

Welcome to Piacenza

“Ladies and gentlemen, you are all welcome, those who come here will be welcome” . This is the vernacular epigraph engraved on the hospitality plate, also known as “Benvegnù” plate, which was found in 1330 and is now preserved in Palazzo Farnese Municipal Museum as the symbol of Piacenza’s hospitality. Piacenza, a hospitable province , “open to everybody” as you’ll discover from these pages, dedicated to accessible itineraries, studied by tour operators trained on accessibility by means of a training managed and sponsored by the province. You can go along these itineraries on your own, after asking the advice of the tourist information office , or accompanied by a tour guide; itineraries can last one day or be longer, providing accommodation in selected facilities. Discover our itineraries, downtown and in the province and... see you in Piacenza!

We’d like to thank Piacenza Turismi for kindly supplying the texts provided and for carrying out this guide



“Piacenza, a province for everyone”, training for tour operators organised by Enaip of Piacenza (Project 2002-0296 approved by the Province of Piacenza with D.D. n. 2422 del 22/11/2002). The course aimed at spreading the knowledge of the tools made available to tour operators who want to change their premises and methodologies according to the safety rules and who intend, above all, to develop an accessible tourism. Subjects studied: “Design for All”, psychology and communication, law, dietetics and nutrition, domotics, accessibility and tourist projects in the city and in the province of Piacenza.



IAT – TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE - PIACENZA

Piazza Cavalli, 7 - 29100 Piacenza tel.
0523 329324 - fax 0523 306727 e-mail
iat@comune.piacenza.it

The office has two entrances. The main entrance is in Piazza Cavalli and has two steps, while the secondary entrance (in the gallery leading to the courtyard of Palazzo Gotico) is accessible to the disabled and may be open by the operators upon request. Two operators, Elisabetta Fornasari and Daniela Ponzini, have attended the training “Piacenza provincia per Tutti” and can therefore suggest accessible itineraries and ways of visiting the territory of Piacenza open to everybody.



TOUR GUIDES

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STROLLING AROUND TOWN

The typical city tour starts from piazza Cittadella with the visit to Palazzo Farnese (Farnese Palace). Opposite the Palace entrance the pedestrian crossing, supplied with a ramp, enables people to reach Via Cittadella easily. This street leads to the main square: piazza Cavalli. From here it is possible to admire safely some of the most important monuments of the city: palazzo Gotico, Governor's Palace and the beautiful Baroque equestrian monuments portraying Alessandro and Ranuccio Farnese, and the church dedicated to San Francesco, begun in 1278. The itinerary carries on with the visit to piazza Duomo, which can be reached in two ways. The first one goes along via Sopramuro, that you can take walking under the Portico of the Inps palace: the passageway is easily accessible, except on market days (Saturday and Wednesday mornings), when there are bikes parked everywhere. Via Sopramuro is a narrow, roman paved street, but there's not much traffic along it. Be careful to the slope at the end, leading into Via Chiapponi. The second itinerary goes along Via XX Settembre, pedestrianised street full of boutiques and other shops. Once you reach Piazza Duomo (easily accessible because the square, the streets around it and the porticoes are at the same height of the street or supplied with ramps when necessary) you may admire the Cathedral. In piazza Duomo you may also stop and rest: the square is supplied with green flower beds and benches, and on a corner there are even toilets, made accessible by steps with a railing. On market days (Wednesday and Saturday mornings) ramps are not easily accessible and the crowd makes moving more difficult. Going along via Chiapponi you may reach the third following stage: piazza Sant'Antonino, so called because of the Basilica, dedicated to the patron saint of the city. Walking across the square you'll reach via Verdi, where you can admire the Neoclassical Façade of the Municipal Theatre. Via Verdi reaches Corso Vittorio Emanuele, pedestrian street ideal for strolling and more shopping. If you have some more time, we suggest that you visit Ricci Oddi Modern Art Gallery and its rich art collection: you can reach it taking Via San Siro from Via Giordani (restricted traffic area), or, better, from Corso Vittorio Emanuele (pedestrianised).

TEATRO MUNICIPALE (MUNICIPAL THEATRE)

Via Verdi, 41 tel. 0523 492255 fax 0523 492253 e-mail teatro@comune.piacenza.it

Opening time: opening 1 hour before the show.

Possibility of guided tour upon reservation, even if not during the opening time (duration of the visit: u1 hour) Bus stop at 100 m (No 4 or 5 buses) Payment parking with two spaces reserved to the disabled in piazza Sant'Antonino.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Built upon request of a group of noblemen from Piacenza, the Theatre was built between 1803 and 1804 upon a project of Lotario Tomba. Neoclassical in style, it's got a nice porticoed façade inspired to that of Piermarini's Scala Theatre in Milan. The internal decorations were carried out by the same scenographer from Verona, Alessandro Sanquirico. The internal plan has a classical horse shoe shape and was originally characterized by 4 circles, the 2 upper ones currently used as galleries and a balcony.

ACCESSIBILITY

The ground floor (ticket office and front stalls) is accessible, while the upper floors are only partially accessible, since the lift stops at the landing and to reach the floor there are some more steps to do. The accessible seats in the front stalls are 6. The toilets are accessible, but quite narrow (they are supplied with a railing). Animals are not admitted.

EVENTS

The Scenographers' Hall, a large, 400 seat auditorium, in the upper part, may be rented for weddings,

conventions and workshops.

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

Inside the theatre there are two bars: one on the ground floor (always open, kitchen also available) one on the first floor (open only during the shows). At 200 metres from the theatre shopping along the main street of the city

PALAZZO FARNES MUSEUMS

Piazza Cittadella, 29

tel. 0523 326981 fax

0523 338270

www.musei.piacenza.it e-mail

musei.farnese@comune.piacenza.it

Open all the year round, closed on Monday.

Opening times: Friday, Saturday, Sunday from 09.00 am to 1.00 pm and from 3.00 pm to 6.00 pm

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 09.00 am to 1.00 pm

Duration of the guided tour: about two hours (the cost of the visit is included in the ticket).

