Immerse yourself in the essence of Italian life in the fabled Lake District for one full week with charming accommodations in the heart of lovely Como at the PALACE HOTEL. Cruise by private boat on Lake Como, Lake Maggiore and Lake Orta. Excursions feature Bellagio, Villa del Balbianello, Stresa, Isola Bella and the Sacro Monte di Orta. Visit Milan’s Duomo and Teatro alla Scala and see Leonardo da Vinci’s *The Last Supper*. Enriching lectures and the exclusive VILLAGE LIFE® FORUM with local village residents bring personal perspectives of the region’s modern life and cultural heritage. Verona and Venice Post-Program Option.

**September 18 to 26, 2021**

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*Itinerary is subject to change.*
In Como, Italy

- Seven nights in the charming Palace Hotel on the southern shore of Lake Como.
- Full buffet breakfast each morning.
- Three dinners in the hotel and one dinner in a traditional restaurant, featuring northern Italian specialties.
- Welcome Reception.

Expert-Guided Excursions and Exclusive Cultural Enrichments

- Walking tour of Old Como.
- Lectures by a resident art historian and local Como scolar.
- Spectacular, full-day scenic tour of Lake Maggiore, featuring a private cruise around the Borromean Islands and time to experience Stresa’s spectacular views and tropical gardens at leisure.
- Visit to Lake Maggiore’s Isola Bella with a walk through the gardens of the 17th-century Palazzo Borromeo.
- Full-day excursion to Milan to visit the world-famous Teatro alla Scala and the exquisite Duomo.
- Visit to UNESCO World Heritage-designated convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, for a specially arranged viewing of Leonardo da Vinci’s The Last Supper.
- Private boat cruise across Lake Como to medieval Bellagio, including time at your own pace to explore this romantic and most famous village on Lake Como.
- Specially arranged guided tour of the Italian National Trust’s magnificent 18th-century Villa del Balbianello.
- Specially arranged Village Life® Forum with local Lombardy residents.
- Excursion by private boat to Lake Orta’s island of San Giulio, including a visit to the 12th-century basilica, renowned for its medieval pulpit made of black Oira marble, and a walking tour of its beautiful medieval village.
- Guided tour of the fresco-adorned chapels dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi on Sacro Monte di Orta, a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Opportunities to explore local markets in Como at your own pace.
- Opportunities to savor northern Italy’s traditional cuisine during included meals and on your own.
- Occasion to interact with locals and immerse yourself in Lombardy life.
- Italian language introduction.

Always Included

- Transfers and luggage handling abroad if your arrival(s)/departure(s) coincide with the scheduled group transfer(s).
- Experienced, English-speaking local guides for all included excursions.
- Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- Complimentary bottled water provided on motorcoaches during excursions.
- Hospitality desk in the hotel.
- Experienced Gohagan & Company Program Director at your service.
- Complimentary use of an audio headset during guided excursions.
- Automatic $250,000 flight insurance policy for each participant ticketed on flights by Gohagan & Company.

VERONA • VENICE

Post-Program Option*

"The Travel Program outlined here is subject to the finalized Itinerary. Included Features, Post-Program Option, tariff, terms and conditions and cancellation fees as stated in the final 2021 Village Life® around the Italian Lakes brochure. In addition, applicable airline and administrative cancellation fees, charges for extra arrangements, etc. may apply. Upon your receipt of the brochure with the terms and conditions and tariff you will be asked to select your cabin category and reconfirm your reservation(s), or you may cancel this tentative booking and receive a full refund."
VILLAGE LIFE AROUND THE
ITALIAN LAKES
SEPTEMBER 18 TO 26, 2021

ALL THE DETAILS!!

ITINERARY*
Como, Borromean Islands, Stresa, Bellagio, Sacro Monte di Orta, Milan

Day | Destination
--- | ---
1 | Depart the U.S. or Canada
2 | Milan, Italy/Lake Como
3 | Como
4 | Lake Maggiore/Borromean Islands/Stresa
5 | Milan
6 | Lake Como/Villa del Balbianello/Bellagio
7 | Lake Orta/Orta San Giulio/Sacro Monte di Orta
8 | Como
9 | Como/Milan/Return to the U.S. or Canada

*Itinerary subject to change.

