

Lake Maggiore, Piemonte: the ultimate Gardens & Villas

An exclusive tour led by a professional garden designer to discover the most stunning villas and gardens placed on the well-known Piedmontese lake's banks: Lake Maggiore and Lake Orta.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ✓ The beauty and elegance of the Villas and gardens of the Borromean Islands
- ✓ The beauty of the lake Orta
- ✓ Exclusive opening of Private gardens
- ✓ The Ultimate collection of camellias and rhododendrons
- ✓ A must-see for garden lovers
- ✓ Tour led by a Professional Garden Designer
- ✓ A deep immersion into the nature and the history

DAY 1

Arrival to Stresa by private transfer from Milano or Torino and settle at the 4* Hotel La Palma.

Private boat cruise to discover the most admired destination on Lake Maggiore: **Isola Bella**, one of the three Borromean islands that lie in a wide gulf surrounded by mountains, directly opposite Stresa, deriving its fame from its stunning Baroque palace and elaborate Italian gardens with majestic trees, spectacular flowers and exotic plants.

Lunch at Isola dei Pescatori.

The afternoon, visit the **Isola Madre**, that boasts a 20-acre park which is considered one of the most impressive and well-preserved in Italy. The rare plants and exotic flowers in these English-style botanical gardens have been enchanting visitors for over a century. Afterwards, go back on solid ground on the western lakeshore (in Pallanza) and meet the beautiful botanical gardens of **Villa Taranto**. The style is mainly English, although there are references which are typical of the Italian statues, fountains, pools, terraces, waterfalls and all that helps give a sense of magic to this spectacle of nature. Eucalyptus trees, azaleas, rhododendrons, magnolias, maples, camellias, dahlias, tulips, lotus flowers, heather, dwarf stars, hydrangeas, many tropical plants and rare species inhabit these spaces.

Afterwards, transfer to Oggebbio, to visit the garden of **Villa Anelli**. Besides the exotic plants coming from the Far East, Villa Anelli houses a remarkable collection of camellias, developed with great passion by Antonio Sevesi, a mechanical engineer by profession and one of the outstanding authorities in the camellia world at that time, founder of the Italian Society of Camellias and one of the authors of the International Camellia Register. Return to Stresa, free dinner, overnight at the hotel.

DAY 2

After breakfast, continue the exploration through the magnificent gardens of Lake Maggiore, visiting **Villa Ducale**, that stands on Stresa lake front. The interior is decorated with a number of frescos on mythological subjects, accessed by a broad imperial staircase with pink granite steps and wrought iron handrails. The gardens, originally laid out in the Italian style, have seen the addition over the years of exotic plants, among them a superb Magnolia Grandiflora and an imposing Cedar of Lebanon.

Transfer on the hills over Stresa (800 m altitude above), to explore a natural balcony with an incredible view: the **Botanic Garden Alpina**. You will admire the over 1,000 different species coming from the alpine and sub-alpine plain of the Alps, although quite remarkable are also some species common to the Caucasus as well to China and Japan.

After lunch, transfer to **Villa Brandolini d'Adda**, in Baveno. Built in the 16th Century over a former convent, the villa displays a number of fine architectural and decorative features. The garden is the only one of its kind in the world, being divided into four parts: Italian, English, French and Japanese.



Afterwards, transfer to **Villa Pallavicino** in Stresa, a paradise of flowers and animals to delight visitors of all ages. Transfer by bus to the unmissable **Villa Giulia** and its garden overlooking the lake. Villa Giulia was built in 1847 on the wishes of Bernardino Branca, the inventor of the well-known liqueur Fernet. Return to the hotel, dinner and overnight.

DAY 3

After breakfast, check-out hotel and private transfer to **Lake Orta** and precisely to **Villa Motta**, with its magnificent gardens, where the works started in 1880 and they continued to be enriched until today with vegetable species of camelia, osmanthus, rhododendron, azalea and roses.

Transfer to **Villa Crespi**, a prestigious restaurant located on Lake Orta and a delicious place in every sense of word: food, location and hospitality. Here very precious, delicious and gorgeous goat cheese are produced and served with the supervision of one of the most well known Italian chef. Certificated organic farm and its products are a must to try, in this location surrounded by the pure nature.

Transfer by bus to the area of Biella, to visit the naturalistic area of **Oasi Zegna**, a freely accessible nature park created in 1993 as a natural development of Ermenegildo Zegna's "green thought".

Out of a visionary dream, it is the first example of environmental patronage in Italy. From a natural site to a protected park capable of giving visitors an educational and unexpectedly moving experience. From an isolated mountain area to a nature oasis

Transfer by bus to the close **Burcina Park**, a panoramic historical garden established around 1850 by Piacenza family in a soft hill very near to the pre-Alps of Biella. The aim of the Piacenza family was to plant redwoods trees (on the lake shores), cedars of the Atlas (towards the mountains), strobilus pines and many others. However, the most attractive part of Burcina Park is the rhododendron valley, with very precious and unique cultivars selected in Europe. Transfer to Turin or Milano for the departure to your destination.



ACCOMMODATION

Hotel La Palma 4* Stresa

Elegant and, modern hotel with comfortable interiors and welcoming staff surrounded by a large flowered garden. The hotel is located in a quiet and central position in Stresa on beautiful Lake Maggiore, with a swimming pool overlooking the Borromean Islands.

High standard Italian and International menus are served by the attentive staff in the restaurant overlooking the flowered garden.

The lobby, lounges, bar and other common areas are nicely appointed and offer a touch of class to this nicely done lakeside hotel.



RATE PER PERSON (Valid until 31/10/2015):

Minimum number of participants	6	10	15	20	30	40	Single supplement
Price per person	€ 1.530,00	€ 1.345,00	€ 975,00	€ 955,00	€ 840,00	€ 845,00	€ 370,00

RATE INCLUDES:

- ✓ Professional Garden Designer as tour leader for the whole tour
- ✓ Minivan or Minibus or Coach for the whole tour
- ✓ Private boat tour
- ✓ 2 overnights in Stresa in 4* hotel La Palma (or similar) in DBL STD room, BB treatment
- ✓ 2 lunches
- ✓ Admission fees
- ✓ Vat and local taxes
- ✓ 24/7 Assistance