

An excellent Christmas in Varese

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Christmas in Varese powers up again: **On Friday 5th December** officially starts the month of festivities, with the lights in the *Giardini Estensi* **at 17:00**.

An event that is only the first of a rich calendar prepared by the Pro Loco in collaboration with many corporations, associations and sponsors.

"Once again we find ourselves presenting the calendar, made with the few resources available, with the fundamental contribution of trade associations and private sponsors," explains the assessor **Sergio Ghiringhelli** (in the picture). "Last week, the children set up the trees in the court of honour, while this morning the Fire Department put the lights on the pine tree in the Monte Grappa square, and on Friday we start the suggestive lighting of our beautiful gardens, in an atmosphere that will leave you breathless, as always. In short, we want to show to those who come to visit Varese, a city alive and lively, despite the crisis. In times of crisis, saving and getting depressed can only cause further damage." Among the good news, Ghiringhelli reminds us of the inauguration on Saturday, of "Il Presepe Domotico alla Galleria Manzoni: un modo per rendere vivo un "passaggio" (The Domotic Nativity scene at the Galleria Manzoni: a way to make alive a "passage") and a corner of the city that have been neglected in the past."

IT STARTS FROM THE LIGHTS (THE DOMOTIC NATIVITY SCENE)

Friday the 5th at 17:00 there is an appointment in the Giardini Estensi, for the

switching on of the decorative stencil illuminations, with entertainment by the choir of treble voices of the Academy Slevoci and the presence of some players of Varese Calcio 1910 and the Basketball team of Varese. Finally there will be hot drinks for everyone (by the Alpine Group of Varese and CRI (Italian Red Cross) – Local Committee of Varese, in collaboration with Lindt & Sprüngli and Cooperativa Prealpina Latte).

On Saturday the **Domotic Nativity scene** will be inaugurated, which will be opened in Galleria Manzoni until Sunday, January 11th, every day from Thursday to Tuesday (10:00-13:00 and 15:00-19:00). Special opening Wednesday, December 24th from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 15:00 to 19:00 and Wednesday, December 31st from 10:00 to 13:00 (closed on Thursday, December 25th and January the 1st). The staging is led by the artist **Giuseppe Trimboli**. The Nativity scene is 6 meters long: as explained by its creator, the light and sound effects are perfectly calibrated and controlled by a computer; the statues and the scenery are patiently modelled, and the movements of the characters can boast an amazing fluidity and naturalness. The statues, all made by hand personally by the artist, are each equipped with an autonomous mechanism. The stars are ... 800 small LEDs. For the visit, 20 people are allowed at a time. The artist will launch what is an out-and-out show of about three minutes, with movements, sounds, lights and effects. For groups of more than 8 people, a booking is required the from the IAT Varese Office (0332-281913). The hours are from Monday to Saturday from 9:30 to 13:00 and from 14:00 to 17:30.

Speaking of nativity scene, this year there is again the photo contest dedicated to them. This year the title is: **"Un presepe per Varese green city... verso Expo2015, fotografie e pensieri"** (A nativity scene for Varese green city ... to Expo2015, pictures and thoughts). The concept is ... "Go and look around, discover, set, invent and immortalise in a snapshot a nativity scene of Varese and describe it in ten words." To the photo contest of creativity and imagination can participate all those who love Varese, the Garden City and want to dedicate a nativity scene that represents it. Each participant can join by sending a picture (maximum 1MB) by Sunday, December 28th, with the title and the description (maximum ten words), the e-mail: promozione.territorio@comune.varese.it.

THE COMPETITION ANNOUNCEMENT

To discover " Il significato del presepe" (The meaning of the Nativity scene) is also planned a conference, Sunday, December 14th at 15:00 in the Wedding Hall of Palazzo Estense: it will be a journey into the history and symbolism of the nativity scene by Prof. **Romano Giosuè**.

STREET MARKETS A GO-GO

For all festivities, the city swarms with street markets where you can find ideas for gifts and for shopping.

In Monte Grappa Confesercenti square, **from 6 to 14 December**, will be prepared **chalets** located around the fountain, with the exhibition and sale of culinary excellence

from various Italian regions and craft products. In the **Repubblica square**, on weekends until January 6, there will be some **street markets and the distribution of products**, especially food, to complete the playground of Christmas (by the Association of Confesercenti category).

