



THE UNESCO BEAUTY BETWEEN LAKES & MOUNTAINS LAKE MAGGIORE, LAKE ORTA, OSSOLA VALLEYS

This one-day-tour will allow you to visit the Lakes region in northern Piedmont, discovering a scenic beauty and the many naturalistic, historical, and artistic treasures preserved in its UNESCO World Heritage sites. Travel with us from the Ossola Valleys, at the foot of the Alps, down to Lake Orta to admire two important Sacred Mounts. Finally, we will reach Lake Maggiore to talk about protected green areas. Pleasures of taste will not be missing thanks to the proposals of the local cuisine between lakes and mountains. The Lakes area in Piedmont is also part of the MAB Ticino Val Grande Verbano Biosphere Reserve, another UNESCO World Heritage Site. Live your Lago Maggiore UNESCO Experience!

8:00 am: departure from Torino to the **Lakes District** in upper Piedmont.

10:30 am: arrival in **Domodossola**, Ossola Valleys and guided visit to the Sacro Monte Calvario - Sacred Mountains of Piedmont and Lombardy, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a wonderful view of the Alps chain. A reference person of Sacro Monte will be present for welcome.

Sacro Monte Calvario winds from the city of Domodossola up to Mattarella hill. The Sacred Mount project was undertaken in 1656 by Capuchin friars Gioacchino da Cassano and Andrea da Rho to represent the Passion and Death of Jesus in life-size images in a Biblia Pauperum of sorts. When Napoleon disbanded the monastic orders in 1810, the Capuchin friars were cast away and the convent turned into military barracks. In 1828, the complex returned to life thanks to a new religious order founded by the priest and philosopher Antonio Rosmini from the Trentino region. The construction of the other chapels resumed and continued until the early twentieth century.

12:30 pm: typical alpine lunch at quality restaurant Osteria Gallo Nero in Montecrestese in the surroundings of Domodossola. Guests will taste a Ossola gourmet menu, Piedmontese wines included.

3:30 pm: arrival in **Orta San Giulio**, Lake Orta, ascent on foot and guided tour of the Sacro Monte di Orta - Sacred Mountains of Piedmont and Lombardy, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a wonderful view of the lake and its pearl, the Island of San Giulio.

Located in a charming landscape, on a promontory overlooking Lake Orta, a sequence of twenty chapels surrounded by nature illustrates some episodes of the life of St. Francis from Assisi, with sculptures and paintings. The chapels are distributed along a route that offers spectacular views on the lake. The idea of a Sacro Monte became reality in 1590, thanks to the contribution of Abbot Amico Canobio from Novara, and according to the project of Capuchin architect Cleto from Castelletto Ticino. From 1593 to 1615, Bishop Carlo Bascapé of Novara became the main actor of the building process, defining the architecture of the complex and inviting renowned artists to work in Orta. There the intimate and natural atmospheres typical of early seventeenth-century Lombard art are combined with the lively theatrical Baroque style of the end of the century. The route ends at the Church of San Nicolao, a proto-Romanesque building, completely redesigned during the seventeenth century to recreate the spaces of the lower Basilica of Assisi. The beauty of the landscape, its silence and harmonious balance between faith, art, architecture, and nature mirror the essence of Franciscan spirituality.

6:00 pm: brief stop at the entrance to the Lagoni di Mercurago Natural Park in Arona Pile-dwellings sites of Piedmont and Lombardy, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a park ranger to illustrate the historical-naturalistic resources of the protected area.

The Lagoni di Mercurago Natural Park is one of the most important Bronze Age settlements in the whole Alpine range and an extremely important archaeological site, not only in Italy. The park is a protected area home to one of the first pile-dwelling structures found in Europe in the mid-19th century, the first to be scientifically studied



in Italy. Archaeological excavations have brought to the surface several ceramic objects, weapons and metal ornaments, flint tools, glass beads and wooden artefacts. Now conserved in local museums, they are examples of the extraordinary cultural and historical richness of the park.

7:00 pm: arrival in **Arona**, Lake Maggiore for a short walk in the lovely historic center and lakedinner at quality restaurant Ristorante Vecchia Arona on the lake promenade. Guests will taste a gourmetlake menu, Piedmontese wines included.

9:30 pm: departure of the group with its guide back to Torino.

11:30 pm: arrival in Torino and overnight.

Please note: comfortable shoes and clothing and anti-insect lotion are recommended for all participants.

*Fam Trip organized and offered by the Local Tourism Board Distretto Turistico dei Laghi
in partnership with local Operators involved in the tour.*