Cost of the ticket: Whole price € 5.25/Discount ticket € 4.20 / Schools € 2.65

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Palazzo Farnese (Farnese Palace), was started in 1558 and construction works continued until 1564, under the supervision of the famous Jacopo Barozzi, known as Vignola. It is located in the area occupied by the Cittadella Viscontea (Viscontean Citadel), fortress built by the Visconti in the 14th century. The imposing complex is characterized by three brickstone floors and a large subterranean. The building wasn't finished: it is a huge unfinished work, as you may notice observing from the inner ward the two layers of arcades that were probably conceived to support a monumental semi-elliptic theatre. The complex contains Museo Civico (Municipal Museum), Pinacoteca (Art Gallery), Museo delle Armi (Arms Museum), Museo delle Carrozze (Carriage Museum), Museo del Risorgimento (Risorgimento Museum), Museo Archeologico (Archaeological Museum), State Archives and the office of the Culture Council.

ACCESSIBILITY

Bus stops at less than 20 m, car park and coach station in Piazza Cittadella at about 10 metres. The access to the inner ward from Piazza Cittadella has no steps. The inner ward has cobblestone paving, but you don't have to go across it to reach the museum entrance. The municipal and Arms museum are on the mezzanine and are reached by steps. The stairway is supplied with a lifting hoist that may be started upon request (1 minute and 15 seconds to go up and the same time to go down). To reach the Art Gallery and the Carriage Museum you may use the lift with Braille buttons and Sound Warning; the

Risorgimento Museum , on the entresol, may be reached by steps only. There are no seats. The accessible toilets are on the second floor, upon request.

SPECIAL EVENTS

In the summertime, concerts are held in the inner ward. Didactic activities for school groups upon request.

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

The ticket office sells publications, postcards, posters and more. In Piazza Cittadella there are two bars.

PALAZZO GOTICO (GOTHIC PALACE)

Piazza Cavalli Tel. 0523 384849 (active only during exhibitions) Open only on the occasion of exhibitions. Entrance fare: changing according to the exhibition. Piazza Cavalli is accessible only to tourist coaches who can drive through and stop for passengers to get off and on. In the square there are other car spaces for the disabled. Payment parking at 200 m. in piazza Cittadella.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The palace dominates the town's main square. Designed and built starting from 1281 by local masons, it was ordered by Alberto Scoto, chief of the merchants and Ghibelline Lord in town. It represents one of the most meaningful examples of public architecture in the 13th century for its proportions and for the elegance of materials and decorations. The marble lancet arches of the lower floor support the Romanesque second floor, characterized by three and four mullioned windows, richly decorated, that illuminate a large hall. Ghibelline crenellations join the angle towers dominated by the "lantern", a 40 metre square tower.

ACCESSIBILITY

Six steps without railing give access to the ground floor. However, it is possible to reach the portico through two secondary passageways, in via Illica and piazzetta. The access to the palace is next to the information office and is supplied with ramp. A stairway or, as an alternative, a lift lead to the upper floor hall. Toilets are completely accessible.

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

In Piazza Cavalli there are bars and shops. In the same square, the market takes place on Wednesday and Saturday mornings.

GALLERIA D'ARTE MODERNA RICCI ODDI (RICCI ODDI MODERN ART GALLERY)

via S. Siro, 13 tel. e fax 0523 320742. e-mail riccioddi@libero.it

Open all the year round, closed on Monday. Opening times: from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm and from 3.00 pm to 6.00 pm. Fare entrance (whole price 4,00 euro; discount price 3,00 euro, students 1,00 euro). Free entrance the last Thursday of every month. Duration of the visit: about two hours. Bus stop in via Giordani at 50 metres (No. 1, 5, 8, 10, 13 buses). Parking along via S. Siro (payment parking, with one space for the disabled) and Politeama parking in via S. Siro (payment parking supplied with lift).

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Born as private collection between 1897 and 1923 upon will of the nobleman Giuseppe Ricci Oddi and given to the Council of Piacenza in 1924. It was built upon a project of the architect Giulio Ulisse Arata. The precious collection includes paintings from the 19th and 20th centuries divided per schools and regions. Walking along the halls illuminated from the ceiling, the visitor may follow the itinerary of the main artistic movements, from the Romanticism (works by Hayez, Piccio, Induco) to the Realism, namely the “macchiaioli” movement (paintings by Fattori, Lega, Signorini; Sernesi, Abbati), from the “scapigliatura” movement (Cremona, Ranzoni, Conconi) to the “divisionism” of Segantini and Previati, up to the “international” painting by Boldini, De Nittis, Zandomenoghi. A very remarkable artist here is the great landscape painter Antonio Fontanesi, of whom the gallery owns more than 80 works. For the 20th century there are works by Medardo Rosso, Carrà, Carena, Casorati, De Pisis, De Chirico, Campigli.

ACCESSIBILITY

The entrance has no steps; the museum is on two levels (the mezzanine may be reached by a ramp). A lift is available. The gallery is supplied with two toilets, 1 of which accessible to the disabled, located on the mezzanine, and three toilets, one of which accessible to the disabled, on the ground floor.

EVENTS

The rooms nearby are occasionally used for exhibitions.

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

Bars, restaurants and shops in the streets nearby, above all Corso Vittorio Emanuele.

CATHEDRAL

Piazza Duomo, 10 tel.
0523 335154

Open all the year round. Opening times: 7.30 am-12.30 pm / 4.00 pm-7.30 pm. Duration of the guided tour: 30 minutes. 45 minutes including the visit to the crypt. Free entrance. Payment parking in Piazzetta Chiostrì Duomo. Bus stop at 10 m (No. 4, 9, 16 buses).

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Building begun in 1122 and finished in the first decades of the 13th century '200. The complex, simple and majestic at the same time, characterised by a balanced elegance, is a mixture of gothic and Romanesque styles. The façade, made of marble from Verona and sandstone, has a hut structure, with blind galleries in the upper part. Portals offer a wonderful example of Lombardic Romanesque style and was carried out by pupils of Wiligelmo and Nicolò. Inside, it has a latin cross plan, and an overhead chancel over the crypt. In the dome it is possible to admire frescoes by Guercino (1625/27) portraying prophets and sibyls, while the apse and the vault display frescoes by Camillo Procaccini and Ludovico Carracci (XIV-XVI sec.). Some of the pillars in the central nave are characterised by examples of relief dating back to after 1140 portraying the emblems of the craftsmen or merchants' guilds. The golden copper angel on the top of the belfry is a weather vane and is a symbol for the people from Piacenza, who call it “l'Angilon”.

ACCESSIBILITY

The main entrance has 10 steps with railing; the side entrances in Chiostris del Duomo are supplied with ramps, as well as the left side entrance in front of the bishop's see. To have access to the crypt there are 16 steps with railing.

