



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



jim linwood

Best Churches in Turin

Turin, 1 Day

Table of contents:

- Guide Description 2
- Itinerary Overview 3
- Daily Itineraries 4
- Turin Snapshot 9

Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: A list of not-to-be-missed Turin churches.

Turin's history is reflected through its buildings and monuments but its churches are testimonies to Christian centres of worship through time. Many of these churches are iconic symbols of the city, such as the Cattedrale del Duomo, the beautiful Santuario della Consolata and the Royal Church of San Lorenzo.

Churches in Turin don't have to be big to be impressive. Two churches can be found at the southern end of Piazza San Carlo, the church of Santa Cristina and the church of San Carlo framing the entrance to the southern part of via Roma.

Day 1 - Turin

DAY NOTE: Let's start at the Cathedral of San Giovanni Battista, also known as the Duomo di Torino, in Via XX Settembre. Its the only example of Renaissance architecture in the city and was erected between 1491 and 1948. Behind the rather bland façade are six chapels to the right side of the right aisle and seven along the left. Of particular note is the second chapel on the right, consecrated to San Crispino and San Crispiniano, painted by Defendente Ferrari. The Shroud of Turin is kept inside a special fireproof case in the Duomo di San Giovanni Battista. There is a photographic copy on display.

Just behind the Cathedral stands the Royal Church of San Lorenzo, adjacent to the Piazzetta Reale, in this case its simple façade conforms to nearby civil buildings. Construction began in 1634 and the church was consecrated in 1680. Famous for its extraordinary cupola which because of its astonishing, interlocking rib design seems infinite. Designed by Guarino Guarini, the church was the original home for La Sacra Sindone when it first arrived in the city.

From here, leave the piazzetta and enter Via Garibaldi There are two churches in this street worth a peek. The first is at number 25, the S.S. Martiri, dedicated to Turin's three patron saints, Solutore, Avventore and Ottavio, the church was built by the Jesuits in 1577. Just to the right of the church there's access, via the Jesuit's college, to the lavishly decorated Chapel of the Pious Congregation of Merchants and Bankers.

The Basilica Sanctuary of the Consolata can be found by leaving Via Garibaldi and taking Via della Consolata, across Piazza Savoia, to the small piazza on you right aptly named Piazza della Consolata. The original church was founded in the 11th century and features Juvarra's lavish high altar as its centre piece. Opposite the entrance, across the piazza at number5, is Al Bicherin, Turin's oldest coffee shop.

Last stop of the day will be Piazza San Carlo, so leaving the Consolata by way of Via della Orfane rener Via Garibaldi, turn left and head toward Piazza Castello again. At the end of the street, turn right and enter Via Roma across the piazza. Turin's grandest shopping street leads into Piazza San Carlo where at the southern end facing you are two churches, the church of San Carlo and the Church of Santa Cristina.

The Church of Santa Cristina was erected in 1639 on the wishes of Christine of France, the first Madama Reale, the marble and granite façade is due to Filippo Juvarra. Inside there is a single nave and beside the high altar, there is a rectangular chapel with the painting, Riposo dalla Fuga in Egitto, by Antonio Triva. The church of San Carlo was begun in 1619, also has a single nave with two bays with cross vaults and two chapels on each side. Look out for the first chapel on the left, of the Addolorata, which hosts a work of art by Tommaso Carlone.

Depending on what time you started this is probably time for an aperitivo which is quite lucky, as Piazza San Carlo contains three of Turin's most famous caffes, Caffè Torino at number 204, Caffè San Carlo at number 156 and on the opposite side of the piazza, at number 155 is Neuv Caval'd Bròns frequented in the past by the likes of Ava Gardner, Errol Flynn, Orson Welles, Fangio and Sinatra.

Don't forget to look out for the bull's balls outside Caffè Torino, stand on them and it might bring you luck! What a way to end the day!



Cattedrale di San Giovanni Battista

Home of the Shroud



Basilica della Consolata

A Model of Grandeur and Wealth



Al Bicerin

Opened in 1763, possibly Turin's oldest and smallest café.



Piazza San Carlo

Turin's drawing room...



Caffè Torino

One of Turin's most stylish cafés.



Caffè San Carlo

A Torinese 'must do'.



Santa Cristina

Twin Sister in Piazza San Carlo



The Bull in Piazza San Carlo

A pirouette to bring you luck?

