



# PORTOFINO

## ITALY

**P**ortofino is a very small storybook town known for its charming streets, villas of the rich and famous and picturesque bay. Situated on the northwestern coast of Italy, Portofino is in the Liguria region. Liguria arcs around the Tyrrhenian Sea with the Gulf of Genoa in its center. It is a mountainous and hilly land with landscapes of great beauty.

The region is divided in two sections. The Riviera di Ponente is to the west from Ventimiglia to Genoa. To the east is the Riviera di Levante from Genoa to La Spezia. The strip of the Riviera di Levante is known as “Le Cinque Terre” or the Five Lands and still represents a beautiful example of Italian landscapes.

A fishing village, Portofino’s calm green waters attract luxurious yachts and in the Piazzetta, people like to sit and chat at the many cafe tables enjoying the warm Mediterranean weather. The quaint town has pastel-colored homes, exclusive boutiques, a decorative square, and it is a great place to relax and watch the world go by.

Enjoying the reputation as being a favorite with the ‘Jet Set’, scenic Portofino has come to signify an image of Italy throughout the world. Portofino is the gateway to explore the Pearls of the Italian Riviera including the sister cities of St. Margarita, Rapallo and legendary Genoa. There is a wealth of things to see and do in the Liguria region.

Discover the fascinating history of Genoa or take a relaxing walk through the historical coastal town centers. Admire the marvelous scenery, browse the fashionable boutiques or treat yourself to the wonders of Ligurian food at the many cafés and restaurants.



