

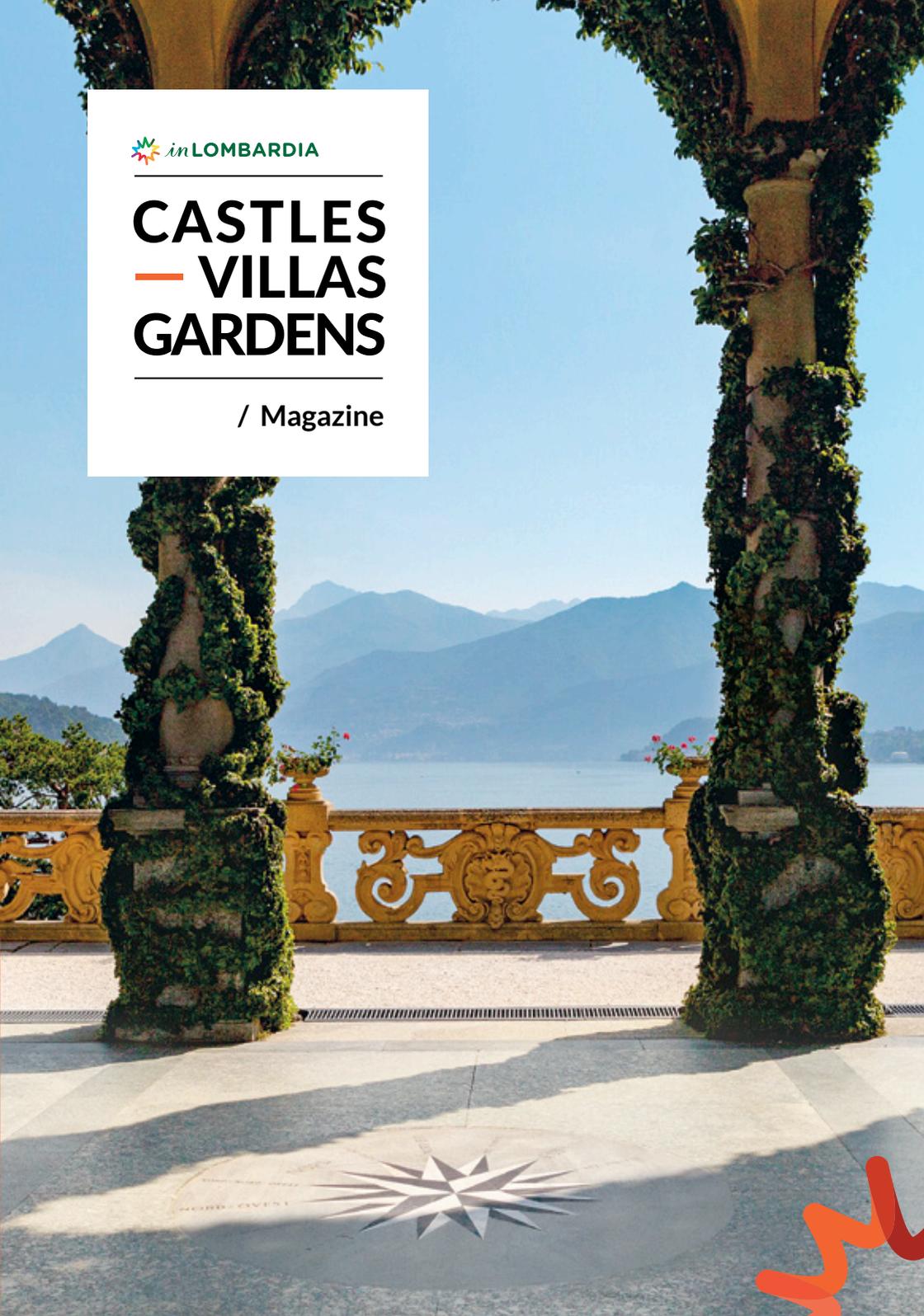
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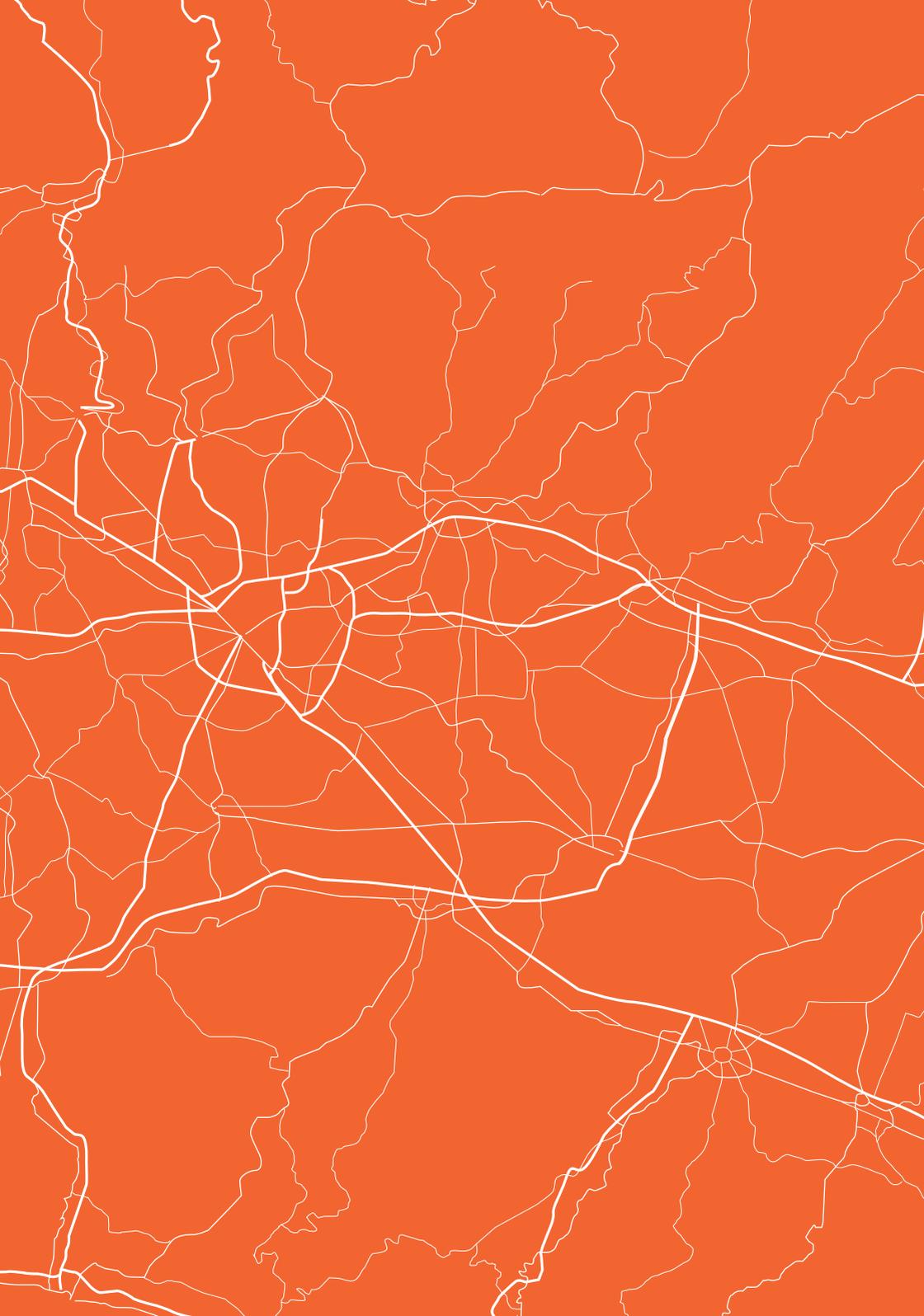
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# CASTLES — VILLAS GARDENS

