

THE TRAVEL CLUB

Pre-departure Itinerary

Lakes & Villages of Northern Italy

PLUS: Alpine Switzerland

9 DAYS: Saturday, May 18 – Sunday, May 26, 2024

NORTHERN ITALY is a gorgeous landscape of deep blue lakes, smart resort towns, ancient villages, fortified castles and lush gardens. Lake Maggiore's charm and sophistication are the perfect setting for Baveno, a small lake-side resort flanked by cypress trees, dotted with villas and lake-side promenades brimming with café's and bars overlooking the Borromean Islands. From our accommodations directly on the lake-front in a converted 18th-century villa, we'll enjoy excursions to Isola Bella, quiet and secluded Lake Orta, romantic Bellagio on Lake Como and see the highlights of Milan in a half-day tour. A highlight of this holiday may be the full-day excursion to Lugano—called “the sunny side of Switzerland” by Rick Steves, with a splashy, zesty, Mediterranean ambience. Lake Maggiore is one of Italy's most elegant destinations with old world charm, flower-decked lake islands and shores spanning two countries.

RATES

\$3,999 per person double occupancy
INCLUDES round-trip airfare, fuel surcharge
and all air taxes and fees.

Single supplement is \$545. We have a limited
number of single supplements available at
just \$450. Call to reserve.

Triple accommodations may be available upon
request. Fuel surcharge, air taxes and fees subject
to change. Passport required. Per person deposit
is \$300.

FEATURES

Cruise to Isola Bella, tour of Palazzo Borromeo,
Cruise to Stresa. Full-day excursion to Lugano.
Excursion to Lake Como including tour of Villa
Carlotta, mini-cruise of Lake Como, free time in
Bellagio. Excursion to Lake Orta, market at
Omegna, mini-cruise to Orta San Giulio. Full-day
excursion to Milan including guided tour and
free time.

INCLUDES

- Round-trip regularly scheduled **ITA Airways** flights from Boston to Milan, via Rome
- Seven nights' four-star accommodations: **Hotel Simplon**, Baveno (or similar)
- Eleven meals: seven buffet breakfasts, four dinners with wine
- Escorted round-trip, private airport/hotel transfers
- Services of professional local Tour Manager

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Simplon
Corso Giuseppe Garibaldi, 52, 28831 Baveno
Phone: +39 0323 924656

Day 1: Overnight flight from Boston to Rome

Day 2: Arrive Rome – Connecting flight to Milan – Transfer to Lake Maggiore

After passport control, check-in, and baggage claim, transfer to the hotel. Breakfast included. Pass through

customs and move into the Arrivals Hall where we'll meet our Tour Manager who will accompany us for the length of our holiday. Board the transfer coach to the Hotel Simplon in Baveno on Lake Maggiore. After receiving room assignments the rest of the afternoon is free to get acquainted with the hotel and surroundings. Dinner with wine and overnight at the hotel. **(D)**



Hotel Simplon

Recently restored, the Hotel Simplon is surrounded by a park, a few meters from the Maggiore lake shore in the heart of Baveno. The Simplon hotel, unique because of its immediately recognizable pink façade recalling the warm color of the local marble, famous all over the world, has always been very appreciated as a relaxing place where you can rejuvenate yourself with long walks in the green. The 4-story hotel features comfortable and luxurious rooms and suites, an outdoor swimming pool, massages with advanced reservations, a fully equipped fitness facility, sauna, and soccer field. Guests can furthermore access the health center at the Grand Hotel Dino by walking through the hotel's art gallery. To delight your palate the restaurant will offer you many typical local dishes for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Room service is offered during limited hours. There is a rich wine cellar, and while at the bar you can spend pleasant nights with your friends.

Day 3: Lake Maggiore – Isola Bella

After breakfast we'll depart for a full-day excursion of Lake Maggiore. Nestled against the breathtaking beauty of the Swiss Alps, Lake Maggiore is known for its serenity and an abundance of flora and fauna. Enjoy a relaxing boat trip to Isola Bella, one of the famous Borromean Islands in the centre of the lake, to visit the exuberant Palazzo Borromeo and its spectacular gardens. Dating back to the 17th century, this elegant palace boasts an array of spectacular fountains, imposing statues and landscaped, terraced gardens that gently cascade down to the tranquil waters of the lake. Cruise to Stresa for free time before heading back to your hotel. **(B)**



