



**FOUR BEAUTIFUL LIGURIAN BOROUGHS UNIFIED IN ONE TOWN**

## **FINALE LIGURE**

**Finale Ligure is an important tourist seaside resort in the province of Savona, well-known for the sea, the beaches, the pleasant surrounding hills and its mild climate all year round. The Town Hall is housed at Palazzo Buraggi, one of the magnificent decorated palaces that embellish its town centre. In addition to tourism, also the agricultural production - typical of the western Ligurian coast, has an important role in the local economy, as well as the various flourishing industrial and craft activities located in appropriate and separate areas.**

### **FINALE LIGURE**

Finale Ligure, famous for its typical fishermen's dwellings in the Saracen style by the sea, is located on the Riviera Ligure di Ponente, between the headland of Caprazoppa to the west and Capo Noli to the east. The

town of Finale Ligure was founded in 1927, bringing together the villages of Finalborgo, Finalmarina, Finalpia and the hamlets of Perti, Verzi, Valle di Ponci and Varigotti. The whole district extends from Borghetto Santo Spirito to Spotorno, between the sea and the mountains, in the province of Savona. It is characterized by a mild winter climate, thanks to the mountains that protect it from the northern winds, and warm summers. From a historical point of view, Finalborgo, that was the capital of the Marchesato di Finale from the twelfth to the end of the sixteenth century, is certainly the most interesting place.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The district of Finale Ligure has been inhabited since the Paleolithic period, as evidenced by the important archaeological finds such as graves, artefacts and tools, discovered in its numerous hidden caves and today displayed in the civic museum housed in the Convento di Santa Caterina of Finalborgo. Among the most significant finds, to be mentioned is "The grave of the Young Prince", one of the oldest paleolithic graves in Europe, together with a primitive cemetery with fifteen buried bodies, located in the cavity of the Arene Candide; equally important are the finds of the Caverna delle Fate, in the Arma delle Manie. It was inhabited by Ligurian tribes, then by the Romans, the Byzantines and later by the Lombards, and every historical era has left important evidence in the territory of Finale. Since the end of the twelfth century to 1598 (the year when the area became an important Spanish Fief that lasted up to 1707), Finale was a very powerful Marquisate led by the Del Carretto family for four centuries, often coming into conflict with the Republic of Genoa, at the time owner of almost all the ports of Liguria. In the seventeenth century the territory was sold to the Spanish and became a strategic area for the control of Northern Europe.

The district became part of the Republic of Genoa during the Napoleon Bonaparte's first French Empire (1805); in 1815 it entered the Kingdom of Sardinia and in 1861 became part of the Regno d'Italia. In 2007 the town of Finale Ligure was awarded the Blue Flag for its clear bathing waters and the quality of its beaches. Thanks to the conformation of its territory, it also offers many opportunities for sport activities, both for amateurs and professionals.

## FINALBORGO

Burgum Finarii, now Finalborgo, a border town in Roman time and an important Marquisate from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, is still surrounded by well-preserved medieval walls interspersed with a few semicircular towers and gates, and dominated by two fifteenth-century castles. It is considered among the most beautiful towns in Italy. Its historical town centre features narrow streets that lead to astonishing little squares, embellished with the typical Ligurian colours and with the "stone of Finale"- the slate, adorning the gates and shaped into columns and ornaments. There are interesting craft shops and, most of all, some architectural monuments, among which a few notable churches such as the Basilica di San Biagio and the complex of Santa Caterina, as well as some fifteenth-century and Renaissance palaces, such as Palazzo del Tribunale, Palazzo Aycardi e Palazzo del Municipio, modified during the Spanish dominion. Very characteristic are the fortresses: Forte San Giovanni, built between 1640 and 1644, and Castel Gavone perched on a giant curved bastion, erected in order to strengthen the defences of the area.

## THE MONUMENTS OF FINALBORGO

### Basilica di San Biagio

The Basilica of San Biagio was built in the seventeenth century, over the earlier medieval church (1372) of which it only preserves the apse and the octagonal late Gothic bell tower - slightly sloping and characterized by numerous thin lancet windows. The present Basilica is a magnificent example of the Baroque architecture, with a raw stone façade left unfinished. Its interior, with a nave and two aisles, is striking for its magnificence and the richness of the decorations. The nave preserves two outstanding sculptures attributed to Francesco Schiaffino: the balustrade in Carrara marble, with figures of angels bearing a finely carved Eucharistic tablecloth, and the pulpit representing the vision of Ezekiel. Quite precious are the frescoes of the cupola and the vault of the presbytery (1878).

