

KUONI

LAKE COMO ITALIAN GARDENS TOUR



**EXCLUSIVE TOUR WITH HESTER MACDONALD,
AWARD-WINNING GARDEN DESIGNER, HISTORICAL GARDEN
GUIDE AND HOST OF DIG IT! ON WRS**

SEPTEMBER 26 – 29, 2017

TUESDAY

26 SEPT. 2017

ZURICH – LUGANO – COMO (2HRS DRIVE) LUNCH/DINNER

07h15 Meet at Zurich Airport and check-in.

09h20 Departure from Zurich Airport to LUGANO with SWISS flight LX2902.

10h00 Arrival at Lugano Airport.

Meet with your driver and departure by private coach to Tremezzina via Menaggio in Italy.

Visit the Villa

Balbianello. This villa is considered to be one of the most beautiful villas on Lake Como.

The Villa is sited on a wooded promontory jutting into the lake. The gardens are structured by the panoramic terraces and filled



with interesting and colourful plants including gigantic plane trees, magnolias, cypresses, holm oaks and wisterias, and in spring is packed with cyclamen, rhododendrons, azaleas and snowdrops. Thanks to its extraordinary setting, this villa has been the location for a number of famous movies, such as Jackpot, Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones and 007 - Casino Royale.

After the visit, lunch in a restaurant nearby.

In the afternoon, another breath-taking visit is on the program: **Villa Carlotta** with its magnificent botanical garden and art masterpieces in over 70.000 square meters of gardens and museum.



The gardens are worth visiting year round : ancient cedars and sequoias, huge planes and tropical plants, as well as the Rock Garden and the Fern Valley, the

Rhododendron Wood and the Bamboo Garden as well as wonderful views of the lake.

Late afternoon, after approx. a one-hour drive you will reach your hotel.

Accommodation for three nights at the **SHERATON LAKE COMO**

HOTEL ** or similar.**

Dinner at the hotel.

WEDNESDAY

27 SEPT. 2017

COMO - COMO REGION - COMO (2 HRS DRIVE) B'FAST/LUNCH

Breakfast at the hotel.

09h00 Departure by coach to Bellagio, the “Pearl of the Lake”.

Bellagio is located exactly halfway between the two southernmost branches of the lake, and is famous worldwide for its beautiful villas overlooking the water.

*The first visit of the day is dedicated to the **Villa Melzi**.*

This neoclassical villa is surrounded by a vast botanical garden. As well as the azaleas and gigantic

rhododendrons, a Japanese style pond and an Orangerie, the gardens also include exotic and rare plants, specimen trees, elegant camellia hedges, and many other plant species that thrive in the sub-tropical climate of Lake Como.



*After the visit, a short and picturesque ferry ride will take you to **Varenna**, an attractive fishing village on the eastern shore of Lake Como, overlooking the central part of the lake towards Bellagio.*

*After a brief walk from the jetty, you will discover the garden of the **Villa Monastero**.*

The garden is terraced, giving outstanding views of the Lake at every turn, and it is a wonderful combination of a botanic garden, full of exotic and unusual plants, as well as a collection of English roses, oaks and other more familiar plants. The lower wooded areas provide welcome shade on hotter days,



and the upper formal areas are full of statues and garden structures of the period.

Lunch in a restaurant.

Cruise back by ferry to Bellagio in order to visit Villa Serbelloni.



After the visit, drive back to the hotel and dinner at leisure.

THURSDAY

28 SEPT. 2017

COMO + BORROMEAN ISLANDS - COMO (2H30 DRIVE) B'FAST

Breakfast at the hotel.

09h00 Departure by coach with a specialized English speaking guide to Lake Maggiore.

After approx. one-hour drive, arrival in Stresa on Lago Maggiore.

From there, after a short cruise by ferry, you will reach Isola Bella, the second largest of the Borromean Islands.

This small rocky island is fully occupied by the Borromeo Palazzo and its garden extravaganza, both dating back to the 17th century.

