



# Tour Information



## Lake Orta





## Travel

### Passports

You may need to renew your British Passport if you are travelling to an EU country. Please ensure your passport is less than 10 years old (even if it has 6 months or more left on it) and has at least 6 months validity remaining from the date of travel. EU, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino and Swiss valid national identification cards are also acceptable for travel.

For more information, please visit: [passport checker](#)

### Visas

As a tourist visiting from the UK, you do not need a visa for short trips to most EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. You'll be able to stay for up to 90 days in any 180-day period. For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

For further information, please check here: [travel to the EU](#)

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

Italian Consulate-General: "Harp House", 83/86 Farringdon Street, London EC4A 4BL.

Tel: (0)20 7936 5900. Open Mon-Fri 0900-1200

Email: [consolato.londra@esteri.it](mailto:consolato.londra@esteri.it)

Website:

[http://www.conslondra.esteri.it/Consolato\\_Londra](http://www.conslondra.esteri.it/Consolato_Londra)



### Tickets

You will be sent an e-ticket, which shows your flight reference number, with your final departure documents. You will need to quote / show this reference number at the check-in desk and you will be issued with your boarding pass.

Please check that the details on your documentation are accurate and that all names are spelt correctly and match the names on your passport.

Your Group Scheduled or Club Class ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.



### Baggage allowance

We advise you to check the baggage allowances carefully as you are likely to be charged the excess if you exceed the weight limit. Maximum weights for single bags apply.

With British Airways your ticket includes one hold bag of up to 23kg plus one cabin bag no bigger than 56 x 45x 25cm including handles, pockets and wheels, and a personal bag (handbag or computer case) no bigger than 45 x 36 x 20cm including handles, pockets and wheels.

For more information please visit:

[www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com)

### Border Control

At border control, you may need to:

- show a return or onward ticket.
- show you have enough money for your stay.
- use separate lanes from EU, EEA and Swiss citizens when queueing.

### Transfers

On arrival in Milan transfer by coach to Lake Orta (approx. one hour) and the Giardinetto Hotel.

### Special Requests

If you haven't already done so, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.



## Accommodation

### Giardinetto Hotel, Lake Orta

The charming 4-star Giardinetto Hotel has belonged to the Primatesta family since 1930 and is located in a wonderful, isolated position directly on Lake Orta, about 4km from Orta San Giulio. The terrace restaurant, where we shall enjoy dinner every evening, overlooks the lake and offers lovely views. This friendly, family-run hotel has a heated swimming pool, a bar, a private beach, and modern, comfortable bedrooms with private bath/shower, hairdryer, TV, telephone, and wi-fi. Unfortunately, rooms at the Giardinetto Hotel do not include coffee/tea making facilities, so we recommend you bring a travel kettle if required.

For more information visit their website  
<http://www.giardinettohotel.com/en/>



## Food

Italian food rivals French in the hearts and taste buds of many gastronomes and the regional cuisine, of which the locals are very proud, wonderfully reflects the climate and local produce. Delicious pizza, pasta and risotto dishes are present everywhere throughout Italy with local specialities and sauces. Birthplace of the most prestigious school of Italian cooking, the Piedmont region offers the most varied and refined cuisine of the peninsula. Try the traditional *agnolotti* (pasta folded over with a beef and vegetable filling), the many excellent cheeses (such as the prized *Castelmango*), locally produced honey, salami and cured meats, such as *mortadella of the Ossola*. Rice dishes are also very popular in this region, the most famous being *Risotto alla Milanese* (rice with saffron and white wine) and *Paniscia* (rice cooked with lard, onions, salami and seasonal vegetables).

Renowned for excellent pastry and chocolate, Piedmont's *marron glace* and *gianduiotto* are famous worldwide. Local specialities include *Crescenzin* (rye loaf stuffed with walnuts, figs and raisins) and *Margheritine of Stresa* (biscuits

originally made in honour of Queen Margherita of Savoy). Strong Italian espresso coffee is served after the meal and will be black, in small cups, unless a *cappuccino* is requested.

Table service is common in most restaurants and bars. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, and no further tipping is required.



## Drink

The world's largest wine producer, Italy is home to some of the oldest viticulture regions. The wines are named according to their grape variety or after their village or area of origin. Excellent wines are produced throughout Italy and Sicily, with local wines offering great value and quality. With some of the best known, noble, world-appreciated and prize-winning wines, you will be spoilt for choice in the Piedmont region. It is mainly red wines that represent the main grape variety (Nebbiolo) at its finest. *Barolo*, *Barbaresco*, *Gattinara*, *Ghemme* and *Roero DOCs* are excellent.