Day 1 - Turin

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Let's start at the Cathedral of San Giovanni Battista, also known as the Duomo di Torino, in Via XX Settembre. Its the only example of Renaissance architecture in the city and was erected between 1491 and 1948. Behind the rather bland façade are six chapels to the right side of the right aisle and seven along the left. Of particular note is the second chapel on the right, consecrated to San Crispino and San Crispiniano, painted by Defendente Ferrari. The Shroud of Turin is kept inside a special fireproof case in the Duomo di San Giovanni Battista. There is a photographic copy on display.

Just behind the Cathedral stands the Royal Church of San Lorenzo, adjacent to the Piazzetta Reale, in this case its simple façade conforms to nearby civil buildings. Construction began in 1634 and the church was consecrated in 1680. Famous for its extraordinary cupola which because of its astonishing, interlocking rib design seems infinite. Designed by Guarino Guarini, the church was the original home for La Sacra Sindone when it first arrived in the city.

From here, leave the piazzetta and enter Via Garibaldi There are two churches in this street worth a peek. The first is at number 25, the S.S. Martiri, dedicated to Turin's three patron saints, Solutore, Avventore and Ottavio, the church was built by the Jesuits in 1577. Just to the right of the church there's access, via the Jesuit's college, to the lavishly decorated Chapel of the Pious Congregation of Merchants and Bankers.

The Basilica Sanctuary of the Consolata can be found by leaving Via Garibaldi and taking Via della Consolata, across Piazza Savoia, to the small piazza on you right aptly named Piazza della Consolata. The original church was founded in the 11th century and features Juvarra's lavish high altar as its centre piece. Opposite the entrance, across the piazza at number5, is Al Bicherin, Turin's oldest coffee shop.

Last stop of the day will be Piazza San Carlo, so leaving the Consolata by way of Via della Orfane reenter Via Garibaldi, turn left and head toward Piazza Castello again. At the end of the street, turn right and enter Via Roma across the piazza. Turin's grandest shopping street leads into Piazza San Carlo where at the southern end facing you are two churches, the church of San Carlo and the Church of Santa Cristina.

The Church of Santa Cristina was erected in 1639 on the wishes of Christine of France, the first Madama Reale, the marble and granite façade is due to Filippo Juvarra. Inside there is a single nave and beside the high altar, there is a rectangular chapel with the painting, Riposo dalla Fuga in Egitto, by Antonio Triva. The church of San Carlo was begun in 1619, also has a single nave with two bays with cross vaults and two chapels on each side. Look out for the first chapel on the left, of the Addolorata, which hosts a work of art by Tommaso Carlone.

Depending on what time you started this is probably time for an aperitivo which is quite lucky, as Piazza San Carlo contains three of Turin's most famous caffes, Caffè Torino at number 204, Caffè San Carlo at number 156 and on the opposite side of the piazza, at number 155 is Neuv Caval'd Bròns frequented in the past by the likes of Ava Gardner, Errol Flynn, Orson Welles, Fangio and Sinatra.

Don't forget to look out for the bull's balls outside Caffè Torino, stand on them and it might bring you luck! What a way to end the day!

contact:

tel: +39 011 436 1540
http://www.comune.torino.it/chiese/sangio.htm

location:

Piazza San Giovanni
Turin 10122

hours:

