



VENICE TO LUCERNE

LAKES & GARDENS OF ITALY & SWITZERLAND

MAY 7TH - 17TH 2020

Ringed by alpine peaks, the sparkling waters of the Italian and Swiss lakes command a landscape where mountains descend to meet the shores and grand hotels rise up in pretty lakeside towns. Here at the convergence of Italy and Switzerland is an area graced with shocking beauty and extraordinary diversity, where each lake with its own charms and treasures unfolds against a backdrop of semi-tropical gardens, gracious old villas, and vibrant villages.

The legendary beauty of this region has enthralled visitors for centuries. Artists have been inspired by its brilliant light, poets and writers have been moved to pen great works, and travellers have come to bask in all that it has to offer. From the majesty of Lake Garda, to the enchanting vistas surrounding Lake Lucerne, we'll explore an area beloved of the Romantic poets, as well as writers as diverse as Virgil, Goethe, Stendhal, and Hemingway.

We begin with a few days in Venice, once known as "the Serene Republic," before continuing on our path to Lucerne with a few nights on the shores of Lake Garda in the Italian Lake District.

This unique itinerary highlights the gardens, historic sites, and landscape of this region. The pace is never frantic, yet the days are pleasantly full and there are bound to be some unexpected diversions and adventures along the way. Join Discover Europe on an unforgettable journey from Venice, at (or sometimes below) sea level, up into the Alpine majesty of northern Italy and Switzerland.



LAKE GARDA



LUCERNE

THE COST OF THIS ITINERARY, PER PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY IS:

LAND ONLY (NO AIRFARE INCLUDED): **\$4880**
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: **\$1290**

Airfares are available from most U.S. departure cities. Please call for details.

THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE INCLUDED:

- HOTELS:** 9 nights' accommodation in first-class hotels, including all hotel taxes and service charges
- COACHING:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- MEALS:** Breakfast daily, 2 lunches, 4 dinners
- GUIDES:** Fully qualified Discover Europe tour guide throughout, local guides in Venice and Villa Cicogna Mozzoni
- EXPENSES:** Portage of one large suitcase per person
- ENTRANCES:** Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary
- TICKETS:** 3 day Vaporetto pass for Venice

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour. Insurance information will be mailed to each registration on receipt of deposit.

DISCOVER EUROPE LTD.
95 Adams Street
Keene, NH 03431
USA



e - info@discovereuropeltd.com
w - www.discovereuropeltd.com
t - (toll free) 866-563-7077
f - (fax) 603-563-7137



THURSDAY, MAY 7TH - Departure from your chosen US gateway city. **OVERNIGHT: PLANE**

FRIDAY, MAY 8TH - Your arrival in Venice will be met for the transfer to our hotel on the main island. If our rooms are not available for immediate check-in, there will be time to find lunch and begin exploring the neighborhood. This afternoon you will have a chance to unpack and rest up from the overnight flight before gathering this evening for a reception at the hotel before dinner. **(D) OVERNIGHT: VENICE**

SATURDAY, MAY 9TH - Venice stands apart from the rest of Italy, a fairy-tale city floating on the sea (and sometimes well beneath it!), fiercely independent and a constant thorn in the side of successive empires. The “Most Serene Republic” can be dazzling, seductive, irritating, dirty, expensive, but never, never disappointing or boring. A morning walking tour with a local guide places Venice in its historical context as we visit St. Mark’s Basilica to observe the Byzantine influence and then the Doge’s Palace. The remainder of the day is free; you may wish to visit Venice’s cathedral to art, the Accademia, or take an excursion to the island of Murano to visit the glassblowers. Whatever your plans, Venice is a treasure trove of wonders to explore. **(B) OVERNIGHT: VENICE**

SUNDAY, MAY 10TH - This morning we take an excursion to the island of Torcello, where we’ll visit the Casa Museo Andrich, a fabulous modern art gallery surrounded by an historic garden, and the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, built in the Ravenna style with the finest mosaics in Venice. We’ll relax over lunch on the terrace at the restaurant Locanda Cipriani and then take the boat over to Burano, another of the islands in the lagoon, famous for its lace making. The rest of the afternoon and evening are free. **(B, L) OVERNIGHT: VENICE**