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/ Magazine





# Castles, Villas and Gardens #inLombardia

— Magazine

*Come and explore castles, royal residences, villas and gardens and discover a different Lombardy on a journey through enchanting scenery, fairytale castles, magnificent mansions and baroque "villas of delights" surrounded by exquisite gardens and botanical wonders. Six thematic itineraries to explore the region in a different light: In Search of an Author, In Leonardo's Footsteps, Exploring Wine Cellars, Belvederes and Vistas, Family Friendly Adventures and Action! Over 160 attractions to be visited. Endless adventures #inLombardia.*

Cover\_ Villa del Balbianello, Tremezzina (Como)



A photograph of a stone archway on a castle roof, overlooking a valley. The archway is made of light-colored stone blocks and has a small, dark opening. The roof is covered in dark, curved tiles. In the background, there are rolling green hills and mountains under a blue sky with white clouds. A few birds are visible in the sky. The overall scene is a scenic view of a castle overlooking a valley.

## Castles

— *Reasons to visit...*

*Defence outposts, impregnable fortresses, with enchanting lake views or beautiful terraces overlooking the city. Magical places, where visitors can experience all the delights, art and culture*



# Malpaga Castle

— Cavernago



From the outside this castle is an impregnable fortress. Inside is ample evidence of a court which enjoyed the finer things in life, with a lively interest in art and culture.

The Malpaga Castle is located in Cavernago, a small town within the Serio Nature Reserve. It was bought in 1456 by Bartolomeo Colleoni, a condottiere originally from Bergamo – Captain general of the Republic of Venice – who decided to make this castle his private residence. The advent of gunpowder meant Colleoni was forced to heavily modify the

castle's defence system to adapt it to the new technologies. He also renovated the castle's interior, with new frescoes portraying the active court life led by a lord with a genuine interest in art and culture. To this day the castle is surrounded by farmland and is the centre of many projects under the aegis of Permalpaga, an organisation aimed at innovating local agriculture, developing sustainable energy alternatives and restoring the ancient town centre as a hub of social life, events and cultural activities.

Loc. Malpaga, piazza Castello, Cavernago (BG)   
tel. +39 035 840003 Open: March–November. Opening times: variable. Admission: only guided tours or with paid audioguide. [info@castellomalpaga.it](mailto:info@castellomalpaga.it)  
[castellomalpaga.it](http://castellomalpaga.it)



# San Vigilio Castle

— Bergamo



The San Vigilio Castle was the last bastion of the city's defences: if San Vigilio fell, so did Bergamo. Which is why over the centuries a labyrinth of tunnels, secret passages and escape routes were dug out beneath the castle's walls to be used in the event of a siege. Of the original castle four towers, the battlements, the walkways and the embrasures are still visible today. Built on top of the San Vigilio hill which dominates the upper town, the castle is now owned by the municipality, which has opened it to the public, turned the

surrounding area into a park and reopened the funicular, generally considered the best way to reach the hill and the castle.

Thanks to the speleological group Le Nottole, visitors can also explore the secret passage used to connect the castle to San Marco's fort, located in the northern part of the city's walls.

Colle San Vigilio, via al Castello San Vigilio 1, Bergamo (BG)   
tel. +39 035 320402. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free. [info@visitbergamo.net](mailto:info@visitbergamo.net)  
[visitbergamo.net](http://visitbergamo.net)



# Rocca of Bergamo

— Bergamo



The Rocca, or castle, dominates Bergamo's upper town from the hill of Sant'Eufemia, giving it superb views of the town and the surrounding Val Brembana and, on a clear day, of Treviglio and Milan. Built on the site of Roman and Celtic ruins, the castle has long been a landmark and the protagonist of events that have changed the city's history. Today the central structure is made up of a quadrangular keep with square towers on each corner. Through the centuries the building has been renovated, modified and expanded to meet the town's ever-changing needs, the evolution

of war techniques, the advent of gunpowder and new alliances. During the Austro-Hungarian domination it served as a stronghold against Garibaldi's army. From the highest tower visitors can enjoy breathtaking views of the Po valley to the south, and the Bergamo Alps to the north. The castle is today home to the town's historic museum: along the walkways visitors can admire the most interesting pieces of the museum's collection, including cannons and tanks.

Piazza Mercato del Fieno 6/A, Bergamo (BG) 🌟  
tel. +39 035 247116. Open: all year. Opening times: variable. Admission: charge.  
Children's recreational activities. [info@bergamoestoria.it](mailto:info@bergamoestoria.it)  
[bergamoestoria.it](http://bergamoestoria.it)



# Brescia Castle

— Brescia



Occupying the whole top of the Cidneo hill, one of Brescia's main green areas, the castle is the star of the city's skyline, visible from every angle. The imposing castle has undergone many renovations which are still visible to this day. Built in the Middle Ages and surviving the Napoleonic era and the Unification of Italy, the castle has been central to the city's history up until the start of the 20th century, when it was purchased by the municipality and opened to the public. Inside, a dense maze of alleys and hidden rooms, together with the oldest and

finest vineyard instituted inside a city, make it a fascinating place to explore. The castle also houses the Arm Museum Luigi Marzoli and the Museum of the Risorgimento dedicated to the Unification of Italy.

Via del Castello 9, Brescia (BS) 🌟🚶 (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 030 2400640. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: Castle, free. Arm Museum Luigi Marzoli, charge. [santagiulia@bresciamusei.com](mailto:santagiulia@bresciamusei.com)  
[bresciamusei.com](http://bresciamusei.com)



# Desenzano Castle

— *Desenzano del Garda*



The imposing castle overlooks the nearby town of Desenzano and was built as a refuge from Barbarian invasions, the Hungarian hordes in particular, during the Middle Ages. The castle is first mentioned in an official document of the 9th century. At the time the castle housed an independent small village inside the walls. Despite losing its military importance with the passing of time, it has remained an active and vibrant community.

Today all that is left of the original defensive structure are the walls, the merlon, the four

towers and the battlements through which visitors can access the keep and admire the view of the lake and surrounding areas.

The addition built at the end of the 19th century was originally used as headquarters for the officers but is now used for exhibitions and conventions, whereas the addition on the north-west side of the walls has recently been renovated and is used for exhibitions, cultural and musical events.

