



Province of Biella

Panoramas of beauty, art, and nature.

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Province of Biella

Panoramas of beauty, art, and nature.

Nature, outdoor sports, art, culture, textile entrepreneurship, and typical flavors under the banner of genuine authenticity. These are the main elements that describe the Province of Biella, a showcase of landscapes between plains, hills, and mountains. An unexpected natural jewel, nestled in the northwest of Piedmont, with an extraordinary vocation for outdoor activities and rich in artistic and cultural attractions, the Biellese is the ideal place to regenerate yourself by following your rhythms and passions.

Its artisan and entrepreneurial history overlap with that of the old villages, and the food and wine excellences typical of this part of Piedmont complete the picture of a multifaceted area with truly much to discover.

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TERRITORY AND NATURE

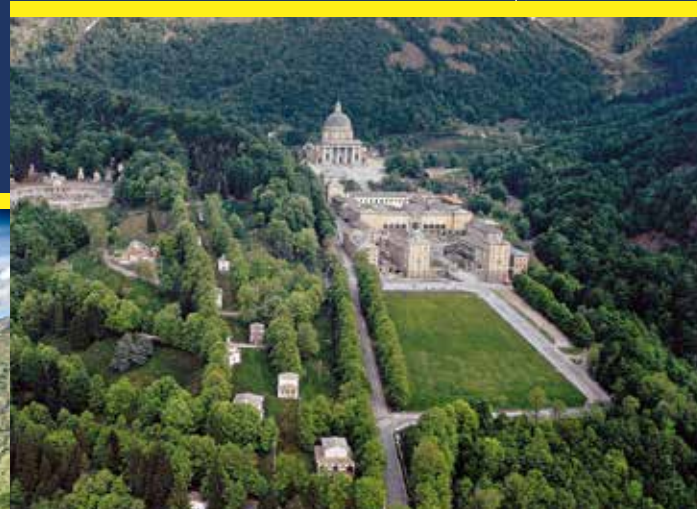
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Territory and Nature



Nature Reserve of Bessa



Salvine, Valle Elvo - Credits: Massimiliano Tarello



Serra morenica of Ivrea



Foliage at Oasi Zegna



Lake Viverone



A showcase of landscapes at the foot of the Alps.

The territory of the Province of Biella presents itself as a true **"showcase of landscapes"** that is loved for the richness and variety of its natural environments and not only as a "trait d'union" between the plains and the mountains, a task that it fulfills because of its location and that constitutes an element of absolute interest.

Its five valleys - Elvo, Oropa, Cervo, Mosso, and Sessera - hills, mountains, and natural parks are perfect for lovers of an "active" vacation to discover amazing places characterized by extensive green spaces. The protected area of **Oasi Zegna, the area of the Serra Morenica and Lake Viverone, the Nature Reserves of Bessa, Burcina Park, Baragge, and Sacro Monte di Oropa** provide unforgettable emotions for all those who love to experience nature in all its facets fully.

Lake Viverone for example, at 55 sq. km. is Piedmont's third largest lake and the largest lake basin found within the large **Ivrea moraine amphitheater**, of glacial origin and dating back to the Quaternary period. In addition to water sports and recreational activities in the tourist center of the same name, it offers quiet walks and wilder

shores rich in reeds and of great ornithological interest because of the quantity and variety of species that find refuge there. The skyline of Lake Viverone is dominated by the mountains in the background and the **Serra** hill, which with its 25 km extension holds the record as the largest moraine in Europe.

The lakefront is home to numerous accommodations, restaurants, and bars, and the area offers a variety of leisure opportunities: bike trails with e-bike rentals, horseback riding, and of course, many water sports, such as water skiing, sailing, canoeing, windsurfing, SUP, and fishing. Do not miss the **boat tours**, organized in the warm season, the beautiful sunsets, and also the local **wines and typical flavors of the area**, to be discovered with visits to the producers' wineries and the many holiday farms on the shores of the lake and in the surrounding hills.

