

EVENTS IN PIEDMONT

Why not combine your wine tasting tour or cookery class with a festival or the oldest Palio in Italy. There are so many wonderful events taking place almost every week in Piedmont. Whether it is Barrel racing, an Asparagus festival, or Open Cellars there is always something interesting that everyone can enjoy and of course there is the World famous Truffle festival in Alba in October and November.

Weekly Markets

Fresh food, plants and flowers, clothes, artisanal products, etc.

Every Tuesday and Friday: Market at Acqui Terme and Canelli

Every Wednesday and Saturday: Market in Asti

Every Friday: Market at Nizza Monferrato

Every Saturday Market at Alba

Antique Markets

Bric-a-Brac, furniture, pictures, books etc.

1st Sunday of the month in Costigliole d'Asti

3rd Saturday of each month in Canelli

3rd Sunday of each month in Nizza Monferrato

4th Sunday of each month in Asti

Vinchio Asparagus Festival

Our local village festival takes place during the first weekend in May. The village is transformed to create a medieval scene and there is a re-enactment of the battle of the Saracens, which took place in the valley below our farmhouse in the year 935. Traditional dishes are served from stalls in the center of the village accompanied by the local 'Barbera' wine. On the Sunday there is a small country market, selling fresh picked asparagus, local products and handmade crafts. You can also book to attend the grand pranzo (lunch) and taste a selection of dishes containing the delicious locally grown green asparagus.

Canelli underground Cathedrals (wine cellars)

The town of Canelli produces some fantastic sparkling white wines which are stored in 16th century underground cellars (known as Cathedrals.) The cellars are open to the public during the third weekend of May, June, September, October and November or can be visited at other times by prior arrangement.

In addition, there is a wonderful gastronomic event during the fourth weekend in September, dedicated to the best products of the various Italian regions. This takes place in the historic cellars and the most picturesque places of the city and is accompanied by wine tasting, folk music, cultural events and art exhibitions.

Nizza e Barbera

During the 2nd weekend in May, there is an annual wine festival in the center of Nizza Monferrato. This takes place in the streets and squares of the Old Town and also in the large undercover exhibition center in the main square . For a small fee, you can sample the Nizza Barbera d’Asti Superiore and all other types of local Barbera DOC wines, many of which are made by smaller producers and are not widely distributed.

Corsa delle Botti (Barrel Racing)

Another great traditional event that takes place every May in Nizza Monferrato is the Corsa delle Botti. The local Cantinas have teams, who race their branded barrels around the square and compete against each other in a friendly competition. There is also often a procession of antique cars during the day and there are lots of fabulous local dishes and wines to try.

Cantine Aperte (open cellars)

During the last weekend in May, you can visit any of the numerous cantinas in the region without having to make a prior appointment . Many of the local Cantinas, including Vinchio Vaglio, hold a number of special events during the weekend; country walks, wine tastings, non-stop food buffets etc.

Gourmet Vineyard Walks

During most weekends from April to September , there are organized walks through the vineyards at many of the towns and villages. During the walk, there are a number of stops for refreshments, appetizers and wine . At the end of the walk there is usually a meal with music and sometimes dancing.

Seige of Canelli

The historical reconstruction of the “Siege of Canelli – year 1613” takes place on the third weekend of June. This huge event celebrates the victory of the people of Canelli against the army of Monferrato. Thousands of people dress up in medieval costumes and the local inns and taverns offer menus exactly replicating the recipes of the seventeenth century. There are re-enactments of the battle with horseback duels, battles with cannons and cavalry charges.

Asti Palio (horse race)

A number of festivals take place in Asti each year but one of the most important is the Palio (horse race), which takes place on the third Sunday of September. The race, which dates back to 1275 is thought to be the oldest in Italy. At the

start of the event, the 21 local districts (commune) of Asti all parade their various flags through the streets, throwing them high into the air and beating drums to create a wonderful atmosphere. This is followed by bareback horse races in the main piazza. During this time, there is also a big wine festival in the town, called 'Douja d'Or', which lasts for 9 days.

The Palio degli Asini at Alba (donkey race)

On the first Sunday in October there is a donkey derby in the streets of Alba, which deliberately mocks the Asti Palio. This started in 1932, after the Albese jockeys were no longer invited to participate in the races between the provinces of Asti. This is a great fun event and the town is alive with traditional pageantry.

Alba White truffle Festival

During October and the first two weeks of November, Alba hosts the International white truffle fair. There are a huge range of events and exhibitions during this time, including food and wine tastings, musical concerts and organized lunches and dinners. Every weekend from 9 am to 8 pm, there is also a huge undercover market where you can go and buy truffles and other local products. There is also a large catering area here, where you can order pasta with or without white truffle and sample many delicious wines.

Open Castles

There are more castles in Piedmont than in any other part of Italy. From 1st May to 30th October many of them are open for visits. Some have beautiful gardens and museums for example Castello di Grinzane Cavour and others fabulous panoramic views for example Castello di Roddi and Castello di Serralunga d'Alba.

Cheese festival in Bra

Bra is the birthplace of Carlo Petrini, who was the founder of the Slow food movement and of the world's first University of Gastronomic Sciences. It is also home to "Cheese," and a biennial international festival takes place in the center (odd numbered years), which features the makers of artisanal cheeses from across the world.

Vinum

This event is every April in the big end Enoteca Wine with the presentation of new wines from Piedmont with displays of more than 150 manufacturers. It presents many products both gourmet tasting and tours