Daily 7am-12:30pm and
3-7pm

1 **Cattedrale di San Giovanni Battista**

DESCRIPTION: The controversial **Shroud of Turin (Sacra Sindone)** and the chapel in which it is enshrined every jubilee year, **Cappella della Santa Sindone**, hold pride of place in this otherwise uninteresting, pompous 15th-century church. Even without the presence of one of Christianity's most precious relics (and it's only rarely on view in the silver casket elevated on an altar in the center of the room), the chapel is well worth a visit. Still under construction after a 1997 fire (one of many the shroud has miraculously survived, with an occasional singeing, over the centuries), the chapel is somberly clad in black marble. But, as if to suggest that better things await us in the heavens, it ascends to an airy, light-flooded six-tiered dome, one of the masterpieces of Italian baroque architecture. The shroud, of course, is allegedly the one in which the body of Christ was wrapped when taken from the cross -- and to which his image was miraculously affixed. The image is of a man 1.7m tall (5 ft., 7 in.), with bloodstains consistent with a crown of thorns, a cut in the ribcage, cuts in the wrists and ankles, and scourge marks on the back from flagellation. Recent carbon dating suggests that the shroud was manufactured sometime around the 13th or 14th century, but the mystery remains, at least in part, because no one can explain how the haunting image appeared on the cloth. Also, additional radio carbon dating has suggested that, since the shroud has been exposed to fire (thus affecting carbon readings), it could indeed date from around the time of the death of Christ. Regardless of scientific skepticism, the shroud continues to entice hordes of the faithful. The shroud is kept at the **Museo della Sindone (Holy Shroud Museum)** around the corner at Via San Domenico 28 (tel. **011-436-5832**; www.sindone.it), open daily from 9am to noon and 3 to 7pm; admission is 5.50€ (\$7.15) for adults and 4.50€ (\$5.85) for those under 14 or over 65. The shroud was last on view during Italy's Jubilee celebrations in 2000. Technically, it shouldn't be on display again until the next Jubilee, in 25 years, but it tends to pop up every 5 to 15 years for special occasions. Otherwise, you'll have to content yourself with a series of dramatically backlit photos of the relic near the entrance to the cathedral, and another in the church of San Lorenzo. The museum houses a plethora of information (including photos, X-rays, and history) relating to the shroud. In front of the cathedral stand two landmarks of Roman Turin -- the remains of a theater and the **Porta Palatina**, a Roman-era city gate, flanked by twin 16-sided towers. © Frommer's



wcities

contact:

tel: +39 011 483 6111
fax: +39 011 483 6120
<http://www.laconsolata.org/>

location:

Via Maria Adelaide
Turin Piedmont 10122

2 Basilica della Consolata

DESCRIPTION: Construction on this church began in 1679 under Guarino Guarini. The foundations were laid on the site where the church of Saint Andrea previously stood with its hexagonal presbytery. After the death of Guarini, Juvarra designed the dome upon which Bortoloni's fresco was painted. The 11th century Romanesque tower belonged to the previous church and now sits on the right hand side of the Basilica's facade. The church is decorated with many valuable marbles, most of which were votive offerings. The impressive marble floor is one of the main talking points of this church. Next to the Basilica della Consolata stands a 25 meter high dedicatory column. A statue of the virgin Mary was placed on top in 1835 as a thank you to the Madonna for keeping at bay the dreaded plague which devastated Europe that year. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +39 (0) 11 43 69 325
<http://www.bicerin.it/>

location:

Piazza della Consolata, 5
Turin Piemonte 10122

hours:

08:30 - 19:30, Closed: Every Wednesday (except the Wednesday prior to 20th June, the one between the 1st and 4th November, and every Wednesday between 4th December and 6th January)
The whole August January 1st (if it's not on Sunday) 24th June (if it's not on Sunday)

3 Al Bicerin

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

This is the original home of the Bicerin. Don't miss it on your visit to Turin.

DESCRIPTION: Located in Turin's atmospheric quadrilatero Romano, Turin's oldest and smallest café has barely changed since it opened in 1763. Frequented by Cavour, Dumas and Puccini, this establishment soon became very popular with the aristocracy. The minute interior has only eight marbled-topped tables and the original counter still stands as solid as ever whilst three dozen multi-coloured sweet jars perch on the shelves behind. It is the original home of the 'Bicerin'. An exquisite hot drink, with three layers, one espresso, one chocolate and one fresh cream in secret amounts, served in a tall glass so you can admire the fusion of colours and the aroma. Preferably sipped after mass at the Sanctuary of the Consolata just across the piazza, this is a truly Torinese ritual and not be missed on any account. © NileGuide



Adrian Petersen

location:

Piazza San Carlo
Turin Piedmont 10121

4 Piazza San Carlo

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Take a coffee break at either Caffè Torino or Caffè San Carlo.

DESCRIPTION: One of Italy's most stunning and beautiful squares, known locally as Turin's drawing room. Built in the mid 17th century and designed by Carlo di Castellamonte, perfectly laid out, porticoed and elegantly proportioned. At the square's southern end lie two churches, on the left, Santa Cristina, on the right, San Carlo, whilst in the centre stands a statue of Emmanuel Filbert, sculpted by Carlo Marochetti in 1838, known as "El Caval 'd Brons" (The Bronze Horse). The



Adrian Petersen

square bisects Via Roma and makes the perfect place to stop for a coffee or aperitivo after all that sightseeing and shopping.
© NileGuide

contact:

tel: +39 (0) 11 54 51 18
fax: +39 (0) 11 56 13 246
<http://www.caffe-torino.it/>

location:

Piazza San Carlo, 204
Turin Piemonte 10121

hours:

Daily from 07:30 - 01:00.

