



Join me and walk  
in the footsteps of  
**Claude Monet**

on a journey through the  
Italian Riviera  
**ITINERARY 2018**

# **PAINTING HOLIDAYS IN ITALY**

## **7 days “plein air” workshops**

A relaxing week in  
breathtaking seaside,  
blooming hillside scenery,  
history, food and wines

All levels of experience are  
welcome. If you are beginner, I'm  
fluent in English and I will help you  
and teach all fundamentals of painting

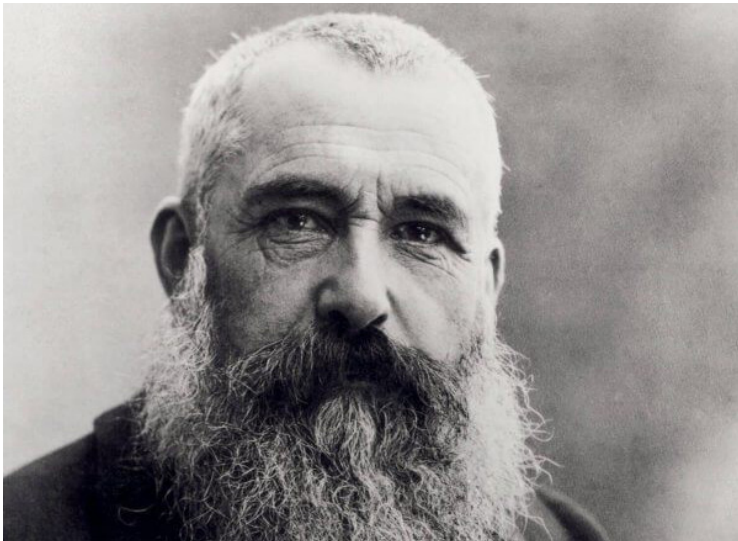




# Claude Monet and the Italian Riviera



*“Everything is wonderful, and every day the countryside is more beautiful, and I am bewitched by the country. Here everything is beautiful and the weather is superb”,* wrote Claude Monet in 1884 to his friend and gallery owner Durand-Ruel.



the history of Impressionism.

Today a traveler, following in the footsteps of Monet, would remain struck by one circumstance: the world which had impressed the imagination and the heart of Claude Monet, had not changed. Monet was entranced by the “blue sea”, the exotic palms and the exuberant vegetation.

Maybe too much: *“I would like to make oranges and lemons that stand out against the blue sea, I cannot find them as I want. As for the blue of the sea and the sky ... it is impossible”.*

Claude Monet had been in the Italian Riviera for nearly three months. He arrived on January the 18th, 1884 and left on April the 3rd.

During this period he made 38 paintings. These 79 days, represented for Monet, an inexhaustible source of inspiration, and for the “Italian Riviera” the memory of an indelible passage, made eternal by the paintings in which the artist painted the medieval villages he visited in those memorable days for him: “We have made a wonderful excursion. We left in a carriage early and we reached an extraordinarily picturesque village. I was intent to return to my hotel on foot along a hill ... unfortunately I will never tell the wonders I saw during the return through the paintings because of the difficulties that I should face to return to paint”.

In this case, Monet was wrong, because his memory convinced him to leave an imprint and, the painting **“The bridge and the castle of Dolceacqua”**, remains one of the most celebrated in







# On the footsteps of Claude Monet A journey through the Italian Riviera

## ALASSIO

... where Ernest Hemingway was use to spend his holidays

### About ...

Pearl of the Italian Riviera besides being known as the land of the sun, the sea, entertainment, sport and chocolate “Baci”, Alas-sio is known for the natural beauties that surround it and make it the ideal destination for the Italian Gulf.

From a flourishing fishing village, as it once was, with the birth of international elite tourism, Alas-sio has become one of the most

elegant centers of the Riviera. Alassio is surrounded by greenery, flowers, beautiful villas and characterized by almost 3 miles “white natural sand” beach, which descends into the sea gently, almost without a slope, making it perfect for children and families to use safely. The City offers hotels, restaurants, luxury shops, and a beautiful Tennis Club in Liberty style.



