

*Expressions*

THE ART OF INTELLIGENT TRAVEL ORGANISING

# GARDEN TOURS OF ITALY

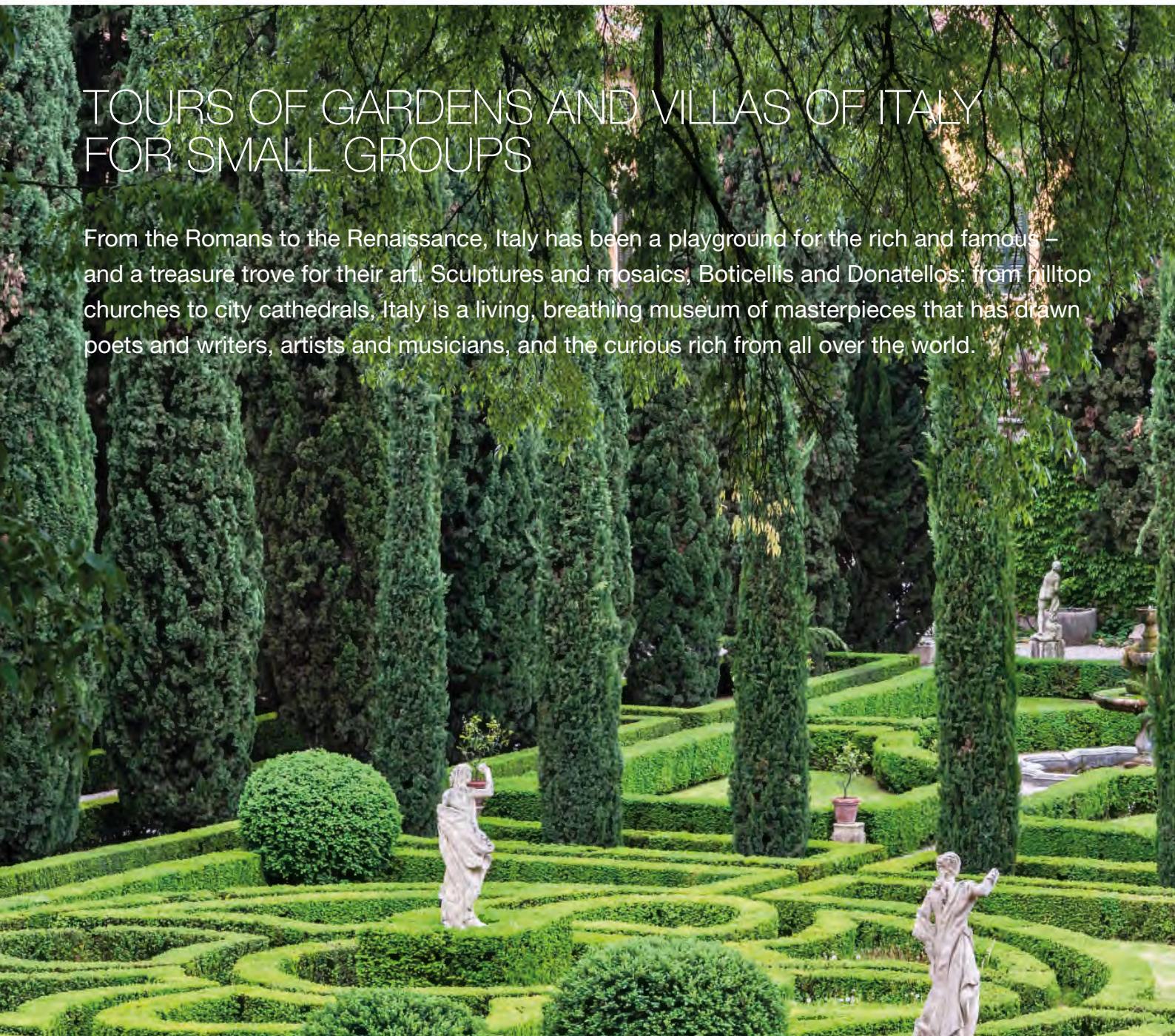
FOR SMALL GROUPS 2021





# TOURS OF GARDENS AND VILLAS OF ITALY FOR SMALL GROUPS

From the Romans to the Renaissance, Italy has been a playground for the rich and famous – and a treasure trove for their art. Sculptures and mosaics, Botticellis and Donatellos: from hilltop churches to city cathedrals, Italy is a living, breathing museum of masterpieces that has drawn poets and writers, artists and musicians, and the curious rich from all over the world.



Giardino Giusti Verona

LITTLE WONDER THEIR LEGACY REMAINS, not just in museums and galleries, but also in extraordinary gardens, with almost every palazzo and villa hiding its own exquisite gem. Perfectly complementing the more traditional delights of the Amalfi Coast, the Italian Lakes, Tuscany, the environs of Rome and the Veneto, our programme of Tours of Gardens and Villas of Italy gives access to some of the finest gardens in Europe, and many of which have been instrumental in the way gardens have been designed and developed in the Western World.

We have also based these tours in outstanding hotels in each of the regions, handpicked for their elegance, their own gardens or their proximity to others.



Villa d'Este, Tivoli near Rome





SCATTERED WITH HILLTOP VILLAGES and cypress-studded horizons, mediaeval towns, and humble trattoria serving rustic feasts in cobbled courtyards often overlooking the plains, Tuscany has called to sun-starved north Europeans – and the British in particular – like nowhere else in Italy. Not for nothing Shelley described it as a ‘paradise of exiles’. Bookended by the Alpi Apuane mountains to the north (whose quarries supplied the marble for Michaelangelo’s David) and the sun-baked clay hills of the crete to the south, Tuscany packs an astonishing variety of landscapes into a relatively tiny area, making it possible to gorge on duomos and campaniles by morning, gardens by afternoon, with simple, sumptuous, sunkissed lunches in between. In Tuscany it is the influence first and foremost of the Medicis that shaped their country dwellings and their land into the classical landscape that we think of as Tuscany today.

TO THE NORTH, THE VENETO AND THE ITALIAN LAKES have a more alpine accent, split between the lush, mountainous splendours of Lake Como and Lake Maggiore, where microclimates allow for some fascinating plants and trees, and the plains of the River Po and the Brenta canal, where water and shelter from north winds play a vital role. Here you find terraced gardens, as well as wilder English-style parks, the influence of Palladio and then the French Baroque with many surprisingly exotic trees, shrubs and plants, collected from all over the world.

