



ITALIAN LAKES DISCOVERY TOUR

5 - 13 May 2026

27 May - 4 June 2026

3 - 11 September 2026

24 September - 2 October 2026





Lake Como

PRICING

AUD 6,650

per person, twin or double share

AUD 8,050

per person, solo traveller

Since 2007, we've been designing tours for travellers who, like us, are passionate about Italy and believe a holiday is best enjoyed in good company. With a maximum of just 12 guests, our small group tours offer a relaxed and authentic way to explore the country.

We travel at an unhurried pace, giving you time to truly soak up each destination without rushing from one city to the next. We also include some free time, so you can follow your interests, or simply put your feet up and take in the view.

This 9-day journey through the lakes district of northern Italy combines comfort and style with lakefront stays in Pallanza (or Verbania) and Bellagio, private boat trips, travel by private mini-coach, and a full-time tour leader to look after you throughout.

You'll begin on Lake Maggiore, staying in either Pallanza or Verbania, and explore the elegant Borromean Islands, nearby Lake Orta, and Lake Lugano in Switzerland. Then, settle into Bellagio—the “pearl” of Lake Como—where you'll visit grand villas and charming lakeside towns and enjoy a day in the scenic Valtellina.

Four lunches and three dinners are included at restaurants selected for their quality and local character. With a minimum of just six and a maximum of twelve guests, this is Italian travel the way it should be: warm, relaxed, and beautifully done.





Lago d'Orta

ITINERARY

DAY 1 - ARRIVAL AT LAKE MAGGIORE

The tour begins with a mid-afternoon group pick-up from Milan Malpensa Airport or Milano Centrale train station, followed by a scenic drive to Lake Maggiore.

On arrival, settle into your cosy lake-view accommodation and ease into the rhythm of the trip.

Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner with your tour leader and fellow travellers in the evening—a relaxed opportunity to get to know each other and hear what's ahead.

Overnight: Pallanza or Verbania (location varies by departure date; details below)

DAY 2 - BORROMEAN ISLANDS

This morning, set off by private boat to explore the Borromean Islands. Your first stop is Isola Bella, where you'll enjoy a guided tour of the opulent Palazzo Borromeo, famed for its baroque architecture and elaborate terraced gardens.

From there, your boat continues to Isola Pescatori—the “Fishermen’s Island.” Here, you'll enjoy a leisurely lunch at a local restaurant featuring freshly caught lake fish and regional dishes.

Return to the mainland in the afternoon and enjoy some free time.

Overnight: Pallanza/Verbania





Lake Como

DAY 3 - LAGO D'ORTA

Today, a private coach takes you on a short journey to Lago d'Orta—one of Italy's most picturesque yet lesser-known lakes. Begin in the charming town of Orta San Giulio, where you'll have time for a coffee before taking a boat to the island of San Giulio. There, explore the 9th-century Romanesque Basilica and wander the peaceful lanes.

After some free time for lunch by the lake, head to the Sacro Monte di Orta, a peaceful sanctuary dedicated to San Francesco, offering sweeping views over the lake and surrounding hills.

Overnight: Pallanza/Verbania

DAY 4 - ALPE DEVERO MOUNTAIN ESCAPE

Today, we leave the lakeside behind and head into the mountains for a refreshing change of pace. A private coach takes you into the Lepontine Alps to visit Alpe Devero, a peaceful alpine plateau surrounded by rugged peaks and larch forests - the drive winds through quaint mountain villages, each with its own character. On arrival, take a short, scenic walk through meadows and along forest paths, breathing in the fresh mountain air.

Enjoy a relaxed alpine lunch at a traditional mountain hut featuring hearty local fare made with regional ingredients. Return to Lake Maggiore in the afternoon, with the rest of the day at leisure—perhaps for a lakeside stroll or a quiet drink at a café. is ideal for unwinding after the morning's adventure.

Overnight: Pallanza/Verbania

DAY 5 - LAKE LUGANO AND ONWARD TO BELLAGIO

After breakfast, check out and begin your journey north along the lake. Your first stop is Lugano, a lovely Swiss town on the lake of the same name, where you'll pause for a coffee and a short walk.

