



Vita Italian Tours

Vita Italian Tours are designed
for the traveller who wants
more than just a holiday

The Northern Lakes & Dolomites Tour

18 Jun – 28 Jun 2012
(11 days/ 10nights) AUD \$4985

This tour is designed for small groups to enjoy and experience some of the most spectacular scenery in Europe. Lago di Como, Lago di Garda and the Dolomites welcome visitors to an oasis of peace and tranquillity in an unspoilt environment. These areas are rich in ancient culture and tradition and dotted with beautiful villages; all with their own special charm and unmatched hospitality.

The tour starts in Milano: the economic heart of Italy, where the group will enjoy a two day visit of the centre of Milano which will include a special tour to Castello Sforzesco and Leonardo's "Last Supper". After Milano we travel to Italy's most beautiful lake: Lago di Como. Our stay will be in the picturesque town of Bellagio. A special ferry ride will take the group on a scenic ride around the lake to enjoy the romantic settings of Menaggio, Tremezzo and Cernobbio. Then we set off to Lago di Garda before the scenic spectacle of *La Grande Strada delle Dolomiti*. Mario and Viny will give you the opportunity to experience these very special parts of Italy. There will be daily strolls with many stops at mountain retreats which provide wonderful eating delights together with unparalleled views. The tour ends in Venice in Piazzale Roma.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 Milano (D) Your tour leaders, Mario and Viny, will meet you at the hotel in the centre of Milano at 4.00 pm. Introductions and a small talk on the tour will precede an evening walk of the city. Milano is Italy's economic centre and design capital of the world. Highlights will include: the impressive Duomo, Royal Palace and the shoppers' paradise – Galleria Vittorio Emanuele. It will follow a special dinner in a traditional restaurant.

Day 2 Milano (BLD) Today the group will visit the imposing Castello Sforzesco and its museums. The itinerary will give the group the opportunity to visit one of the greatest masterpieces in the castle collection: the 'Rondanini Pieta' di Michelangelo'. In the afternoon we visit Santa Maria delle Grazie to view Leonardo's famous painting 'The Last Supper'. Dinner in a traditional restaurant.

Day 3 Milano/Lago di Como/ Bellagio (BD) After breakfast we make our way to the wonderful Lago di Como. Our three days on the lake will be in a hotel with lake views in Bellagio. The afternoon will be spent strolling and relaxing in a truly magnificent setting. Also there will be a special visit special visit to the famous gardens of Villa Melzi on the edge of the lake. Dinner at a local restaurant in Bellagio.

Day 4 Bellagio/Como/Brunate (BLD) Our second day on the lake will be a special experience. We will take a slow boat and meander from village to village on the shores of the lake. Our destination is the city of Como where we will take a ride on one of the steepest railway trains in the world to the village of Brunate. We will have lunch at Brunate where we will enjoy breathtaking views of the mountains and the lake. A quick *passaggiata* around the city centre of Como before we take the hydrofoil back to Bellagio. Dinner in a restaurant in Bellagio.

Day 5 Bellagio/Tremezzo/Lenno (BD) A peaceful tranquil day on the lake visiting two magnificent villas with amazing gardens. Firstly, a small ferry ride will take us to Tremezzo to visit Villa Carlotta: a luxurious palace, completed in 1690, with stunning English gardens. Then we go to the smaller Villa Balbianello with its amazing lake views. Back to Bellagio for dinner.

Day 6 Bellagio/Riva del Garda (BD) After breakfast we make our way to Lago di Garda: the largest of all Italian lakes and famous for its tranquillity and breathtaking scenery. On our morning drive, we will pass some of the lake's delightful towns which are surrounded by lush groves of olives, vines and citrus trees. An afternoon to explore Riva del Garda situated on the edge of the lake. A special dinner will be in a traditional restaurant on the beautiful lakeside promenade.

Day 7 Riva del Garda/Sirmione(BLD) After breakfast the group will board the ferry for the beautiful village of Sirmione. A local guide will take the group to see the ancient Grotte di Catullo, the Scala Family Castle and relate lots of stories about Maria Callas. Lunch in Sirmione before Mario will drive you back to Riva. Dinner in a restaurant.