IN THE FAR SOUTH you explore the rugged, breathtaking cliff-gardens of the Amalfi Coast and Capri, inspiring of artists, poets and musicians. Here are traces too of the origins of gardens and plants from Roman times in the excavations of Pompeii and the remains of Tiberius’s Villa Jovis on Capri. Even ‘modern’ gardens such as that of Axel Munthe are based on the classical and are constructed with ancient artefacts in prime positions. The climate of this region which is suitable for olives, oranges and lemons is also suitable for tender exotics. The soil is rich and fertile around Naples. The Naples region also boasts the Palazzo Reale at Caserta, modelled on Versailles and one of the most important architectural gardens in Europe.

AT THE HEART OF THE COUNTRY, in the vicinity of Rome, much influenced by Roman emperors, the Papacy and Italian aristocrats, are truly amazing gardens that have shaped the design and structure of gardens the world over dating from the 16th Century. Bramante played a key role in the link between the villa and the countryside in a way that emulated Roman models. On the whole plants are less important than structure in this region. Key features include terraces, steps, ramps, central perspective, symmetry and proportion and the use of water.



Ninfa, Rome area tour

#### **Expressions garden tours for small groups**

A unique feature of our tours is that they operate for small numbers only. You have a local guide to accompany you to the garden visits but not in between. You stay in Expressions tried and tested hotels or ones that we have known about and used for our individual guests for 25 years.

#### **Different travel arrangements**

If you want us to arrange flights for different dates and from UK regional airports or to extend your holiday with a stay elsewhere in Italy, just let us know. We will adjust the details and the price accordingly.

#### **Important information for all tours**

Please refer to the important information detailed on page 15 of this leaflet.



# TOUR OF THE GARDENS AND VILLAS OF TUSCANY

Combining Chianti and the Lucca region this 6 night tour reflects the diversity and beauty of Tuscan villas and gardens; Italianate, baroque, parkland, water features and stunning views. The garden tour holiday operates with a maximum of 14 people.

THIS TOUR COMBINES THE CLASSICAL HEART of Tuscany with a stay near Greve in Chianti from where you visit three of the most beautiful and historic gardens in the Chianti area, accompanied by a local guide; Villa Poggio Torselli at San Casciano Val di Pesa, Giardino di Vignamaggio at Greve and Villa Geggiano near Siena.

These villas date from the 15th Century and each of their gardens is famed in its own way for its design and beauty. Villa Poggio Torselli is renowned for its spectacular flowering plants including Indian giant hibiscus and a golden crown of 120 secular lemon trees, whereas Vignamaggio boasts an ornate Italian garden with ornamental trees, roses and cypress and Villa Geggiano, frequently used as a film set, is resplendent with ancient cypress, sculpted boxwood as well as lemon trees.

From Chianti you move further west towards the coast and the town of Lucca, which offers the opportunity to visit some of the less well-known gems of this region, including the baroque gardens of Palazzo Pfanner inside the mediaeval town, Villa Grabau, Villa Oliva, the Parco della Villa Reale and the Villa Torrigiani. En route though you visit the impressive gardens of Villa Garzoni, famed for its Baroque terraces, staircases and water cascades. The Villa Grabau is renowned for its English-style parkland which abounds in rare trees, planted initially in the 16th century when the villa was built and added to over the years. Villa Oliva enjoys views over the countryside near Lucca from its position on a hillside. Its gardens descend the hill and there are numerous water falls and fountains. The Parco della Villa Reale is an extensive garden and parkland with numerous linked water features, a Moorish garden, a lemon garden, a green theatre and a camellia walk. Finally the Villa Torrigiani houses a baroque garden with nymphaeum, grottoes, water games and flowers.



Parco della Villa Reale



Villa Torrigiani



Parco della Villa Reale



Tuscan view from Villa le Barone



Hotel Bagni di Pisa





Palazzo Pfanner

## DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

### Day one: Arrive in Tuscany

You either join our flight at 08.25 from Heathrow arriving in Pisa at 11.35 or you make your own way either to Pisa for this time or directly to the hotel. At Pisa you are met by your small luxury coach and English speaking driver and tour escort who take you the hour and a half approximately to your hotel for the first three nights, the Villa le Barone at Panzano near Greve in Chianti. There is time to unpack and explore the hotel and its grounds as well as the country tracks nearby before dinner.

### Day two: Visit Villa Poggio Torselli and Villa Vignamaggio

Today combines visits to Villa Poggio Torselli and Villa Vignamaggio with guided tours at both gardens. The first visit today is at Villa Poggio Torselli. Villa Poggio Torselli, near San Casciano Val di Pesa, dates from the 15th Century and is renowned for its spectacular flowering plants including Indian giant hibiscus and a golden crown of 120 secular lemon trees. There will be free time for lunch in Greve in Chianti, a pretty town at the heart of the Chianti wine region, with a choice of cafes and small restaurants for lunch. Villa Vignamaggio was the home of the Gherardini family and Lisa Gherardini who is said to be the subject of da Vinci's Monna Lisa. Return to the hotel Villa le Barone at about 16.30 hrs, in good time for dinner which will be at 19.30 hrs.

### Day three: Visit Badia a Coltibuono and Villa Geggiano

Departure this morning for a full day tour is at 09.00 hrs. You visit two gardens today: Badia a Coltibuono and Villa Geggiano. The gardens at Badia a Coltibuono, a former mediaeval abbey, take their spirit from the old monks' hortus conclusus. Today there is still a domestic quality to the garden with its pots of lavender, potted olive trees, clumps of hydrangea, and a vine-covered pergola. There is a formality dating from the early 20th Century with its box parterre and magnolia grandiflora too. This is a garden for all seasons. The second garden of the day is Villa Geggiano, now a national monument, where you have a guided tour and a wine tasting. After the visit at Geggiano you are driven into Siena for a late lunch under your own steam, and free time for sightseeing until about 16.30 hrs. You should arrive back at the hotel at about 17.45 hrs in time to rest and

change before dinner at the hotel at 19.30 hrs.

### Day four: Departure for Lucca and visit Villa Garzoni gardens en route

You leave Greve this morning for your second stay of the tour, at the Bagni di Pisa near Lucca. En route we have included a visit of the gardens of Villa Garzoni, dating from 1652 and famous for the balustraded terraces, symmetrical staircases and water cascades, which make the most of the hillside location. Lunch is included at the Ristorante Garzoni. You arrive at the Bagni di Pisa mid to late afternoon, with time perhaps for a spa treatment or a swim in the hotel's pool. Dinner is taken at the hotel.

### Day five: Full day tour to Villa Grabau and Villa Oliva

Today a local guide accompanies you on your visit to Lucca and the baroque gardens of Villa Pfanner and then nearby Villa Grabau and the gardens of the Villa Oliva. These two villas and their gardens near Lucca give you a flavour of the variety of the gardens in this area with both English-style parkland with rare trees and formal water features. Time in the day to have a light lunch (under own steam). Dinner is taken back at the hotel Bagni di Pisa.