Apéritifs such as *Campari* and *Punt e Mes* are excellent appetisers, while Italian liqueurs include *Grappa*, *Stregga*, *Galliano*, *Amaretto*, *Sambuca* and *Limoncello*.

Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

**Breakfast** – daily

**Dinner** – daily set menu at the Giardinetto Hotel

### Taking food into EU countries

You are not able to take meat, milk or any products containing them into EU countries.



## Destination

Be captivated by the quiet beauty of this small, undiscovered lake – the water is a perfect blue, its little island mysterious, the mountain and lake scenery spectacular, the quaint lakeside villages quintessentially Italian. Enjoy charming boat trips on lakes Orta and Maggiore, take in the flavours and colours at Omegna's lively street market, and discover peaceful and fascinating religious sites.

### Details of places of interest included in the tour:

#### Lake Orta & Orta San Giulio

One of Italy's least visited lakes, *Lake Orta* is unjustly ignored as it is one of the most beautiful, and delightfully set in the foothills of the Alps. Just 3.5km from your hotel, the lake's main town, *Orta San Giulio*, has a beautiful historic centre containing handsome *palazzi* and pretty houses with decorative wrought-iron balconies. In the main square is the town hall, a frescoed building dating from 1582 standing on arcades and a host of restaurants with outdoor terraces, perfect for a lovely, relaxed lunch. Elsewhere, visit the 15<sup>th</sup> century church of *Santa Maria Assunta* with a richly-decorated interior of 17<sup>th</sup> century frescoes and (energy permitting, as it sits high above the town) the amazing *Sanctuary of Sacro Monte*, that was built between 1591 to 1770 and contains 21 chapels in which a variety of scenes from the life of St Francis are depicted in life-size statuary. Another delight is the tiny island *Isola San Giulio* reached from the town by boat (leaving from the Piazza Motta, return fare approx. €3, not included and payable locally), with a pretty church containing a 12<sup>th</sup> century pulpit.

For more information about Lake Orta, please visit:  
<http://www.orta.net/>

#### Omegna

Market day in the lake's other main town, *Omegna*, is a delight too and reached by boat which departs directly from the hotel. For a true slice of Italian life this excursion should not be missed. Omegna's centre is also very pleasant around the *Piazza del Municipio* where a bridge spans the River Nigoglia.

#### The Lakes – Maggiore and Swiss Lugano

A wonderfully scenic introduction to the area is a full day tour of two of the principal lakes of the region: the relaxing *Lake Maggiore* and the Swiss/Italian *Lake Lugano*. With plenty of refreshment stops at delightful lakeside villages and spectacular lake and mountain views, you will be enchanted at every turn. Each lake has its own character and style whilst both offer wonderful scenery and are lined with elegant villas and pretty villages with typical local architecture.

For more information about Lake Maggiore, please visit:  
[http://www.illagomaggiore.com/en\\_US/home](http://www.illagomaggiore.com/en_US/home)

For more information about Lake Lugano, please visit:  
<http://www.lugano-tourism.ch/en/32/tourist-information.aspx>

#### Varallo

Nestled in the foothills of the Alps, *Varallo* is a small town on the confluence of two rivers – the *Sesia* and the *Mastallone*. Visit the 15<sup>th</sup> century church of *Santa Maria delle Grazie* that houses a superb collection of beautifully-restored frescoes depicting the life of Christ, painted in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century by local Gaudenzo Ferrari. The town also boasts an extraordinary religious community founded in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, *Sacro Monte de Varallo*, set high up at an altitude of 610m reached by a long staircase or cableway. One of the most famous pilgrimage sites in Piedmont, this lovely complex of buildings houses the 19<sup>th</sup> century *Basilica dell'Assunta* and a series of 50 chapels dotted around it representing the sacred sites of Jerusalem and filled with 800 life-sized religious statues dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Monte Rosa & Macugnaga

The pretty mountain village of *Macugnaga*, founded in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by the Swiss Walser people, sits at the base of *Monte Rosa*, the second highest mountain in Western Europe, in both Italy and Switzerland, and is dramatically surrounded by a series of high peaks. Its location it is a quiet place makes it perfect to appreciate the wild and spectacular Alpine scenery of the area as well as its charming mountain architecture.

For more information about Macugnaga, please visit:  
<http://www.macugnaga.it/>

## Stresa & the Borromean Islands

On the shores of the Lake Maggiore, the chic town of *Stresa* boasts a wealth of lovely villas, left behind by the aristocracy of Europe, who have chosen it as a holiday spot for centuries. The *Borromean Islands*, a group of three islands in the lake, easily reached from the quayside at Stresa, comprise *Isola Bella*, location of the splendid 17<sup>th</sup> century *Palazzo Borromeo*, *Isola Madre*, home to a beautiful botanical garden, and *Isola dei Pescatori*, the only inhabited island with its quaint and picturesque fishing village.