**3 miles “white natural sand” beach**



**Hotels and restaurants**



**Tennis Club in Liberty style**



**Luxury shops**



**A10 minutes drive from Garlenda Golf Club**

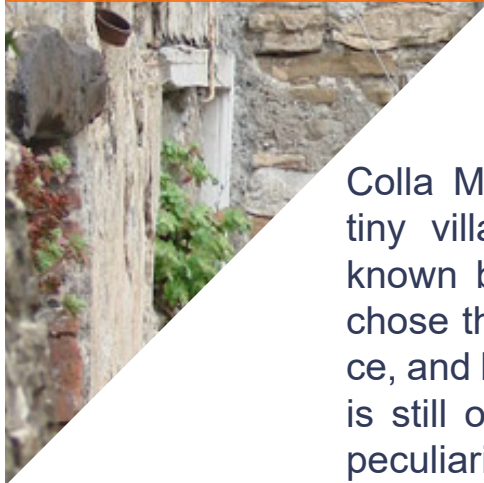
*Ruggero Ruggieri*  
*Art*



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# COLLA MICHERI

**... where Thor Heyerdahl lived a long part of his life**



## About ...

Colla Micheri is a beautiful and tiny village still inhabited. Well known because Thor Heyerdahl chose this village as his residence, and bought a large estate that is still owned by his family. The peculiarity of Colla Micheri is that from the coast one can not even suspect the existence of a country, because the houses are located on the back side of the hill. It was built in this way for not being

sighted by the Saracen ships that in the ages passed with their incursions on the coast terrorized the inhabitants.

Also happy choice, because in Colla Micheri, when the sun is out in Laigueglia at sunset, you can still enjoy a beautiful show: just turn your back to the sea and you can see the sun going to lie behind the hills in a “sea” of olive trees.



**A wonderful panorama**



**It is the first of the walks that should be done on holiday in Laigueglia**





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# LAIGUEGLIA

... belonging to



I Borghi  
più belli  
d'Italia

(the Most Beautiful Villages of Italy)

## About ...

The first records on the life of Laigueglia date back to the twelfth century, when it became part of the Genoese republic. Between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it suffered a strong immigration of Catalan inhabitants, who came to fish coral. In the XV-XVI centuries Laigueglia was a maritime and commercial center, despite the presence on the Italian coasts of the Saracens. The inhabitants fled to the hill, while from the sea. In 1546 the pirate Dragut landed by and hoarded hostages. The attacks of pirates along the Italian coasts thickened. The Republic then invited all the coastal Municipalities

to provide towers, bastions, and city walls, providing financial aid. Laigueglia thought of his defense, building three towers, of which we can admire the survivor. In the century XVII the mercantile navy reached its maximum development with the transport of oil, grains and wine, with a traffic of over 100 vessels per month. Today remains the architecture of the old town center with its typical "carruggi", designed for defensive needs and the majestic Church of San Matteo.



A beautiful fishing village

*Ruggiero Ruggieri*  
*Art*





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# CERVO

... belonging to



**(the Most Beautiful Villages of Italy)**



## About ...

Cervo, certified for years by the Most Beautiful Villages of Italy, has kept intact its original features of a medieval village on the sea, protected by towers and sixteenth-century walls and surrounded by green hills.

The historic center is practicable only on foot and has been preserved with its buildings, centuries old, and its cobblestone alleys where there are shops of artisans and artists.

The coastline is characterized by the presence of small bathing establishments; for the rest, beaches and cliffs are free and discreet and there is no other voice than that of the sea. And the water is always clear, with seabeds rich in algae and fish.

Upstream of the village, around ruins of bygone eras, the hills are full of pine and olive groves, crossed by silent paths where you can breathe clean air.



**A medieval village on the sea**



**The hills are full of pine and olive groves**





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# ALBENGA

**... its ancient history dating back to Roman times**

## About ...

Once a village of Italian origins, later a Roman municipium, and then a medieval “comune”, it flourished through eras of constant economical prosperity until the XIII th century, when it underwent a deep transformation: the natural course of the river which flowed northbound was diverted southwards, causing a swift advancement of the plain which buried the city shore together with its old harbour, radically changing the nature of the locality. Albenga went on to lose more and more its contact with the sea, eventually having to base its economy on far poorer agriculture alone.