EVENTS

Classical music concerts in some periods of the year.

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

Inside the cathedral it is possible to buy postcards and publications. In Piazza Duomo there are bars, pizzerias and shops. The market takes place in the square every Wednesday and Saturday morning.

BASILICA DI SANT'ANTONINO (SANT'ANTONINO BASILICA)

Piazza Sant'Antonino, 6 Tel. 0523 320653 Opening time on week-days: 8.00 am - 12.00 pm / 4.00 pm - 6.45 pm Opening time on festive days: 8.15 am - 12.30 pm / 8.00 pm - 9.30 pm Free entrance

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Ancient pre-Christian Basilica, dedicated to the patron saint of the city, built between 350 and 375 by San Vittore, first Bishop of Piacenza. Nearly completely destroyed during the barbarian invasions, it was rebuilt in 1014 modified several times. In 1450 the left transept was extended with an atrium, called "Porta del Paradiso (Heaven's gate)", composed by a lancet arch with a rose window on top and decorated by pinnacles. Inside "Paradiso (Heaven)" a stone slab commemorates the meeting which took place here in 1183 to discuss the preliminaries of the peace of Costanza between the members of the Lombard League and the emperor Frederick Redbeard. Inside, several frescoes by Camillo Gavasetti (1622). In the museum, altarpieces, antiphonaries dating back to the end of the 15th century, silver vessels, chalices, reliquaries and a precious manuscript dating back to 840, belonging to Lotarium king of Lorraine.

ACCESSIBILITY

Payment parking next to the church with parking spaces for the disabled; TEMPI bus stop opposite (No. 1, 5, 8, 10, 13 buses). Two entrances to the church, one supplied with ramp

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

At 200 m possibility of shopping in the town's main street.

HOLIDAY INN PIACENZA ***

Via Emilia Pavese, 114/A Tel. 0523/493811 Fax 0523/499115 e-mail:

holidayinn.piacenza@alliancealberghi.com www.holiday-inn.com www.alliancealberghi.com

The hotel, opened in 1993 in a modern 4 storey building, is supplied with 136 beds divided in single and double bedrooms. The rooms all have private bathroom, adjustable heating and air conditioning, minibar, satellite tv, pay tv and free Internet connection. 60% of bedrooms are non-smoking.

2004 Fares (B&B) Single room 164 € Double room 186 € Double room with 3rd bed 21,00 euro supplement

ACCESSIBILITY

The hotel is totally accessible to the disabled and offers for rooms for the disabled with private bathroom. The restaurant offers children's menus, vegetarian and dietetic dishes, with particular attention for guests with celiac disease. It has a large external parking and a subterranean garage, both supplied with parking spaces for the disabled. It can be easily reached from A21 TO-BS motorway, Piacenza ovest exit, and from A1 MI-BO, Piacenza sud exit, then heading for Piacenza ovest. The hotel is 2,5 Km far from the city centre and the railway station; bus stop in front of the hotel entrance.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Organisation of package tours with guided tours of the town and its province; gastronomic tours and visits to the castles of the Duchy of Parma and Piacenza and to Verdian sites; possibility of sailing along the river. Special fares to the hotel guests in a fitness centre 1 km far from the hotel.

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

Just behind the hotel there's a shopping centre with supermarkets, boutiques, pizzerias, bars etc., all accessible to the disabled. Inside the hotel, snack bar available to guests; little animals are welcome, but are not allowed in the restaurant. Daily laundry service also available; wireless high-speed connection in the hall; possibility of keeping valuables in hotel or individual safes; groups welcome; two meeting rooms containing from 10 to 55; restaurant serving local, regional and international cuisine. The hotel may welcome disabled people and can even provide them with the transport service supplied by the city council, if requested in advance.

OSTELLO “DON ZERMANI”

Via Zoni, 38/40 Piacenza

Tel. e fax 0523 712319

e-mail ostellodipiacenza@libero.it www.ostellodipiacenza.it

www.inyourlife.it/emiliaromagna/piacenza/ostellodonzermani/welcome.html

The hostel opened in the year 2000 in a recent building, has 55 beds in single, double or three-four-five-six bed bedrooms, for a total of 16 bedrooms. Some rooms have a private bathroom, other rooms share it with another bedroom (mini-apartment). It is surrounded by a large garden, open to all guests, including little ones, who can safely play in it. The reception is open 12 hours a day, but guests may rent a card giving access to the hostel 24 hours a day. Snack bar service is available for the evening meal, while groups are offered half board or full board accommodation. The hostel also has a TV room, a meeting room, a laundry room and four bikes to rent. 2004 Fares (prices per person , B&B accommodation):

single room € 20 double room € 19 room with several beds € 16

ACCESSIBILITY

The hostel is in a quiet residential area in town, a few minutes from the centre. It can be easily reached from Piacenza Ovest (A21 Torino-Cremona-Brescia) and Piacenza Nord (A1 Milano-Bologna) motorway exits, public transport is good both from the railway station and from the city centre (bus stops are at about 300 m. from the hostel). A pedestrian and a car gate lead into the courtyard/internal parking, while a stairway or a ramp lead to the hostel entrance. On the ground floor there are a large, well lit hall and some bedrooms, on the first floor there are a dining room and a TV room, on the third floor there are more rooms and the toilets for the disabled. A lift supplied with Braille buttons reaches all floors. The hostel has all sorts of comforts for the little ones: folding chair, changing top and stroller. Customised menus are available (for customers with special needs). Marcella Marzi, specialized in hotel services, did a training on accessibility attending the course “Piacenza provincia per tutti” (Piacenza, a province for everyone), and is therefore qualified to meet the requirements of different types of customers.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Organization of package tours and thematic itineraries with the cooperation of some of Piacenza Tour operators Piacenza (“Atlante” Tour guide association, “Navigare sul Po” consortium and “Compagnia del Po” for river sailing, Fattorie Didattiche association; “Eredi Gutenberg” association for museum entertainment, “Castelli del Ducato di Parma e Piacenza” association for visit to castles)