For more information about Stresa, please visit:

<http://www.stresa.com/>

## Reading Suggestions

**Bernard Levin, *From the Camargue to the Alps: A Walk Across France in Hannibal's footsteps*.**

As the title suggests, English journalist Bernard Levin follows the Carthaginian military commander's path across France to Italy, describing history, landscape and culture on his way.

**Henry James, *Italian Hours*, 1909.**

Published at the end of his life, Henry James portrays his love of Italy through this series of essays, written over nearly four decades.

**Charles Richard Weld, *Auvergne, Piedmont and Savoy: A Summer Ramble*, 1850.**

The historian Charles Richard Weld wrote a series of "Vacation Tours", of which the account of his travels to the Piedmont.

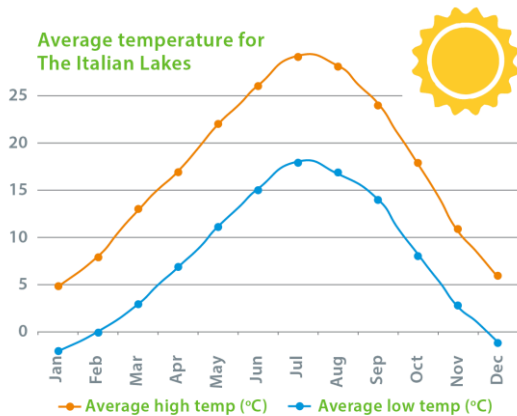
## Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions, please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.



## The Basics

**Climate** – The weather around Lake Orta at this time of year is likely to be pleasant, but evenings can be quite cool and there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.



**Time** – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT +1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

**Language** – Italian.

**Religion** – Roman Catholic.

**National holidays** – New Year's day (01 Jan); Epiphany (06 Jan); Easter Monday; Liberation day (25 Apr); Labour day (01 May); Republic day (02 Jun); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); All Saints' day (01 Nov); Immaculate conception (08 Dec); Christmas day (25 Dec); St Stephens day (26 Dec).

**Currency** – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

**Banks** – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

**Credit cards** – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

**Electricity** – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

**Drinking water** – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

**Shops and museums** – Department stores are open 0830-1930 Monday to Saturday. Most shops are closed between 1230-1530. Please note that some museums close on Mondays.

Although very common in tourist towns in Italy, please note that street vendors selling all kinds of designer knockoffs are illegal and could land you with a hefty fine. Care should also be taken when buying antiques since Italy is renowned for skilled imitators.

**Clothes & Shoes** – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good flat/grip walking shoes are recommended.

**Camera** – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

**Bath plugs** – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

**Telephones/mobiles** – The guarantee of free mobile phone roaming throughout the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway has ended. Check with your phone operator to find out about any roaming charges that might be applied after 1st January 2021. A new law means that you are protected from getting mobile data charges above £45 without you knowing. Once you reach £45, you need to opt in to spend more so that you can continue using the internet while you are abroad. Your phone operator will tell how you can do this.

**Tipping** – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one awards with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm.



## Health

### Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**



### Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**

### General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

### Sun Protection

Always ensure you take sufficient sun protection and moisturiser. A sun hat and sunglasses are also advisable.

### Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



## Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

### European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

Before you travel, make sure you have got a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or travel insurance with health cover.

You may not have access to free emergency medical treatment and could be charged for your healthcare if you do not have an EHIC or GHIC when visiting an EU country, or travel insurance with full healthcare cover when visiting Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. If you have an EHIC it will still be valid while it remains in date. Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) will be valid if you're travelling to an EU country.

For further information about the GHIC please visit:

<https://www.ehic.org.uk>



## Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7841 023807

00 44 7831 133079

**PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.**

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate general Milan

Via S. Paolo, 7

20121 Milan

Italy

Tel: +39 (0)6 4220 2431

Fax: +39 (0)2 8646 5081

Italy.consulate@fco.gov.uk

Open Mon-Fri 0930-1230 and 1400-1600. Phone lines open 0900-1700. Outside these hours a consular Emergency Service is in operation and can be contacted on +39 (0)6 4220 2413.

Travel Editions

3 Young's Buildings, London EC1V 9DB

Tel: 02072510045

Email: [tours@traveleditions.co.uk](mailto:tours@traveleditions.co.uk) [www.traveleditions.co.uk](http://www.traveleditions.co.uk)

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