The lakes of Lombardy
An 8 days self-guided cycling vacation

Code tour: ITALOM02C

ECOLOGICO
TOURS

From Lake Garda until Lake Maggiore

A fabulous cycling tour in a flourishing and varied landscape, in which you cross national parks, oases and natural reserves. You cycle along waterways zigzagging between green hills, passing characteristic villages, castles... always admiring the brilliance of the sun reflecting on the crystal clear water surfaces of the lakes. Sometimes you have to make a small detour, but always you are rewarded with a stunning view of a lake. This cycling tour starts in Peschiera on the shores of Lake Garda, where the Mincio river leaves the lake. The town has a small old town centre, defences which are a UNESCO world heritage site and a harbour. The next days you will cycle from east until west crossing the hills south of the big Alpine lakes. The first part follows the river Mincio, and you are cycling along the cycle path 'Ciclopista del Sole', which makes part of Eurovelo 7. The route passes Bergamo, where you can visit the old town with the cableway. A walk along the 5km old Venetian walls offers a stunning view of the valley. In the Academia Carrara you can see masterpieces of Botticelli, Raphael and Titian. Discover Bergamo's nightlife enjoying a delicious local meal in one of the small restaurants and drink a beer or glass of wine in the cosy pubs and wine bars.
The route continues in the lake areas and at lake Como the route meets the Way of Pilgrims (Via dei Pellegrini), Eurovelo 5. You will pass hermitages, fortresses and picturesque villages, which preserve artistic treasures of exceptional value, ancient noble palaces and castles with famous botanical gardens enclosing a peerless silence. The tour ends at Lake Maggiore where you could make a relaxing boot trip on the lake with a visit to the enchanting Borromee Islands (isola Bella, isola Madre ed isola dei Pescatori)
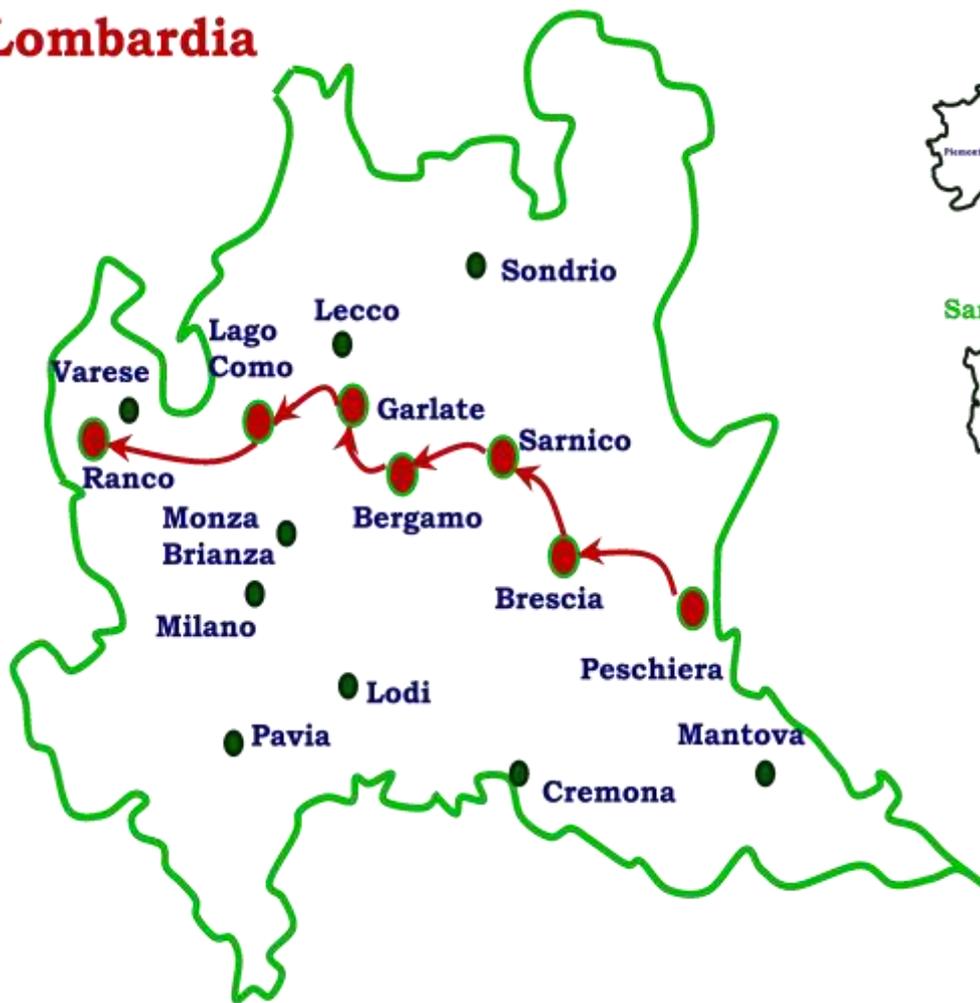
Period:
Self-guided Tour: every Saturday from 27 March until 25 September (on request with min. 4 people it is possible to start on another day)

Participants: minimum 2 persons

Level: 2/3
Medium difficulty: You cycle through a hilly landscape mostly on quiet country roads and sometimes cycle paths. The steeper climbs are short and the longer ones not too steep. The daily distances are restricted to between 35 km/22 miles and 63 km/39 miles. Total length:
251 km/156 miles minimum and 269 km/167 miles.

