

THE ITALIAN LAKES: LAKE MAGGIORE



TRIP OVERVIEW

Relax and enjoy the romance and serene beauty of Lake Maggiore, inspiration for artists, writers and travellers since Roman times. Explore the region by boat, cable car and train from Stresa to Turin, taking in Mediterranean and Alpine Gardens, and even Locarno in Switzerland, all from your lakeside hotel.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to Italy. Please take the time to read this dossier to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important information such as airline and hotel details and visa requirements.

Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, **L** = Lunch, **D** = Dinner

Day 1: UK to Milan **D**

Depart London on your direct flight to Milan, where you will be transferred to your hotel in Belgirate, on the shores of Lake Maggiore.

Day 2: Belgirate and the Borromeo Islands **B**

By private boat, explore the three islands on the lake, owned by the aristocratic Borromeo family. Isola Madre is home to magnificent English Gardens, where rhododendron, azalea and many rare species of plant thrive and keep a lookout for the white peacocks which live here. After free time for lunch on the only inhabited island of the three, Isola dei Pescatori, head next to Isola Bella and its spectacular 17th century baroque palace. The combination of stunning facade, ornate interiors and extravagant Italianate gardens spread over a pyramid of terraces, provides a memorable finale to the day.

Day 3: Belgirate and Turin **B**

Leave the lake today and journey to the beautiful city of Turin, original capital of a united Italy and surrounded by snow-capped alps. A panoramic tour will show you the elegance and charm of this city, home to royal palaces, museums, historic cafes and wide boulevards lined with renaissance and art nouveau buildings. Window shop the elegant boutiques in the shade of 17th century porticoes or stop in one of the ornate cafes to watch the world go by.

Day 4: Lake Orta - Belgirate **B**

Enjoy a day at leisure to explore independently. Alternatively take an optional excursion (at a supplement) to Lake Orta, * the smallest yet prettiest of the lakes. The charming town of Orta San Giulio, with its winding cobbled streets, is perfect

for whiling away the afternoon and perhaps visit the island (not included) and its small church and crypt. The scenic return journey stops near Arona to see the giant statue, known as San Carlone.

**Please note this is not available to pre book for 12/10/2020.*

Day 5: Belgirate, the Centovalli Railway and Lake Maggiore **B**

Today take the public boat from Belgirate to Locarno. Disembark in the delightful Swiss town of Locarno, at the northern tip of Lake Maggiore. Stroll to its heart, Piazza Grande - perhaps visit its 12th century castle, now an archaeological museum. Now catch the narrow-gauge train through the Centovalli, or Hundred Valleys. This scenic 60km, 90-minute route takes you from Italy into Switzerland, passing through hillside villages, across deep valleys via breathtakingly high bridges, for views of waterfalls, vineyards and forests.

**Please note customers will travel there by boat and return by train.*

Day 6: Belgirate **B**

Today is yours to explore at leisure or alternatively enjoy an optional excursion (at a supplement) after breakfast. Take the panoramic cable car (approximately 20 mins) from the town of Stresa to Alpina, a small village 800m above the lake. Extending over 40,000 square metres, the botanic gardens, with over 700 species of alpine, oriental and American plants boast magnificent views over the lake.

Day 7: Macugnaga & Monte Rosa **B/D**

Embark on a leisurely drive up into the mountains of Monte Rosa to see Macugnaga, a typical Alpine village with quaint old houses and narrow streets, where some time at leisure provides the perfect opportunity to explore, before returning to Belgirate for the remainder of your final day. This evening, delight in a farewell dinner in the hotel.

Day 8: Milan to the UK **B**

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your return flight to the UK.



ACCOMMODATION DETAILS & MAP



Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience, location, comfort or character. Hotel accommodation is generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note there is no international classification system for hotels, and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and Italy. All group tours hotels have private bathroom facilities and air-conditioning, where needed. Rest assured that all accommodation used by Mercury Holidays is regularly inspected by our staff and partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. If you have booked a triple share please note that your room will be a twin room with a rollaway bed or sofa bed added. This may limit the floor space in the room.

Please note: the accommodation listed is provided for guidance only and final confirmation of your accommodation will be sent in a document, along with your final flight information, approximately 10 days before you travel.

Meals

Breakfast is always western style and served in the hotel each morning. Dinner (when included) will be taken at the hotel.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Your initial flight is to **Milan Airport** with **British Airways**, departing from **London Gatwick South Terminal**.

IMPORTANT: Please note that final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

Airport Extras

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras on 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

Baggage Allowance

Each passenger is entitled to 23KG of hold luggage plus 1 item of hand luggage not exceeding (Max 23kg - 56cm/45cm/25cm) in size and 1 personal item such as a handbag, briefcase or laptop case. Weight restrictions will be finalized on E-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay extra at check-in. Check-In should be at least 3 hours before departure.

