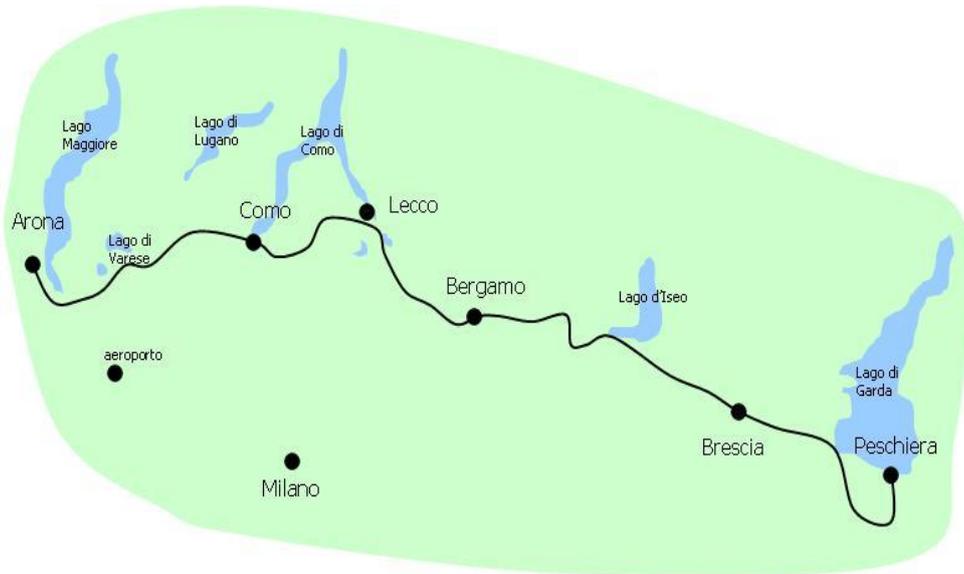


# Cycling Safaris

## Lakes of Lombardy 2018 SELF GUIDED TOUR

7 nights/8 days, total cycling distance approx 285 km



This itinerary runs from east to west mainly in the hilly areas south of the big Alpine lakes in the Lombard region. The first part, going along the Mincio River, coincides with the Cycling Route del Sole and with **Eurovelo 7**. In Como it crosses La Via dei Pellegrini, which is **Eurovelo 5**.

Being well connected to the main international tourist cycling routes, the beautiful nature of the areas and the rich artistic sights make this a fantastic route. Cycling tourists will generally find little traffic on these roads with some sections where cars are not allowed.

The route is mainly on roads with low traffic density and in some places on dedicated bicycle trails.

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## TOUR ITINERARY

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### **Day 1**                      **Arrival Peschiera del Garda**

After your arrival you can check in to your accommodation and enjoy the town or relax.

### **Day 2**                      **Peschiera del Garda - Brescia**                      **45/72 km**

From the harbour-fortress of Peschiera on Lake Garda, we ride downstream on the Mincio River and arrive at Monzambano, a town with a looming castle. The peaceful rolling hills accompany us to the enchanting Castellaro Lagusello, surrounded by a medieval wall. The first castle in Pozzolengo was erected over a thousand years ago to defend against the Hungarian raids. Through the vineyards we come to the tower of San Martino. After the lakeside town of Desenzano, a short climb takes us to hilltops overlooking Lake Garda. Then following fragments of an ancient Roman road, we traverse the moraine hills from the abbey of Maguzzano to arrive at the Romanesque Parish of Pontenove with its romantic 1700s bridge.

Many of the monuments of Brescia were constructed in marble from the nearby hills.

Brescia also shows traces of its Roman history (temple capitolino), Lombard (monastery of Santa Giulia) and Venetian (the Loggia)

### **Day 3**                      **Brescia – Sarnico/ Lake Iseo**                      **35 km**

Before the year 1000, the Hungarians raided Franciacorta, the ancient name given to this region. The defenses, in the form of castles, from that era are still in evidence. At Lake Iseo we reach the Torbiere of Sebino, a natural reserve which is watched over by the impressive monastery of San Pietro in Lamosa. The fish in the lake have a particular taste exalted by a long gastronomic tradition.

Our destination today is Sarnico on the banks for the Oglio River.

### **Day 4**                      **Sarnico/ Lake Iseo - Bergamo**                      **35 km**

We enter the Bergamo region pedalling along the river bank. The flat country of Bergamo brings to mind, with its towers and castles that rise above the emerging hills, the real splendour of the feudal ages. The agriculture remains an important activity. However as we approach the city, the space that separates one town from another begins to shrink: Bergamo, originally a Celtic settlement, is really two cities: The upper, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Venetian defensive structure and the lower a 19<sup>th</sup> century residential area.

For quite a long way we pedal along the Adda, the waters of which near the lake form caves that reflect the green of flourishing nature. Then we pass through Brianza, between the lakes of Annone, Pusiano and Alserio. This population, which is proverbially composed of workers, has really transformed the territory. The meadows, however, have retained an almost Alpine colour and freshness. Next to the church of Oggiono there is a beautiful Romanesque monastery constructed with squared stones.