Activity Level
Moderately Active

HIGHLIGHTS

- Comprehensive Italian soggiorno (sojourn) in the fabled region that has inspired renowned writers and artists for centuries.
- Accommodations for seven nights in the charming PALACE HOTEL in the heart of medieval Como—just steps away from historic monuments, family-owned negozi (shops) and old-world ambiance.
- This small group program allows for an authentic experience of life in the Italian Lake District in the foothills of the majestic Alps.
- Private boat tours on Lake Como, Lake Maggiore and Lake Orta, an undiscovered gem.
- Enriching lectures by local Como resident and by a resident art historian.
- Visit the stunning 18th-century Villa del Balbianello and gardens and time at your own pace in the renowned lake town of Bellagio.
- Full-day excursion to Milan featuring the impressive Duomo, the exquisite Teatro alla Scala and the UNESCO-inscribed Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, for a specially arranged viewing of Leonardo da Vinci’s The Last Supper.
- Exclusive excursion to Lake Orta featuring Orta San Giulio, one of Italy’s most beautiful villages and the 16th-century chapels atop the Sacro Monte di Orta, a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Exclusive VILLAGE LIFE® Forum featuring local residents.
- Verona and Venice Post-Program Option.
PALACE HOTEL

The ideally located, classic belle-époque PALACE HOTEL is a delightful establishment with an ideal setting on the lungolago (lakefront promenade) overlooking Lake Como, just steps away from Como’s beautiful marble Duomo and the medieval, pedestrian-only town center. Venetian stucco artistry, Italian marble and antique furniture provide subtle touches of 19th-century elegance throughout the hotel.

Its expertly landscaped gardens are the perfect setting to admire enchanting views across Lake Como. The Garden Bar Ceccato, with its summer terrace overlooking the lake, is an excellent setting to enjoy the hotel’s renowned homemade ice cream or a cappuccino.

Each of the hotel’s 94 renovated guest rooms is tastefully appointed with a private bathroom, air conditioning, satellite television, minibar and hair dryer. Meals feature fresh seasonal Italian ingredients, local specialties and international cuisine. Regional wine selections accompany dinner. The hotel staff provides exceptional service.

INCLUDED FEATURES

IN COMO

❖ Seven nights in the charming PALACE HOTEL on the southern shore of Lake Como.
❖ Full buffet breakfast each morning.
❖ Three dinners in the hotel and one dinner in a traditional restaurant, featuring northern Italian specialties with Italian wine.
❖ Welcome Reception.

INCLUDED FEATURES

EXPERT-GUIDED excursions and exclusive cultural enrichments

❖ Walking tour of Old Como.
❖ Enriching lectures by local Como resident and by a resident art historian.
❖ Spectacular, full-day scenic tour of Lake Maggiore, featuring a private cruise of the Borromean Islands and time to experience Stresa’s spectacular views and tropical gardens at leisure.
❖ Visit to Lake Maggiore’s Isola Bella for a tour of the gardens of the 17th-century Palazzo Borromeo.
❖ Full-day excursion to Milan to visit the world-famous Teatro alla Scala and the exquisite Duomo.
❖ Visit to UNESCO World Heritage-designated Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, for a specially arranged viewing of Leonardo da Vinci’s The Last Supper.
❖ Private boat cruise across Lake Como to medieval Bellagio, including time at your own pace to explore this romantic and most famous village on Lake Como.
❖ Specially arranged guided tour of the Italian National Trust’s magnificent 18th-century Villa del Balbianello.
❖ Specially arranged Village Life® Forum with local Lombardy residents.
❖ Excursion by private boat to Lake Orta’s island of San Giulio, including a visit to its 12th-century basilica, renowned for its medieval pulpit made of black Oira marble and a walking tour of the beautiful medieval village.
❖ Guided tour of the fresco-adorned chapels dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi on Sacro Monte di Orta, a UNESCO World Heritage site.
Opportunities to explore **local markets** in Como at your own pace.
Opportunities to savor northern Italy’s traditional cuisine during included meals and on your own.
Occasion to interact with locals and immerse yourself in Lombardy life.
Italian language introduction.

