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As you can see, there is plenty to see and do in Como city so you can easily fill a day in town and its immediate surroundings. But you can also just visit for a few hours or stay for a few days – it really depends on your overall travel itinerary. As a minimum, we recommend half a day in Como. This will give you enough time to explore the old town, visit the Cathedral, and walk along the lakeside promenade. In addition, you could easily take a funicular to Brunate or visit Villa Olmo. If you have one full day in Como city, you can see all the main landmarks mentioned in our guide, including Brunate village and Volta Lighthouse. If you want to actually visit a few places inside, take a boat tour, and enjoy some quiet time, we recommend 2-3 days for Como. Plus, you could easily spend an additional 3-4 days exploring the wider surroundings along the shores of Lake Como. Como town as seen from the lake. Many people visit Como on a day trip from Milan. With a direct train between the two cities, it's indeed very easy to do. But if you only have a day, you'll probably want to see more of Lake Como than just Como Town! In that case, start with a few hours in Como, followed by a fast ferry to Bellagio. After visiting Bellagio, take a boat to Varenna. From there, you can take a train back to Milan. TIP: Alternatively, consider joining this highly-rated day tour that visits all these places in the most efficient way. Tours use their own transportation (also boats) saving lots of time and allowing you to make the most out of your day. With its proximity to Milan and Lugano and good transport connections (railway, highway, and ferries), Como can be a good place to stay when exploring the area for a few days. Also, because it's a bigger city with more options, accommodation here tends to be a bit cheaper compared to the smaller prime towns on Lake Como such as Bellagio or Varenna. Still don't expect 'budget' prices in the high season - Lake Como is not a cheap destination. Anyway, here are a few recommended hotels in Como city center for all budgets: €€€€€+ Vista Palazzo - Small Luxury Hotels of the World€€€€€ Hilton Lake Como (one of the top picks)€€€€ Hotel Metropole Suisse€€€ Albergo Firenze (great value)€€ Ostello Bello Lake Como LEARN MORE: Best towns to stay in Lake Como Historic Como Hotel Metropole Suisse. Como town is quite enchanting, a destination that combines some of the most stunning scenery in the world with compelling art, architecture, and history. I hope this guide helps you get a better idea of what to expect and plan your visit. Enjoy your stay in this unique and romantic lakeside resort! TIP: If you are planning to see more of the Lake Como area than just the city of Como, there are quite a few things and practical aspects that you should know when planning your trip! Via the link below, you can find our top tips for your first visit to Lake Como. Check it out! READ ALSO: Info & Practical Tips for Visiting Lake Como If you found this post helpful, don't forget to bookmark it and share it with your friends. Are you on Pinterest? Pin this image! Photos: personal collection and Depositphotos.com. Additional credits claudioviziav/Depositphotos.com and sailig/Depositphotos.com. More travel inspiration for Northern Italy: This site contains affiliate links, which means that we may earn a small commission, at no cost to you, for qualifying purchases. More info: Disclosure. Home + Italy Travel Guide Yes, Lake Como is just as dreamy as everyone says—and then some. I've spent so many summers here with my family, and every time I come back, I fall in love all over again. The lake has this way of slowing you down. Whether you're sipping wine by the water, getting lost in the little cobblestone streets, or hopping between towns by ferry, it always feels like a movie. So here it is: my personal guide to 33 unforgettable things to do in Lake Como, from the spots everyone raves about to the ones only locals seem to know. If you're planning your first visit—or just want to dig deeper—this list has you covered. This travel guide contains affiliate links which supports us at no extra cost to you. Jump To Okay, geography moment: Lake Como (Lago di Como) is in Northern Italy, just an hour from Milan by train or car. It's shaped like an upside-down "Y" and lined with colorful towns like Bellagio, Varenna, and Menaggio. If you're like me and get excited about a place that mixes mountains, water, and charming villages—all in one view—this is it. This part's actually really easy. From Milan:you can catch a train from Milano Centrale to either Como San Giovanni or Varenna-Esino—both take under 1.5 hours and drop you right by the lake. By car:If you want to explore the smaller, lesser-known towns (looking at you, Lierna and Nesso), renting a car gives you more freedom. Just be ready for some very tight mountain curves. Train: Take a high-speed train from Rome to Milan (approx. 