nileGUIDE
ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP

jim linwood

Turin's Best Museums

Turin, 2 Days

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Guide Description

AUTHOR NOTE: Turin is a city renowned for its museums, there is a fine selection covering numerous subjects from armour to politics, from cinema to design, from ancient civilisation to modern art.

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Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Turin

DAY NOTE: This morning start at Via Accademia delle Scienza, 6. Here you will find two of Turin's greatest museums the Museo Egizio, where you'll find an extraordinary selection of archeological artefacts and the Galleria Sabauda with its great art collection. Lunch at Arcadia in the Galleria Subalpina about five minutes away in Piazza Castello, before heading to Piazetta Carlo Alberto to the site of Italy's first parliament at the Museo Nazionale del Risorgimento. This Museum illustrates the process of the political unification of Italy. Finally, stop at the Biblioteca Reale, housed within the Royal Palace, the Royal Library hosts Leonardo da Vinci's self portrait amongst other great works.

Museo Egizio
Best Egyptian Museum Outside of Cairo

Galleria Sabauda
Gallery Sabauda hosts the royal art collections.

Arcadia
Half Japanese, Half New Piedmont

Day 2 - Turin

DAY NOTE: Let's start where we finished off yesterday at Piazza Castello. Today is going to be a little more eclectic! So first we will head to the centre of Piazza Castello and Palazzo Madama, reopened in 2006 this fantastic baroque building hosts the Museo Civico d'Arte Antica di Torino. A short walk down the porticoed Via Po leads to the junction with Via Montebello, take a left here, and soon the sight of Turin's most iconic building, the Mole Antonelliana comes into view. Inside this extraordinary building resides the National Cinema Museum, spread over five floors and offering the visitor an insight into the world of film. Back to Via Po for the third stop of the day. At number 55, the Museo di Arti Decorative, no translation necessary, opened in 1999, due to the will of one of the most important art and antique dealers of the 20th century, Pietro Accorsi. Lunch at Porto di Savona in nearby Piazza Vittorio Veneto, number 2. Try the Piemontese tajarin style pasta. Finally a short bus or taxi (€8) ride away, along by the river Po is the Museo dell' Automobile Turin, charting the history and progress of Turin's motor industry and displaying the first Fiat 500 and the Itala 35/45 HP winner of the Peking to Paris race in 1907 amongst many other fine cars.

Palazzo Madama
An Eclectic Building

Museo del Cinema
From the Lumiere To Modern Cinema

Museo di Arti Decorative
Fantastic Crystal Porcelain and Furnishings

Porto di Savona
Turin Style Brasserie

Museo dell' Automobile
Turin's motor history

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Day 1 - Turin

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contact:
tel: +39 011 561 7776
fax: +39 011 562 3157
http://www.museoegizio.it/

location:
Via Accademia delle Scienze 6
Turin 10123

1 Museo Egizio

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DESCRIPTION: Second only to the museum in Cairo, the Museo Egizio was founded in 1924. From then, the museum has expanded and now holds over 30,000 pieces, many of which are discoveries from the Italian Archeological Mission in the last century. 5000 years of art, religion, and daily life in the time of the Pharaohs are illustrated here through real treasures including the black statue of Ramses II, the book of death, the tomb of Kha and Merit, and the rocky temple of Ellesiya. Various cultural events happen here from time to time. Check website for more details. © wcities.com

contact:
tel: +39 011 440 6903
fax: +39 011 5069814
http://www.museitorino.it/galleriasabauda/,http://www.artito.arti.beniculturali.it/galleria_sabauda/index.php

location:
Via Accademia delle Scienze 6
Turin Piedmont 10123

2 Galleria Sabauda

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
Open: September to May, Tuesday to Saturday from 08:30 to 19:30; June to September, Tuesday to Friday from 08:30 to 19:30; Saturday from 08:30 to 23:00.

DESCRIPTION: Located within the Palazzo dell'Accademia delle Scienze, the Galleria Sabauda was established by 1832 King Carlo Alberto in 1832. Some 28 years later the Galleria was handed over to the State by Victor Emmanuel II and now contains a fine collection of paintings including the royal art collections amassed by the House of Savoy. There is work by local Piemontese artists and from other Italian schools such as Lombard, Venetian, and Emilian as well as the prestigious paintings from the Flemish, Dutch, and Northern Schools.
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contact:
tel: +39 (0) 11 56 13 898
fax: +39 (0) 11 56 13 974
http://www.foodandcompany.com/food&company.html

location:
Galleria Subalpina, Piazza Castello
Turin Piedmont 10123

hours:
Monday to Saturday from 12:30 to 14:30. Closed Sundays.

