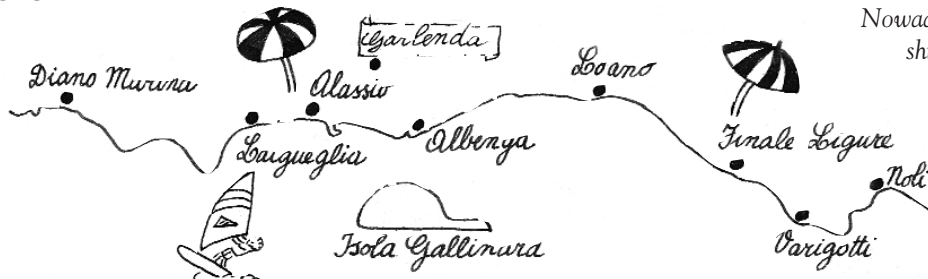
Tel. 0182-542544

The Beaches of “La Baia del Sole”

If you are a sun worshipper, the beaches of “La Baia del Sole” (The Bay of the Sun) are the place for you. The bay takes its name from the very sunny climate enjoyed by this section of Liguria, no less than 2100 hours of sun in a year. Besides, Liguria is the region where seawater is by all standards the cleanest in Italy and counts the highest number of “Blue Banner Beaches”, the award given each year to the top Italian seaside resorts. If you like spending the day at the beach, our suggestion is Alassio (6 km from “La Meridiana”), with its beach of golden sand and many lovely bathing establishments. A beautiful promenade runs along the beach, shaded by tall palms and pines and a pleasant walk (approximately 3 km) can take you as far as Laigueglia.

In summer, a healthy and romantic way to cover the distance between Alassio and Laigueglia is walking on the beach barefoot, with a few stops to collect seashells left by the high tide. In Albenga, due to the presence of a large river mouth, the beach is not sandy but with large pebbles. It is, however, possible to rent sun umbrellas at the local establishments. From the Western end of the beach, there is a lovely view over the section of the Western Riviera extending from Capo Noli on the East down to Alassio, Laigueglia and Capo Mele on the West. Less than 2 miles from the shore is the Gallinara Island, an intact bird and flower sanctuary. In the Middle Ages, a powerful benedictine monastery was on the island, named after Saint Martin of Tours, in remembrance of the French saint’s hermitage in a cave on the island.

Nowadays the island is a private estate. Many shipwrecks happened here in ancient times and the sea-bottom around the Gallinara appeals to submarine archeologists for the abundance of ancient remains.



THINGS KIDS CAN DO

Babysitting

If you're wanting to find a way to amuse your child and give yourself a few hours off at the same time, you can ask at reception for our babysitting service with at least 24 hours' notice.



“Le Caravelle” Water park

On the hills of Ceriale, do not miss to visit “Le Caravelle”, one of the most beautiful Waterparks in Northern Italy. The theme is the voyage of Columbus to the Americas and you will find replicas of Columbus' three caravels. A rich variety of slides and serpentine are scattered in the 80,000 sq mts of the park grounds providing hours of fun to youngsters and grown-ups who want to take a not-so-quiet plunge, once in a while.

“Le Caravelle” Waterpark

Via S.Eugenio, 49 - Ceriale - Tel. 0182-931755

www.lecaravelle.com

(Open 10 to 19. June to September)

Nightlife

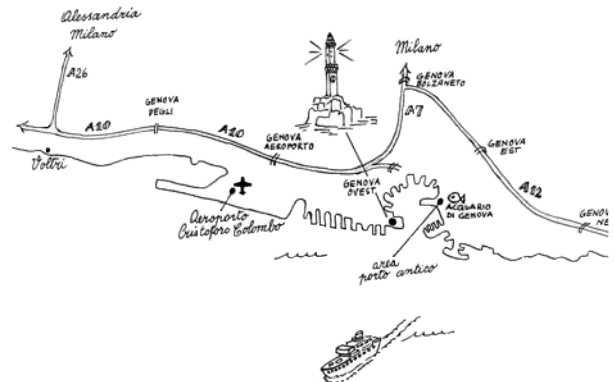
For nocturnal types, Alassio offers a wide range of amusements: many night-time haunts on the walk from here to the sea stay open until late at night, as do many boutiques and shops. For an evening with music, you will find the following on the seafront between Albenga and Laigueglia:

- “Essaujra” - beachside bar restaurant with music
- “Le Vele” - open air discothèque on the seafront in Alassio
- “Al porto” - discothèque in Alassio's harbour
- “La suerte” - open air discothèque on the seafront in Laigueglia

Trips and excursions

The ideal destination for an excursion that will make both grown-ups and little ones happy is, without doubt, the area of Genoa's Old Port, an hour's drive away from “La Meridiana”, with its two big attractions that are very close to one another and can thus be visited in a single trip. The Aquarium, the biggest in Europe and one of the most beautiful in the world, satisfies both children and parents completely by its scientific interest and sheer impressiveness. Not far away, the Sea Museum “Museo Galata” has an extensive exhibition route, which tells the story of seamanship over the course of the centuries. Still close to the Aquarium, for smaller children, one can pay a visit to “Città dei Bambini” (Children's City), a playhouse of modern design with all types of games, from the very simplest right up to real-life scientific experiments that are educational as well as fun. Genoa, European Capital of Culture in 2004, offers you the chance to visit its many museums, amongst which are the “Palazzo Ducale” (Duke's Palace) and the “Casa di Cristoforo Colombo” (Christopher Columbus's house).