Via Fosse Castello, Desenzano del Garda (BS) ★ ♿

tel. +39 030 9994161. Open: all year.

Opening times: variable. Admission: Castle, free. Keep, charge. [cultura@comune.desenzano.brescia.it](mailto:cultura@comune.desenzano.brescia.it)  
[comune.desenzano.brescia.it](http://comune.desenzano.brescia.it)



# Padernello Castle

— *Borgo San Giacomo*



Legend has it that on the night of the 20 July, the ghost of a young woman dressed from head to toe in white wanders the halls of the castle, reading from a golden book. The girl is Biancamaria, daughter of Count Giuseppe Martinengo, who was lured into the castle's moat by fireflies, and drowned the night of 20 July 1480. Legends aside, the Padernello Castle feels like a castle out of a fairy tale, with its working drawbridge and encircling moat. It was built at the end of the 14th century by the Martinengo family, who owned it until the death

of the last heir. After changing owners a few times, the castle was abandoned in 1961 until in 2006 the Padernello Castle Foundation started a long series of renovation projects.

Today the castle hosts a variety of cultural, artistic events, food and wine tastings and is the seat of one of the two "Earth Markets" organised by the Slow Food Association in Lombardy.

Loc. Padernello, via Cavour 1, Borgo San Giacomo (BS) ♿ ★ ♿ (with restrictions)

tel. +39 030 9408766. Open: July-September.

Opening times: variable. Admission: only paid guided tours. [info@castellodipadernello.it](mailto:info@castellodipadernello.it)  
[castellodipadernello.it](http://castellodipadernello.it)



# Rocca Scaligera

— Sirmione



Rocca Scaligera in Sirmione was built in the 13th century. It is an unusual fortress located on the narrowest part of the peninsula on Lake Garda and is one of the best-preserved castles in Italy. Surrounded by the lake except for the artificially structured harbour, which was originally designed to protect Verona's fleet, the castle has three towers and a 47 metre-high main tower. Originally accessible from the town of Sirmione and from the outside, the only entrance today is the one from Sirmione itself. Visitors cross the drawbridge into the central

portico and up 146 steps to the swallowtail battlements, from there they can take the recently renovated wooden staircases up to the high tower to admire the breathtaking views of Sirmione and Lake Garda. The castle's vast portico is home to a lapidarium and a small exhibition on the castle's history.

Piazza Castello 34, Sirmione (BS) ★♿ (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 030 916468. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. pm-lom.roccascaligera@beniculturali.it  
polomuseale.lombardia.beniculturali.it



# Visconti Castle

— Pandino



The castle was commissioned in 1355 by the Lord of Milan, Bernabò Visconti, and is one of the best examples of fortified structures of its century. It was meant to be a countryside residence where the Lord of Milan could engage in one of his favourite pursuits: hunting. The design is similar to other buildings of this period with a square base, corner towers, courtyard and porticos with lancet arches surmounted by a loggia. The castle's original decorations in the portico, loggia and halls, mainly featuring floral and geometrical motifs,

are extremely well preserved and a good reason alone to visit the castle. Today the whole complex is owned by the local municipality and houses the local public library in its stables, whereas the halls are used for cultural events as well as painting and photography exhibitions.

Via Castello 15, Pandino (CR) ★♿  
tel. +39 0373 973350 – +39 339 4523204. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: courtyard, free. Halls, charge. turismo@comune.pandino.cr.it  
castellodipandino.it



# Rocca Sforzesca

— Soncino



This castle is one of the best-preserved traditional examples of military architecture in Lombardy. Built in the 10th century, it was an important military outpost for the defence and for the supervision of the region up until the Treaty of Lodi, when the Venetian Republic surrendered it to the Duchy of Milan. From here on, the castle was expanded and renovated on the orders of Francesco I Sforza, and over time it lost its military characteristics, turning into a noble residence – a process that reached its peak with its acquisition by the

Stampa family. Today the castle's exterior still looks like a defensive outpost, surrounded by a moat with imposing towers on each corner, but the interior is decorated with the frescoes commissioned by the wealthy Stampa family. After undergoing various renovations the castle now hosts many events for the town's active cultural scene.

Piazza prof. Ferrari, Soncino (CR) 🚶 🚼 (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 0374 83188. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. [turismo@comune.soncino.cr.it](mailto:turismo@comune.soncino.cr.it)  
[soncino.org](http://soncino.org)



# Vezio Castle

— Perledo



Vezio Castle is located on a cape at the centre of Lake Como, overlooking the town of Varenna. It was built in the late 11th century as a military outpost to protect nearby towns ruled by Theodelinda, queen of the Lombards. Originally the castle's walls extended around the town of Varenna, protecting it from potential enemies, but today all that is left is a watchtower accessible via a drawbridge and enclosed by a square of walls. Surrounded by a beautiful olive grove, one of the most northerly in the world, gently

nurtured by the mild climate of the lake, the castle's atmosphere is magical: the beautiful views of the lake and surrounding area can be admired from different parts of the castle including the top of the tower. The castle is now home to a falconry centre, the perfect setting to learn more about this ancient medieval art – which has recently been granted status as an intangible heritage of humanity by UNESCO.

Loc. Vezio, via del Castellano 6, Perledo (LC) 🚶 🚼  
tel. +39 3488242504 - +39 3334485975. Open: March-October. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. [info@castellodivezio.it](mailto:info@castellodivezio.it)  
[castellodivezio.it](http://castellodivezio.it)



# Bolognini Castle

— Sant'Angelo Lodigiano



Bolognini Castle is a perfect example of traditional military architecture in Lombardy with its quadrilateral plant and towers on each corner. Built in the 13th century on the shores of the river Lambro, it lost its military importance due to changing alliances and was converted into a noble residence in 1383 on the orders of Regina della Scala, wife of Bernabò Visconti, who had the main tower erected and mullioned windows installed along the walls. After changing hands many times it was acquired by the Bolognini family who, in 1933, entrusted

it to the Morando Bolognini Foundation, which administers the property to this day. The castle is home to three museums: the Morando Bolognini historic house museum (24 rooms) showcasing furniture, paintings and china from the 18th century to the 20th century; museum dedicated to the history of agriculture – from the Neolithic era to the present day – and the museum of bread.

Piazza Bolognini 2, Sant'Angelo Lodigiano (LO) ★♿ (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 0371 211140-41. Open: March-July and September-November. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: only paid guided tours. info@castellobolognini.it  
castellobolognini.it



# Saint George Castle

— Mantua



Built as a military outpost in the 14th century on the orders of Francesco I Gonzaga, fifty years later this castle was converted into a noble residence. Isabella d'Este, one of the most influential women of the Italian Renaissance, lived here for a long time. The castle is designed as a square base with corner towers and is surrounded by a moat crossed by three drawbridges. As part of the palaces built by the Gonzaga family as their ducal residence, it is also one of the most important buildings in Mantua from an artistic and historical

standpoint. But the castle's greatest treasures are tucked away inside, like the Camera Picta (The bridal chamber), located in the north-east tower. This narrow room was turned into a work of art realized by Andrea Mantegna in nine years (1465-1474). The stunning frescoes give visitors the impression of being in an open portico overlooking the beautiful countryside.

