

italian tours and

*Travel* by Diana

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f Italian Tours by Diana

## Custom Tour to La Bella Italia & Switzerland

### Day 1 Depart USA

International flights from USA to Milan, Italy.

### Day 2 Arrive Milano, Lago di Garda

Buongiorno e benvenuti! Welcome to La Bella Italia! Arrive in Milan, and your private driver will wait for you at the airport, in the arrivals hall, holding a sign with your name for a pleasant drive to your destination (2h). Check in to your hotel in Garda and settle from overseas flights. Lake Garda is a beautiful alpine lake region in northern Italy. You may choose to visit the gorgeous Lago (lake), which can best be experienced from a boat. Enjoy taking in the lovely sights of this pristine lake. You may also choose to visit the lakeside cities of Garda, Bardolino and Sirmione with its impressive ancient castle.

Overnight in Garda. PT/H

### Lake Garda



### Day 3 Garda

Breakfast at hotel. Today you will enjoy a boat excursion along Lake Garda. Make your way independently to the Garda port to meet your tour. With this full day boat tour, you will admire the splendid views of Lake Garda from another perspective. Head to the southern part of the lake, such as Punta San Vigilio, Garda and San Biagio Islands and Manerba Natural Park. In the towns of Sirmione and Salò, you will have free time to explore independently. A light snack will be served and you will have time for swimming! Return to Garda for overnight. B/BR/H

### Day 4 Garda

Breakfast at hotel. Today is yours independently on Lake Garda. Perhaps relax in one of the many lakeside cafés or restaurants or shop in the colorful stores and bookshops on the traffic free roads. You may wish to visit the Rocca di Garda or Villa Albertini to immerse yourself in history. You could also

rent a bike and cycle around the lakeside path to the town of Bardolino. Another option could be making your way to the town of Malcesine, where you can ride a cable car to the summit of Monte Baldo for spectacular views. At the top of the summit, you can walk along the paths for amazing panoramas! Overnight in Garda. B/H

#### Day 5      Garda, Bergamo, Stresa

Breakfast at hotel and check out. Meet your private driver in the hotel lobby this morning for transfer to Stresa (2h 30 min). Along the way, you will stop in Bergamo for time at leisure. Enjoy independent time in this characteristic town, with its cobblestone streets and Venetian walls. This would be a great place to delight in a wonderful lunch, as the Po valley has a particular climate. The cheeses, salami and desserts here (like Donizetti cake) are not to be missed. Continue on to Stresa with your driver and check in to your hotel along Lake Maggiore. Check in and settle. Overnight in Stresa.      B/PD/H

#### Day 6      Stresa

Breakfast at hotel. Then at 10:00 a.m. in the hotel lobby, meet your private bilingual guide for a tour of the Borromeo Islands.

## Lakes Region



During your private boat ride, you will circumnavigate the beautiful islands. You will stop at The Isola Bella Island, for a short walking tour. In 1670 Count Vitaliano Borromeo started construction of the monumental baroque palace which dominates the island, and began to landscape the majestic scenery of the gardens for which the Island became so famous. The stately Borromeo residence contains priceless masterpieces: tapestries, furniture, and paintings by great masters. The gardens bloom with every variety of trees and rare flowers which, as one can imagine, provide an excellent example of the celebrated "Italian garden" of that period. Enjoy the remainder of the afternoon at leisure in Stresa. Overnight in Stresa.

B/G/BR/ET/H

Day 7 Stresa, Lago di Como

## Como



Breakfast at hotel. In the hotel lobby this morning at 9:00 am, meet your private driver for transfer to Lago di Como (1 hour). The stunning city of Como is situated in the South-West arm of Lake Como and borders both Switzerland and Italy. Enjoy time at leisure to explore the city independently. You may choose to visit the “Duomo” (Main Cathedral). We also recommend tasting some sweet breads from one of the many local bakeries and pastry shops. You may enjoy tasting them as you stroll through the alleys and many boutiques around town. If you wish, board one of the ferry boats around the lake; you will see the villas that have made Lake Como so famous. These include Villa Olmo, Villa Erba, the stunning Hotel Villa d’Este, Villa Fontanella of the Versace family and of course Villa Oleandra owned by George Clooney! You may then dock in Bellagio, the “Pearl” of Lake Como for independent exploration. Return to Stresa with your driver in the late afternoon. Overnight in Stresa. B/PD/H

Day 8 Stresa, Alba

Breakfast at hotel and check out. Enjoy the morning at leisure in Stresa, relaxing along the lakeside. Around 12:00 pm, meet your private driver in the hotel lobby for transfer to Alba (2h). Along the way, you may stop in Torino for time at leisure.