5 Caffè Torino

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Aperitivo hour is a must do!

DESCRIPTION: One of the city's grandest cafés and most elegant meeting places, located in the beautiful Piazza San Carlo, known locally as 'Turin's drawing room'. Caffè Torino opened in 1903 and moved to its present location in the 1930's during the rebuilding of Via Roma. A favourite haunt of actors, poets and politicians, Cesare Pavese and Alcide De Gasperi were regulars, as were Brigitte Bardot and Ava Gardner. Caffè Torino is decorated with a heady mixture of cream and pistachio, glinting mirrors and sparkling chandeliers plus a belle époque winding staircase. Famous quotations from international literary history adorn the walls and one above the bar pays homage to coffee: "dolce come l'amore, puro come un angelo, caldo come l'inferno". The atmosphere is definitely elegant but relaxed. In fair weather sitting at one of the outdoor tables, covered by 17th century porticoes, is a must. Between 18:00 and 21:00 you can snack off a fabulous selection of dishes and platters laid out along the bar for around 7 €. Don't forget to look out for the bull embedded in the pavement just outside, standing on his balls could bring you luck! © NileGuide



Adrian Petersen

contact:

tel: +39 (0)11 53 25 86
fax: +39 (0)11 53 74 52
www.caffesancarolo.it

location:

Piazza San Carlo, 156
Turin Piedmont 10121

hours:

Daily from 08:00 - 24:00.

6 Caffè San Carlo

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The perfect place to pause, reflect and people watch whilst enjoying a great coffee.

DESCRIPTION: Caffè San Carlo is one of Turin's oldest and most famous, in many ways, it is the essence of Turin's café culture, a place where you can have an espresso or prosecco in real style. Early chroniclers called it "a palace", hardly surprising as the lavish mixture of gilded mirrors, rich plasterwork and classical art is topped with a very large helping of Murano chandelier. In 1832 it became the first café in all of Italy to use gas lighting, which enhanced the interior, a favourite of Cavour and a place where the Risorgimento patriots met. Today its the perfect place to pause, reflect and people watch, whether in the morning to see the locals 'take' their heart starting espresso and enjoy a chocolate or cream pastry, or in the evenings when they return for free stuzzichini (almost all the cafés feature these evening snacks, if you pay for a drink you can help yourself to an aladdin's cave of pizzette, frittata, roasted



Adrian Petersen

vegetables, salads, cheese, salami, olives, bread and more!) and an aperitivo. A Torinese 'must do' since 1822. © NileGuide

contact:

tel: +39 011 53 5181 (Tourist Information)

http://www.comune.torino.it/illuminazione_olimpica/monumenti/santa_cristina.htm

location:

Via Roma
Turin 10121

7 Santa Cristina

DESCRIPTION: The church of Santa Cristina was built on the request of Madama Reale, Maria Cristina, in 1639 on the project of Carlo di Castellamonte. The facade erected between 1715 and 1718, is the work of Juvarra. It has one nave and is rather simple in style, but the chapel dedicated to San Giuseppe and Santa Cristina. It has been built on the side of Via Roma in front of the church of San Carlo. These two sister churches stand out on the south side of the piazza. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +39 011 535 181

location:

Piazza San Carlo
Turin Piedmont 10121

8 The Bull in Piazza San Carlo

DESCRIPTION: Although the reasons why are obscure, the city has always been symbolized by a bull, but whatever the origin of the association, it must have had a positive value. This is the case with the bull in Piazza San Carlo. It is said that to tread on its horns, or even better its genitals, will bring great fortune. The only thing is that it must be done accidentally. And for this reason, you will not be told in what part of the square the bull is to be found, hoping that you will tread on him by accident!



Adrian Petersen

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 Caffè Torino is a perfect place to taste biccin (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.

Turin Snapshot continued

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.

Turin Snapshot continued

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 Caffè 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 becomes the 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 of gianduia (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 Palazzina 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 Italian passeggiata, 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

Turin Snapshot continued

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 the Sindone 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, the balon (a Turin collection), and its mixture of different ethnic groups. 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 the festa 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.

Ristorcolor

The tram that usually takes people to work or school becomes Ristorcolor, 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 rumoured 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

Turin Snapshot continued

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.

©

Travel Tips

Getting there:

By Air:

The Turin International Airport(+39 11 567 6361/http://www.aeroporto torino.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://www.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 Nuova(+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.

©

Turin Snapshot continued

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 Caffè 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

© NileGuide