# The Association of Former Students, Texas A&M



AROUND THE

# ITALIAN LAKES

Lake Como • Lake Maggiore • Lake Orta





# **Traveling Aggies**

A PROGRAM OF
The Association of Former Students

ĀМ

Howdy, Ags!

High on the list of the most captivating destinations in the world is northern Italy's fabled Lake District. Its unique, extraordinary landscape of glacial waters, Alpine peaks, and ancient towns painted in ocher and terra cotta hues and its distinctly *bella figura* Italian style, combined with its rich history, have inspired poets, composers, musicians, artists and philosophers for centuries.

Join our small group of former student travelers in the quintessentially Italian città di Como—your picturesque "home" for a full week—for this one-of-a-kind, VILLAGE LIFE® AROUND THE ITALIAN LAKES soggiorno, an exceptional way to experience the true essence of life in Italy's beautiful and charming regions of Lombardy and Piedmont. Our carefully designed, expert-guided excursions explore the artistic and architectural treasures commissioned by Roman patricians, medieval lords and Renaissance princes, including the fashionable city of Milan and a specially arranged viewing of Leonardo da Vinci's renowned masterpiece, The Last Supper, hung in the UNESCO World Heritage-designated Santa Maria delle Grazie.

Enriching presentations and the exclusive VILLAGE LIFE® FORUM, featuring local residents, offer you personal perspectives on Lombardy cultural heritage and contemporary life. You will have opportunities to taste northern Italy's acclaimed cuisine and wines and learn basic Italian phrases to make your time in Como all the more enjoyable.

Your accommodations for this comprehensive program are ideally located in the heart of charming Como in the prestigious, lakeside PALACE HOTEL, just steps away from the city's Gothic-style Duomo. This historic hotel overlooks stunning *Lago di Como* and welcomes guests with warm Italian hospitality and impeccable service.

Indulge in the simple, authentic traditions of the Italian Lakes and join us on this unique, popular travel program, where you unpack only once in one of Italy's loveliest settings. It is an excellent value and has sold out every time it has been offered, so I encourage you to book now while early booking savings and space are still available.

Gig 'em!

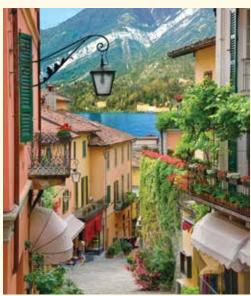
Jermfer Bohac

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or (800) 633-7514 Fax: (979) 845-9263

No funds donated to The Association of Former Students or to Texas A&M University have been used in the production or mailing of this travel brochure; all such costs are covered by our tour supplier.

Cover: Enjoy a private boat ride across the tranquil waters of Lake Orta, the hidden gem of the Italian Lake District.



Experience Bellagio's authentic old-world charm and beauty.

#### **ITINERARY**

#### Day

- 1 Depart the U.S.
- 2 Milan,<sup>©</sup> Italy/Lake Como
  - ◆ Check into the PALACE HOTEL in Como.
- 3 Como
  - Walking tour of Old Como.

#### CULTURAL ENRICHMENT:

- Lecture by Como scholar.
- 4 Lake Maggiore/Borromean Islands/Stresa
  - Private cruise on Lake Maggiore around the Borromean Islands.

#### **CULTURAL ENRICHMENTS:**

- ◆ Tour of Isola Bella's magnificent 17<sup>th</sup>-century palazzo and gardens.
- Explore the charming *strade* (streets) of Stresa at your own pace.

#### 5 Milan

Guided tour of Milan.

#### CULTURAL ENRICHMENT:

 Visit to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Santa Maria delle Grazie to see Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper.

#### 6 Lake Como/Villa del Balbianello/ Bellagio

Private scenic cruise on Lake Como.

#### CULTURAL ENRICHMENTS:

- Specially arranged tour of the Italian National Trust's Villa del Balbianello.
- ◆ Exclusive VILLAGE LIFE® FORUM.
- Explore charming Bellagio at your own pace.

#### 7 Como/Lake Orta

- Private boat ride across Lake Orta to visit the beautiful Isola San Giulio.
- Walking tour to medieval Orta San Giulio.

#### CULTURAL ENRICHMENT:

◆ Guided tour on Sacro Monte di Orta.<sup>®</sup>

#### 8 Como

#### CULTURAL ENRICHMENT:

- Day at leisure. Opt to stroll Como's colorful market and mingle with Lombardi.
- 9 Como/Milan

Post-Program Verona<sup>®</sup> • Venice<sup>®</sup> Option\* <u>or</u>

Return to the U.S.

\*Available at additional cost.