Under the rule of Genoa, occupied by France, assigned to the House of Savoy, the city went on

to endure long periods of decay and abandonment. However, around the mid nineteenth century, enterprising citizens transformed the agricultural economy, bringing prosperity and wealth to the plain. Albenga awakened and its urban installation, frozen inside its walls for centuries, finally changed: in the twentieth century, with fluctuating peaks caused by different waves of urbanization, the city expanded enormously around its historical centre.



**Museums**



**Monuments**

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*Art*





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# VILLANOVA D'ALBENGA

... a medieval walled village

## About ...

Medieval walled village, agricultural center located in the fertile plain at the confluence of the Lerone with the Arroscia. In 1206 it was ceded by the Marquises of Clavesana to the free municipality of Albenga, which rebuilt the fortifications from 1250. Once under Genoese control, Villanova followed the events of Albenga, sharing its decline. With the annexation to the Kingdom of Sardinia (Congress of Vienna, 1815) began a period of greater

tranquility. The church of Santo Stefano in Pian Cavatorio, built in the 12th century in Romanesque forms, was later modified. Outside the walls you can still see its original position before the new village was built. It has a porch on the façade, and is flanked by a cuspidate bell tower and open to mullioned windows, perfectly preserved. The church of Santa Maria della Rotonda, built in 1520, is of Renaissance origin and has a central plan, flanked by a squat cuspidate bell tower. Nearby is the small baroque church of Our Lady of Grace. The main resources come from the cultivation of fruit and flowers, in particular its violets that are known throughout Europe.







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# ZUCCARELLO

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## About ...

The foundation act of Zuccarello dates back to April 4, 1248, in the castle of Zuccarello.

Between 1624 and 1633, the Republic of Genoa bought the remainder of the Marquisate for 200,000 florins and the Del Carretto disappeared from the political scene.

The possession of the entire Marquisate by the Republic of Genoa provoked the immediate reaction of the Savoyes and of the French their allies and in 1625 triggered the so-called War of Zuccarello or Guerra del Sale, which ended in 1631 with the Treaty of Cherasco and with the victory of the Genoese. This event marked the end of the centuries-old Caracci lordship on the Val Neva.

Between 1326 and 1335, the Clavesana took over the Del Carretto di Finale, following the marriage between Caterina di Clavesana and Enrico II Del Carretto di Finale, who had three other brothers, Lazzarino, Carlo I and Giovanni. As repeatedly documented, the presence at Zuccarello of Carlo I Del Carretto, belonging precisely to the branch of the Finale, emerged since the last decades of the fourteenth century, when in 1379 his daughter Maddalena Ilaria was born.



**The construction of the Castle can be dated between 1200 and 1248**

*Ruggiero Ruggieri*  
Art



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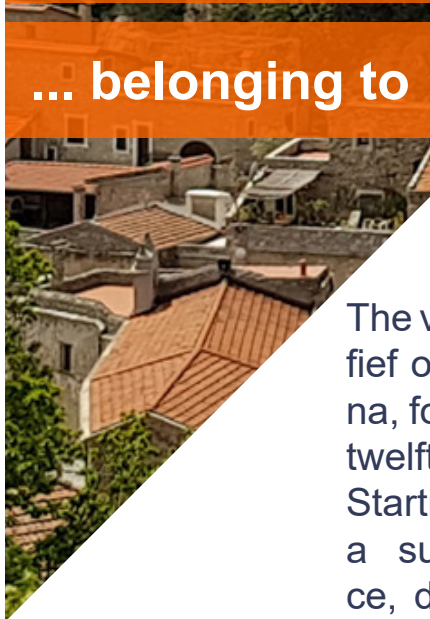
# CASTELVECCHIO

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## About ...

The village was once an important fief of the Marquises of Clavesana, founded by them between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Starting from this century it lost a substantial feudal importance, due to the foundation of the nearby fief of Zuccarello which, erected as a marquisate, incorporated the village of Castelvecchio.

In 1623 it was bought by the Savoy family, which was forced to

cede the village in favor of the Republic of Genoa, following the siege - Genoese soldiers - of the local castle in 1672. The fact forced the Piedmontese family to surrender the land. In 1746 the Piedmontese army tried to besiege the village and the castle during the Spanish succession war, but in vain.

In 1815 it returned to the borders of the Kingdom of Sardinia and in 1861 into the Kingdom of Italy.



