

NEW DEPARTURE DATE ADDED DUE TO POPULAR DEMAND

A WEEK ON LAKE MAGGIORE

Discover the islands, lakes and gardens of Lombardy
staying at the delightful Villa e Palazzo Aminta

3rd to 10th May & 20th to 27th September 2023



NOBLE CALEDONIA

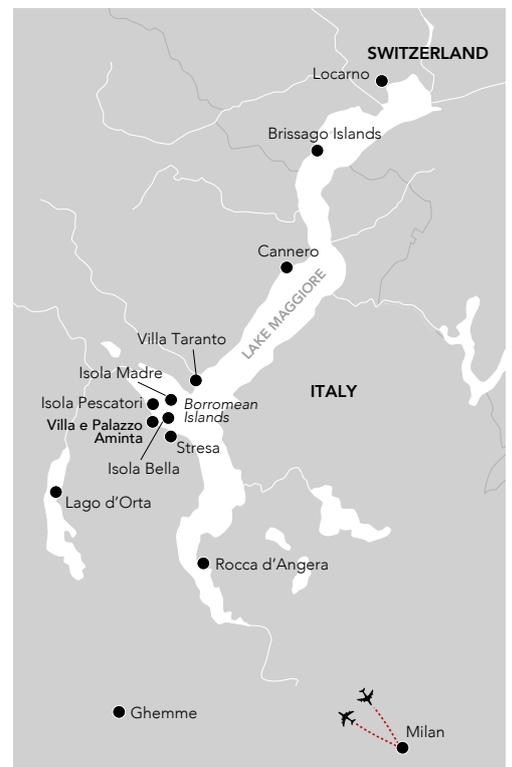
Borromean Islands, Lake Maggiore



Italy has more than its fair share of beautiful places, but few would argue that the lakes that nestle in the foothills of the Italian Alps are one of its finest assets. The Lakes of Lombardy and in particular Lake Maggiore are very special. The early mist rising off the lake, church bells resonating off the water, flower-filled gardens reflected in the still, deep waters and numerous craft going about their business, criss-crossing the lake. The images stay with you forever.

A little more sedate than some of the other Italian lakes, Lake Maggiore harbours a distinct belle-époque air with regal promenades and grand villas lining its shores. Its hinterland is intriguingly wild and the steep inclines of Piedmont's lower Alps and gentle Mediterranean climate make for lush vegetation, and are the reason why so many rare and exotic plants thrive here. Our elegant and comfortable hotel, the Villa e Palazzo Aminta is scenically positioned by the shores of the lake and when you can stir yourself from this idyllic setting there is a wealth of wonderful things to see and do and we have devised an itinerary which includes a perfect combination of included tours and ample time at leisure. Highlights of our stay will include visits to wonderful gardens such as Villa Taranto in Pallanza which features over 3,000 species of plant, a tour by boat to see the Borromean Islands with their wonderful palaces and botanic gardens and a full day exploring the lakes, towns and valleys by rail and boat including the Swiss town of Locarno.

We have also allowed for opportunities to dine independently so that you may join the local restaurant-goers in the wonderful waterfront restaurants nearby. If you enjoy touring at a gentle pace, sampling local foods and wines, walking amidst beautiful surroundings and appreciating the exotic plants and flowers on display in the company of just a few fellow travellers then this tour will surely appeal.





The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Lake Maggiore, Italy. Fly by scheduled flight to Milan. On arrival transfer to the Villa e Palazzo Aminta. After checking in enjoy free time before we meet for a welcome drink and dinner in the hotel this evening. (D)

Day 2 Borromeo Islands. This morning we will take a local boat from our hotel for a panoramic ride on the lake where we will view Isola Madre, the largest island on Lake Maggiore. The island is private, belonging to the Borromeo family and the mansion that was built at the end of the 16th century is considered the first of the villas ever built on the lake. The importance of the island comes from the botanical garden where, from the beginning of the 19th century, local and exotic plants have been cultivated. Continue to Isola Bella where we enjoy a guided visit of Palazzo Borromeo, the Baroque mansion built from the 17th century by the noble family feudatories of Lake Maggiore and surrounded by wonderful gardens. After the visit we have free time for a walk on the island before we make our way to the small, charming Isola dei Pescatori where the small boats and fishing nets denote the main activity of its inhabitants. Enjoy lunch in one of the local restaurants before returning to our hotel by private boat. The remainder of the afternoon and evening is free to relax in the hotel or explore the local town independently. (B, L)

