

# Interreg



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## SUSTAINEVENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### The thousand colors of Alto Piemonte: from autumn foliage to the magic of Christmas, nature becomes a spectacle

*From the Slow Journey of the 'Foliage Train' to the Lago Maggiore Marathon: The Calendar of Events Spanning Italy and Switzerland Celebrates the Environment*

*Alto Piemonte Becomes a Green Laboratory for Sustainable Tourism*

Baveno, October 6, 2025 – Autumn in **Alto Piemonte** (Upper Piedmont) is the season of colors, activity, and experiences in contact with nature: the ideal time to experience the territory amidst landscapes that turn red and gold, and events that combine sport, slow tourism, culture, and gastronomy, all with a keen eye on the environment, leading up to the Christmas holidays. Alto Piemonte is becoming one of the first "**green laboratories**" for sustainable tourism, thanks to initiatives promoted by **SustainEvents**, a project financed by the Interreg VI-A Italia Svizzera 2021-2027 Program, with the Italian lead partner being the Monte Rosa Laghi Alto Piemonte Chamber of Commerce.

#### **Autumn in the nature of Alto Piemonte**

The journey into the nature of Alto Piemonte begins aboard the renowned [Treno del Foliage®](#) (Foliage Train), which runs along the **Vigezzina-Centovalli Railway** between **Domodossola** and **Locarno** from October 11 to November 16. The 52 kilometers of colorful forests and alpine valleys unfold before travelers' eyes like a constantly changing painting. Listed by Lonely Planet among Europe's most beautiful railway routes, the Foliage Train is not just a feast for the eyes but also a symbol of **gentle mobility** and **sustainable tourism**: an invitation to discover the territories with a respectful and conscious approach.

The immersion in the woods and colors continues on the blue waters of **Lake Maggiore**: a mirror reflecting the change of season, where nature meets movement and puts sport center stage with the great challenge of the [Lago Maggiore Marathon](#) (November 9), running from **Arona** to **Verbania Pallanza** along one of Italy's most scenic routes. Thousands of runners

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will compete amidst the lake landscapes in an event that offers classic 42km races alongside formats suitable for all levels, celebrating sport as a moment of wellness, sociality, and respect for the environment.

The dialogue between season, man, and nature extends to the sensory experience of flavors: the region in autumn is showcased through wine and its typical products with [Taste Alto Piemonte](#), organized by the Consorzio Tutela Nebbioli Alto Piemonte, scheduled for November 9 and 10 at the Grand Hotel des Iles Borromées in Stresa, directly overlooking the lake. Wines and local products—from the famous **Gorgonzola** to the region's culinary excellences—narrate the history and characteristics of a landscape shaped by nature and the Alps. Wineries will present new vintages from ten Alto Piemonte denominations (Boca DOC, Bramaterra DOC, Colline Novaresi DOC, Coste della Sesia DOC, Fara DOC, Gattinara DOCG, Ghemme DOCG, Lessona DOC, Sizzano DOC, and Valli Ossolane DOC), in an event that is not just a tasting but a story of the link between culture, nature, and sustainability. The vineyards thus become guardians of **biodiversity** and **ancient traditions**, an example of how viticulture can combine quality, innovation, and respect for the environment, giving rise to a wine tourism model that is increasingly attentive to the landscape and local communities.

**SustainEvents also focuses on art and culture** through events that choose the path of sustainability, marking time between man and nature. [Fatti ad Arte](#) (Made with Art), the National Exhibition of High Craftsmanship running until October 12 in **Biella**, values ancient knowledge and innovation, demonstrating how creativity can interact with the environment. The initiative obtained **ISO20121 certification** in 2023 and is now participating in the SustainEvents project as an associated organization.

Similarly, [Corto e Fieno – Rural Cinema Festival](#) (October 10-12 in **Ameno**), organized by Asilo Bianco—another associated project organization—brings cinema, music, and spectacle to tell the story of the relationship between man and nature in an innovative and responsible way. Established in 2010 to combine cinephilia and the memory of farming communities, it interprets cinema as an ethical choice and a view of the planet that must be preserved. In addition to animating the villages and farmhouses of Lake Orta, the festival involves the historic Cinema Sociale in Omegna and, throughout the year, strengthens collaborations with other rural and urban realities, from Cascina Cuccagna in Milan to Valcamonica and Val d'Ossola.

The new season of the [Fondazione Teatro Coccia di Novara](#), also an associated organization of SustainEvents, also opens under the banner of art, spectacle, and sustainability. From a variety show dedicated to Giorgio Gaber (October 11) to **Aperitivi in...**

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**musica** with NovaraJazz (October 12), from theater with Umberto Orsini (November 1) and Lucia Poli (December 20) to the comedy of Raul Cremona, up to the **Gran Galà di San Silvestro** (New Year's Eve Gala, December 31), the program intertwines music, drama, and entertainment to celebrate autumn and the holidays with elegance and participation.