Crossing back into Italy, stop in Porlezza for a lakeside lunch, then continue to Bellagio—known as the “pearl” of Lake Como.

On arrival, settle into your elegant lakefront hotel and enjoy the remainder of the day at your own pace.

Overnight: Bellagio





Villa Balbianello

DAY 6 - VILLA CARLOTTA AND VARENNA

This morning, catch the ferry from Bellagio to Villa Carlotta, a grand lakeside villa famed for its botanic gardens and art-filled interiors. The gardens stretch over 70,000 square metres, with azaleas, rhododendrons, and towering ancient trees. Inside, view sculptures by Canova and 19th-century artworks.

After your visit, continue by ferry to Varenna, a charming lakeside village known for its romantic promenade and cobbled lanes. Spend a relaxed afternoon exploring or simply enjoy the atmosphere before returning to Bellagio.

Overnight: Bellagio

DAY 7 - THE VALTELLINA

This morning, head north into the Valtellina, a region known for its alpine landscapes, terraced vineyards, and long-standing food and wine traditions. Your first stop is a family-run winery, where you'll tour the vineyards and cellars and enjoy a tasting of local wines shaped by the alpine climate. Afterwards, enjoy a traditional lunch at a local trattoria. In the afternoon, return to Bellagio, with time to rest before dinner or enjoy a quiet evening in town.

Overnight: Bellagio

DAY 8 - A PRIVATE CRUISE AND VILLA BALBIANELLO

Enjoy a slow morning in Bellagio—perhaps browsing the shops or sitting by the lake with a coffee. In the afternoon, board a private boat for a cruise across central Lake Como, taking in the beautiful villas and small towns that line its shores.

Stop at the spectacular Villa del Balbianello, perched on a wooded promontory. You'll tour the villa's elegant interiors and manicured gardens and hear about its role in films and history. Return to Bellagio in time for a farewell dinner with views over the lake.

Overnight: Bellagio

DAY 9 - DEPARTURES

It's time to pack your bags and say goodbye to the Italian Lakes—at least for now.

The group transfer will travel to Milan Malpensa Airport (arriving by 11am) and Milano Centrale train station (arriving by 12pm). Please contact us before booking onward travel if you require a different transfer time.

Overnight: NA





Porlezza



Luca and Philippa



Bellagio

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ◆ Experienced and bilingual tour leader on hand for duration of tour
- ◆ Transfer at the start and end of the tour to Milan Malpensa airport or Milano Centrale station
- ◆ Accommodation (on a twin-share basis) in charming 3 or 4 star hotels
- ◆ All breakfasts, four lunches and three dinners (wine, or something softer if you would prefer, is included with all lunches and dinners)
- ◆ All land travel in Italy in private, air-conditioned mini-coach
- ◆ Entry fees to all attractions listed in the itinerary
- ◆ Expert, local guides at key attractions

EXCLUSIONS AND ADD-ONS

- ◆ Local city tax (payable directly at the hotel)
- ◆ Add-on a night or two in Milan pre-tour

WEATHER

May and September are both ideal times to visit the Italian Lakes. In these shoulder seasons, the weather is generally mild and pleasant, with daytime temperatures typically ranging from 15°C to 25°C. You can expect warm days that are perfect for sightseeing and boat trips, while the evenings may still carry a slight chill—so it's wise to bring a light jacket or an extra layer. These months also tend to be less crowded than the height of summer, making for a more relaxed and enjoyable travel experience.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

We don't place any age limitations on the tour and welcome anyone with a moderate level of physical fitness. Specifically, you should be comfortable on your feet for up to 3 hours with short breaks and be able to walk comfortably at a consistent pace without assistance.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is compulsory when travelling on one of our tours. Please contact us if you need help arranging travel insurance.

BOOKING

If you would like to book a place on this or any other tour or have questions about the itinerary, please don't hesitate to contact Luca or Philippa at Italian Tours.