3 Arcadia

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
Best to book, especially at lunch time.

DESCRIPTION: Arcadia, located in Galleria dell'Industria Subalpina one of the picturesque galleries of last century urbanization in the heart of the city has set up an interesting formula offering a double choice. You can eat Japanese or taste a revised new Piedmontese cuisine which uses classic ingredients from the area prepared in a lighter and creative way. How would you like to try Sformato di Castelmagno; (a Langhe cheese) with lettuce cream? The result is appealing. © wcities.com

"Photo courtesy of Arcadia"

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Day 2 - Turin

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contact:
tel: +39 011 443 3501
http://www.palazzomadamatorino.it/

location:
Piazza Castello
Turin 10122

1 Palazzo Madama

DESCRIPTION: The Palazzo Madama is situated in the centre of Piazza Castello, with its facade facing Via Garibaldi. It takes its name from the two Royal Dames who lived here, Maria Cristina and Giovanna Battista. During past centuries, it was the home of the Savoy family, as well as the site of the signing of important treaties, and the seat of the Italian Senate when Turin was the country's capital. Today it houses the Antica Museum of Art. Its historical date is somewhat difficult to determine because it has been continually reconstructed throughout its history. The oldest part is the Roman Porta Pretoria. The back of the building dates to a thirteenth century castle which can still be seen in the two towers situated at each corners. The typically baroque facade was built in the seventeenth century by the architect Filippo Juvarra. The internal staircase is also attributed to him and is one of the best examples of the Piedmontese baroque style. © wcities.com

wcities

contact:
tel: +39 011 813 8560
fax: +39 011 812 5738
http://www.museonazionaledelcinema.org

location:
Via Montebello 20
Turin Piedmont 10124

2 Museo del Cinema

DESCRIPTION: Founded in 1941 by Maria Adriana Prolo, the Museo Nazionale del Cinema is a delight to behold. Of course, the most appealing sight is the building that houses the museum: the Mole Antonelliana. An unusual structure, this architectural marvel is definitely a sight to see for its architectural details. Inside the museum, a whole new world of treasure awaits you. This museum boasts collections that would pique the interests of the most avid cinema-lover. Among the collections are photographs, archives, posters, films and a lot more, pertaining to the history of Italian as well as World Cinema. Do visit this museum and find out for yourself why it is one of the most preferred museums for visitors. See the website for more information. © wcities.com

Photo courtesy of Museo del Cinema

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contact:
tel: +39 011 837 6883
fax: +39 011 815 4061
http://www.fondazioneaccorsi.it

location:
Via Po 55
Turin 10124

3 Museo di Arti Decorative

DESCRIPTION: The Museo di Arti Decorative is the pride and joy of the Accorsi Foundation, founded in December 1999, as requested in the will of the great torinese antiques dealer Pietro Accorsi. All the details of an aristocratic, piedmontese residence of the eighteenth century are reconstructed in the rooms of this historic building which was designed by Amedeo Castellamonte. The collection is the fruit of decades of research from all over Italy. Particularly outstanding exhibits are a Madonna from the fifteenth century and six Empire style chairs which were a wedding present for Paolina Bonaparte. © wcities.com

Photo courtesy of Museo di Arti Decorative

contact:
tel: +39 011 817 3500
www.portodisavona.com

location:
Piazza Vittorio Veneto 2
Turin 10123

hours:
Tues 7:30-10:30pm; Wed-Sun 12:30-2:30pm and 7:30-10:30pm

4 Porto di Savona

DESCRIPTION: What is probably the most popular trattoria in Turin is tucked under the arcades along the city's largest piazza. Seating is family style, at long tables that crowd a series of rooms beneath old photos and mementos, and the typically Piemontese fare never fails to please (all the more so on Sun, when many other restaurants in central Turin are closed). Several variations of gnocchi are usually made fresh daily, as is the Piemontese flat noodle, tajarin, and pasticcio, a pasta casserole with meat and cream. Another way to start a meal is with some variation of porcini mushrooms, which are served in many different variations, perhaps best when simply sautéed. These starters can be nicely followed with a grilled meat dish -- a house specialty. © Frommer's

