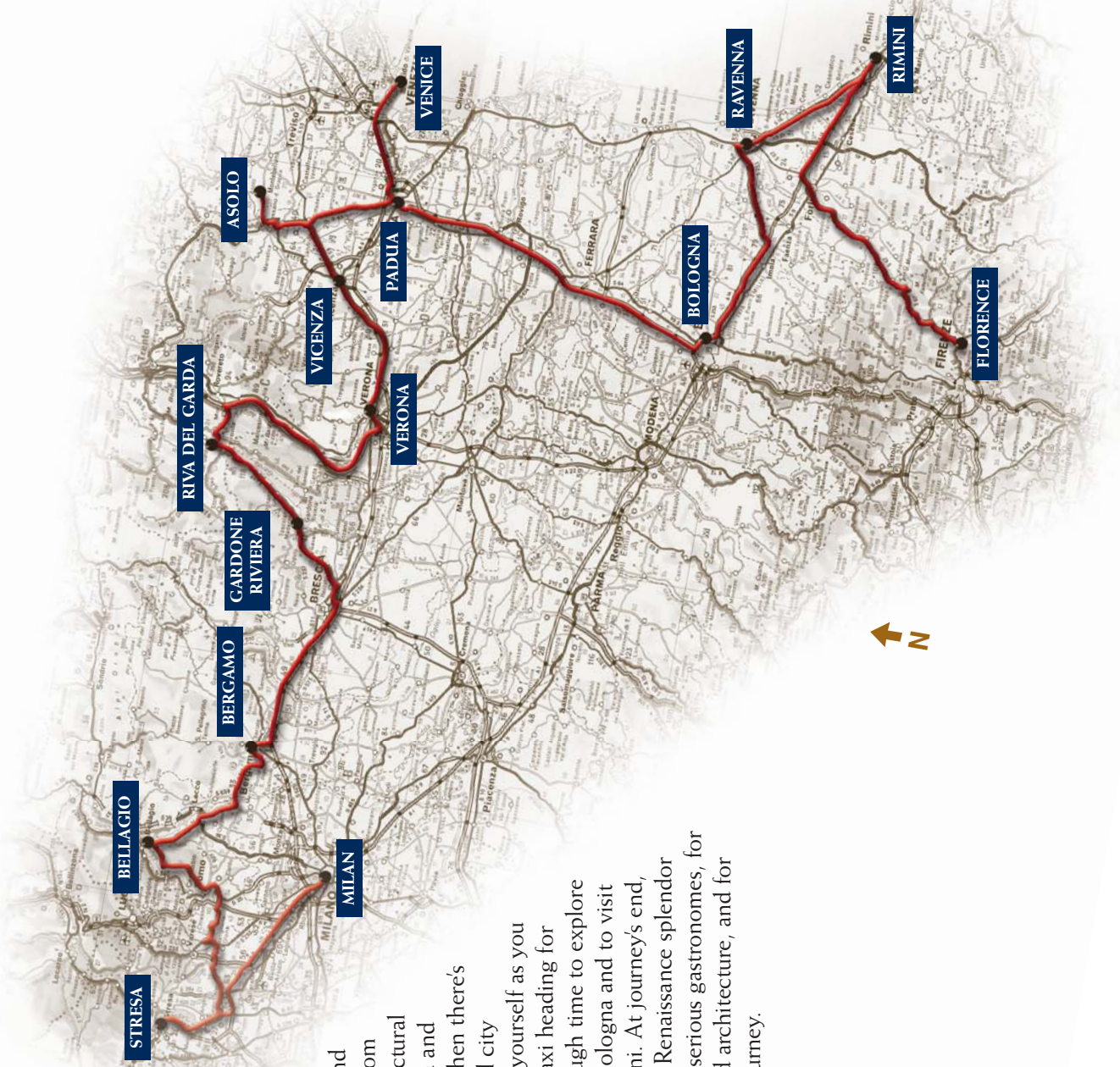


NORTHERN LAKES TO THE ADRIATIC & TUSCANY

FROM THE CHIC BOULEVARDS of Milan to the palaces of the Renaissance, this tour offers the best of northern Italy. You'll go through the northern lakes district, where Lake Garda, Lake Como and Lake Maggiore are magical names that conjure up a manicured mountain paradise for 19th-century elite. Magnificent villas and waterfront gardens abound in this surprisingly mild climate. From here, you go on to tour the architectural masterpieces of Palladio in Vicenza and Verona, the city of *Romeo & Juliet*. Then there's Venice, arguably the most beautiful city in Europe. You can decide that for yourself as you cross the Grand Canal in a water taxi heading for Harry's Bar. There's more than enough time to explore the cuisine of Emilia-Romagna in Bologna and to visit the buzzing seaside bazaar of Rimini. At journey's end, you'll wind up in Tuscany with the Renaissance splendor of Florence spread before you. For serious gastronomes, for those who love Renaissance art and architecture, and for lovers of nature, this is a perfect journey.



