



WINTERTIME AT THE RIVIERA

HOLIDAY TIPS FOR DECEMBER TO FEBRUARY

IN THIS ISSUE

PIERO'S NOTE

Winter at Agriturismo Cà de Runde... For summer guests it might be hard to imagine what it's like, but wintertime in Ospedaletti might surprise you.

Even from November to March, our region is usually blessed with a mild climate: temperatures rarely go below 10 degrees and there are many sunny days. The wind from the north clears the high sky, making it incredibly bright and blue. On the best bright days, you can even see the island of Corsica on the horizon, from the panoramic seaview of our gardens. The mountains protect our coastline from the north wind and prevent temperatures from dropping really low. Perfect conditions for enjoying nature, hiking, cycling and visiting the cities and villages nearby without the crowds.

It's also the time of year that I rearrange and prepare the gardens, make homemade limoncello (and a few other liqueurs), do repairs and make improvements on the property - among a lot of other things.



Come over to Cà de Runde during wintertime. Let's enjoy a glass of wine together and discover Liguria in a different way.

A presto!

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VILLAGE HOPPING

Discover the medieval villages of Imperia 03

COSY WINTER COMFORT FOOD

Ligurian style 05

IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

The Riviera dei Fiori at Christmas time 09

REGULARS

Piero's gardens 07

Hiking & cycling 08

Event calendar 11

La prossima volta 14



VILLAGE HOPPING

DISCOVER THE MEDIEVAL VILLAGES OF IMPERIA

Of course, visiting Sanremo, Genova and Monaco during your stay at Cà de Runde is a great idea! All marvelous hotspots where you can have a great time. But to truly dive deeper in our region's historic, artistic and cultural heritage, make sure to put a visit to a few of our "borghi" on your holiday planning as well.

A "borgo" is a fascinating small Italian town, generally fortified and dating back to the period from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. They're true hidden gems, but you can find lots of them throughout Italy. There is even a selection of villages officially recognised as "[i borghi più belli d'Italia](#)", the most beautiful villages of Italy. In our province Imperia the villages Apricale, Cervo, Diano Castello, Lingueglietta, Perinaldo, Seborga, Taggia and Triora - all made that cut.

You will find lots of dreamy villages if you take a roadtrip through the valleys of our hinterland. Just follow the coastline in western direction, for example, and drive along the Nervia river into the mountains (Val Nervia). A fun-filled day of village hopping is guaranteed. This valley will lead you to Dolceacqua, Apricale, Rochetta Nervina, Perinaldo and Pigna.

In eastern direction, while following the Argentina river into the valley, you will cross enchanting villages like Taggia, Badalucco and Triora. All with their own characteristics, special highlights, local dishes, curious events and extraordinary inhabitants.

THERE'S ONLY ONE PLACE I WANT TO GO - AND IT'S TO ALL THE PLACES I HAVE NEVER BEEN

During wintertime you can enjoy the villages in peace. But if you think these villages are asleep, guess again. Their calendar's are filled with patronal feasts, celebrations in the time leading up to Christmas, ringing in the New Year, Valentine's Day, Carnevale and so on.

There is something special about the charms of a small village during winter that warms your spirit. Whether you're strolling along a cobblestone street with glittering holiday lights, or cozying up by a fire pit with hot chocolate or a vin brulé after a fun day of wandering around and getting lost - the villages offer the perfect escape from the winter blues.

For this winter edition of our guest magazine we are highlighting a few villages of the Nervia valley, to help you plan your winter getaway.



APRICALE

Artist's village

While wandering through the streets of Apricale, the many colourful murals, decorated mailboxes, tiny boutiques and art galleries won't go unnoticed. Creativity is in the air and there is lots to see. On the main piazza you will find an iconic mark of the village by looking up to the bell tower. Contemporary artist Sergio Bianco famously fixed a bicycle to the roof of the tower. A piece of art, entitled "La forza della non gravità."

An excellent extra virgin olive oil is produced in the Taggiasca olive groves of Apricale. The town is part of the National Association of the [Cities of Oil](#) and is located along the "Strada dell'Olio". Aside from the famous olive oil, local specialties include Pansarole, sweet pancakes served with hot zabaglione, and Cubaite, a honey and hazelnut cake. Make sure to taste them when you visit Apricale.