Porto di Savona

contact:
tel: 0039 (0) 11 16 77 666
fax: 0039 (0) 11 66 47 148
http://www.museoauto.it/home/

location:
Corso Unita d'Italia 40
Turin Piedmont 10126

hours:
Tues-Sat 10am-6:30pm; Sun 10am-8:30pm

5 Museo dell' Automobile

DESCRIPTION: As befits a city that is responsible for 80% of Italian car manufacturing, this shiny collection of mostly Italian automobiles, housed in a purpose-built, light-filled exhibition hall of classic 1960s design, draws car buffs from all over the world. Not too surprisingly, a century's worth of output from Fiat, which is headquartered in Turin, is well represented. The collection includes most of the cars that have done Italy proud over the years, including Lancias, Isotta Frashinis, and the Itala that came in first place in the 1907 Peking-to-Paris rally. Oddities include a roadster emblazoned with the initials ND that Gloria Swanson drove for her role as faded movie queen Norma Desmond in Sunset Boulevard. **Note:** The museum is closed for restorations until the end of 2008. © Frommer's

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Turin Snapshot

Local Info

Describing Turin is no easy task; the city is known for its cold weather, grey cityscape, and large industries. On the other hand, it is also an interesting and multifaceted city, rich in history. Formerly the capital of Italy, and linked to the Savoy tradition, it is a city of charm, brimming with historic monuments and bearing the entrepreneurial spirit of a city in continual economic growth. It is also a very ordered city, built to an urban plan with linear streets from the Roman period. Above all, Turin is an elegant city that does not flaunt its regal past, traces of which can be found in its artistic and historic heritage.

Centre

The physical, historic, and cultural centre is the symbol of the ancient capital of the Savoy kingdom. Turin would not be the same without its palaces, such as the Palazzo Madama and the Palazzo Reale, or without the porticos dating from the baroque period. Built to protect the royal family and their court from bad weather, these stunning architectural pieces are visible from a walk which winds around the centre for 18 kilometres. Starting from the Porta Nuova, walk to Piazza Castello, under the porticos which are surrounded by shops, bars and cafés of all kinds, until you reach the River Po. Crossing Piazza San Carlo and Piazza Carlo Felice, walk opposite Palazzo Reale until, in the distance beyond the Piazza Vittorio bridge, the Gran Madre is visible. The numerous cafés in the centre are an excellent refuge in the cold winter days, and provide a sanctuary where one can warm up with tea or a hot chocolate. Platti offers seductive desserts, while Pfatish lures customers with its chocolates. The Caffe Torino is a perfect place to tastebicerin(a local favorite drink consisting of melted chocolate, coffee, and milk), while Baratti, in the Galleria Subalpina has an intriguing atmosphere reminiscent of the far-off days of princes and princesses. On the opposite side of Piazza Castello is the Cathedral which houses the Holy Shroud and is currently undergoing restoration after the fire of a few years ago. The Mole Antonelliana stands out among the other buildings, and offers a splendid landscape view of the city to anyone who wants to climb to the top.

Crocetta-Cenisia

This is a mostly residential area which is popular with the Torinesi for its elegance. The famous Crocetta Market offers a wide variety of quality products in a traditional setting. This is the place to take a deep breath of good Turin air in the midst of distinguished buildings and sophisticated shops.

Mirafiori

This area is mainly associated with Fiat, which has its enormous factories here. In the last ten years, this working class area has been revamped and is now one of the most popular places for people looking to buy a new house. There are many green areas in the area, including the famous park, Parco del Valentino, and Superga's Park.

North Turin

This area is densely populated and contains many shops, but the large number of crowded buildings darken the atmosphere. There are a number of wholesale shops in the area, such as Revedi, but tourists generally prefer to shop in the centre of town. For a more unique tour, make note that Turin is one of thirty three international official centres for witchcraft. Their focal point is either the astrological sundial on the right side of the Cathedral or the Egyptian Museum, which has the second best collection of Egyptian cultural and traditional material and documentation in the world.

San Salvario

The multi-ethnic area of Turin extends from Porta Nuova to Porte Palatine. The large number of immigrants pouring into Turin in the last few years have settled in this area and have recreated the unique atmospheres of their homelands. The Torinesi have partly abandoned this area, which is one of the districts most in need of rehabilitation.
©

