

# SARONNO: BETWEEN HISTORY AND CULTURE

**HISTORY** – Saronno was founded during the iron age as an agricultural and commercial center with an important market. In 1185 the city was submitted to Milan as countryside by Federico Barbarossa and in the following century city wall, a castle and a palace, which don't exist anymore, have been built on behalf of Matteo II Visconti. From 1500 onwards, Saronno lives a difficult period: French and Spanish dominations, a bad economic crisis and bubonic plague. During XVIII century, under Austrian domination, economic recovery takes place and Saronno becomes the center of trades again. In the end of that century, under Napoleon domination, feudal system is abolished and a local administrator is established in each town. Agricultural and commercial sectors are well developed as well as the local breed market. In 1827 a serious fire destroyed S. Cristoforo area with heavy consequences for 800 people who lost everything: in memory of this event "Ciocchina" monument, which also inspired a local reward, has been built. During XIX century Saronno takes part in fighting against austrian dominators in "five days of Milan" during which Paolo Reina from Saronno played an active role. The transformation of Saronno economy takes place after II World War with the shift from agricultural to commercial and industrial sector.



Chiesa di S. Antonio  
S. Anthony Church

**GENERAL INFO** – Saronno is situated 212 meters on the sea level and has been part of Varese county since 1927. It is crossed by Lura stream which becomes part of Olona river close to Milan and it is in a strategic place: in fact it is an important cross-roads among Varese, Como and Milan. Colours of the city are white and light blue, being used in town's flag since 1932 which is the flag of marquis Stampa Soncino. Industrial and commercial sectors are the most important for the economy of the city which is well known all over the world for Amaretto liqueur.



Chiesa di S. Francesco  
S. Francis Church

**TO SEE** – Among monuments and turistic places there's Sanctuary of Blessed Virgin of Miracles established in 1498 by Predetto Morandi to thank the Virgin for his recovery. Built on Vincenzo Dell'Orto project with the help of Giovanni Amadeo, Bramante's pupil, who worked on dome, and of Paolo Della Porta for the tower. Lots of work are in the Sanctuary: sculptures by Prestini, Leone Leoni, Andrea da Milano, Alberto Lodigiano, Paccetti e Pompeo Marchesi as well as frescos and pictures by Bernardino Luini, Gaudenzio Ferrari, Cesare Magno, Bernardino Lanino and others. The front was projected by Pellegrino de' Pellegrini in XVII century. In the principal square there's Saints Peter and Paul Prevost Church built in 1783 in the place of S. Maria ruins. In this church there's the

cross from 1783 which is shown to congregation during "Festa del trasporto" on the fourth sunday of October, Serassi organ from Bergamo, one picture by Gaudenzio Ferrari and two others by Legnanino. Beautiful are vault and nave's frescos where Saints Peter and Paul's lives are shown. In the Immaculate altar there's a Virgin statue from 1700 from S. Francis Church, which has been recognised as national monument since 1931. Its foundation is tributed to S. Anthony from Padua in 1297, and it still has the original characteristics. Inside, the vault's nave is made of wood and chapels host pictures by Tommaso Legnani, Legnanino, Bellotti, Lanzani e Bernardino Luini's sons. Among buildings, Visconti Palace is from XVI century and needs some restructuring program. It has columns made of Baveno's granite and decorated ceilings by Giovanni Antonio Cucchi. Gianetti Villa, the old municipality's seat, has been built in '20s by Gianetti Family on Domenico Verga project with a Lombard Rinascimental style. It has beautiful graffiti, decors and a patio columns outside. Public library has been hosted by Morandi House from the end of XVI century. Established as hostel for pilgrims going to the near Sanctuary, during XVIII century has been used as horse postal station and from that time onwards kept the name of its hosting family. During the restructuring of 1990, the enclosed Giuditta Pasta theatre, a famous lyric singer from Saronno, has been built.



Chiesa Prepositurale  
Prevost Church