DOLCEACQUA

Painter's muse

"... *the place is superb, there is a bridge that it is a jewel of lightness* ..." a famous quote by Monet, describing Dolceacqua in his memoirs. Dolceacqua is a true pearl! The village is divided in two by the Nervia river and connected by a 33 metre long medieval bridge, built in the 15th century. The older part of the village is called Terra, the newer part is called Borgo, from where you have a stunning view on the village's historic elements. Although Dolceacqua is quite small, there is lots to see and to do. Enter the labyrinth of small alleys to reach the famous Castello dei Doria. Try to find the spot from where Monet painted its famous painting "*Le Château de Dolceacqua*". Taste the sweet Micetta and learn all about its creepy legend from the villagers of Dolceacqua. Or follow the [routes](#) marked by the community to make sure you won't miss any hotspots.

[DOWNLOAD THE DOLCEACQUA APP >>](#)



PERINALDO

Hill of the stars

Perinaldo, a picturesque medieval village, is situated on a ridge almost 600 metres above sea level, with a magnificent view of the Ligurian Alps to the north and the sea to the south, through its terraces planted with centuries-old olive trees, vines and mimosas.

It's said Napoleon stayed here in 1797, during his first campaign, but the village is most known as the birthplace of the famous astronomer Gian Domenico Cassini. The Astronomical Observatory in the village center is definitely worth your visit. The [Stellaria Association](#), invites you to discover the wonders of the starry sky and organises lots of fun and interesting events.

TIP: Leave your car at Dolceacqua and try the beautiful hiking route from Dolceacqua to Perinaldo.



COSY WINTER COMFORT FOOD

LIGURIAN STYLE

After a long day of being outdoors, hiking, cycling or visiting villages or cities nearby, what better way to end a day than by cosying up by the fire and filling your bellies with delicious seasonal treats! So, what is in season in Liguria during wintertime?

A TASTE OF LIGURIA

Our region is most famous for its Pesto Genovese, Focaccia and Taggiasca olives, but there is so much more to discover of the Ligurian cuisine.

Ever tried **Farinata di ceci**? This savoury flatbread is the perfect appetizer or afternoon snack. It's actually one of Piero's home-baked specialties. He can tell you vivid stories about the origin of this local dish. The ingredients of Farinata di ceci are simple: chickpea flour, water, extra virgin olive oil, rosemary, salt and pepper. It should be enjoyed hot, right out of the oven.

Sardeinara is typically from the Imperia province and you should definitely try it! Walking through Sanremo, you will see it is often offered as street food. This specialty has the looks of a pizza, but is quite different. The dough resembles that of focaccia. This is topped by a rich layer of tomato sauce, Taggiasca olives, capers, red onions, garlic and sardine fillet.

There are a few Ligurian dishes that you will find a lot around here, specifically during wintertime.

Cappon magro is a beloved salad of seafood, vegetables on a foundation of biscuits, traditionally served on Christmas eve.

Buridda, a traditional Genoese fishermen's soup or stew, will warm your body during chilly days. Often it contains cuttlefish, peas, tomatoes, onion, garlic, mushrooms, parsley, capers, anchovies, white wine, extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper.

In winter a **stew of rabbit or wild boar** is a great choice to regain strength after outdoor activities. Both rabbits and wild boar live here in abundance, in the forests and mountain areas and make for a great local specialty. Try it prepared *alla cacciatora* - hunter's style, in a stew with onions, herbs, tomatoes, peppers and wine. It's delicious!

Are you in for something sweet? **Pandolce** is Liguria's typical Christmas cake – traditionally prepared on the morning of Christmas Eve and served as a dessert. It's Liguria's version of the Panettone, but lower and denser and enriched with pine nuts, candied fruit and raisins.