History

Little is known about Turin before the Roman domination. It is probable that the Taurini, a people of Celtic or Ligurian origin, inhabited the area. The city was destroyed by Hannibal in 221 BC during his descent from the Alps towards Rome. Julius Caesar gave the inhabitants of Taurinum their Roman citizenship and changed the name of the city to Julia, though later it was renamed Augusta Taurinorum by Augustus. In coming centuries the city was plundered by the Lombards and became one of their thirty dukedoms. The task of protecting the transalpine routes and suppressing possible revolts by neighbouring peoples was taken over from the duke by the Count of the Carolingians. The area then passed into the hands of the Arduini who, under Berengario II, set up the realm of Italy. The most important Marquis was Olderico, whose death led to the succession of the Counts of Savoy. Nonetheless, Turin was not immediately handed over to the House of Savoy, and although the rulers had the title of Marquis, they had to share power with the bishop for a long time. After mixed fortunes, Amedeo III took control of the city, which then passed into the hands of Angioini and on to Guglielmo XII, Marquis of Monferrato, who then lost it to Tommaso III. From that point on, the House of Savoy ruled continuously until the sixteenth century. The city was then entrusted to the French king Francesco I, whose successor returned it to Emanuele Filiberto. The French were frequently involved in disputes over the successors and alternately backed the success of one pretender or other. From 1800 to 1814 Turin was the capital of the French department of the Po, and in 1815 the House of Savoy was restored. Ever since then the history of Turin has merged with the State of Savoy and, subsequently that of Italy.

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In 1848 Piedmont was at the centre of the first Italian war of independence. The Piedmontesi defeated the Austrians at Pastrengo and then, thanks to the endurance of Tuscan volunteers at Curtatone and Montanara, they managed to overcome them at Goito. On the 30th October, Carlo Alberto was crowned King of Italy. However, the war rapidly turned against the Piedmontesi, who were forced to surrender to the Austrians and give up Tuscany. Vittorio Emanuele II was proclaimed King of Italy on the 18th February after the annexation of Lombardy, Tuscany, Emilia, Romagna, the Papal State, the international policies of Cavour, and the exploits of Garibaldi(who conquered the Kingdom of the Due Sicilie in February 1861). The capital was originally in Turin but was moved to Rome on the 27th March. The Albertine Statute celebrated fifty years in 1898.

Over time Turin became more and more industrialised and it was therefore heavily bombed during the Second World War by the Allies and later subjected to terrible destruction by the retreating Germans. In the 1950's Fiat played an essential role in the re-development of the city, and, after a period of recession in the 1980's, it gained importance in the 1990's as one of the most developed technological regions. Thanks to Turin's new image, the city hosted the winter Olympics in 2006.
©

Hotel Insights

Turin has a wide choice of hotels to meet every need and satisfy every pocket. The atmosphere in these hotels is warm and friendly, totally functional and wonderfully welcoming. Finding a place to stay in Turin is easy; all you need to do is decide what kind of visiting experience you want to have:

At number 8 Via Sacchi, next to Porta Nuova station, you'll find the luxurious four star il Turin Palace Hotel. A little further down the road is il Genova e Stazione with a decor both classic and sumptuous. L'Hotel Genio is situated across from the station in Piazza Carlo Felice, on the corner of the glamorous promenade Corso Vittorio Emanuele. You can drink in its pleasant atmosphere and elegant furnishings while making use of its convenient business services. The Starhotel Majestic(also on the same street), is very comfortable and earns the four stars allocated to it. Moving towards the centre of Piazza Carlo Felice you'll find the Roma e Rocca Cavour, a lovely hotel decorated with flair and good taste. Via Roma has a good selection of hotels for the weary traveller too, such as the Jolly Hotel Ligure which are very cosmopolitan and suitable for business travellers.

The city centre also has many accommodations to offer. If you head towards Piazza Castello, and stop in Via Carlo Alberto, you will see the Grand Hotel Sitea, richly decorated in splendour. At the top of Via San Francesco d'Assisi you'll find Le Petit Hotel, an ideal place for tourists and businessmen alike. A few doors down is L'Hotel Liberty, a which is housed in a charming period building that still retains much of its original design.

L'Hotel Diplomatic is in the direction of Porta Susa station, this is a luxurious hotel located at number 42 Via Cernaia, close to L'Hotel Dock Milano, which boasts all the modern comforts. There are several other accommodations close to the station: the City Hotel has very contemporary décor and furnishings. Near to the beautiful Parco del Valentino, the Valentino du Parc stands proudly in Via Giotto, it is small but elegant and cosy.

Do you prefer the hills and the green countryside? Then you could choose Hotel Villa Sassi, a place for repose which is submerged in greenery. The hotel also has an excellent restaurant, which is available for both guests and visitors. L'Hotel Crimea nestles at the foot of the hills with a view of the rest of the city.

