

Bestselling touring novel about traveling in one of the world's most famous regions.

The Radical Design Foundation, publisher of this volume, was founded by **Sandra and Charley Vezza** with the mission **to promote the creativity of the Langhe in its many forms**.

The Radical Design Foundation was established in 2019, thanks to the vision of Piedmontese entrepreneur Sandra Vezza and her son Charley (Creative Director of renowned design companies such as Gufram, Memphis Milano, and Meritalia), with the purpose of supporting the human and natural resources of the Langhe.

Continuing the **unconventional approach** that made radical design unique, the Foundation is committed to developing projects closely linked to the territory, involving artists and creatives from various cultural contexts.

Following the site-specific opera ***Barolo to Heaven* conceived by Emilio Ferro** in 2019, the Foundation is now promoting the volume ***Impossible Langhe, a touring novel*, written by Pietro Giovannini with photographs by Maurizio Beucci**. After the success of the volume in Italy, the Foundation decided to translate it for English-speaking readers, adding previously unpublished texts and images.

****A Touring Novel****

Impossible Langhe arose from the author's quest to answer a question as banal as it is frequent: Why are the rolling hills of the Langhe so special?

The book thus describes a **region full of contrasts and epic stories**, populated by everyday heroes and **extraordinary visionaries**. Hills, valleys, and nature, along with towns, villages, and hamlets—from lower Piedmont to Liguria—frame a captivating narrative that suggests **out-of-the-ordinary itineraries**, accompanied by unexpected, **authorial images**. The result is an original, intimate, and authentic portrait of the area's places and people, viewed from different perspectives: stories that seem impossible to coexist within just a few miles.

The result is a book that feels like two books in one, as if shuffled like a deck of cards by a magician, with each card magically finding its place. The first book is for travelers, those who wish **to explore the Langhe without haste or a set destination**, discovering lesser-known routes and unpublished itineraries. The second is for those who may never visit the Langhe, instead keeping it as an imaginary island in their minds—a **place where they can dream without necessarily being there**.

Impossible Langhe can be described as a touring novel, a new literary category: a guide without addresses, a story without an ending.

****The Structure of the Book****

The book is divided into nine chapters, each telling the story of a different Langa—from Alba, the smallest capital in Europe, to the Langhe of Barbaresco, Moscato, Barolo, and Dolcetto, up to the Alta Langhe of the Tanaro River, Belbo, Bormida, and ending with the Alta Langa of Asti, Alessandria, and Savona. Each chapter explores these areas geographically and through their intrinsic characteristics, shaped by wine, landscapes, historical legacies, and, above all, the stories of the people who have lived there.

“It is a book you can browse through at whim and start reading anywhere, as it has no beginning or end—just like the roads of the Langa,” says Pietro Giovannini, journalist and author of the novel. “It’s a tale of a tailor-made Langa, where everyone can find what they are looking for, as long as they are not in a hurry, don’t wish to know their way in advance, discard their GPS (which is useless here anyway), and **follow only two dowser rods: instinct and curiosity**.”

The book’s dual nature is reflected in its binary structure, featuring two complementary sections. On one hand, there’s the **geographical journey**, detailed and analytical, which takes readers (and travelers) through

scenic spots, country churches, villages, and hamlets, while also recounting unhurried memories and anecdotes, much like the slow pace recommended for those who enjoy lingering. On the other hand, insert pages complement each geographical profile with **stories and memories, traditions and characters** that have shaped these hills into the unique entity they are today.

Throughout the book, there is a parade of characters and events: **Napoleon's** youthful ambitions and **Cavour's** idealistic dreams, **Carlo Alberto's** ruins and **Canavesio's** devils, Milton's love for Fulvia, and Augustine's broken dreams at Pavaglione (**characters from Beppe Fenoglio's famous books**). There is the poetry of **Cesare Pavese's** land and the dialect of the storytellers' songs, the legends of the **Masche** (Piedmontese witches) and **Pallapugno** (a traditional Piedmontese fistball), as well as the harsh realities of St. Martin's Day and *Malora*. We encounter **Michele Coppino** sending Italy's children to school and **Michele Ferrero** giving an economic future to the Langhetti. We also discover the Renaissance visions of **Macrino** and the **Situationist Pinot Gallizio**, the **American dream of Giacomo Morra** and the naïve dream of **Romano Levi**, the seductions of the **Countess of Castiglione and Bela Rosin**, the misfortunes of **Pertinace** the Roman emperor and the heretical Cathars of Monforte. From the mysteries of Saliceto to the earthy delights of peasant cuisine, from the cruelties of the Civil War to the blood spilled by the Brigade Rosse, from **De André's first guitar** to the last tavern in the Langa.

Impossible Langhe is thus a merry-go-round of stories, memories, and personal encounters: a novel in which one loses oneself to find that elusive alchemy **that makes the Langhe so unique** and impossible to understand at a superficial glance.

The book is also a finely designed object. ***Impossible Langhe*** won the **European Design Award in 2023** as the third most iconic European book, thanks in part to the work of the Turin-based graphic design studio **Undesign**, which conceived the layout.

The English version of the book will feature even more delightful surprises.

****Maurizio Beucci's Photographs****

"The photographs in this book, like photography in general, are a discovery for me. The fundamental process is observe-take-look-show, if we go out to take photographs already planning what we will do, thinking therefore that we already know everything, then it is useless.

Photographing is a revelation, it is also an instinctive and immediate act.

This does not mean not thinking while you shoot, quite the opposite, it means not planning. It means abandoning yourself to the epiphany of photography.

Today the opposite often happens, you plan, you photograph and then you show, and this is a way of photographing that does not belong to me and that is not found in the book." Maurizio Beucci