RESTAURANT RECOMMENDATIONS

Just a few of our favourite restaurants nearby, usually open during the winter season*:

- **Come a casa** - Ospedaletti
- **Byblos** - Ospedaletti
- **1909 Ristorante** - Ospedaletti
- **Pappa Buona** - Ospedaletti
- **Il Giardino** - Vallebona
- **Del Portico** - Castelvittorio
- **Marcellino's** - Seborga
- **La Porta Verde** - Sanremo
- **La Pecora Nera** - Rocchetta Nervina

* We recommend to always visit the restaurant website to check current opening hours and make a reservation in advance to avoid disappointments.





PIERO'S GARDEN

Agriturismo Cà de Runde offers an original way to experience the Ligurian countryside. The farmhouse with guest apartments on top of a hill of Ospedaletti is surrounded by several gardens. When you open a window or the front door of your apartment, you will instantly find yourself in a true oasis. Olive trees and avocado trees around your breakfast table, a seasonal pool surrounded by banana trees and lemon trees all over the place.... As a professional in agriculture, Piero makes sure there's always enough to pick, taste and enjoy all year round.

There are a few more gardens on different, more remote locations in Ospedaletti, covering a surface of nearly 20.000 m2. These gardens are full of olive trees. Our part of the Riviera dei Fiori is known for its famous Taggiasca olives and some of the world's best olive oil. The olives owe their name to the town of Taggia (just 15 km from Cà de Runde), where monks have introduced this special variety.

Also on a (safe) distance: local beekeepers Andrea and Michela of [N1 NumeroUno Miele & Delizie](#), have set up their beehives in one of Cà de Runde's remote gardens. What better place than at the Riviera of Flowers, for the bees to collect nectar! You can taste the result of their hard work - the home-made honey - in the agriturismo.



In the winter season you will find all kinds of citrus fruits in the gardens around the house. Oranges, pomelo, grapefruit, tangerines and lemons... Kickstart your day with a healthy, juicy piece of fruit you selected and picked yourself.

Aside from tasty fruits Piero has planted different kinds of salad, cabbages and... fennel! *Finocchio* in Italian. This hearty winter vegetable is delicious in dishes with rabbit and olives. A salad of roasted fennel, red onion, oranges and olives from the oven make for a great winter feast. Or prepare it with mozzarella, parmesan cheese, bread crumbs and fresh thyme from the garden for a perfect Fennel gartin. Use it for puff pastry tartlets or as a cameralized side dish.... plenty of options for true foodies!

Looking for some ingredients for a sweet & sour dessert? How about passion fruit or kiwi? You will find lots of them in our winter gardens!

As a guest of Cà de Runde, you are most welcome to enter the gardens around the house and gather what you need. There are enough garden-to-table options to pick and share and make yourselves tasty home-made dishes for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Check out the garden planning to see what Piero's gardens have in store for you, during each season of the year.

[GO TO THE GARDEN PLANNING >>](#)





HIKING & CYCLING

Crisp air, colourful sunsets, rough seas, bright skies, deserted hiking trails and the beautiful Mediterranean lights... Winter in Ospedaletti offers plenty of opportunities for outdoor activities.

Several hiking tracks start right behind our agriturismo. You can cross Monte Nero to reach Seborga or Sasso di Bordighera. Or walk downhill to follow the beautiful coastline to Sanremo. Walk a true pilgrim's route by following the tracks of the "[Via della Costa](#)" which connects a spiritual path between Rome and Santiago de Compostela (Spain).

Or hop on a bicycle or mountainbike to enjoy the numerous easy, flat, or more challenging or difficult tracks in the hinterland. If you want a guided trip, just ask Piero to connect you with our local tour guides.

MENTON - CAP MARTIN - MONACO

One of the most beautiful walks in our region is on the Promenade le Corbusier, also called Sentier des Douaniers. This walk from Menton to Monaco passes the medieval coastal town Roquebrune Cap Martin. You can also choose to start there halfway and pick one destination.

This beautiful coastal walk gives a great panoramic view of the beaches, rough rocks, crystal clear water, impressive landscapes and the skyline of Monaco. Along the route you will find plenty of benches to relax and enjoy the view.

TIP: Bring a bottle of water and some snacks as there are no refreshment points along the route.