If you are in Turin on business, you may want to stay at the newly built Hotel Meridien-Lingotto which is one of the most practical places to stay in the whole of Turin. For busy travellers the Jet Hotel is handily placed beside the airport. Thankfully, it isn't a modern monstrosity, as the hotel is located inside a renovated farmhouse that also houses the Antica Zecca restaurant.
©

Restaurants Insights

Piedmont is a real culinary wonderland for a number of reasons, many of them geographical: links with France through a shared dynasty heritage go back for centuries. In addition, the mild, sunny climate and an extraordinary rich soil produce some of the world's best vines in the hilly areas of Langhe and Monferrato(30/50 miles SE of Turin). Worldwide, top restaurants, exclusive retreats, and gourmet households have recognized the distinct flavor of Turin's Barolo wines. The white Alba truffle is gaining a strong reputation among culinary experts as well, even getting special coverage in magazines like"Forbes". In Italy everybody knows great red wines such as Nebbiolo, Dolcetto and the popular, strong Barbera, the farmers' everyday wine. As a result, all of the other products of Piedmont are experiencing cult status, even going so far as to make the aforementioned white truffle from Alba sell for about 10 dollars per gram—almost the same price as gold!

When exploring the Centre, there are a variety of different options to satisfy any palate. For a truly traditional experience, visit Del Cambio, which was established in the 18th century and still retains much of its original appeal. From the service to the décor, you will feel very much a part of history. If your tastes run towards more exotic fare, check out Arcadia, a combination sushi bar and Italian trattoria. For those on a budget, Porto di Savona, offers tasty dishes for a good price, with a selection of appetizers and pasta dishes that are especially good. For a taste of the Tuscan sun on a grey Turin day, stop by Al Gatto Nero and enjoy their delicious appetizers with special ingredients imported from Tuscany.

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Also make sure to stop by Crocetta-Cenisia for their neighborhood Mercato della Crocetta. One of the best places to buy fresh food in the city, it is always bustling and you can find all sorts of delicious products from around the region. For a comfortable and intimate dining experience, stop by Osteria Antiche Sere and enjoy your meal in one of three cosy rooms or in their outdoor courtyard.

If you have a craving for something sweet, Turin can easily accommodate. Also in the city's Centre is Baratti& Milano, a confectionery, that was opened in 1873 and has remained a top choice for delicious and sophisticated treats. It is also a full service café, complete with cocktails and an excellent lunch menu. Not to be outdone, Peyrano-Pfatisch, stands in the Crocetta neighborhood and has gained a strong reputation as a decadent chocolate shop serving everything from cakes to candies.
©

Nightlife Insights

Don't let yourself be misled by the fact that Turin is known for being an industrial city, there are a variety of activities available for both locals and tourists.

Cinema

You'll find more than twenty-five cinemas catering to a population of less than one million inhabitants. Unlike many other European cities, whose cinemas show specific genres of films, the cinemas of Turin show all kinds of movies- from recent American blockbusters to Italy's finest offerings. The majority of cinemas in Turin are found in the city centre. Il Fiamma is a popular choice after indulging in an ice cream at Caffe Miretti. There's also il Reposi, which has five screens showing an exceptional variety of films, and l'Ambrosio with its three screens facing the bustling Lucky Nugget Saloon. For art-house film lovers, il Cinema Massimo offers screenings of foreign films in their original languages, as well by pieces from new film makers. It is also the seat of various festivals and numerous events dedicated to contemporary directors.

Theatre

The theatre season in Turin is extremely varied. The Teatro Stabile organisation deserves special merit, offering programmes of works at theatres like Carignano and Alfieri. Opera has its own special space devoted to it in the elegant Teatro Regio, and right next door, the below-ground theater Piccolo Regio hosts multiple productions and ballets. Celebrated performances can also be seen at the welcoming Teatro Nuovo, as well as the Alfa Teatro. If you love foreign theatre companies and avant-garde performances, then the best place to go is Araldo.

Turin's passion for cabaret and comedy is deeply rooted, so make sure to check out the performances at Teatro Erba, home of the Cabaret Festival. Teatro Juvarra and Cab 41 are the places to go for some sophisticated singing or a bit of a laugh.