Day 3 Lago D'Orta. After breakfast in the hotel we drive to Lago D'Orta. The small and picturesque lake is surrounded by mountains and we will take a boat to the island of San Giulio which lies in the centre. On our guided tour we will visit the ancient Basilica, which dates back to the 4th century and was rebuilt in the 11th century, then decorated with Renaissance and Baroque frescoes. The remains of Saint Julius, evangelizer of the region, are kept in the crypt. Walk along the only lane to see the Benedictine cloister before boarding the boat back to the enchanting village of Orta. The lack of cars together with the granite portals, the wrought iron gates, the little lanes and the inside yards gives it a timeless atmosphere. Later, transfer by boat to Bagnera and continue to a local agriturismo for a lunch of local specialities, sourced directly from the farm, accompanied by local wines. Return to the hotel this afternoon for some time at leisure. (B, L)

Day 4 Rocca d'Angera. Drive this morning to the magnificent Rocca d'Angera located on a rocky spur on the southern shores of the lake. Owned by the Borromeo family since 1449 the Rocca consists of five different buildings, the Torre Castellana, Ala Scaligera, Ala Viscontea, Torre di Giovanni Visconti and the Ala dei Borromeo which were constructed at various times between the 11th and 15th century. Now merged to create one historic building, we can explore the historical halls and rooms including the beautiful 'Hall of Justice' with its 12th century frescoes and visit the museum of dolls and toys. Outside we see the restoration of the Medieval gardens which blends medicinal herbs with ornamental plants. Return to the hotel and enjoy a free afternoon before meeting for dinner. (B, D)

Day 5 Villa Taranto. This morning we visit the famous Villa Taranto in Pallanza whose gardens were established between 1931 and 1940 by Scotsman Neil McEacharn. Today the gardens contain nearly 20,000 plant varieties representing more than 3,000 species, set among seven kilometres of paths. Walking along the avenues we will admire the most curious and important species, according to the season. Varieties include azalea, rhododendron, 300 types of dahlias as well as the greenhouses of Victoria amazonica, a small herbarium and the founder's mausoleum. We will take lunch in Pallanza and have some time to explore before returning to the hotel this afternoon. (B, L)

Day 6 Lago Maggiore Express. After breakfast we will embark on a full day tour exploring the lake and the valleys and towns on its shores. A morning cruise will sail north from Stresa, passing the Borromeo Islands, the castles of Cannero, the Brissago Islands and fascinating shorelines dotted with picturesque towns and villages. After a light lunch on board we arrive in the Swiss town of Locarno where we have some free time. From Locarno we take the Centovalli railway through wild and romantic scenery, punctuated by vertiginous bridges, streams of the purest water, vineyards, chestnut woodlands and villages perched on steep slopes. The railway crosses 83 bridges and travels through 31 tunnels before arriving in Domodossola where we board our coach and return to our hotel. After some time at leisure we meet in the hotel for dinner. (B, L, D)



Day 7 Ricetto di Ghemme. Leaving the lake behind we travel to the Rovellotti cellars in Ghemme. The town lies in a fertile plain of the Novara Province, at the foot of the hills that rise up towards the nearby Pre-Alps, between Piedmont and Lombardy. It boasts a wide variety of landscapes: rice fields, cultivated fields, castles and unspoilt natural beauty. We will explore the Ricetto, an impressive walled rectangular-shaped Medieval citadel, originally a stronghold used for the safe retreat for the local population in case of siege. Visit the cellars, situated in a centuries-old two storey structure made of bricks and river stone, grouped around lovely little courtyards. Here we will enjoy a tasting of their wines served with local delicacies. Return to the hotel this afternoon and enjoy free time before we take our farewell dinner in the hotel this evening. (B, D)