### **Day 5**                      **Bergamo – Garlate/Lake Garlate**                      **40 km**

Leaving Bergamo we cross the Brembo River in Ponte San Pietro and go uphill very near Mount Cavo with ancient villages resting on the slopes. Pope Giovanni XXIII, whose house we can visit, was born in one of these, Sotto il Monte. We pass over some hilltops and descend towards the Adda River, which issues from the eastern leg of Lake Como. This river course provides particularly beautiful landscape here.

## Day 6 Garlate - Como

40 km

For quite a long way we pedal along the Adda River, the waters of which form caves that reflect the green of the flourishing nature all around. Then we pass through Brianza, between the lakes of Annone, Pusiano and Alserio. Next to the church of Oggiono there is a beautiful Romanesque monastery constructed with squared stones.

We ride along an unpaved road immersed in a wood. Then we travel through a large hilly area studded with noble residences. At last, we go down to Como. The splendour of the Broletto and of the cathedral testify to the ancient strength of this city, made lively by the pedestrian streets. In the centre is the piazza Cavour facing the lake.



## Day 7 Como – Ranco (Lake Maggiore)

60km

You leave Como going uphill but are soon rewarded with a view of the city. Immediately after, there begin the ups and downs between the various hills where each climb is compensated for by a downhill glide. The towns have well preserved small treasures such as the Romanesque Oratory of San Martino in Albiolo. Another climb takes you to the centre of Varese. With a visit to the center and a recuperative break in the grandiose park of Palazzo Estense, you will forget the slight fatigue of this stage. From Varese it's a quick descent to the lake, for some cooling relief. Further on, you come to Lake Monate and a little after that a panoramic view of Lake Maggiore.

## Day 8 Ranco

Tour ends after breakfast.

### 2018 DEPARTURE DATES

Every Saturday from 17 March to 13 October, minimum 2 people  
Other dates available for 4 pax or more

### 2018 TOUR PRICE

High Season (1<sup>st</sup> April – 7<sup>th</sup> July & 29<sup>th</sup> August – 14<sup>th</sup> October)

€950.00 per person sharing  
€1205.00 for single occupancy

Low Season (all other dates)

€930.00 per person sharing  
€1185.00 for single occupancy

### INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE

#### Included in tour price

- 7 nights accommodation in 3\* hotels and 4\* hotels with breakfast
- Luggage transfer from hotel to hotel (1 piece per person)
- Bike rental
- Road book, maps (1 set per room), tourist information in English
- Telephone service hotline

**Not included:**

- Travel to starting and ending places
- Lunches at noon
- Meals and beverages
- Entrance tickets to museums
- Helmet (5€)
- Local taxes

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**BIKE INFORMATION**

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In your first hotel you will find your road book, the maps and your bikes (a 21 gear hybrid bike). The bikes will be delivered by our local bike mechanic. Your bike has a single waterproof pannier bag (Ortlieb), there's a good lock and you'll get a repair-kit including a pump and a water bottle.

We draw your attention to the fact that you will be held responsible for damage or theft of the bike. Above all watch your bike: in Italy a good number of bikes get stolen, so never leave it unattended. Always lock it and fasten to a fixed object if possible or to another bike.

At the end of the last cycle day you have to return your bike. When you leave that morning from the hotel, please make sure to bring back all the equipment.

Generally speaking, the routes you will follow are nearly always on cycle paths or minor roads, but sometimes you will cycle on main roads for short stretches (for instance in towns) and you have to pay attention, because Italian drivers don't always respect the rules! Cyclists, of course, have to observe traffic rules and regulations. The most important rule is to remember that you are not alone on your bike and that you are sharing the road with other road users.

## WHAT TO BRING

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Specialized cycle clothing is not strictly necessary. What you need (among other things) is the following:

- shorts/ long trousers
- shirts/sweater
- rain clothes
- sandals when you cycle and good shoes
- sunglasses/cap
- swimming costume
- camera
- insect repellent
- helmet

## TRANSFER

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### **Airplane:**

The closest airport is **Verona**; there is a shuttle bus from the airport to the train station of Verona Porta Nuova, from there there's a direct train to Peschiera del Garda.

From **Milano** Airports (Linate and Malpensa) take the bus to Milano central station and then the train to Peschiera

From Bergamo Airport take the bus to Brescia train station and then the train to Peschiera

### **Train:**

Peschiera del Garda is linked directly to the train stations of Milano (1 hour), Brescia (25 minutes) and Verona (15 minutes)

### **Car:**

From Austria/Innsbruck take Highway A22/E45, exit Affi/Lago di Garda sud, then follow direction "Peschiera" on SR450 until Peschiera.

From Austria/Villach take Highway A23/E55 until the end, then A4/E70 direction Venezia/Padova/Verona/Milano and exit PESCHIERA

From Switzerland/Chiasso take Highway A9/E35 until Milano, then A4/E70 direction Verona and exit PESCHIERA

The Hotel is located near the train station.

Taxi from Ranco to Milan Airport costs €35- €45