The special microclimate of this area makes it particularly well suited to agriculture, evident in the expanse of orchards and vineyards - **Erbaluce DOCG** and **Canavese DOC** are produced here - and makes Viverone a welcoming resort, all to be discovered and experienced.



Discovering amazing nature.

Another place of great impact is the **Sacro Monte di Oropa Reserve**, which, in addition to guarding the splendid Unesco World Heritage sanctuary complex, is no less valuable from a naturalistic and environmental point of view, with its particular harmonious fusion of architecture and nature of great beauty.

The Nature Reserve, rich in alpine pastures and springs encompasses the entire Oropa basin up to the borders with the Mars Park, a protected area in Valle d'Aosta, and is an ideal place to **fall in love with splendid views, immerse yourself in the greenery or admire the autumn foliage** and engage in many outdoor activities in all seasons. Perfect for walking, trekking, mountain biking, tree adventure trails, climbing, and skiing, the Reserve is also home to the **Botanical Garden** included in the WWF Oasis system, which tells the story of the typical environments of the Biella mountains and welcomes species from mountain ranges around the world.

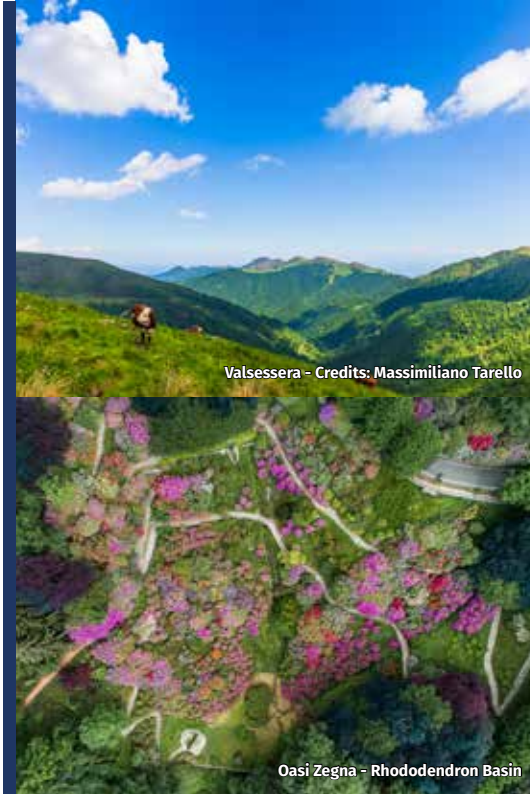
Finally, **Oasi Zegna**, which was created in the 1930s on a project

to enhance the territory at the behest of textile entrepreneur Ermenegildo Zegna, is spread over a mountain area of about 100 square kilometers with free access, where an extensive trail network allows direct contact with unspoiled environments.

The particular natural conformation of the territory and the remarkable endowment of infrastructures built since the beginning of the construction of the Panoramic Road of the same name that crosses it, make Oasi Zegna the ideal place for a vacation in harmony with nature. There you can experience regenerating activities such as **forest bathing, mountain watching, and barefooting**, savor genuine traditional dishes and engage in sports activities that are perfectly compatible with the environment. Particularly rich is the offer for cycling enthusiasts, with routes for MTBs, e-bikes, and road bikes, dedicated services, and paths leading into the wild territory of Alta Valsessera. Air sports are also worth trying, thanks to the inexhaustible currents rising from the plains.



Sacro Monte di Oropa



Valsessera - Credits: Massimiliano Tarello



Cammino di Oropa - Credits: Massimiliano Tarello



Oasi Zegna - Pera Furà

Outdoor and Sport





Trappa di Sordevolo - Credits: Massimiliano Tarello



Via Francigena



Nature Reserve of Bessa - Gold diggers



Foliage at Burcina Park

Bocchetta di Margosio - biking at Oasi Zegna



Fun for the whole family.

Outdoor life and outdoor sports are indispensable elements to tell the story of the Biellese area, where really anyone can easily find his or her favorite activity, thanks to the great variety of the landscape.