Day 8 Riva del Garda/Dolomite Road/San Vito di Cadore (BLD) Today we slowly make our way to *La Grande Strada delle Dolomiti* which links Bolzano with Cortina D'Ampezzo. It is 100 kms of some of the most spectacular scenery in Europe. Gorges, waterfalls, glaciers, high passes, thick forests and incredible mountains characterise the whole of the journey. Our stay in the Dolomites is close to Cortina in San Vito di Cadore. Dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 9 San Vito di Cadore/ Cortina D'Ampezzo (BLD) After breakfast we continue to experience the scenic spectacle of the Dolomites. A quick ride to Cortina where we will catch the Faloria cable car and have lunch at the Rifugio Tondi at 2327m. In the afternoon will be spend making our way back to Cortina where you are free to wander through this beautiful mountain village. Dinner will be in a traditional restaurant in San Vito.

Day 10 San Vito di Cadore/Passo di Giau` (BLD) Today we discover one of the most beautiful passes in the Dolomites. A short trip in the van through Cortina to Pocol to view the unique valley below which is surrounded by three mountain passes. On to Passo di Giau`: a personal favourite for many visitors in the Dolomites. We will enjoy apple strudel and coffee at the *rifugio* surrounded by lush green meadows and panoramic mountain scenery. Then a short ride towards Passo Falzarego in the Cinque Torri area. We take a chairlift to the Scoiattoli Rifugio for lunch, after which, we visit the Great War open air museum. Dinner in a local *pizzeria* in San Vito.

Day 11 San Vito di Cadore/Venice (B) Today after our final breakfast in the Dolomites we slowly make our way down to Venice. As we descend passing many beautiful mountain villages, there are opportunities to enjoy the spectacular views of the mountains and valleys carved out by the receding glaciers. The group will be dropped off in Piazzale Roma in Venice for the next part of your journey.

Items included in the Tour

- All land travel in air conditioned mini buses
- Accommodation for 10 nights in a superior 3 star hotel in Milano/Bellagio/Riva del Garda and in a mountain chalet in San Vito di Cadore
- **10** breakfasts
- **10** dinners
- **6** lunches (the meals includes special lunches and dinners in traditional local restaurants as detailed in the itinerary)
- Admission to all villas listed in the itinerary
- Admission to all galleries, museums and historical sites included in the itinerary
- Personally guided tours to all the towns mentioned in the tour
- All chairlift and ferry rides included in the itinerary
- The services of the tour leaders throughout the tour

Items not included

- Airfares
- Travel insurance (we strongly recommend you take travel insurance during your travels)
- Admission fees to places other than those specifically itemised in the itinerary
- Meals on tour except when specifically mentioned in the itinerary
- Drinks outside normal meal times or additional wine in restaurants
- Personal transport costs, phone calls and other personal needs

Cost

The cost of the tour is **AUD \$4985** per person in twin share accommodation. **A deposit** of **AUD \$400** is required to reserve a place on the tour which is not refundable unless the tour is cancelled. **Single** supplements are available at an additional cost of **AUD \$570**. **The full balance** is due 60 days before departure. **The tour** is costed on a minimum of 6 people travelling on the tour with the maximum number of 16 people.

We recommend that you read carefully the conditions applying to Vita Italian Tours

Additional information

The weather: it is the height of summer and it can get quite warm and humid in Milano, and on the lakes. For this part of the trip we recommend light, comfortable clothing. You will be staying in comfortable accommodation with air conditioning. On the mountains, the weather can be warm during the day with cool nights. Again we recommend suitable clothing with a light wind/rain jacket. It is mountainous country and you can expect to be very hilly and in some parts the gradients can be quite steep. It is not a hiking tour; however, some walking is required. You should expect to stroll leisurely for up to two hours with many breaks for sightseeing, coffee and a taste of the local produce. **The program** appears to be full; however it is mixed with long restful lunches and leisure time for your enjoyment and comfort. You will have plenty of time to enjoy the scenery of this spectacular mountain range.

If you need to, you can always take time off from the organised program.

For further information

Visit the web site **www.vitaitaliantours.com** for the full list of tours.

Write to: Vita Italian Tours
PO Box 145
Preston Vic 3072
Australia

Email: info@vitaitaliantours.com

Telephone: 03 94607373

Mobile: 0433161897

Mario & Viny Vitellone

Directors

Solito Investments Pty. Ltd.

(ACN 108 308 434 - ABN 49 585 472 899) trading as Vita Italian Tours