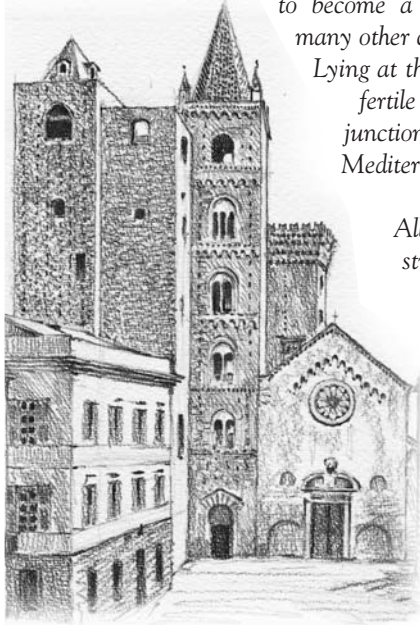
- Genoa Aquarium – Open 9.30-19.00 (No admittance after 17.30) – Open every day www.acquario.ge.it
- Sea Museum “Museo Galata” www.galatomuseodelmare.it
- Città dei Bambini – For children between the ages of 3 and 14 – Open 10.00-18.00 – (Admittance at fixed times) – Closed on Mondays – www.genovagando.it



ALBENGA

The Old Town

Albenga is a unique town in Liguria, both for its geographic position and for its very particular history. It was not destined to become a tourist resort like many other cities in the region.



Lying at the center of a very fertile plain and a perfect junction point between the Mediterranean sea and the Northern plains,

Albenga always felt a stronger vocation for agriculture and commerce rather than fishing and seafaring. After centuries of prosperity at the time of the Roman empire, Albenga reached its highest

splendour in the Middle Ages, when it became one of the richest and most powerful cities in the region. In the 13th Century huge floods caused a change in the course of the river and the port was consequently swallowed by the river mouth. This meant the end of all economic activities based on fishing and trade and the beginning of a new life as an agricultural centre. Albenga was successful in its new career and is today one of the leading producers of vegetables and flowers. Artichokes and asparagus are specialty crops, together with cyclamen and daisies. The centre of Albenga is also unique, an outstanding example of how, in the Middle Ages, cities could perfectly overlap the original Roman town almost to the stone. The historical events of later centuries have luckily spared the most ancient part of Albenga, so we can still enjoy a scenario which has changed very little since the 14th Century: the bell-tower of the Cathedral, the towers of the

Town Hall, several other red-brick towers and buildings. These historic treasures have won Albenga the definition of the Ligurian sister of the extraordinary Tuscan town of San Gimignano, near Siena. In the heart of downtown Albenga, well shielded by the surrounding squares is the most precious of the town's architectural jewels: the Baptistry, built in the 5th Century A.C., one of the most beautiful monuments of the Byzantine period in Italy. The centre of Albenga deserves an unhurried visit: stroll along the narrow lanes and the small piazzas savouring the atmosphere of centuries gone by and do not miss the Romanesque-Gothic Cathedral of St. Michel, the stately palaces and the charming Piazza dei Leoni.

The Museums

Museo Civico e Battistero (Town Hall Museum and Baptistry)

Palazzo Vecchio is the 13th Century Town Hall and is now a Museum of local history and archeology with a fine collection of roman and medieval remains. From the frescoed loggia, a few stairs lead you to the Baptistry, the finest architectural treasure in town. Built in the 5th Century at the time of the Byzantine rule over northern Italy exclusively for the ceremony of baptism, it is decorated with an exceptionally well kept mosaic, which art critics judge to be the second best after the splendid ones in Ravenna.



Piazza S. Michele - Tel. 0182-51215
(Open 10-12 and 15-18 / 16-19 in summer).
Closed on Mondays. Guided Tours

Museo Navale Romano (Roman Naval Museum)

In the stately rooms of a 17th Century manor you will see an impressive reconstruction of a Roman ship wrecked in the sea facing Albenga in the 1st Century B.C. with intact amphors recovered by the archeologists. Many other interesting pieces pertaining to the world of merchant shipping in the Roman times are also on show.

Palazzo Peloso-Cepolla P.za S. Michele - Tel. 0182.51215
(Open 10-12 - 15-18 / 16 to 19 in summer.)