Piazza Sordello 40, Mantua (MN) ★♿  
tel. +39 0376 224832. Open: all year. Opening times: Tuesdays-Sundays 8.15 am-7.15 pm.  
Admission: charge. pal-mn@beniculturali.it  
mantovaducale.beniculturali.it



# Sforza Castle

— Milan



The Filarete Tower is the natural link between the important Milanese landmarks – Piazza del Duomo and the Arco della Pace – which represent two of the city's most important historical periods: social life in Milan has always revolved around the Sforza Castle, a symbol of both the city's renowned industriousness and its love of beauty. Preceded by a vast pedestrian area and heralded by a magnificent fountain whose waters freeze during the coldest winters, everything about the imposing castle was meant to convey the

power and wealth of the Dukes of Milan. As well as its towers, battlements, vast halls and courtyards, the castle is also home to 18 different museums, among them the Museum of the Pietà Rondanini – Michelangelo, the Sala delle Asse – Leonardo da Vinci and the Egyptian Museum, giving visitors a range of attractions within an attraction. Behind the castle lies Parco Sempione, the biggest park in the heart of the city, which leads directly to the Arco della Pace and the Arena Civica, two magnificent relics of the Napoleonic era.

Piazza Castello, Milan (MI)   
tel. +39 02 88463700. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: castle, free. Museums, charge.  
[milanocastello.it](http://milanocastello.it)



# Dal Verme Castle

— Zavattarello



Built in the 10th century, the castle belonged to the Dal Verme family for six centuries, is an imposing quadrangular structure that overlooks the medieval town of Zavattarello and the surrounding valley. It was built as a military outpost and has proved itself impregnable with its strong walls – as thick as four metres in certain sections – which have resisted many sieges. One of the castle's unique features is the intricate system of internal staircases connecting every room. From the terrace and the top of the tower visitors can enjoy the stunning views of the

countryside, the hills, the forests of the Oltrepò Pavese region up to the Po valley. The castle is also surrounded by a beautiful nature reserve that spans over 80 hectares, an area of great interest from an environmental and naturalistic standpoint. The interiors have been completely renovated and are now the perfect setting for various cultural events and festivals. Since 2003 the top floor has been home to a museum of contemporary art dedicated to Giuseppe and Titina Dal Verme.

Via Carlo Dal Verme 4, Zavattarello (PV)  (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 0383 589132 - +39 0383 589746. Open: April-October. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: only paid guided tours. [castello@zavattarello.org](mailto:castello@zavattarello.org)  
[zavattarello.org](http://zavattarello.org)



# Castle of Vigevano

— Vigevano



The Castle of Vigevano is considered one of the biggest fortified structures in Europe, occupying 70 thousand square metres. All the buildings within the walls are connected, making this an authentic city within the city. The castle, with the iconic Bramante Tower, overlooks the splendid Piazza Ducale and the entrance. The original structure of the castle dates back to the Lombards, but underwent many renovations and expansions up until the 17th century. The castle's unique structure is made of square sections decreasing in size as they ascend the

hill and was the inspiration for the Filarete Tower at the Sforza Castle. The best way to explore the castle and to enjoy its magical atmosphere is to get lost in its maze of rooms and halls. It is now home to the Lomellina National Archaeological Museum where visitors can admire archaeological finds from the many excavation sites in the region, alongside some pieces found by chance, and discover a very detailed history of the costumes and traditions of this area.

Piazza Ducale, Vigevano (PV) (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 0381 691636. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free. Tower and Leonardiana, charge. [infopointcastello@comune.vigevano.pv.it](mailto:infopointcastello@comune.vigevano.pv.it)  
[comune.vigevano.pv.it](http://comune.vigevano.pv.it)



# Visconti Castle

— Pavia



Built in 1360 by Galeazzo Visconti, this castle was home to a refined and elegant court rather than being a rough military outpost, as testified by the remarkable internal loggia, the beautiful frescoes and the mullioned windows, to the point that during the 14th and 15th century the court became an important artistic hub. The castle was originally surrounded by a park and game reserve that extended all the way to Certosa, and it was here that the battle of Pavia between the French army and the Holy Roman Empire army took place in 1525.

At the start of the 20th century the castle was acquired by the local municipality and has since been home to the civic museums, hosting many different art collections including: the Archaeological Museum and the Sala Longobarda; the Romanesque and Renaissance section; the Malaspina Art Gallery and an art gallery dedicated to the 17th and 18th centuries; the Quadreria dell'Ottocento; the Museum of the Risorgimento (now open to visitors under the Touring Club Italiano "Open for You" scheme).

Viale XI Febbraio 35, Pavia (PV)   
tel. +39 0382 399770. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. [museicivici@comune.pv.it](mailto:museicivici@comune.pv.it)  
[museicivici.pavia.it](http://museicivici.pavia.it)



# Grumello Castle

— *Montagna in Valtellina*



This castle was built in a strategic location, on a steep cliff overlooking the whole valley and nearby town. It is a rare example of "castello gemino" or twin castle, composed of two similar buildings enclosed by the same walls. Built in the 13th century, most likely by the De Piro family who were originally from Como, it was destroyed in the 16th century during the Grisons' occupation.

Today there is very little left of the military outpost, but it is still worth a visit to admire the breathtaking view on the Valtellina Alps

from the top of the hill and enjoy the solemn atmosphere of the imposing ruins. The castle formerly belonged to the Reschigna Kettlitz family, who revitalised wine-making in the Grumello area and who still organise wine tours, but since 1987 the castle itself has been entrusted to the FAI (Italian National Trust) which has overseen the partial renovations and uses it to host different types of cultural events.

Via S. Antonio 645, Montagna in Valtellina (SO) 🚶 ⚔️  
tel. +39 0342 380994. Open: February-mid December. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free offer. [proprietà@fondoambiente.it](mailto:proprietà@fondoambiente.it)  
[fondoambiente.it](http://fondoambiente.it)



# Masegra Castle

— *Sondrio*



This imposing castle was built in the Middle Ages and strategically positioned at the opening of the Valmalenco valley so it could easily control the access to the valley. Since it was the property of the influential Salis family, it is the only castle in the town of Sondrio which wasn't destroyed by the Grisons during their invasion of Valtellina in the 16th century. As time went by, the castle lost its original defensive function and was converted from rough military outpost into an elegant residence more suited to a refined court, as

testified by the frescoed rooms and beautiful loggias. Recently the castle's stables have been converted into a historical museum, which gives visitors an in-depth look into aspects of life in Valtellina during the three centuries (1512-1797) of the Grisons' occupation.