**An important fief of the Marquises of Clavesana**





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# VEREZZI

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## About ...

In about 800, the Benedictine monks who settled in a new convent near Borgio are entrusted with the church of San Pietro. They are attributed to the extraordinary structuring of the hilly terraced territory supported by split stone walls without binder. In the same years Borgio and Verezzi suffer from the Saracen invasions.

In 1385, after having been possessed by the Bishops of Albenga and the Marquis Del Carretto di Finale, the two centers are ceded to the Republic of Genoa by Pope Urban VI. In 1815, Liguria was incorporated into Piedmont in the Kingdom of Sardinia.

In Verezzi comes out of isolation thanks to the construction of the

first Borgio - Verezzi road, which allows you to reach the villages on the hills with the carts, and then, at the end of the century, with the first cars.

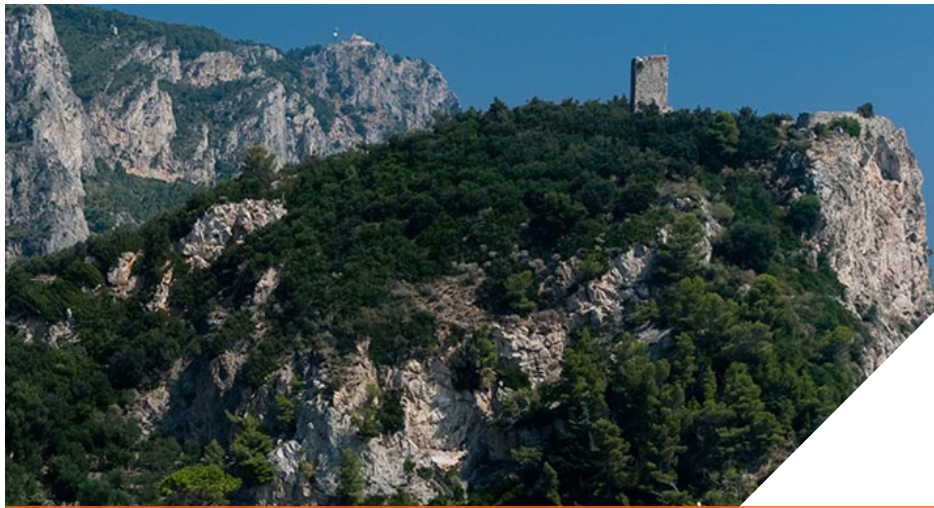
In 1933, Borgio and Verezzi are united in a single municipality with the name of Borgio Verezzi, during the Second World War.

In 1967 the Theater Festival of Borgio Verezzi was born, which takes place every year, in July and August, now considered one of the most important national prose festivals.



A wonderful panorama

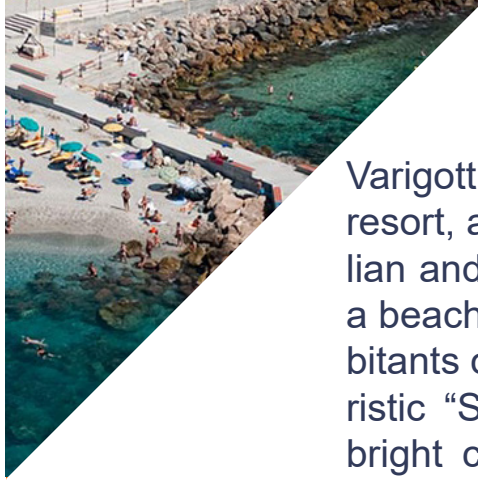
*Ruggiero Ruggieri*  
Art



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# VARIGOTTI

... a “Saracen village”



## About ...

Varigotti is an important seaside resort, a destination for many Italian and foreign tourists, but also a beach sought after by the inhabitants of the area. The characteristic “Saracen village”, with the bright colors of its plasters and squared buildings, and the quality of its beaches have made Varigotti a famous tourist resort with a strong maritime heritage.

Once a common autonomous time, Varigotti was united to Final

Pia in 1869 and in 1927 it merged with today’s Municipality of Finale Ligure, passages suffered not without complaints of the inhabitants with a strong identity spirit. The 15th century medieval remains on the promontory testify to its historical past.

Towards Noli, the Baia dei Saraceni beach is one of the largest and most suggestive beaches in Liguria, surrounded by high rock walls and wild nature.