**ALWAYS INCLUDED**
- Transfers and luggage handling abroad if your arrival(s)/departure(s) coincide with the scheduled group transfer(s).
- Experienced, English-speaking expert guides for all included excursions.
- Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- Complimentary bottled water provided on motorcoaches during excursions.
- Hospitality desk in the hotel.
- Experienced Gohagan & Company Program Director at your service.
- Complimentary use of an audio headset during guided excursions.
- Automatic $250,000 flight insurance policy for each participant ticketed on flights by Gohagan & Company.

**TESORI DI VERONA E VENEZIA POST-PROGRAM OPTION**
Few cities have the power to enchant quite like Verona and Venice, both UNESCO World Heritage sites. Verona is renowned for its well-preserved Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals, delightful piazzas and magnificent Roman monuments and is the legendary setting for Shakespeare’s timeless romance, *Romeo and Juliet*. See star-crossed Juliet’s famous balcony and the spectacular 2000-year-old Roman Arena. Discover the glories of centuries woven through a romantic tapestry of shimmering waterways crisscrossed by stone bridges that lead to Venice’s extraordinary confection of architectural treasures, including the Gothic-style Doge’s Palace. Admire one of the finest collections of Renaissance art in the world on a specially arranged guided tour of the Gallerie dell’Accademia, and trace the development of Venetian art. Cross the lagoon to the charming archipelago’s island of Burano, known for its skilled fishermen and colorful houses. Enjoy three nights in the HOTEL BONVECCHIATI, an 18th-century palazzo ideally located just a short walk from Venice’s famous Piazza San Marco.

**DAILY SCHEDULE**

**U.S.**

*Day 1*
Depart the U.S.

**Milan, Italy/Como**

*Day 2*
Arrive in Milan, Italy, and transfer to Como, the perfect “home” for our *soggiorno* (sojourn) in the spectacular mountainous Italian countryside. Check into the charming PALACE HOTEL on the shore of Lake Como, and enjoy ideally located accommodations for the entire week in the *centro storico* (old town) of this timeless Italian città. Join your traveling companions for a Welcome Reception and dinner in the hotel. (R,D)
Como
Day 3
Founded by the Romans in 196 B.C., Como has been internationally known for its silk-weaving industry since silkworms were first imported here in the 14th century. At one time, Como was the largest European silk producer—dyeing, weaving and designing fabrics to be shipped to the fashion houses of Milan, Paris and London. Stroll beside medieval towers and walls, Renaissance palaces and churches, neoclassical 19th-century villas and small family-owned negozi (shops) leading to the Piazza Cavour and the tranquil lakeside promenade.

See the magnificent Duomo di Como, considered the most beautiful cathedral in Lombardy, which took nearly 400 years to complete, reflecting a seamless blend of Gothic and Renaissance styles. Visit the 12th-century Romanesque Basilica di San Fedele, with stunning frescoed naves and apses and an exquisitely sculptured choir, carved by Comacini masters. Peruse the fresh fruit and vegetables in the tri-weekly outdoor market, a local tradition for centuries.

A resident art historian and a local scholar of Como from the Roman era to the present will each present private, expert lectures. (B,D)

Lago Maggiore/Borromean Islands/Stresa
Day 4
Beloved by Lombardy’s nobility, Italy’s second-largest lake is a natural boundary between the regions of Lombardy and Piedmont. A close rival to Lake Como as the most spectacular in the Lake District, Lake Maggiore’s mild climate allows gardens to grow rare and exotic plants beneath the high Alps, particularly on the remarkable Borromean Islands. Enjoy a private boat cruise amidst its charming islands that inspired Flaubert, Wagner and Goethe.

Cruise among Lake Maggiore’s enticing islands, graced with elegant villas and striking natural beauty. Isola Bella, Isola di San Giovanni, Isola Madre and Isola dei Pescatori are collectively known as the Borromean Islands, named after the powerful and influential Borromeos, a dynasty of counts, cardinals and warriors.

Visit the crown jewel of the Borromean archipelago, Isola Bella, occupied by the 17th-century Palazzo Borromeo. Walk through its splendid Italianate gardens, a baroque botanical masterpiece ablaze with roses, gardenias, azaleas and rhododendrons, described by Edith Wharton as a work of “Renaissance poetry.” Commissioned by Count Carlo Borromeo III in 1632, this secluded Baroque retreat is dedicated to his wife, Isabella, and its extravagant halls and opulent salons are filled with priceless masterpieces by old masters such as Rubens, Titan and Van Dyck. See the Sala di Napoleone, where Napoleon and Josephine slept in 1797, and the unforgettable grotto, decorated entirely with marble- and lava-studded mosaics of marine life.