[CHECK OUT THE ROUTE OPTIONS >>](#)



PISTA CICLABILE

24 Kilometers of fun, fantastic views and fascinating sights! That's the Pista Ciclabile; the coastal cycling path from Ospedaletti to San Lorenzo al Mare.

This track is only accessible to hikers and cyclers and is paved over an old railway track. The path passes cosy coastal villages, nice beaches, lush parcs and stunning villas. On your way the road will lead you through several railway tunnels, keeping you curious about what you will see next.

Just downhill from our agriturismo, you will find several options to rent bikes, e-bikes and family bikes. Check out the map with rental facilities, interesting sights and refreshment point.

[DISCOVER THE PISTA CICLABILE >>](#)

SEASONAL HOLIDAYS

IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

Ring in the festive season in Ospedaletti and enjoy a December to remember. Find out what the Riviera dei Fiori has in store for you and why you should choose to spend the holidays at Agriturismo Cà de Runde.



CHRISTMAS TIME AT THE RIVIERA

You don't always need polar temperatures to create a nice Christmas atmosphere. Agriturismo Cà de Runde is the perfect cosy winter hide out for those in search of a holiday that combines relaxation and being outdoors in an inviting climate. Not only are there less crowds, but there are many unique festivities and traditions only found this time of year. The Christmas festive season starts on December 8th, the date of Immaculate Conception of Mary, and is celebrated until January 6th, the day of the Epiphany.

RELIGIOUS SITES

Do you want to attend a Mass, light a candle for someone or just marvel at the beautiful religious sites of the Riviera? There are several unforgettable places to visit around here. To name just a few, let's start with the **Santuario delle Madonna delle Porrine**. This charming church is right in front of our agriturismo in Ospedaletti. It was initially built in the late 1500s. In that time, the harbour was plundered by pirates and inhabitants were kidnapped. The senate of the Republic of Genoa decided to build a watchtower, which became a place of worship. Mid-1700 the small church, was enlarged with a fresco by Carrega, but the present form dates from 1817. **Sant'Ampelio** is a romantic, tiny seaside church on the cliffs at Bordighera. Legend has it Sant'Ampelio used to live in the desert of Egypt where he worked as a blacksmith. When he was challenged by the devil, he drove the devil away by wielding a red hot iron. As a gift from God, he then became insensitive to burns. He moved to the Ligurian coast to live as a hermit in a cave among the rocks, where later Benedictine monks built the church to house his remains.

Aside from these and other charming small churches there are some grand must-see sites nearby:

Basilica Concattedrale di San Siro in Sanremo

San Giovanni Battista Church in Cervo

Chiesa di Cristo Salvatore (Russian Orthodox) in Sanremo*

**(please note the difference in religious calendars)*

CHRISTMAS MARKETS

To really get into the Christmas spirit it's super fun to visit one of the many cosy Christmas markets in the region. Stroll along the streets with line-ups of Christmas stalls, filled with handmade ornaments, gifts and food. One particular thing you'll notice at the Christmas markets is lots of stalls selling a figure of a witch on a broomstick. This actually isn't a witch, but *La Befana*, celebrated on the 6th of January, the end of the holiday season. Sip vin brulé, taste some seasonal street food snacks and enjoy the lights and colourful decorations. You will find a list of Christmas markets in the event calendar.

NATIVITY SCENES

Looking for an atmospheric nativity scene, you are bound to find beautiful *precepi* in churches and main squares of most villages around here. Usually you can count on the communities of Imperia, Finale Ligure, Menton and Cervo to set up the most extraordinary indoor and outdoor displays.





WINTER EVENT CALENDER

Since these are uncertain times, we advise to always check the "more information button" or contact the community, before planning your day, for the latest updates on the events mentioned.

UPARTE NATALE - BADALUCCO

Come and check out the beautiful exhibition of paintings, sculptures and photographs, set up in Piazza del Duomo in Badalucco. Visit the arts & crafts market, participate in workshops and enjoy music

4 to 24 December 2021 - Badalucco, Piazza Duomo

[More information](#)



IMPERIA WINTER REGATTA

The Imperia Winter Regatta brings sailing crews from all Europe to Imperia, to sail this world class-event for 470's and 420's. Head off to Porto Maurizio for a wonderful event of sports with beautiful races in the waters of the capital of winter sailing.