### Day six: Full day tour to Parco Villa Reale di Marlia and Villa Torrigiani

Your guide accompanies you to two splendid gardens in the Lucca area again today. The Parco Villa Reale is a very large garden with numerous water features, gardens within gardens and an enormous amount to explore. Lunch is included at a local trattoria in between visits. Villa Torrigiani is very pretty, formal and ornate. Villa Torrigiani is very pretty, formal and ornate. You return to the hotel for dinner and your last night.

### Day seven: Return to London from Pisa

You have some time this morning to relax before heading back by your small coach to Pisa airport and your flight to London Heathrow which leaves at 19.05.

### Dates and prices

This tour departs on the following dates from London for these prices per person sharing a double or twin room:

16 May 2021	<b>£2,850</b>
13 June 2021	<b>£2,850</b>

5 September 2021

**£2,850**

Supplements: Single supplement for use of double: £440 per person in May, £500 per person in June and £530 per person in September.  
Superior double or twin room at the Villa le Barone £36 per person per night  
Deposit payment: £400 per person

### We include

- Flights with British Airways London Heathrow to Pisa in Euro traveller
- Transportation from Pisa airport and back to Pisa airport in a small coach for maximum 14 people with one piece of luggage per person, English speaking driver/escort
- Entrance tickets to the gardens mentioned with guided visits of all except Villa Grabau.
- Three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Villa le Barone in a classic double or twin rooms.
- Three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Hotel Bagni di Pisa in double or twin rooms.
- Two lunches in local restaurants per person

### Villa le Barone

#### Panzano, Greve in Chianti

This is a traditional hotel, once an aristocratic villa and now a 4 star hotel of less than 30 rooms, in its own grounds amid a typical Tuscan landscape of rolling fields and vineyards. There is a swimming pool and tennis court.

### Hotel Bagni di Pisa

#### San Giuliano Terme, near Lucca

This is a 5 star spa hotel of about 60 rooms, situated on the edge of a small spa town. It is renowned for its spa facilities including a thermal pool and cave, yet its location near Lucca and Pisa make it an ideal base. There is an indoor and outdoor pool, spa and fitness centre.

### Different travel arrangements

If you want us to arrange flights on other dates and from UK regional airports or to extend your holiday with a stay elsewhere in Italy, just let us know. If you are not arriving from the UK, then we can give you a price that excludes flights and perhaps with extra transfers included. We will adjust the details and the price accordingly.



# TOUR OF THE GARDENS AND VILLAS OF LAKE COMO AND LAKE MAGGIORE

This 6 night group tour combines stays in luxury four star hotels on Lake Como and Lake Maggiore, both of which have a distinctly alpine feel but are also luxuriant in their vegetation. The garden tour holiday operates with a maximum of 14 people.

THIS TOUR OF TWO VERY POPULAR and dramatically beautiful Italian lakes features a splendid range of striking villas and their gardens which you visit with a local guide.

On Lake Como these include the splendid Villa Melzi d'Eril at Bellagio with its eclectic collection of sculptures in this essentially English-style park that abounds with excellent tree specimens, the enchanting Villa Balbianello facing Serbelloni, secluded in its setting and full of woods of pine, cypress and oak as well as flowerbeds and the Villa Carlotta at Tremezzo, full of imaginative planting, sunny terraces, with climbers, ferns, giant magnolias and cork oaks. Two more gardens complete the tour at Lake Como; Villa Cipressi which is poised upon a rocky promontory with terraces leading down to the lake, planted with Mediterranean shrubs and vines, laced with magnolia, eucalyptus, pittosporum, lavender and agave and Villa Monastero, renowned for a fine collection of Mediterranean and tropical vegetation, as well as fountains and statues.

On Lake Maggiore we had to include Isola Bella, one of the most dramatic 17th Century Baroque gardens in Italy, seemingly floating on the surface of the lake with its ten-terraced garden and marble balustrades. Water theatre, putti and grottoes embellished with tinted stucco, pebble mosaic and shellwork add to the sense of fantasy here. Trees include orange trees, lemons and pomegranates. We also visit Isola Madre and the Botanical garden Alpinia above Stresa. There is also time for an optional visit to the Villa Giulia in Pallanza.



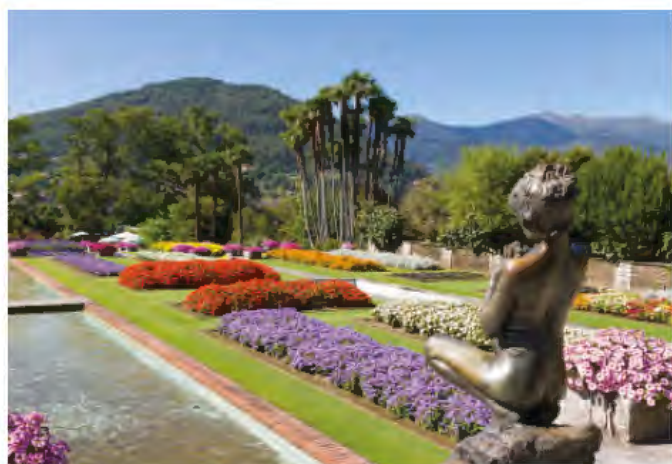
Villa Monastero



Lake Como from the Grand Hotel Imperiale



Grand Hotel Majestic on Lake Maggiore



Gardens of Villa Taranto



Isola Bella



## DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

### Day one: Arrive in Milan

You join our flight BA 576 at 09.20 from Heathrow Terminal 5, arriving in Milan Malpensa at 12.20. At Milan you are met by your small luxury coach for up to 14 people. You arrive at your first hotel on Lake Como in time for dinner.

### Day two: Full day to Villa Cipressi and Villa Monastero

Meet with the local guide whose services you have this morning as you visit and tour the gardens of Villa Monastero (renowned for a fine collection of Mediterranean and tropical vegetation, as well as fountains and statues). After the visit there is time for lunch (own expense) before a guided visit to Villa Cipressi, poised upon a rocky promontory. You are taken back to the hotel in time to relax before dinner.

### Day three: Full day guided tour of gardens

This is quite a full day with a total of three gardens to be visited on different shores of Lake Como. First you visit the Villa Melzi d'Eril (at Bellagio with an eclectic collection of sculptures in this essentially English-style park that is full of excellent tree specimens), time for your packed lunch in between, a short interlude in Bellagio itself, and then on to Villa Balbianello for a guided visit (in a secluded setting and full of woods of pine, cypress and oak as well as flowerbeds) and then to Villa Carlotta at Tremezzo for another guided visit (full of imaginative planting, sunny terraces, with climbers, ferns, giant magnolias and cork oaks). You return to the hotel in good time for dinner.