An 18th- and 19th-century “Grand Tour” of Europe was considered incomplete without a visit to Stresa to experience its spectacular mountain views, tropical gardens and the sparkling waters of Lake Maggiore. A young Ernest Hemingway, recuperating in Stresa during World War I, was inspired to make it the setting for Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley’s famed reunion in A Farewell to Arms. (B)

Milan
Day 5
The recognized capital of the design and fashion worlds, Milan has an ancient cultural heritage that blends its ornate palaces, Gothic churches and venerable museums with vibrant contemporary life, a wealth of modern art, an abundance of haute cuisine, and outstanding
operatic traditions. Visit Milan’s exquisite late-Gothic Duomo, which dates to 1386, and the world-famous Teatro alla Scala opera house, a neoclassical jewel of gilt boxes and glittering chandeliers.

By special arrangement, visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Santa Maria delle Grazie to experience the enduring genius of Leonardo da Vinci’s masterpiece, *The Last Supper*. (B)

**Lago Como/Villa del Balbianello/Bellagio**

*Day 6*

Composer Franz Liszt romanticized, “When you write the story of two happy lovers, place them on the shores of Lake Como.”

Cruise by private boat across the sparkling waters of Italy’s deepest—and perhaps most spectacular—lake while learning about its fascinating history and allure. Perched on a promontory punctuated by stands of cypress trees, Bellagio has been a favorite retreat since the time of the Caesars and is one of the Italian Lake District’s most internationally well-known villages. In the 18th and 19th centuries, Milanese nobility flocked here to build elaborate villas and cultivate subtropical gardens. Enjoy time to explore Bellagio at your own pace.

Across Lake Como from Bellagio, visit the magnificent Villa del Balbianello and its unique terraced gardens. Built in 1787 by Cardinal Angelo Maria Durini, this consummate Italian lake villa was renovated in the early 20th century by an American veteran of World War I and then purchased by Italy’s first explorer to summit Mt. Everest, Guido Monzino, who bequeathed it to the Italian National Trust. It remains a paragon of authentic Italian luxury, the villa is a repository of 18th-century French and English furniture and an exquisite collection of Monzino’s Chinese, pre-Columbian and African art.

This evening, during the Village Life® Forum in Como, residents will discuss contemporary life in the extraordinarily beautiful and historic Italian Lake District. Savor the delights of a northern Italian dinner in a local ristorante. (B,D)

**Lago Orta**

*Day 7*

Serene Lake Orta, nestled in the captivating Piedmont region of northwestern Italy, is the Lake District’s best-kept secret. Enjoy a walking tour to the heart of Orta San Giulio’s medieval village center, a cinematic tableau of gracefully aging ochre-hued houses woven with arabesques of decorative wrought-iron and flamboyant Baroque palazzos built by Italian nobility.

Atop the summit of Sacro Monte di Orta—one of nine sacred mountains in northern Italy and a UNESCO World Heritage site—amidst a picturesque landscape of forested hills, visit several small chapels dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi, decorated with elaborate frescoes and built between the 16th and 18th centuries.

Cruise across the cobalt-blue water in a private boat to diminutive Isola San Giulio, taking in stunning views of picture-perfect Italian villas and gardens along the way. Robert Browning, Honoré de Balzac and Lord Byron all wrote of this intimate island’s sublime beauty. Visit the 12th-century Romanesque-style Basilica San Giulio, whose opulent interior is adorned with richly detailed frescoes painted upon the nave, chapel, vaults and aisles; then, stroll the monastery’s lush grounds. Return to Orta San Giulio for time at leisure in this beguiling village. (B)

**Como**

*Day 8*
The day is free for independent pursuits. You have the opportunity to peruse the fresh fruits and vegetables in Como’s outdoor market, a local tradition for centuries. This evening, join your travel companions for the Farewell Dinner in the hotel. (B,D)

**Como/Milan/U.S.**

*Day 9*

After breakfast in the hotel, continue on the Verona and Venice Post-Program Option, or transfer to Milan for your return flight to the U.S. (B)