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(Mileage is estimated from each preceding city or site. Before you begin your trip, please note: For space reasons, we could not provide the most detailed map with this brochure. We recommend the use of *Michelin Map #735 Italy in conjunction with this guide.*) To order *Michelin maps*, call 1-800-223-0987.

MILAN AIRPORT—Begin your trip at Milan's Malpensa Airport, where nonstop flights from the United States usually land. If you've got a connecting flight through Europe, you'll likely come through Milan's Linate Airport. Either one is convenient for starting your trip.

31 miles
MILAN—Milan is Italy's fashion capital, and you can spend hours window-shopping along Corso Vittorio Emanuele II. Stroll through the Piazza del Duomo and then peruse the paintings and sculpture in the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, where great works by Titian, Da Vinci and Botticelli can be found. Locate a nice trattoria where you can sample risotto alla Milanese, the saffron-infused dish most closely associated with this stylish town. With a bit of luck, you might get the last pair of tickets to a Puccini opera at Teatro alla Scala.

51 miles
STRESA—The 82 square miles of Lake Maggiore make it the second largest lake in Italy, and its northern shores embrace the Ticino canton in Switzerland. The town of Stresa makes a delightful base for exploring the lake. It's a former fishing village that grew to become a haven for the wealthy in the 19th and early 20th

centuries. Stendahl, Dickens and Byron all spent time on its shores. To get a taste of the 19th century, tour Villa Ducale, once the home of philosopher Antonio Rosmini. Then stroll in the Parco di Villa Pallavicino, an English garden with pelicans and llamas, as well as tropical plants. From Stresa, it's easy to access Isola Borromeo, three islands that were transformed by the Borromeo family in the 17th century. On Isola Bella, you'll find a Baroque palazzo and magnificent gardens. Isola Madre has an 18th-century villa, while little Isola dei Pescatori is quiet, with delightful local architecture.

71 miles
BELLAGIO—Lake Como is Italy's third-largest lake, and Bellagio, with its central location at the junction of the lake's two arms, is a fine place to stay awhile. It has spectacular views across Lake Como, and its medieval layout is a delight for pedestrians. Along its shores are 19th-century villas, including the Villa Serbelloni, which is now a grand hotel. One of the most delightful ways to explore Lake Como is via boat, and there are several ferry routes that depart from Bellagio. The boats can take you to the villas at Tremezzo and Lenno as well as the medieval towns of Varenna and Bellano.

35 miles
BERGAMO—One of the highlights of this small city is the Accademia Carrara, especially the Pinacoteca d'Arte Antica, with its collection of paintings by Bellini, Mantegna and Pisanello. You can then take a funicular up to Bergamo Alta, once the main square here, but carry on to the Piazza del Duomo, where you can visit Santa Maria Maggiore and the Colleoni Chapel. And if you're a fan of *Lucia Di Lammermoor*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* or *La Zingara*, plan to visit the Museo Donizettiano. It's devoted to the Bergamo-born composer of nearly 70 operas, Gaetano Donizetti.

53 miles
GARDONE RIVIERA—Lake Garda is Italy's largest lake, ringed by soft hills in the south and rugged cliffs in the north. Bestowed with a benign Mediterranean micro-climate, spectacular mountain scenery and clear waters, Lake Garda was a favorite resort in Roman times. A fashionable resort since the late 19th century, Gardone Riviera has a fine location on the western shore of the lake. It is reputedly the warmest place in northern Italy in winter, which is why it's home to the Giardino Botanico Hruska, a botanical garden with more than 2,000 species of plants. And its pleasant situation is why writers such as poet Gabriele D'Annunzio came to the area. A writer whose work became synonymous with decadence, D'Annunzio was a brilliant self-promoter. He lived in nearby Vittoriale degli Italiani from 1921 to 1938, and his residence contains thousands of books and artworks, his motor boat and even his airplane.

