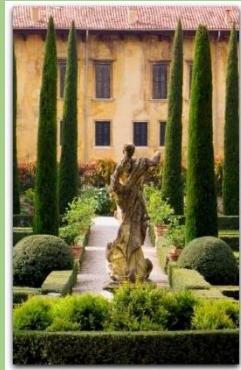


Chip Callaway's



September 5 – 14, 2018

GARDENS OF NORTHERN ITALY: THE LAKES AND THE LAGOON.

Our journey to Northern Italy includes the Italian Lakes of Maggiore, Como and Garda and ends crossing the lagoon to Venice. We will take you to some of the finest lakeside and island gardens of this uniquely beautiful region. We will travel a lot by boat, discovering landscapes of quiet enchantment and sublime grandeur. While our days will be infused with exquisite light, by night we will revel in the *fin de siècle* atmosphere of our lakeside and canal side hotels. The warm, humid microclimate of the Italian Lakes, results in exceptional growing conditions, with much to enthuse the plantsman. Combining great botanical interest with the fascinating history of the gardens' origins, our tour will move from the Renaissance to the twentieth century through compelling and often neglected chapters of Italian garden history. While in Venice, we will visit a rose garden on the Grand Canal; explore a vegetable garden tended by monks; discover the flowers that inspired the Fortuny prints. We have carefully selected four exceptional hotels all 5star category with rooms with views where ever applicable. I will be accompanied throughout by **Jenny Condie**, author of *Gardens of Venice and the Veneto*, who will introduce us to the rich history of Venice and Northern Italy through its diverse and intriguing gardens. – Chip

Day 1: Thursday 6th September 2018

Our tour begins at Milan Linate airport-at noon for a transfer to the hotel on Lake Maggiore, or we will meet at the hotel in the evening, if arranging your own flights. Our hotel, the Grand Hotel des Iles Barromées, combines sumptuous Art Nouveau elegance and tradition with charm. With lakeview rooms we will be here two nights.

Tonight we will enjoy an aperitif followed by dinner served with local wines. D-Dinner
www.borromees.com/

Day 2: Friday 7th September 2018

After breakfast, we board a private boat and make the short crossing to the breathtaking island garden of **Isola Bella**. We have plenty of time to explore the terraces and admire the Baroque fountains, statues and water theatre, all set against the magnificent backdrop of Lake Maggiore and the distant Alps. After a delicious lunch on the tiny **Isola dei Pescatori**, we cross to **Isola Madre** to admire the Borromeo family's wonderful 19th century collection of exotic trees and plants. B -Breakfast, L-Lunch

Day 3: Saturday 8th September 2018

Today, we drive along the shore of the lake to visit **Villa Taranto** and the extraordinarily rich range of plants collected in the 1930s by *Neil McEacharn*. Then we will cross Lake Maggiore by ferry to visit the 16th century **Villa Cicogna**, where our charming host *Count Jacopo Mozzoni Cicogna* will guide us around the richly frescoed Renaissance villa, with 16th century terraced garden, water staircase, and 19th century *giardino inglese*. After lunch at Villa Cicogna, we journey to Lake Como. **Villa Flori** is our lakeside hotel for two nights. We will have a dinner together tonight.
<http://www.hotel-villa-flori.com/>.

B /L/D

Day 4: Sunday 9th September 2018

We take a private boat from our hotel to enjoy the terraced botanical collection established by Charlotte, Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen, at **Villa Carlotta**, with time to visit the villa and its fine collection of paintings and sculpture. We then cross the lake to the picturesque town of Bellagio with free time for lunch. By water again to the exquisite **Villa del Balbianello**, a late 18th century villa set in steeply sloping gardens at the tip of a wooded promontory. After a tour of the art collections assembled by its last owner, mountaineer and polar explorer *Count Guido Monzino*. We will return to the hotel and you may opt to dine this evening at Hotel Villa d'Este, the world-famous hotel of the rich and famous or visit charming Como town.

B

Day 5: Monday, 10th September 2018

After an early start from the hotel and we will travel the short distance to Milan to visit Leonardo di Vinci's "Last Super" and hidden gems at the **Santa Maria delle Grazie Church**. After our stop there, with time for lunch, we continue to Lake Garda. We will cross by boat to the small island of **Isola di Garda** to see the terraced garden and share an aperitif before crossing the lake and re-joining the coach to drive the short

distance to Verona. The famous Due Torri is our hotel and the location is superb. We will definitely check the Opera Schedule.

<http://hotelduetorri.duetorrihotels.com/> (opera schedule will be checked!) B

Day 6: Tuesday 11th September 2018

A day around Verona: we begin with a visit to **Villa Allegri Arvedi**, where elaborate *broderie* parterres create the foreground to a beautiful agricultural landscape, followed by a light lunch in the 18th-century garden of **Pojega** at **Villa Rizzardi**, famous for its magnificent green theatre. In the afternoon we go into the heart of Verona, to **Giardino Giusti**, a dramatic garden that has been attracting visitors for over four hundred years. Free time in Verona this evening.B/L

Day 7: Wednesday 12th September 2018

This morning we will drive to Padua and visit the **Scravegni Chapel** followed by some free time for lunch and the city's ancient **Padua Botanic Gardens** where modern glass houses built to a cutting-edge design have just been completed next to the 16th century garden. Later in the afternoon we visit the famous 17th-century garden of **Villa Barbarigo** at Valsanzibio, with its exquisite watergate, pools, statues, maze and rabbit island. We will travel by private boat to your hotel, Hotel Bauer Palazzo(San Marco) at the end of the Grand Canal. Free time for lunch in Padua. Dinner on your own in Venice. B www.bauervenezia.com/en/

Day 8: Thursday 13th September 2018

We will travel by vaporetto to the Giudecca where we visit the **Chiesa del Santissimo Redentore** (Church of the Most Holy Redeemer) which behind it is a large enclosed vegetable garden tended by the monks of the Franciscan monastery. We then visit the beautiful gardens of the **Bauer Palladio Hotel**. Remaining on the Giudecca, we will visit **The Fortuny showroom and gardens**. In 1919, Fortuny purchased land on the island of Giudecca. Although no visitors are permitted to enter the factory itself, in order to preserve the secret of Mariano Fortuny's manufacturing process, the showroom is open to the public and the adjacent gardens will be opened to us today. Many Fortuny fabrics are known for their intricate floral patterns which feature exuberant vines, twisting stems and flowers in full bloom. The garden is an extension of the showroom, with hydrangeas, roses, oleanders, and a host of other flora, many of which are the actual basis for Mariano Fortuny's designs, while others are inspired by his motifs. On the return journey, visit the remarkable garden on the Grand Canal of **Palazzo Cappello Malipiero Barnabò**. Free time for lunch and tonight we will enjoy cocktails together before you are free to dine at some of Venice's best locations! Perhaps al fresco to the orchestra music and say arrivederci Italy. B

Day 9: Friday 14th September

Journey by boat to Venice Marco Polo airport to check-in for the return flights