Isola Bella

Day 4: Lugano, Switzerland

Close enough to Italy to have a certain Mediterranean flair, but still quintessentially Swiss, Lugano is an eclectic and vivacious city, with posh designer boutiques, bars and pavement cafes studding the steep cobblestone streets that lead to the edge of the lake and along the flowery promenade. Popping up above the lake are the twin peaks of Monte Brè and Monte San Salvatore, both commanding astonishing views deep into the Alps and attracting hikers and mountain bikers in the warmer months. Return to the hotel for dinner with wine and overnight. **(B,D)**



Lugano

Day 5: Lake Como

After breakfast at the hotel we'll experience one of the highlights of our vacation – a full-day excursion to Lake Como. Marvel at the spectacular scenery as we drive along Como's western shore to Tremezzo where we'll enjoy a guided tour of Villa Carlota. Later we'll board a private boat and enjoy a mini-cruise across the lake passing many quaint villages and sumptuous villas before we disembark in picturesque Bellagio. The town of Bellagio has been called the most beautiful town in Italy. With a promenade planted with oleanders and limes, hotels painted shades of butterscotch, peach and cream, and a hilly old quarter of steep cobbled streets and alleyways – to say nothing of its spectacular mid-lake location – it's easy to see why Bellagio has become so popular. Enjoy free time on our own for browsing and lunch before returning by boat to Como and motorcoach to Baveno. Return to the hotel for dinner with wine and overnight. **(B,D)**



Bellagio

Day 6: Lake Orta

After breakfast we embark on an excursion that begins in Omegna where we'll visit the local weekly market, and then continue on to Lake Orta, one of Italy's best-kept secrets – an unspoiled gem that is quieter than nearby Maggiore. The lovely lakeside villages and surrounding green hills provide a truly romantic setting. The medieval centre of Orta town has pretty, cobbled streets and tucked away cafes and trattorias. A beautiful main square overlooks the ancient monastery on the island of San Giulio. This is a place to relax and enjoy the peace and tranquility of the lakes. We'll boat to the Island of Orta San Giulio. Before returning to the hotel, stop at the Cantina Bianchi for a snack and wine tasting. **(B)**

Lake Orta



San Giulio

Day 7: Milan

Today we'll travel to Milan – a historic city, with a spectacular cathedral and enough ancient churches and galleries to keep you busy for a week. Milan also represents the leading edge of Italy's fashion and design industry. In the morning we'll enjoy a guided tour of the city highlights including medieval Castello Sforzesco, the beautiful gothic cathedral – the Duomo, the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele and the world famous opera house, La Scala. The afternoon is at leisure. **(B)**



Day 8: Free day in Baveno

Today we'll enjoy a day at leisure to explore on our own. Dinner with wine and overnight at the hotel.
(B,D)



Day 9: Return to Boston

Today you will depart the hotel in the very early morning for the transfer to Milan Malpensa airport. Details of departure will be posted. Upon arrival in Milan you will connect with your international flight to Boston.

LAKE MAGGIORE

Anyone who has read Hemingway will know this lake and its forested shores from *A Farewell to Arms*. That's just the sort of place Lake Maggiore is -- a pleasure ground that's steeped in associations with famous figures (Flaubert, Wagner, Goethe, and many of Europe's other great minds seem to have been inspired by the deep, moody waters, backed by the Alps) and not-so-famous wealthy visitors. Fortunately, you need not be famous or wealthy to enjoy Maggiore, the top bit of which is in Switzerland.



BAVENO

Lovely Baveno has been a well known tourist resort since the early 19th century. This elegant past is reflected by the beautiful villas that dot the surrounding landscape. With its wonderful views of the Borromean Islands, Baveno has a small harbor, an attractive promenade with lakeside cafés and a profusion of flowers and oleander trees. There are regular ferry connections to Borromean Islands. Isola Pescatori is an old fishing village with good restaurants, famous for the white peacocks that strut in the botanical gardens. Isola Bella, perhaps the best known of the islands, features the magnificent Borromean Palace and beautiful landscaped gardens.

Proof of Citizenship is required for all trips outside the United States. U.S. citizens require a valid passport to travel; with at least 6 months' validity. All non-US citizens should check with the appropriate foreign consulate for additional entry requirements. Passports are the responsibility of each traveler.

PLEASE NOTE: This pre-departure itinerary is designed to give you an idea of how this itinerary is structured. We reserve the right to make any changes to your final itinerary if deemed necessary, at any time prior to departure.

PLEASE NOTE: This is not your final itinerary. You will receive final documents (itinerary, tickets (if applicable), etc.) approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure. Although we try our best to ensure that information is accurate at the time of publication, we are not responsible for any error, omission, misprint or liability that results from the use (or misuse) of this information.