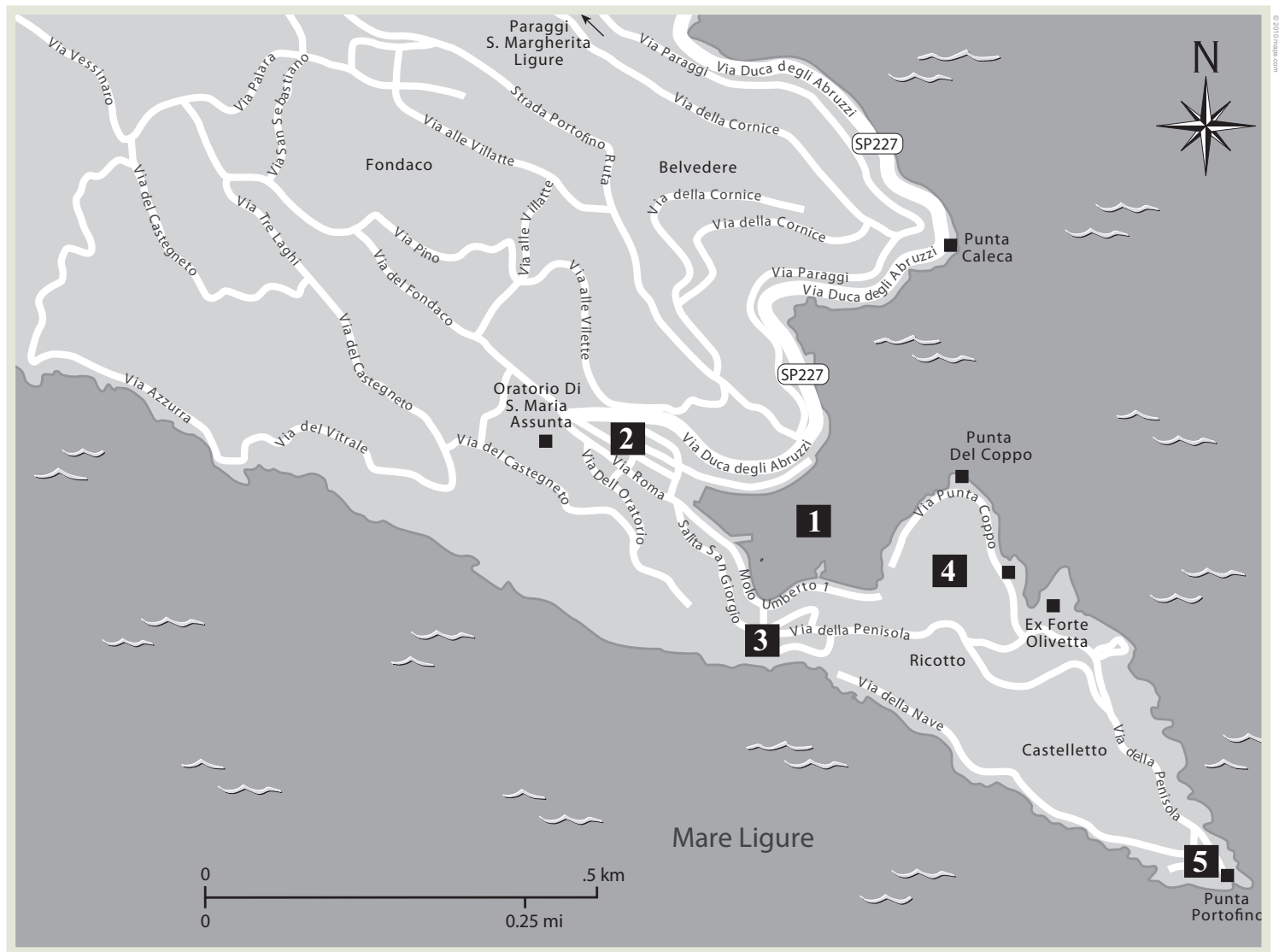
### HISTORY

First inhabitants of the Liguria can be dated back to prehistoric times. Wars between Rome and the Ligurian people between the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. led to Roman domination of the region. According to legend, Romans founded Portofino, naming it Portus Delphini, or Port of Dolphins, because of the large number of them that frolicked in the Tigullian Gulf.

During the Middle Ages, Tigullian towns along the gulf began to prosper. In the 11th and 12th centuries, Rapallo and other coastal towns aligned with powerful Genoa in its battle against Pisa. Portofino provided housing for Genoa’s merchant seamen. Genoa was a maritime leader in the Mediterranean from the end of the 11th century to the end of the 18th and Genoese territories flourished.

In 1805, Liguria was annexed to the French Empire by Napoleon. Ten years later, the Congress of Vienna decreed that the ancient Republic of Genoa should be annexed to the Kingdom of Sardinia, which was to become part of unified Italy a few decades later. During this time the tourism potential of this coastline became apparent and forever marked the character of the area.

In the 1920’s the Liguria was discovered by German and British holidaymakers. By the 1950’s Portofino had become fashionable with royalty and movie stars. Today, the town is more inviting than ever and is still favored by the rich and famous.



## PORTOFINO PLACES OF INTEREST

**1 Portofino Harbor** has hosted some of the most prestigious leisure craft in the world. The little bay is naturally sheltered by its shape and by Mount Portofino. The cobble streets leading up from the harbor can be explored in a short amount of time with Via Roma being the busiest street with a variety of shops.

**2 Church of San Martino** is located in the oldest part of the town and dates back to the twelfth century, while the Oratorio dell'Assunta was built in the fourteenth century.

**3 Church of St. George** has a plain interior and situated on the narrow Portofino headland. The church is on a site once used as a lookout point and is a place of religious significance that goes back centuries.

**4 Castello Brown** is an imposing 17th century fortress which dominates the harbor. The castle contains interesting historical exhibits, architectural features and art exhibitions. The terraced gardens have wonderful views of the village.

**5 The Faro** is the old lighthouse for Portofino harbor. From here there are great views of the harbor and village.

## Beyond Portofino

**The Town of Santa Margherita** is linked to Portofino by one of the most attractive winding roads along the coast. The town has a bustling harbor and seaside esplanade with cafes, bars and restaurants. The beaches near Santa Margherita are among some of the most popular on the Italian Riviera.

**The Town of Rapallo** located south of Portofino, overlooks the Gulf of Tigullio and is known for its views of the ocean and surrounding hills. A famous resort town, Rapallo has year round mild weather, a 6th century Baroque Cathedral and a cable car that climbs the mountain to the 16th century sanctuary of Montallegro.

**San Fruttuoso Abbey** is located in a deep inlet along the coastline of the Promontory of Portofino. The abbey of San Fruttuoso di Capodimonte dates to the 10th and 11th centuries. The magnificent structure was the home for centuries of the Doria Princes. The belfry is one of the most ancient architectural elements of the abbey and of the Liguria region. The octagonal tower with its dome was constructed in the Byzantine style.

**Genoa** located on the northwestern coast of Italy, is the capital of the Liguria region. Nestled between the Gulf of Genoa

and the base of the Apennines mountains, the city is one of the largest in Europe with approximately 700,000 inhabitants. This international port of call is the principle seaport for Italy and is a commercial and industrial center. In 2004, Genoa was proclaimed the European Capital of Culture.