The majestic building, mainly baroque in style, occupies most of the island and was designed and created by the famous architects and artisans of the period.



However, it is the fabulous park that leaves visitors speechless:

An Italian garden composed of ten overlapping terraces in the shape of a cut-off pyramid, embellished with statues, fountains, rare shrubs and exotic plants and flowers. The upper section of the gardens is dominated by the unicorn – the coat of arms of the House of Borromeo.

After the visit, you will have some time to stroll around and enjoy a light lunch on your own.

In the afternoon, again by ferry you will be heading to Isola M



The biggest of all the islands of the Borromeo Gulf was first converted into an orchard, then an olive tree grove and, at last, into a citrus grove. Today Isola Madre is a botanical garden famous

for the rare plants hailing from all over the globe. The English-style park offers shady boulevards where you can promenade or stop by a telescope to enjoy the panorama.

Later in the afternoon, you will reach Stresa, by ferry.

There will be some leisure time to stroll around this small town facing the Borromeo Islands.

Late afternoon, drive back to your hotel in Como.

In the evening, dinner in a restaurant.

FRIDAY

29 SEPT. 2017

COMO – LUGANO – GENEVA (45 MIN. DRIVE) B'FAST/LUNCH

Breakfast at the hotel.

Check-out and storage of the luggage in the luggage room of the hotel.

09h00 Short walk to the Villa Erba where the 2017 edition of the "Orticolario" will be taking place.



Orticolario is a celebration of nature in all its forms. Show gardens by the brightest and best young Italian designers, top-quality plants from the best growers in the region, accessories, art, food and everything to delight the senses. You will have an exclusive tour of the show gardens and an opportunity to meet the designers and artisans involved. The event takes place in the noble setting of the Villa Erba.

By noon, departure by coach from the hotel to the center of Como.

Lunch in a restaurant.

Como is a city steeped in history. Due to its strategic position on the lake it was



a worthy competitor to Milan in the past and the Old City boasts lovely 19th century palaces as well as beautiful churches and walls dating back to

the Middle Ages.

Some leisure time for shopping and sight-seeing in the afternoon.

Transfer to Lugano Airport.

19h00 Departure from Lugano to ZURICH with SWISS flight LX2913.

19h45 Arrival at Zurich Airport.

YOUR HOTEL (OR SIMILAR)

*Sheraton Lake Como Hotel ****, Como*
Comfortable, modern first class hotel set in a unique environment within a large garden, the Sheraton Lake Como Hotel is just minutes by car from the historic center of Como and from Cernobbio.



The hotel offers modern and comfortable rooms, 3 restaurants, an outdoor pool (in season), a fitness room.

PRICE AND SERVICE

Package price per person in a double room : <u>15 pers.</u>	<u>min. 10 pers.</u> <u>min.</u>	
CHF 1'995.-		CHF 2'195.-
Supplement for a double room single use:		CHF 385.-

THESE PRICES INCLUDE:

- The flights with SWISS Zurich-Lugano-Zurich in economy class including airport taxes and fuel surcharge
- 1 piece of checked luggage per person (23 kg)
- All transfers, excursions by private modern coach and boat/ferry as per program
- Accommodation in a double room at the Sheraton Lake Como Hotel or similar including daily breakfast
- All meals indicated in the program (without beverages)
- All entrance fees to the visited sites
- The whole tour from/to Geneva accompanied by Hester Macdonald from WRS (except during the excursion on 28.09.17)
- One English speaking local guide on 28.09.17
- All applicable taxes
- Travel documents in English

THESE PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE:

- Meals that are not included and all the beverages
- Travel insurances (cancellation, luggage, etc.)
- Tips to driver, local guide
- All personal expenses

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Prices and services are subject to changes until final reservation. The prices are based on a min. of 10 registered persons and 15 registered persons.

FOR MORE INFORMATION DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT :

MICEexperts

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www.worldradio.ch/article/lake-como-italian-gardens-tour/