### Day four: From Lake Como to Lake Maggiore

Today you leave to drive over to Lake Maggiore heading for your hotel on Lake Maggiore. Settle in and enjoy some free time before wine-tasting and then the dinner at the hotel.

### Day five: Isola Bella and Isola Madre

Today is spent on the islands in Lake Maggiore, described to you by a local guide. You visit Isola Madre and then by boat to Isola Bella to visit the museum and gardens. Isola Bella

is one of the most dramatic 17th Century Baroque gardens in Italy, seemingly floating on the surface of the lake with its ten-terraced garden and marble balustrades. You enjoy a packed lunch along the way, returning to your hotel for the included dinner.

### Day six: Villa Taranto

Your guide gives you a tour of the gardens of Villa Taranto. The gardens of the Villa Taranto were established between 1931 and 1940 by Scotsman Neil McEacharn who bought an existing villa and its neighbouring estates, cut down more than 2000 trees, and undertook substantial changes to the landscape, including the addition of major water features employing 8 km of pipes. The gardens opened to the public in 1952 and today the gardens contain nearly 20,000 plant varieties, representing more than 3,000 species, set among 7 km of paths. Among its collections are azalea, cornus, greenhouses of Victoria amazonica, and 300 types of dahlias. It also contains a small herbarium and the founder's mausoleum. This is followed by a visit to the Botanic gardens Alpina above Stresa and reached by cable car. Packed lunch provided. There is free time to visit Stresa itself before you return by coach to your hotel.

### Day seven: Back to Milan and London

You have a large part of the day at leisure on Lake Maggiore today as your flight does not depart until 19.00 from Milan Malpensa. Arrive back at Heathrow at 19.55 hrs.

### Dates and prices

This tour departs on the following dates from London for these prices per person

11 May 2021	<b>£2,580</b>
8 June 2021	<b>£2,630</b>
22 June 2021	<b>£2,630</b>
7 September 2021	<b>£2,630</b>

Prices are based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

Single supplement for use of double: £320 per person.

Deposit payment: £400 per person

### We include

- Flights with British Airways London Heathrow to Milan in Euro traveller
- Transportation from Milan airport and back to Milan airport in a small coach for maximum 14 people with one piece of luggage per person.
- Entrance tickets to the gardens mentioned
- Services of an English speaking local guide for garden visits as mentioned
- Three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Grand Hotel Imperiale in a double or twin park view rooms
- Three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at Hotel Cannero, Cannero Riviera in rooms with garden view.
- Three packed lunches provided per person.

### Grand Hotel Imperiale Moltrasio, Lake Como

The Grand Hotel Imperiale is a four star hotel and one of the many historical hotels on Lake Como. The rooms, whether in the modern wing or in the original hotel are all elegantly furnished with modern amenities and have either lake views or views over the gardens. The hotel's outdoor swimming pool is the perfect place to relax and unwind.

### Hotel Cannero

#### Cannero Riviera, Lake Maggiore

This hotel is one of our most popular hotels in the Italian Lakes. A traditional, boutique, family-run 4-star hotel on the promenade of Cannero Riviera, the hotel has a garden, swimming pool and a cosy charm. We include rooms with park/garden view but it is possible to upgrade to a lake view, subject to availability, at a supplement of £24 pp per night.

### Different travel arrangements

If you want us to arrange flights on other dates and from UK regional airports or to extend your holiday with a stay elsewhere in Italy, just let us know. If you are not arriving from the UK, then we can give you a price that excludes flights and perhaps with extra transfers included. We will adjust the details and the price accordingly.



# TOUR OF THE GARDENS AND VILLAS OF THE AMALFI COAST, CAPRI AND ISCHIA

This gardens and villas tour explores a glorious region whose climate is not only suitable for olives, vines, oranges and lemons but also for tender exotics. The region of Campania around Naples is blessed with a rich, fertile and well-drained soil that was appreciated by the Romans. From native plants of Roman times to exotic imports, there is a flourishing huge diversity here to explore. You are based on the outskirts of Sorrento and then on the island of Ischia. This tour operates with a maximum of 14 people.

THIS TOUR OFFERS a classic introduction to the landscape, history and flora of Campania including the magical islands of Capri and Ischia. In Ravello, perched high above the coast, the remarkable site of Villa Cimbrone boasts a wisteria-clad pergola almost the length of the garden, formal and informal side gardens, a rose garden and trees such as umbrella pines, plane trees and olives that intermingle with palms, cycads, phormiums and yuccas. An air of slight neglect and seemingly wild native euphorbias, scented anemones and giant fennel create a pleasing and relaxed atmosphere. Nearby the gardens of Villa Rufolo extend along three terraces that contain a variety of trees and flowers, from palms and yuccas to oleander and bougainvillea. A gem is the private Tenuta Porta di Ferro near Salerno, a Grandi Giardini Italiani where the estate includes rare plants, Mediterranean native species and an experimental garden with water plants and contemporary design.

The island of Capri is home to the extraordinarily beautiful villa and gardens created by Axel Munthe will entrance and delight. Sculptures, ancient artefacts, a granite Sphinx, a Greek tomb are to be discovered throughout the gardens, shady pergolas and a profusion of colour as well as stunning panoramas of the island. You are accompanied on a walking tour of the Giardini di Augustus, botanical gardens designed in terraces overlooking the sea full of ornamental plants and flowers.

On the island of Ischia you visit the private gardens of Ravino, home to succulents and cacti, and then you will treasure a visit to La Mortella, the home and gardens created by Lady Walton, an exotic oasis amongst the maquis where luxuriant plants and trees from around the world co-exist with the indigenous, creating a unique universe with an aromatic fragrance.



Villa Cimbrone



La Mortella, Ischia



La Mortella





Villa Rufolo, Ravello



Garden of the Cuccumella



Hotel Mezzatorre

## DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

### Day one: Arrive on the Amalfi Coast

You may choose to fly to Naples between the 06.40 flight from Gatwick arriving at 10.20 or the 15.00 flight arriving at 18.40. You are met and transferred to the hotel. Free time and dinner under your own steam. The hotel has a restaurant and there are numerous others nearby.

### Day two: Visit Ravello with Villa Cimbrone and Villa Rufolo

Depart after breakfast for a full day excursion by coach accompanied by a local guide for the spectacular drive along the coast road to spend the day in Ravello and Amalfi. There is plenty of time to explore the delights of the Villa Cimbrone and the Villa Rufolo in Ravello, free time for lunch and then a visit to Amalfi where you stop to visit its Paradise Cloister. You make your own arrangements for dinner, perhaps at the hotel or nearby.