### Genoa Places of Interest

**The Lanterna** is a lighthouse that was constructed on a rock outcropping in the harbor in the 1500's and has since become the symbol of the Genoa. Standing at approximately 360 feet high, its light can be seen as far as 40 miles away.

**Cathedral of San Lorenzo** is probably the most notable of the medieval churches in Genoa. Constructed in the 12th century the present edifice was built upon the foundation of an earlier structure. The dome and bell tower were added later. Built in Pisan style, the cathedral is famous for its black and white marble that decorates the exterior. The Cathedral contains the chapel housing the bones of St. John the Baptist.

**Palazzo Ducale** with its neoclassical façade was the seat of the first Genoese Doge and the site of the Government of the Republic of Genoa for centuries. This elaborate palace has been painstakingly restored to its original splendor. Today it is host to concerts, exhibitions and cultural events.

**Piazza S. Matteo**, located near Palazzo Ducale is one of Genoa's most beautiful squares. On the small piazza are former Doria family palaces and the Church of San Matteo. Built in 1125, the church has an alternating black and white marble façade and contains the tomb and sword of Italian admiral and statesman Andrea Doria.

**Piazza De Ferrari** is the location of the Opera Theatre Carlo Felice and the 13th century Palazzo Ducale. Once the residence of the Genoese Doges, the Palazzo is adorned with fountains, statues and frescoes by Corlone and Tiepolo. Piazza De Ferrari is close to one of the main shopping areas.

**Galleria Nazionale di Palazzo Reale** is an enormous structure that is one of the most important examples of a stately home in Genoa. Formerly a royal palace, it is now home to a gallery featuring the works of Tintoretto and Van Dyck. The rooms are richly decorated and many contain original furniture. The Mirror Room is modeled after the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

**Via Garibaldi** was once known as the "Golden Road" because of the elegant residences constructed on this street by the city's wealthiest merchant families. Many of the opulent mansions are now home to museums and art galleries. Most notable of which are the red and white palaces and Town Hall. Within the historic Town Hall valuable artifacts such as Paganini's violin and Columbus' manuscripts are kept.

**Porta Soprana** was once the main entrance for the city. The huge arched gateway has two towers and was constructed in the 12th century as part of Genoa's defenses.

**Genoa Aquarium** is one of the largest of its kind. The modern structure offers the opportunity to discover a rich world of marine life. Natural environments from all over the world are accurately reproduced in vast tanks. Sharks, seals, dolphins, penguins and fish of all shapes and colors can be found at the unique facility.

**Carignano Hill** overlooks the city and provides panoramic views of Genoa and the coastline.

## SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Portofino and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of the organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult [azamarclubcruises.com](http://azamarclubcruises.com) or contact the onboard Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, guests are advised to take with them only the items they need and to secure any valuables.

## LOCAL CUSTOMS

**Bargaining:** Most items have fixed prices, but it may be possible to get a discount on a large purchase. It is normal to bargain at markets, except for food items.

**Tipping:** Generally a 10% service charge is added to restaurant bills, however, as this amount doesn't all go to the waiter, it is normal to offer a 5% tip to the waiter in addition to any service charge. For taxi drivers, a 5-10% tip is acceptable.

## LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

Pasta is most widely associated with Italian cuisine and there are many types as well as sauces to accompany them. The signature dish of Liguria is Pesto, a simple sauce consisting of basil, garlic, pine nuts and pecorino. Seafood is found regularly on Portofino tables. Focaccia Flat Bread is a local specialty and can be topped with cheese, olives and herbs.

Throughout Italy there can be found many coffee bars, often without seating, where Espresso or Capuccino are the thing to drink. Chianti is a popular wine of Italy, but each region produces a number of very good quality wines. Bottled water is recommended.

## SHOPPING

Shopping hours are generally from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm and 4:30 pm to 8:00 pm Monday thru Saturday. There may be some tourist-oriented stores open on Sunday.

Fashion is the main attraction with particularly good buys in leather and silk. Other items of interest include: shoes, bags, art, antiques, ceramics, costume jewelry, filigree, glassware, lace-work, wine, cheeses, pesto and olive oil.

Value added Tax (VAT), is added to most purchases. Visitors who spend over a certain amount may be entitled to re-claim some or all of the tax paid, however, regulations and conditions governing the refund of VAT are subject to change and RCCL cannot guarantee the cooperation of local authorities.