3 hours), then connect to Como or Varenna (about 1 hour). This is the fastest and most convenient option. Car: Driving takes about 6 hours (600 km). It's a scenic trip through the countryside if you prefer flexibility. Bus: Buses from Rome to Milan take around 6 hours. From there, transfer to a local train or bus to reach Lake Como towns. Train: Take a train from Venice to Milan (2.5 hours), then connect to Lake Como by regional or high-speed train (1 hour). Car: Driving takes around 4 hours (350 km), with beautiful views along the way. Bus: A budget-friendly option—buses to Milan take about 3 hours, followed by a train or local bus to Lake Como. Train: Take a train from Florence to Milan (approx. 2 hours), then transfer to a train heading to Como or Varenna (1 hour). Car: The drive is about 3.5-4 hours and offers stunning countryside views—perfect for a road trip. Bus: Slower than the train and may require transfers, but ideal for budget travelers. Private Transfer: If you're looking for comfort, hire a private car to take you directly from Florence to Lake Como. Train: Ride a high-speed train from Naples to Milan (4.5 hours), then take a regional train to Como or nearby towns (1 hour). Car: A long but scenic drive—about 8 hours (800 km) through central and northern Italy. Bus: Buses to Milan take around 9 hours, then transfer to reach Lake Como. I've been in almost every season, and honestly, they all have their charm. But here's the quick breakdown: Spring (April–June): Blooming gardens and way fewer crowds Summer (July–August): Hot, busy, and totally worth it—ideal for swimming + boat days Fall (September–October): My personal favorite: quieter, cooler, and perfect for wine tastings Winter (November–March): Peaceful, romantic, and way more affordable I get this question all the time, and here's my take: Varenna: Quiet, romantic, and train-friendly (great without a car) Bellagio: Beautiful and iconic—but pricier and a little more polished Como: Bigger city energy, good for shopping and transit Menaggio: Relaxed and super charming—perfect for a slower pace Tremezzo/Cernobbio: Great if you want spa vibes and lake views from your hotel window Tip: If it's your first time and you're not driving, Varenna is a dream base. The Duomo di Como is a stunning Gothic cathedral located in the heart of the city. The cathedral features beautiful stained glass windows, intricate carvings, and a bell tower with panoramic views of the city. The historic center of Como is a maze of narrow streets and alleys, lined with charming shops, cafes, and restaurants. Take a stroll through the historic center and admire the beautiful architecture, including the impressive city walls and towers. The Italians like to do a happy hour that they call aperitivo. Essentially you just enjoy a drink with free food (typically small bites). In Como, there are many restaurants that offer this, just plan to go after 5pm. I find it very enjoyable sitting at an outdoor table and just enjoying the tranquility of the historical center while sipping on a nice glass of wine. The funicular railway connects Como with the hilltop town of Brunate, offering stunning views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. The ride takes about seven minutes and offers breathtaking panoramic views. Sometimes the line gets super long depending what day you go on/ Visit the Volta Lighthouse, a historic landmark and museum dedicated to Alessandro Volta, inventor of the electric battery Honestly one of my favorite villas on the lake. You pay a very cheap entry fee and you can explore the whole villa. Perfect during sunset. The city is home to several weekly markets, including the popular Mercato di Como, where you can find everything from fresh produce and flowers to clothing and souvenirs. The Tempio Voltiano is a museum dedicated to the famous Italian physicist Alessandro Volta, who invented the first electric battery. The museum features exhibits on Volta's life and work and is located in a beautiful neoclassical building. Its located right in the center of the lake, you can't miss it! Last summer I spent 2 days renting a chair by the lake where I was able to swim and tan! There are various lake clubs that let you rent chairs or just access their amenities from prices between 10 euros and 40 euros. If you are walking, I recommend going to