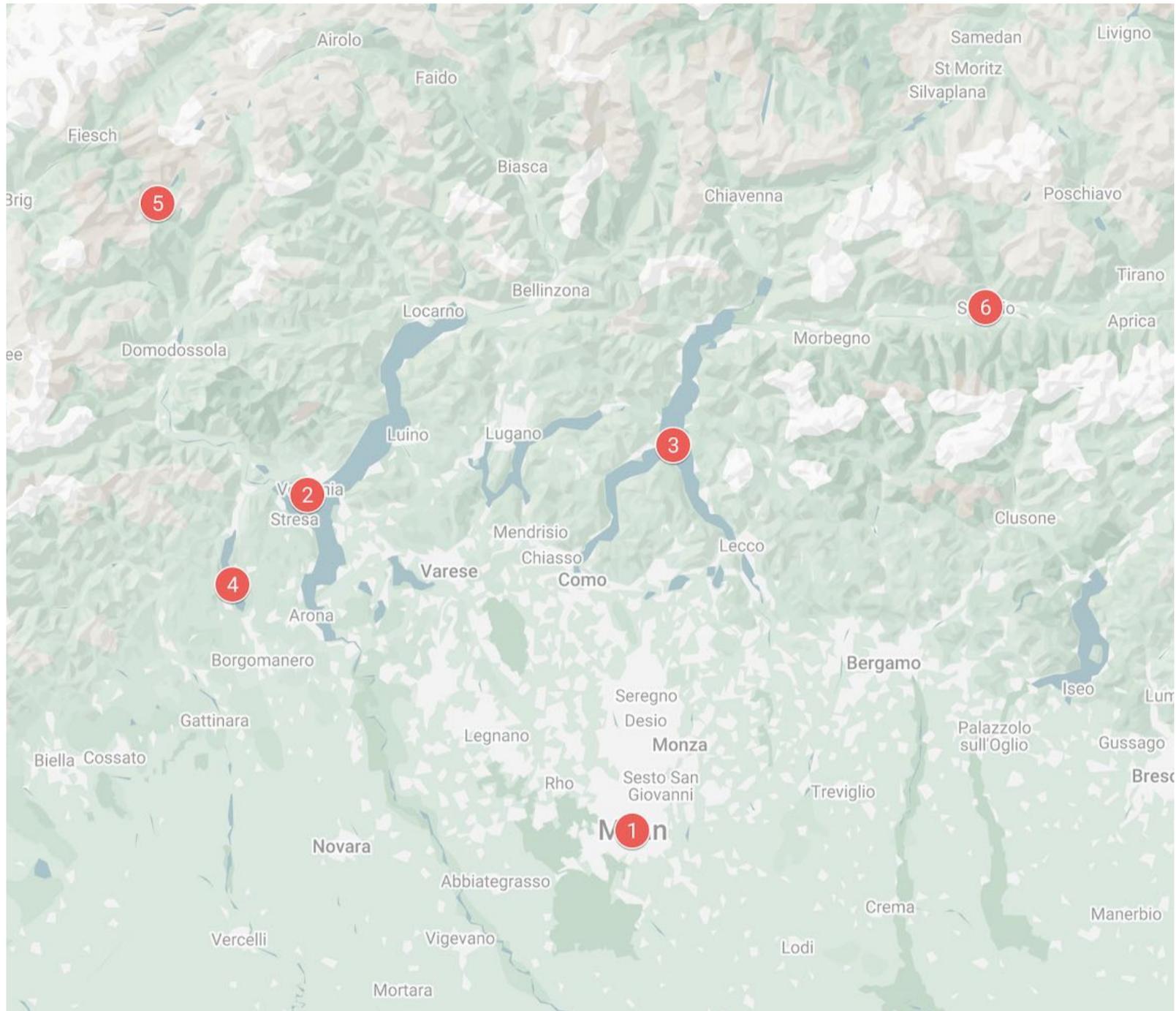
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TOUR MAP



Map data © 2024 Geo Basis DE/BKG (©2009), Google

LEGEND

1. Milan
2. Lake Maggiore - 4 nights
3. Lake Como - 4 nights
4. Lake Orta
5. Alpe Devero
6. Valtellina

