



Genoa & Turin

Palaces & galleries in north west Italy

18–24 April 2026 (MM 925)

£2,860 • 7 days

Lecturer: Dr Luca Leoncini

Two great cities, unaccountably overlooked by many cultural travellers.

Genoa was a leading maritime republic of medieval Italy and birthplace of Columbus.

Turin was developed with grand avenues and *piazze* during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Both have magnificent palaces, churches and other architecture, medieval to Neo-Classical.

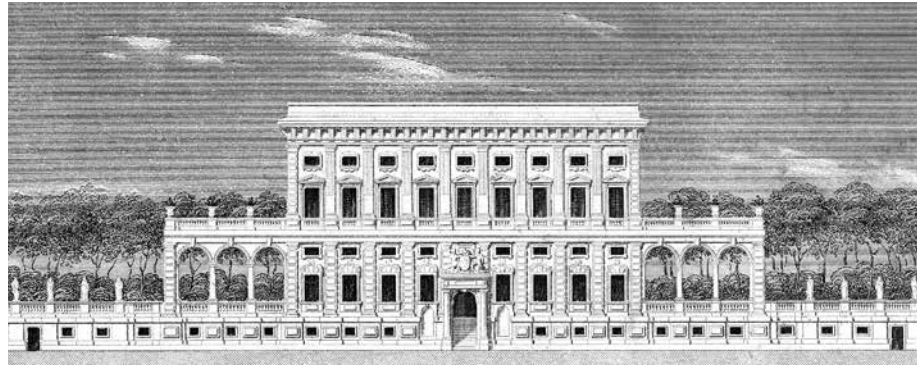
Exceptional picture collections with fine examples of Van Dyck and Rubens.

'Secret cities' would have been an absurd subtitle for two such major places, but did suggest itself because of the rarity with which Britons find themselves in Genoa and Turin. But every art lover should go. The prevailing images are perhaps still predominantly commercial and industrial, but not only do both have highly attractive centres but both are distinguished by the large number of magnificent palaces and picture collections.

Genoa lays claim to the largest historic centre of any European city. It was one of the leading maritime republics of medieval Italy (it remains the largest port in the Mediterranean), and enjoyed a golden age during the 17th century. In the 1990s civic improvements and building restorations were undertaken to prepare the city for celebrations connected with the quincentenary of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas, and the cultural momentum has continued.

In the earlier 17th century Genoa was artistically the equal of almost anywhere in Italy except for Rome and Naples. More than any other Italian school of painting, the Genoese was indebted to the Flemish school: Rubens made a prolonged visit in 1605 and Anthony Van Dyck was based here from 1621 to 1627. Many of his paintings remain here.

Turin was developed on a grand scale in the 17th and 18th centuries as the capital of Savoy, an independent state which became a kingdom from 1720. The region of Piedmont formed the majority of the kingdom's mainland territory (which included Sardinia), and in the 19th century Piedmont became administratively and industrially the most advanced state in Italy – and the springboard for the *risorgimento*. Turin



Genoa, the Villa del Principe, steel engraving c. 1850

was the first capital of the newly united and independent Italy, 1861–65.

Turin's centre is laid out on a regular plan with broad avenues and *piazze* of remarkable architectural homogeneity. Guarino Guarini (1624–83) and Filippo Juvarra (1678–1736), among the best architects of their time, both worked here for much of their lives.

Itinerary

Day 1: Genoa. Fly at c. 10.00am (British Airways) from London Heathrow to Milan Linate. Drive to Genoa. Upon arrival visit the Palazzo Spinola which has good pictures, Van Dycks in particular. First of three nights in Genoa.

Day 2: Genoa. In the morning visit Palazzo Rosso, which has fine furnishings and excellent pictures. In the afternoon, see the Palazzo Reale with its magnificent stairway, splendidly furnished rooms and an impressive art collection.

Day 3: Genoa. Visit the church of S. Luca with its beautifully decorated interior. See also the church of the Annunciation and the Piazza S. Matteo, formed by the imposing palaces of the Doria family, which overshadow the small family church of S. Matteo. The Cathedral of S. Lorenzo, built in the 12th–16th centuries, possesses many works of art and a fine treasury. Afternoon visit to the Villa del Principe with Perin del Vaga frescoes.

Day 4: Cherasco, Stupinigi. Leave Genoa and take a cross-country route through the beautiful countryside and wine-producing area of Le Langhe. Stop in Cherasco which

has a 14th-century Visconti castle for a typical Piedmontese lunch. En route to Turin is Palazzina di Caccia in Stupinigi, a royal hunting lodge built to a fascinating ground plan by Filippo Juvarra in 1730. First of three nights in Turin.

Day 5: Turin. A morning walk through the beautiful Piazza S. Carlo, with arcades and 18th-century churches, is followed by a visit to the cathedral, with Guarini's Chapel of the Holy Shroud. See also the Palazzo Madama in the centre of Piazza Castello, now housing the City Art Museum, and the little church of S. Lorenzo, another Guarini masterpiece. In the afternoon, visit the Royal Palace, built in 1660, with wonderful interiors from the 17th–19th centuries. The Galleria Sabauda, housed in the Palace, has an excellent picture collection.

Day 6: Venaria, Turin. Morning visit to the magnificent royal palace of Venaria (Amedeo Castellamonte, 1659) reopened in 2007 following extensive renovation work. Some free time in Turin.

Day 7: Superga, Lingotto. Visit the votive church of Superga, a magnificent hilltop structure by Juvarra, and the Pinacoteca Giovanni and Marella Agnelli at Lingotto which has a small but excellent quality collection in a building designed by Renzo Piano. Fly from Milan Malpensa, returning to London Heathrow at c. 8.45pm.

Genoa & Turin
continued

Lecturer

Dr Luca Leoncini. Art historian specialising in 15th-century Italian painting. His first degree and PhD were from Rome University followed by research at the Warburg Institute in London. He has published articles on the classical tradition in Italian art of the 15th century and contributed to the *Macmillan Dictionary of Art*. He has also written on Mantegna and Renaissance drawings.

Practicalities

Price, per person. Two sharing: £2,860 or £2,620 without flights. **Single occupancy:** £3,220 or £2,980 without flights.

Included: flights (Euro Traveller) with British Airways (Airbus 320); travel by private coach; hotel accommodation; breakfasts; 1 lunch and 4 dinners with wine; all admissions; all tips; all taxes; the services of the lecturer and the tour manager.

Accommodation. Grand Hotel Savoia, Genoa (grandhotelsavoia.genova.it): 5-star hotel close to the Palazzo Reale. **Grand Hotel Sitea, Turin** (grandhotelsitea.com): 4-star hotel, comfortable, elegantly furnished and very central. *Single rooms are doubles for sole use.*

How strenuous? The tour involves a lot of walking in town centres where vehicular access is restricted and standing in museums, and should not be attempted by anyone who has difficulty with everyday walking and stair-climbing. The transfer days between Milan's airports and the hotels and between Genoa and Turin involve a lot of driving. Average distance by coach per day: 51 miles.

Group size: between 10 and 22 participants.