### *The lights and magic of Christmas light up the villages*

After the foliage and the flavors of autumn, Alto Piemonte lights up with the glow and magic of **Christmas**. The region's villages and cities transform into enchanting settings, with markets, cultural events, and festive moments that unite communities and visitors under the banner of sustainability. The year-end calendar interweaves traditions, music, and spectacles, charting a shared path towards the new year that respects local identities.

**Macugnaga** will open the season, welcoming visitors with its **Christmas Markets** on November 29 and 30, 2025. In the picturesque Walser village, at the foot of **Monte Rosa**, the community preserves and renews its history through typical craftsmanship, genuine flavors, and the authentic atmosphere of Advent. An event that celebrates not only the magic of the holidays but also the commitment to preserve the alpine culture and pass it on to new generations.

From December 6 to 8, it will be the turn of **Santa Maria Maggiore**, which will once again transform into an authentic Christmas village with its famous **Christmas Markets**, now recognized as a European landmark. In the heart of **Val Vigezzo**, over 200 exhibitors will offer artisan creations, food and wine specialties, and many gift ideas that speak of the love for traditions and the work of local communities. Strolling through the illuminated streets, visitors can immerse themselves in an atmosphere of lights, scents, and smiles.

This event is designed for the whole family: children will be enchanted by entertainment, music, and typical sweets, while adults will rediscover the pleasure of alpine traditions. Every corner of the village will hold a surprise, offering an emotional and engaging experience for all ages. Amidst craftsmanship, flavors, and mountain atmospheres, the Santa Maria Maggiore Christmas Markets confirm their status as an unmissable stop for those who wish to experience the magic of Christmas in the heart of the Alps.

Among the most evocative Christmas events are also "**Verbania on Ice**" on the Pallanza lakefront and "**Locarno on Ice**" in the picturesque Piazza Grande in **Locarno (Switzerland)**. Two ice-skating rinks where the ice becomes the protagonist of enchanted atmospheres for

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the whole family: amidst sparkling lights, reflections on the lake, and winter scents, young and old can immerse themselves in fairytale settings.

With the arrival of New Year's Eve, the magic continues and intensifies. Alto Piemonte welcomes the new year with the elegance and magic of the **Gran Galà di San Silvestro** at the **Teatro Coccia in Novara**. An evening dedicated to music, performance, and culture, transforming the night of December 31st into a unique experience, capable of celebrating local traditions and art, engaging the public in a narrative that values the territory and its cultural identity. A moment where history, elegance, and spectacle intertwine, offering emotions to be lived intensely and memories to be cherished.

**New Year's Eve at the Piana di Vigizzo** exalts the immersion in nature, amidst pristine landscapes and evocative atmospheres, creating an experience capable of providing unique emotions and fun for an unforgettable new year. The program includes a **snowshoe hike under the stars**, a route that crosses snow-covered woods and valleys illuminated by the moon and trail lights, where the silence of the mountain mixes with the scents of the forest and the crunch of snow underfoot. Snowshoeing in this scenario creates an intense sense of connection with the surrounding environment, a moment of wonder and contemplation that makes the longest night of the year truly special. The evening continues with a traditional dinner, karaoke, DJ sets, and a **fireworks display** that lights up the sky above the woods, transforming the Piana di Vigizzo into a painting of lights and colors, combining fun, emotion, and respect for nature.

Every event is part of a collective narrative aimed at valuing the territory, promoting **sustainable, and responsible tourism**, which stems from the strength of local communities and the ability to preserve and renew their traditions. In this context, each initiative becomes a piece of a single goal: to tell the story of the territory through experiences that unite culture, nature, and sustainability, generating memorable emotions and lasting value for communities and the environment.

The vision of the **SUSTAINEVENTS** project aims to consolidate the territory as a leading destination for sustainable and inclusive tourism. The joint commitment of institutional bodies, associations, and sector operators, through eco-sustainable cultural and sports initiatives, is making Alto Piemonte (which includes the provinces of **Biella, Novara, Verbano Cusio Ossola, and Vercelli**), the **Varesotto** area, and **Canton Ticino** a reference model for the development of conscious tourism, capable of generating long-term value for communities and the environment. The project, which also values the territory's "hidden gems," aims to develop a replicable and certifiable model according to rigorous **ESG criteria**.

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**SUSTAINEVENTS** is a project financed under the **Interreg VI-A Italia Svizzera 2021-2027 Cross-border Cooperation Program**. The project aims to build a replicable model for designing and implementing events with an eye on **environmental sustainability** (a result of previous cultural/sports event certification projects), **inclusion**, and **governance**, to activate innovative processes and enhance the competitive socio-economic fabric of the cross-border project area. **CCIAA Monte Rosa Laghi Alto Piemonte** is the Italian lead partner. The Swiss lead partner is **IAS Register AG**. Project partners include: Istud srl, CCIAA Varese, Distretto Turistico dei Laghi, ATL Terre dell'Alto Piemonte, Fondazione Tones on the Stones, Aiep - Avventure in Elicottero Prodotti.

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