Nightlife

For those who want to make a night of it, there are discos and disco-pubs(loved by the young trendy set). Every year, a new fashionable'in' establishment springs up, and quickly becomesthe place to see and be seen. La Gare, which was once a building used as a recreational club for railway workers before becoming the haunt of Turin's crème de la crème, is still going strong. Il Theatrò attracts a crowd of those 25 and up who flock here for dinner and dancing. The Hennessy, is frequented by the"beautiful youth" of Turin. It is situated on a hill that rises towards Pino Torinese, and during the summer it opens up its outdoor dance floors. If Latin-American salsa is more your thing, then Ganas de Mar is the best disco in Turin to let yourself go.

You can also spend an evening chatting and joking with friends. At the moment, Irish themed pubs are all the rage, and Shamrock Inn is the best loved amongst them. People often sit on the steps inside than choosing a more traditional(and less crowded) pub.

Another favourite haunt is the Divina Commedia, which has three floors to choose from, including"Inferno","Purgatory" and"Paradise". Something to please everyone, indeed.
©

Things to Do Insights

Visiting Turin is a larger undertaking than one might initially think, as there are many different ways to explore the city and the surrounding area. Try this tour of the city centre in the morning, when you are feeling energetic—after this nice long walk, you'll be ready for a café break.

From Piazza Vittorio to Piazza Castello

Starting from Piazza Vittorio, in front of which you can see the huge'mole' of the Gran Madre di Dio and the river Po, walk along Via Po towards Piazza Castello. On your way, take the opportunity to make a small detour through Via Verdi and visit the Cavallerizza quarter. Under the porticoes in Via Po you will see some of Turin's most beautiful buildings, such as the university; visit the courtyard and indulge at some of Turin's most famous ice cream parlours and patisseries. Stop in at Caffè Fiorio for an ice cream or hot chocolate, and taste their speciality ofgianduia(chocolate cream) ice cream.

Continuing down Via Po, have a look around Piazza Castello, where you will find the Royal Palace, the Church of San Lorenzo, the Teatro Regio, and the Palazza Madama. Once you are at this point you have to decide whether to go down Via Pietro Micca or Via Roma, both of which are skirted by porticoes. If you opt for Via Roma you will come across Piazza San Carlo halfway down the street- this is where everyone goes for a traditional Italianpasseggiata, a leisurely evening walk through the city streets. After Piazza San Carlo, you will enter Piazza Carlo Felice, and from here onwards you could continue walking under the porticoes of Corso Vittorio. Another option would be to go back to your starting point by walking back under the porticoes on the other side of the road, and in this way you will have

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toured the centre of Turin without being hit by a single drop of rain!

You may be rather exhausted after this walk, so take a quick break for lunch while resting your feet in one of the many small restaurants which line the sides of Via Garibaldi. After this you may be ready to begin the next itinerary on foot.

Via Garibaldi and its Surroundings

Via Garibaldi, which was once called Via Dora Grossa, begins and ends in two beautiful squares, Piazza Castello and Piazza Statuto. On the stroll down this charming avenue, you might want to wander off into some of the pretty side streets and squares in the area. Exit the Piazzetta Reale through the passage on the left; this leads into Piazza San Giovanni, also known as Piazza del Duomo. Here you will find Turin's Duomo, the cathedral where theSindone is kept, a relic shroud said to have once been wrapped around the body of Jesus Christ. At the northern end of the square there are remains of ancient walls, a Roman cobbled floor, a Roman theatre, and the Porta Palatina. Keep going from here and soon you will come across the picturesque and colourful Porta Palazzo district which is famous for its market, thebalon(a Turin collection), and its mixture of different ethnic goups. Continue down Via Milano, and you will arrive in Piazza Palazzo di Città, and from there you can follow Via Garibaldi down to Piazza Statuto, a square first opened in 1864 as one of the four monumental entrances into the city.

Boating on the Po

In the last few years the Po has become more and more popular with the people of Turin, mainly thanks to the new cycle paths, boats, and the bars and restaurants along its banks. One of the best places to admire the city and its beautiful hills is onboard a boat on the river Po. There are guided boat tours running year-round, and on weekends and during the Christmas holidays, these trips are free! The view is especially spectacular when thefesta degli artisti(arts festival) takes place because Turin is all lit up. Along the left bank of the Po, between the Umberto I Bridge and the Principessa Isabella Bridge you will see the Parco del Valentino, the Borgo Medievale, and the Orto Botanico. Further along the river you will have a good view of the Hill, which is dotted with the villas of the local nobility and upper classes, as well as with many religious buildings such as Monte dei Cappuccini, and the Basilica di Superga.

The TurismoBus

The TurismoBus service runs everyday except Tuesdays, and offers a guided tour of the city and the royal residences. There is a multilingual commentary on board which gives information about the monuments, the museums, and the famous buildings en route. It is a very good service that offers a wide variety of services and guides to those wanting a more relaxing trip around the city.

