GOHAGAN & COMPANY

VILLAGE LIFE® AROUND THE ITALIAN LAKES *
Lake Como ♦ Lake Maggiore ♦ Lake Orta
September 5 to 13, 2020
From approximately $3,795 plus air

U.S.
Day 1
Depart the U.S.

Milan, Italy/Como
Day 2
Arrive in Milan, Italy, and transfer to Como, the perfect “home” for our soggiorno (sojourn) in the spectacular mountainous Italian countryside. Check into the charming PALACE HOTEL on the shore of Lake Como, and enjoy ideally located accommodations for the entire week in the centro storico (old town) of this timeless Italian città. Join your traveling companions for a Welcome Reception and dinner in the hotel. (R,D)

Como
Day 3
Founded by the Romans in 196 B.C., Como has been internationally known for its silk-weaving industry since silkworms were first imported here in the 14th century. At one time, Como was the largest European silk producer—dyeing, weaving and designing fabrics to be shipped to the fashion houses of Milan, Paris and London. Stroll beside medieval towers and walls, Renaissance palaces and churches, neoclassical 19th-century villas and small family-owned negozi (shops) leading to the Piazza Cavour and the tranquil lakeside promenade.

See the magnificent Duomo di Como, considered the most beautiful cathedral in Lombardy—which took nearly 400 years to complete, reflecting a seamless blend of Gothic and Renaissance styles. Fruit and vegetables available in the three-times-weekly outdoor market, a local tradition for centuries.

A local scholar of Como from the Roman era to the present, and resident art historian Giuseppina Lucini will each present private, expert lectures. (B,D)

Stresa/Lake Maggiore/Borromean Islands
Day 4
Italy’s second-largest lake is a natural boundary between the regions of Lombardy and Piedmont and a close rival to Lake Como as the most spectacular in the Lake District. Lake Maggiore’s mild climate allows gardens to grow rare and exotic plants beneath the high Alps, particularly on the remarkable Borromean Islands. Enjoy a private boat cruise amidst its charming islands that served as inspiration for Flaubert, Wagner and Goethe. Cruise among Lake Maggiore’s enticing islands, graced with elegant villas and striking natural beauty. Isola Bella, Isola di San Giovanni, Isola Madre and Isola dei Pescatori are collectively known as the Borromeo Islands, named after the powerful and influential Borromeo family.

Visit the exquisitely preserved Isola Bella and walk through its splendid Italianate gardens, where white peacocks stroll among the seasonal blaze of roses, gardenias, azaleas and rhododendrons. Commissioned by Count Carlo Borromeo III in 1632, this secluded Baroque retreat is dedicated to

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his wife, Isabella. Tour the 17th-century Palazzo Borromeo, filled with priceless masterpieces by such artists as Tiepolo and the sculptor Canova, and see the unforgettable grotto, decorated entirely with mosaics of marine life.

Return to Stresa for time at leisure. An 18th- and 19th-century “Grand Tour” of Europe was considered incomplete without a visit to Stresa to experience its spectacular mountain views, tropical gardens and the resplendent glistening waters of Lake Maggiore. A young Ernest Hemingway, recuperating in Stresa during World War I, was inspired to make it the setting for Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley’s famed reunion in A Farewell to Arms. (B)

**Milan**  
_Day 5_  
The recognized capital of the design and fashion worlds, Milan has an ancient cultural heritage that blends its ornately preserved palaces, churches and museums with vibrant contemporary life, an abundance of haute cuisine, art and operatic traditions. Visit the world-famous Teatro alla Scala opera house and Milan’s exquisite Duomo.

By special arrangement, visit the UNESCO World Heritage-site Santa Maria delle Grazie to experience the enduring genius of Leonardo da Vinci’s masterpiece, The Last Supper. (B)

**Lake Como/Villa del Balbianello/Bellagio**  
_Day 6_  
Composer Franz Liszt romanticized, “When you write the story of two happy lovers, place them on the shores of Lake Como.”

Cruise by private boat across the sparkling waters of Italy’s deepest—and perhaps most paradisal—lake and learn more about its fascinating history and allure as you survey the quaint coastal village of Bellagio and grand Renaissance villas, built on the slopes of snowcapped mountains.

Visit the magnificent Villa del Balbianello and its unique terraced gardens. Built in 1787 by Cardinal Angelo Maria Durini, this consummate Italian lake villa was renovated in the early 20th century by an American veteran of World War I and more recently purchased by Italy’s first explorer to summit Mt. Everest, Guido Monzino, who bequeathed it to the Italian National Trust. It remains a paragon of authentic Italian luxury, and repository of 18th-century French and English furniture and the collection of Monzino’s Chinese, pre-Columbian and African art.

Just across the lake and perched on a promontory punctuated by stands of cypress trees, Bellagio is one of the Italian Lake District’s most internationally well-known communes and has been a popular European holiday destination since Roman times. In the 18th and 19th centuries, Milanese nobility flocked here to build elaborate villas and cultivate subtropical gardens.

Enjoy time at leisure in Bellagio. This evening, during the VILLAGE LIFE® forum in Como, residents will discuss contemporary life in the extraordinarily beautiful and historic Italian Lake District. Savor the delights of a northern Italian dinner in a local ristorante. (B,D)

**Lake Orta/San Giulio Island/Sacro Monte di Orta**  
_Day 7_  
Serene Lake Orta, nestled in the captivating Piedmont region of northwestern Italy, is considered a Lake District best-kept secret. Enjoy a walking tour to the heart of Orta San Giulio’s medieval village center, replete with cobblestone lanes that open up to a picturesque piazza; rich, ochre-hued houses fronted by decorative wrought-iron balconies; and attractive palazzos, once home to Italian nobility. Cruise across the cobalt-blue water in a private boat to diminutive Isola San Giulio, taking in stunning views of picture-perfect Italian villas and gardens along the way.

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Robert Browning, Honoré de Balzac and Lord Byron all wrote of this intimate island’s sublime beauty. Visit the 12th-century Romanesque-style Basilica San Giulio, whose opulent interior is adorned with richly detailed frescoes painted upon the nave, chapel, vaults and aisles; then, stroll the monastery’s lush grounds. Return to Orta San Giulio for time at leisure in this beautiful village.

Atop the summit of Sacro Monte di Orta—one of nine sacred mountains in northern Italy and a UNESCO World Heritage site—amidst a picturesque landscape of forested hills, visit several small chapels dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi, decorated with elaborate frescoes and built between the 16th and 18th centuries. (B)

**Como**

*Day 8*

The day is free for independent pursuits. You have the opportunity to peruse the fresh fruit and vegetables in Como’s outdoor market, a local tradition for centuries.

This evening, join your travel companions for the Farewell Dinner in the hotel. (B,D)

**Como/Milan/U.S.**

*Day 9*

After breakfast in the hotel, continue on the Verona and Venice Post-Program Option, or transfer to Milan for your return flight to the U.S. (B)