Closed on Mondays. Guided Tours.

Museo Diocesano - (Museum of the Cathedral)

In the beautiful Palace of the Bishop, art lovers can appreciate a rich collection of archeological pieces recovered from the restoration of churches in the region, together with ceramics and various works of art of the Renaissance. Among the fine pictures is a "Decollazione di Santa Caterina" by Guido Reni.

Via Episcopio, 5 - Tel. 0182-50288

(Open 10-12 and 15-18. Closed on Mondays.)

The Archeological Promenade

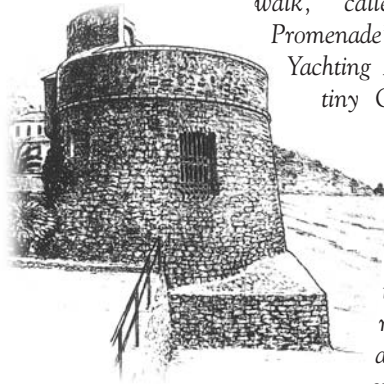
At the western end of the city of Albenga, on the hill called "Il Monte" (The Mountain) it is possible to visit the ruins of the most important monuments of Roman Albenga. One of the most scenic points is the side of the hill where the Roman theatre still faces the town and the plain around it. A short walk away is a section of the original Roman road built at the time of the roman conquest of Northern Europe, named Julia Augusta after the emperor Augustus who launched its opening in 13 A.C. Other roman buildings can be seen in the area: one of them is "il Pilone", a pillar-shaped funerary monument rising on a very panoramic point embracing the plain, the hills, the sea and the island. Along the lane you will find more ruins since the whole area was a necropolis and imposing funerary monuments flanked the road. Those who feel like walking longer can complete the trip along the Roman road as far as the Chapel of Santa Croce, overlooking Alassio and its bay. The complete distance is a 2-hour walk: a highly recommendable excursion of great archeological and environmental interest, a full immersion in the mysteries of history and in the charms of the Mediterranean landscape.

ALASSIO

According to the legend, Alassio takes its name from Adelasia, daughter of the German Emperor, Otto the Great, who eloped here with her beloved Aleramus and took shelter in these hills. The German princess was the first, but surely not the last of the Northern visitors to fall in love with this corner of the Riviera. The pleasant climate, mild throughout the year, the silvery green of olive trees, the colourful gardens sloping down to the seashore, the beach of golden sand, all these outstanding features make Alassio one of the Ligurian seaside resorts most favoured by Italians and foreigners. In the steps of Lord Byron, who loved the place immensely, wealthy and cultured Britons "discovered" Alassio at the end of the 19th Century and promoted its very rapid growth by building the beautiful promenade, several rich villas and gardens on the hills and establishing sporting and cultural institutions.

More tourists came from Northern Europe and international fame changed Alassio from a quiet fishing village into an elegant and swinging town. Not to be missed is the long charming promenade, shaded by tall palms and dark-green pines, that runs along the beach for over 3 kms always in sight of the blue bay that embraces Alassio and Laigueglia. Picturesque and teeming with life, the "budello" is the twisty paved road that runs through downtown Alassio. Shopping here, among lofty palaces and rustic fishermen's houses, is one of the favourite activities of vacationers. Starting from the Spanish bastion at the eastern end of the city, another pleasant





walk, called “The Winter Promenade” will take you to the Yachting Port, just beside the tiny Chapel by the Sea. Regattas and off-shore competitions are numerous in the summer months. From the hills, are innumerable panoramic views: Solva and Moglio, quiet, small villages full of

flowery gardens, the “balcony” of Santa Croce, and the Church of Nostra Signora della Guardia, high on the mountaintop.

LAIGUEGLIA

Of all the charming places on the Riviera, Laigueglia is beyond doubt one of the most romantic and picturesque. It has the typical structure of the old fishing village, with one single narrow street (the local word for it is

“caruggio”), and tall houses lining it on both sides, with just a few interruptions for the sunny piazzas that open straight on the beach. Laigueglia today is not so different from the way it was in the glorious 18th Century, when the profits of coral fishing financed the building of a gorgeous rococo church with a scenic flight of steps and a glittering bell spire in multicoloured ceramic. When strolling along the beach, do not forget to go to the pier and turn your eyes on the fine



range of houses lining the seashore: the façades are painted in different shades of pastel colours with a fantastic pictorial effect, enhanced by the sunlight at sunset. But life in Laigueglia has not always been so idyllic: in the 16th and 17th Century Arab pirates pillaged the coast and often went ashore to take captives and asked high ransoms to set them free. Every summer, in mid-August, one of those nights of terror is meticulously recreated in a colorful historic pageant, but with a happy ending: before leaving the beach, the “pirates” return the girls to their families...and enjoy the party. On the hills behind Laigueglia, half-hidden in the pinewoods, is the tiny, charming hamlet of Colla Micheri, with a spectacular view of the bay and a rustic, genuine Ligurian atmosphere.

