



from Italy around the world with flavour aus Italien mit Geschmack rund um die Welt
de Italia en el mundo con sabor **dall'Italia nel mondo con gusto** de l'Italie dans le monde avec goût

"Country world" and "medieval world"
in September in the district of Asti:
Douja d'Or, Festival delle Sagre and Palio di Asti
(country world and medieval traditions meet together in gourmet Piedmont)
Friday 11th – Monday 21st September 2009
I-PIE-11-01



1st Day Friday 11th September 2009 - Arrival

Arrival of guests at the hotel in **Asti**, welcome cocktail and dinner. Overnight.

2nd Day Saturday 12th September 2009 – Country world: Douja d'Or and Festival delle Sagre

After breakfast, walk in the streets of **Asti** to know its history, through its roman, medieval, Renaissance and modern monuments (the Roman House in via Varrone, the Crypt of Sant'Anastasio, the Baptistery, San Peter's Rotunda with the Palaeontologic Museum that hosts 2 Egyptian mummies, the many churches, towers, noble palaces, the streets with the historic interesting shops); Lunch on your own. In the afternoon, we'll enjoy the country atmosphere of the **Festival delle Sagre** and the involving charm of the **Douja d'or**, choosing among the many delicious proposals and the entertainment activities of both the events (enogastronomic stands, wine seminars at the Douja d'Or, country games and music at the Festival delle Sagre); time at disposal for the country dinner in Piazza Campo del Palio where chefs of 46 villages will prepare traditional menus with typical dishes, while entertainment and local folklore will enrich the program.

3rd Day Sunday 13th September 2009 - The country parade of the Festival delle Sagre

After breakfast, the 46 towns involved will stage a parade with floats depicting traditional fascinating but also hard country life of the beginning and the half of the 20th century, with everyone (about three thousand people among children, women and men) in costume along **Asti's** roads from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm to reach "Campo del Palio" square. We'll enjoy this ancient atmosphere, made of colours, perfumes and unforgettable emotions. Lunch on your own at the Festival delle Sagre in Piazza Campo del Palio with its many stands that will propose rich menus, continuously checked in the quality and in the precision of their preparation by a jury of competent Piedmontese journalists. After lunch, excursion to **Cisterna d'Asti** to visit the Castle and the interesting *Museum of country tools and ancient crafts*; tasting of the local DOC wine and dinner in a country-inn.



Tour Gourmet s.r.l. – Tour Operator

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4th Day Monday 14th September 2009 - **Local craft in Asti**

Breakfast and guided tour of **Asti** with visit of a nougat laboratory to learn the secrets of the production of nougat, chocolate and the typical Piedmontese hazelnut; tasting. Lunch on your own in the many restaurants to taste raw meat and the typical Piedmontese fassone *vitello tonnato* (veal served cold in a tuna and anchovy mayonnaise), the peppers in *bagna càuda*, the *agnolotti* and *tajarin*, typical cheese or cakes. In the afternoon we'll enter the Certosa di Valmanera, an ancient Carthusian Monastery, near the historical centre of Asti, that was restored to host the *Scassa's Tapestry Weaving Mill*, the one of the few of tapestry weaving mills still active in Italy and its *Museum* with the finest pieces. It's possible to admire a unique paintings' collection, tapestries of renowned artists such as Corrado Cagli, Mastroianni, Mirò, De Chirico and Kandinskij. We can learn the particular technique of these tapestries that are woven on looms of haute-lisse. This noble but also more exacting technique (about 500 hours of artisan work are necessary to produce a square metre of tapestry) gives results which would be impossible to obtain in any other way and it enables the most diverse forms and expressions of the pictorial language of contemporary art to be transferred to the tapestry not only respecting the original but, in some cases even enhancing its effect. Return to the hotel and typical dinner.

5th Day Tuesday 15th September 2009 – **The Bormida Valley and the sparkling Canelli**

After breakfast, departure for **Bormida Valley**; transfer to the ovine and goat mountain pastures in **Roccoverano**, to a country estate that breeds sheep and produces the DOP cheese *Robiola di Roccoverano*; tasting of cheese with honey and *cugnà*. We'll later reach the highest village in Langa. Langa Lunch with the typical dish "fritto misto alla piemontese", house made *tallarin* with the wines *Barbera and Dolcetto d'Asti*, *bonet* (typical chocolate pudding), and *amaretti* of *Mombaruzzo* with the *DOCG Moscato d'Asti* in a country inn in **Monastero Bormida**. After lunch, visit to a country estate, producer of the typical old *mais* (old Piedmont cultivar) and to see the stone mill in **Bubbio** and walk to visit a near original Arabian wild horses stud-farm. En-route stop in **Canelli**, declared *Unesco World Human Heritage* because of its underground wine cellars and the many vineyards that surround the town; visit to a producer of a famous sparkling wine, to learn techniques of this production and visit the cellars. Tasting and return to the hotel for dinner.



