

AMELIA DALTON LTD

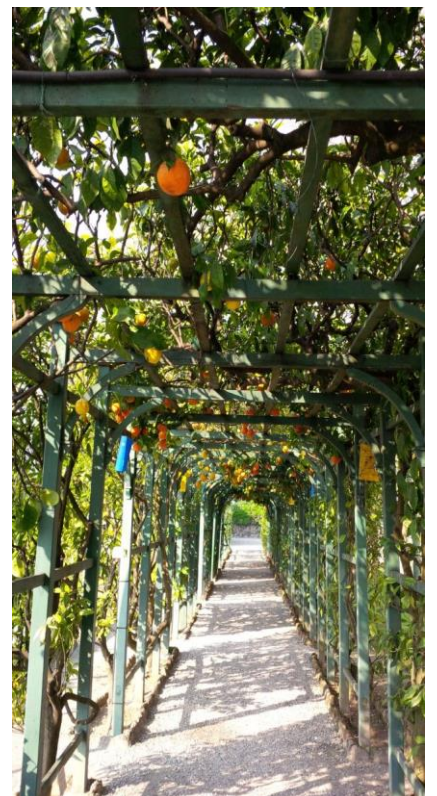
TRAVEL



The Romance of Northern Italy in Spring
LAKES, ISLANDS, VILLAS & GARDENS
a short break on the Lakes of Maggiore & Como
with Mike Nelhams, A.H.R.H.S., F.I.Hort. & Amelia Dalton



Villa Balbianello



Orange Pergola at Villa Carlotta

“The island gardens which dot the Italian lakes are among the most beautiful and beguiling in the world.

But it takes a gardener to explain their fascination” Monty Don.

MIKE NELHAMS is Curator of the Abbey Gardens at **Tresco** in the **Isles of Scilly** and is highly-regarded for his expert knowledge and depth of experience. He is an **RHS Chelsea Flower Show** judge and an enthusiastic inspirational gardener. We will be privileged to take advantage of his knowledge and familiarity with these breath taking villa gardens in their spectacular lake-side settings, as well as enjoy his lively company and down-to-earth garden advice.



AMELIA DALTON has created unusual itineraries in remote parts of the world for the past fifteen years, ranging from Scotland to Indonesia with a focus on the flora and fauna in remote regions including specialised tours for The Durrell Conservation Trust and Kew Gardens. Her aim is to provide an experience characterised by purpose, adventure and joie de vivre, managed with competence and professionalism.



Isola Bella



Isola Pescatori

These romantic villas with their enchanting gardens were created by Europe’s 17th and 18th century glitterati, who lavished money and style to create elegance and exoticism on the shores of these beautiful lakes.

Detailed Itinerary: After a delicious dinner in **Stresa**, our introduction to this glorious part of Italy starts with a private boat cruise across the lake to **Isola Bella**, the Baroque extravaganza created by the Borromeo family, feudal lords of the lake. The 17th century garden was created by Count Carlo III for his wife Isabella to resemble a ship: terraces form decks whilst white peacocks strut amongst the garden statuary. Later family members created the magnificent palazzo where **Napoleon** stayed and **Mussolini** met British and French officials in 1935. We continue on our launch to **Isola dei Pescatori** for lunch at the picturesque fishing village. In the afternoon we continue by boat to visit to the luxuriant magical botanic garden of **Isola Madre**, with its citrus trees, camellia hedges, mimosa, cornus and azaleas.

We break the short transfer between the lakes at **Varese**. With the owner, Jacopo Cicogna Mozzoni as our guide, we visit the 16th century **Villa Cicogna Mozzoni** with its decorative loggia, steep water staircase, grottoes and sunken gardens, lunch in the village nearby before continuing to our delightful hotel on the shores of **Lake Como**. Tonight we can wander through the cobbled streets linking Pescalo with the little town of **Bellagio**, known as the most beautiful town in Europe. Ochre-coloured houses cluster tightly round the promontory and the stepped streets are alive with bars and shops whilst roses tumble over balustrades.



Villa Cicogna Mozzoni



Bellagio

Next morning our private boat collects us from the hotel's jetty to cross **Lake Como** for a visit, by special **private arrangement** to the striking gardens at the country villa of **Baron Pier Fausto Bagatti Valsecchi**. Created from the sheer rock above Menaggio, this is one of the most dramatic gardens of Como with stupendous lake views providing a dramatic backdrop to the waterfalls and richly planted terraces. After lunch in the medieval lake-side village of **Menaggio**, our boat returns us across the lake to **Bellagio** for an afternoon exploring the elegant 19th century gardens of **Villa Serbelloni**, occupying the high ground above the town, and described by Stendhal as 'a sublime and enchanting spectacle'.