# VILLAGE LIFE®

AROUND THE

# ITALIAN LAKES

Stay in the heart of charming Como on the shores of this picturesque Italian lake, and experience firsthand the authentic character of Italy's romantic Lombardy and Piedmont regions. During this specially designed small group soggiorno, visit charming lakeside città (towns) and villaggi (villages) along the shores of Lake Como, Lake Maggiore and Lake Orta. Experience the rhythms of daily life and traditions of Italy's elite, and enjoy custom-designed Cultural Enrichments, such as the UNESCO World Heritage-designated Sacro Monte di Orta, the exquisitely Italian Villa del Balbianello and secluded Isola Bella and a private viewing of Da Vinci's unrivaled painting, The Last Supper, a fixation for scholars since its inception. Engage with local Lombardi during the exclusive VILLAGE LIFE® FORUM, hear insights from a Como scholar and lifelong resident and sample savory regional specialties and the colorful Italian dialect. This popular program in the VILLAGE LIFE® series immerses you in an intimate and comprehensive travel experience at just the right pace and includes exceptional accomodations, specially arranged meals and all excursions—an excellent value.





Sacro Monte di Orta is one in the sacred series of calvaries—Sacri Monti of Piedmont and Lombardy—known for their great virtue and impeccable integration into the natural landscape.

#### Como

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. Enjoy ideally located accommodations for the entire week in the PALACE HOTEL on the shores of Lake Como and in the centro storico (old town) of this charming Italian città. 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, arguably the most beautiful cathedral in Lombardy—which took nearly 400 years to complete, reflecting a seamless blend of Gothic and Renaissance styles.

#### **CULTURAL ENRICHMENTS:**

A local scholar of Como from the Roman era to the present and resident art historian Giuseppina Lucini will present private, expert lectures. During the exclusive VILLAGE LIFE® FORUM, residents will discuss contemporary life in the dazzling and historic Italian Lake District.

Savor the delights of a northern Italian dinner in a local *ristorante*. Peruse the fresh fruit and vegetables in the tri-weekly outdoor market, a local tradition for centuries.

### Lago Maggiore

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.

#### Borromean Islands

Lake Maggiore's enticing islands are 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 Borromean Islands, named after the powerful and influential Borromeo family.



On Isola Bella, visit a magnificent  $16^{th}$ -century villa and stroll through one of the most beautiful gardens in the world.



Lush parks with fragrant gardens and poplar trees surround the lakeside village of Bellagio, which is comprised of many traditional patrician houses and villas.

#### **CULTURAL ENRICHMENT:**

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 his wife, Isabella. Tour the 17<sup>th</sup>-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.

#### Stresa

An 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-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 reunion in *A Farewell to Arms*.

#### Milan

The 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.

#### **CULTURAL ENRICHMENT:**

By special arrangement, visit the UNESCO World Heritage-designated Santa Maria delle Grazie to experience the enduring genius of Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece, *The Last Supper*.

### Lago di Como

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.

#### Villa del Balbianello

Just across Lake Como from Bellagio is the exquisite Villa del Balbianello and its magnificent 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.

## Bellagio

Perched on a promontory punctuated by stands of cypress trees, Bellagio is one of the Italian Lake District's most internationally



Milan's awe-inspiring Gothic-style Duomo is home to some of Italy's finest religious art.

#### THE PALACE HOTEL

The recently refurbished, classic belle-époque PALACE HOTEL is a delightful establishment with an ideal setting on the *lungo lago* (lakefront promenade) overlooking Lake Como, just steps away from Como's beautiful marble Duomo and the medieval, pedestrian-only town center. Venetian stucco artistry, Italian marble and antique furniture provide subtle touches of 19<sup>th</sup>-century elegance throughout the hotel, while its pristinely landscaped gardens are the



perfect setting to admire enchanting views across Lake Como. The Garden Bar Ceccato, with its summer terrace overlooking the lake, is an excellent place to enjoy the hotel's renowned homemade ice cream or a cup of cappuccino.

Each of the hotel's 94 comfortable guest rooms is tastefully appointed with a private bathroom, air conditioning, satellite television, minibar and hair dryer. Meals feature well-prepared Italian and local specialties and international cuisine. Table wines are served with dinner. The hotel staff provides exceptional service.

well-known communes and has been a popular European holiday destination since Roman times. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Milanese nobility flocked here to build elaborate villas and cultivate subtropical gardens.

### Lago d'Orta

Nestled in the captivating Piedmont region of northwestern Italy, serene Lake Orta is one of the Lake District's best-kept secrets. 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. Enjoy time at leisure in this beautiful village.

#### **CULTURAL ENRICHMENT:**

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 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

#### Isola San Giulio

Cruise across cobalt-blue Lake Orta in a private boat to diminutive Isola San Giulio, taking in stunning views of picture-perfect Italian villas and gardens along the way. 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.



