



AZAMARA
CLUB CRUISES®
YOU'LL *love* WHERE WE TAKE YOU®

PORT EXPLORER



SANTA MARGARITA

ITALY



There perhaps is simply no more romantic setting on earth than Italy's Riviera di Levante. The food, the music, the scenery and the language all conspire and combine to evoke the very definition of tender passion. Here, along the coast of stunningly beautiful Liguria, if one can not fall in love or rekindle the spark of affection ... then alas ... perhaps all hope is lost. But perhaps not ... for here the lush and rocky mountains of the coast rise from the blue Mediterranean. Here every natural harbor seems to be a living picture-postcard. Here towns and villages are sprinkled like sparkling jewels along the shore. Here the cool sea breeze and warm sun seem to embrace you.

Santa Margarita Ligure is a classic resort town where visitors have been coming to relax, refresh and rejuvenate for generations. The harbor is filled with pleasure craft and fishing boats. The cafés and restaurants beckon with delicious food and cool drinks.

But take counsel and be warned. This is, after all, the Riviera di Levante. The moment may come when you look into the eyes of your love and find yourself wondering what took you so long to get here ... and more ... wonder how you will, or if you even should, conjure up a legitimate excuse to ever leave.

HISTORY

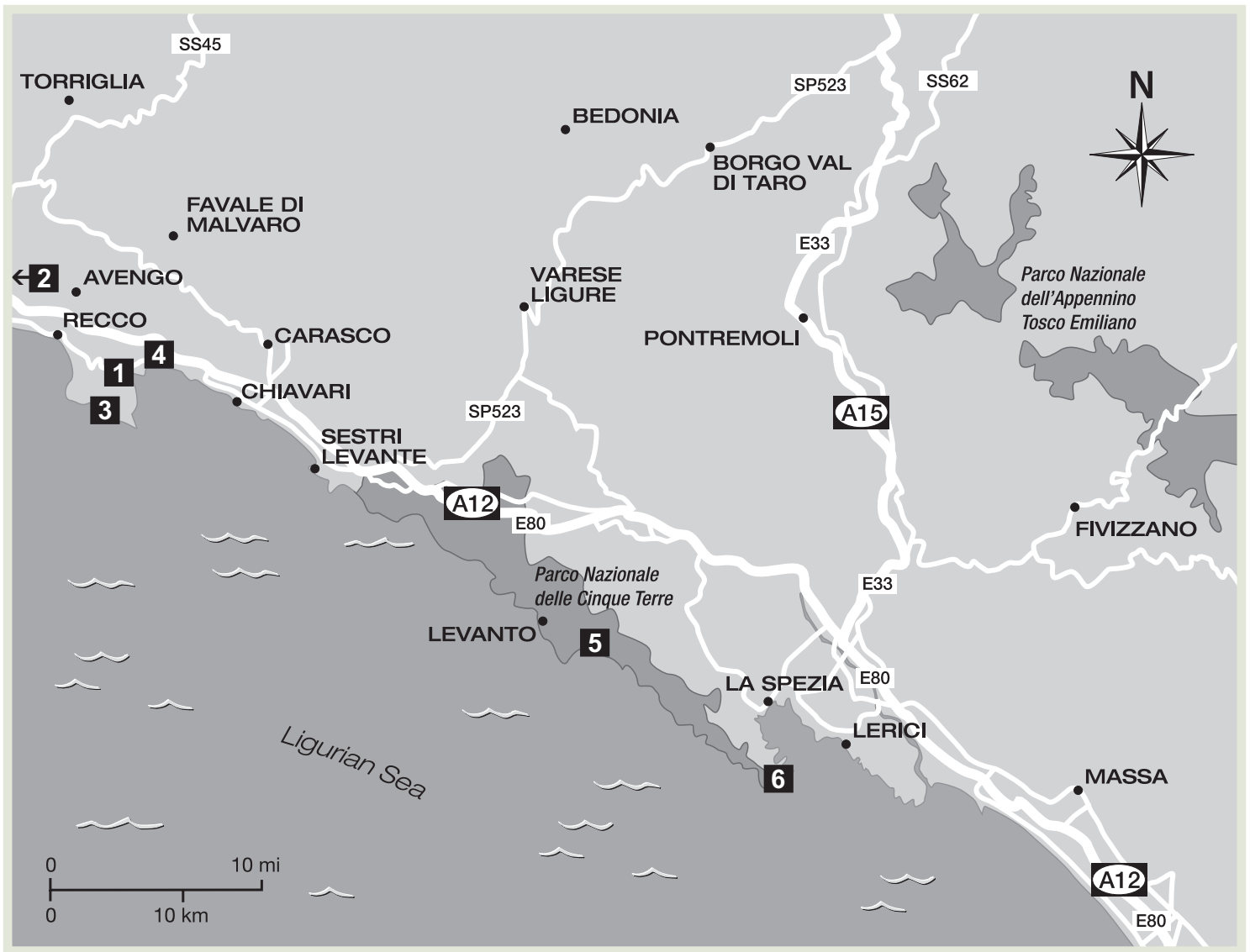
Using Genova as a central reference point, starting with the First Punic War between the very young Roman Republic and mighty Carthage (264 to 241 BC), this entire region has been constantly involved or caught up in a power struggle. Eventually Rome came to regard the people of Liguria as superb seamen and brave warriors.

As the slow collapse of the Western Roman Empire unfolded the Byzantine Emperors of the Eastern Roman Empire stepped into the power vacuum just long enough for the Germanic tribes to sweep down from the snowy, frigid north; followed by the fearsome Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Vandals, Burgundies, Lombards and Franks.