5 to 8 december 2021 - Porto Maurizio, Imperia

[More information](#)

SANREMO MARATHON

A breathtaking route of 42.195 km that leads along the most beautiful towns and villages of Western Liguria. Participate or cheer on the runners of the main event, the 10k or the fun family run.

5 December 2021 - Sanremo and surroundings

[More information](#)



MERCATINI DI NATALE VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Arma di Taggia: 4 December - Piazza Marinella

Bordighera Alta: 10 to 12 December - Centro Storico

Menton: 1 December to 6 January - Les Jardins Biovès (FR)

Sanremo: 1 December to 6 January - Piazza Borea D'Olmo

Ventimiglia: 7 December to 9 January - Via Aprosio





PRESEPE VIVENTE CERVO

For this year it is not officially confirmed yet, but the community of Cervo usually organises a wonderful live nativity scene. Follow Maria, Giuseppe and Gesù and the other participants of that incredible first Christmas.

To be announced - Usually 24 December - Cervo

[More information](#)

IL PRIMO TUFFO DELL'ANNO OSPEDALETTI

The New Year's dive is chilly and requires a bit of courage, but it is the best way to start the new year fresh. Join the inhabitants of Ospedaletti and jump into the sea on New Year's Day, or watch this fun event from the sidelines.

To be announced - Usually 1 or 2 January - Ospedaletti

[More information](#)



ARRIVA LA BEFANA OSPEDALETTI

Festivities for children, celebrating the arrival of La Befana - the old lady who spoils good children with treats and sweets on the morning of Epiphany.

To be announced - 6 January - Ospedaletti / all over Italy

[More information](#)



FIOREGGIANDO A SAN VALENTINO - OSPEDALETTI

Visit the local flower market and find some presents for your loved-ones on Valentine's Day. Aside from flowers and plants you will find lots of other local products.

To be announced - Usually on 14 February - Ospedaletti

[More information](#)



FESTIVAL DI SANREMO

The city is butsling! It's time for the famous Italian song festival in Sanremo. Watch the *Campioni* (already well-known performers) and discover the *Nuove Proposte*, (upcoming talents) during 5 nights of sparkle and glamour.

1 to 5 February 2021 - Teatro Ariston - Sanremo

[More information](#)



È TEMPO DI... CARCIOFI OSPEDALETTI

An ode to the artichoke and a feast for foodies! Visit the producers of our *carciofo spinoso sardo* and taste it in our local restaurants, prepared in many different ways.

To be announced - Usually mid February to mid March

[More information](#)

FIERA DELLA CANDELORA SAN BARTOLOMEO AL MARE

The Candlemass fair of San Bartolomeo al Mare is the oldest traditional fair in Liguria, historically linked to the beginning of the agricultural season.

Usually 1, 2 and 3 February - San Bartolomeo al Mare

[More information](#)



NOTTE DEI FULGARI & FESTA DI SAN BENEDETTO - TAGGIA

Ancient festival with bonfires, historical re-enactments and celebrations. All to remember the night the town was set on fire to deceive the Saracen pirates and save itself from invasion and to honour the patron saint San Benedetto.

Usually late February - Taggia

[More information](#)





LA PROSSIMA VOLTA

WHAT IS UP NEXT?

SPRINGTIME AT THE RIVIERA

The Riviera dei Fiori is blossoming! Spring is in the air and flowers pop up everywhere. It's the season of Easter celebrations and flower parades. Piero will set up the seasonal pool and you can pick and taste the first avocados and fava beans from the gardens.

In the new Spring edition of our guest magazine we will talk weddings, new hiking routes and the famous Milan-Sanremo road cycling race, among other springtime topics.

Spring edition - coming soon!



THE GUEST MAGAZINE

Agriturismo Cà de Runde - The Guest Magazine | December '21

This destination magazine aims to inspire you to make the most out of your stay at Agriturismo Cà de Runde and experience the Riviera dei Fiori to the fullest. Every season offers its own unique charm, colours and flavours, and plenty of opportunities to enjoy your holidays.

Editors

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