



# HEAD FOR CAROUGE

No visit to Geneva is complete without stopping by at Carouge, a beautiful laidback town with French-Italian influence.

-By Aruna Rathod

While Geneva is the melting pot of Europe and the rest of the world, Carouge, a small town, about 10 minutes drive or by tram from Geneva, is distinctively Swiss-Italian with French influences thrown in. The buzz of Geneva quietly settles once you are in Carouge, making visitors want to just stop and stare at its unique charm.

Carouge and Geneva are separated by a peaceful river called the Arve. The feel of this town is distinctive because of its small town houses, uniformity in design, and peaceful ambience, with courtyards attached to some houses. It has a Mediterranean atmosphere that allows one to relax and enjoy the city. The beauty of Carouge lies in its architecture, that is predominantly a beautiful combination of French-Italian styles.

A charming town, it has boutique stores which are heart-warming. Handmade hats, crochet and fabric crafts, tea stores with a range of kettles from all over the world at the Place du Marche. Plenty of antique stores, and a green grocer's market on Wednesdays and Saturdays makes Carouge a popular town.

## Soak in the ambience

Whenever the weather permits, take a morning stroll through the narrow charming streets, admiring the structures of the beautiful low rise bungalows. Stop for a leisurely coffee break in one of the district's many charming cafés. As for lunch, dine outdoors under a tent, sipping wine and digging into a lightly spiced fresh fish fillet (possibly from Lake Geneva) served with steamed vegetables and fries. The freshly







baked bread that is served on every table with butter and olive oil is a delight.

On Wednesday and Saturday mornings, the sleepy Place du Marche is a busy place with its fresh local produce set up neatly in portable stalls. Buy fruit, vegetables, bread, and honey. If you just want to browse you are welcome to just enjoy the upbeat atmosphere and people watch by sitting at the fountain.

### Classy shopping

If you are looking for a shopping experience under one roof, check the Centre Commercial de Carouge but street shopping works best here on Rue St-Joseph, from where you can walk down to Place du Marché exploring the adjacent streets. It is a pleasure to step into

the artistic small independent stores with friendly proprietors who allow you to enter, browse, click a photo and buy! A lady works intently at her sewing machine, in the process of getting a hat together, while another one smiles as she ushers visitors into her crochet designer store.

This former trading town is now referred to as the "Greenwich Village of Geneva" for its many boutiques and studios where artisans and craftsmen have set up their tiny stores. Nights are unique here with a plethora of cafes, jazz bars and nightclubs.

## Make the most of life!

