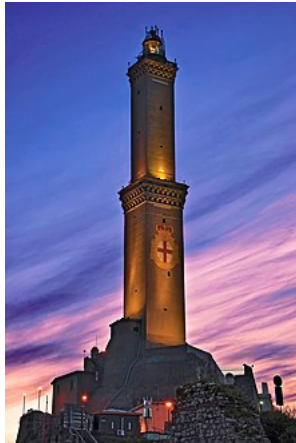


Quirky beauty of Genova (Genoa) or that place near-ish Milano/Pisa/Nice

Migrating to live in another country is full of fear and anticipation. I put it in that order because often, we want to showcase the highlights of our lives, not the way we feel inside. However, as you arrive in a new city, you see the weird oddities.

This is a brief story of my connection to the city of Genova, the same place as Genoa as the English would say, and not Geneva, as Google is always keen to encourage. Arriving after a long drive from the UK to Genova you get welcomed by a magnificent tower as you come off the autostrada, the Lanterna of Genova. Which, after a little time of learning some basic Italian, does not mean lighthouse as you would expect but the more obvious translation of Lantern.



<should be side by side>

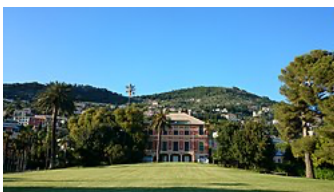


The Lanterna forms an iconic symbol to both migrants and locals as the symbol of the city in many ways. That weirdly isn't near the centre of the city but instead the industrial port and the autostrada. However, the prominence of the Lanterna on top of a historic rock formation making it the second tallest lighthouse in the world. Allowing the Lanterna to remain visible along the coastline, as long as you aren't in one of Liguria's many coves.



However, once into the centre of the city the small streets and relatively tall buildings by English standards are there to remind you, you will get lost, but eventually you will hit one of two things 1. The sea and therefore see the Lanterna; or 2. The mountains and therefore see, you guessed it, the Lanterna.

You would think with such a rich hybrid of mountains and sea Genova would exhibit a carefully constructed inclusion of natural beauty into the city. However, as one of the interesting oddities the city exhibits only 2 parks. One in a suburb of the city called Nervi a large scale park formerly of Villa Grimaldi Fassio. And secondly in a completely newly constructed area, which was formerly a home of the many shipping containers from the port, which is now the home of companies and institutes a like. This weird oddity seems baffling after coming from a country littered with parks and majority of homes exhibiting some form of garden.



Nervi Park



Erzelli Great campus

Moving to another country brings much uncertainty about life, especially when you reflect on what is going on in your own country, which for most is chaos, as you are now an outsider looking in. I didn't think the experience of living abroad, which is different to travelling or even for living a few months within the same place, would be so transformative to the way you view your place in the world. Weirdly, it seems the world would be a better place if more of us did live abroad, try to understand the quirks and beauty of living in a new place, but sadly an opportunity not many of us can have.

Genova as described by many is a dirty city. If you keep your eyesight at ground level you see tiny dark streets often covered in black dust as a signature of the cities long history. However, once you start to look up you start to see impressive architecture that has lasted the test of time. Such beauty you don't see when you first arrive in the city but gradually you identify overtime. Often a clear indication of how long you have been in Genova is when you have started to identify its hidden beauty. Going hand in hand with this is the significance the city has played in history. While this might suffer from the common issue of once you know of something you hear it everywhere, it is particularly true of Genova as it plays a role in most expeditions in the 19th and 20th century as the starting place of travellers, explorers or mountaineers or even further back in time during the early European crusades.



While Genova may be the starting point for many people its beauty sandwiched between the sea and the mountains can quickly become a home without you realising it.