## Turin



Turin hosts an outstanding food market which many chefs and gourmets attend to get the best ingredients that this land can offer. Furthermore, don't miss "Baratti & Milano", an historical pastry shop and chocolate factory, favorite destination for intellectuals, presidents and maître chocolatiers. Ask the barista for a “bicerin” - pron. [bitʃe'rin] - a delicious creamy coffee-hearted chocolate, with a crown of soft and delicate whipped cream.\*Kindly let us know your preferences, if you would like to include this stop.\* Upon arrival in Alba, check in to your hotel and settle. Enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure in the charming city of Alba. Overnight in Alba. B/PD/H

## Day 9 Alba

Breakfast at hotel. Today is yours in Alba. Alba is well known for its culinary delights, like white truffles, chocolates and Barolo and Barbaresco wine. Settled in pre-Roman times, Alba has a long history. The medieval towers, the Roman gate and the Duomo di Alba give this city its characteristic look. The warmth of the town will embrace you. There are some hiking trails around the city you could explore, as they will take you through the hills of the wine region nearby. Overnight in Alba. B/H

## Day 10 Alba, Barolo

Breakfast at hotel. Then, meet your private driver in your hotel lobby for transfer to the town of Barolo, a very scenic small town in the Piedmont region which has become a world famous wine city. It is the namesake city for the "king of wines and the wine of kings". Today you will experience two visits to prestigious wineries. The first one is like a "library of Barolo" with all local cellars representations; the second one will be more focused on guests and their relaxation. The tastings will include a light snack and a sampling of some of the local products of the Piedmont region.

## Langhe Region



Keep in mind the surrounding countryside is spectacular and that you will see some amazing panoramic views. An unforgettable experience can be arranged at the "Museo del Vino" (Wine Museum) to discover all the secrets about this ancient art. Return to your hotel for overnight. B/PD/WT/WT/ET/H

## Day 11 Alba, Lausanne

Breakfast at hotel and check out. Meet your private driver in the hotel lobby for transfer to the train station. Here you will board a scenic train to Lausanne. Enjoy the day crossing the Swiss Alps into the town of Lausanne. Upon arrival, meet your private driver in the train station for transfer to your hotel in Lausanne. Check in and settle. Overnight in Lausanne. B/PT/TRTK/PT/H

## Day 12 Lausanne, Interlaken

Breakfast at hotel. Meet your private driver in the hotel lobby for transfer to the city of Interlaken (2h) where you have time for independent exploration. Beautiful Interlaken is nestled between two lakes and three mountain ranges. It is considered the adventure capital of Switzerland for its 45 mountain railways, cable cars, chair lifts and ski lifts. Adventure seekers constantly flock to its 150 miles of ski slopes and a dense network of hiking trails. Relax and enjoy your stay in this Swiss getaway.

# Interlaken



Take in the surrounding beauty of the Alps, or perhaps take a boat trip around Lake Brienz. If you're feeling very adventurous, Interlaken is known for its skydiving, hang gliding and canyon jumping! Return to Lausanne in the early evening for overnight. B/PD/H

## Day 13 Lausanne

Breakfast at hotel. This morning, enjoy independent exploration of this lovely city. Lausanne houses the International Olympic Committee headquarters as well as the Olympic Museum and Archives. The medieval, car-free streets of the Old City will transport you back in time, and the shop-lined streets will provide plenty for you to see. You may also choose to visit the 12th-century Gothic cathedral and the 19th-century Palais de Rumine, filled with fine art and science museums. Be sure to try some regional specialties such as cabbage-filled sausage with leek gratin called "Papet Vaudois." In the evening, enjoy the vibrant nightlife that Lausanne has to offer. Overnight in Lausanne. B/H

## Day 14 Lausanne, Basel

Breakfast at hotel. Make your way to the Lausanne train station once again, and board a train to Basel. You can enjoy time in Basel, on the Swiss border with France and Germany. Travelers know the city for its historic landmarks, including the large market square with its richly decorated red sandstone town hall and the late Romanesque-Gothic cathedral. Basel is known as "The City of Art" and its nearly 40 museums give it the highest density of museums in the country. Be sure to try the local treat known as Lackerli, which are sweet honey biscuits, or indulge in Mässmogge, hazelnut praline candies. In the late afternoon, make your way back to the Basel train station and board a return train to Lausanne for overnight. B/TRTK roundtrip/H

