

7 Reasons To Visit Genoa Now



While high-profile cities like Venice, Florence and Rome draw many of the country's international visitors, Genoa is a destination that deserves more attention for anyone seeking authentic Italian experiences. Rich in art, architectural treasures and museums, with an evocative medieval centro storico, one of the largest in Europe, a varied food and wine culture, and a sprawling seafront, the city is ideal to visit in autumn. Here's what Genoa has on offer this fall.

A Great New Art Exhibit

Peter Paul Rubens, the influential Baroque artist who came to Genoa in the early 17th century, knew many of the city's most prominent families and documented the architectural grandeur of their magnificent palazzi in an illustrated two-part tome, *Palazzi di Genova*. To mark the 400th anniversary of the book's publication, the city is hosting a major exhibit, *Rubens and Genoa's Palaces*, at the Palazzo Ducale, running from October 6 to Jan 22, 2023. Complementing Rubens' works in permanent collections in Genoa, the show will feature 20 additional prized pieces by the artist, like *Portrait of a Lady*, and a self-portrait completed when in his 20s, that were drawn from various holdings and museums in Italy and throughout Europe. More than 100 other period paintings will be on exhibit, as well as decorative items, including furnishings and tapestries typical of what was found in aristocratic dwellings of the time, in addition to fashion pieces, providing a look at the city's exceptional aesthetic riches and cultural power in the early 1600s. Visitors will also be able to follow an itinerary to discover Rubens' art in other parts of the city.

The Genoa International Boat Show

Appropriately for a former maritime power, Genoa holds a major international boat show each year, the Salone Nautico, one of the largest events of its kind in the world. The next Salone will take place this month (September 22 to 27) at the Fiera di Genoa and present the latest designs and news in yachts, superyachts, sailboats, motorboats, and nautical tech with more than 1000 seafaring vessels on display. Team members participating in the

round-the-world sailing regatta, the Ocean Race, will be on hand; the six-month competition spanning 32,000 nautical miles begins in January in Alicante, Spain, with a grand finale to be held in Genoa from June 24 to July 2, 2023. The Salone also hosts a variety of conferences, seminars and activities during the show.

The Restored Palazzo Rosso

After a nearly three-year renovation, the Palazzo Rosso, one of Genoa's most noted museums, re-opened to the public in early June. The palace, the former home of the powerful Brignole-Sale family, is a trove of Old Masters with works by Anthony Van Dyck, Guercino, Guido Reni and Albrecht Dürer. (A Brignole-Sale heir, the Duchess of Galliera, donated the palazzo and its contents to Genoa in 1874.) The magnificent vaulted ceiling of the Sala della Primavera with lavish frescoes by Gregorio de Ferrari was refurbished, as was the Sala della Grotta in the private mezzanine apartment once inhabited by Genoa's ambassador to Paris, Anton Brignole-Sale, now open for viewing for the first time. The Sala dell'Autunno, period furnishings and loggia were also refurbished, along with the palazzo's facade. Infrastructure and technological upgrades were implemented to bring the museum up to date.



A Sleek New Hotel

The first hotel to be built in the city, the Astoria dates from 1860 (the structure was once the property of the Marquises of Serra), but recently underwent a major renovation to add a variety of 21st-century flourishes. Located in Piazza Brignole within walking distance of many Genoa attractions (and the Brignole train station), the four-star hotel, which re-opened in October 2021, has 70 sleek well-planned rooms, ranging from singles to family suites with modern decor and finishes.

The Astoria offers various themed packages with tie-ins to key attractions and events in Genoa, or for touring the nearby Riviera. The Discovering Liguria package, for example, provides a discounted room rate with a five-night stay. (Discounts are also available for a regular three-night booking.) Among the amenities—free minibar drinks and free phone calls in Italy and to the United States. Giovanni Rimbotti, CEO of Algilà, which manages the Hotel Astoria and has a sister property in Ortigia (Syracuse), said in a statement that he and his company “strongly believe in the future of Genoa and the potential of this territory’s unique attractions,” an area he describes as “still waiting to be discovered by many.”



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Foodie Tours and Classes

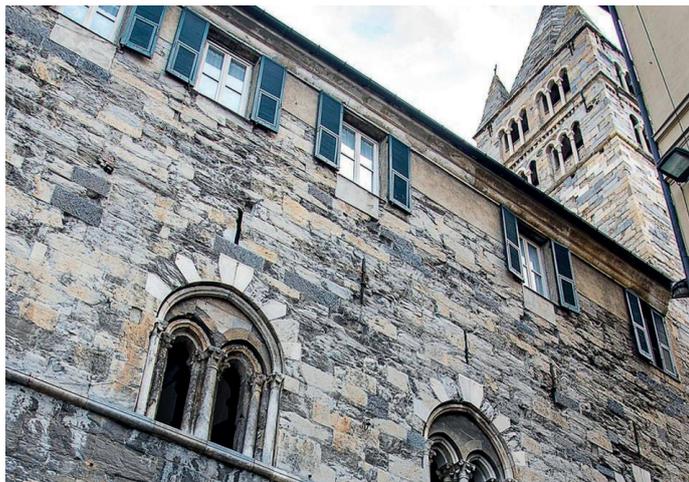
A great way to learn about the cooking of Genoa and the Italian Riviera is with culinary expert and author, Enrica Monzani, who heads up the engaging and highly regarded website, A Small Kitchen in Genoa. This fall Monzani is offering tours that she describes as a “stroll through the narrow alleys of Genoa discovering its flavors and culinary traditions.” She likens the excursions, which last two and a half hours, to a “small treasure hunt,” with visits to food shops in the historic center and samples of specialties (sweet and savory) consumed along the way. The tours require a minimum of two people (maximum eight) and are available mornings and afternoons, excepting Sunday, Monday morning and Wednesday afternoon.



Another option is Monzani’s morning food tour/cooking class that begins with an outing to the amazing Mercato Orientale, Genoa’s expansive covered food market, to shop for in-season ingredients to be used in the class, where lunch is prepared. The cooking lesson takes place in Monzani’s home kitchen and lunch is served, in good weather, on her terrace overlooking the city. The tour/class takes about five hours and can be booked for two to six guests.



A New Museum



Check out one of the city's newest cultural offerings, MEI, the National Museum of Italian Emigration. Genoa, like Naples and Palermo, was a key embarkation point for millions of Italians seeking to relocate to the Americas, Australia and other parts of the world in the 19th and 20th centuries. The three-story museum, housed in the Commenda di San Giovanni di Prè dating from the Middle Ages, chronicles these epic journeys and those of other times, as well as the history of migration to and within Italy, with photographs, personal correspondence and interactive exhibits.



Catherine Sabino

Contributor
TRAVEL

Rolli Weekend



Genoa hosts "Rolli Days" twice a year when some of the city's most splendid palaces, not ordinarily accessible to the public, are open for visits. The next Rolli event is scheduled for the weekend of October 14-16. Genoa had an unusual system for hosting foreign dignitaries during the heyday of its Republic—the palazzi of top families were part of a list, or rollo, designated to accommodate these visitors, according to rank. There were 163 palaces, 42 of them are on the UNESCO World Heritage List; many are located along the former Strade Nuove (the "new streets" like Via Garibaldi, Via Balbi, Via Cairoli). A number of Rolli places, such as the Palazzo Rosso and Palazzo Bianco, are highly regarded art museums and can be visited year-round.