CERVO

The town of Cervo clings to the cliff like a rocky pine-cone. High above the white-washed houses is the beautiful church a wonderful example of the Ligurian baroque. It dates back to the 18th Century, when coral fishing was the most profitable activity for Cervo and local fishermen donated much of their money to embellish the church. This is the reason why it has since been known as “the Church of the Coral Fishers”. Cervo is full of picturesque corners and the scenic qualities of the place are one of the elements of Cervo’s success as a very special open-air theatre. In the summer months, string quartets and famous soloists draw crowds of music lovers for the Festival of Chamber Music. The artists perform at nightfall, right on the church steps against the unique background of the coast lined with lights.



THINGS AND PLACES TO SEE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

There are many interesting things to see in the outskirts of Garlenda and the valleys around Albenga. Small towns and villages may seem all alike to the hurried tourist, but it is not so: every hamlet has its own castle, its legends, its special features. We suggest that our guests try more than one of the possible itineraries if they really want to appreciate the many faces of Liguria.

Upon request, we can arrange excursions with a chauffeur-driven car or with a tourist guide. The following are just a few among our favourites.

VILLANOVA

The name of the village, "New Town", explains its origin. It was founded in the 13th Century when the powerful Albenga needed a crown of fortified satellites all around to protect itself and its rich territories from envious neighbors. Villanova, the first of several "little daughters", is therefore a miniature copy of mother Albenga, but here the Medieval walls are almost entirely in their original place and are extraordinarily well preserved. A walk in the narrow alleys, now full of flower pots and geraniums, can give the idea of life in the Middle Ages in a country village.

Right in the centre of the village is the well that served the community with water for more than seven centuries. Do not miss a visit to the interesting "M u s e o dell'Olio" in n e a r b y Arnasco if you want to learn every-thing about olive oil.



ZUCCARELLO

Zuccarello also was founded in the Middle Ages: in 1998 the village celebrated its 750th birthday with an impressive historical pageant.



The very special feature here is the long line of arcades on the main street, originally meant to serve as a covered market place. High above the village are the ruins of the castle of the del Carretto family, landlords over this valley for

centuries. One day in 1403, the beautiful Ilaria, daughter of the Marquis, left this castle to marry the Prince of Lucca, in Tuscany. She was not to see her native village again, because she died in childbirth two years later. But her beauty lives on in marble, since the prince had her image sculptured by Jacopo della Quercia, who made of Ilaria's gravestone one of the masterpieces of the Renaissance and one of the most cherished jewels in Lucca's cathedral.

PIEVE DI TECO

In a strategic position halfway between the coast and the North of Italy, is Pieve di Teco. It has been a market town since times immemorial. Long before the Romans conquered the region traders from the plains and the mountains met here to exchange corn and metals for the most precious of marine commodities: salt. The "salt road", now a favourite among hikers, was the cause of endless wars, from the Byzantines to Napoleon. Now Pieve quietly lives around its castle and several beautiful churches and convents. Arcaded streets, typical of northern regions of Italy, are a sign that continental Europe begins just behind the surrounding mountains.

CASTELVECCHIO

High on the rock, a real eagle nest, Castelvechio is unanimously considered one of the most scenic and picturesque among Ligurian countryside villages. The tiny, rustic homes cling to the mountain, seeming to seek some protection from the incumbent castle. The place has been the scene of countless numbers of battles and the castle proved invincible to ordinary military forces. But in 1625 the Piedmontese troops who long besieged it finally found a different way to conquer it: they obstructed



all water flowing to the village, so that residents and defenders were forced to surrender rather than die of thirst. Now Castelvechio is a peaceful, silent, charming village and absolutely "top of the list" for lovers of landscape photography who find here hundreds of fantastic subjects.

TOIRANO

Rich in history and folklore, the little town offers the visitor a very interesting museum, the Museum of Rural Life and Traditions, where many ancient tools are on show, including the equipment for the complete oil making process. The main attraction however is the Cave of the Witch, not far from the village. It is a huge complex of caves, classified as one of the most interesting in Europe both for their scientific value and extraordinary beauty. Scientists found evidence of human life in the caves dating back to the Neanderthal age of (40.000 B.C.) Another dweller to have left its tracks was "Ursus Speleus", a bear that lived in the caves in prehistorical times. Wonderfully transparent stalactites and stalagmites are a fairy-tale setting for ballet shows in summer.