### Day three: Visit Capri

Today you are taken to Capri by boat with a guide for a visit first to Anacapri and the extraordinary Villa San Michele, home of Axel Munthe. Enjoy this astonishing collection of ancient artefacts, mosaics and sculptures set amidst splendid vegetation. Then there is free time for lunch before visiting the Giardini di Augustus and a gentle walk to the Punta Tragara from where you can admire the Faraglioni rocks. For those who are fit and able walkers and happy to cope with the steps and uneven surfaces, an optional visit to the amazing site and Roman ruins of Villa Jovis is possible (entrance fees at own cost). Return to your hotel for dinner under your own steam.

### Day four: Visit Tenuta Porta di Ferro

Today we are pleased to offer you a hidden gem near Salerno. The Tenuta Porta di Ferro is a private estate with several distinct garden areas devoted to rare plants, contemporary and experimental design, water plants and Mediterranean species. It is a member of the Grandi Giardini Italiani and the garden development started in the early 20th Century. The journey time is about 90 minutes by car. Once there you will visit the themed gardens, presented by a botany expert from the estate, translated by your English speaking escort. A brunch is included and there is also the chance to see and taste the farm produce, much of it DOP. The extensive gardens feature mixed borders of perennials, citrus trees, lavender, roses, wisteria, bougainvillea, agapanthus, water plants, olives and vines. Return to your hotel for the evening.

### Day five: Transfer to Ischia

Leave Sorrento at 9.30 for the direct ferry (50 mins) to Ischia crossing the Bay of Naples. You are transferred to your hotel and you will be able to leave your bags (it is too early to guarantee a check-in but time for lunch or a stroll. In the afternoon, you are taken to the gardens of Ravino, a private garden housing a collection of exotic plants, succulents and cacti, unique in Europe. Spread over an area of about 6000 square metres you will be able to walk through the gardens along pathways of over 500 metres in an area abundant in plants. Then back to your own. Dinner is not included but there is a restaurant at the hotel and others within walking distance.

### Day six: Visit of La Mortella

A visit to La Mortella is the highlight of your stay on Ischia. We arrange a transfer for you from the hotel to the gardens and then you will have an English-speaking guide to give you a tour of the gardens (about 2 hours). La Mortella is Lady Walton's magnificent garden that is an oasis of greenery amid the maquis. The air is humid enough for New Zealand tree ferns and there is a range of rare and tender trees, palms, shrubs and bulbs. The garden offers a parallel existence of indigenous plants (the aroma of the maquis or machia in Italian abounds) as well as the exotics. Charming, fascinating and oozing specimens to delight. The rest of the day is your own.

### Day seven: Return to London from Naples

Morning at leisure before departing in the afternoon by road and sea back to Naples and on to the airport for the flight leaving at 18.55 arriving back into Gatwick at 20.45 hrs.

### Dates and prices

This tour departs on the following dates from London for these prices per person.

6 May 2021	£2,690
27 May 2021	£2,690
17 June 2021	£2,820
9 September 2021	£2,760

Prices are based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

Single supplement for use of double: £780 on 9 May, £880 on 23 May, £980 in June and £880 in September.

Deposit payment: £400 per person

### We include

- Flights with British Airways London Gatwick to Naples in Eurotraveller
- Transportation on the mainland in a luxury small coach

with one piece of luggage per person.

- Transportation from Sorrento to Ischia and from Ischia to hotel, back from hotel to Naples.
- Services of a local guide for the excursions and visits as mentioned.
- Entrance tickets to the villas and gardens mentioned with brunch at the Tenuta Porta di Ferro
- Four nights' bed and breakfast at the Antiche Mura in Sorrento in a comfort double or twin.
- Two nights' bed and breakfast at the Hotel Regina Isabella, in Lacco Ameno on Ischia in a superior double or twin with balcony and garden view.

### Hotel Antiche Mura Sorrento

Built in 'Belle Epoque' style, Hotel Antiche Mura is a four-star hotel in the heart of Sorrento, its name coming from the ancient town walls which are still visible in the grounds. The main entrance hall is light and airy, whilst retaining the grand atmosphere of a large villa. The 52 bedrooms and suites are spacious with warm-coloured and elegant furnishings. There are plenty of peaceful places to sit, from the lounge inside, to the beautiful garden of shady lemon groves around the swimming pool.

### Hotel Regina Isabella Ischia

This is a 5-star deluxe hotel on the waterfront in the town of Lacco Ameno. Around the town are rocky outcrops, private beaches and Mediterranean pinewoods. The hotel has 128 rooms divided between three parts of the hotel. The rooms are decorated in Mediterranean style with hand-painted majolica tiles and a combination of mid-century furniture with 21st century touches. The hotel has three bars and three restaurants, where you can enjoy views of the sea or the garden. A special feature of the Regina Isabella is the thermal spa baths; a range of spa treatments is on offer.

### Different travel arrangements

If you want us to arrange flights on other dates and from UK regional airports or to extend your holiday with a stay elsewhere in Italy, just let us know. If you are not arriving from the UK, then we can give you a price that excludes flights and perhaps with extra transfers included.



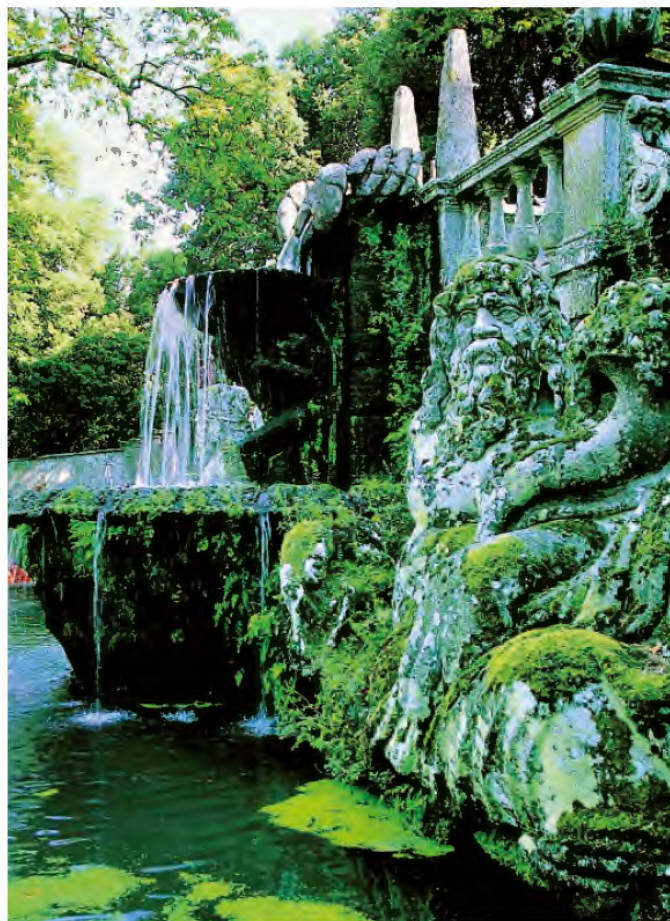
# TOUR OF THE GARDENS AND VILLAS OF THE ENVIRONS OF ROME

This tour explores the architectural gardens of the ancient region of Latium which have influenced the development of Western garden design. Today located in the region of Lazio, these gardens developed mainly in the late 16th Century and were first and foremost architectural with plants being only of a primary importance in Ninfa and Landriana, which are recent creations. This tour encompasses some of the greatest masterpieces of Italian garden design. This tour operates with a maximum of 14 people.