Nature parks and routes between mountains and hills constitute perfect places for **cycling and hiking** enthusiasts. They feature challenging routes such as ascents to alpine peaks and refuges, found in the valleys; noteworthy in this regard is the **Great Traverse of the Alps (GTA)**, a hiking route in stages. It unites the entire western Alpine arc, and in the Biella

region stops at the Rivetti Refuge, the Sanctuaries of San Giovanni d'Andorno and Oropa, and the Coda Refuge-or under the banner of "slow" tourism such as the **Cammino di Oropa** and the **Via Francigena**.

Many trails can be easily walked in various parts of the province and its many different environments. The **"Priest's Walk" in Oropa**, for example, is mostly flat, and develops in the shade of beech trees with beautiful views over the plains, and unusual vistas toward the Sanctuary. The **Bielmonte Tour**, is an easy loop trail among beautiful natural scenery, while the **"Ciapèi**

parfundà" hike, is a relaxing walk in the woods among the high pebble piles of the ancient **Bessa** open-pit gold mine. This is where you can experience firsthand **the adventure of panning for gold in the Elvo stream**.

A visit to **Burcina Park** is suitable for the whole family. It offers views of mountains and plains ranging from Monviso to Adamello, famous for the splendid blooming of the **rhododendron basin** in May; a hike to **Trappa di Sordevolo**, with a visit to the Eco museum; and walks and rides in the **Baraggia**, a short distance from the medieval village of Ricetto di Candelo.



An adventure full of surprises.

For those who love challenges and competition, the Biella region offers the chance to try their hand at a wide range of exciting sports and experiences: **bungee jumping, adventure parks, golf, aerial and water sports**, the latter especially at Lake Viverone, as well as **canyoning** on the Elvo stream.

The area is also ideal for **equestrian sports**: the wide variety of environments, from the plains to the Alps, make it particularly suitable for splendid horseback riding excursions through nature reserves, nature oases, sanctuaries, and small villages.

A key place to experience the outdoors and sports in the Biella area is **Bielmonte**. Nested in the heart of Oasi Zegna, it is a **family-friendly ski resort** par excellence in winter. Many services and activities are designed especially for families, like 18 km

of downhill slopes suitable for skiers of all levels, and 20 km of cross-country trails, snowshoeing, even under the moonlight, ice-skating, and gourmet breaks to savor the genuine flavors of the tradition, all in a magical atmosphere of silence and harmony with the surrounding nature.

In spring, summer, and fall, the area is an ideal place for activities like hiking, mountain biking, forest bathing, horseback riding, Nordic walking, and air sport. It maintains a special focus on children and families, with offerings such as the **Adventure Forest** and the **Forest of Smiles**, Bielmonte Summer Kids entertainment, and, on weekends, a full calendar of festivals and events.

The Biellese is also a true **paradise for bicycle lovers** in all its forms, thanks to the possibility of practicing this sport in very different contexts. For those who love

road biking, it is possible to retrace the climbs that made the Giro d'Italia great, such as the famous **"Pantani" climb** from Biella to the Sanctuary of Oropa.

For gravel bikes, or MTBs lovers, on the other hand, the fun they are looking for is offered by dirt roads, forests, and mountains of the Province such as the **routes of the Baraggia and Bessa nature reserves on the Serra Morenica** or Mount Casto in Oropa Valley, or even the adrenaline-pumping routes of the **Enduro Bike Parks of Oasi Zegna, and Rive Rosse**.

Of note for two-wheelers is the **"Unesco Grand Tour of Piedmont"** a route of about 600 kilometers to discover the UNESCO sites and Nature Reserves of Piedmont, which in the Biella area touches on the Sanctuary and Sacro Monte of Oropa, the city of Biella and Oasi Zegna.



Biking Baraggia of Candelo



Bungee Jumping Veglio



Wakeboard Lake Viverone



Trekking Oasi Zegna - Credits: Massimiliano Tarello



Bielmonte Oasi Zegna

Culture





Cathedral Square Biella



Baptistry of St. John the Baptist



Medieval village of PIAZZO



Biella: culture and history on three levels.