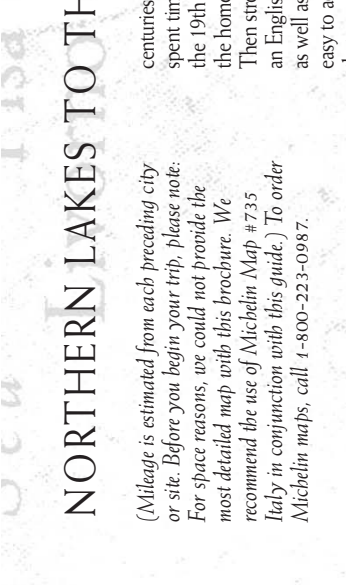
25 miles
RIVA DEL GARDA—Located at the northern tip of Lake Garda, Riva is in the Trentino region and was actually ruled by Austria until 1918. There's a fine collection of paintings in Riva's Museo Civico, located in a 12th-century structure called the Rocca. Do visit the Inviolata, a 17th-century building with extraordinary frescoes. Then peruse the small farmer's market on Piazza del Erbe, where you can find Trentino's famed olives.



51 miles
VERONA—Verona is a city made for strolling, for taking in the opera at the 1st-century Roman arena, and for visiting the market in the Piazza del Erbe. This umbrella-filled square is lined with superb buildings, including Casa Mazzanti. Verona is where Shakespeare set *Romeo and Juliet* and there's always a small crowd gathered at Casa di Giulietta, on Via Cappello, with its balcony and bronze statue of Juliet in the courtyard. Carry on to the stately Piazza dei Signori, where you'll find a statue of Dante and the Loggia del Consiglio, Verona's finest Renaissance building. Move on to the Basilica di San Zeno, one of the best Romanesque structures in the world. Days could be spent here, in one of Italy's most civilized cities.

32 miles
VICENZA—Andrea di Pietro, better known as Palladio, is the best reason to visit Vicenza. The most accomplished architect of the Renaissance, Palladio had Vicenza as his canvas. His masterworks here include the Basilica Palladiana and the ornate Loggia del Capitano. On Corso Palladio, you can see Casa del Palladio, a house the master designed for one of Vicenza's merchants. The Palazzo Chiericati, on the same street, houses the Pinacoteca, a major art collection that includes works by Montagna, Tintoretto and Van Dyck. And don't miss the Teatro Olimpico. Designed by Palladio and Scamozzi, a disciple of Palladio, this 16th-century theater has a permanent stage set of a piazza and streets.

33 miles
ASOLO—Asolo's lovely position attracted such visitors as the poets Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning and composer Igor Stravinsky. But it was Palladio who really left his mark here, with Villa Barbaro, in the adjacent village of Maser. Begun in 1549 and completed in 1558, it boasts ionic columns, symmetrical wings and a distinctive profile. It's a profile, in fact, that can be seen in such Palladio-inspired architecture as the United States Capitol building. Inside are wonderful frescoes, primarily by Paolo Veronese.



38 miles

PADUA—A university town, Padua was where both Dante and Galileo lectured. And it is where pilgrims congregate every June to revere St. Anthony of Padua at the Basilica di Sant'Antonio, a church that combines Byzantine and Gothic influences. You'll see the famed equestrian statue called "Gattamelata," by Donatello in Padua, which is considered to be the first bronze cast of the Renaissance. And the city's Museo Civico has paintings by Titian, Giorgione and Bellini. The Piazza del Erbe is the center of Padua, and nearby, you'll find Caffè Pedrocchi, one of the famous cafés in Italy. At Piazza della Frutta, wander through one of Italy's greatest food markets, open every day but Sunday.

25 miles

VENICE—The most theatrical city in the world, Venice enchants with its canals, narrow passageways and palaces. Take a gondola, water taxi or one of the water buses known as "vaporetti" along the Grand Canal. When you arrive in Piazza San Marco, you may agree with countless others that it really is Europe's finest drawing room, a marvelous square that fronts San Marco's Basilica. By all means visit the Palazzo

Ducale, the Doge's Palace, and explore the Peggy Guggenheim Collection with its work by Bacon, Braque, and Brancusi, to name just a few of the '90s'. But best of all, wander into churches and tiny squares, pause for refreshment in wine bars and trattorias, and absorb Venice slowly. At night, return Piazza San Marco, splurge on an alfresco drink at Caffè Florian, and listen to the resident string ensemble play in the most romantic spot in the world.

