



ITALY

WONDERS OF THE NORTHERN LAKES (TOUR CODE: 12369)

STARTS AND ENDS

Milan to
Milan

TRAVEL PERIODS

19 May 23 - 20 Oct 23

EXPERIENCE

Escorted
Cultural

TRAVEL STYLE

Escorted Group Tour

Experience the enchanting beauty and charm of Northern Italy's most famous lakes: Como & Garda, during this fascinating, 5-day tour.

Highlights

- **Guaranteed Departures**
- **English only Tour**, with English-speaking Tour Director.
- Discover Lake Como with its stunning villages: **Bellagio and Varenna**
- Board the **Bernina Train**, a piece of history considered a World Heritage train!
- Discover **Franciacorta** region, well-known for its unique sparkling wine!
- Specialty dining & tasting experiences.

If you are looking for a quiet holiday, away from the crowds and bustling cities, this is the perfect itinerary for you. These Italian lakes are flanked by breathtaking scenery with snow-capped mountain peaks, crystal blue lakes, lush forests and charming villages. Your tour starts in Milan by enjoying a splendid ride onboard the Bernina Express. Then you'll continue to Lake Como, a popular retreat for aristocrats and celebrities. Explore the cities and towns of Bellagio, Varenna, and stop overnight in Bergamo.

Continue to Lake Garda, the largest lake in Italy. Visit Verona, a historic city known for its well-preserved Roman ruins and magnificent Renaissance architecture and Franciacorta to enjoy a light lunch with Wine tasting before returning to Milan..



- ✓ ENTIRE Cooling-Off Period
- ✓ ENTIRE Change of Mind
- ✓ ENTIRE On Ground Support
- ✓ ENTIRE AUD Prices
- ✓ ENTIRE Industry Accredited
- ✓ ENTIRE Australian Owned

INCLUSIONS

- 4-night accommodation in 4-star hotels
- Transportation by deluxe motorcoach
- Private transfers from airport as per itinerary
- Scenic boat transfers
- Bernina Express
- Daily breakfast
- Lunch and Dinners as per itinerary
- Relax and taste a typical aperitivo (happy hour) in Milan in day 1
- Enjoy light lunch and wine tasting in Franciacorta in day 5

ITINERARY

Day **1**

Milan

Welcome to Milan! Meet the driver at Milan Malpensa Airport and enjoy a private transfer to your hotel.

In the afternoon, meet your expert local guide at the hotel and set off on a three-hour walking tour through the heart of **Milan**. Going down via Spallanzani, you will reach **Porta Venezia (literally, Venice Gate)**, one of the historical gates to the city. It has medieval and maybe even Roman origins and gives the name to the city district all around it. An urban legend has the other term, it is known as - "Porta Renza" - stems from Renzo Tramaglino, co-protagonist of the novel *The Betrothed* by Alessandro Manzoni, who enters Milan exactly from this access.

You will proceed toward **Corso Venezia** and take a shortcut inside Giardini Indro Montanelli, a public garden. Opposite the garden, you will go past GAM, the **Galleria d'Arte Moderna** (modern art museum). Proceeding along **Viale Manzoni**, you will head for **La Scala Opera House (Teatro alla Scala)**, inaugurated on 3 August 1778. The theater underwent major renovations from early 2002 to late 2004. Then get ready to take in the stunning **Milan Cathedral** (Duomo di Milano). Your tour guide will illustrate its main features.

The last stop will be the majestic **Castello Sforzesco**, a medieval fortress built in the 15th century by the Duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza. In its vicinity, we have chosen a refined bakery for you to be able to relax and taste a typical *aperitivo* (happy hour).

At the end of the aperitivo, the tour will be over and you will have some free time before returning to the hotel on your own.

Overnight in Milan at **Starhotels Ritz** or similar.



Day **2**

Milan Bernina Express Milan

Get ready with the **Bernina Express** tour on boarding the train that snakes its way up to the mountain peaks. Just like sitting in a theater, you will admire unique views from your seat on board the Bernina Train, a piece of history (100 years old), and a World Heritage train.

After breakfast at the hotel, meet our driver and reach **Tirano**. You will get on board there and start this ride along one of the most beautiful railway routes in the world, with its unsurpassed alpine views. The journey will need two hours to complete. As the train winds its way over the Alps, occasionally passing through mountain tunnels and puffing its way past a myriad of towns and villages, many highlights will catch your attention. Look out at the Swiss Alps as you ride along the Bernina pass to **St. Moritz**, and enjoy free time to explore it. Meet your driver to return to Milan (meeting point in St. Moritz).