Ristocolor

The tram that usually takes people to work or school becomes Ristocolor, a pleasant restaurant from which you can admire Turin. Busy tourists and gourmets alike will go mad for this restaurant, as they can try many Piedmontese specialties on the tram, all the while catching sight of historic monuments. It was the first restaurant of its kind in Europe, completely renovated and colorfully designed inside and out by the world famous designer Ugo Nespolo. The bus can accommodate groups of up to 32 people, and has disabled access as well. Call for info on bookings and tours.

The Magic of Turin

Turin's magic and charm is easy to appreciate through the discovery of its architectural splendour. In fact, most of the places linked with strange and interesting rumours can be found right in the centre of town, mingling with the monuments and buildings for which Turin is best known. This trail will take you passed Turin's"black" areas associated with Satanism and witchcraft, and on to the"white" town towards the Gran Madre, the place where the two influences meet.

The tour starts off from a small obelisk in Piazza Statuto that is partially hidden by a sparse clump of trees—this is the spot where Black Masses are rumoured to be held. View the inscriptions on the monument such as"666", upside-down crosses, and other similar incomprehensible phrases. Moving on from this spooky place, proceed towards Via Garibaldi where the shops serve as a good distraction from the uneasy feeling that lingers after the last stop. At the corner of Via Orfane is the church of San Dalmazzo, where suspicion of Satanist rituals is fuelled by the frequent theft of holy water. A couple of blocks along lies I cani di San Domenico, the area presided over by the church of San Domenico, where torture and suffering were once very commonplace—this is where the Inquisition was held.

Leave behind this dark side of town and proceed down Via Garibaldi towards Piazza Castello and Palazzo Madama. Once in the piazza, turn to your left to face Palazzo Reale. Move forward into the courtyard, and buried beneath you underground are the Alchemy Caves(Grotte Alchemiche), where only the initiated scientists may enter. Behind the Palazzo Reale lies the Duomo, housing the greatest mystery the city has ever seen, the sacred Shroud. Unfortunately the relic, in which Christ was said to be buried, is now hidden in a secret location, following the completion of restoration work from a fire a few years ago.

Back in Piazza Castello, continue through the surrounding arcades towards Via Po. A long arcade leads to Piazza Vittorio Veneto, and once inside, it is worth taking a moment to appreciate the view of the Po River, the Monte dei Cappuccini on the hilltop to the right, and the tour's final destination on the other side of the river. The Gran Madre di Dio dominates the entire skyline with its well-known statues representing Faith and Religion. Cross over the bridge and take a closer look at them. One is meant to be a warning to the pope, while the other is rumored to be the place where the Holy Grail is buried.

If you prefer a trip outside the town, hop into a car and head towards the Val di Susa, home of the Avigliana lakes. Spend the day sunning yourself on the beach or

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water-skiing in the summer, and enjoy the slopes in the winter. What is so mysterious about that? Some people have admitted to seeing strange lights in and out of the calm water, which are rumored to be linked to UFOs. And if you are really into extra-terrestrial activity, take a tent up to Monte Musine and spend the night sky searching. But beware: flying saucers and aliens are no joking matter up here- and even if you do not have a close encounter of the third kind, watch out for the adders living among the rocks.
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Travel Tips

Getting there:

By Air:

The Turin International Airport(+39 11 567 6361/http://www.aeroportoditorino.it) is located approximately 9 miles from the city centre. Airlines serving Turin include:

Air Berlin(+45 30 41 47 75 10;http://www.airberlin.com)

Air Dolomiti(+39 199 400 044/http://www.airdolomiti.it)

Air France(+39 848 884 466/http://www.airfrance.it)

Air Portugal(+39 02 6968 2334/http://www.tap.pt)

Alitalia(+39 06 2222/http://www.alitalia.it)

American Airlines(+39 02 6968 2484/http://www.aa.com)

Austrian Airlines(+39 02 8963 4296/http://ww.aua.com)

British Airways(+39 199 712 266/http://www.british-airways.com)

Condor(+1 800 524 6975/http://www7.condor.com)

Delta Air Lines(800 477 999/http://www.delta.com)

Easy Jet(+33 8 25 08 25 08/http://www.easyjet.com/)

Finnair(+39 840 000 979/http://www.finnair.com)

Iberia(+39 199 101 191/http://www.iberia.com)