The **city of Biella**, with its identity as a wool textile province that has made the history of Italian manufacturing, was awarded in 2019 with the valuable recognition of **UNESCO Creative City** in the 'Crafts and Folk Art' sector for the tradition, creativity, craftsmanship, and sustainability of Biella's 'savoir-faire' in textiles. In 2021 it was also officially designated the **"Alpine Town of the Year"**, by an international jury, joining the important cross-border network whose aims are the implementation of the Alpine Convention and sustainable development.

Biella is distinguished by its distribution on **three levels**, which tell different moments and aspects of its history.

Biella Piano, first, dates back to Roman times and today preserves important monuments from different periods set in an elegant context that is the result of 19th-century urban development. Among the most important places of interest in this area, to be mentioned are the **Cathedral**. Dedicated to the patron saint of Biella, St. Stephen, it was built at the behest of the community following a vow made to Our Lady of Oropa, for the escaped plague of 1399. It became a cathedral in 1772 following the assignment to Biella as an episcopal see. **The bell tower of St. Stephen**, dating back to the 11th century, and the **Baptistry of St. John the Baptist**: a fine example of Romanesque architecture, built of pebbles and bricks on a quadrilateral plan, it preserves traces of two decorative fresco campaigns attributable to the Master of Oropa.

Very interesting is the **Museum of the Biellese Territory** with the complex of San Sebastiano in the Lombard Bramante style - also located in the City Plan - and commissioned by Sebastiano Ferrero, a key figure of

the Biellese Renaissance. In addition to the cloister and the basilica, rich in frescoes and works of art, inside the museum site, visitors will be able to deepen their knowledge of the Biellese territory through a journey through time that interweaves the testimonies guarded by the archaeological section with those of the historical-artistic section.

Perched on the hill to the west of the city and reached by a scenic funicular railway, **Biella Piazza** (the city's second level), on the other hand, retains the characteristics of the medieval village, with gateways and cobbled streets winding between stately palaces. Founded in 1160 by the Bishop of Vercelli Uguccione, the Piazza was quickly populated, becoming the center of commerce and the cultural and administrative evolution of the city. Over the following centuries, the Piazza flourished with the **residences of the great noble dynasties of Biella**, including Palazzo Ferrero, Palazzo Gromo Losa, and Palazzo La Marmora, which today constitute the **"Cultural Pole of Biella Piazza"** hosting events, festivals, and exhibitions. The central **Piazza Cisterna**, the heart of the village, is lively and busy especially in summer thanks to the characteristic restaurants and clubs housed under the arcades.

Finally the city's third tier along the Cervo stream preserves one of the most important industrial heritage in Europe, the former textile mills, now transformed into cultural centers featuring contemporary art, including **Cittadellarte Fondazione Pistoletto**, a creative hub, art residence and home to the largest exhibition of Michelangelo Pistoletto's works, **M.A.C.I.S.T. Museum of Contemporary Art** and **Woolbridge**, an art gallery built in the spaces of the former Pira Wool Mill.



Piazza Funicular



Gromo Losa Palace

Sanctuary of San Bernardo



Sanctuary of Graglia



Alpine shrines and UNESCO sites.

Visiting the artistic and cultural proposals of the Biella region also means going on a discovery tour of the places of faith that populate the area, among which the **Sanctuary and Sacro Monte di Oropa complex** stand out. An itinerary that can then continue in the other three important alpine sanctuaries of great artistic interest: built in the green in splendid panoramic positions, the **Sanctuary of Graglia, Sanctuary of San Giovanni di Andorno and Sanctuary of the Brughiera**, are also excellent starting points for nature excursions and offer accommodation and catering services. Among the many other sanctuaries in Biella, the Sanctuary of San Bernardo in Oasi Zegna is also worth mentioning for its magnificent panoramic location.

The Sanctuary and Sacro Monte di Oropa complex, recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, is set in a grandiose alpine setting at 1,200 meters above sea level, a short distance from the city of Biella, and is considered the most important place in Marian worship in the Alps, a pilgrimage destination for centuries.