Toirano Caves: open 9.30-12.30/ 14.00-17.00

Tel. 0182-98062/ Fax 0182-921903

www.toiranogrotte.it

A SEASON OF EVENTS

March-April

Alassio and Andora - Regattas

Savona - Rites and Procession of the Resurrection

Ceriana - Holy Week Procession of Brotherhood Companies

Albenga - Flower festival in the historic town centre

May - June

Albisola - Volkswagen's "Beetle" Rally

Diano Marina - Carpets of flowers on Corpus Christi Day

Savona - International Regattas

Finale Ligure - Pageant of the Marquis and Palio

Calizzano - Palio of the Contrade

July

Albenga - Historical Pageant and Medieval Night

Garlenda - Rally of vintage "Fiat 500s"

Borgio Veruzzi - Three Week Festival of Theatre in the Open

Ceriale - Historical Pageant "Landing of the Turks"

Giustenice - Medieval Festival, Palio and Medieval Supper

Villanova d'Albenga - International Vintage Cars Rally

Laiugueglia- Historical Pageant "Pirates on the shore"

Loano - Festival of the Sea - International Ballet Festival

Toirano - Ballets in the Cave of the Witch

Cervo and Diano Marina - Concert Season

August

Alassio - Beauty contest - Sandcastles contest

Altare - Market of Artistic Ancient Glass

Castelvechio - Historical Pageant

Cervo and Finale Ligure - Festival of Chamber Music

Loano - A Night With the Witches

Villanova d'Albenga - Festival of the Towers

September

Alassio - Off-shore Championship

Albenga - Festival of Ligurian wines

Laiugueglia - Non-competitive bicycle tour on Laiugueglia's hills

Noli - Medieval Regatta

Imperia - Historic Sailing Ships/ Motor Yachts

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

Turning West...

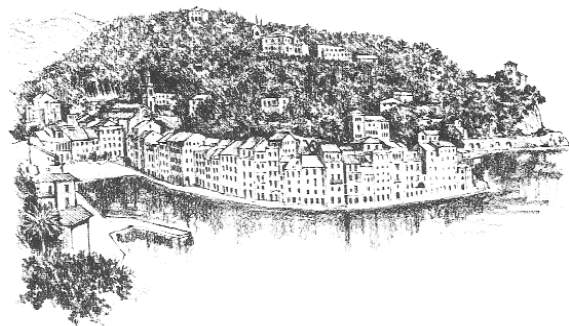
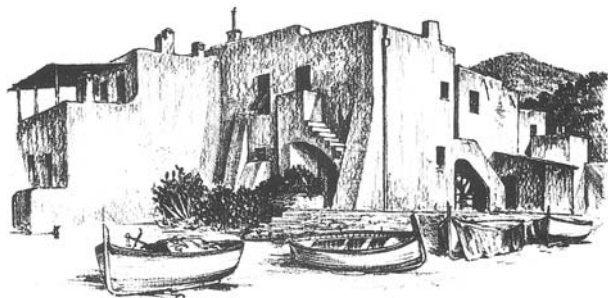
Excellent olive oil and a rich choice of fresh fish are the strongpoints of **Imperia**: in the district of **Oneglia** the "Museo dell'Olivo" tells the extraordinary story of olive oil and in **Porto Maurizio** the local fish market is worth visiting because it is a show in itself.

Sanremo is famous for its flowers and for the gambling Casino, but many other things can interest the visitor. Two of them are the picturesque district of "la Pigna" and **Bussana Vecchia**, once a deserted village now revived by the workshops of painters and sculptors who chose to live here.

Tall palms and giant magnolias adorn the beautiful Passeggiata along the shore in **Bordighera**; scenic Medieval ruins and quality red wines in **Dolceacqua**; rustic rural homes in the ancient village of **Pigna** and a miniature kingdom in the unique "**Principato di Seborga**".

Quite close to **Ventimiglia**, rich with Roman and Medieval architectures, the little hamlet of La Mortola is home to the **Hanbury Gardens**, a sub-tropical paradise where exotic trees and rare flowers from all over the world have been scenically planted by the British Lord Hanbury in the late 1800's. One of the most enchanting corners of Liguria, the gardens offer quiet walks among colorful flowerbeds and shady groves gently sloping down to the shore.

And west of the border.....**Menton, Monaco and Monte-Carlo, Nice and the Côte d'Azur**....



Turning East...

Stern feudal manors and Medieval abbeys in **Final Borgo**; a romantic atmosphere among the pastel-coloured homes of the fishing village of **Varigotti**; a breathtaking view over the entire arch of the Western Riviera from the height of Arab-looking **Verezzi**.

Noli, once a glorious seafaring power, has all that is needed for a perfect Medieval setting: red-brick towers, merlon-fringed walls, ruins of a castle atop the hill, Gothic churches in the town centre. History and fine arts go together in **Savona's** ancient bastions of the Priamàr: the fortress is now home to a rich picture gallery.

Albisola is the capital of artistic ceramics in Liguria: the local Museum shows how handicraft ceramics can turn into real works of art. In Villa Faraggiana, an 18th Century manor it is possible to find the atmosphere of old-time aristocratic vacations.