KLM(+39 02 218 981/http://www.klm.com)

Lufthansa(+39 199 400 044/http://www.lufthansa.it)

Luxair(+39 011 567 6361/http://www.luxair.lu)

Meridiana(+39 199 111 333/http://www.meridiana.it)

Ryanair(+39 899 678 910/http://www.ryanair.com)

SAS(+39 02 7200 0193/http://www.scandinavian.net)

Sky Europe(+421 2 4850 1111/http://www.skyeurope.com/in.php)

SN Brussels Airlines(+39 02 6968 2364/http://www.flysn.com)

A railway links the airport to the city with departures every 30 minutes during peak times. The station is located just outside the terminal and the trip into Turin is only 19 minutes(+39 011 691 0000/http://www.qtt.to.it)

The SADEM Bus Shuttle(+39 011 300 0611/http://www.sadem.it) provides regular service between the Airport and downtown Turin and surrounding areas. The bus trip is approximately 40 minutes. Buses are located in front of the terminal on the Arrivals level and depart every 30-45 minutes during peak hours.

Taxis can be picked up in front of the terminal. Fare is approximately EUR26-42 to downtown Turin and the travel time is about 30 minutes. Taxi companies include: Pronto Taxi(+39 011 5737) Radio Taxi 5730(+39 011 5730) CTA- A 24-hour private taxi/limousine service(+39 011 996 3090/http://www.ctataxi.it)

Rental car stations are readily available with offices located at the Arrivals level in front of the terminal. Companies include:

Avis(+39 011 470 1528/http://www.avisautonoleggio.it)

EasyCar(+39 011 996 3257/http://www.easycarspa.com)

Europcar(+39 011 567 8048/http://www.europcar.com)

Hertz(+39 011 567 8166/http://www.hertz.com)

Maggiore(+39 011 470 1929/http://www.maggiore.it)

Thrifty(+39 011 567 8096/http://www.thrifty.it)

Sixt(+39 011 470 2381/http://www.e-sixt.it)

Targarent(+39 011 567 8090/http://www.targarent.it)

By Bus:

Eurolines(+39 055 35 71 10/http://www.eurolines.it) provides international bus travel to various cities in Europe and offers regular stops in Turin.

By Car:

Highway connections in and out of Turin include the A4, A5, A6, A21 and A32.

By Rail:

There are several rail stops throughout Turin. Porta Nouva(+39 011 561 3333) is Turin's central rail station located in the city centre that services most international trains. Porta Susa(+39 011 558 513) is a stop for most east and west bound trains and is located in Piazza XVIII Dicembre. Torino Lingotto(+39 011 665 3757) is located in the southern end of the city and connects Turin with Southern Italy. Torino Dora(+39 011 221 7835) is located in the northwestern part of Turin and serves local trains to the Canavese area. **Getting around:**

There is an extensive network of ATM trams and buses(800 019 152/http://www.atm.to.it) that offers service throughout Turin and surrounding areas. Tickets are available at newsstands. A good option is the Torino Card, which allows you to ride public transportation for free for up to 48 hours.
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Fun Facts

1. Geographical fact: Turin lies in Italy's northwest corner, on the river Po, in the Piemonte region with the Alps to the west and north

2. Interesting fact: Turin was the first capital of the Kingdom of Italy from 1861 to 1864

3. Religious fact: The Holy Shroud is located in Turin's Duomo just off Piazza Castello

4. Random fact: Turin's iconic building, the Mole Antonelliana was once the highest brick building bulding in the world

5. Chocolate fact: The ChocoPass is your ticket to 10 tastings of chocolate, from Gianuiotti to pralines, from cakes to biscuits and hot chocolate in Turin's historic cafe's and pastry shops

6. Fun fact: Step with your heel on the bronze bull's balls set in the pavement outside Caffe Torino in Piazza San Carlo, it's supposed to bring you luck!

7. Sports fact: In 2006 the eyes of the world were on Turin for the 20th Winter Olympic Games

8. Weird fact: Turin's Egyptian Museum has the second most important collection of Egyptian antiquities outside Cairo

9. 2011 fact: This year the city will host major celebrations for the 150th anniversary of Italian Unification

10. Food fact: The"Slow Food" movement was started in Bra, near Turin

11. Bread fact: Turin is home to grissini, those famous breadsticks now served in virtually every restaurant in Italy

12. Drink fact: Vermouth was invented in Turin in 1786 by Benedetto Carpano who created this aperitif created by the expert blending of wine with thirteen different ingredients

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