

96th National Gathering of the Alpini: in Biella, May 10-12, 2025, music, memory, and Alpine spirit

Published on 12/04/2025

From May 9 to 11, 2025, Biella will host for the first time in its history the 96th National Gathering of the Alpini. A city with a strong connection to the mountains and the Black Feathers, ready to welcome hundreds of thousands of people to an event that blends memory, identity, and spirit of brotherhood. The motto chosen for this year, *"Alpini bearers of hope"*, echoes the "Dream of Peace" launched in Vicenza in 2024, but today assumes an even deeper meaning in a time marked by uncertainties and conflicts.

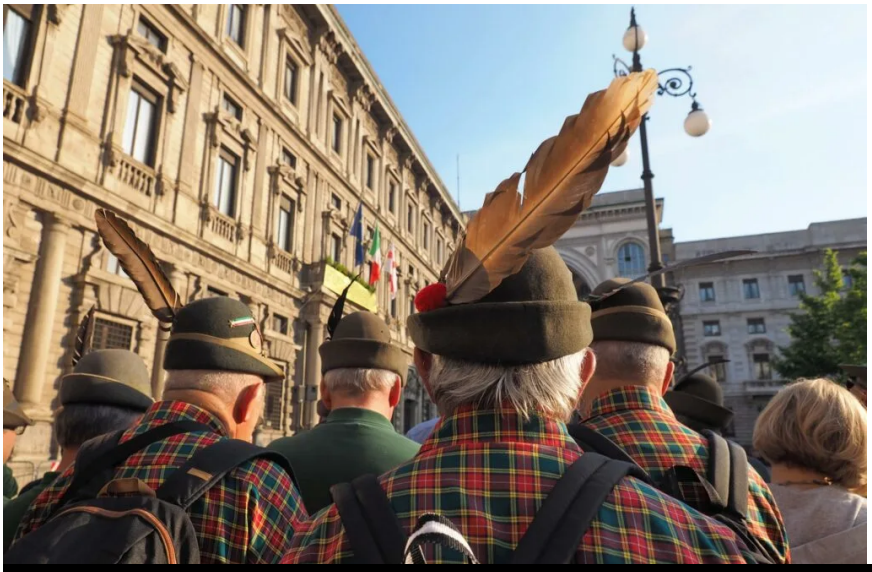


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The roots of the Alpini: a history of courage and belonging

Founded on October 15, 1872, the Corpo degli Alpini is the oldest active mountain infantry unit in the world. Created to protect Italy's northern borders, it has become a symbol of courage, tenacity, and spirit of sacrifice. Their motto, *“Semper Primus”* – Always First – embodies the pride and dedication that distinguish them, in peace and war, on the field and in volunteering.

Among the most iconic symbols of the Alpini is the *black feather*, pinned on the hat, which varies in type and position depending on rank and service status. A sign of recognition, certainly, but also of deep belonging. It is not uncommon, at gatherings, to see feathers worn with pride by young people, veterans, and entire families.



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The National Gathering: an event of memory and brotherhood

The first Gathering dates back to 1920, on Monte Ortigara, to remember the fallen of the Great War. Since then, every year in mid-May, thousands of Alpini gather to celebrate their values: solidarity, memory, unity. It is much more than a simple parade: it is a collective event that spans generations, involves entire communities, and conveys a message of peace and service.

The central moment of the Gathering is the **great Sunday parade**, where tens of thousands of Alpini, from every corner of Italy and the world, march together in a river of emotions, music, history. From military bands to choirs, from Carnic carriers to veterans, each group brings with it a piece of national history.



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Biella and the Alpine soul

Biella, located at the foot of the Alps and recognized as an Alpine City since 2021, has a deep mountain vocation and a textile tradition that has shaped its landscape and identity. The local ANA section was founded as early as 1922 and in 2004 saw the election of Biella native Corrado Perona as national President. Today, the city crowns this journey by hosting the most heartfelt event for the Alpine people.

The program officially opens on Friday, May 9, with the flag-raising in Piazza Duomo, followed by honors to the fallen, the inauguration of the *Cittadella degli Alpini* and Civil Protection. In the evening, the parades of banners and standards will give the official welcome to the Alpine community, accompanied by the mayor's speech.

Saturday, May 10, will be the day of the paratrooper launch, the Holy Mass in the Duomo, and itinerant concerts. Sunday, May 11, will see the grand procession cross the city, concluded by the *passing of the baton* – the symbolic handover between the host city and the next year's city: Genoa.



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The Cittadella degli Alpini: history, technology, and values

The great novelty of the 2025 edition is the *Cittadella degli Alpini*, set up in the Giardini degli Alpini d’Italia. It will be an interactive exhibition area dedicated to the present and future of the Corps, with demonstrations of combat methods, mine-clearing robots, tactical vehicles, climbing walls, and educational spaces for the younger ones. The exhibition, curated by the Taurinense Alpine Brigade, will be based on three pillars: *values, training, and technology*.

There will also be historical relics from the National Museum of the Alpini and an exhibition dedicated to the *Domenica del Corriere*, with screenings of original short films that tell the story of today's Black Feathers.



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Music, memory, and Alpine spirit

Choirs and fanfares are the irreplaceable soundtrack of every Gathering, and in Biella too, over a hundred choirs and twenty Alpine fanfares will make the streets and squares vibrate, offering moments of genuine emotion. Music, with its universal language, becomes a vehicle of shared emotions and memories that transcend generations. Such a significant event could only be accompanied by a special philatelic cancellation: the chosen subject is Monte Camino, with the little church of San Maurizio at 2398 meters, a symbolic place for the Alpini.

The cancellation will be available at the Gathering Village in Piazza Vittorio Veneto, offering collectors and enthusiasts a tangible memory of the event. **The 96th Gathering in Biella will not only be a celebration but a profound call to the founding values of Alpinity: spirit of sacrifice, love for the Homeland, solidarity, brotherhood, and service**. In an era that often loses memory and the sense of community, the Alpini remind us that hope is built together, step by step, song by song, feather by feather.

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