

Village Life<sup>®</sup>  
Italian Lakes



# VILLAGE LIFE® ITALIAN LAKES

Immerse yourself in the fascinating culture and breathtaking scenery surrounding some of Italy's beautiful lakes. This nine-day, seven-night Italian land trip will have many medieval sites to explore and stunning art to admire. Start and end each day of this journey in the luxurious PALACE HOTEL in Como. Live and learn like a local villager with lectures from knowledgeable local art and history experts intimately familiar with the area and its past. Experience the sights within the fascinating medieval walls of Old Como and admire the frescos inside the Church of San Fedele—and later within Orta's chapels dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi and San Giulio's Basilica. Float in an exclusive boat ride on Lake Maggiore to Isola Bella, home to unique caves previously used as living spaces for villagers to escape the summer heat. Visit the stunning Palazzo Borromeo and lavish gardens on the island. Enjoy a guided tour through Milan's Duomo—the largest Gothic cathedral in the world—and gaze at the wondrous artistic and architectural relics of its storied, centuries-long history. Learn about Villa del Balbianello's humble beginnings as a small Franciscan monastery and present-day home to a rich collection of Chinese, African, and pre-Columbian art. Travel throughout the picturesque Bellagio and plunge into its colorful coastal culture. No matter where you end up on this wonderful tour, there will be no shortage of striking sights amid these Italian lakes.

*Villa del Balbianello on Lake Como*







# TEXAS EXES<sup>®</sup>

## — FLYING LONGHORNS —

### Dear Texas Ex:

One of the world's most captivating destinations, northern Italy's fabled Lake District beckons with its sublime landscapes of shimmering glacial waters, soaring Alpine peaks, charming waterfronts, and bijoux towns. The Mediterranean region's ancient history echoes through towns embellished with lavish Renaissance and Gothic architecture and imbued with the distinct *bella figura* Italian style that has inspired poets, composers, musicians, artists, and philosophers for centuries.

Join our small group of travelers in the Italian *città di Como*—your picturesque “home” for a full week—during this outstanding tour around the Italian Lakes *soggiorno*, an exceptional way to experience the genteel ambiance and authentic delights that have lured visitors to the storied regions of Lombardy and Piedmont since the days of the “Grand Tour.”

Our carefully curated, expert-guided excursions explore the artistic and architectural treasures commissioned by Roman aristocrats, medieval lords, and Renaissance princes—including a specially arranged viewing of Leonardo da Vinci's renowned masterpiece, “The Last Supper”, in the UNESCO World Heritage-designated Santa Maria delle Grazie. Trace the legacy of Milan's outstanding artistic heritage, visit the enchanting town of Bellagio, and the romantic Borromeo Island of Isola Bella—crowned by the Baroque Palazzo Borromeo, famed for its lavish ornamentation, priceless artworks, and terraced Italianate gardens.

Enriching presentations from local experts offer you personal perspectives on the area's cultural heritage and contemporary life. Your accommodations are in the heart of charismatic Como in the ideally located, lakeside PALACE HOTEL. Indulge in the refined traditions of the Italian Lake District on this unique program, where you unpack only once in one of Italy's loveliest settings. It has sold out every time it has been offered, so we encourage you to book now while early booking savings and space are still available.

This outstanding itinerary is brought to you by the Texas Exes Flying Longhorns travel program, which supports the association's mission of promoting and protecting The University of Texas at Austin and uniting its alumni around the world. While you do not have to be an alumnus of UT to travel with us, we do ask that all Flying Longhorns travelers have an active membership in the Texas Exes. Memberships start at just \$50.

The association is a huge proponent of continuing education and there is no better classroom than our world. Experience rich history and culture in the company of your fellow Longhorns! Are you ready for the adventure of a lifetime? We're standing by to answer all of your questions and/or take your reservation. Capacity is limited on this popular program and it may sell out quickly. Additional information about all Texas Exes Flying Longhorns trips can be found at [travel@texasexes.org](mailto:travel@texasexes.org)

Best regards,

Your Flying Longhorns Travel Team,  
Margaret, Janice, and Leslie

**Contact the Flying Longhorns office to secure your spot:  
1-800-594-3900 or [travel@texasexes.org](mailto:travel@texasexes.org)**