Via Capitani De Masegra, Sondrio (SO) ⚔️ ♿ (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 0342 526553 - +39 0342 216403. Open: May-September. Opening times: Saturdays-Sundays 9 am-12.30 pm and 3 pm-6 pm. Admission: free. [museo@comune.sondrio.it](mailto:museo@comune.sondrio.it)  
[castellomasegra.org](http://castellomasegra.org)



# Rocca Borromeo

— Angera



The majestic Rocca in Angera is located on a hilltop on the southern shore of Lake Maggiore. The castle was originally owned by the Visconti family and subsequently by the Borromeo family. What tends to strike visitors is the architectural harmony of the Rocca's five different buildings, erected between the 11th and 17th century. The interiors have been the object of a thorough renovation project, restoring the frescoes, paintings, furnishings and decor to their original glory. A walk through the magnificent reception halls of the Sala del Buon Romano, the Sala della

Mitologia, the Sala delle Cerimonie, the Sala di San Carlo and the Sala dei Fasti Borromeo is an experience that will leave even the most jaded art expert amazed.

Outdoors visitors can admire the view of the lake and the Alpine foothills, while the gardens have been carefully restored to their original splendour through the painstaking study of ancient medieval manuscripts. The Rocca is also home to the Museum of Dolls and Toys, with over a thousand pieces ranging from the 18th century to modern times.

Via alla Rocca Castello 2, Angera (VA)    
tel. +39 0331 931300. Open: March (dates may vary)-October (dates may vary).  
Opening times: 9 am-5.30 pm. Admission: charge. [roccaborromeo@isoleborromeo.it](mailto:roccaborromeo@isoleborromeo.it)  
[borromeoturismo.it](http://borromeoturismo.it)



Photo

Right. Pescarenico hamlet along river Adda, Lecco.

Previous page. View of Lake Maggiore from the Rocca Borromeo, Angera.

# In Search of an Author

## — Travel ideas

Explore the places and experience the atmosphere that inspired some of the greatest masterpieces of literature and some of the greatest minds of the past.

Every Italian child learns in school that Alessandro Manzoni's *The Betrothed* was the first Italian novel. Is it purely coincidental that an author from Milan who wrote a story set in the heart of Lombardy achieved this titanic feat? Probably not, given that in over 200 years countless novels have been set under Lombardy's famous sky "so beautiful when it's beautiful". It all began with "That branch of the Lake of Como, which turns towards the south." We can still retrace the footsteps of Renzo and Lucia, Don Rodrigo and his thugs, the nun of Monza, Fra' Cristoforo and the Unnamed by following one of the many itineraries dedicated to Manzoni and his work: in Lecco and the surrounding areas visitors can tour **Villa Manzoni** and its museum, Lucia's house in **Acquate**, Don Rodrigo's villa, Don Abbondio's church in **Olate**, the Unnamed's castle, near Vercurago, a tall, menacing building overlooking **Lake Garlate**, and the Capuchin monastery in **Pescarenico** where Fra' Cristoforo lived. Not to mention **Milan**: what is left of the **Lazaret**, for example, in the street that bears its name and in Via S. Gregorio; or the bakery **Forno delle Grucce** in Corso Vittorio Emanuele at numbers 3-5. Then there are all the places related to Manzoni the author, his former **home**, now a museum, in Via del Morone, his statue in Piazza San Fedele and his grave at the Famedio, the memorial chapel of the Monumental Cemetery. Milan, crossroads of people and cultures, has provided inspiration for many writers. While Manzoni was busy outlining, writing and rewriting *The Betrothed*, the great French writer **Stendhal**, who arrived on the Navigli canals with Napoleon's army, declared Milan his ideal city and requested the inscription on his gravestone to say, in Italian: "Arrigo Beyle [Stendhal was Henry Beyle's pen

name], Milanese". **Carlo Porta**, was friend with both Manzoni and Stendhal and despite not being a novelist, his poems, written in the local dialect, are true romances; his characters' stories, from the cowardly, tragic-comical Giovannin Bongee to Ninetta, prostitute and proto-feminist, from Marchionni di Gamb-Avert, the melancholic and crippled tavern musician to the feeble and pompous marchioness Donna Fabia Fabron de' Fabrian, all take place on the stage of some of Milan's most recognisable landmarks such as **Piazza Vetra** and the **Verziere** – the herb market, which is today home to Carlo Porta's statue –, **Via della Commenda** and the parvise of **Santa Maria presso San Celso** church. Stendhal was not the only foreigner to fall under Milan's literary spell: **Mark Twain**, visiting at the end of the 19th century was amazed at the **Duomo**'s majestic facade, and greatly admired the **Arena Civica**, which some malicious tongues

claimed he believed to be a Roman ruin. Years later his fellow countryman, **Ernest Hemingway**, working as a war reporter with the Red Cross, was wounded in the region of Veneto in 1918 and transported to a Milanese hospital in Via Armadori, where he met, and subsequently fell in love with, the nurse Agnes von Kurowsky. In his letters and his novel *Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway remembers snippets of his time in Milan, especially the shops in the city centre and at the **Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II**, and the afternoons spent at the **San Siro Hippodrome**. But there are also many traces of famous novels on the shores of the lakes. From **Lake Maggiore**, **Luino**, the surrounding valleys – **Valcuvia**, **Val Germanasca** – jetties, piazzas, villas and pathways amongst the vegetable gardens where **Piero Chiara** set the scene for the epic tale of his small universe; to the theatre set on the shores of **Lake Como**, in the town of **Bellano**, by a more recent imitation of

Chiara, Andrea Vitali, or the shores of Lake Lugano, near Como where **Antonio Fogazzaro**'s *Piccolo Mondo Antico* is set.

The **Vittoriale**, in **Gardone Riviera** on the western shores of Lake Garda, where the poet D'Annunzio retired and spent his final years (1921-1938), is another must on any literary buff's bucket list. Two of **Maria Bellonci**'s historical short stories take place in the majestic setting of the **Palazzo Ducale in Mantua**. **Lucio Mastronardi** sets his stories of teachers, shoemakers, and southern immigrants in the town of **Vigevano** in his vivid novels. **Alberto Arbasino** portrays the years of the economic boom in the city of **Lodi**, amidst brash new-found opulence, Alfa Romeo sports cars and agricultural wealth in his novel *Bella di Lodi*. Last, but not least, comes the low-lying area between the city of **Pavia**, the **Ticino** and the **Po** rivers, where **Gianni Brera**'s novels are set amid hunting parties and the area's familiar fog.



Photo

Right: Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci.

# In Leonardo's Footsteps

— Travel ideas

*The iconic Renaissance genius, his paintings, his drawings, his machines and his incredible works of hydraulic engineering.*

In the last two decades of the 15th-century Milan, under the strong leadership of the Sforza family, developed into a creative, financial and entrepreneurial hub.

Drawn like a magnet by the city's reputation, thirty-year-old Leonardo came to Milan in the spring of 1482, rather curiously as a musician in the service of the Duke of Milan, Ludovico il Moro. The young musician dazzled the court with his silver lyre in the shape of a horse's head, which he himself had designed. This was just the start of the innovations that Leonardo's genius was to create during his time in Milan and Lombardy.