ON YOUR ARRIVAL

On your arrival in Milan you will be met by a representative from our local agent, **Europlan**, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/ Europlan representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your local guide will be on hand 24 hours a day should you have any queries, however if you need to contact your representative during your stay the details are:

Europlan

Address: Via Gabriele D'Annunzio, 11, 37011 Bardolino VR, Italy
Contact number: 0039 045 620 9448

Email: sales@europlan.it

Emergency contact information

Please find below the 24 hour emergency contact details for **Europlan:**
0039 045 620 9448

WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR TOUR

Visas

A visa is not required for your trip to Italy. Further advice should be sought from the applicable tourist authority for other nationalities and for general queries. We strongly advise you check your destinations' Tourist Board or Embassy for the most up-to-date guidelines regarding passport validity.

Tour Guides - Local Guide

This is a fully escorted tour meaning that you will be met by a local guide in each of the cities that you visit, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

Currency Exchange

The currency in Italy is the Euro. We recommend that you exchange your currency before you leave the UK. It is important that you budget carefully and ensure you have the right form of currency before you arrive in the country. Cash machines will also be available throughout the tour in order to withdraw money in

your local currency.

Group Size

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 15, and the maximum will be 40. If in the unlikely event there are less than 15 people booked on your tour date, we will endeavour to reduce any disruption to your holiday and try to operate your tour with lower passenger numbers. If we are not able to operate your departure date, then you may be asked to change to a different date and a full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry, any meals not included in the itinerary as well as drinks and any additional snacks. Approximately £300- £400 per person will be sufficient for the duration of the tour. It is a good idea to try and maintain a supply of small notes and change in the local currency for tipping or small purchases.

Itinerary Changes

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in country are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction &/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

Tipping

Tips - it is customary to tip your guide and driver, this is at your discretion, but we recommend you allow approximately €2 per person per day. Optional excursions are at an additional cost. Tips can be given at the end of each day.

Health and Vaccinations

It is your responsibility to check any health and vaccination requirements applicable to your booked arrangements. We can only provide general information about this. Health and hygiene facilities and disease risks vary from country to country. You should take health advice about your own needs as early as possible and in good time before your departure. Sources of information include; www.fco.gov.uk, www.travelhealthpro.org.uk, www.hpa.org.uk, your General Practitioner or a specialist clinic.

Physical Accessibility

This tour is accessible to most people with a good level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves climbing of steep stairs and getting on and off coaches. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties. All our tours feature a "Tour Pace" to help find the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights, climb stairs and get on and off coaches and boats. Our tour paces are

marked with dots out of 3, with the differences being as follows:

- 1 Dot the tour is Easy-Going
- 2 Dots the tour is Intermediate
- 3 Dots the tour is Advanced

The Italian Lakes: Lake Maggiore is rated as 1 Dot meaning that the tour pace is Easy-Going. A reasonable level of fitness is required as you will be spending some time on your feet each day though there are no large distances to cover. You will be walking around the sights at a leisurely pace, and may be getting on and off coaches, trains and boats and climbing some steps.

Credit Card Information

As normal practice you may be asked for your credit card details on check-in at the hotel in order to cover any extras incurred during your stay. If you do not have a credit card, you may be asked for a cash deposit. American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in hotels.

Travel Insurance

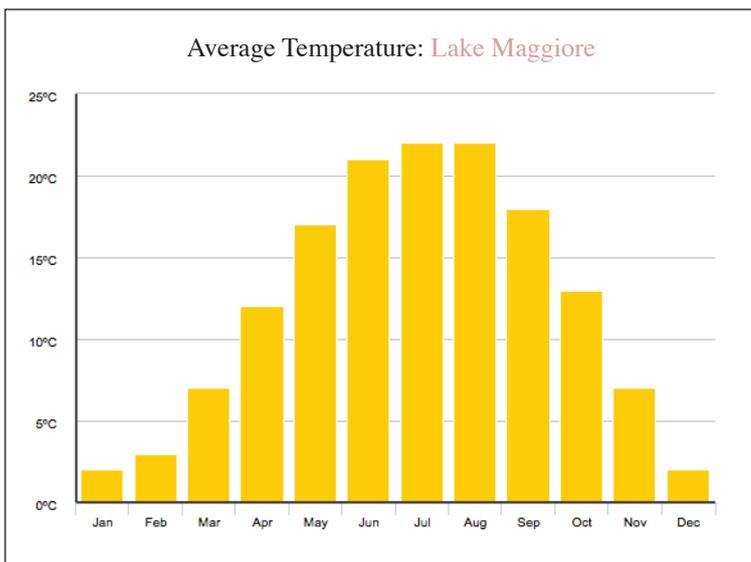
We strongly recommend that you and all members of your party are suitably insured as soon as you book your holiday. It is a condition of booking that you must have suitable travel insurance. It is important that you purchase travel insurance that suitably covers your participation in whatever activities you may undertake at the time that you make your booking. To assist you with this, we have arranged travel insurance in partnership with Holiday Extras. To arrange your travel insurance with Holiday Extras, please call **0800 781 4237** and quote 'WK830' for preferential rates. Please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Sunspot Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

WHAT TO PACK

- Sunglasses, Sunscreen and hat in summer
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Camera and charger
- A plug adaptor - the voltage in Italy is 230 V
- Antibacterial hand gel
- Binoculars
- Personal first aid kit containing travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, antiseptic creams, aspirin etc
- Small day pack for excursions
- Waterproof, lightweight jacket
- Lightweight clothing
- Sweater and jacket for the cooler months

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.