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

The hostel is close to via Cella, where you can find all sorts of shops

TREBBIA VALLEY: MEDIEVAL BOROUGHS IN BRIGHT LANDSCAPES

The wide valley, which has always been a passage way towards Liguria, goes along the whole 110 Km river Trebbia. While the lower areas are devoted to vine growing, the High Trebbia Valley, at the border with Liguria, can offer extremely beautiful landscapes. Here you can still bathe in the river, which flows meandering amid the rocks, and you may practise different outdoor sports, from trekking to canoeing, to fishing. Just after Gazzola we advise you to stop in Rivalta, a typical fortified borough, probably dating back to 1048, where you can visit the castle dominating the left bank of the river Trebbia. A fierce battle between the Romans and people from Carthage took place here: in 218 B.C., during the second punic war, the army of Hannibal defeated the troops led by Publius Cornelius Scipio. From Gazzola you can easily reach Rivergaro, nice tourist resort, dominated by the Anguissola Scotti castle. Going along trunk road No. 45 you arrive in Travo, which has been inhabited ever since the Neolithic age, was colonised by the Romans and witnessed the martyrdom of Sant'Antonino, roman soldier become Christian, now patron saint of Piacenza. The village centre grew around the Medieval Anguissola Castle. Today the castle belongs to the Municipality and has become Archaeological Museum. Trunk road No 45 becomes narrower and more meandering and is surrounded by a breathtaking nature and the Apennine mountains: next to cultivated fields you may find woods of yew trees, oaks, chestnuts and firs. Going along this way you'll reach Bobbio, 330 m. altitude, the most important tourist resort in the valley, above all thanks to the river. Visiting the little town you may stop in piazza San Francesco, in piazza Duomo, in piazza Santa Fara, in piazza Corgnate or you may walk along Via Sopramura; all parking areas are supplied with spaces for the disabled. The tourist information office (IAT) is at the entrance of Bobbio (IAT), and there are no steps. The symbol of Bobbio is Ponte Vecchio, also known as "Gobbo", of Roman origin; you may reach it either by going along the old ring road, now one way, via di Sopramura, with parking spaces for the disabled, or walking down from Porta Agazza (behind the Cathedral). The bridge has a typical irregular shape, with 11 spans probably due to the fury of the river or, according to a legend, to the devil himself, who apparently built it in one night. The city centre is characterized by medieval, cobbled narrow streets, old houses and noblemen's palaces. The borough is located in a meaningful position for the control of the Salt Way, leading from Piacenza to Rome, and its story was linked to the abbey founded in 614 A.C. by the Irish monk Columba. The abbey was very important between the 9th and 10th century for the transcription of codes and the subsequent transmission of the classical culture. In the premises of the monastery there are the Museo dell'Abbazia (Abbey Museum), and the Museo della Città (City Museum). Next to the monastery tourists may visit Basilica di San Colombano (St. Columba's Basilica). Castello Malaspina (Malalospina Castle) is worth visiting. It was built at the beginning of the 14th century, and from its inner ward you may enjoy a beautiful view of the little town and of the surrounding mountains.

RIVALTA MEDIEVAL BOROUGH

Località Rivalta di Gazzola (PC) Tel. 0523 978104 Fax 0523 978300

www.castellidelducato.it

Opening period:

from March to November

Payment entrance

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Several construction stages led to the present structure; some parts date back to the middle ages: the massive square donjon, the lancet arch at the entrance of the village and the small semicircular tower in the walls surrounding the borough. The fortress was enlarged towards the second half of the 15th century and still preserves typical renaissance elements, such as the porticoes and the arcades, while the external façade, with its triangular gable and the staircase dates back to the 18th century. Inside there are several elegantly furnished halls: the great hall, a large kitchen with a remarkable potter collection, bedrooms with original pieces of furniture and a museum displaying three flags dating back to the battle of Lepanto (1571).

ACCESSIBILITY

The largest parking is opposite the road with respect to the entrance to the borough (attention must be paid when crossing). The parking slopes downwards and is paved with gravel, but an asphalted ramp leads to the road. Alternative parking is possible on the sides of the castle, where a second car 'park with few parking spaces is available. A short asphalted slope leads to the main entrance. The narrow internal streets are all accessible, though paved with gravel. The entrance to the castle is on the same level as the street and gives access to the ticket office, the bookshop and the toilets. Walking across the inner ward visitors will reach the first rooms open to the public: the great hall, the arms room and the pools room. A steep staircase leads to the dungeons: spaces are dark and narrow here. The visit carries on to the first floor (two bedrooms) accessible by means of two low steps, and finally to the second floor (museum, only accessible through a narrow staircase).

BASILICA DI SAN
COLOMBANO (SAINT
COLUMBA'S BASILICA)

Piazzetta di San Colombano
Bobbio (PC)

Opening times: Week days 8.00 am - 7.00 pm Festive days 8.00 am - 12.30 pm/ 2.30 pm - 7.00 pm

Free entrance

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A portico leads to the tripartite façade. All the building, dating back to the reconstruction carried out in 1456-1522, contains the remains of the original structures, like the belfry dating back to the 9th century. The interior has a Latin cross plan, with three naves, separated by clustered piers ; a wooden choir dating back to the 15th century is preserved here. In the crypt visitors may admire the remains of a beautiful 12th century floor jigsaw, with biblical stories and iconographic motives connected to months and crafts.

ACCESSIBILITY

The shortest, easiest way to reach the Basilica is via Porta Nova, restricted to traffic on week-ends and festive days. The entrance has no steps, while the crypt can be only reached by means of two ramps located next to the Main Chapel, that lead 2,40 m below the upper floor

CASTELLO MALASPINA (MALASPINA CASTLE)

Via del Torrino
Bobbio (PC)

Opening times

From April to September: Tuesday to Friday 8.00 am-2.00 pm, Saturday and Sunday 8.00 am-4.30 pm
From October to March : Monday to Saturday 8.00 am-3.00 pm free entrance

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Built in 1304 by Corradino Malaspina, it remained, under his rule, a ghibelline fortress; after that the city rule was taken over by the Visconti family, who gave it as a fief to the Dal Verme family. Nel 1545 the castle was transformed into a luxury mansion, purchased by other noble families and it was eventually taken over by the state only in 1956. The external walls, connected to the town's walls, got destroyed throughout the centuries; nothing remains of the dry moat separating external and internal walls. The internal walls are still visible, together with the drawbridges, from the north-western and north-eastern sides. On the western side there are remains of Torre del Vescovo (Bishop's Tower), on the extension of which there was S. Petri basilica, used for many years by the lords of the castle as powder magazine. Inside the inner ward there's a square donjon, while on the eastern side a circular building was built later on a bastion.