THIS TOUR FOCUSES ON some of the most important gardens or villas and gardens in Italy, located in Lazio, to the north and the south of Rome. You are based for the first three nights to the north of Rome in the historic city of Orvieto from where you can reach Villa Lante, a perfect Renaissance garden, which is a landmark in the history of Italian gardens and nearby Sacro Bosco at Bomarzo, with its collection of overwhelming and eccentric stone sculptures amid the parkland. Near Viterbo is also the Villa Farnese, dating from the mid 16th Century and another masterpiece of Italian garden art providing a perfect balance of landscaping, architecture and sculpture.

Then you drive south visiting the magnificent Villa d'Este and Villa Adriana at Tivoli near Rome. Villa Adriana offers a magical insight into the gardens of antiquity and its hay meadows, wild flowers, pools and fishpond remain as features whilst the Villa d'Este is the quintessential garden of the High Renaissance and resplendent in its structure and use of water. You will be based near Frascati to the south of Rome, from where you can reach three spectacular and vastly different gardens: those of Castel Gandolfo, rich in history, Landriana, bursting with luxuriant flowers, shrubs and trees in an English fashion yet containing controlled Italian styles amidst colour from April to October, and Ninfa, where crumbling mediaeval walls provide a sheltered microclimate for rare and tender plants and an amazing collection of plants from all over the world. Amid 20 acres, plenty of summer heat and water from the hills, this is a unique garden, frequently perceived as a perfect garden.

Finishing the tour in Rome gives you a wonderful opportunity to extend your stay in Italy, with perhaps a few days in Rome itself for shopping, sightseeing or further garden visits.



Villa Lante



Hotel Piccolomini



Inside the Villa Grazioli



Villa d'Este at Tivoli





## DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

### Day one: Arrive in Rome and transfer to your first hotel

We include the 08.30 flight from London Heathrow that arrives in Rome Fiumicino at 12.00 hrs. You are met by a tour escort who welcomes you to the tour and then taken by small coach to your hotel in Orvieto. Time to unpack and rest before dinner. Dinner is not included but we will give you a list of recommended restaurants within walking distance of the hotel

### Day two: Visit Villa Lante and Sacro Bosco at Bomarzo

Depart from the hotel after breakfast to visit first of all Villa Lante's garden, with abundant water features of cascades, fountains and grottoes, and superb stone carving. You enjoy a visit with a local guide of the gardens. Then you visit the bizarre collection of both eccentric and delightful stone 'beasts' and 'monsters', dating from the mid 16th Century. Enjoy this park in your own time before returning to the hotel. Own arrangements for dinner.

### Day three: Visit Villa Farnese

This is a half day excursion with your coach and driver to Villa Farnese, about 12 miles south of Viterbo. Hailed as a magnificent masterpiece, the garden here harmonises landscape, architecture and sculpture and bursts with a spectacular water feature, the Casino del Placere, dating from about 1560. The remainder of the day will be at leisure back at your hotel, with time to visit Orvieto. Own arrangements for dinner.

### Day four: Travel to Frascati visiting Villa d'Este and Villa Adriana in Tivoli

You leave your first hotel this morning and head south towards Rome for two incredible visits before reaching your hotel near Frascati, where you will be based for the next three nights. A packed lunch is provided. The first visit is to the Villa d'Este, now a UNESCO world heritage site and an impressive garden of man-made terraces, fountains, grottoes, nymphs, often considered a model for European gardens thereafter. Then you visit the nearby Villa Adriana, villa of the Emperor Hadrian and even in its ruined state is one of the most spectacular Roman gardens and an impressive monument to antiquity. The garden recreated a sacred landscape and a hydraulic system fed water to the main structures. Today it is still a magical site with wild flowers, meadows, tall cypresses, fishpond and pool remaining as features. You have time to settle in to your hotel near Frascati before dinner that is included at the hotel.

### Day five: Visit the Giardini della Landriana

The highlight today is a guided visit of the Giardini della

Landriana. Occupying 25 acres and created since 1956, this is a rarity in Italy due to the scale of the separate compartments and the combination of luxuriant English planting and formal Italian structure. The garden is a mass of colour from April to October. Whites, blues, olives, citrus, cottage-style mauves and yellows abound. Formal and informal 'rooms' open and close in speedy succession. The influence of Russell Page is evident. A break for lunch is taken at the end of the visit here before you continue to Frascati where you have some free time to explore the town on your own. You are then taken back to the hotel for time to relax before dinner, which is included at the hotel this evening.

### Day six: Visit the Giardino di Ninfa

The garden of Ninfa is an amazingly special place and perhaps the perfect garden. A guide here conducts the visit. You will witness the verdant location, fed by streams from the hillsides, the impact on the plants of temperatures that rarely fall below 10 degrees Centigrade, the dilapidated walls of the village buildings that provide a microclimate for rare plants to flourish, trees and walls flower-covered and there are scents of rose and jasmine. This is a fantastic collection of plants from all over the world that flourish in this idyllic site. Time for lunch after the visit at Ninfa and then in the afternoon you are taken to Villa Aldobrandini for a private visit of the gardens (not guided). Included dinner this evening at the hotel.

### Day seven: Visit the Gardens of Castel Gandolfo and then return from Rome to London

Today there is a final garden to visit; that of the gardens of the papal residence Castel Gandolfo. This is not a private visit with a guide but entrance to the gardens. Please note: no shorts or sleeveless tops. There is some free time at the end of the visit before departing for Rome airport and the flight at 15.15 hrs for London Heathrow, arriving in at 16.35 hrs.

### Dates and prices

This tour departs on the following dates from London for these prices per person.