Deer and wild-pigs, falcons and buzzards, beech-woods and centenarian oaks in the **Beigua Regional Park**, in the upper Savona District.

Enamelled saucers, jewel-glasses and other transparent wonders at the extraordinary Museum of Glass in **Altare**.

And further east..... **Genoa**..... **Portofino** and the **Gulf of Tigullio**.....the **Cinqueterre** and the **Bay of the Poets**.

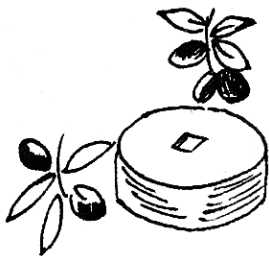
FLAVOURS AND TASTES OF OUR LAND

The Mediterranean Diet:

The Reasons for an International Success

The Mediterranean way of eating is now universally known to be the healthiest and most balanced of all, since it does not use animal fat but prefers olive oil, whose qualities are scientifically proven, and largely adds herbs instead of spices.

The other fundamental component of the Mediterranean diet is, of course, pasta, the typical Italian product. Imperia, in Liguria, as Naples in the South, has contributed to reaching top levels of production and international fame. Our region is one of the cradles of this style of eating because all the staples of the “Mediterranean diet” have



been on our tables for centuries.

The extravirgin olive oil is of course the “star” in the Ligurian cuisine and you will find it in all the traditional dishes as well as in the more trendy ones. Also herbs, many of them growing wild in the Mediterranean hillsides, play a major role: garlic, basil, marjoram, thyme, sage, chives and rosemary add a touch of flavour to many dishes: from the “pastas”, notably trofie and corzetti among them, where “pesto” is of course the king of sauces, to the rich vegetable soups, to rabbit.

A separate chapter in the golden book of typical Ligurian cuisine is entirely devoted to fresh vegetables: the excellence of artichokes, eggplants, zucchini, and the violet asparagus from Albenga is a good reason to make vegetables a major item on the Ligurian menu, especially when they are used to stuff meat dishes like veal breast, to fill home-made pastas like pansotti, or to stuff the perfumed flowers of the



local zucchini and the savoury pies. Fish, of course, is also a favourite, prepared with olives and pinoli (pine nuts), but the most typical of the fish dishes is by far stockfish, that the Ligurians love to cook “in tocchetto” with a large addition of savoury Taggia olives.

Thanks to modern technology, it is possible to pack many of the Ligurian products and comfortably take home a good supply of flavour-rich delicacies. In the local oil factories it is possible to buy home-made extravirgin olive oil and also a large choice of salted black olives, olive paste, artichoke cream, sun-dried tomatoes in oil, pesto, walnut sauce, anchovy paste and other appetizing specialties.

In our Restaurant “**Il Rosmarino**”, in a warm and refined environment, traditional cuisine is interpreted with originality, respecting the flavours and tastes of Liguria: the scent of thyme, sage and delicate basil.

At the “**Bistrot**”, in a welcoming and convivial environment, the freshest of produce from the Albenga plain and in the best of Italian tradition will be offered to you in the form of simple and tasty dishes.

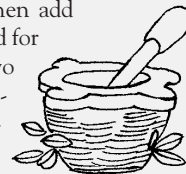
During the day, at a relaxing lunch at Restaurant “**La piscina**”, you will be able to enjoy hot and cold dishes, salads and delicious chef’s specials.

Our version of pesto: “The Cream of Basil”

Carefully wash 6 bunches of basil leaves. Place the ingredients in a blender, strictly following this order:

- coarse sea salt and a large sprig of parsley
- one clove garlic and a nut of butter
- a handful of pinoli (pine nuts), 6 walnut kernels and 12 toasted hazelnuts
- 1/2 litre of extravirgin olive oil.

Blend until you get a creamy paste, then add the dry basil leaves a few at a time, blend for a few seconds every time. Add two spoonfuls of first-quality ground parmesan cheese. The pesto can be poured into an air-tight container and kept in the refrigerator for 8/10 days.



Wines to taste in Western Riviera

Grape growing, largely present in the Western Riviera, is favoured by the climate, the geography of the region and the composition of the soil. A very rich and diverse wine production, makes it possible to find the perfect wine for every dish of the local cuisine.

To help the visitor in the choice of the wine that best suits the quality of food and gratifies the palate and the soul at the same time, we have prepared a short list of the features of the best DOC wines in Western Liguria: **Pigato**, **Rossese**, **Vermentino**, **Ormeasco** and **Ormeasco Sciac-trà** and a typical local wine: **Lumassina**. All these wines have a limited vintage and are perfect at a fresh temperature around 8-10°C.

Pigato has a straw- yellow colour, an intense fragrance, is somewhat aromatic, with a slightly bitter almond taste. It is ideal with seafood and typical ligurian dishes, but is also fine with appetizers. Made with a grape of the same name, it is mainly produced near Albenga, especially in Ortovero.



