



DESTINATION ITALY

ITALIAN LAKES

Natural Itineraries

ITALIAN LAKES

Luxury holidays to Lake Como, Lake Garda and Lake Maggiore

Italian lakes are mostly placed to the south of the Alps and to the north of the Po Valley. The landscape around the Italian Lakes is one of deep blue waters surrounded by greenish-blue tinged mountains, often snow-capped. On the shores of the lakes and the lower slopes of the hills you find a profusion of lemons and olives, chestnuts and palms, magnolias and camellias.

Pretty villages with rustic stone and wood houses hug the sheltered bays and fishing boats still moor next to sailing boats. Wrought-iron balconies and colorful shutters adorn gaily-painted houses with terracotta roofs.

Dining is usually al fresco in the summer months and a magical atmosphere is created with the lapping of the waters and the twinkling of the lights around the lake and in the hills above. The close proximity to Milan and Verona means you can visit the Lakes quite easily for just a weekend or a short break.



LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS



Gastronomy in the Italian Lakes

The cuisine of northern Italy tends to contain more meat, rice and polenta compared to southern Italy. Saffron is used extensively as in Risotto alla Milanese. Bresaola is cured raw beef served as a starter (now often with rocket and parmesan).

Manzo al Barolo (beef in Barolo wine), Costolette alla Milanese (veal cutlets in breadcrumbs) and Ossobucco (veal in wine and tomatoes) are all popular dishes.

The region produces some of Italy's most famous cheeses such as Gorgonzola, Bel Paese, Fontina and Taleggio as well as some of Italy's most exportable wines such as Amarone, Soave, Bardolino and Valpolicella.

Less well known but interesting wines are produced in the Valtellina in the north of Lombardy and in Franciacorta near Lake Iseo.



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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

Getting out and about

Historic villas are to be found on every lake from the Grotte di Catullo Roman villa at Sirmione on Lake Garda to Villa Melzi and Villa Olmo on Lake Como and the Palazzo Estense in Varese.

Most of these villas also have extraordinarily beautiful gardens (which can be visited as part of a Destination Italy Garden Tour holiday) such as the Villa Carlotta on Lake Como, the Isola Bella in Lake Maggiore and Villa Taranto at Punta della Castagnola on Lake Maggiore. Monte Mottarone above Stresa on Lake Maggiore and Monte Baldo above Lake Garda can both be reached by cable car for spectacular views.

At Gargnano on Lake Garda you can see the stone pavilions where lemons were traditionally cultivated. Within the region there are national parks such as the Stelvio National Park north of Orta and the Parco Nazionale della Val Grande above Verbania on Lake Maggiore.



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