## THE LAKE DISTRICT AWAITS

Through the centuries, the Lake District of Italy has seduced the hearts, minds, and souls of artists and writers, including Lord Byron, William Wordsworth, Edith Wharton, and Ernest Hemingway. Long before the Romans annexed the region 2,000 years ago, it was settled by Etruscans and invaded by Celts. Following the Romans through the Renaissance, nobility built palatial villas, filled them with priceless art, and laid out extraordinary gardens. European aristocrats of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries considered the Italian Lake District an essential stop on their “Grand Tour” of Europe, as chronicled in E.M. Forster’s “A Room With a View”. To this day, the mild climate and snowcapped Alpine peaks descending to lake shores continue to lure the wealthy, as well as celebrities and elite travelers from around the world. From the deep-blue glacial lakes of Como, Maggiore, and picturesque Orta to the enchanting Villa del Balbianello, and from colorful Bellagio—the “Pearl of Lake Como”—to the sophistication of Milan, discover the exquisite gem that is the Italian Lake District.





# Art Imitating Life

There is no shortage of magnificent art to admire as you traverse throughout the Italian Lakes District. Vibrant frescoes adorn the walls and ceilings of the Church of San Fedele, depicting religious scenes and figures with intricate details and beautiful colors. The frescoes not only showcase the artistic skill of the painters but also provide a telling glimpse into the history and culture of Italy at that time. Learn all about the beautiful art and fascinating history the Italian Lakes District has to offer from an enthusiastic and knowledgeable local art history expert on this exquisite trip. While visiting the Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, marvel at the use of perspective, dramatic composition, and meticulous attention to detail in the renowned masterpiece Leonardo DaVinci's "The Last Supper," depicting the final meal of Jesus Christ with his disciples. Take in the stunning views of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Villa del Balbianello's landscape on Lake

Como. With its immaculate gardens and ornate architecture, it's clear why the villa is a recurring film site for the most noteworthy works of cinema. Frescoes also grace the interior of the exquisite Basilica di San Giulio in Orta San Giulio, with striking depictions of Saint Fermo and Saint Apollonia and an emotive portrayal of Saint Julius hugging Saint Audenzio.

These picturesque sites and marvelous works of art make them must-visit attractions on this exclusive tour.



## INCLUDED FEATURES

- ◆ Transfers and luggage handling abroad if you purchased air through Gohagan & Company and your arrival(s)/departure(s) coincide with the scheduled group transfer(s).
- ◆ Experienced, English-speaking local guides for included excursions.
- ◆ Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- ◆ Experienced Gohagan & Company Travel Directors 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.
- ◆ Meals included as noted in the itinerary (B,L,R,D).





## 9-DAY/7-NIGHT ITINERARY

### Depart home city

#### Day 1

Depart your home city on an overnight flight to Milan.

### Milan, Italy/Como

#### Day 2

Arrive in Milan and transfer to Como, the perfect “home” for our *soggiorno* in the spectacular mountainous Italian countryside. Check into the charming PALACE HOTEL on the shore of Lake Como and unpack only once for this exclusive journey. After enjoying some of the hotel’s luxury amenities, join your traveling companions for a welcome reception. Enjoy a provided dinner at the hotel. (R,D)

### Como

#### Day 3

Start your morning by listening to a fascinating lecture about Como’s history, “From Roman Ruins to Medieval Walls to the Present.” Stroll throughout Old Como and admire

magnificent architectural sites like the Gothic Duomo di Como, the beautiful fresco-adorned Romanesque Basilica di San Fedele, the 13<sup>th</sup>-century town hall Broletto, and the 12<sup>th</sup>-century gate tower Porta Vittoria. During the walking tour, you will also visit the grand Voltas Square, which commemorates the credited inventor of the battery Alessandro Volta. Enjoy lunch on your own and provided dinner at the hotel. (B,D)

### Lake Maggiore/ Borromean Islands/ Stresa

#### Day 4

Enjoy a private boat cruise amid charming Lake Maggiore islands, graced with elegant villas and striking natural beauty. Visit the crown jewel of the Borromean archipelago, Isola Bella, occupied by the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Palazzo Borromeo. Relish in the island’s lush

gardens. Enjoy spectacular mountain views from Stresa, a must for any “Grand Tour” that was also the setting for Ernest Hemingway’s iconic novel “A Farewell to Arms”. Explore Stresa and have lunch on your own. At the hotel enjoy an art lecture by a local expert. Enjoy dinner on your own. (B)