12 May 2021	<b>£2,580</b>
2 June 2021	<b>£2,580</b>
23 June 2021	<b>£2,580</b>
8 September 2021	<b>£2,580</b>

Prices are based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

Single supplement for use of double: £320 per person.

**Deposit payment:** £400 per person

### We include

- Flights with British Airways London Heathrow to Rome

in Eurotraveller

- Transportation on the mainland in a small coach with one piece of luggage per person.
- Services of English speaking tour escort throughout.
- Services of a local guide for Villa Lante, Villa Farnese, Villa d'Este, Villa Adriana, Landriana, Ninfa Aldobrandini.
- Entrance tickets to the gardens visited.
- Three nights' bed and breakfast in a standard double or twin room at the Palazzo Piccolomini in Orvieto.
- Three nights' dinner, bed and breakfast at the Villa Grazioli, Frascati in a classic double or twin room in the Paggeria wing of the hotel.

### Palazzo Piccolomini Orvieto

This is a small, historic 4 star hotel with just 22 rooms in the centre of the hill-town of Orvieto, providing a charming and discreet location for your stay. The Palazzo is a renovated aristocratic town mansion dating from the end of the 16th Century and located within easy reach of the shopping area, the Cathedral and the lifts that operate from the parking areas below the town. There is a breakfast room and reading room. The hotel bedrooms are air-conditioned with digital TV. There is no restaurant at the hotel itself but many within easy walking distance.

### Park Hotel Villa Grazioli Frascati

The Park Hotel Villa Grazioli dates from the 16th Century. Once a Cardinal's villa, it has been carefully restored as a 4 star hotel to combine its wealth of history and modern comforts for its guests. There are 62 rooms in the main Villa and two smaller villas, the Paggeria and the Limonaia. Rooms are elegant and restrained, and overlook the park, Frascati the Hill of Tuscolo or the direction of Rome. The Acquaviva Restaurant has an enchanting hanging garden with a view over Rome, and offers guests specialties of local and Mediterranean cuisine. There is an outdoor swimming pool. The classic rooms are located in the Paggeria wing of the hotel. Rooms can be upgraded on request at a supplement.

### Different travel arrangements

If you want us to arrange flights on other dates and from UK regional airports or to extend your holiday with a stay elsewhere in Italy, just let us know. If you are not arriving from the UK, then we can give you a price that excludes flights and perhaps with extra transfers included. We will adjust the details and the price accordingly.



# TOUR OF THE GARDENS AND VILLAS OF THE VENETO

This 6 night tour splits between the two cities of Padua and Verona, both with clusters of significant gardens in and around them whilst their villas benefit from the influence of the great Palladio. Also in this region, due to the importance of the cities of Padua and Verona, there are very particular gardens of historic interest inside the cities themselves. Please note that this holiday does involve walking tours of up to 2 or 3 hours in duration and the gardens have terraces and steps. This tour operates with a maximum of 14 people.

THIS TOUR ALLOWS YOU plenty of time to explore the beautiful cities you stay in. Also, because of the proximity of the gardens to the cities, there is little driving time in between each visit or each day in total. The tour starts with a drive of about 30 minutes south-west of Padua and the Villa Barbarigo Pizzoni Ardemani whose gardens take the form of an amphitheatre surrounded by hills but reached by avenues containing all the attributes of an Italian garden: box hedges, lemon trees, sculpture and water features, including water games which may soak the unsuspecting visitor. Nearby on the edge of the Euganean Hills is Villa Emo at Rivella. This villa dates from 1588 and is attributed to Vincenzo Scamozzi, a pupil of Palladio. The main lines of the garden are straight and Italianate but the planting is informal with lots of indigenous flowers such as primroses, hellebores and hepaticas, mixed with salvias, iris and arums in the water. Padua is a delightful, small city and at its heart is the Botanic Garden. Just under 30 minutes' drive from Padua, on the Brenta Canal, is the Villa Pisani, whose gardens reflect the French influence at the time with its gates and grilles offering views to the countryside outside of the park. There is also a labyrinth, gentle lawns, avenues of water and decorative statues. Our time in Verona is spent exploring the city with a local guide but also visiting the Giardino Giusti, set on a steep hillside behind the villa courtyard, inside Verona and one of the oldest Renaissance gardens in Italy, dating from the 1570s and much visited by artists over the centuries. Goethe was inspired by the huge cypress trees. Our final garden is that of the Villa Rizzardi that lies about 11 miles to the north of Verona. Its most outstanding feature is a green theatre, the finest of its kind in Italy dating from 1796. The alleys and vistas have been designed to glimpse the hills and mountains whenever possible. An avenue of cypresses interspersed with palm trees leads to a belvedere. There is also a wild bosco where stone beasts lurk.



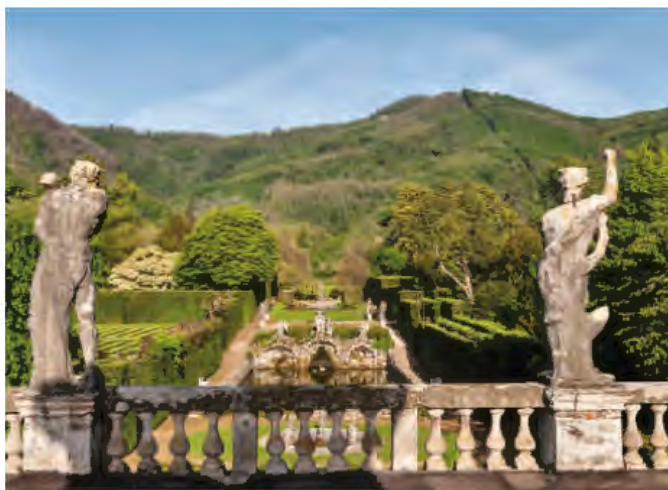
Villa Pisani



Palazzo Victoria, Verona



Junior suite at the Palazzo Victoria



Villa Barbarigo



## DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

### Day one: Arrive in Italy

We book you onto the 14.00 British Airways flight from Gatwick to Venice, arriving at 17.10. You are met by your small luxury coach and driver/escort who take you to Padua, a drive of less than an hour. As our hotel is in the historic centre, passengers and luggage will be transferred to the hotel by minibus. Time for a stroll in the city centre and to try one of our recommended restaurants for dinner (not included).

### Day two: Visit Villa Barbarigo and Villa Emo at Rivella

Today you are driven the short distance (about 30 minutes) south-west of Padua to the area of the Euganean hills for the two visits today. A local guide at the gardens will provide guided visits. Enjoy the sense of theatre from the setting of Villa Barbarigo, with its beautiful garden that has strong structural element but also is full of flowers as well as clipped hedges, box, magnolias and fishponds with waterplants. At Villa Emo, you will appreciate the very pretty borders and flowers, unusual in such a structured Italian garden. An English influence is evident in the double herbaceous borders and blocks of blue iris. The setting of the villa is a delight with the estate-owned apple orchards, corn fields and vineyards. Return to Padua for the evening and own dinner arrangements.

