The Best of Lake Maggiore Walking Holiday



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Italy	4 & 6	573kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Italy's second largest lake after Lake Garda, the shimmering Lake Maggiore is adored for its beautiful scenery, delicious food, and postcard-worthy towns. Visit the picturesque streets of Orta San Giulio and experience sunny shoreside strolls around Lake Orta plus wow-worthy walks in the foothills of Monte Rosa and the Anzasca Valley. You can also take an optional boat ride to the Borromean Islands, the most famous of which is the enchanting Isola Bella, which translates as 'beautiful island.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Discovering Lake Orta
- Walking in the foothills of Monte Rosa, one of Italy's highest mountains
- The option to take a train to Milan or a boat to the Borromean Islands

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers (flights available from other airports - price may vary)

- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in Pallanza
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

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Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Welcome to Lake Maggiore. Once you arrive, settle in and get acquainted with where you'll stay for the week.

Day 2 **Belgirate back to Stresa**

The Chestnut Route as it is known locally. We follow old mule trails dating back to Roman times, passing pretty churches, small hamlets, and the zoological gardens of Villa Pallavicino.

Option 1 - Chestnut Walk

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Ascent: 800ft (240m)

Descent: 900ft (280m)

From the shore, we'll walk up to the Romanesque church of Santa Maria to see the views and the frescoes. Then following a mule track, you'll see how farming used to be before we arrive at the church of Saint Paolo. Step through a chestnut forest, passing the ruins of Sanin Albino, to the village of Passera and the gardens of Villa Pallavicino.

Option 2 - Chesnut Walk via Calogna

Distance: 7½ miles (12km)

Ascent: 1,300ft (400m)

Descent: 1,150ft (360m)

Taking the same route as option one until the church of Saint Paolo, we'll then venture off on another mule trail uphill to the hamlet of Calogna. Crossing moorland to a beech forest, we'll pass by old shepherd huts while glimpsing the lake down below. Once we reach the village of Magognino, we'll start descending through Passera to the gardens of Villa Pallavicino.

Day 3 **Suna To Cavandone Or Lake Mergozzo**

Suna is a charming medieval village linked by arched passageways. Cavandone with its' breathtaking views and traditional stone houses has a centuries old yew tree as the symbol of the village. Verbania is described as the gem of Lake Maggiore for its splendid views and historic villas.
Lake Mergozzo is a small, yet very beautiful lake situated at the beginning of the Ossola Valley. It takes its name from the small town of Mergozzo located on the northern tip of the lake. The areas on these walks are known for medieval villages, stunning villas, chestnut tree groves and ancient mule tracks

Option 1 - Suna to Cavandone

Distance: 4.5miles (7.5km)

Ascent: 900ft (260m)

Descent: 1,150ft (360m)

We start from Suna from where we'll follow an ancient trail past the chestnut wood and medieval tower, climbing further for impressive views of Lake Maggiore below. At Cardavone, you'll see a 400-year-old yew tree.

Option 2 - Lake Mergozzo

Distance: 7½miles (12km)

Ascent: 1,200ft (360m)

Descent: 1,200ft (360m)

We'll take the bus to Verbania to set off on a path that hugs the eastern shore, passing through chestnut woods and meadows that open out onto views over Lake Mergozzo. Stop for lunch in Mergozzo before taking the Sentiero Azzuro (Blue Path), pausing at Montorfano for far-reaching views of Lake Maggiore and the Toce River. We'll visit the Romanesque church before descending to Verbania where we'll catch the bus back.

Day 4 **Cannero Riviera and Cannobio**

Cannero Riviera is a picturesque lakeside town on the western shore of Lake Maggiore, and it is known for its tranquillity and natural beauty. There is a promenade from which there are stunning views of the lake and the Catelli de Cannero castles. Cannobio is one of the prettiest towns on Lake Maggiore. It has a historic centre and features narrow streets with pastel-coloured houses. Both these towns are in Italy's Piedmont region. Both walks today start from Cannero Riviera and end in Cannobio.

Option 1 - Carmine Superiore

Distance: 5.5 miles (9km)
Ascent: 1739ft (530m)
Descent: 1197 (365m)

From Cannero Riviera, we walk on an old mule track. We will spot the legendary castles of Cannero on a gentle uphill walk. Halfway up we will encounter the castle-like Carmine Superiore cut into the rock this Romanesque church has frescoes and a breathtaking view over the lake. Late winter into spring camellias are in bloom while the blossom on chestnut trees can be seen in May and the holly blooms from early spring into summer. October sees the arrival of stunning autumn colours. Our path leads down to Cannobio where the two groups meet and enjoy some time exploring this delightful village.

