

The countryside to the South of Turin can offer a lot to its visitors. The mainly rural tradition of its towns, such as Carignano, Castagnole Piemonte, Lombriasco, Osasio, Pancalieri, Piobesi Torinese, Vinovo and Virle Piemonte, shouldn't be misleading: both nobles and clergymen left behind them prominent examples of art, so that in some cases its artistic offer can rival that of more important Capitals. Carignano, important for its strategic location, was donated in 1621 by Charles Emmanuel 2nd, duke of Savoy, to his cadet son, founder of the branch of Savoy-Carignano; later on, in 1683 Vittorio Amedeo 2nd of Savoy granted to Carignano the important title of City, thus recognizing its fidelity to the ruling House. This is the first act of important renovations, which, without destroying all its representative Middle Age contents, will create splendid monuments in baroque style.

The architects that operated in Carignano, have been active also in the nearby towns, thus creating an artistically uniform substratum. It is therefore possible to discover unusual itineraries inside villages of ancient foundation, which have been able to preserve intact their urban structures. Noble buildings, castles, churches and chapels, courtyards, streets and squares may tell the daily history of their inhabitants, but also narrate episodes of the great History: here did stop kings and emperors, popes and bishops, warriors and celebrated characters, sometimes leaving behind them important traces. Each age has left testimonies, e.g. the Middle Ages (in Carignano, the vaulted passages along the downtown streets; in Piobesi, the church of St. John, with its frescoes; in Castagnole, the little castle of the Piossasco Family); the Renaissance (in Osasio, the delicate frescoes of the cemetery chapel; in Vinovo, the grand castle Della Rovere, decorated with frescoes attributed to the School of Pinturicchio and the courtyard with the valuable terracottas; in Pancalieri, the noble buildings); the Mannerism (in Carignano, the façade of the church of St. Mary); the first Baroque (the numerous churches of Carignano, undisputed masterpieces of this artistic style and the noble buildings; in Virle, the dance room of the Castle Piossasco; in Pancalieri, with its beautiful churches and chapels); from the Late Baroque through the Rococo until the Neoclassicism (the Cathedral of Carignano, genial intuition of the architect Alfieri and the churches designed by the architect Vittone, perfect synthesis between light and architecture; in Castagnole, the sculptures of Lavy in the parish church; the beautiful plasters of the parish church of Lombriasco); then the 20th century Rationalism (in Carignano, the new Town Hall – cosa ci fa questo? Stiamo parlando di percorsi artistici!). Numerous are also the signs of the human industriousness: from the mills (in Pancalieri and Osasio), to the big factories of the 19th and 20th centuries (silk--mills, manufactures, brick-factories, in Castagnole, Pancalieri, Carignano...).

The “The Prince's City” Project, promoted by the association “Progetto Cultura e Turismo Tourism Onlus”, Town Administrations and private people, is targeted to the tourist development of eight small urban centres (sette sono piccoli, uno è grandioso, enorme e importante!) in the plains to the South of Turin. The mutation of the tourist offers is currently oriented towards a “cognitive mobility”, defined by increasing needs of freedom and culture, offering the possibility of having a physical contact with the outside, the open air, the traditions, the local identity and cultures. What we propose is a slow tourism, to be lived at walking pace, giving the possibility of discovering not only interesting places and gastronomic traditions, but also events and curiosities: in other words, an echocompatible tourism.