Rossese is a light ruby red made with the grapes of the same name. It is dry and delicate, soft and slightly bitter in taste. Perfect with roast meat, rabbit and game. This wine is typical of the area of Albenga and Finale.



Vermentino, golden-white in colour, is delicate and fruity in fragrance, fresh and harmonious in taste. It goes wonderfully with fish but can also be enjoyed with a snack of "friscèu" (vegetable fritters), "farinata" (chick pea tart), or "focaccia". It is produced in the regions of Finale, Albenga, Pietra Ligure, Ortovero.



Ormeasco, a typical wine from the westernmost part of the province of Savona, Pornassio and the surrounding villages, is a full-bodied ruby red wine, perfumed and dry in taste with a touch of bitter. Excellent with roast meat and game.

Ormeasco sciac-trà is the product of the traditional partial white vinification. Its features are a coral-pink shade, the pleasant perfume, the dry taste.

Lumassina is a wine typical of the region of Finale Ligure. It has a straw-yellow colour with a vein of green, delicate in perfume, dry and persistent in taste.

The wonderful cellar at our restaurant "Il rosmarino" offers a wide selection of the best producers in Liguria and a rich collection of Italian wines: more than 7000 bottles, from rare vintages by famous producers to the emerging new generations of wine makers.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Climate

Climate on the Western Riviera is one of the mildest in the Italian peninsula. Average temperatures and days of sunshine are almost identical to those in Taormina.

July and August are, of course, rather hot but even at the highest temperatures the breeze from the sea and the western winds from the valleys ensure pleasant conditions.

Average temperatures

January	6-12° C
April	12-16° C
July	20-30° C
October	14-18° C

Shopping

Almost everywhere in the Western Riviera the town centre is the richest shopping district. In Alassio, Loano, Finale, the lively, picturesque main street is called "caruggio" and is reserved for pedestrians. Everything is sold here, from tiny bijoux to antiques.

Opening hours vary from town to town and depend also on the articles for sale: shops generally open from 9 to 12.30 and from 16.00 to 19.30/20. In the most frequented seaside towns some shops extend openings until 23. Weekly closing is usually Monday morning.

Market Days

Open markets are one of the local attractions both for Italian and foreign tourists. Every town has a market day, as detailed hereafter, so it is not difficult to find day by day the right place to go for a few hours of outdoor shopping.

Monday:	Finalborgo, Andora
Tuesday:	Borghetto S.S., S. Remo
Wednesday:	Albenga, Varigotti
Thursday:	Finale Ligure
Friday:	Laigueglia, Loano
Saturday:	Alassio, S. Remo

www.tacuinodiviaggio.it

Another appointment rarely missed by visitors is the one with antiques vendors. Antiques markets are held in Albenga every second week-end in June, July, August. In Alassio the stalls fill the "caruggio" almost every week (days may vary) from June until late autumn.

Banks and Exchange Bureaux

Within 10 km from our hotel more than 20 banks are present in the territory and most of them have cash machines and exchange counters. These are approximate opening times: from Monday to Friday, 8.30-13.20/14.30-15.30

Pharmacies

Those closest to us are in Garlenda and Villanova d'Albenga. Pharmacies are frequent in all the main towns in the region.