ACCESSIBILITY

On a higher position with respect to the town, it may be reached going along sloping streets. As an alternative, it may be reached by car, the parking area is a few m from the entrance. It is possible to visit the inner ward, which is easily accessible, and the circular tower.

MUSEO DELL'ABBAZIA (ABBEY MUSEUM)

C/o Abbazia di San Colombano Piazza Santa Fara Bobbio (PC)

Opening times: from September to June: Saturday 3.00 pm-4.30 pm Sunday 11.00 am-12.00 pm/3.00 pm-5.00 pm; July and August: every day 3.00 pm-6.00 pm Saturday and Sunday 11.00 am -12.00 pm

Entrance fare: € 6, 20

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The museum is inside Saint Columba's monastery, the construction of which began towards the end of the 9th century, when abbot Agilulfo (883-96) decided to move downwards the whole complex. The medieval borough that grew around the area of the monastery kept its primitive name of "Bobium". It started to develop more after the year 1000, when it was given the title of bishop town. The Abbey Museum preserves a collection of archaeological remains and works all related to Saint Columba, carried out between the 4th and 18th century. Among the most precious remains there is a 4th century ivory pyx.

ACCESSIBILITY

It may be reached on foot, going along via Porta Nova, or by car (parking at a few m). The entrance is accessible from piazza San Colombano, through the corridor connecting it to piazza Santa Fara. The museum is on various levels, all staircases are supplied with mini-ramp.

MUSEO DELLA CITTA' (CITY MUSEUM)

C/o Abbazia di San Colombano Piazza Santa Fara Bobbio (PC)

For info: Centro Culturale Comunale tel. ++39 0523 962804

Opening time from November to March: Saturday and 11.30 am- 12.30 pm and 3.00 pm - 5.00 pm.

Fare entrance:

whole price € 1

reduced price € 0,50 free

up to 10 years of age

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The city museum is located in the former refectory and hand washing room of S. Columba's Monastery and is conceived as a didactic itinerary introducing to the other museum institutions and to the whole town. The various sections deal with the life and deeds of Saint Columba, from his Irish beginning to his arrival in Bobbio, the geo-political situation of the Longobardic Italy and the Scriptorium activity Scriptorium. Texts and drawings are displayed in three transparent panels, supplied with IT tools. The first interactive programme is a sort of palaeography lesson with the reproduction of pages of Codes

edited in Bobbio. The user gets to know writing and decoration techniques through the different historical periods, as well as the productive organisation of the scriptorium. A second programme enables to go on a virtual tour of the abbey.

ACCESSIBILITY

It may be reached on foot going along via Porta Nova and by car (parking at a few metres). Besides the main entrance, there is a secondary entrance to the inner ward, where stairs are supplied with platforms for wheel chairs. Inside the museum, a lift brings to the display area in the basement.

TIDONE VALLEY: SWEET HILLS AND VINE GROWING

It's the westernmost valley in the province of Piacenza, dividing the territory of Emilia from that of Lombardy and the river bearing the same name flows across it. Due to its strategic linking position between Padana Valley and Lombardy it's always been a borderland, as witnessed by early historical and Roman remains, by the several castles and strada Romea, which went across the valley. It's a large, sunny valley, with meadows and sweet hills, woods and pine woods in the highest part. The itinerary starts from Castel San Giovanni. The first evidence of a fortress in Castel San Giovanni is to be found in a document dating back to 954: 1290 Alberto Scoto had a fortress built as a protection against Pavia. Nothing of it remains, as the building was demolished in 1784 upon order of Ferdinando di Borbone. In the 16th century Collegiata di San Giovanni (St. Giovanni's Collegiate Church) was built in gothic-Lombard style, and it was later decorated by baroque stuccoes. Starting from Castel San Giovanni, going along the road leading to Creta, past Luzzano and Vicobarone, you arrive in Ziano: its territory, between the provinces of Piacenza and Pavia, was strategically important in the middleages, as witnessed by several castles. Among those, only some portions of walls and stone buildings remain of the castle of Ziano, mentioned in a document dating back to 1029. The very close castle of Seminò is still perfectly preserved. After Ziano, a few minutes later you'll stop in Borgonovo. It was built by the inhabitants of Piacenza as protection against Pavia in 1196 and the well preserved Fortress is currently the headquarter of the Council offices and of the tourist information office (accessible up to the entrance, 1 step); the brick made outside of the castle dates back to the 14th century, while the inside, with its three layered arcades and the two ramp stairway date back to the 17th century. The gothic-Lombard Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta (S. Maria Assunta's Collegiate Church) is worth visiting. Driving along Trunk Road No. 412, after Castelnovo, past the vineyard spread hills, you'll reach Pianello, well known tourist resort, located in an area which was already inhabited in Roman times; the remains found in the surrounding countryside are now kept in the Archaeological Museum which is located in a part of the castle, built in 1300 by Jacopo dal Verme and currently belonging to the Municipality. Not far from here, you may see Rocca d'Olgisio, built on a rock and surrounded by three rounds of walls, and probably already existing in the 11th century. The trunk road leads to Nibbiano: of the castle, mentioned in a 1029 document, some elements remain in the surrounding rural buildings, like the tower, at the entrance of the village, and the little square with its low portico. Back to Pianello and heading for Agazzano you may visit the 14th century fortress, still well preserved, next to which there are a 17th century palace and its gardens. On the hills nearby some castles, only partially restored or rebuilt, may be admired, among which Boffalora, Bastardina, Tavernago, and Sarturano castles. Southward from Agazzano, heading towards flat land, you'll see Gazzola, whose council has its headquarters in the castle dating back to the first half of the 14th century, clearly restored in the baroque period. The tower of Momeliano, and the castles of Monticello and Lisignano witness the violence and splendours of the past. In this area, in 218 B.C., during the second punic war, along the left bank of the river Trebbia, did Hannibal's army fight against and defeat the Roman army, led by the consul, Publius Cornelius Scipio.

COLLEGIATA DI SANTA MARIA ASSUNTA (S. MARIA ASSUNTA'S COLLEGIATE CHURCH)
Via Cavallotti Borgonovo Val Tidone (PC) Tel. 0523 863110

Opening times: 9.00 am-12.00 pm / 3.00 pm– 6.00 pm always open

Free entrance

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Finished in 1218, towards the half of the 15th century it underwent several structural changes, which were necessary because of the several wars through the centuries and the natural damage caused by time. Some valuable works of art are preserved here, among which the wooden altarpiece, sculptured and painted in 1474, by the brothers Lupi, 5th century Lombard frescoes (on the pillars and over the southern door) and a cycle of contemporary stained glasses, begun in '70 by the painter Giovanni Reposi, carried on by Giansisto Gasparini and finished by Franco Corradini, artist from Borgonovo, with ten stained glasses describing the presence of the Virgin in the Gospel.