Program in short:
Day 1 Arrival at Peschiera
Day 2 Peschiera - Brescia
Day 3 Brescia – Sarnico/Paratico
Day4 Sarnico - Bergamo
Day 5 Bergamo - Garlate
Day 6 Garlate – Como
Day 7 Como - Ranco
Day 8 End of tour

Program day by day

Day 1 Individual arrival at Peschiera del Garda
The historical centre of Peschiera, a town on the shore of lake Garda, is surrounded by cannels. Garda lake is the largest lake of Italy and the beautiful landscape has inspired many writers like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Franz Kafka. The lake has numerous small islands and five main ones, the largest being Isola del Garda. The centre of Peschiera is walled-in and there is a fortress to visit.

Overnight with breakfast in Peschiera

Day 2 Peschiera del Garda - Brescia
The first cycle day of this holiday dedicated to the lakes of Lombardy follows the river Mincio. Crossing the morenic hills, you will reach the medieval castle of Monzambano, a little village set in the Mincio Park surrounded by a picturesque landscape. The next stop is Castellano Lagusello on the shores of a heart-shaped lake. The medieval centre is walled. In Pozzolengo is another castle to visit. You can shorten the route by going directly to San Martino della Battaglia. From afar, you will see the characteristic neo-gothic tower from 1878. Final destination of today is Brescia, a custodian of a rich heritage of art and history from prehistoric times to the modern day. Worth visiting is the museum of Santa Giulia, which houses the City Museum of the town having more than 11,000 finds. It takes the visitor from the prehistoric Age, the Roman, the Lombard and the Carolingian Age and the period of the medieval Comuni and Signorie up to the Venetian Age.

Short route:
Overnight with breakfast in Brescia
Distance: 45,1 km / 28 miles
Ascent & Descent: + 346m -256m

Long route:
Overnight with breakfast in Brescia
Distance: 63,1 km /39,2 miles
Ascent & Descent: + 534m -440m
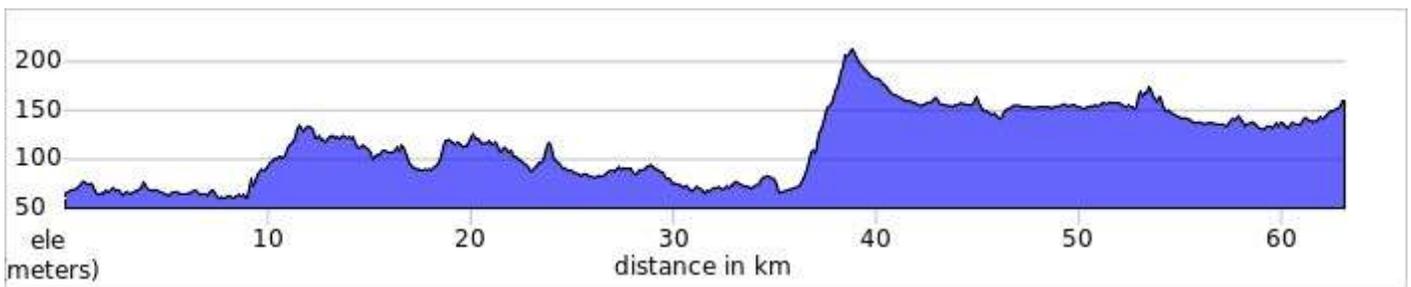
Day 3 Brescia –Iseo Lake/Sarnico/Paratico

Today's route passes the Abbey of Rodengo of the Benedictines congregation, one of the most impressive and rich monuments of the North of Italy. In the 10th century the abbey was founded by the monks of Cluny. The next stop is Provaglio d'Iseo, at the foot of mount Monte Cognolo (674m), located in the region of Franciacorta and famous for its wine production. The nearby Torbiere Sabine is an important national reserve with a rich flora and fauna. You can visit the castle of Crusane

Overnight with breakfast in Sarnico/Paratico
Distance: 35,6 km / 22,1 miles
Ascent & Descent: + 266m -237m

Day 4 Sarnico/Iseo lake – Bergamo

Today is full of green rolling hills, vineyards, small villages and castles. You will pass the castle of Grumello and Montello. Bergamo is divided in a upper medieval town centre and a modern lower part, which are connected by a cable train. The most known part of Bergamo is the cosy square, Piazza Vecchia with many terraces and the tower 'Torre Civica'. Here we found also the Duomo and famous Colleoni Chapel.