LAKE MAGGIORE EXTENSION

If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so, please contact 0843 224 0723



TRIP OVERVIEW

Spend 3 nights independently exploring more of the exquisitely beautiful area around Lake Maggiore as well as the striking lake itself from your comfortable base, perfectly situated by the lake, with a public boat station conveniently nearby.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to Lake Maggiore.

Hotel

Your 3 night stay in Lake Maggiore will take place at one of the following hotels

Belgirate: (3 nights): 4★ Hotel Villa Carlotta on a Bed & Breakfast basis. Offering one of the most spectacular views, overlooking the calm waters of Lake Maggiore, the luxurious 4★ Hotel Villa Carlotta is perfectly located in one of the most unforgettable locations in Italy. With a verdant botanical garden spanning 20,000 square metres and surrounded by panoramic views of the lake, this modern hotel with fantastic guest facilities, serves as a comfortable and peaceful base for exploring all that Lake Maggiore has to offer.

Hotel information - Via Mazzini, 121/125 28832 Belgirate (VB) Maggiore Lake
Contact number: 0039 (0)322 76461

Stresa: (3 nights): 5★ Villa e Palazzo Aminta on a Bed & Breakfast basis. Positioned on the crystal clear waters of Lake Maggiore, the enchanting 5★ Villa e Palazzo Aminta offers you a luxurious base for your stay in one of Italy's most memorable destinations. Nestled amongst lush gardens and with striking mountains framing the calming Lake Maggiore, take advantage of this lavish hotel's fantastic guest facilities, including a rejuvenating spa, a choice of

swimming pools and a selection of elegant restaurants and bars.

Hotel information

Via Sempione Nord 123 28838 Stresa Italia
Contact number: 0039.0323.933 818

Any alternative hotels or board basis will have been confirmed at booking. Please speak to our reservations department if you are unsure.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover personal purchases, laundry service and souvenirs, plus lunch, dinner and drinks.

Tour Guides

Your stay in Lake Maggiore is not escorted by a tour guide, your time will be free to explore at leisure. All internal transfers are included and your representative will advise pick up times for your main tour.

Please note

This extension takes place after your main tour.



FLIGHT INFORMATION

Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

VENICE CITY STAY

If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so, please contact 0843 224 0723



TRIP OVERVIEW

This unique city, built on over 100 islands in the lagoon, is yours to explore. Take in galleries, museums and historic churches, as well as canals lined with grand villas and tucked-away cafes - be sure to make time for an 'ombre e chiceti' - chilled white wine with typical snacks.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to Venice.

Hotel

Your 3 night stay in Venice will take place at one of the following hotels

Venice Lido (3 nights): 3★ Hotel Riviera on a Bed & Breakfast basis. With spectacular views overlooking the charming Venice Lagoon, this fantastic hotel is ideally positioned directly in front of the ferry docks which transports you to some of Venice's most iconic landmarks, taking just 10 minutes to cruise to St Mark's Square. With excellent guest facilities and being just 700 metres from the Lido Venezia beach, the Hotel Riviera is the ideal base for your stay in Venice.

Hotel information - Gran Viale S.M Elisabetta 5, 30126 Lido (VE) Italy
Contact number: 0039 041 5265979

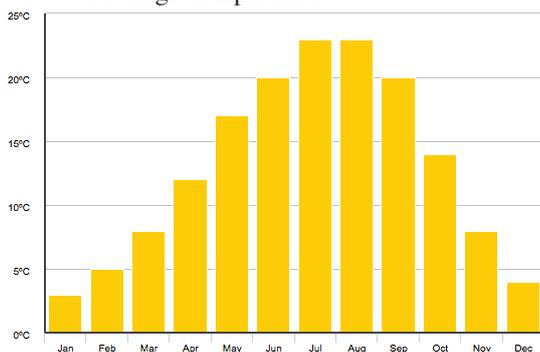
Venice: (3 nights) 4★ Hotel Palazzo Giovannelli & Gran Canal on a Bed & Breakfast basis.

Situated on the bank of the Grand Canal, this elegant 4H hotel offers incredible views and is conveniently positioned just a stone's throw away from St Mark's Basilica, Doge's Palace and the Rialto Bridge, to name a few. Elegant, comfortable rooms are well-equipped with air-conditioning/heating, FREE Wi-Fi and a Flat Screen TV.

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.

Average Temperature: Venice



FLIGHT INFORMATION

Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

Hotel information

Santa Croce, San Stae, 2070. I – 30135 Venice, Italy
Contact number: 0039 041 5256040

Any alternative hotels or board basis will have been confirmed at booking. Please speak to our reservations department if you are unsure.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover personal purchases, laundry service and souvenirs, plus lunch, dinner and drinks.

Tour Guides

Your stay in Venice is not escorted by a tour guide, your time will be free to explore the city. All internal transfers are included and your representative will advise pick up times for your main tour.

Please note

This extension takes place after your main tour.