Possibly the highlight of Como are the **Villas** and **Gardens of Carlotta** and **Balbiano**. Again crossing Como by private boat, our morning begins at **Villa Carlotta**, a 19th century Neo-classical villa famous for its beautiful terraces, arched lemon pergolas, and dazzling displays of azaleas and camellias. Lunch today is at a typical Italian small restaurant beside the lake in **Tremezzo**, before we continue to romantic **Villa Balbianello**. Built in the 16th and 17th centuries, a backdrop for *Casino Royale* and once the home of the explorer and Everest climber, Guido Monzino, the rooms have eclectic collections from his travels whilst the gardens are regarded as **Como's crown jewel**. The beautifully painted decorative loggia is a delight and provides stunning views over the magnificent candelabra plane trees of the lake and mountains. Dinner tonight will be at a delightful family restaurant in **Bellagio** where the chef makes the most of the excellent local produce. A short walk from the hotel on our final morning takes us to Neo-classical **Villa Melzi**, built in 1810 for Francesco Melzi d'Eril, vice-president of Napoleon's Italian Republic. Stretching along the lake the gardens are famous for the marvellous camellias and sculptures by Luigi Canonica



Villa Balbianello



Villa Balbianello from Lake Como



Day 1: Wednesday 15th April 2015: 16.45 (time TBC) transfer from Milan Linate airport direct to **Stresa** on **Lake Maggiore** (approx. 1 hr) Check into the **Hotel Regina Palace**. Walk to nearby **Stresa** for 4 course dinner with wine.

Day 2: Thursday 16th April: After breakfast, transfer by private boat across the lake to **Isola Bella**, to the villa & gardens. Continue to **Isola Pescatore** for lunch before an afternoon at the magical gardens at **Isola Madre**.

Day 3: Friday 17th April: Today we transfer to **Lake Como** and en route visit the gardens and villa of **Villa Cicogna Mozzoni**, hosted by the owner before lunch in the village. On arrival at **Pescallo**, nestling beside **Bellagio** on **Lake Como**, we check into the **Hotel La Pergola**. Bellagio with its many restaurants is a short walk away or the hotel has a small dining room overlooking the lake: evening at leisure.

Day 4: Saturday 18th April: This morning we have a specially arranged private opening of the gardens at **Villa Bagatti Valsecchi** before lunch in the pretty lake-side village of **Menaggio**. Returning to Bellagio we visit the gardens at **Villa Serbelloni** close to our hotel in **Pescallo**.

Day 5: Sunday 19th April: Today our private boat takes us first to **Villa Carlotta**. Lunch will be a short walk away in **Tremezzo** and our afternoon is spent at **Villa Balbianello** before we return to **Bellagio** for a 4 course dinner in one of the delightful typical restaurants.

Day 6: Monday 20th April: this morning we have time to explore the terraces at **Villa Melzi** before the transfer to Milan Linate airport

Maximum Group Size will be 12.



Villa Carlotta & Terraces

Wednesday 15th – Monday 20th APRIL 2015

Hotel Regina Palace, Stresa, Lake Maggiore: is a traditional *fin de siècle* hotel right on the lake, facing the Borromea Islands. The hotel is a short walk from the centre of Stresa and has a garden, indoor and outdoor pools, Turkish Bath & Sauna. Rooms have a Jacuzzi, safe, internet connection and heating. Our private boat will operate from the hotel's jetty. **2 nights**



Hotel Regina Palace at Stresa on Lake Maggiore

Hotel La Pergola: is a charming, small, family-run 3 star hotel on the shore of Lake Como with its own jetty in the tiny fishing harbour of Pescallo: rooms have lake views. Our private boat will operate from here and Bellagio village is a 10 minute walk along a pretty pathway between the private villas. **3 nights.**



Hotel La Pergola, Pescallo



Departing across Como from our hotel at Pescallo

COSTS for 6 day tour
Deposit Sterling £250.00 Balance Eur 2,170 (equivalent to £1,783 @ May 2014)

The Cost, based on 2 sharing a room includes:

- accommodation in hotels as mentioned (or of a similar quality) including taxes and service charges with breakfast daily
- 4 Lunches, 2 Dinners with wine at each meal
- All entrance fees, local guides and visits as mentioned in the itinerary
- transfers from and to **Milan Linate airport** connecting with the suggested flights below only
- boat & minibus transfers as mentioned in the itinerary.
- gratuities throughout
- services of your Garden Expert & Tour Leader

Cost does NOT include:

- arrival at & departure from **Milan Linate** airport – **see below**
- items of a personal nature, e.g. excess luggage / phone calls / laundry.
- travel insurance.
- Meals, transport & activities unless specified in the itinerary
- government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme

MAXIMUM GROUP will be 12 plus Mike and Amelia.

Lake view supplement, twin room 2 nights @ Hotel Regina Palace on Lake Maggiore
 Single supplement in twin room with lake view @ Regina Palace on Lake Maggiore



Eur 225
Eur 250

FLIGHTS: the tour cost **does not include flights** but does include transfers at the start and finish of the tour as described, provisionally linked with the flights below. It is easy to travel independently to/from Lakes Maggiore and Como.

I am happy to help with arrangements.

15th April 2015: Easy Jet ETD Gatwick 13.20 / ETA **Milan Linate** 16.15

20th April 2015: Easy Jet ETD **Milan Linate** 16.50 / ETA Gatwick 17.40

As at May 2014 these flights, (inc 1 checked-in bag) are £170 return

AMELIA DALTON TRAVEL LTD. 13 Graham Terrace, LONDON SW1W 8JE
 Tel: + 44 (0)20 7823 5612 Fax: + 44 (0)20 7823 5609 Mobile: + 44 (0) 7831 121 156
 Email: amelia@ameliadaltonttravel.co.uk www.ameliadaltonttravel.co.uk
 Registered Office: 44 Chatsworth Gardens London W3 9LW No 05024060