ACCESSIBILITY

To visit the church, parking in piazza Garibaldi is advised. Take via Cavallotti and you'll arrive right in front of the church. There are 5 steps ant the main entrance, while the side entrance, which may be opened upon request by the parson, has one step only.

COLLEGIATA DI SAN GIOVANNI (S. GIOVANNI'S COLLEGIATE CHURCH)

p.zza Chiesa Maggiore Castel

San Giovanni (PC)

Tel. ++39 0523 842646

Opening times: 8.30 am-12.00 pm/ 3.00 pm– 6.30 pm
always open

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Ideally at the end of Via Gazzotti, the main church dedicated to the town's patron saint is in gothic Lumbard style and dates back to the end of the 13th- beginning of the 14th century. The gothic façade is tripartite by means of big lancet arches with a wide rose window typical of the most important churches in Piacenza, while the three portals are clearly baroque. The Chapel of Madonna del Popolo is on the left side. The inside is divided into three naves characterized by massive pillars decorated by statues with rib vaults, in a typical baroque style, as the works of art preserved here, among which the crucifix (Giacomo and Giovan Angelo del Maino, 1496), the Font (Bernardo and Battista Casella, 1550), six wooden statues composing the Crucifixion, the altarpiece dating back to 1448, apparently carried out by Bongiovanni and Giovanni Bassiano de Lupis and the altarpiece Predica di S.Giovanni Battista (St. John Baptist's preach) by Pietro Melchiorre Ferrari.

ACCESSIBILITY

Since this is a no parking area, parking in Giordano Bruno (next to the church) is suggested. Here there are also four parking spaces for the disabled. The entrance has one step.

VAL D'ARDA (ARDA VALLEY)

The valley is east of the territory of Piacenza, it borders with the province of Parma and also includes, besides the Arda stream, the Ongina, Stirone, Chero and Chiavenna streams. It goes from the river Po to the Apennine, amid beautiful river landscapes, vineyards, natural parks, roman excavations, medieval boroughs. The east side of the Valley, today crossed by via Emilia, an ancient roman road, was once the way medieval pilgrims walked along, to reach pilgrimage locations. The visit to Arda valley can start in Carpaneto, lively commercial town with roman origin. Nearby the town you may find l'azienda vitivinicola "Montesissa" (Montesissa vine growing farm) where guided tours and free tasting are possible. Leaving Carpaneto and driving along secondary roads that go through the green hills of Chero, Chiavenna and Vezzeno valleys, you'll reach Gropparello, that dominates the Vezzeno valley with its castle on top of a ravine. Carrying on visitors will reach Veleia, one of the most important archaeological sites in Emilia Romagna; discovered at the half of the XVIII century it was an important Roman Municipium and excavations still go on in the area. Heading back for Carpaneto you'll reach Fiorenzuola d'Arda, then proceed towards Castell'Arquato. The medieval borough lies on Pliocene hills witness of the times when there was the sea at the feet of the Apennine and fish and whales swam in the area. Their remains may still be found in the grey-blue clays of this area. To visit the town, parking the car in No 4 parking is suggested. Nearby Castell'Arquato (heading for Fiorenzuola) you'll see salumificio "La Rocca" producing D.O.P. cured meats: it belongs to the "Strada dei Vini e dei Saperi dei Colli Piacentini" (Gourmet Food and Wine Trail of Colli Piacentini) and it is open to guided tours and free tasting. From Castell'Arquato a deviation will lead you to Vigolo Marchese, with its beautiful romanesque Parish Church and Baptistery, then the road carries on towards the vineyards in Chiavenna valley, goes past Lugagnano and reaches Vernasca, where it is possible to admire the belfry and the apse of the Romanesque parish church dedicated to San Colombano (S. Columba). Carrying on along the way you'll see the borough of Vigoleno, located on a hill from which you can enjoy a breathtaking view. If you go in Vigoleno you may visit the castle, Pieve di San Giorgio (S. Gorgio Parish Church) Madonna delle Grazie Oratory. In the summer particular events, among which internationally known opera, take place here. Going back to Via Emilia, between Fiorenzuola and Alseno, you may stop at Chiaravalle della Colomba Abbey, a cistercian abbey dating back to 1135. If there's still time, heading back to Fiorenzuola, you may take the road to San Pietro and visit the 15th century castle.

CASTELL'ARQUATO

Part of "Borghi più belli d'Italia" (The most beautiful boroughs in Italy), it is a well preserved, beautiful medieval town. The narrow alleys lead to the monumental square, where are all the most important buildings in the borough, representing the spiritual and political power: Rocca Viscontea, built starting from 1342 under the rule of Luchino Visconti, the Collegiata di Santa Maria (Santa Maria's Collegiate Church), Romanesque structure consecrated in 1122 and made of sandstone, the Palazzo del Podestà (Podesta Palace), built in 1293. Other important architectural examples are Fontanone del Duca (Duke's fountain)(1292), Torrione Farnesiano (Farnese Tower) dating back to the end of the 16th century. The visit is even more interested if extended to the various museums in the borough: The Geological Museum (in the premises of the former Ospedale di S. Spirito), the museum dedicated to the writer and libretto writer Luigi Illica and Museo della Collegiata (Collegiate Church Museum).

ACCESSIBILITY

A1 motorway (Milano – Bologna) or A21 (Torino – Brescia) Fiorenzuola d'Arda exit. Carry on for Castell'Arquato. The Tourist information office (tel. 0523 803091) is at the entrance of the town, and is well visible both arriving from Fiorenzuola and Carpaneto. There's a pavement before the entrance. A wide parking is next to the office. Since the streets of the borough have cobble paving and slope upwards to reach the Square, leaving the car at parking No. 4, in the upper part of the town, is

advisable (follow the directions): This way reaching the main monuments will be easier. Entrance to Rocca Viscontea has no steps, and the inner ward is more easily accessible, while stairs lead to the upper floors. To enter the Collegiate Church you have to go down a step. The Geological Museum has a lifting hoist and the halls are all on the same floor. Steps lead to Luigi Illica Museum. In town there are two public toilets: one next to the school, in the lower part of the borough, in piazza S. Carlo, the other one in the upper part of the borough, in n. 4 parking (both toilets are accessible).