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception will bring in **San Giuseppe square** some appointments with spirituality and tradition, with a culinary markets and the craft markets (which will last from 15 to 24 December.) Instead the **market in Piazzale Kennedy** will have a special schedule throughout the month, in addition to the traditional days of Monday, Thursday and Saturday: **Monday, December 8th, Sunday 7th**, 14th and 21st December and Wednesday, December 24th, just as the **Antico Mercato Bosino**, with a special edition from 18 to 20 December. Street markets also in the **promenade area between Via Donizetti and square Giovine Italia** (by Ascom and Arti e sapori di nordovest (Arts and flavors of north west)), with whims, delights, curiosities and gluttony, from food and wine quality products to "pieces" of artisans and artists, who will also conduct demonstrations of the processing steps of the exposed products (from Saturday 6 to Monday 8 of December and from Saturday 20 to Wednesday 24 of December). Other street markets in **via Marconi** (until December 7), in **Masnago** (December 8), **Corso Matteotti** on 6 and 7 December and on the 4th January (dedicated to painting), in addition to the traditional **market of Insubria** on December 21st and the **Markets of Coldiretti** in G.Italia square on Wednesday and in front of the stadium on Friday.

Eventually, **Mr. Panettone**, will be the undisputed protagonist of Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 of December at Sala Campiotti Chamber of Commerce, of a curious exhibition-market with exposition, tasting and sale of the cake which "let Christmas be Christmas" (by the Confectioners Association).

MUSIC CROWDS THE STREETS

Regarding music and performances, ten groups of Street artists, with jugglers, acrobats and fire eaters, will perform every weekend until the Epiphany in the old town centre: **Loud Trio, Il gatto e la volpe, Riccardo Preda, Paola Elena Ferri, Time Townshi, Forget Band, Giuseppe Urso**. Still in downtown, there will be **concerts on December 7th**, from 15:00 to 17:00 with: **Claudio & Consuelo** and their Christmas cart with songs, stories, juggling, gags and surprises. On Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 with **The One Man Snow Band**, itinerant show with instruments and melodies from worldwide. Saturday 20 December with the **Banda dei Babbi Natale**, that is animations with Christmas marching band that performs the most famous songs of the Italian and international Christmas repertoire. Sunday 21 December with the **Band Natalizia Varesina Zampogna** (bagpipe and accordion). At the Motta Church on Monday, 22 of December there will be the **Concerto di Natale** (Christmas concert) by the Choir ANA Campo dei Fiori, and then on the Epiphany at the Salone Estense "**I Ciaparatt in concerto**", at 15:00, will give entertainment with dialectal songs of the tradition. At 17:45, again on January 6 you can go up to the Sacro Monte, to the Sanctuary, to attend the concert of the Epiphany (Mario Mariotti, trumpet; Fabio Nava, organ).

CHILDREN ARE THE PROTAGONISTS

Along with many animations of street artists for the children, the “**Natale da Fiaba**” (Fairy tale Christmas) will be at Monte Grappa square from the 6th to the 14th of December: it will bring characters taken from the Christmas folklore which will tell magical fairy tales to children, going along with them on a trip to discover the Christmas traditions. There will also be paths and theme laboratories. At Repubblica square **Christmas Amusement Park** from the 8th of December to the 6th of January, with attractions of the traveling show. At the **Sacro Monte** on Sunday the 7th and Monday the 8th of December (Camponovo) with the **Paese dei Balocchi**, there will be organized shows and laboratories for children and street market inside the hall and in the underground ones. At last two special appointments at New Year's Eve and at the Epiphany. The end of the year and the 2015 will say goodbye to each other in Monte Grappa square

from 8:00 pm with **Radio Number One** and **intermezzi di Marcus e Nadine** with **group dances and 60' and 70' music**. Before midnight, extraordinary participation of the stand-up comedian **Italo Giglioli**. Entertainment shows, cabarets and music with live singers are planned. On the 6th of January instead, at the Salone Estense, the **Befana Alpina** will distribute all the charities collected during the mountain feast 2014 (by the Alpine group of Varese); followed by a concert of traditional songs of Lombard songwriters (as Enzo Iannacci) executed by a young band, the one of the **Ciapatrat**.

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