the lake club called Lido di Villa Genoa. Enjoy a leisurely private boat tour of Lake Como and admire the stunning scenery from the water Visit the picturesque villages and towns along the lake shore, including Menaggio and Tremezzo This place is such a gem—perched in the hills above the lake with views that seriously look like a painting. Ristorante Il Filo d'Olio serves seasonal, locally sourced dishes that highlight the best of Northern Italian cuisine (the name means "thread of oil"—so yes, expect amazing olive oil on everything). I explore the beautiful gardens and grounds of this historic villa, located on a promontory overlooking the lake Take a guided tour of the villa and learn about its fascinating history This is also the iconic spot in Star Wars where In Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones, the lake and the surrounding area were used as the location for the planet Naboo. The Villa del Balbianello, located on the western shore of Lake Como, was used as the exterior for the Naboo villa where Anakin Skywalker and Padmé Amidala share a romantic moment. Discover the grandeur of Villa D'este and its magnificent Italian Gardens, one of the most beautiful parks in Italy. The villa is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and features more than 500 fountains, statues, and sculptures throughout its gardens. It's best to visit this villa if you have a car. You can park near by and then ask to get a coffee/ walk around Explore the beautiful natural scenery of the Lake Como region on a hiking tour Take in the stunning views from high mountain trails, including the famous "Path of the Wanderer" Explore the beautiful Romanesque architecture of this historic abbey, located on the eastern shore of the lake Admire the stunning views of the lake from the abbey's terrace Learn about the history of silk production in the Lake Como region at this fascinating museum See examples of traditional silk weaving techniques and admire beautiful silk textiles This natural gorge located in the small town of Bellano is a unique natural wonder. It features a narrow gorge with waterfalls and rock formations that make for a breathtaking sight. While the Villa Carlotta is a popular tourist attraction, it's worth a visit for its beautiful gardens and art collections. The villa features an extensive collection of artwork from the 18th and 19th centuries, including sculptures and paintings. Explore the charming streets and colorful houses of this picturesque town Visit the Varenna Castle, a historic landmark dating back to the 12th century Take a stroll along the beautiful lakefront promenade Visit the Villa Melzi Gardens, a stunning botanical garden with breathtaking lake views Explore the narrow streets and alleys of the old town Take a boat tour of the lake and admire the scenery from the water Enjoy the tranquil atmosphere of this small town on the eastern shore of the lake Take a dip in the clear waters of the lake at the beautiful Riva Bianca Beach (something I love to do in the summer) Explore the medieval castle and the Romanesque church of San Pietro Screenshot Visit the Villa Carlotta: The Villa Carlotta is a stunning 18th-century villa located on the shores of Lake Como. The villa features beautiful gardens and art collections, including works by Canova. Thorvaldsen, and Hayez. Explore the historic center: Menaggio has a charming historic center with narrow streets and alleys, lined with shops, restaurants, and cafes. Take a stroll through the historic center and admire the beautiful architecture, including the impressive bell tower of the 17th-century church of Santa Marta. Take a boat tour: Boat tours of Lake Como depart from Menaggio and offer a unique perspective on the lake and the surrounding towns. Choose from a range of tours, including private tours, group tours, and sunset tours. Hike to the Rifugio Menaggio: The Rifugio Menaggio is a mountain hut located on the slopes of Monte Grona. The hut offers stunning views of the lake and the surrounding mountains and is a popular destination for hikers and nature lovers. Play golf: Menaggio is home to the Menaggio & Cadenabbia Golf Club, one of the oldest and most prestigious golf clubs in Italy. The golf club features an 18-hole course and offers stunning views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. Swim in the lake: Menaggio has a beautiful public beach located near the town center, where you can swim in the clear waters of Lake Como and enjoy the beautiful scenery. Visit the Chiesa di San Stefano: The Chiesa di San Stefano is a beautiful church located in the historic center of Menaggio. The church features