Popular tradition has it that the initiator of the Christian cult at Oropa was **St. Eusebius, Bishop of Vercelli**, who is said to have brought with him from Palestine the wooden statue of the Virgin, carved by St. Luke, in the 4th century AD.

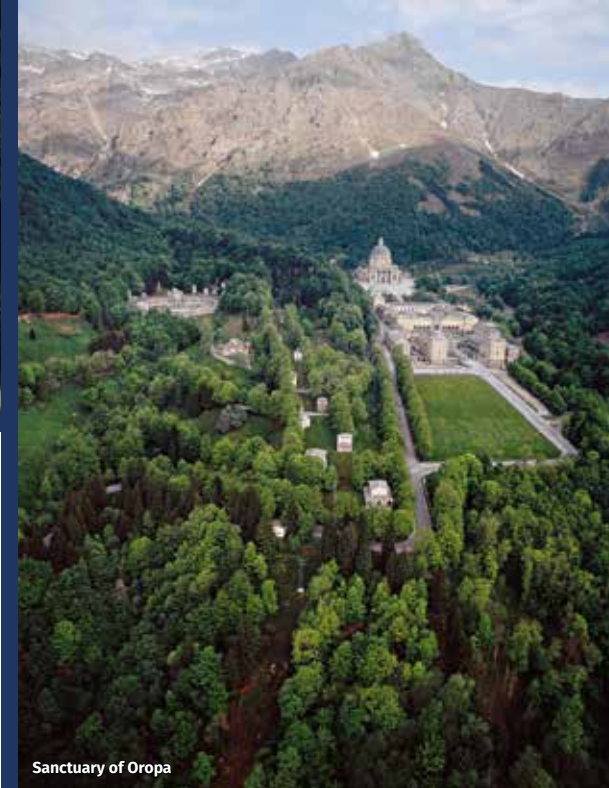
The construction of a church is documented from the 1200s, and since then the shrine has expanded to accommodate,

and contain the ever-increasing number of worshippers until it reached its present appearance consisting of the Cloister with the Old Basilica, the New Basilica, and the side bodies, where more than 300 modern rooms have been carved out to accommodate pilgrims.

Worth visiting, in the galleries that run through the buildings, is the **collection of votive offerings**, tangible testimony to the devotion to the Blessed Virgin; the Museum of the Treasury and the Royal Apartments of the Savoy family; and, by request, the **Weather and Seismic Observatory** and **Library**.

Immersed in the natural surroundings of the Shrine is the **Monumental Cemetery**, and the **twelve chapels of Sacro Monte** that tell the life of Mary with polychrome terracotta statues, and frescoes by Giovanni d'Enrico and his workshop, Bartolomeo Termine and Agostino Silva, and in the 18th century by Carlo Francesco, Giuseppe Aurelio Termine, and Giovanni Galliari; five other chapels are dedicated to the saints and the tradition of the Shrine.

Among UNESCO recognitions, **Lake Viverone** can also boast of an important one: a few meters below the water level are extraordinarily preserved remains of some 5,000 piles that supported the structures of a very ancient large pile-dwelling village dating back to the Bronze Age and now registered in the system of **"Prehistoric Pile-Dwelling Sites of the Alpine Arc"**.



Sanctuary of Oropa



Sanctuary of Brughiera



Lake Viverone Piles



Rosazza



Princes' Palace - Masserano



Rosazza



A journey through time among the villages.

There are many places of great interest in the Biella area: the Ricetto of Candelo and the village of Rosazza for example, included in the circuit of "The Most Beautiful Villages in Italy," or Masserano with its beautiful porticoed historic center.

The **Ricetto of Candelo** is a late medieval (13th-14th cent.) fortified structure built by the local farming community, without any feudal intervention, on land originally owned by the Vialardi nobles of Villanova and later redeemed by the Candelo people. In ancient times, the shelter was meant to provide stable protection for the community's most precious things, namely the produce of the land, primarily grain and wine; only in extreme cases of danger, and for a short time, did the population also take refuge there.