Garlenda

Farmacia Dr. Pincin - Tel.0182-82583

Villanova

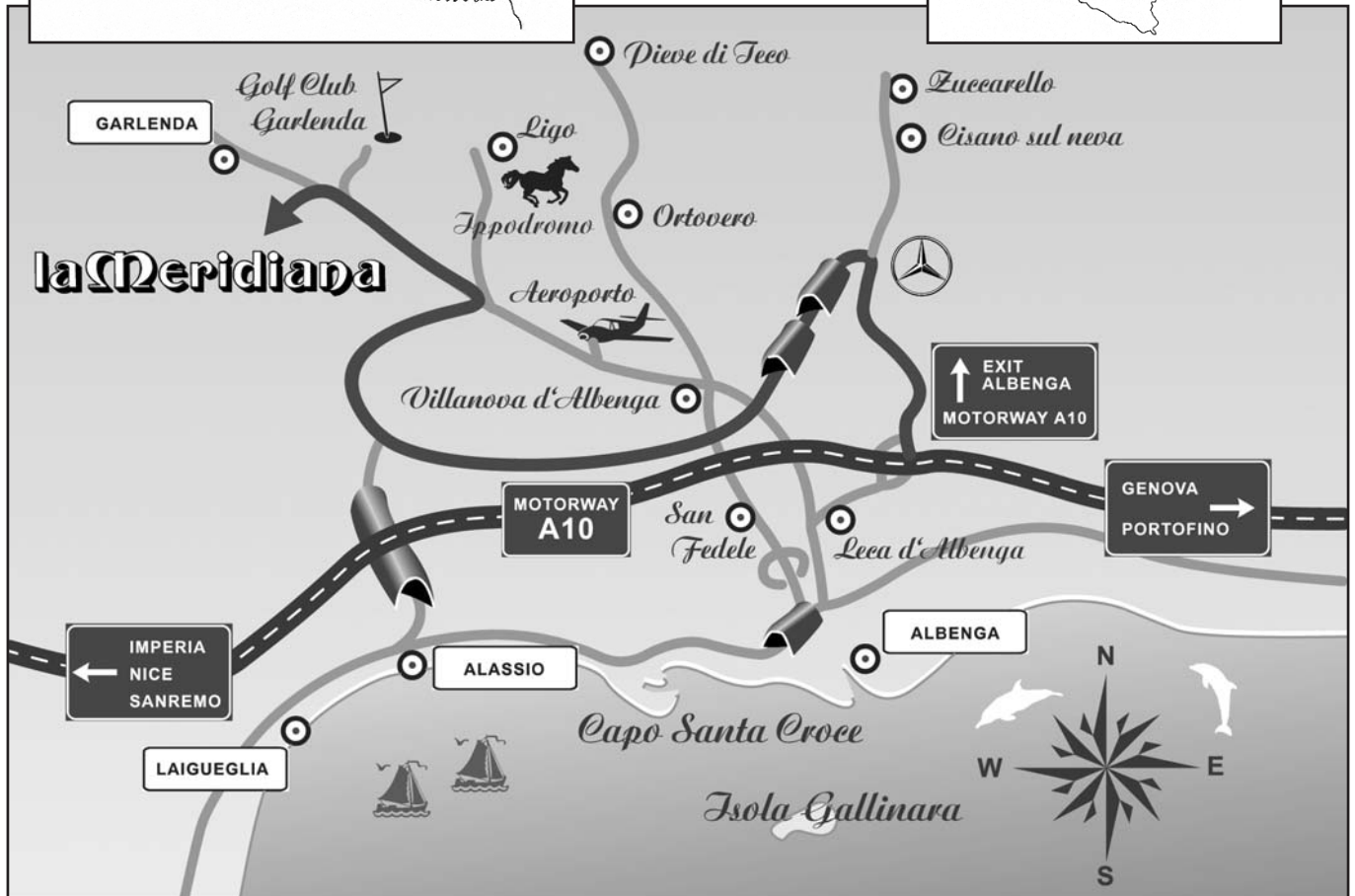
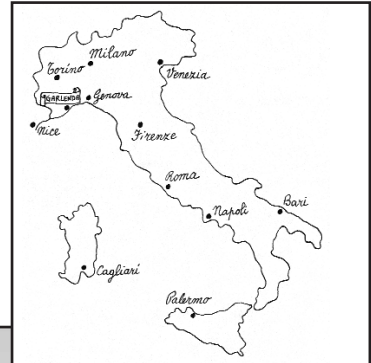
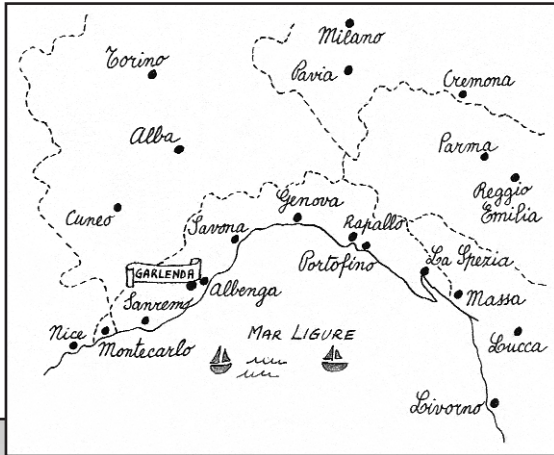
Farmacia Dr. Ranaldo - Tel.0182-582595

Open: 8.30-12.30 16.00-19.30

Church Services

All the churches in the region are Roman Catholic. Sunday masses in Garlenda and Villanova are at the following hours:

- Garlenda - Parish of Nativity of the Holy Virgin
Sunday: 10.30 (10 in winter)
Saturday Evening: 19 (18.30 in winter)
- Villanova - Chapel of St. Catherine
Sunday: 11 (10.30 in winter)
Saturday Evening: 18 (17 in winter)
- Alassio: Parish of St. Ambrogio
Sunday 10.00 – Saturday Evening 18.00



la Meridiana

ALBERGO IN GARLENDAL DAL 1978



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Michelin Three Red Turrets since 1981

Winner of "Three Golden Keys" award by "Viaggiare bene"

Gambero Rosso since 1997

"Things to do around La Meridiana"

Based on an idea by Alessandra Segre

Written by Alessandra Segre and Anna D'Alessio

Landscape Drawings by Piero Vado

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