Retracing the Florentine master's steps will lead you on a fascinating adventure which can only begin in Milan, more precisely in the refectory of the monastery of **Santa Maria delle Grazie**, home to one of the most famous masterpieces in the world: *Last Supper*. This painting's ephemeral colours and shapes have survived mysteriously intact, despite the damage caused by time and man – it was miraculously saved by the monks during World War II air raids – it is Leonardo's only work to be painted on dry wall as opposed to wet plaster, and to this day attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors.

Just round the corner from Santa Maria della Grazie, located behind the facade of what used to be the *Casa degli Atellani* residence, is Leonardo's vineyard, given to him by the Duke of Milan in 1498, as he was finishing the *Last Supper*. The vineyard's arbours remained intact until the 1943 air raids. Thanks to recent agronomic studies which recovered and brought back to life the roots of this 15th-century vineyard, visitors can now enjoy one of most important places in the artist's time in Milan, **Leonardo's Vineyard**. The **Museo**

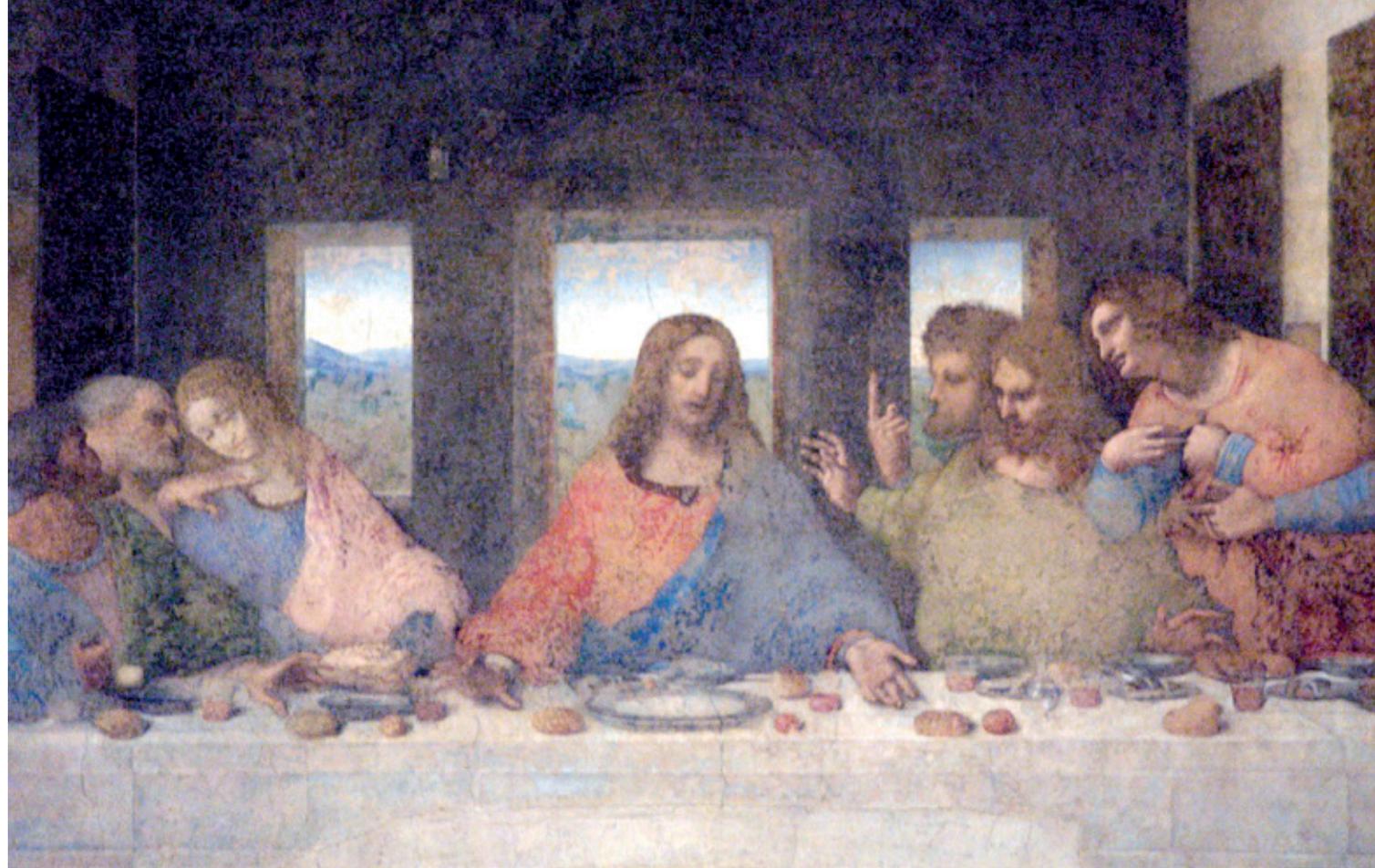
**Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia**, dedicated to **Leonardo da Vinci** himself, is located a few blocks from the vineyard, where the ancient monastery of San Vittore al Corpo used to be, and houses faithful reproductions of Leonardo's machines. Leaving the museum visitors can use the helpful app *LeonardoAround* to lead them towards another important place in Leonardo's life: the **Sforza Castle**, which between 1494 and 1499 was transformed, thanks to Leonardo's artistic talent and engineering genius, into one of the most splendid courts in Europe. Apart from the lavish parties he organised – including the memorable wedding feast for the marriage of Gian Galeazzo Maria Sforza and Isabella of Aragon, which Leonardo ensured would be suitably grandiose – Leonardo left his mark on the castle with his wall to ceiling tempera on