stunning frescoes and a beautiful baroque altar. Take a scenic drive: The roads around Menaggio offer some of the most scenic drives in Italy. Take a drive along the western shore of Lake Como and enjoy the beautiful views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. Lecco is a beautiful city located in the Lombardy region of northern Italy, on the eastern shore of Lake Como. It has a rich history and culture, with a charming old town center, stunning architecture, and breathtaking natural landscapes. If you're already in Varenna (and you should be), take the uphill walk to Castello di Vezio. It's a bit of a climb, but the views at the top are so worth it. You can see the whole lake stretch out in front of you, and there's something about standing inside a centuries-old castle that feels a little magical. I went up just before sunset once, and it honestly took my breath away. Lake Como's only island! It's teeny tiny, but the ferry ride alone makes it feel like an adventure. Once you're there, you can wander the ruins, peek inside the church, and grab lunch at the one restaurant on the island. It's such a peaceful little break from the busier towns. If you're up for a scenic walk (nothing too crazy, I promise), the Greenway trail is one of the best ways to see the lake slowly. It winds through postcard-perfect towns like Lenno and Tremezzo, and there are plenty of cafés to stop at along the way. I like doing a section of it in the morning and rewarding myself with gelato by the water after. Villa Melzi is such a dreamy spot—less crowded than some of the other villas, and honestly, I think the gardens are even more peaceful. You'll find little sculptures tucked between the trees and a perfect view of the lake from almost every angle. Bring a book, take a stroll, or just sit by the water and breathe it all in. On a cloudy day (or when you just want a break from walking), the Pinacoteca Civica in Como is a lovely little art museum. It's quiet, calm, and filled with works by Northern Italian artists. I didn't expect to love it as much as I did—it's the kind of place that makes you slow down and really look. Cernobbio has such an elegant feel—less touristy, more timeless. I love coming here just to wander the promenade and sit down for a relaxed lunch near the water. You can peek at Villa d'Este while you're there (even if you're not staying), and the whole town has that perfect "Italian summer" energy. This one's a bit of a hidden gem. Argegno is a sleepy little town with gorgeous lake views, but the real surprise is the cable car that takes you up to Pigna. It's a short ride but the view at the top? Unreal. You feel like you're floating above the lake. Way up at the top of the lake, Domaso is surrounded by hills covered in vineyards. It's a bit quieter up there, but the wine is so good. I did a tasting at a family-run winery that looked right out over the lake—local wines, homemade snacks, and just the nicest people. Total hidden gem. If you're renting a car, don't skip the drive along the western shore of the lake. It's winding and narrow, yes, but every turn gives you a new jaw-dropping view. I like to stop in random towns I've never heard of—some of the best meals I've had were from those "let's just pull over here" moments. La Vila è Bella, Menaggio - This restaurant serves delicious Italian cuisine with a modern twist. The outdoor terrace offers stunning lake views, a modern twist. The outdoor terrace offers stunning lake views, a modern twist. Located on the shore of Lake Como, this restaurant serves fresh seafood and traditional Italian dishes. The terrace offers panoramic views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. Il Gatto Nero, Cernobbio - This Michelin-starred restaurant serves creative Italian cuisine with an emphasis on fresh, local ingredients. The romantic setting, with a terrace overlooking the lake, is perfect for a special occasion. Ristorante La Punta, Bellagio - This restaurant is known for its exceptional seafood dishes, served in a beautiful setting overlooking the lake. The terrace offers stunning views of the surrounding mountains. La Baia di Paré, Moltrasio - This restaurant serves delicious Mediterranean-inspired cuisine, with a focus on seafood. The outdoor terrace offers beautiful views of the lake. Trattoria del Glicine, Varenna - This traditional trattoria serves classic Italian dishes made with fresh, locally sourced ingredients. The outdoor terrace is surrounded by beautiful flowers and offers stunning lake views. L'Orangerie, Villa Crespi, Orta San Giulio - This Michelin-starred restaurant is located in a beautiful villa overlooking Lake Orta, about