

Vinovo

The relationship between the Della Roveres, lords of Vinovo and pope Sixtus IV, in the world Francis Della Rovere, determined the fortunes of this powerful Piedmontese family. Mid-15th century, Vinovo became one of the main Renaissance courts inside the State of Savoy: the cold middle-age fortification was turned into a magnificent residence, adorned by terracottas, pictures and statues, besides a lot of fittings coming from the demolition of the ancient cathedral of Turin. Today, a magnificent palace can still remind us of those times, with its traces of frescoes attributed by some experts to the School of the famous Pinturicchio, one of the most successful painters in the Roman Holy See. Today Vinovo is a town looking to the future and considering its Castle as a fundamental basis for its cultural rebirth.

The “Vicus Novus” is already mentioned in the donation act of Olderico and Giuditta Romagnano to the abbey of St. Silano of Romagnano Sesia (1040). In the 13th century the emperor Frederick Ist called “Barbarossa” confirmed the feud to the Romagnanos. During the Middle Ages a part of the territory and the castle were subjected to other noble families: the Provanas, the Vagnonis, the Cavorettis and the Manfredis. The castle finally passed to the Della Roveres, who, in the 16th century, renewed the “castellaccio” turning it into a splendid Renaissance palace. In 1692 the castle was granted to the Delle Lanzes, who returned it to the Savoys, who gave it to the Order of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus. Between 1776 and 1820 the building was used as an important manufacture of porcelains under the guide of Gioanetti. In the 19th century Vinovo became an important manufacturing centre for silk and building materials.

In the historical centre, along one of the streets of the ancient fortified village, the most important buildings of the towns are aligned. The parish **Church of St. Bartholomew** was built in 1451 and remodeled in the 17th century, when, by widening its central body and restructuring the façade in late Renaissance style, the current structure was defined. Inside: two stupendous high reliefs of Early Middle Ages, imitating the Byzantine style, probably coming from the demolished Church of St. Saviour of Turin under orders of Domenico Della Rovere, bishop of Turin; in the bell cell, dating back to the 15th century, the sculptural group of the “Plurasere” has been located; it represents the lament on the died Christ and was commissioned in 1500-1505 by Martin Della Rovere, who represented himself as witness. This work was originally located in the church of St. Desiderio and lacks of the Christ statue, stolen in 1977. A great park surrounds the massive structure of the **Castle Della Rovere**. Built between 1510 and 1520 by the counts Della Rovere, lords of Vinovo, who began their fortunes attributing to themselves a kinship with the Pope Sixtus IV, in the world Francis Della Rovere from Savona, the building has four imposing angular towers. The project of the new castle is attributed to Baccio Pontelli or to Amedeo del Caprina by Settignano (said Meo del Caprina, author of the Cathedral of Turin). The arcaded courtyard is decorated by notable terracottas: the presence of the same works in other buildings in this area, such as Carignano and Piobesi, would testify a local production of high level. Recently, in the ancient hall called “deaurata hall, some frescos have been recovered and attributed to the School of the Pinturicchio, the privileged painter of Pope Sixtus IV. Between XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries the northeast façade was rebuilt in Baroque style and a great staircase in the Juvarra style was added. The fresco of Rodolfo and Luigi Morgari, of mythological theme, on the ceiling of the Main Hall paved with mosaic dates back to 19th century. In the 18th century the castle became a porcelain manufacture, the famous “porcelains of Vinovo” produced by Vittorio Amedeo Gioanetti and exported in all Europe. The **Church of St. Cross** was built from 1573-75. It has a single aisle in late Renaissance style, and behind the high altar a beautiful choir with wooden stales may be admired. The bell tower offers beautiful Baroque forms. The 19th century has left important artistic testimonies: a work of the famous architect Crescentino Caselli is the **Market Hall**, of 18th-century origin, which was renewed but keeping unchanged its external contour and adding the beautiful

arched structure. The project for the **Primary School “Luigi Rey”** was realized at the end of 1800 by the architect Caselli, with a financing of the industrial Rey, who also offered the building ground. The bust of the industrial L. Rey, work of the sculptor Leonardo Bistolfi, can be found in the garden.

Out of the town centre, close to the current cemetery on the road towards Piobesi, the ancient **Church of St. Desiderio** rises. It dates back to the 12th-13th centuries and it was a parish church until 1451. Modified in the 17th century and again in the 19th century (the façade was redesigned by Crescentino Caselli in 1888-89, with the application of polychrome ceramics), the church preserves in its inside an ancient pylon with the the image of the Virgin with the Dead Christ. In the cemetery, it is also interesting the structure the **Ferrando grave**, designed by the architect C. Caselli in 1885.

Vinovo is surrounded by old rural installations, the most interesting of which is without doubt the **casaforte of Belriparo**, a beautiful example of fortification of 13th-14th centuries, the property of which was divided among various noble families (Provanas, marquises of Romagnano and lords of Cavoretto): the building rises in the countryside towards Stupinigi, surrounded by an impressive farm.

Events

With the restauration of the Castle, prestigious environments have been restored and used for shows, concerts, Authors' presentations and events of international level. For information, call the Library (0119931006).

Carnival (February) - shows of allegorical wagons, musical bands, majorettes and folklorist groups along the streets of Vinovo. For about a week the town people is involved in dancing and gastronomic evenings and which ends only on the so called “Fat Tuesday”

Spring fair (Monday after the Easter Monday) -exhibition of ancient and modern agricultural equipment, horticulture, nursery garden products and handicraft articles.

Fair of the Village Garino (May) - in honour of the Saint Patron

Piedmont meets the other Italian Regions (June) - friendship meeting with the Italian regions, with the presence of several folklorist groups.

Patronal Fair of St. Bartholomew (last week of August) – especially famous for its final fire works’ show

Egg and omelette fair (October) – it remembers the tradition of egg sellers, typical of Vinovo. A whole day dedicated to wine and food, with demonstration of ancient jobs and handicraft articles.

Christmas together (December) - events and shows

Music Boys and Creative Wave (June): musical and creative show organized by the young people for the young people

The Reader's week (end September-beginning October): shows, meetings with authors, presentation of books and exhibitions

For information

Town hall, Piazza Marconi 1, tel. 0119620411; www.comune.vinovo.to.it

Cultural Service and Informagiovani tel. 0119931006/0119656607 biblio@abaconet.it