The pseudo-pentagonal plan occupies an area of about 13,000 square meters and is surrounded by defensive walls built with stream pebbles laid in a "herringbone" pattern; four round towers ensured the defense of the Ricetto at the corners, while a square curtain tower ensured it halfway up the north side. Inside it houses restaurants, craft stores, and cultural spaces such as the Eco museum of Viticulture where you can delve into the history and traditions of this very special place.

The secret of the **monument's splendid condition** lies in the total peasant use that was made of it until very recent times and to some extent still today. Candelo's ricetto, unlike many similar monuments that dotted Piedmont (more than 200, of which 112 in the Biellese area, now largely disappeared or greatly transformed) has undergone little remodeling. The atmosphere pervading its "rue," between the Piazza Castello and the inner square, is still intact today: its silence and stillness suggest magical memories of an ancient peasant world that no longer exists. Among the main events that take place in the ricetto is **Candelo in Fiore** in the springtime.

With a mysterious and fascinating history is the village of **Rosazza**, located in the picturesque **Cervo Valley**.

The stately appearance of this small mountain village is due to the works of the most illustrious character to whom it gave birth, **Federico Rosazza Pistolet**, a member of Mazzini's Giovane Italia, and then a senator of the Kingdom of Italy. Supported and inspired

by his collaborator Giuseppe Maffei, in the second half of the 19th century financed the construction of mansions, palaces, gardens and public works such as aqueducts, bridges and roads, such as the one leading to the Sanctuary of San Giovanni d'Andorno and later to the Sanctuary of Oropa through a tunnel carved into the rock.

The eclectic style is well represented by the **parish church, cemetery, municipal palace, and neo-Gothic castle**, now a private residence, characterized by extensive use of symbolic elements that have earned the locality the name of **Italy's most mysterious municipality**. Rosazza fascinates with the **pretty houses perched** along the mountainside, separated by narrow paved streets that open onto picturesque views, fountains, and stone inscriptions, the latter of which are also present along the **mule tracks** that penetrate the green of the surrounding mountains, such as that of **Gragliasca**.

The works were made thanks to the skill of the valley's inhabitants in the mason-chisel trade, a traditional activity well documented inside the **Casa Museo Alta Valle Cervo**, which recounts the customs and traditions of these places rich in history and charm.

Reviewing the most characteristic medieval towns and villages of the Biellese, of great relevance to the history of the area is **Masserano, a papal fief** for centuries under the rule of the very powerful Ferrero Fieschi family, descendants of Sebastiano Ferrero. Divided into several hamlets scattered over the hills, it is at the center of a limited but qualitatively important hilly wine-growing area that produces fine wines made from Nebbiolo grapes, such as Bramaterra and Lessona, and the Coste della Sesia, to be discovered with visits and tastings at holiday farms and wineries.

The town retains an impressive older core, but it is above all the **Princes' Palace**, now the Town Hall, that has retained great evocative power. Inside, among precious stuccoes and frescoes, one can admire the splendid wooden altar of St. Theonestus. Along the main street is the **Collegiata**, a parish church dedicated to SS. Annunziata dates back to the late 15th century, while narrow, cobbled streets and low porticoes lead to the **13th-century church of San Teonesto**, built in an isolated and dominant position, which retains its Romanesque bell tower and simple, elegant facade.

Passione di Sordevolo



Trappa di Sordevolo



Masserano



Ricetto of Candelo



Unforgettable events and places.

Among the events related to faith and tradition, not to miss is the **Passione di Sordevolo**: a massive performance of popular theater that has involved the entire population of Sordevolo, a town of 1,300 at the foot of the Alps, every five years since 1816.

In **an area of 4,000 sqm.** capable of seating about 3,000 spectators, a small patch of Palestine is staged (the Last Supper, Sanhedrin, Gethsemane, Herod's Palace, Pilate's Praetorium, Calvary) where 400 characters, performers, extras, Sanhedrin guards, soldiers and Roman cavalymen bring the Holy Drama to life.