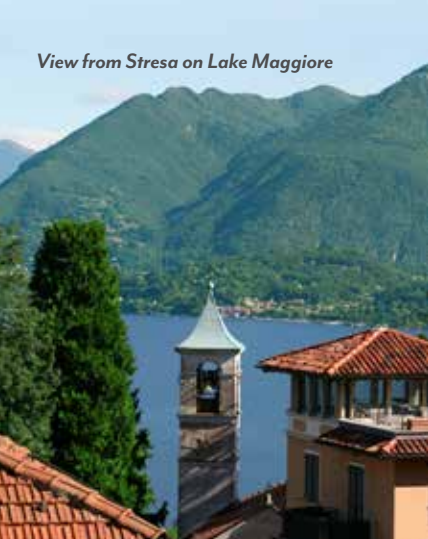
### Milan

#### Day 5

Visit Milan’s world-famous Teatro alla Scala opera house, a Neoclassical jewel of gilt boxes and glittering chandeliers. Continue on to the city’s social hub, the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II. Visit the city’s Duomo, renowned as the largest Gothic cathedral in the world taking nearly 500 years to complete. Enjoy lunch on your own. By special arrangement, visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Santa Maria delle Grazie to experience



*View from Stresa on Lake Maggiore*



*Frescoed Basilica of San Giulio*

the genius of Leonardo da Vinci's famous work, "The Last Supper." Enjoy dinner on your own. (B)

## **Lake Como/ Villa del Balbianello/ Bellagio**

### **Day 6**

After a delicious breakfast buffet at the hotel, 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. Enjoy time to explore Bellagio at your own pace and browse through its wonderful boutiques. Across Lake Como from Bellagio, visit the magnificent Villa del Balbianello and its unique terraced gardens. Lunch will be on your own. Later, savor the delights of a provided northern Italian dinner in a local *ristorante*. (B,D)

## **Orta San Giulio/ Sacro Monte di Orta/ Lake Orta**

### **Day 7**

Start the day by enjoying a provided breakfast buffet at the hotel. Visit the heart of Orta San Giulio's medieval village center to admire Baroque palazzos built by Italian nobility. Admire chapels dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi atop the summit of UNESCO-inscribed Sacro Monte di Orta and admire the chapels' frescoes and terra cotta statues. Transfer by private boat across the cobalt-blue water to Isola San Giulio and visit the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Romanesque-style Basilica San Giulio, taking in views of Italian villas and gardens along the way. Lunch and dinner will be on your own. (B)

## **Como**

### **Day 8**

Following a complimentary breakfast at the hotel, the day is free for independent pursuits, which may include the Como public market. Travel guides may also recommend guests visiting Villa Carlotta, which is a botanical garden and museum on Lake Como, or Isola Comacina, the only island on Lake Como. The island also played an important role in Como's history and it acted as a fortress centuries ago, with its structures surrounded by high walls. Enjoy lunch on your own. This evening, join your travel companions for a provided farewell dinner at the hotel. (B,D)

## **Como/Milan/Return to home city**

### **Day 9**

*Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II in Milan*







# THE PALACE HOTEL

The classic *belle époque* PALACE HOTEL is ideally located on the *lungolago* the 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 19<sup>th</sup>-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 terrace overlooking the lake, is an excellent place 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.



Interior of Duomo Cathedral in Milan





Lakeside Ristorante in Bellagio

## 2024 DEPARTURE DATE

**May 11 to 19** (Tour Begins: May 12)

### LAND RATES

*per person, based on double occupancy,  
excluding taxes*

**Early Booking  
Rate through  
December 4, 2023**

*Rate after  
December 4 2023*

Includes Accommodations

**\$3,775**

**\$4,195**

Singles are available upon request for an additional \$1,100  
and are subject to availability.

Final payment due November 27, 2023

**To secure your spot, Contact the Flying Longhorns office:  
1-800-594-3900 or [travel@texasexes.org](mailto:travel@texasexes.org)**

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