94 miles

BOLOGNA—The capital of Emilia-Romagna allegedly has the best food in all of Italy. Stroll around the historic center and put that theory to the test at any number of trattorias. The oldest university town in Italy, Bologna's old city is centered around two squares—the Piazza Maggiore, where you can explore San Petronio church, and the Piazza Nettuno. The latter is where you'll find the Palazzo Comunale, a Renaissance masterpiece. There are many more churches and Renaissance buildings to be seen in Bologna. But the city is about "la dolce vita," the sweet life, and you can sample it in food shops like Tamburini, the essence of an Italian food emporium.

48 miles

RAVENNA—The most beautiful mosaics in Italy are in Ravenna, which is not surprising, given the city's former role as the western capital of the Byzantine Empire. You can see these mosaics in San Vitale, a 6th-century octagonal basilica, at the 5th-century Mausoleo di Galla Placidia and at the Museo Nazionale. And in late June, come for the Ravenna Festival. Founded by Riccardo Muti in 1990, it has become one of the best musical festivals in Italy.

32 miles

RIMINI—A city with a dual personality, Rimini is both a medieval town and a modern, beach-side resort. In the old town, the attractions include the Tempio Malatestiano, a Renaissance building that stands in tribute to one of the wives of Sigismondo Malatesta, a patron of such artists as Piero della Francesca. On the modern beachfront Rimini, it's Romeos on Vespas and northern European Julietts on parade.

115 miles

FLORENCE—There's enough to keep a curious visitor to Florence busy for a lifetime. Start in the Uffizi Gallery, with its Piero della Francesca, Uccello and Botticelli masterworks. Wander through the Duomo, the cathedral with its enormous dome by Brunelleschi that lies in the heart of Florence. Visit the Bargello, which has a marvelous collection of Renaissance sculpture, and take time to examine the Vasari frescoes at the Palazzo Vecchio. Consider buying shoes, gloves and fine paper goods. You can unwind with a simple pasta and Chianti at a trattoria. And then buy a little hazelnut gelato and wander across the medieval bridge known as the Ponte Vecchio on the Arno River, content that you've sampled the best that Italy has to offer.

FLORENCE PERETOLA AIRPORT

Florence's compact airport is convenient for connections to Milan, Rome or other European cities for the flight back home.

HOTELS

Grand Hotel de Milan. Located in the fashion district and near La Scala, this 95-room hotel has retained its Art Nouveau style. The Don Carlos restaurant is perfect before or after the opera. Via Manzoni 29, Milan. Tel: 39-027-23141 Fax: 39-028-6460861 For reservations in the USA 800-888-4747

Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni. This 80-room neoclassical mansion is on the shores of Lake Como. It's known for delightfully old-fashioned guest rooms, decor that runs to frescoes and oriental carpets, and a fine lakeside restaurant. Via Roma 1, Bellagio. Tel: 39-031-950216 Fax: 39-031-951529

Villa Frontaliso. There are just seven rooms in this neoclassical hotel on Lake Garda. The seasonal Italian cuisine is of a high standard, and the surrounding cypresses, pine trees and olive trees ensure privacy. Via Zanardelli 150, Gardone Riviera. Tel: 39-036-520158 Fax: 39-036-5290011 For reservations in the USA: 800-735-2478



Gabbia d'Oro.

Beamed ceilings, stone walls and frescoes are the hallmarks of this hideaway near Piazza delle Erbe. The 27 guest rooms are decorated with antiques, oriental carpets and 16th-century prints. Corso Porta Borsari 4A, Verona. Tel: 39-045-8003060 Fax: 39-045-590293

Hotel Critti Palace. Situated on the Grand Canal, with an incomparable view of the water, the Hotel Critti Palace was built in 1525 as the residence of the Doge of Venice. The 90-room hotel is filled with antiques and fine paintings and boasts the most beautiful waterside restaurant in Venice. Campo Santa Maria del Giglio, Venice. Tel: 39-041-794611 Fax: 39-041-5200942 For reservations in the USA 888-625-5144

Westin Excelsior. This recently refurbished 165-room grand dame occupies two houses that overlook the Arno River. The marble floors, 19th-century staircases and stained-glass windows are complemented by antiques, damask and brocade. Piazza d'Ognissanti 3, Florence 50123. Tel: 39-055-264201 Fax: 39-055-210278 For reservations in the USA: 888-625-5144

RESTAURANT

Restaurant Enoteca Pinchiorri. Set in a Renaissance palace, Giorgio Pinchiorri has more than 150,000 wines in his celebrated cellar. The cuisine is French with a Tuscan accent, thanks to chef Annie Féolde. Via Ghibellina 87, Florence. Tel: 39-055-242777 Fax: 39-055-244983 For reservations in the USA: 800-735-2478