



Parco di Portofino



*Surface area: 1.055 hectares*  
*Population: 5 millions residents*  
*Region: Liguria*

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#### *Presentation*

The huge conglomerate block of Il Promontorio di Portofino forms the coastal protected area in the northernmost part of the Western Mediterranean. It includes cool forests, warm Mediterranean maquis, and chestnut and olive tree groves, and has a long tradition of smallholder farming and fishing.

Protected since 1935, the Park is home to one of the richest examples of flora in the Mediterranean, a notable variety of birds and invertebrates, a rich architectural heritage and some of the best known landscapes in the world. A dense network of paths criss-crosses maquis, mixed forests typical of the Apennines, rural settlements and fishing villages steeped in art and history. All of these factors, together with the area's easy accessibility, make Il Promontorio di Portofino one of the best known and most visited tourist destinations in Europe.



#### *Natural heritage*

Walking through the Park's highly distinct habitats allows the visitor to enjoy its spectacular landscapes and fascinating views in just a small area. The northern sector is dominated by deciduous forests, while the southern part is covered by dense maquis, pinewoods, ampelodesmos grass meadows and garigue shorelines. The sea cliffs are home to a unique biological system, while the agricultural landscape is dominated by olive trees, often interspersed with vegetable plots and orchards.

The fauna of the Park is rich in species, particularly bird life. The headland, because of its location which juts out into the sea, is a superb site for watching migratory birds, along with those species which nest on the inaccessible cliffs, including several interesting birds of prey.



#### *Historical heritage*

The most interesting villages include: Portofino Mare and San Fruttuoso, seat of an old Benedictine abbey, which has been restored by the F.A.I. and opened to the public. The Abbazia della Cervara near Santa Margherita Ligure, the Church of San Nicolò in Comune di Camogli, the convents and numerous chapels, and other rural and coastal buildings dotted throughout the area are witness to the area's fervent religious tradition.

#### *Main activities*

For many years, Portofino Park has organised activities based upon the conservation and promotion of the historical-environmental heritage of the area. The Park finances numerous projects aimed at restoring local agricultural traditions, including the abandoned olive groves and the dry-stone walls. It also maintains a network of more than 50 km of paths, runs wildlife management programmes, and provides support and help for researchers and postgraduate students.



The Park, through the Territorial Laboratory for Environmental Education, promotes activities and projects for schools, and organises guided visits for groups and a calendar of organised hikes aimed at getting to know the Park in more detail.