Overnight in Milan at **Starhotels Ritz** or similar.

Breakfast



Day **3**

Milan Como Bellagio Varenna Bergamo

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel and then prepare for a short visit to **Como**, a tourist destination and vicinity to **Lake Como and the Alps**.

Stunning views over the lake and the alpine valleys are guaranteed! The lake, sometimes called **Lario**, has long been famous for its y-shape and **Bellagio**, which you will reach by boat. This little gem town lies at the intersection of the lake's two southern arms, with the Alps dominating the horizon to the north, and is home to some of the most charming landscapes in Italy. Take some time exploring this picturesque village and its small streets, luxury hotels, villas, and gardens, and have lunch at your leisure in one of the many restaurants or cafés.

Back onboard in the afternoon, make your way to **Varenna**, where you will take a panoramic tour before moving on to **Bergamo**. **Bergamo** is a truly historic and artistic jewel characterized by its urban structure: the **città bassa** (or lower town), a modern and dynamic, while the famous **città alta** (or upper town) houses the city, a medieval heart.

Enjoy a dinner at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Bergamo at **Starhotels Cristallo** or similar.

Breakfast, Dinner



Day 4 Bergamo Sirmione Riva Del Garda Bergamo

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel and visit the next destination, **Lake Garda**, the largest lake in Italy.

We recommend taking a panoramic tour of the lake's west coast, taking in the splendid natural landscape, like the **Brenta Dolomites** (the Brenta Group has officially been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the gentle slopes of the **Moraine Hills of Lower Garda**. Enjoy the area's rich vegetation, including lemon trees, oleanders, magnolias, and bougainvillea, and be sure to taste some of the locally-made olive oil and wines.

Next, you will move to **Sirmione**, where Lake Garda and its surroundings are at their finest. See the sun reverberating on the lake's blue waters, the tree-lined shores, Sirmione Castle, and the ruins of Catullus's villa or Grottoes of Catullus (the 1st century BC poet owned a Villa here) during a boat tour.

Once you're through, you will have some free time to have lunch before departing for **Riva del Garda**. Located on the north side of the lake, you will see its quaint Venetian-style historical center.

Enjoy a dinner at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Bergamo at **Starhotels Cristallo** or similar.



Day **5**

Bergamo Verona Franciacorta Milan

After breakfast, reach fair **Verona**, a museum en plain air. A local professional will wait and take you on a guided tour. The fascinating mix of historical periods and cultures (both classical and Germanic) is a blend of Nordic as well as Mediterranean influences that are both ancient and modern.

A walk through its narrow streets will allow you to get in touch with Verona's varied and fascinating past: traces of its splendid Roman origins, its medieval structures, its magnificent renaissance palaces, as well as the impressive fortifications protecting it. The combination of art and history will amaze you.

Two of William Shakespeare's plays set in Verona: "**Romeo and Juliet**" is by far the most famous one. We suggest taking a look at the so-called Juliet's home (and its balcony, said to have been the legendary balcony of the famous "Oh Romeo, Romeo" tragedy scene). It is a medieval building located via Cappello. Capello is the name of a family who resided in the building during the 14th century.

After the Verona tour, you will drive towards the area of **Franciacorta**, which soil consisting of gravel and sand over limestone, is ideal for the cultivation of grapes and winemaking. It is where you will enjoy a light lunch and taste some local food and renowned local wine.

After this experience, you will head for Milan, where our services will end in the late afternoon.

Breakfast, Lunch



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Italian

LOCAL CURRENCY

EURO

- No age limit, maximum group size up to 40 people.
- All passengers must be able to independently board and alight the coach.
- We work with a selection of hotels in each location. All bookings are subject to availability, which means our team will confirm your specific hotels upon confirmation and payment of deposit. The package price is based on 4-star accommodation.
- For organizational reasons, the itinerary may be reversed or modified without notice. In this case, our supplier ensures similar visits and excursions in accordance with the spirit of the tour program.
- Blackout dates may apply during festive season.

Excluded

- International airfares and taxes
- Domestic airfares and taxes, unless otherwise specified in our holiday package
- Visa expenses, processing and issuance fees
- Meals other than as specified in our holiday package
- Travel Insurance or expenses of a personal nature (mini-bar, phone call, laundry, etc.),
- Tips or gratuities to guides, drivers, porters, hotel, restaurant or boat staff, etc.
- Or any other travel expense that has not been included in our holiday package