an hour's drive from Lake Como. The cuisine is inspired by the flavors of the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Al Velu, Tremezzo - This rustic restaurant serves traditional Italian dishes made with fresh, local ingredients. The outdoor terrace offers stunning views of Lake Como. Imbarcadero, Bellagio - This stylish restaurant offers modern Italian cuisine with a focus on seafood. The outdoor terrace offers beautiful views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. Salice Blu, Bellagio - This Michelin-starred restaurant serves creative Italian cuisine with a focus on fresh, local ingredients. The outdoor terrace offers beautiful views of Lake Como. There are a number of different travel insurance companies that offer coverage for Italy. Before purchasing a policy, it is important to do your research and compare policies to make sure you are getting the best coverage for your needs. Some popular choices include World Nomads, Allianz Travel Insurance, and Travelix Insurance Services. Learn more about Italy travel Villa del Balbianello, Via Comodia, 5, 22016 Lenno CO, Italy - This beautiful villa on the western shore of Lake Como is a popular spot for Instagram photos, with its stunning gardens, terraces, and lake views. Bellagio Waterfront, Lungolario Manzoni, 22021 Bellagio CO, Italy - The waterfront promenade in Bellagio offers beautiful views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. It's a great spot for photos at sunset. Castello di Vezio, Via al Castello, 22010 Perledo LC, Italy - This medieval castle on a hilltop above Varenna offers panoramic views of Lake Como and the surrounding countryside. Menaggio Waterfront, Piazza Garibaldi, 22017 Menaggio CO, Italy - The waterfront promenade in Menaggio is a great spot for photos, with views of the lake and the colorful houses along the shore. Villa Melzi Gardens, Lungolario Manzoni, 22021 Bellagio CO, Italy - The gardens of this beautiful villa in Bellagio offer a peaceful retreat with stunning lake views. Don't miss the Japanese garden and the neoclassical temple. Varenna Waterfront, Via Venini, 22010 Varenna LC, Italy - The colorful houses and boats along the waterfront in Varenna make for a great photo backdrop. Don't miss the charming cobblestone streets and alleys of the old town. Fiumelatte, Fiumelatte LC, Italy - This small river on the eastern shore of Lake Como is known for its milky white color and picturesque waterfall. It's a great spot for nature photos. Faro Voltiano, Via alla Funicolare, 22032 Brunate CO, Italy - The lighthouse on top of the hill above Como offers panoramic views of the city and the lake. It's a great spot for sunset photos. Villa Serbelloni Gardens, Via Roma, 1, 22021 Bellagio CO, Italy - The gardens of this grand villa in Bellagio offer beautiful views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. Don't miss the colorful flowers and fountains. Piona Abbey, Via Abbazia, 1, 23874 Piona CO, Italy - This ancient abbey on the eastern shore of Lake Como offers a glimpse into the region's medieval history. The Romanesque architecture and beautiful gardens make for great photo opportunities. Currency: The official currency of Italy is the Euro. Language: Italian is the main language spoken in Lake Como, though English is widely understood in most areas. Weather: Summers are usually warm with temperatures between 18-30 °C (65-85 °F). Winters are mild with temperatures ranging from 0-15°C (32-60°F). Public Transportation: Lake Como's main public transportation includes buses, trains, and ferries. The primary train station is called Como San Giovanni. Time Zone: Lake Como follows Central European Time (CET). Italian Visa: Depending on where you are from, you may need to obtain a visa before entering Italy. You should check with your local Italian embassy or consulate for more information. If you are an American, Canadian, or Australian citizen, you will need a visa for visits of up to 90 days. Electricity Socket: Electrical outlets in Milan are Type F, which accept plugs with round pins or Europlug adapters. The voltage is 230 V and the frequency is 50 Hz. Italy SIM Card: It is recommended to get a local SIM card when travelling in Italy. This will give you the best coverage and access to data services while roaming. Car Rentals: If you are planning on renting a car in Como, it is important to do your research beforehand. There are several rental companies that offer competitive rates and good customer service. I recommend this car rental service. Get more italy travel tips History of Lago di Como/ Lake Como Lake Como, or Lago di Como in Italian, is a glacial lake located in the