

# LAKE COMO RAMBLING



ITALY

## Lakeland Walking Holiday in Northern Italy

- *The Chic and Charm of 'Bellissimo' Villages*
- *Classic Alpine Scenery*
- *Lakeside and Mountain trails*

Lake Como is a gorgeous blue ribbon of postglacial lake stretching for 50km squeezed within the constraints of its surrounding mountains. The southern end forks into two long 'legs', with the picturesque town of Bellagio situated on the promontory between them. Visitors have been coming to the area for over 2000 years and for good reason: the accessible alpine beauty. The best way to experience the region is to combine walking the trails and using the ferries to access many of the chic and charming villages.



Once in Como, visit the historic town centre and stroll along the lake to soak up the tranquil old world atmosphere. Como is renowned for its Romanesque churches, its wonderful cathedral, medieval town walls and impressive villas. The walks commence by taking the cablecar up to Brunate from where you walk along a high ridge above the lake, with views to both sides. Walk down to the lakeshore village of Torno, and take the boat back.

Otherwise return through the forest to Brunate and travel back by cablecar to Como. From Como, travel by boat and taxi to the charming village of Breglia. Fill the day with a short walk to Madonna di Breglia, a 'church with a view'. From Breglia a circular walk to a mountain hut provides spectacular views across Lake Como. A short extension to this walk brings you to 'Pizza Coppa' for views as far as Lake Lugano in Switzerland and dedicated walkers can make the summit of Monte Grona (alt. 1736 m.). Moving on by boat arrive in the charming village of Varenna, deemed 'Italy's most romantic village', (quite a claim). Varenna has inspirational views of the lake and the distant mountains, brightly painted houses adorned with flower-filled balconies, a bustling waterfront and a maze of meandering cobblestone streets. An afternoon visit from Varenna to the small village of Bellano provides a short walk into the canyon of the River Pioverna. From Varenna you can also complete a walk on the northern stretch of the 'Sentiero del Viandante', a relatively easy lakeside path from Dervio or Bellano back to Varenna. Views over the lake from this path are marvellous as you walk through a terraced landscape and visit the

abbey of Piona, a most intriguing place. Varenna is a good place to embark on a day's boat tour of the lake. There are several places you could visit or start a walk, including the splendid Villa Carlotta, with its beautiful gardens, and Bellagio, "the pearl of the lake". Recommended is an incredibly scenic walk through the delightful countryside, passing the fishing village of Pescallo, climbing to the charming hamlet of Visgnola, then descending to the lakeshore and the wonderful gardens of



### Inn to Inn 8 days

TOUR CODE JCO

**Grade** Easy-Moderate . **Day Stages** Min 5 km, max 17 km. There are some different options for extending or shortening days and increasing the level of difficulty to include some longer sections up or downhill, sometimes on paths with rough surfaces. Most of the trails are well maintained.

**Waymarking** Only a part of the route is waymarked; elsewhere it is necessary to follow the route descriptions provided together with the maps.

**Accommodation and Meals** 2, 3 and 4\* hotels in attractive locations, bed and breakfast throughout.

**Start and End of Tour** The tour starts in Como and the nearest international airport is Milan. A regular train service runs from Milan (about 1 hour). There are also buses directly from Milan Malpensa Airport. Regular ferryboats run from and to all places along the lake shore. A pickup service by private taxi from Milan or the airport can be arranged on request (not included).

### Self-Guided Dates and Prices 2008

Available: Mid March to July, late August to late October.

For prices please see insert.

- ▶ For more details request dossier JCO
- ▶ Extra days can be spent at any of the accommodations

### Accommodation

**7 nights/8 days** - The first two nights are spent at Como, the capital of the Lake, in a welcoming and comfortable 4\* hotel, it is centrally located within walking distance of all the main monuments of the medieval town centre. The third and fourth nights are spent in a comfortable 2\* (deserves at least one more star) hotel in the small hamlet of Breglia, high above the lake, in the mountains above Menaggio. The last three nights are spent

in a very good 3\* hotel in the wonderful little village of Varenna, the 'most romantic village of Italy'. Some people say that Varenna is even more beautiful than Bellagio. Halfway up the Eastern shore this town is a cool spot in the heat of summer with overhanging trees and foliage. Almost devoid of the usual tourist offerings, it does have waterside cafes, with the town located up steep and narrow alleys.