Option 2 - Chestnut Wood and Viggiona Village

Distance: 7.4m (12km)
Ascent: 2395ft (730m)
Descent: 1772ft (540m)

From Cannero Riviera, famous for its citrus groves, our walk takes us through chestnut woods and on a sealed road past beautiful villas until we reach the village of Viggiona, with its breathtaking views of Lake Maggiore and the surrounding hills it is just a short distance from the Swiss border. The village has a well-preserved rural character and is known for its picturesque alleyways and terraces. We take time to enjoy the peaceful atmosphere before joining an old mule track heading downhill. We pass Molineggi, where there used to be mills to ground rye. We reach some shepherd huts from where we can take in the panoramic views. From here we head down to the medieval village of Cannobio, meeting up with the other group. There is time to explore its arcades and promenade.

Day 5 **Free Day**

Immerse yourself in the beauty of Lake Maggiore by taking a hop-on, hop-off boat from Pallanza to one or more of the Borromean Islands. The largest is Isola Madre considered to be a botanical garden on water. Here you will find rare plants from around the world and at the highest point the elegant Palazzo Borromeo, a family home from 1563, while today it is a museum. The world-famous Isola Bella has an Italian-style baroque garden with superimposed terraces and grottoes, statues, obelisks and two water-wheel towers. To add to this astonishing display white peacocks spread their tails as they saunter around the island. If you are a member of the Royal Horticultural Society of UK, the gardens on both islands are open to you free of charge. Don't forget to pack your membership card to enjoy these stunning gardens.

If you would like to go further afield and don't mind an early start, trains travel from Pallanza to Milan a centre of fashion, design, art, architecture and culture where history and modernity sit comfortably side by side.

Day 6 **Lake Orta**

Today we head over to Lake Maggiore's little sister, Lake Orta. Both walks start in the hills above the lake and finish in Orta San Giulio, one of the most beautiful towns in Italy.

Option 1 - Armeno to Orta San Guilio 1

Distance: 6miles (9km)

Ascent: 450ft (140m)

Descent: 1,150ft (360m)

We'll start in the town of Armeno following trails through farms and meadows, crossing a Roman bridge, and entering another village called Armeno. We'll head down through lush parkland to Vacciago, once a rich retreat away from the lake. We'll descend to Legro and from here to the lake with time to explore Orta San Giulio.

Option 2 - Armeno to Orta San Guilio 2

Distance: 8½miles (14km)

Ascent: 700ft (220m)

Descent: 1,450ft (460m)

Following option one from Armeno to Armeno, we then ascend to Monte Mesma and the Franciscan convent of the same name. We'll get a wonderful view of Lake Orta, then after circling the small peak we'll head down into the village of Vacciago and onto the painted village of Legro. A final descent takes us to Orta San Guilio with time to explore.

Day 7 **Anzasca Valley And Mont Rosa**

Today we head into the mountains and the Anzasca Valley to Macunaga, home to the Walser people. This small region still has its own language and keeps to its historic traditions. After both walks, we'll take you to the village of Macunaga sitting below Mount Rosa.

Option 1 - Piedimulera to Castiglione

Distance: 3½miles (6km)

Ascent: 1,250ft (380m)

Descent: 500ft (160m)

We start in the pretty village of Piedimulera, which sits at the mouth of the Anzasca Valley looked over by Torre Ferreiro. Our path takes us out of town, through the valley, following the course of the Anza river. Passing chestnut woods, fruit trees, and old watercourses, we'll see ancient settlements and traces of old trades. We'll finish in the hamlet of Castiglione before heading to the Walser village of Macuanaga.

Option 2 - Piedimulera to Molini

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Ascent: 1,850ft (560m)

Descent: 1,100ft (340m)

From Piedimulera we'll follow the same route as option one. After the village of Castiglione, we'll head along the valley and into the deep forested hills as we follow the old road with occasional glimpses of the cobalt blue torrent. We soon enter the outskirts of the village of Molini, which clings to the hillside flanked by the river. Finally, we'll have time to explore Macuanaga.

Day 8 **Departure Day**

We'll leave Lake Maggiore for our flight back home.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.



Moderate walking grade 6

Longer full day walks with more ascent and varied terrain. Good fitness and agility are needed. Typically, 9-10 miles (15-16km) with around 1,500ft (460m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Belvedere, Pallanza, Lake Maggiore

Overlooking the stunning Lake Maggiore, Hotel Belvedere offers an exquisite 4- star stay in an elegant lakefront setting. Guests enjoy easy access to Pallanza's historic centre and the boat dock for trips to the beautiful Borromean Islands.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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