

Italian Lakes You Need to Visit



Travel Tips & Guides

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Lake Como: Getting There & Where to Stay

Where to Stay (by vibe):

- 👉 Bellagio — iconic, romantic, ultra-walkable; great ferry links.
- 👉 Varenna — best by train; quiet lanes + sunset promenade.
- 👉 Tremezzo — villa gardens & upscale stays.
- 👉 Menaggio — family-friendly base, west-shore buses.

Travel Tips:

- ✨ Stay in Varenna if traveling by train
- ✨ No car needed — use ferries!
- ✨ Bellagio & Varenna ideal for couples

How to Get There:

- 🚆 Train: Milan Centrale → Varenna-Esino
 - Trenord | ~1h | ~€7-€10 one-way

Ferry Tips:

- Frequent ferries Varenna-Bellagio-Menaggio-Tremezzo
- Day pass ~€15-€25
- Fast hydrofoil (aliscafo) for longer routes
- In summer: arrive early, especially weekends

Lake Como: Top Things to Do & What to Eat

Must-Do Experiences:

- ✓ Villa del Balbianello — timed booking required; reach on foot from Lenno (20-30 min, uphill) or by boat.
- ✓ Villa Carlotta — gardens + museum (seasonal hours).
- ✓ Ferry-hop Bellagio-Varenna-Menaggio.
- ✓ Sunset at Punta Spartivento (Bellagio).
- ✓ Walk the Greenway del Lago di Como (≈ 11 km, easy, village-to-village).

Extra Tip:

- ✨ Book villa tickets in advance

What to Eat & Drink:

- 🍽️ Missoltini (sun-dried lake shad) with polenta; risotto al pesce persico.
- 🍽️ Risotto al pesce persico (perch risotto)
- 🍸 Aperitivo with lake views; try a Lombardy white (e.g., Franciacorta).

Where to Eat:

- 🍷 Aperitivo et Al (Bellagio)
- 🍴 Crotto dei Platani (Brienno)
- 🍴 Il Cavatappi (Varenna)

Lake Garda: Getting There & Where to Stay

Where to Stay:

- 👉 Sirmione — castle + thermal spas; romantic base.
- 👉 Desenzano — best rail hub + ferry links.
- 👉 Riva del Garda — alpine feel, hiking & sailing.
- 👉 Torbole — windsurfing & cycling community.

Travel Tips:

- ✨ South for relaxing & exploring villages
- ✨ North for outdoor lovers & views
- ✨ Desenzano is best base with great ferry connections.

How to Get There:

🚆 Train: Milan Centrale → Desenzano del Garda / Peschiera del Garda

- Trenitalia Frecciarossa or Trenord
- ~50 min (Frecciarossa), ~1h 20 min (Trenord)
- €12-€20 (Frecciarossa), ~€9-€10 (Trenord)

Ferry Tips:

- Ferries connect Desenzano-Sirmione-Malcesine-Riva
- Car ferry runs east-west: Maderno ↔ Torri del Benaco.
- Day pass €15-€30

Lake Garda: Top Things to Do & Eat

Must-Do Experiences:

- ✓ Scaliger Castle (Sirmione) + walls walk.
- ✓ Terme di Sirmione / Aquaria — thermal spa session.
- ✓ Monte Baldo cable car (Malcesine): go early for clear views; seasonal.
- ✓ Limone suspended cycle-path segment (iconic photo spot; rent bikes in town).
- ✓ Ferry-hop from Desenzano to northern towns.

What to eat/drink:

- 🍝 Bigoli with duck ragù
- 🍝 Dishes with Garda olive oil
- 🍷 Wines to try: Lugana DOC whites (south), Bardolino DOC reds/rosé (east).

Where to Eat:

- 🍴 Trattoria La Fiasca (Sirmione)
- 🍴 Osteria Al Pescatore (Desenzano)
- 🍴 La Speranzina Restaurant & Relais (Sirmione)

Lake Maggiore: Getting There & Where to Stay

Where to Stay:

- 👉 Stresa — best hub for Borromean Islands ferries.
- 👉 Cannobio — authentic vibe + pretty promenade.
- 👉 Verbania (Pallanza/Intra) — base for Villa Taranto gardens.

Travel Tips:

- ✨ Stresa is great for first-time visitors
- ✨ Best for garden lovers, slow travel, and spring/fall trips
- ✨ Combine with Milan for a relaxing end to your trip

How to Get There:



Train: Milan Centrale → Stresa

- Trenitalia | ~55 min (Trenord)
- ~€8-€10 one-way
- Runs hourly from early morning to late evening

Ferry Tips:

- Ferry passes cover Borromean Islands + lake towns
- Check seasonal timetables Sit upper deck for best photos

Lake Maggiore: Top Things to Do & Eat

Must-Do Experiences:

- ✓ Borromean Islands — Isola Bella palace/terraces; Isola Madre botanical gardens (get island combo + ferry).
- ✓ Villa Taranto (Verbania) — plan 1-2 hours; seasonal opening.
- ✓ Sunset walk along Stresa's lakeside.
- ✓ Mottarone viewpoints by road or hike (cable car closed).

What to Eat & Drink:

- 🍽️ Lake perch dishes
- 🍽️ Ossola cheeses, herb risotto
- 🍷 Piedmont's Nebbiolo wine

Where to Eat:

- 🍴 Ristolounge Elvezia (Isola Bella)
- 🍴 La Rampolina (Stresa)
- 🍴 Trattoria Imbarcadero (Cannobio)

Ferries, Photo Spots & Packing Tips

Ferry Tips:

- ✓ Day passes offer value (zone vs whole-lake)
- ✓ Check timetables the day before—off-season (Nov-Mar) runs fewer boats
- ✓ Sit upper deck for best photos
- ⚠ Ferries reduced Nov-Mar — check first!

Top photo spots:

📸 Lake Como: Villa Balbianello, Brunate, Varenna promenade

📸 Lake Garda: Punta San Vigilio, Monte Baldo, Malcesine

📸 Lake Maggiore: Isola Bella terraces, Mottarone (by car/hike; cable car closed)

Pro Tips for Visiting:

✓ Best Time: Spring & Fall = fewer crowds, great weather

What to Pack:

- 👟 Walking shoes • 🧥 Light jacket • 🩴 Swimwear + towel
- 🧢 Hat & sunscreen • 🚰 Refillable water bottle
- 🧣 Scarf for churches/villas