Lombardy region of northern Italy. The lake is shaped like an upside-down Y and stretches over an area of 146 square kilometers, making it the third-largest lake in Italy. The area around Lake Como has been inhabited since prehistoric times, and evidence of human settlements from the Bronze Age has been found in the region. The lake has been a popular destination for tourists since the Roman era, when wealthy Romans built villas along its shores. During the Middle Ages, Lake Como was a strategic location due to its position on the trade route between Milan and Switzerland. Many towns and villages were founded during this time, and several castles were built to defend the area. The region became a center of silk production during the Renaissance, and wealthy merchants and aristocrats built elaborate villas and gardens around the lake. In the 19th century, Lake Como became a popular destination for wealthy Europeans, including writers, artists, and composers. Today, the lake remains a popular tourist destination, known for its scenic beauty, historic towns, and luxury villas. How long should you spend in Lake Como? The length of your stay in Lake Como largely depends on your interests and travel style. However, it is recommended to spend at least two to three days in the area to fully experience its beauty and activities. If you plan to explore the surrounding towns and attractions, consider staying for five to seven days or more. What is Lake Como best known for? Lake Como is best known for its stunning natural beauty, surrounded by the picturesque Italian Alps and dotted with charming towns along its shores. The lake is also famous for its historic villas and gardens, including the majestic Villa del Balbianello and Villa Carlotta. Additionally, Lake Como is a popular destination for outdoor activities such as hiking, boating, and windsurfing. Is there a lot to do in Lake Como Italy? Yes, there is plenty to do in Lake Como Italy. Apart from enjoying the beautiful scenery, visitors can explore the historic villas and gardens, take a boat tour, hike the surrounding mountains, visit museums and galleries, and enjoy the local cuisine and wine. There are also many charming towns along the lake's shores to explore, such as Bellagio, Varenna, and Menaggio. What to do in a day in Lake Como? If you only have one day in Lake Como, start with a boat tour to admire the stunning scenery and historic villas. You can also explore the charming town of Bellagio, known for its cobbled streets, boutique shops, and lakeside cafés. Other popular activities include hiking, visiting museums and galleries, and enjoying the local cuisine and wine. Where is the Como train station located? The Como train station is located at Via Giovanni Battista Pirelli 2, 22100 Como. It is easily accessible by bus or on foot. How often does the Bellagio ferry run? The Bellagio ferry runs from dawn to dusk and operates every 30 minutes throughout the day. Tickets can be purchased online or at ticket offices around the lake. What are some of the best restaurants in Lake Como? Some of the best restaurants in Lake Como include Trattoria del Glicine in Lenno, Imbarcadero in Bellagio and Salice Blu in Bellagio. All of these restaurants serve modern Italian cuisine with a focus on fresh, local ingredients. What are some of the most popular photography spots in Lake Como? Some of the most popular photography spots around Lake Como include Villa del Balbianello, Bellagio Waterfront, Castello di Vezio, Menaggio Waterfront, Villa Melzi Gardens, Varenna Waterfront, Fiumelatte, Faro Voltiano and Villa Serbelloni Gardens. On Lake Como, leisure gets an upgrade. You can sip a Negroni in a centuries-old piazza, hike up to a castle before lunch, and still have time for a swim beneath a waterfall—all before the evening bells chime. Ready to trade your to-do list for a gelato and a ferry ticket? Here's your guide to living your best life on Lake Como. Explore the Towns and VillagesComoThe bustling heart of the lake, Como is where most journeys begin. Stroll its medieval center, admire the Gothic-Renaissance Como Cathedral (one of Northern Italy's most important churches), and stop by the neoclassical Villa Olmo and its lakeside gardens (open daily and now free to enter). Don't miss the Tempio Voltiano, a museum dedicated to Alessandro Volta, inventor of the electric battery. For sweeping views, ride the funicular up to Brunate and hike the trails above the city, the funicular departs from Piazza Alcide de Gasperi and runs year-round.Alexi Rosenfeld/Getty ImagesTourists walk along the steps of the street leading to the top part of the town in Bellagio, Italy.BellagioNicknamed