Discover the delightful treasures of two beloved Italian locales—fair Verona and extraordinary Venice. The legendary setting for Shakespeare's timeless romance and tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*, and a UNESCO World Heritage site, Verona is renowned for its well-preserved Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals, delightful piazzas and magnificent Roman monuments. See the spectacular 2000-year-old Roman Arena—the third-largest such edifice in the world, still in use today—and star-crossed Juliet's famous balcony.

Tour Venice, a UNESCO World Heritage site and architectural masterpiece, including the Gothic-style Doge's Palace. Visit the charming archipelago of Burano, known for its colorful houses, fishing boats and skilled lace-making artisans. Enjoy three nights in the elegant HOTEL BONVECCHIATI, an 18<sup>th</sup>-century palazzo ideally located just a short walk from Venice's famous



The Post-Program Option is available at additional cost. Details will be provided with your reservation confirmation.

### **Included Features**

### In Como

- Seven nights in the charming PALACE HOTEL on the southern shore of Lake Como.
- Full buffet breakfast each morning.
- ◆ Three dinners in the hotel and one dinner in a traditional restaurant, featuring northern Italian specialties with Italian wines.
- ♦ Welcome Reception.

### Expert-Guided Excursions and Exclusive Cultural Enrichments

- Walking tour of Old Como.
- Exclusively arranged, private lectures:
   Como history and culture presented by a local
   scholar and Como native, and a presentation on the
   life of Leonardo da Vinci by an art historian and
   resident of Como.
- Spectacular, full-day scenic tour of Lake Maggiore, featuring a private cruise of the Borromean Islands and time to experience Stresa's spectacular views and tropical gardens at leisure.
- Visit to Lake Maggiore's Isola Bella with a walk through the gardens of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Palazzo Borromeo.
- Full-day excursion to Milan to visit the world-famous Teatro alla Scala and the exquisite Duomo.
- Visit to UNESCO World Heritage-designated Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, with a specially arranged viewing of Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper.
- Private boat cruise across Lake Como to medieval Bellagio, including time at on your own pace to explore romantic Bellagio, the most famous village on Lake Como.
- Private guided tour of the Italian National Trust's magnificent 18<sup>th</sup>-century Villa del Balbianello.
- ◆ Specially arranged VILLAGE LIFE® FORUM with local Lombardy residents.
- Excursion by private boat to Lake Orta's
   island of San Giulio, including a visit to the
   12<sup>th</sup>-century basilica, renowned for its medieval pulpit
   made of black Oira marble and a walking tour of the
   beautiful medieval village.
- Guided tour of the fresco-adorned chapels dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi on Sacro Monte, a UNESCO World Heritage site overlooking Lake Orta.
- Opportunities to explore local markets in Como at your own pace.
- Opportunities to savor northern Italy's traditional cuisine during included meals and on your own.
- Occasion to interact with locals and immerse yourself in Lombardy life.
- Italian language introduction.

# Always Included

- Transfers and luggage handling abroad if your arrival(s)/departure(s) coincide with the scheduled group transfer(s).
- Experienced local guides for all included excursions.
- Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- Complimentary bottled water is provided on motorcoaches during excursions.
- Hospitality desk in the hotel.
- Experienced Gohagan & Company Program Director at your service.
- Complimentary use of an audio headset during guided excursions.
- Automatic \$250,000 flight insurance policy for each participant ticketed on flights by Gohagan & Company.

## The romantic allure

# Italian Lake District



For centuries, Italy's Lake District has seduced hearts, minds and souls, including those of Virgil, Napoleon, Byron, Stendhal, Wordsworth, Shelley, Wharton, Verdi, Puccini, Toscanini, Twain and Hemingway. Long before the Romans annexed the region 2000 years ago and began to

build their well-ordered towns, it was settled by Etruscans and invaded by Celts. Following the Romans, Middle Ages and Renaissance, nobility built palatial holiday villas, filled them with priceless art and laid out extraordinary gardens. European aristocrats of the 18th and 19th centuries considered the Italian Lake District an essential stop on their "Grand Tour" of Europe.

Lombardy became one of the richest and most economically developed areas of Italy and Europe, thanks to its agricultural production, trade and banking activities that extended throughout the continent.

To this day, the region remains of paramount importance to Italy. The mild climate and the snowcapped Alpine peaks descending to serene lake shores continue to lure the rich, the famous and travelers from around the world. From the deep-blue glacial lakes of Como, Maggiore and picturesque Orta to the enchanting Villa del Balbianello, and from colorful Bellagio-"Pearl of the Lake"—to the modern sophistication of Milan, discover the exquisite gem that is the Italian Lake District.

The beautiful town of Stresa on Lake Maggiore has beckoned artists, authors and European aristocracy



Nestled on the shores of Lake Como and surrounded by majestic Alpine peaks, the legendary Villa del Balbianello has one of the most beautiful and dramatic settings in all of Italy.

