

Vernazza

Vernazza is considered by many to be the most charming of the Cinque Terre.

It was documented for the first time in 1080 and is the fourth Cinque Terre town heading north.

It has the only proper harbor in the Cinque Terre, does not have any car traffic and remains one of the truest "fishing villages" on the Italian Riviera.

Vernazza was founded about 1000 A.D. and was ruled by the Republic of Genoa starting in 1276. Vernazza's historic wealth is evidenced by the elegant style of its houses and streets, which are decorated with tower forms, open galleries, refined arcades and elaborate doorways.

The Village is surrounded by very steeply-terraced Olive groves which are said to produce among the finest Olive oil in the country.

The village is dominated by the remains of the "castrum" a series of Medieval forts dating back to the XI century, with a cylindrical castle and tower. The built up area comprises separate houses in a single central street and perpendicularly steep flights of steps called "arpaie".

The most important historical moment is *Santa Margherita di Antiochia* (St.Margaret of Antioch), a Roman-Genovese style church, whose construction dates back to the XIII century in which are recognised a Medieval body and a Renaissance one.

Vernazza is a quaint, tiny place, with a population of about 1,000. The hike northwest from the town to Monterosso (or vice versa) creates indelible memories of incredibly beautiful cliffs and seascapes.

The hike takes about 90 minutes each way, but you can hike one way and return on the train