6th Day Wednesday 16th September 2009 – **To the local market, cooking lesson and Douja d'or**

After breakfast, visit to **Asti's** market to buy the ingredients for a cooking lesson at the *Gourmet School*, with the preparation of a typical seasonal menu (cocktail with *Monferrato's* wines, raw meat with celery and *Parmesan* flakes, roasted peppers in *bagna càuda*, *Carnaroli* rice in a *Barbera* sauce, fondue or braised veal with a sauce of *Monferrato's* red wine, *bonet*) and tasting-lunch with these prepared dishes. In the afternoon, free time at disposal to walk through the town among the stands of the market and the artisan shops (on request it will be possible to visit an artisan laboratory where casks are built, to learn techniques of the seasoning, toasting and working of both the traditional Piedmontese casks and the modern *barriques*) with en-route stop at the *Douja d'Or* to know and taste the winning wines of the *National Competition of Italian Wines Douja d'Or 2009*, as well as quality products we can also buy here. Dinner on your own, choosing among the many appetizing gourmet and artisan proposals, shown by the excellent local producers.

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7th Day Thursday 17th September 2009 – The Langa, its lands and wines

After breakfast, excursion through the hills, on the right bank of Tanaro river towards **Alba**, the main town of Langa, with its one hundred towers; walk in the town, between autumn's perfumes and colours. Lunch on your own in the many local restaurants; afternoon departure for **Barolo** and visit of its castle and of the Regional Enoteca. Stop at the most ancient local wine cellar to admire past and present bottles of wines in its cellar and wine shop (the only example in Italy). Tasting. We'll proceed with the visit of **La Morra**, to see the famous "Belvedere on the wonderful sea of vines' sea". The village has preserved the original medieval structure with its steep paved little streets. In the evening, gourmet dinner with the doc wine Pelaverga di Verduno in a country-inn in **Verduno**. Return to the hotel and overnight.



8th Day Friday 18th September 2009 – Turin and the Royal House

Departure for **Venaria** and visit of the royal Palace, the "Piedmont's Versailles" whose precious halls and wonderful gardens have been recently restored. In the late morning, excursion to **Turin**, the first main city of Italy, romantic and austere town, also defined "magic town" because of its atmospheres and secrets. Lunch on your own and visit of the *Mole Antonelliana*, symbol of Turin, that hosts the *National Film Museum*. The combined ticket also includes the panoramic glass lift running through the centre of the building. This lift offers a beautiful panorama of the whole of Turin and of the Alps when one reaches the top and it is definitely worth experiencing since on its ascent and descent one can see the spectacular inside of the museum itself. En-route stop for *comparison dinner* in a restaurant that was an ancient water mill. Guests will taste dishes of both the country poor and the noble Savoyard cuisine. Return to the hotel and overnight.



9th Day Saturday 19th September 2009 – Gavi and Palio race's eve in Asti

Breakfast and departure for **Gavi** (after Romans' defeat, the town was conquered by the Saracens, and a legend tells that under their domination, the first rock was built by the Princess Gavia). Visit of the rock, national monument of the 16th century. Visit of an important cellar where docg wines Gavi are produced. Tasting of wine and typical local appetizers. Exclusive shopping with Tour Gourmet Card by the McArthur Designer Outlet village in **Serravalle**, the biggest one in Europe with its 184 shops. Afternoon return to the hotel to relax before the walk in town and aperitif at the Douja d'or, the important National Wine Competition that selects, presents and awards a prize to the DOC and DOCG wines of all Italy. Emotions of the Palio's eve: we'll experience the real life of the *borgo* and participate at the *propitiatory Palio dinner* (dinner prepared to favour victory) with a menu prepared by the Palio Committee and offered along the town street, all decked with flags and lights. We'll see the jockey's dressing ritual. Overnight.

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THE PALIO in ASTI



10th Day Sunday 20th September 2009 – **Enjoying Palio race in Asti**

In the morning, we'll enjoy the blessing ceremony of the horse in front of the parish church of San Secondo, patron of **Asti** and admire the parade in medieval costumes and the exhibition of drummers and flag throwers. We'll wait the afternoon palio race as real "villagers", strolling among Piazza San Secondo and the town streets, looking at the propitiatory rituals and at the many stands of typical products and colourful gadgets. Lunch on your own, plunged in the medieval atmosphere with its sounds, colours and emotions. At 3 pm, we'll enter the Piazza Alfieri to take seat in the tribune and enjoy the Palio race. We'll look at the historical parade with one thousand five hundred people: the procession, which is opened by the Group of the Captain of the Palio, followed by the sounds of many drummers and the colours of the flag throwers, re-enacts 21 scenes of medieval life. Palio bareback horse-race (jockeys ride without a saddle) will follow: three preliminary heats in which seven horses compete; the best three in every heat proceed to the exciting final race and then... the awarding of the Palio to the winner that can also be the so called "scosso" horse (that means an horse without its horseman) as it happened in 2007. In the evening, dinner on your own ... or a sandwich at a bar. You can later participate at the following celebrations of the winner of the Palio 2009. Return to the hotel. Overnight.



11th Day Monday 21st September 2009 – **Departure from Asti**

After breakfast, departure of guests. End of the tour.

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