

Created by: Debra C. Argen

## Turin, Italy



In October 2004, Edward F. Nesta and I took the train from Nice, France to Turin, Italy, to learn what **Turin Hotels International (THI)**, [www.THI-Hotels.com](http://www.THI-Hotels.com), was planning for autumn 2005, and to visit our friends, artists Guido Borelli and Danka Weitzen.

We pre-purchased our tickets in the United States through **Rail Europe** ([www.raileurope.com](http://www.raileurope.com)), which allowed us to go directly to the track at the station without waiting in line to purchase our tickets. From our comfortable seats on the train, the scenery was breathtaking as we passed the yellow stucco houses on the hills which appeared to be a golden color in the sun, and enhanced with the strong green color from the palm, olive, lemon, orange and Cyprus trees. Bright spots of bougainvillea and pink oleander delighted the eye, as well as the cactus that grows in the Mediterranean climate. The sea sparkled like diamonds as the train hugged the coast, before making its way to the mountains.

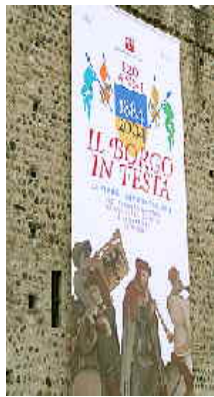


Turin, Italy was founded by the Romans, and was the capital of Italy from 1861 - 1864, before they moved the capital to Rome. As such, the city is rich in history, has a palace, is situated on the River Po, and offers a wide spectrum of activities for its visitors. We stayed at the **Grand Sitea Hotel** ([www.THI-Hotels.com](http://www.THI-Hotels.com)), which was perfect with its central location. (Read our article on the hotel in **Hotels & Resorts** section.)



Our friends, Guido and Danka played tour guides for us, and took us all over Turin to appreciate their city. We drove to the top of Turin, and from that high vantage point, we could see the Alps, majestic and dusted with snow. We drove by the **Opera House**, past the palace where Danka lived for ten years, strolled through the **Citt  di TorinoGiardino Roccioso**, a gorgeous botanical park, and stopped for a drink at the **Green River Music Caf **, where we sat at an outside table under a canopy overlooking the Po River. From our bird's-eye view, we could see the villas along the river, watch the kayaks and riverboat cruises, and had a great view of the bridge with its ornate statues. We also went to **Il Borgo**, a medieval village that was created in 1884, as part of the Italian General Exhibition, celebrating 120 years, 1884 &ndash; 2004.

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We also visited the **Duomo di Torino Basilica Cattedrale Metropolitana San Giovanni Battista** where we saw a copy of the Holy Shroud of Turin.

After sightseeing, we went to Guido and Danka's house and sat under a kiwi arbor that was laden with fruit, and ate sweet grapes still warm from the sun that Danka picked from their vines for us to eat. Their cat, Stefano, came to sit in my lap, as we sat outside in the sunlight, and ate grapes and drank wine from their friend, Patrizia's vineyard. Their home is a creative work of art, as would be appropriate for two artists. Even their garden is a work of art, with



tables and chairs tucked under two arbors, a bench awaits guests in the shade of a fan palm tree, roses and herbs grow in their gardens, and pots of flowers grace their doorways and balcony. Their house is a beautiful gallery showcasing their art and that of their friends, creating an interesting and inviting ambience, where each artist has their own separate studio in which to create. (Read our article on their art reception in St. Paul-de-Vence, France in our **Arts & Antiques** section.)

For dinner, Danka made a wonderful antipasti of kidney beans mixed with thinly sliced red onions, an omelet made with herbs, filled with cheese and rolled crepe-like and then thinly sliced and served with arugula, as well as tuna fish mixed with mayonnaise, potatoes, and peas, and another dish of red and yellow peppers sautéed with oil olive and green olives. She followed that with thinly sliced sautéed eggplant, tomatoes, garlic and onions, which she mixed with spaghetti. We drizzled a very green, very delicious olive oil over the pasta, as well as a very hot red pepper sauce. Grated Parmesan cheese completed this appetizing dish. She had also made a lovely mixed green salad, gratin potatoes and had a cheese course, but alas, we ate too much of the pasta to be able to sample any more of the dishes. We did however make room for sipping chilled vodka, and eating poached pears, which she topped with melted chocolate and vanilla ice cream. In addition to being an artist, Danka is also a wonderful cook. Brava, Danka! We enjoyed the rest of the evening conversing and laughing and returned to the hotel content after a marvelous day.

The next day we enjoyed strolling through the streets and stopping to look at the specialty food shops along the way. Gourmands will appreciate the specialty cheese, meats, pasta, breads, pastry and sweet shops. Fashionistas will appreciate the designer shops in Turin. The city is very appealing in that it offers

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something for everyone from the cultural to the gastronomic.



For lunch we went to the elegant **Ristorante del Cambio**, ([www.THI-Hotels.com](http://www.THI-Hotels.com)), the oldest restaurant in Turin, which has been in continual operation since 1859. (Read our article on the restaurant in the **Restaurant** section.) In the evening, we went to dinner at **Il Ciacolon**, with our friends. (Read our article on the restaurant in the **Restaurant** section.)

Turin will host the 2006 Winter Olympics, but why wait until then to visit? The city awaits you with open arms.

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