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## FINALMARINA

Finalmarina, with its old town centre and its beautiful avenues lined with palm trees, is a tourist resort both in summer and wintertime. It was established as a trading centre for maritime trade in the late medieval period and flourished during the seventeenth century under the Spanish rule. The town centre developed around the ancient Platea Magna, now called Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II, delimited to the north by a fifteenth-century porch and, towards the sea, by the arch dedicated to Margherita Teresa, Infanta of Spain, built in 1666. She was the seventeen-year old daughter of Philip IV of Spain and stopped here on her way to Vienna to marry the Emperor Leopold I of Austria. Another arch, dedicated to Carlo Alberto, stands by the eastern entrance to the town, adjacent to Viale delle Palme; it was built in 1836 to celebrate the passage of King Carlo Alberto. Also important is piazza San Giovanni Battista, where there is the collegiate church with the same name, consecrated in 1675: it is one of the most beautiful churches in Liguria, in the shape of a Latin cross, with a nave and two side aisles divided by double columns. At the main entrance you can see a splendid Baptistery, which preserves a magnificent statue representing San Giovanni Battista, a work of art by Salvatore Revelli dating back to 1853. In the sacristy, which houses other paintings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there is a picture representing Sant'Erasmus and San Nicolao, with a view of Finale Marina and the surrounding territory in the seventeenth century, quite interesting from a historical point of view. The eastern part of Marina is dominated by the structure of Castelfranco built by the Genovesi in 1365 and afterwards modified. Some majestic palaces decorated with portals and slate coats of arms rise along the squares and the streets: Palazzo Locella, Palazzi Buraggi, Battaglieri-Cosmelli and Grossi, Palazzo Rossi, Malvasia, De Ferrari with its sumptuous hall, Palazzi Ferri and Mendaro, Palazzo Prasca and Palazzo Ruffini. Outside the historical centre of Marina, in Via Brunenghi, there is the ancient Pieve di San Giovanni Battista (fourth and fifth centuries), an early Christian and early medieval monument: it is said that the church was built on the site of a Roman settlement. Finale Ligure is one of the few towns of Western Liguria which can boast a theatrical tradition, dating from the early eighteenth century, and two theatres: Teatro Aycardi at Finalborgo that, having been inaugurated in 1804, is the oldest Ligurian theatre of the nineteenth century still existing, and Teatro Camillo Sivori, opened in 1868 in Finalmarina. For many decades, Teatro Sivori was the ideal venue for any kind of cultural activities, such as plays, opera seasons, concerts, shows, films and conferences. It is currently under renovation with the aim of bringing it back to its former glory and providing it with all the necessary infrastructures..

## FINALPIA

Surrounded by terraced hills covered with olive trees and vines, Final Pia is a typical fishing village with its sixteenth century houses lying around the Santuario di Nostra Signora di Pia, an ancient centre of culture and religion: the presence of a church in the place has been attested since 1302 and still evidenced by some pointed arches and the campanile, one of the most significant examples of the thirteenth century campanili in Liguria. In 1477, a monastery, entrusted to the Benedictine Congregation of Monte Oliveto, was built next to the church.

## VARIGOTTI

Painters and writers have always been fascinated by this seaside village located along a coast full of cliffs and ravines. The oldest part of town is characterized by a very particular type of houses that seem to be of Arab-Saracen origin. A path leads, through the pines, to the medieval church of San Lorenzo, which hosts a few very ancient tombs.

## *Getting to Finale Ligure*

**By car:** Motorway (A10) Genoa-Ventimiglia, exit Finale Ligure or SS 1 Aurelia.

**By train:** Railway station of Finale Ligure.

**By bus:** ACTS - Savona - (bus service in Riviera).

SAR - Cisano sul Neva - (bus service in Riviera).

S.A.F. - (bus service from the cities).

Autoservizi Novarese S.T.I.E. (bus service from the cities).

**By plane:** Genoa - Cristoforo Colombo Airport.  
Nice-Cote d'Azur.