### Day three: Explore Padua and visit the Botanic Gardens

This morning you will enjoy a walking tour with a guide of the heart of Padua with its bridges, arcaded streets and piazzas and also the famous historic botanic gardens. Padua is a delightful, small city (setting for Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew) and home to an ancient university. The city has arcaded streets, piazzas and is intersected by branches of the Bacchiglione river. At the heart of Padua is the historic Botanic Garden, dating from 1545 and founded as an apothecary's teaching garden for the University Medical School. Living plants from all over the world were brought here to be studied and for use in herbal medicine. The layout is still very geometric. The rest of the day is at leisure for you to explore on your own. Own arrangements for dinner.

### Day four: Villa Pisani and Verona

You leave Padua this morning for the second stay of the tour but en route you drive along the Brenta Canal and stop to visit Villa Pisani, one of the most famous of the villas on the canal and resplendent with symmetrical water features,

statues and lawns. If possible we will visit Villa Trissino Marzotto before reaching Verona. Your hotel is in the city centre, a few minutes' walk from the Arena. This afternoon is at leisure for you to explore the city on your own. Own arrangements for dinner or visit one of our recommended restaurants.

### Day five: Sightseeing of Verona and the Giardino Giusti

You enjoy a morning's sightseeing walking tour of Verona with a local guide, have free time for lunch, and then in the afternoon you visit the Giardino Giusti, one of the oldest Renaissance gardens in Italy and from which you will be able to admire panoramic views of the Alps and the Po valley. The highest level of the gardens is thick with 19th Century landscape-style planting and then lower down on the flat are formal box-edged parterres, lemons in pots and fountains. Cypress form a walk and there are beautiful views to the Alps and across the Po to Mantua. Own arrangements this evening for dinner.

### Day six: Villa Rizzardi and Valpolicella wine tasting with lunch

Your final full day on this tour takes you north of Verona towards the Valpolicella wine region and first a visit to Villa Rizzardi and its famous green theatre, the oldest in Italy. After the visit you will have a wine-tasting and a light lunch. Mid-afternoon return to Verona for your final night. Own arrangements.

### Day seven: Return to London from Verona

You will check-out after breakfast for a morning flight back to London, departing from Verona at 11.50 and arriving into Gatwick at 12.50 hrs. If you prefer we can arrange for you to have a full day in Verona and fly back on the evening flight at 22.10 arriving into Gatwick at 23.00 hrs (transfers extra). Or why not extend your stay in Italy and visit Lake Garda or Venice perhaps? Ask us for details.

### Dates and prices

This tour departs on the following dates from London for these prices per person  
17 September 2021 **£2,890**

Prices are based on two people sharing a double or twin room.

**Supplements:** Single occupancy £480

**Deposit payable:** £400 per person

### We include

- Flights with British Airways Gatwick to Venice, Verona to Gatwick in Euro traveller
- Transportation from Venice airport back to Verona airport in a small coach for maximum 14 people with one piece of luggage per person, English speaking driver-escort.
- Entrance tickets to the gardens mentioned with guided visits
- Sightseeing tour on foot of Padua and Verona
- Three nights' bed and breakfast in double or twin rooms at the Hotel Majestic Toscanelli, Padua
- Three nights' bed and breakfast in a deluxe double or twin room at the Palazzo Victoria, Verona
- Luggage and passenger transfer in Padua

### Hotel Majestic Toscanelli

Padua

This is a 4 star hotel in the heart of the old town of Padua, traditional in style, furnished with antiques and with each bedroom having its own soft furnishings. Rooms have either bath or shower and wc and overlook the square at the front of the hotel or the courtyard at the back. The hotel offers a buffet breakfast and there is an American bar serving drinks and food.

### Palazzo Victoria

Verona

The Palazzo Victoria is now a 4 star hotel with about 70 rooms and suites in the historic centre of Verona. Originally a private palazzo, the building has been painstakingly restored to incorporate original features such as Roman mosaics and mediaeval frescoes. There is a bar, popular with the Veronese where cocktails can be enjoyed often accompanied by live jazz and there is also a restaurant with show kitchen. Super location and lots of atmosphere.

### Different travel arrangements

If you want us to arrange flights on other dates and from UK regional airports or to extend your holiday with a stay elsewhere in Italy, just let us know. If you are not arriving from the UK, then we can give you a price that excludes flights and perhaps with extra transfers included. We will adjust the details and the price accordingly.

### Important information

Please refer to the important information detailed on page 15 of this leaflet.

Giardini Giusti, Veneto





Landriana, Rome area



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### EXPRESSIONS HOLIDAYS GARDEN TOURS FOR SMALL GROUPS

A unique feature of our tours is that they operate for small numbers only. You have a local guide to accompany you to the garden visits but not in between. You stay in Expressions tried and tested hotels or ones that we have known about and used for our individual guests for 25 years.

### OTHER TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

If you want us to arrange flights for different dates and from UK regional airports or to extend your holiday with a stay elsewhere in Italy, just let us know. We will adjust the details and the price accordingly.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

These tours are based on 14 people participating. If there are fewer than 14 people participating, we may modify the tour (smaller coach, or combining driver and escort. Visits to gardens would remain unaffected). We reserve the right to consolidate departure dates if there are insufficient numbers for any of the departures. Our booking conditions apply to this holiday and a copy of the booking conditions can be seen on our website, a copy can be requested before you book and a copy will be sent to you with a confirmed booking. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary if we cannot be accommodated in any of the villas and gardens for any reason closer to the date of departure. We reserve the right to alter the hotel accommodation if necessary. Holiday insurance is not included but it is absolutely essential that you are fully insured. You should also check with the FCO website before you book to ensure you are fully conversant with their advice about your holiday destination.

### FULL FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Full financial protection is provided when you book an Expressions holiday. The air holidays are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is 3076. We are also members of ABTA (W1080) and AITO (the Association of Independent Tour Operators), an organisation of some of Britain's best specialist tour operators.



### OTHER ASPECTS OF ITALY,

Our full Italian Expressions programme offers tailor-made holidays to over 150 of the very best hotels throughout Italy. These holidays are ideal for long, leisurely stays perhaps combining coast and country or lakes and mountains with cities. Increasingly holidays to Italy provide more special interest themes such as the cookery and garden tours, opera and music festivals.

Publication date: 10 July 2020

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THE ART OF INTELLIGENT TRAVEL ORGANISING



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