MONDAY, MAY 11TH - Leaving Venice, our first stop is Padua. Rich in medieval and Renaissance art, it was once the most active patron city of the arts in the entire Veneto—Giotto, Uccello, Lippi, and Donatello all left their mark here, and its university, founded in 1222, counted Galileo among its professors. We’ll visit the Scrovegni Chapel with its magnificent Giotto frescoes and then have free time for lunch before continuing west to our hotel on the shores of Lake Garda. Dinner is included this evening. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: DESENZANO**

TUESDAY, MAY 12TH - Today we’ll take an excursion to the nearby city of Verona, where our first stop will be a visit to San Zeno Maggiore. The church is modeled on an ancient Roman basilica and was built to house the shrine of Verona’s patron saint. The fascinating 11th and 12th-century bronze door panels depict Old and New Testament scenes. There will then be free time to find lunch, view the massive 1st-century AD Arena, the third largest amphitheatre in the world, or gaze on Juliet’s balcony at the Casa di Giulietta. This afternoon we’ll gather again for a visit to Palazzo Giusti. Built in the 16th century (1570), the gardens are considered to be one of the finest examples of a Renaissance Italian garden surviving today. We’ll return to our lakeside town for a free evening. **(B) OVERNIGHT: DESENZANO**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13TH - This morning we’ll travel by boat to Sirmione, an enchanting town on the lake’s southern shore, to visit the Grotte di Catullo, the ruins of a large Roman villa, a reminder that Garda has been a holiday resort for the pleasure-seeking well-to-do since the height of the Roman era. This is the most important example of Roman imperial domestic architecture in northern Italy and is beautifully set amid olive groves at the end of a long promontory. We’ll have free time for lunch and sightseeing in Sirmione before we return to our hotel by bus, stopping en route at the charming town of Salo, once the seat of the Captain of the Venetian Empire. This evening we’ll dine in a local restaurant in Desenzano. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: DESENZANO**

THURSDAY, MAY 14TH - We’ll begin our day with a drive through the spectacular countryside of northern Italy, to Varese, where we’ll visit the Villa Cicogna Mozzoni and enjoy a private tour with the owner, of both the house and garden. The residence is a stellar example of Lombard Renaissance architecture and was first built in 1400 as a hunting lodge for the Mozzoni family, Milanese nobility who retired to the Varese area. The gardens, dating back to the 16th century, include a ‘stairway’ of water featuring a temple at the top and a grotto with tunnels. We’ll relax over lunch before we head back on the road and cross the border into Switzerland. We’ll arrive in Lucerne in time to check in to our hotel and freshen up before having the evening free to explore the local restaurants. **(B, L) OVERNIGHT: LUCERNE**



FRIDAY, MAY 15TH - This morning a walking tour of the old town takes us across the famous covered bridge, the Kapellbrucke, past the Old Town Hall (Altes Rathaus) and through the unspoiled pedestrian areas of Kornmarkt and Weinmarkt to see the remains of the old city walls. This afternoon there will be free time to shop, explore and have lunch. The evening is free. **(B) OVERNIGHT: LUCERNE**

SATURDAY, MAY 16TH - A morning excursion up nearby Mt. Pilatus. This is not for the faint of heart as we ascend by cable car and come back down by the steepest cog railway in the world! Should the weather close in, you can always spend several hours in Bucherer’s, Switzerland’s largest clock and watch outlet, but remember, it will always be sunny on top of the mountain above the clouds. This evening we’ll visit the Stadtkeller, a Lucerne institution, where you can enjoy traditional Swiss food and entertainment. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: LUCERNE**

SUNDAY, MAY 17TH - This morning you transfer to Zurich Airport for returning flights to the U.S. **(B) OVERNIGHT: HOME**