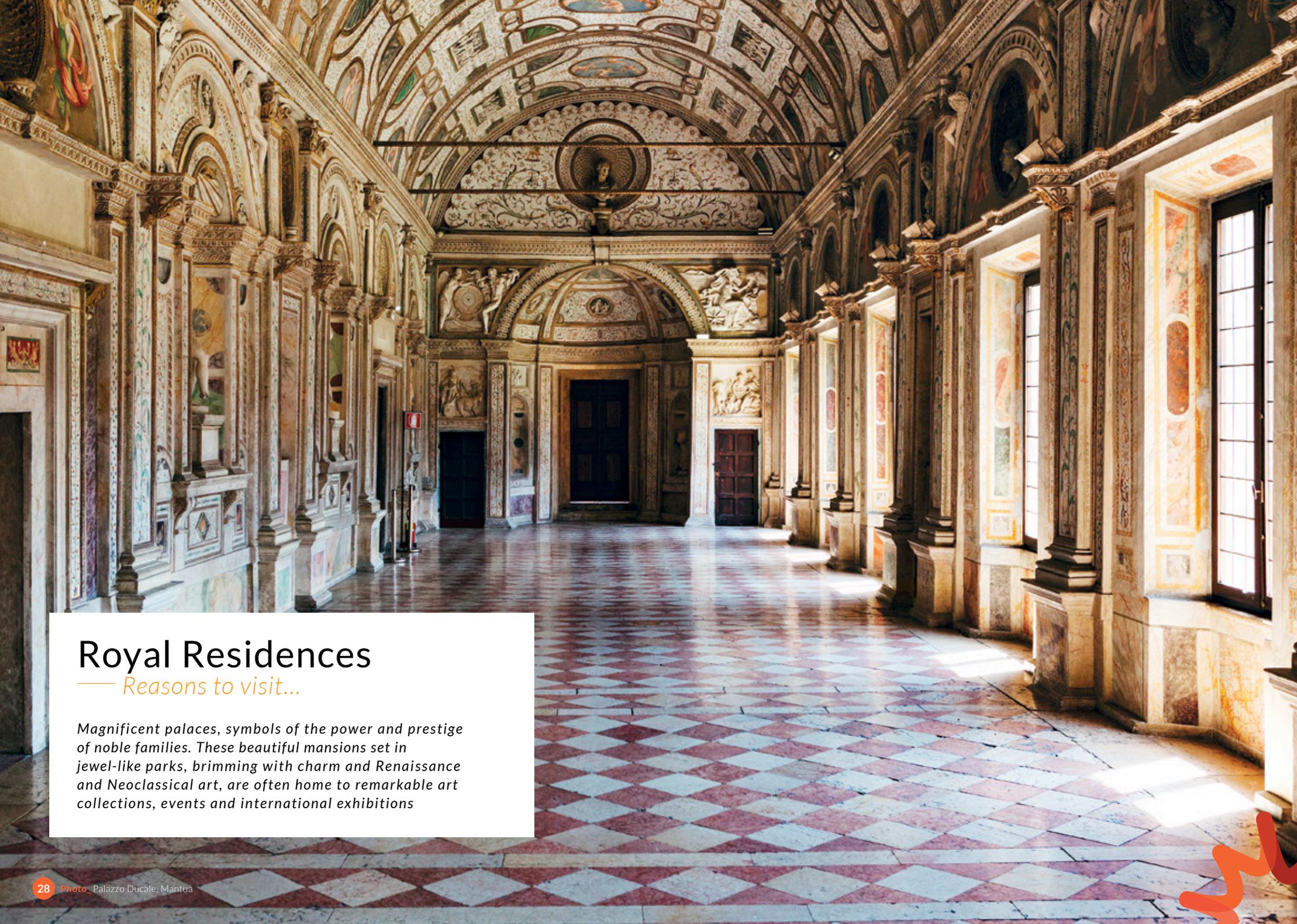
plaster in the *Sala delle Asse*, one of the halls on the ground floor of La Falconiera, the square tower on the north-east corner.

The **Codex Trivulzianus**, written between 1478 and 1490 and containing Leonardo's architectural sketches and drawings is also preserved in the castle in the *Biblioteca Trivulziana*. Another important manuscript is the **Codex Atlanticus**, over 1110 pages of Leonardo's drawings and writings preserved in the *Biblioteca Ambrosiana*. But Leonardo can surprise us even after leaving Milan. We owe the complex system of canals and dams that to this day forms the Navigli to his hydraulic expertise, from the **Naviglio Grande**, near the river Ticino and Lake Maggiore, to the **Naviglio della Martesana**, in the north-east, which connects Milan to the river Adda. Crossing through Milan, Bergamo and Lecco's provinces is the **Ecomuseo Adda di Leonardo**,

an open air itinerary that stretches along the beautiful scenery of the river Adda with many natural, historical and technological landmarks along the way. At **Imbersago** there is a ferry boat that still relies on its original system of currents and ropes to function.

During his time in Lombardy Leonardo was consulted multiple times regarding the construction of the **Duomo in Pavia** – which was finally built in the 19th century – and the beautiful **Piazza Ducale in Vigevano**, adjacent to the **castle**, which is home today to Leonardiana, a new museum dedicated to the life and works of the Florentine master. And visitors who want to admire the **biggest equestrian statue in the world**, Leonardo's Horse, designed to commemorate Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, can see a copy of it at the **Hippodrome of San Siro**.





## Royal Residences

— *Reasons to visit...*

*Magnificent palaces, symbols of the power and prestige of noble families. These beautiful mansions set in jewel-like parks, brimming with charm and Renaissance and Neoclassical art, are often home to remarkable art collections, events and international exhibitions*



# Palazzo Ducale

— Mantua



The beauty and opulence of Palazzo Ducale, the Gonzaga residence, is hard to describe. This is probably the grandest and most architecturally dense palazzo of its period. Located near the shores of Lake Inferiore it occupies nearly two thirds of the inner town, creating an incredible maze of buildings, churches, gardens, internal piazzas and porticos, a perfect example of the architectural styles that were fashionable during the Renaissance. One could say that Palazzo Ducale is the perfect expression of Italy's Renaissance, from its design to the construction

to the countless pieces of artwork it is home to, from Pisanello to Mantegna and Giulio Romano amongst many others.

The palazzo was expanded over the course of the centuries and is now a museum (now open to visitors under the Touring Club Italiano "Open for You" scheme) which houses over 350 classical statues in marble, taken from the family's various residences, and showcased in the palazzo's many rooms.

Piazza Sordello 40, Mantua (MN) ★♿  
tel. +39 0376 224832. Open: all year. Opening times: Tuesdays-Sundays 8.15 am-7.15 pm.  
Admission: charge. pal-mn@beniculturali.it  
mantovaduale.beniculturali.it



# Palazzo Reale

— Milan



Palazzo Reale is one of Milan's most famous landmarks, the link between the city's illustrious past and its innovative present. Walking up the magnificent Neoclassical staircase will give visitors an idea of the palace's splendour at the time of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Located to the right of the Duomo, behind a small piazza and adjacent to the Arengario, Palazzo Reale is one of Milan's most iconic sights. The building's current facade is the result of an 18th-century renovation project, carried out by architect Giuseppe Piermarini, who was

instructed to modernize the residence, and other, somewhat questionable, renovations carried out at the start of the 20th century, when parts of the building were destroyed to redesign the space surrounding the Duomo.

The building was heavily damaged during the 1943 bombings by Allied forces, but a series of popular art exhibits has given it a new lease of life, turning it into a symbol of Milan's renaissance as cultural capital of Europe.

Piazza del Duomo 12, Milan (MI) ♪★♿  
tel. +39 02 88445181. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. c.mostre@comune.milano.it  
palazzorealemilano.it



# Villa Reale

— Monza



Monza's famous Villa Reale is one of the most popular attractions in the area, particularly during the weekends, when people enjoy strolling in the open air along the avenues of the park and over its lawns. Indeed one of the most striking features of the villa today, apart from its architecture and graceful perspectives, its stuccos, chandeliers and lavish furnishings, is its accessibility.