**The Bay of Saracen Beach is one of the most suggestive beaches in Ligurian Riviera**





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# FINALBORGO

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## About ...

There are no First Walls precise news, the current ones are built by the Marquis Giovanni I del Carretto after the unfortunate war of 1447-49 against Genova.

The entrance doors to the Borgo, there are four, Porta Reale, Porta Romana or del Mulino, Porta Testa, Door of the Half Moon.

Inside the walls the whole plant urban planning is intersected from alleys and alleys.

The main buildings were built between XV and XVII sec. , some still retain examples impregnated with late gothic taste, in via Gallesio the palaces and Cavasola from the 16th century in piazza del Arnaldi palace court in style barocchetto, in via del Municipio Palazzo Ricci or Riccio is one of the best examples of architecture of the first Renaissance in Ligu-

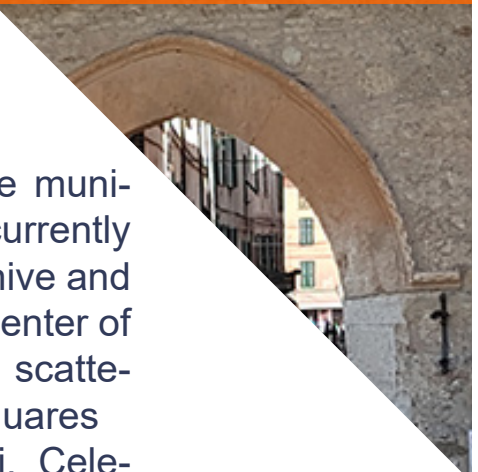
ria, until 1927 seat of the municipality of Finalborgo, currently hosting the Historical archive and the Association Historic Center of Finale. The buildings are scattered among streets and squares Ramondo, Ricci, Aycardi, Celestia, Borea, many have been rearranged during the centuries.

On the main square is located an arch built on the occasion of the passage (1666) of the Infant Margaret of Spain, later dedicated to some of the characters of the Savoy family



**Built under the rule of Henry II,  
surrounded by walls**

*Ruggiero Ruggieri*  
*Art*





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## NOLI

... belonging to



(the Most Beautiful Villages of Italy)



### About ...

Noli is one of the medieval centers of greatest historical and artistic interest of Liguria for its historical and economic importance. Archaeological excavations have provided evidence of a continuity of life even in the Lombard period and then Frankly. In the early Middle Ages Noli was part, following the dismemberment of the Carolingian Empire, of the Marca Aleramica under the dominion of the Marquis of Savona - Del Carretto. Noli participates in the First Crusade (1099) drawing considerable wealth and privileges as evidenced by the treaties stipula-

ted with Tancredi and Boemondo, princes of Antioch, and with Baldwin king of Jerusalem. The full emancipation of the city is confirmed by Henry VI of Swabia who, with a diploma of 1196, validates the rights and privileges acquired by the Nolesi. The Maritime Republic of Noli is born. The continuous wars against the enemy cities of Finale and Savona, the invasions of Spaniards, Milanese and Piedmontese, the Barbarian raids, contributed to the decadence of Noli.

Its decline continued until it passed, in 1797, under French domination losing its independence after seven hundred years of substantial freedom. The Porta di Piazza is from the Middle Ages (12th-13th centuries) and is the main and central entrance to the city walls.



In 1099 Noli participates in the First Crusade





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# DOLCEACQUA

**... where Monet painted one of the most famous ...**

## About ...

Monet made his first visit to the Riviera at the end of 1883 in the company of Renoir, for only fifteen days.

He was so impressed by the charm of the places that just returned to Giverny, he immediately expressed the desire to return, in fact on January 23, 1884, Monet is back in the Ligurian Riviera.

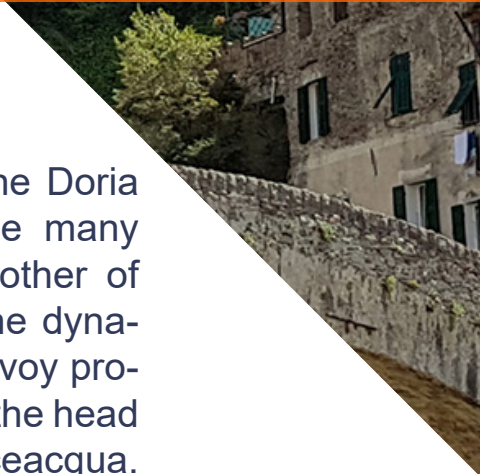
The first document that mentions Dolceacqua dates back to 1151; when the counts of Ventimiglia built the first nucleus of the castle at the top of the rocky spur.