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Various events are organised throughout the year. The most suggestive one is the banquet for the review “Ricordanze di Saperi” (Recollection of tastes) (it takes place in July and is a dressed up dinner inside Rocca Viscontea).

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

The borough offers several shopping opportunities, ranging from typical products to handicrafts. There are also public premises, such as restaurants, bars, discos.

SALUMIFICIO LA ROCCA

Via Caneto

Castell'Arquato (PC) tel.

0523 805139 fax 0523

803641

e-mail info@salumificiolarocca.com

www.salumificiolarocca.com

How to arrive: A1 motorway (Milano-Bologna) or A21 (Torino-Cremona) Fiorenzuola exit; follow directions for Castell'Arquato.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

“Suino doro in campo rosso”(Golden swine on red background)... a slogan created in 1963, suggested by the love for good salami and passion for this job. Since then the company has practiced cured meats making, respecting tradition but adopting, at the same time, the most modern methodologies for working and seasoning pork meat, and producing the famous DOP cured meats of the area of Piacenza: “coppa”, “salami” and “pancetta”.

ACCESSIBILITY

A large parking opposite the entrance is open both to cars and buses. There are no steps to enter the entrance and the production department. A large lift reaches the upper floors, where seasoning takes place. The oldest room dedicated to seasoning is in the basement, and is only accessible by means of a staircase.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The cellar is always open for guided tours upon reservation. Ideal days for visits are Saturday and

Sunday , days on which there's no production, in order to have easier access to premises dedicated to meat processing. One visit lasts about 1 hour and covers explanation of production line and machineries, stages of seasoning and old cellar. The visit ends tasting three types of cured meats : coppa, salami and pancetta, and of a local wine. Cost of the visit: € 3 per person

SHOPPING, BAR, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

Possibility of buying cured meats and other typical products at the shop inside.

CASTLE OF SAN PIETRO IN CERRO

Via Roma, 19

S. Pietro in Cerro (PC) tel. 0523 836085/983711/984722 fax 0523 984722

www.castellidelducato.it e-mail:

info@castellidelducato.it

Opening time: guided tours from March to October only on Sunday and festive days; on week days upon reservation for groups of at least 20 people .

Fares (including guided tours):

5€ whole price

4 € discount price (groups and teen agers up to 16 years of age)

Free entrance for the disabled and for people accompanying groups and school groups.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In the middleages S. Pietro in Cerro was a military outpost of the Pallavicino State. In 1466 Bianca Maria Visconti, widow of Duke Francesco Sforza, gave the fief of San Pietro to the Barattieri family from Piacenza. Bartolomeo Barattieri, who really loved the place, built the castle, maybe upon the remains of a more ancient one, in 1491. The castle has never undergone real changes through the centuries and is a precious example of 15th century stately homes. It has a rectangular plan, from which the entrance donjon and the two round towers emerge; it is compact and essential, while inside it has got an elegant, square inner ward with double arcading. The building is surrounded by a large green area, the 5.000 square meter park with its paths and the meadow.

HOW TO GET THERE

A1 motorway(Milano-Bologna) Fiorenzuola exit, head for Cortemaggiore and then S. Pietro in Cerro; A21 Mortorway (Torino-Cremona-Brescia) Castelvetto exit, head for Piacenza, then Cortemaggiore and S. Pietro in Cerro. Parking and bus stop in front of the castle. A walk with trees on both sides and benches leads to the entrance. The inner ward is on the same level and the ground floor is completely accessible. A large stairway leads to the first floor, a narrow one leads to the second. The toilets are accessible.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The attic of the castle hosts the contemporary art MIM museum MIM (Museum in Motion) (works by contemporary artists are displayed; among them there is a section dedicated to artists from Piacenza).The halls and the park may be rented for lectures, exhibitions, concerts, ceremonies.

CASTLE OF GROPPARELLO

Via Roma, 84 - Gropparello (PC) tel. 0523 855814 - fax 0523 855818 www.castellodigropparello.it;
info@castellodigropparello.it

How to get there A1 / A21 Motorway, Fiorenzuola exit; carry on heading for Carpaneto, then Gropparello .

Free parking possible next to the ticket office. Possibility of getting to the castle even by Tempi bus up to Carpaneto, private coach up to Gropparello.

Opening period: from the 3rd Sunday of March to the 3rd Sunday of November
Ticket office opening hours (castle): from 10.00 am to 6.30 pm (5.00 pm in autumn)

Parco delle Fiabe (Fairy tale park ticket office): from 10.00 am to 5.30 pm (3.30 pm in autumn).

Open on weekdays and in the winter time for groups.

Payment entrance:

- ◆ obligatory guided tour of the castle: whole price € 6
- ◆ Fairy Tale Park adventure: € 8, 50

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Located on an extraordinarily beautiful rock, the castle is the symbol of fortified buildings in this area. The building includes various parts belonging to several historical periods: the donjon dates back to 1000, the guardroom dates back to the 14th century, the apartments date back to '500. During the middleages the castle witnessed fights between the Guelfs and Ghibellines, and was owned by several families (Fulgosio, Borri, Anguissola...). At the end of the 18th century the castle was purchased by Count Ludovico Marazzni Visconti.

ACCESSIBILITY

The ticket office, bar, restaurant and shopping centre can be reached by means of a paved path. From there, a paved path leads to the castle. To reach the castle there are two steps with railing, and the visit is all carried on the same floor. A series of steep ramps with several steps lead to the entrance and the donjon. The round is narrow and sloping.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Inside the park there is the first Italian Emotional park "Parco delle Fiabe (Fairy Tale Park)". This attraction is addressed to children and teen-agers (from 4 to 13) who are dressed up in medieval costumes and live adventures with entertainers dressed up like elves, fairies, dwarves. In September Nursery and elementary school children may practise grapes pressing and must production. Possibility of Historical thematic adventures. Coming soon: natural trails with different levels of difficulty.

SHOPPING, BARS, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

Near the old farm house a restaurant serves ancient, traditional dishes and those who feel like enjoying the medieval atmosphere may participate to a dressed up medieval banquet. (reservation is obligatory).

Inside the farm house a bar, a shopping centre and totally accessible toilets are available.