## Day 15 Lausanne

Breakfast at hotel. Perhaps spend today visiting the small towns around the lake with the ferry boat independently. Make your way to Vevey to visit the stunning Chillon Castle. Built to protect the road from Burgundy to the Great Saint Bernard Pass, the first written documents pertaining to the castle date back to the year 1005. During the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it became the summer home of the Dukes of Savoy and in 1248 it was expanded. When passing through the dungeon, be sure to look for the signature which Lord Byron left behind on the stone wall. After enjoying some time at leisure in Vevey, you may enjoy a scenic walk to the town of Montreux. Upon arrival, enjoy an independent lunch and time at your own pace. The very mild climate here and centuries of sculpting the countryside into terraces in order to maximize the sunlight have gifted this area with its unique almost

Mediterranean feel. After your time in Montreux, return to Lausanne where you will prepare for overseas flights. Overnight in Lausanne. B/H

#### Day 16 Depart Geneva

Breakfast at hotel and check out. Meet your private driver in the hotel lobby for transfer to the Geneva Airport where you will board international flights to the USA. B/PT

**CODES:** B=Breakfast L=Lunch D=Dinner H=Hotel G=Guide ET=Entrance Ticket  
PD=Private Driver PT=Private Transfer TRTK=Train Ticket BR= Boat Ride WT=Wine Tasting

#### Your custom Itinerary to Italy Includes the Following:

- 14 nights in hotels
- 14 breakfasts
- 1 private bilingual certified guide
- 2 entrance tickets per person, skip the line
- 4 private transfers
- 5 private drivers
- 3 train tickets per person, 1<sup>st</sup> class when possible
- 2 boat rides
- 2 wine tastings
- 24/7 concierge service from Diana & staff

Once the "flow" of the itinerary is perfect for your journey, we are happy to provide a package price, per person, for the land portion only. Due to confidential and exclusive contract with our suppliers, we are unable to accommodate request for price breakdowns. Kindly note that your final quote for the land portion of this journey does not include international airfare, tipping, meals where not indicated and a city tax required by the Italian government to be paid upon check out of each hotel. The tax is to be paid in cash and is approximately 1.50-5.00 euro per person per day.

## Working with Italian Tours by Diana (Our Process)- What to expect.....

Step 1: **Your Profile** - We will gather your personal information. We need your name as it appears on your passport, DOB, address, phone number, email address and your travel budget.

Step 2: **Tell Us Your Dreams**...Then we will gather your travel wishes to include activities and destinations desired. Apply this formula - how many separate destinations and hotel changes would you like? This will establish the flow of your itinerary.

Step 3: **The Designing Process** - We will design an itinerary and send it to you for review. We will edit and adjust your itinerary up to two times. Any major revisions after that will be subject to a \$75 fee.

Step 4: **Receive Your Quote** - Once you approve the flow of the itinerary, Diana will price it out for you, doing her best to stay within your budget. The pricing provided will be a package price for the land portion only (per person).

Step 5: **Approval and Deposit** – Kindly keep in mind that the budget process is involved. Minor adjustments to the budget will be free of charge. For more complex adjustments, a \$75 service fee will be applied. Upon approval of budget, a \$1,500 deposit per person is required. This will be applied towards your final cost and will set us in motion to secure your reservations. The deposit can be paid either with a personal check or a credit card. Credit card payments are subject to a 2% surcharge. When all reservations are confirmed, we will send you a list of your hotels.

Step 6: **Final Payment and Terms and Agreement Contract** – Final payment is due 45 days prior to departure. Kindly keep in mind that your services are prepaid before departure. We also require that all travelers age 14 and over sign our company terms and agreement contract. This must be signed within one week of receiving it. In order to receive your final package, final payment as well as a signed contract must be received by Italian Tours and Travel by Diana.

Step 7: **Peace of Mind** – You are making an investment in your dream vacation and you should protect it. We highly recommend that you purchase **travel insurance**. We have three different plans and will be more than happy to provide a quote for you. Please let us know if you are interested in purchasing travel insurance. **TO BE COVERED FOR ANY PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS, IT IS NECESSARY TO PURCHASE INSURANCE WITHIN 15 DAYS OF ANY MONIES BEING SPENT FOR YOUR TRAVEL, INCLUDING AIRFARE.**

Step 8: **Final Package** – Approximately 30 days before departure, we will meet/Skype with you to review the details of your itinerary. You will receive a final package which contains the following: your final expanded itinerary, a letter containing detailed travel tips and Diana's personal contact information, transportation or entrance tickets needed, packing suggestions, tipping guidelines, language lesson, cell phone tips, etc.

Step 9: **Concierge Service** – While you are abroad, our 24 hour concierge service will be available to you from the time that you depart.

Step 10: **Welcome Back!** - Upon your return from your trip, we kindly ask that you provide a testimonial as well as a photo for our office wall of fame and website. We would love to hear about your special journey!

Mille Grazie e Buon Viaggio!  
Diana and Staff