the "Pearl of Lake Como," Bellagio sits at the intersection of the lake's three branches. Wander the cobbled lanes of its historic center, climb the photogenic Salita Serbelloni, and visit the Romanesque Church of St. James, dating to the 11th century. The gardens of Villa Melzi d'Eril (open daily from March to November) and the park of Villa Serbelloni are musts, as is Punta Spartivento for panoramic views.VarennaQuieter and more romantic, Varenna charms with its pastel waterfront, the 11th-century Basilica di San Giorgio, and the tiny Church of San Giovanni Battista with medieval frescoes. The lakeside promenade, known as the "Walk of Lovers," is lined with cafés and offers dreamy sunset views. Villa Monastero's botanical gardens stretch along the shore and are open March through November, with exotic plants and architectural follies. Hike up to Castello di Vezio, a medieval castle with panoramic vistas and art installations. The path from Varenna's center to the castle takes about 30 minutes and is part of the famous Sentiero del Viandante hiking route.BRIGITTE HAGEMANN/Getty ImagesBoats and houses in the city of Varenna, on Lake Como.MenaggioMenaggio is perfect for a lakeside stroll or a lazy afternoon espresso with its vibrant promenade, boutique shops, and lively Piazza Garibaldi. The historic center features the Chiesa di Santa Marta and Chiesa di Santo Stefano, both with beautiful frescoes. Lido di Menaggio is one of the best family-friendly lidos on the lake, featuring pools, a sandy beach, and a playground. Menaggio is also a gateway to hiking trails and ferry connections to Bellagio and Varenna.NessoTiny and often overlooked, Nesso is home to the Orrido di Nesso gorge and waterfall, formed by the confluence of the Tuf and Nossé streams. Cross the fairytale Civera Bridge, take the stone steps down for a swim in the lake's clear waters. The view of the waterfall from the lake is especially impressive—the spot was even mentioned by Leonardo da Vinci.LennoA charming spot after visiting Villa del Balbianello, Lenno's main square features the Church of St. John, built over Roman baths, and the 11th-century octagonal Baptistery. The waterfront promenade is lined with umbrella pines and benches, and there's a beloved gelateria for a sweet break. Lenno's public beach has grassy and pebble areas, and the harbor is one of the lake's most relaxed.Villa-HoppingBrundanstetter images/Getty ImagesHillside garden of Villa Carlotta in Tremezzo.Villa del Balbianello (Lenno)/Star of Star Wars and James Bond, this 18th-century villa is famous for its terraced gardens and spectacular lake views. Access it via a 25-minute walk from Lenno or by taxi-boat from the lakeside promenade. The villa and gardens are open to the public (March–November), with guided tours required for the interior. Advanced reservations are highly recommended.Villa Carlotta (Tremezzo)Villa Carlotta is a masterpiece of art and horticulture, featuring 14 acres of botanical gardens and a museum packed with neoclassical sculptures, paintings, and tapestries. The villa is open from March to November, and the spring is magical for blooms; and autumn is perfect for foliage.Villa Melzi d'Eril (Bellagio)These English-style gardens are dotted with sculptures and offer a tranquil lakeside promenade, a small museum, and a chapel. The villa itself is private, but the gardens are a highlight of Bellagio.Athanasios Gioumpastis/Getty ImagesGardens of Villa Melzi.Vanna (Varenna)Once a Cistercian center, now a museum and conference center, Villa Monastero features a botanical garden stretching along the shore, with exotic plants and architectural follies. The house museum and gardens are open March–November, with extended hours in peak season.Villa Olmo (Como)This neoclassical villa, built in the early 19th century, is now owned by the city and is open for exhibitions and events, and its park is a favorite for lakeside picnics and leisurely walks. With over 800 trees, it's open daily and free to enter. Outdoor AdventuresAlexi Rosenfeld/Getty ImagesA woman holds up a glass of champagne while on a boat tour in Lake Como, Italy.Boat ToursThe classic Lake Como experience. Public ferries (Navigazione Laghi) connect all the major towns and run year-round. You can also rent a private boat or join a guided tour for a more customizable day. The Greenway del Lago di ComoThis seven-mile walking route follows the ancient Roman Via Regina, weaving through Colono, Sala Comacina, Tremezza, and Griante. Expect lakeside villages, historic villas, and endless photo ops. The trail is suitable for all ages and takes about three hours to complete.HikingBeyond the