Overnight with breakfast in Bergamo
Distance: 37,8 km /23,4 miles
Ascent & Descent: + 312m -246m
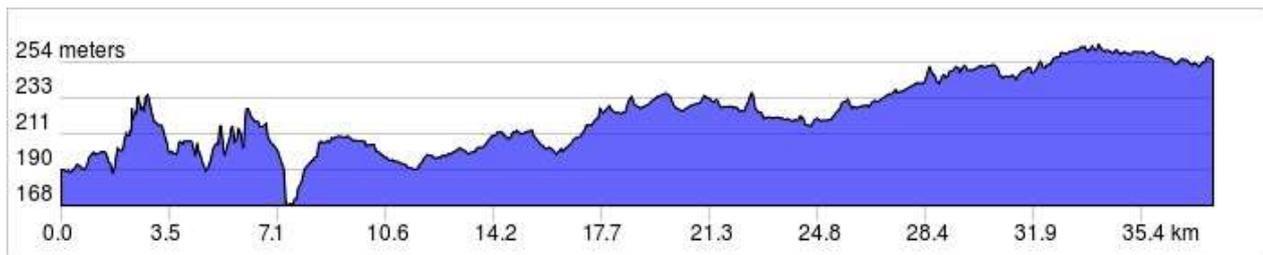
Day 5 Bergamo-Garlate and surroundings

After breakfast in the saddle and after a nice ride you come to the sanctuary of Mapello, located at the foot of Monte Giovanni XXIII where a big part of the monuments are connected with the life of Pope John XXIII. Very interesting is the 'Leonardo' ferryboat of Olginate –a kind of ferry invented by Leonardo da Vinci-. Your overnight stay will be at the lake or in Lecco, a town which was rewarded in 2013 as Alpine town. Lake Garlate is formed by the river Adda. On the left side are situated the towns of Lecco and Vercurago while on the right side the towns of Pescate and Garlate.

Overnight with breakfast in Garlate
Distance: 38,9 km /24,1 miles
Ascent & Descent: + 296m -347m

Day 6 Garlate/surrounding – Lakes of Annone & Pusiano & Alserio – Como Lake
A new day dedicated to many lakes, beautiful views, stunning nature and the small church of Albavilla. The end of today is Lake Como, a lake of Glacial origin and the third lake of Italy. This pre-alpine lake surrounded by a crown of mountains with peaks up to 2700 m high, is not only spectacular but also rich in history and tradition. In the 17th and 18th century it became a popular retreat for aristocratic and famous writers like Stendhal and Flaubert, but also nowadays it is considered as one of the most beautiful lakes in Europe. The most important river is the Adda which is also the lake's only outlet. It leaves the lake at Lecco, at the far tip of the southeastern branch of the lake, flowing into the smaller lakes of Garlate and Olginate before heading south of Milan to join the River Po

Overnight with breakfast in Como or nearby
Distance: 34,6 km / 21,5 miles
Ascent & Descent: + 457m -449m

Day 7 Lake Como - the lakes of Varese & Monate – Ranco (Lake Maggiore)
Today's ride take you to the Romanesque oratory o San Martino at Albiolo (12th century). In the interior, there are nice frescoes of the 14th and 15th century. Also today, there is no lack of water because you pass the lakes of Varese, Monate and you cycle along the river Ticino. The grand final is Lake Maggiore, the most western of the prealpine lakes, and the town of Sesto Calende with its abbey dedicated to San Donato (9th-10th century) Lake Maggiore was featured in Ernest Hemingway's infamous novel, A Farewell to Arms. You could make a relaxed boot trip on the lake!

Overnight with breakfast in Ranco
Distance: 59,3 km /36,8 miles
Ascent & Descent: + 749m -742m

Day 8 After breakfast end of tour

Hotels:
*** or **** stars

Prices per person 2021:
In double room   € 945,00
In single room   € 1.200,00
Bike rental (21 speed, 1 pannier, 1 tool kit) € 95,00
E-bike rental   € 195,00
Helmet   € 5,00

Included in the price:
- Overnight stays in good *** and **** star hotels with ensuite facilities
- Breakfast
- Luggage transportation (1 piece per person)
- Route descriptions in English or Italian and maps (1 set per room)
- Back-up service

Not included in the price:
- Tourist tax (To be paid at the hotel)
- Anything not mentioned under "Included in the price"

Extra nights price per person:
Peschiera *** star hotel
> In double room € 70,00
> In single room € 95,00

Ranco (lake Maggiore) *** hotel
> In double room € 90,00
> In single room € 125,00

How to arrive:
Start / End of tour: Peschiera/Ranco

Airport Malpensa Milan
Take the train to Milan Central Station (4 x per hour).
Peschiera is located along the Milano – Venice train line, one of the most important train lines in Italy, connecting Milan to the Adriatic coast and Venice. Travel time approximately 1 hour 10 minutes to 1 hour 40 minutes.
Or from Verona airport (flights from Belfast, Birmingham, Edinburgh, London, Manchester)
Shuttle buses go from the airport to Verona station "Porta Nuova". About 1 x per hour trains go to Peschiera (travel time 0.15 min)
Trains Italy

Useful Information
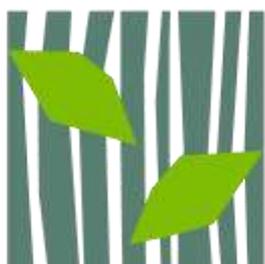
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