The set design and music are meticulously detailed, the choreographic effects exceptional and of rare beauty. The text recited dates from the last years of the 15th century; it is a work elaborated in verse by the Florentine Giuliano Dati,

chaplain of the Church of the Holy Martyrs in Trastevere in Rome.

Still in the territory of Sordevolo, going up the Upper Elvo Valley to an altitude of 1,000 m, amid unspoiled nature and unique landscapes, the characteristic **Trappa di Sordevolo** is worth mentioning: an imposing building inhabited by Trappist monks fleeing from revolutionary France in the late 1700s, easy to visit with a low-stress hike and easily passable all year round. The interior of the former monastery now houses a guesthouse and a mountain refreshment center open in fine weather and is home to the Eco museum of Building Tradition, one of the sites of the Biella Museum Network. It also promotes and participates in the **Slow Food Travel Biellese Mountains** project, which promotes authentic and genuine foods from local producers, and hosts meetings and cultural events every summer.



Entrepreneurial legacy and traditions to be told.

Finally, important for telling the story of the past and present of Biella's industrial fabric are the **company museums**. Among the most significant ones we mention, **Casa Zegna**, which allows visitors to discover the history of Oasi Zegna, and of the Ermenegildo Zegna Group, starting in 1910. In an extraordinary setting it combines the factory with the surrounding mountain environment, and **MeBo**, consisting of the Menabrea beer museum, which traces the more than 170-year history of the oldest Italian brewery still active, and Casa Botalla, a cheese museum that tells the story of the cheese company that is very deeply rooted in the area.

On the other hand, the **Fila Museum**, dedicated to the Biella brand, offers an innovative emotional journey, and finally, the **Fondazione Sella**, which enhances and makes available a vast historical documentary and iconographic archive.

Along with the **Cervo torrent area** in Biella, and the village of **Miagliano** - with the former Botto Wool Mill, the workers' village, and the guided pedestrian routes - a journey to discover Biella's rich industrial heritage cannot fail to include the **Wool Road**. This road connects the cities of Biella and Borgosesia through the

Biellese valleys that saw the birth of textile industrialization.

Here one encounters historic industrial sites of different types, including the **Pray Wheel Factory**, formerly the Flli Zignone wool mill, the central site of the route. This is an Eco museum cell that can be visited in the summer, and a venue for events and temporary exhibitions, which tells the story of textile development in the Biellese.

The **Biella Museum Network** includes castles, palaces, nature areas, museums, and Eco museums where historical identity, customs, and collective knowledge of the area come to life, such as **ironworking in the Elvo Valley** or **terracotta in the village of Ronco**. Among the many museum curiosities, we also point out the **Falseum - Museum of Fake and Deception**, which offers an interactive itinerary dedicated to the theme of forgery at 360°, in the scientific, historical, photographic, and artistic fields, set up in the splendid setting of the medieval castle of Verrone.

Here, once again, environment, religiosity, tradition, art, artisanship, and business services as a common thread in the tale of these places so rich in love of beauty and culture.

Maddalena Bridge - Cervo torrent



Food and Wine





Wines and flavors of the territory



Tasting in the vineyard



MeBo Experience

Biellese specialties



Between wine and beer, an "excellent" toast.

The subject of renewed interest by local and non-local entrepreneurs, the Biella wine sector is of fundamental importance to agricultural production in the Province of Biella, as well as one of the excellences of Piedmontese tradition. The hills of eastern Biellese are the production areas of **Lessona, Bramaterra, and Coste della Sesia**: DOC wines based on Nebbiolo vines, rich in flavor, history, and tradition.

Lessona, the most prestigious wine in the Biella area, is also called the "wine of Italy" because it was chosen by the then finance minister, Quintino Sella, in place of champagne to toast the unification of Italy after the taking of Rome in 1870.