Greenway, trails abound. Tackle the climb from Como to Brunate for spectacular views, or venture up to Castello di Vezio above Varenna. For serious hikers, the Sentiero del Viandante offers rugged mountain paths and breathtaking scenery. The hike from Varenna to Castello di Vezio is a local favorite.picture alliance/Getty ImagesA brook near Naggio, Italy.Swimming and BeachesNot every village has a beach, but Menaggio and Bellano offer private lidos with pools and sunbeds. For wild swimming, Nesso's stone steps and the area above the Civera Bridge are local favorites.Orrido di BellanoThis 15-million-year-old gorge features a walkway suspended above a thunderous river, if you're feeling adventurous.Culture, History, and Hidden GemsREDA/Getty ImagesComo Cathedral.Como Cathedral (Duomo di Como)The largest church on the lake, with a stunning Gothic façade, Renaissance dome, and intricate frescoes. The cathedral is open daily and is a must-see for architecture lovers.Castello di Vezio (Varenna)Medieval ruins, falconry shows, and panoramic views—plus a bar for that much-needed post-hike drink. The castle is open seasonally and reachable by a 30-minute hike from the town center. Note: Falconry shows are currently suspended until further notice. Frank Bienewald/Getty ImagesAerial view from Castle di Vezio on the town and Lake Como.Piona Abbey (Caluso)A serene, lakeside abbey still inhabited by Cistercian monks, famous for its herbal liqueurs and honey. It's a peaceful spot for contemplation and a taste of local tradition. Visitors can explore the church, cloister, and shop for monastic products.Isola ComacinaThe lake's only island, dotted with archaeological ruins and walking paths. Reachable by ferry or water taxi, it's an ideal escape from the crowds.MuseumsComo's Silk Museum reveals the region's textile history, and the Pinacoteca Civica houses Italian art masterpieces. DiningAlexi Rosenfeld/Getty ImagesTourists sit at an outdoor pasta restaurant in Bellagio, Italy.Lake Como's culinary scene is as rich as its scenery. Expect a mix of rustic trattorias, elegant fine dining, and lakeside cafés. Here's a few to try:Feel Como (Como)Modern Italian with a local twist.Tira, Mola e Meseda (Como)Family-run, with standout antipasti, polenta, and roasted veal. The menu evolves with the seasons.Platea Ristorante (Como)Lake views, creative cocktails, and standout dishes.Piazza Roma Ristorante (Como)The go-to for seafood (try the roasted bell octopus and save room for tiramisù)Local specialtiesSample lake fish (perch, lavarell), pizzoccheri (buckwheat pasta with cabbage, potatoes, and cheese), and Gorgonzola from the surrounding mountains. Don't miss local gelaterias in every town!Essential Tips for Visiting Lake ComoLoop Images/Getty ImagesLake Como.Ferries are the best way to get around—driving is tricky and parking is scarce, especially in summer. Book villa tours and fine dining ahead, especially in peak season. Pack comfortable shoes for cobblestones and trails.Lake Como is beautiful year-round, but spring and early autumn offer the best mix of nice weather and fewer crowds. Lake Como is a fabulous blend of nature, history, and style. Whether you're villa-hopping, hiking, swimming, or simply people-watching with a gelato in hand, one moment feels like a scene from an Italian classic film. Plan well, linger longer, and let the lake work its magic. Ciao!Julia CancillaEngagement EditorJulia Cancilla is the engagement editor (and resident witch) at ELLE Decor, where she oversees the brand's social media platforms, covers design trends and culture, and writes the monthly ELLE Decoroscope column. Julia built her background at Inked magazine, where she grew their social media audiences by two million and penned featured articles focusing on pop culture, art, and lifestyle. Today is Mon, 4 Dec 2006 RELATED ARTICLESspanish Exclamatory Words and ExpressionscómoAn adverb is a word that describes a verb, an adjective, or other adverbs (e.g., to run quickly, very tired).adverba, how ¿Cómo hiciste para llegar tan rápido?How did you get here so quickly?No sé cómo se prende este celular.I don't know how you turn on this cell phone.3. (used in interjections). This refers to an idiomatic word or phrase for which there is no word-for-word translation.no direct translation!¿Uf, cómo pesa esta caja?Gosh, this box is heavy!¿Como me gusta este café!I really like this coffee!An interjection is a short utterance that expresses emotion, hesitation, or protest (e.g., Wow!),interjectionCopyright © 2025 Curiosity Media Inc. PhrasesMachine TranslatorsTranslate Cómo using machine translators

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