The Golden Age of the region shined brightest in Genova. The city began as a refuge from repeated attacks by Muslim Saracens. Having literally risen from the ashes numerous times, there came a point when the people of Genova and Liguria took their destiny into their own hands and wrote their own pages in the history books. By the turn of the first millennium Genova was slowly growing into a powerful city-state. For the next three hundred years the city spread its political and economic power throughout the Mediterranean and as far as the Black Sea.

But Genova began to slowly crumble under the weight of its own influence and prosperity. The city and region became ripe for picking and plunder. Over the following centuries other powers, secular and ecclesiastical, coveted Genova and Liguria. Among them included King Louis XIV of France, the armies of the Austrian Hapsburgs and Napoleon with his Grande Armée. In the 20th century the city was shelled by the British Navy, occupied by the German Army and bombed by the U.S. Air Corp.

This is by no means a complete "guest" list of those who visited Liguria and the Riviera di Levante over the past centuries. It is comforting to know however, today visitors come from around the world to admire and appreciate the beautiful region rather than destroy or conquer it.



AREA PLACES OF INTEREST

1 Santa Margarita Ligure, besides the town as a whole, has several interesting sites. The **Basilica di Santa Margarita di Antiochia** is a church which was established in the mid-1600s. The church is commonly referred to as La Madonna della Rosa. The **Villa Durazzo Palace** dates to the 1600s and is considered one of the finest buildings in Santa Margarita. Today the villa serves as the Vittorio Rossi Museum. The garden terraces of the palace are public and enjoyed by locals and visitors. The **San Gerolamo della Cervara Abbey** is on the beautiful coast road between Santa Margarita and Portofino. The abbey dates back to the 14th century.

Beyond Santa Margarita

2 Genova has one of the biggest and best preserved medieval quarters in Italy. Genova has numerous museums with works of art by some of the great masters. Visitors also enjoy the historic palaces and churches.



3 Portofino is a quiet village with cafés, boutiques and a yacht filled harbor. It has long been a favorite of the jet-set.

4 Rapallo is a classic seaside resort right next door to Santa Margarita. The town has a wonderful waterfront, a modest castle from the Middle Ages and a cable-car which takes visitors up to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Montallegro where the view of the surrounding coast is spectacular.

5 Cinque Terre is actually a collection of five lovely fishing villages which hug the coastal mountains. This area has become quite popular with hikers due to the many paths and trails which make their way through the hills.



6 Porto Venere looks out over the beautiful Golfo dei Poeti. This area is famous as a favorite home of the 19th century English Romantic Era poets Percy Shelley and Lord Byron.

SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Santa Margarita and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Order Form or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, be advised to take only necessary items and secure any valuables onboard.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

Bargaining: Most items have fixed prices, but it may be possible to get a discount on a large purchase. It is normal to bargain at open markets, except for food items.

Tipping: Generally a 10% service charge is added to restaurant bills. It is normal to offer a 5% tip to the waiter in addition to any service charge.

Attire: Comfortable conservative dress is recommended. If you are planning to visit local cathedrals and churches, as a simple matter of respect, shorts or "beachwear" are not acceptable.

LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

When speaking about Ligurian cuisine it helps to keep three things in mind; the forest, the sea and the vegetable garden.

From the woods, hills and forests traditional cuisine of the region often includes truffles, mushrooms, a variety of berries and chestnuts. What many may consider staples of southern Italian cooking such as tomatoes, olive oil and garlic, are also widely used in Ligurian cuisine.

Tuna, sardines and anchovies are among the most popular fish but when someone is mentioning the region's claim to fame the same product always seems to top the list... basil pesto sauce. Basil leaves, Parmesan cheese, garlic, olive oil and pine nuts ... simple to make and simply delicious. You can stuff it, garnish or grill with it, spread it, toss it, mix it, marinade with it and/or drizzle it. There is no way to go wrong using fresh pesto.

There is one more food which was first developed in Genova; ravioli. Some say ravioli was invented in China and brought back to Italy by Marco Polo. The Genovese laugh at the China/ravioli/Marco Polo connection theory because the name Ravioli alla Genovese sounds nothing close to Chinese. The word "ravioli" is supposedly derived from something like "left-overs".

Some Italian wines are truly amazing. In the Ligure region production is limited due to the steep terrain. This means some wines are virtually unknown outside of their immediate area. Some of the most popular wines produced in this coastal region are Cinque Terre, Colline di Levante and Vermentino.

SHOPPING FACILITIES

The main shopping in Santa Margarita is along the waterfront and up toward the center of town around the train station.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The unit of currency Italy is the Euro. Most stores accept major credit cards.

POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE

There is a Post Office located at 40 Via dell' Arco (Arch Street).

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 800.172.444

MCI: 800.90.5825

TOURIST INFORMATION

A Tourist Information Office is located at Via XXV Aprile (April 25th Street) 2-B.

TRANSPORTATION

Car rentals and taxis are available in Santa Margarita. Local buses travel the main parts of town as well as up and down the coast. The Trenitalia train station is near the center of town. Santa Margarita is on the main coastal line so it is easy to reach nearby town and cities such as Genova. Ferries to some of the nearby coastal towns can be caught at the Piazza Martiri della Libertà.

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

The Italian language is truly one of the most beautiful in the world ... "la bella lingua". When put to music the Italian language is of such unique beauty it need not be translated to be fully understood and heartfelt. Can opera lovers imagine a world without the Italian libretto? Without French we might not have the language of haute cuisine. Without Greek we might not have the language of science. Without English we might not have the poetic language of Byron, Shelly and Keats. But without Italian...we would not have the language of life and love. After all ... dove c'è amore, c'è vita ... "Where there is love there is life."

English - Italian

Yes - Si

No - No

Good Day - Buon Giorno

Good -bye - Arrivederci

Thank-you - Grazie

You're Welcome - Prego