LAND TARIFF excluding taxes\*

Early Booking Tariff\* through April 2, 2018

Tariff\* after April 2, 2018

Per person, based on double occupancy

\$3,695

\$3,995

☐ I/We will make my/our own

air arrangements.

Singles are available upon request for an additional \$1,000.\*

\*Taxes are an additional \$195 per person and are subject to change.

All FINAL PAYMENTS are required to be made by check or wire transfer

by May 8, 2018.

	ARO	UND THE ITAL	IAIN LAI	LES RESERVATION FORM
Send to: Traveling Aggies 505 George Bush Drive College Station, TX 77840 (979) 845-7514 or (800) 633-7514 Fax: (979) 845-9263				Please make my/our reservation(s):
				☐ Double occupancy (two twin beds).
				☐ Double occupancy (one double bed).
	1 ax. (272) 043-22			☐ Single accommodations.
				☐ I am reserving as a single but prefer to share accommodations and will
Title	Full Name (exactly as it appears on your passport)		Class Year	allow you to select my roommate (shares cannot be guaranteed).
Title	Full Name (exactly as it appears on your passport)		Class Year	Please make my/our reservation(s):
				Tesori di Verona e Venezia
Street Mailing Address (no P.O. Box number please)				Post-Program Option
City		Ctata Zin Cod		☐ Double at \$1,795 per person.
City		State Zip Cod	e	☐ Single at \$2,495 per person.
Telephone (Home)		(Mobile)		☐ I am reserving as a single but prefer to share accommodations and will allow you to select my roommate (shares cannot be guaranteed).
Email Address		(Business)		
Preferred Name(s) on Badge(s)		Tour No. 068-08/11/18-104		☐ I/We want you to book my/our air,
Teso	ram reservations require a deposi ri di Verona e Venezia Post-Progr un, I/we agree to the Release of Liabilit ment as printed on the outside back cove	am Option. By reserving and y, Assumption of Risk and Bind	depositing on this	at additional cost to be advised,† from
☐ Enclosed is my/our check(s) for \$\) as deposit.  Make checks payable to <b>2018 Village Life around the Italian Lakes.</b>				(fill in departure city)
☐ I/We authorize you to charge my/our deposit of \$ to: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard				☐ Economy Class
				☐ Upgraded Economy
				☐ Business Class
Card Number Ex			. Date	☐ First Class
				<sup>‡</sup> Note: Airfare is subject to change and availability and is nonrefundable.
Signature as it appears on credit card				ичинионну ини в поптејиниионе.



The captivating setting of the Italian Lakes possesses an inexhaustible charm for both travelers and locals alike.

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overbooking or downgrading of accommodations, mechanical or other failure of airplanes, vessels, or other means of transportation, or for any failure of any transportation mechanism to arrive or depart timely or safely.

If due to weather, flight schedules or other uncontrollable factors, you are required to spend an additional night(s), you will be responsible for your own hotel, transfers and meal costs. Baggage is entirely at owner's risk. The right is reserved to decline to accept as a trip participant, or remove from a trip, without refund, any person Gohagan judges to be incapable of meeting the rigors and requirements of participating in the activities, or who is abusive to other trip participants, leaders or third parties, or who Gohagan determines to detract from the enjoyment of the trip by others. Specific room/cabin to detract from the enjoyment of the trip by others. Specific room/cabin assignments are within the sole discretion of the hotel or cruise line.

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the fare basis, likely is nonrefundable. Your airline ticket constitutes a contract between you and the airline, even if purchased through Gohagan. LUGGAGE: Luggage allowance policies are set by the airlines and may change without notice.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY: All programs require physical independence and mobility. Any physical or mental condition that may require special medical attention or physical assistance (for example, the need for a wheelchair) must be reported in writing when you make your reservation. Travelers must be able to embark or disembark motorcoaches alone or

Travelers must be able to embark or disembark motorcoaches alone or with minimal assistance from your traveling companion and climb stairs without assistance. Travelers requiring assistance must travel with a companion who will be responsible for handling equipment.

DISCOUNTED RESERVATIONS: Discounts apply only to those reservations received in the offices of Gohagan in writing, accompanied by the required deposit, by April 2, 2018. In the event a "discounted" reservation must be cancelled, no "replacement" reservation can be substituted at the discounted rate. A "replacement" reservation is a new reservation and can be substituted only at the full-fare tariff. Cancellation penalties may apply.

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ACCEPTANCE OF

ACCEPTANCE OF CONTRACT: By forwarding of deposit, the participant certifies that he/she does not have any mental, physical or other condition of disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other participants and accepts the terms contained in this Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Binding Arbitration Agreement.

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