During the following centuries, the water of the river Nerva was brought to feed the fountains and irrigate the gardens.

In the mid-fifteenth century a humpback bridge was built, with a single arc of 33 meters of light.

The history of Dolceacqua is identified with the events of the cast-

le and the Lordship of the Doria which boasts among the many characters Caracosa, mother of Admiral Andrea Doria; the dynasty entered under the Savoy protection, from 1652 it was the head of the Marquisate of Dolceacqua. The castle underwent several transformations. After resisting numerous sieges, he could not however oppose the heavy Franco-Hispanic artillery, which partially destroyed it on 27 July 1744 during an episode of the Austrian succession war. No longer inhabited by the family of the Marquis Doria, who moved to the sixteenth century building adjacent to the parish church, suffered the latest outrages from the 1887 earthquake.



*Ruggiero Ruggieri*  
*Art*



**Here they produce a wine:  
"Rossese di Dolceacqua"**



# OUR DAYS TOGETHER

This will be a typical schedule of our days together:

- **8:30 AM** - Breakfast at your hotel
- **9:30 AM** - Meet and travel to our painting site (about half an hour a day)
- **10:00 AM** - Painting time ... in unique painting sites ... at your own pace. During those 5 hours I will provide basic beverages, sandwiches or local “focaccia”
- **3:00 PM** - Visit interesting villages or sites, this will vary daily
- **5:00 PM** - Free time
- **8:00 PM** - Dinner in a different restaurant every evening
- **11:00 PM** - Return to your hotel.

Excursions can be chosen daily depending on your choice.

On Sunday you will have free time from 3:00-8:00 PM.

## WALK ON OUR PATHS

All sites chosen as painting locations will be close to sea or hill roads and paths that can be walked, if you are not in the mood for painting ...



In Alassio we have many choices of walking paths. All of them are beautiful and the most popular is: “**The Via Julia Augusta**”, built in 13 B.C. at the behest of Emperor Augustus to connect Rome to southern Gaul. The Roman road connects Alassio and Albenga (5,5 km - 3 miles). It is a classic excursion



of our bay. A Romanesque church, a simple and evocative route, overlooking the sea, where you can breathe the weight of history, among the vestiges of the imperial age and the profile of the Gallinara island, so close, that you would believe you could touch it.





## EXTRA EXCURSIONS

Alassio is in a privileged position for excursions. If you prefer not to paint I can plan a week of pleasurable visits. NOTE: excursions are available only from June to September and are NOT included in the price.

- **Tuesday:** Genoa, Rapallo, Portofino (by bus and boat)
- **Wednesday:** Monaco - Monte Carlo (by bus)
- **Thursday:** Cinque Terre - Vernazza, Manarola, Riomaggiore (by bus and boat)
- **Friday:** Nice- Cannes (by bus) or Corse (by bus and ship).

Alassio can be explored any day with its 3 miles of “white natural sand” beach; the shopping experience in the “Budello” of boutique and shoe shops; lovely restaurants, bars and ice cream shops; the beautiful Tennis Club in Liberty style and only a 10 minute drive from Alassio the Garlenda Golf Club.

## A “POSSIBLE” EXCURSION

About 10 miles from Alassio, is Imperia and its fishing Port. There is a “special” fishing boat, equipped for fishing and catering on board. I can arrange a fishing trip and, when back in the port, they will serve the just fished seafood.

NOTE: to organize this excursion, we would need a whole day and therefore need to cancel one of our painting days.

## CLIMATE

You are welcome to visit any time of the year. The coldest months (not recommended for painting in open air) are from December to March. From July 10th until August 20th the weather is extremely hot and very crowded. April, May, June, September and October are fantastic! <http://www.holiday-weather.com/alassio/averages>

## IN CASE OF RAIN

It is not possible to guarantee the weather. If rain will not allow us to paint en plein air, we will take excursions to some nearby villages.