AZIENDA VITIVINICOLA MONTESISSA FRANCESCO (MONTESISSA FRANCESCO VINE GROWING FARM)

Travazzano di Carpaneto (PC) tel. 0523 850123 fax 0523 852096 e-mail vinimontesissa@libero.it

How to get there: A1/A21 motorway, Fiorenzuola exit; carry on for Carpaneto and then Travazzano. Free parking inside the farm.

Opening period: always open.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The farm manages La Costa, Case Ronchi and Buffalora di Sopra estates, 30 hectares of land in Chero valley, on the hills in the municipality of Travazzano, close to Castell'Arquato medieval borough and Veleia Romana's archaeological excavations. The name Montesissa has been known in the wine making world for three generations, and a secular tradition has evolved allowing the farm to earn an important role in the sector.

ACCESSIBILITY

The entrance to the farm, through a large gate, and the courtyard next have no steps. The courtyard leads into the cellars through slightly sloping ramp. A six step staircase or, alternatively, a lifting hoist, leads into the tasting rooms and offices. The oldest cellar, used for the aging of wine in barriques, is only accessible by means of a staircase. The vineyards are near the farmhouse and, going along a quiet, asphalted panoramic road, visitors may enjoy a good view of them. There are two toilets. One has a step, one is on the same level.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

1 hour guided tours of the production premises are possible: grapes working, wine making and bottling processes are shown, and end up with some wine and typical products tasting.

Guided tours preferably take place in the morning, reservation is obligatory for groups.

Cost of the guided tour: € 4,50 per person (fare including visit to the cellars and tasting of two types of wine).

SHOPPING, BARS, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

Possibility of purchasing wines directly from the farmhouse.

NURE VALLEY

Nure Valley is one of the central ones in the province of Piacenza. Visiting this valley means total immersion in a wonderful nature, rediscovery of itineraries once gone along by mules transporting the oil of merchants from Genua, the cereals of the merchants from Piacenza; the surrounding mountains are rich of castles belonging to the local noblemen, stone buildings similar to fortresses and even mills. In the flat land area it is possible to meet castles, small boroughs, old farms and several farmhouses and vine growing farms where visitors can rediscover the pleasure of the gastronomic traditions of Piacenza. In the Apennines area there are peaks and rocks, meadows and and lago Bino, unique for their flora and fauna. The itinerary across the valley stops in S.Giorgio, ancient Longobardic village, where you can admire a beautiful castle dating back to the 11th century, today headquarters of the city hall. The next stage is in Grazzano Visconti, a characteristic medieval style village, built at the beginning of the 20th century upon will of count Giuseppe Visconti di Modrone. From Grazzano, going along trunk road 654 you may reach Vigolzone, where archaeological remains witness that the area has been inhabited ever since the early centuries of the Christian Age. Here it is possible to admire a beautiful castle built during the first half of the 14th century by Bernardo Anguissola and restored at the beginning of the 20th century according to neo-gothic canons; the building has an imposing square tower with ghibelline crenellations. The itinerary then reaches Ponte dell'Olio, important ever since ancient times for its strategic position controlling the commercial routes leading from Padana Valley to Liguria: Through this are the trading of cereals from Piacenza and oil from Genua took place. San Giacomo church, with its precious organ and San Rocco oratory, may be visited. There are three interesting furnaces with three towers, witnessing traditional brick production in the area. The itinerary carries on in the upper Nure Valley, in a territory characterized by wild nature, where several farmhouses, joining the Natural Valley Project, have specialized in organic agriculture. You then arrive in Bettola through an itinerary surrounded by woods and spectacular valleys and cultivated fields; here every tower and belfry, every stone house reminds of the traditional stone working typical of the valley, in a territory which has always been strategically important ever since ancient times. The town of Bettola, which means 'inn', was a rest and restoration point for travellers crossing the valley; the town is still a place of exchange and markets and is divided by the bridge into two boroughs, San Bernardino and San Giovanni, with the large square having in the middle the statue dedicated Cristoforo Colombo, whose family apparently came from this area. From Bettola, going towards the upper part of the valley, you may reach Ferriere, a small tourist resort that is very crowded in the summer, not only by people from Piacenza. In the past it was known above all for its iron and copper mines, while nowadays it is a departure point for excursions going to the ice lakes and to Mounts Nero, Bue and Maggiorasca.

GRAZZANO VISCONTI

Characteristic medieval style borough, built at the beginning of the 20th century upon will of Count Giuseppe Visconti di Modrone. A village already existed in 300 (the name derives from the owner of the lands, Graccus Graccianum), and in 1400 Gian Galeazzo Visconti gave to his natural daughter Beatrice, wife of the nobleman from Piacenza Giovanni Anguissola permission to build the castle. The Anguissola kept the castle until 1884 when countess Fanny, born Visconti and married to an Anguissola, lost the husband and her only son, leaving her estate to her brother Guido Visconti. Giuseppe Visconti gave new life to the borough, which became a neo-medieval village. Thanks to its streets surrounded by green areas, the characteristic buildings with spires and two mullioned windows, workshops famous for working wood, pottery and wrought iron, nowadays it is one of the most important tourist resorts in the province of Piacenza.

ACCESSIBILITY

A large parking just outside the village is open to cars and buses. The borough is restricted to traffic; streets are covered by very compact gravel, so they are accessible both to wheelchairs and strollers. All the itinerary inside the village is at the same level, most shops are supplied with a ramp or with few steps. The tourist information office (IAT) is in Corte Vecchia, 7 (tel. e fax 0523 870997). The entrance

has one step. Public toilets are in the centre of the village and have large doors.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

On the last Sunday of May a spectacular historical festival takes place, performing the wedding between Giovanni Anguissola and Beatrice Visconti: the village is full of flag wavers, characters wearing ancient costumes, even riding horses, and jugglers. The event attracts thousands of visitors, and that's why streets may be too crowded and going along them may get difficult. Another interesting event is "Hostaria medievale" which takes place in June: It is a banquet serving ancient dishes and medieval groups perform in different parts of the village. An important event for children is "Una magica giornata" (A magic day), which takes place in September: it's the ideal occasion to meet history, dress up as medieval soldiers, ride a horse, try arch shooting and become flag waver...

SHOPPING, BARS, RESTAURANTS, SERVICES AND MORE

In the borough there are several workshops working wood, pottery and wrought iron, besides bars, restaurants and trattorie serving tourist menus too.