Day 8 Lake Maggiore to London. Check out after breakfast and transfer to Milan for our scheduled flight to London. (B)

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

CATEGORY	MAY 2023		SEPTEMBER 2023	
	DOUBLE OCCUPANCY	SOLE OCCUPANCY	DOUBLE OCCUPANCY	SOLE OCCUPANCY
Superior Garden View	£3095	£4195	£3195	£4295
Deluxe Lake Side View	£3395	£4595	£3495	£4695
Deluxe Front Lake View	£3695	N/A	£3795	N/A

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Seven nights hotel accommodation at the Villa e Palazzo Aminta • Meals as indicated (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner) • Drinks with lunch & dinner • Tours as described • Noble Caledonia Tour Manager • Gratuities • Transfers.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

Group Size: We are restricting the group size to no more than 25 participants.



Villa e Palazzo Aminta

VILLA E PALAZZO AMINTA

Dating back to the early 20th century, the grand Villa e Palazzo Aminta is one of Lake Maggiore's finest hotels. Initially built as the personal residence of the Admiral of the Royal Navy Francesco Capece, the hotel still bears the name of his dear, beloved wife Aminta and is now owned by the Zanetta family. The property has very much retained the atmosphere of a private house and the owners take pride in the warm hospitality and service provided to their guests from the moment you step into the opulent lobby with its Murano glittering chandeliers, Venetian flooring and marble columns. With its superior position on the lakefront, this sumptuous five-star property provides the perfect base for our exploration of this magical region of Italy.

Your Accommodation

Villa e Palazzo Aminta has a total of 70 rooms and suites which are located across five different floors. All have private balconies or terraces with garden or lake views and each room and suite has been carefully designed with its own colour scheme and decorated with rich fabrics and Italian furnishings. All are all equipped with twin or double bed configuration, Jacuzzi bathtub, single or double sink, goose down quilts, safe, hairdryer, complimentary mini-bar with soft drinks, beer and mineral water (replaced daily), pillow menu, direct phone line, flat-screen satellite TV and 24-hour room service.

Superior Garden View: The superior rooms measure approximately 22 square metres and feature a private balcony or terrace. They are located at the rear side of the hotel with beautiful views over the gardens.

Deluxe Lake Side View: These rooms feature a private balcony and are located at the side of the hotel with a side view of the lake and the Borromean Islands.

Deluxe Front Lake View: These rooms have a private balcony with magnificent views over the lake and the Borromean Islands. These spacious rooms measure approximately 26 square metres.

Junior Suite Lake View: The Junior Suites are located on the 1st floor of the hotel with beautiful views over the lake and the Borromean Islands. They feature a raised seating area and a large private terrace and measure a very generous 38 square metres.

Please note that as the hotel is on a relatively busy lakefront road some traffic noise may be experienced in the lake view rooms and suites though the views are simply wonderful.



Superior Garden View



Restaurant Le Isole



Bar



Junior Suite Lake View



Terrace restaurant Le Isole



Garden

Your Space

Part of the Leading Hotels of the World group, Villa e Palazzo Aminta has a number of elegant and relaxing places from which to relax and enjoy the Italian hospitality, both inside and out. The bar is open all day and drinks and snacks are also served out on the sun terrace. With large glass windows offering panoramic lake views, I Mori restaurant serves classic Italian dishes and the main restaurant, Le Isole, offers regional and international cuisine in elegant surroundings as well as al fresco dining when the weather permits.

The property's spa is one of the most attractive on the lake and features a Turkish bath, hot tub and a number of rooms where treatments such as detox scrubs, wraps and Zen Shiatsu massages can be enjoyed. For those feeling active, there is a well-equipped fitness centre and the property offers complimentary bike hire. There is also a private beach on the shores of the lake with sun lounges, umbrellas and towels provided for guest use. When not on tour you can explore the local area with ease as the hotel is located just a 10 minute walk from Stresa and a free shuttle bus operates to the town several times a day.



Swimming pool

NOBLE CALEDONIA

2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE
 +44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | www.noble-caledonia.co.uk



Itinerary and accommodation subject to change. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
 Cover image: Isola Bella.