Other historic production areas are **Vigliano and Castellengo**: here farms are often located in castles and historic mansions where small producers create wines of excellent quality; on the other hand, **Erbaluce DCG and Canavese DOC** are produced on the slopes of the Serra hill and

around Lake Viverone.

For beer lovers, a visit to the **Menabrea** brewery is not to miss: an artisanal and entrepreneurial success story alive in the area since 1846, which can be rediscovered in the museum exhibit and with the **MeBo Experience**, an in-depth journey and tasting paired with cheeses from the Botalla Company. Also not to miss are the many **artisanal microbreweries**, with workshops scattered throughout the area and sales and tasting points in the historic city center. The **Bolle di Malto event**, a review of craft breweries, street food, and live music held in Biella's historic center, is an eagerly awaited Biella August event.

And it is precisely the water with which these beers are produced that plays a very important role in the identity of the Biellese territory: an essential element of the landscape, it is indispensable with its purity and lightness-it is considered the lightest water in Italy-for the quality of Biellese

textiles but also for agri-food production.

Brands of excellence include Lauretana, a historic and internationally known mineral water brand, based in the Elvo Valley near the **Sanctuary of Graglia** dedicated to Our Lady of Loreto, after whom it is named.

Also worth mentioning is **Ratafià** di Andorno, a sweet liqueur made from the alcoholic maceration of wild cherries, whose five-hundred-year-old recipe is also recorded in the Treatise on Cooking by Giovanni Vialardi (1854), a native of Salussola, the most famous person associated with the area's gastronomy, who was assistant head chef and pastry chef to Charles Albert and Victor Emmanuel II.

Finally, a curiosity: it was a Biellese, the distiller and herbalist Antonio Benedetto Carpano (Bioglio 1751, Turin 1815), who invented **Vermouth** in 1786, transforming medicine into a convivial aperitif, which immediately became all the rage throughout Piedmont.



Mountain specialties and traditional recipes.

The particular conformation of the province, which embraces plains, hills, and mountains, gives a variety of genuine products and traditional specialties that tie in with the characteristics of the area.

First, **Toma Biellese**, made from both whole milk and semi-skimmed milk (the latter, called Toma magra is typical of the Elvo and Oropa Valleys), and then again, among the cheeses, **Maccagno** named after an alpine pasture located at almost 2,200 m above sea level in Valsesia but which has been used by Biellese mountain people for centuries.

Among cured meats, **Paletta di Coggiola** (or Biellese) - listed as a Slow Food Presidium - preserves the heritage and legacy of cutting, processing, and preservation techniques passed down from father to son for generations. Characterized by an abundant coating of pepper with which it is flavored before being encased in the bladder, Paletta is served hot with polenta and accompanied by onion compote or **apple mustard**, another traditional preparation made by prolonged cooking of apple juice, or cold as a very tasty and genuine cooked ham.

Riso di Baraggia Biellese e Vercellese DOP, Italy's first and only PDO rice, produced in the expanses of the agricultural plains bordering the province of Vercelli, is perfect for making **Riso in cagnone**: a typical winter dish rooted in traditional mountain Biella, prepared with boiled rice, fat toma cheese, and sizzling butter. Another delicacy is **capunèt**, rolls of cabbage or, chard leave stuffed with meat, vegetables, and cured meats. Finally, among desserts, of note are the typical **Canestrelli Biellesi**, cookies made up of two wafer wafers stacked on top of each other, filled with chocolate, but also torcetti and **paste di meliga**, and **honey**, which has an increasing number of producers and admirers.

Finally, the typical dish par excellence attests to the fusion of the resources of the mountain pastures and the products of the plains: **polenta "concia"**. Originating in the Oropa Valley, and later becoming typical in the highlands as well (and in nearby Valsesia), it is a fluid cream of corn cooked for a long time in the copper pot and flavored with lightly aged cheese and plenty of farmhouse butter. Dedicated to this classic of Biella cuisine is '**Ben Cuncià**', a festival that involves restaurants throughout the area and takes place in early November.



Biellese cured meats



Capunet



Polenta concia



Biellese cheese