Designed by Giuseppe Piermarini on the orders of Empress Maria Theresa of Austria and completed in 1780, Villa Reale's ambitious

layout is striking in its grandiosity and in the opulence of the royal apartments, the small court theatre, Appiani's rotunda and each and every one of the Villa's 700 rooms. The Villa's rose gardens, with over 4000 rose varieties presented each year at the local flower show which has been a tradition since 1965, is also worth a visit, as is the permanent exhibition set up by Milan's Triennale Design Museum in the Belvedere, dedicated to 1950's pieces that influenced the history of design.

Viale Brianza 1, Monza (MB)

tel. +39 039 394641. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.

Admission: Villa, charge. Park and gardens: free. [info@villarealedimonza.it](mailto:info@villarealedimonza.it)  
[reggiadimonza.it](http://reggiadimonza.it)



Photo

Right. The terraced vineyards of the Valtellina area.

Previous page. The rose garden of the Villa Reale, Monza.

# Exploring Wine Cellars

## — Travel ideas

*Rows of vineyards line the countryside, producing some of the finest wines in the world.*

An itinerary designed to discover the vineyards and wineries of Lombardy would have to encompass the whole region: from north to south, from the Valtellina to the Oltrepò Pavese passing through Valcalepio in the province of Bergamo and Franciacorta in the province of Brescia, towards the “Milanese” vineyards of San Colombano al Lambro on the one side and to the hills of Mantua and the Valtènesi on the other, up to the shores of Lake Garda. The over 30 000 hectares of vineyards and wineries are located all over the region following the irregular lines of the hills and mountains. First stop is **Valtellina**, amongst castles, historical villas and cultural landmarks – two of the most noteworthy: **Grumello Castle**, in Montagna in Valtellina, and **Palazzo Besta**, in Teglio. Here the vineyards grow on steep terraces on the south side of the Adda valley, between Ardenno and Tirano, where the sunlight ripens the Nebbiolo grapes known locally as Chiavennasca. This is where the *Inferno*, *Grumello*, and *Sassella* – austere red wines from the *DOCG Valtellina Superiore* – and the *Sforzato*, also known as *Sfursât*, a potent, velvety *passito*, are produced. On the rolling hills of Valcalepio, in the province of Bergamo, on the shores of Lake Iseo where the panoramic **Conti Calepio Castle** is located, various wines are produced mostly from imported strains of vines but also with some native strains cultivated near Scanzorosciate and used to make *Moscato di Scanzo*, the smallest *DOCG* production in Italy. Brescia is also home to the biggest urban vineyard in Europe, over four hectares of native Invernenga vines, overlooking the city from the **Cidneo Hill** at the foot of the **Brescia Castle**, used to produce *Pusterla whites* and *passiti*. Small production areas are dotted

throughout the countryside surrounding the city in the hilly areas of **Capriano del Colle**, **Botticino** and **Rezzato**, between **Cellatica** and **Rodengo Saiano**. But it's in **Franciacorta**, that the region's best-known wineries (most of which offer tours) are located, scattered around the moraine amphitheatre that crowns the southern shores of Lake Iseo. These wineries produce some of the most famous sparkling wines in the country, such as *Franciacorta DOCG*, made with Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, and Pinot Noir grapes, a delicate, zesty, well-orchestrated wine, the standard bearer for the excellent *DOC Curtefranca* (the Cabernet and Merlot are especially noteworthy) produced in the same area. Just outside the town of Brescia, on **Lake Garda's** coastline, where the blue of the waters meets the green of the vineyards that grow in the **Valtènesi** region, visitors can tour the wineries,

taste and buy the *DOC Garda Classico* (in all its variations: Bianco, Chiaretto, Novello, Gropello, Rosso and Rosso superiore) and *DOC Valtènesi* (either Chiaretto or Rosso) and visit the **castles** in **Moniga del Garda**, **Polpenazze del Garda**, **Desenzano** and **Sirmione**. On the gentle rolling hills of the southern shores of Lake Garda, near **Mantua**, between Castiglione delle Stiviere, Volta Mantovana and Pozzolengo, various grapes are used to produce the whites, reds and rosés of the *Garda Colli Mantovani*. The smaller vineyards of the *Lugana Doc* are located closer to the lake and produce a piquant, firm white with Trebbiano grapes, and *San Martino della Battaglia*, made with Tocai grapes from Friuli, which also offer a fortified version. In the **Oltrepò Mantovano**, near **Suzzara** with its **tower** and battlements, where the river Oglio flows into the river Po, the production of sparkling *lambrusco* red gives way to

the countryside of Emilia Romagna. The *DOC San Colombano* wine (the only *DOC* in the province of Milan) is what remains of the vast vineyards which used to extend from Milan to the pre-alpine lakes. Over half of Lombardy's wineries are located in the **Oltrepò Pavese**, a charming area known for its castles and vineyards. The three most noteworthy are **Oramala**, **Cigognola** and **Dal Verme Castle** in **Zavattarello**. The local grapes of *Barbera*, *Croatina* (also known as *Bonarda*), *Uva Rara*, *Ughetta*, and the international *Pinot Noir* are used for reds, whereas *Riesling*, *Moscato*, *Malvasia* and others produce strong, tangy whites, some of them naturally sparkling. The combination of Pinot Noir and the classic champagne method produce a proper *spumante DOCG*. Luigi Veronelli and Gianni Brera both loved *Barbaccarlo*, a rare wine with a distinct country finesse which is only produced by a single winery in the Broni hills.



Photo

Right. Panoramic view from Venetian Walls of upper town, Bergamo.



# Belvederes and Vistas

## — Travel ideas

*Scene from above. Unusual, privileged points of view from which to admire the region in all its splendour.*

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, master of the Grand Tour, told travellers that the first thing they should do when arriving in a new place was to find a hill or tower from which to admire the view. From that height one can take in the beauty of a city, a valley, a lake or the course of a river in its entirety.

Since Lombardy is mostly flat, it only takes a dozen metres to gain a privileged viewpoint. For example Milan, unlike Rome, does not have seven hills from which to admire its “Great Beauty”, but during a clear day one can admire the city’s skyline and surrounding valleys and Alps from one of the nearby mountains.

The roof of **Milan’s Duomo**, a popular place to visit with tourists and locals alike, has traditionally been the city’s “urban balcony”. Amongst the jungle of stone steeples visitors can clearly make out the city’s landmarks: to the south the *Velasca Tower*, the imposing skyscraper that resembles a medieval keep; next to it the outline of the *Sforza Castle*, and in the background the grandiose *San Siro Stadium*; to the north the unmistakable *Pirelli Tower* and the recently built *Porta Nuova skyscrapers*, in the background the peaks of the *Grigne* and the *Resegone*; to the north-west, along Corso Sempione one can see the *Citylife skyscrapers*.

**Park Tower**, also known as **Branca Tower**, the slight tower made of steel tubes designed by Giò Ponti and Cesare Chiodi, stands out against the greenery of *Parco Sempione*: the tower gives visitors the best view of the park, the *Arena Civica*, including the *Acquarium*, *Arco della Pace* and the *castle*. A newer “urban balcony” which gives visitors a unique view of the city’s skyline is the **Prada Observatory** that occupies the

fifth and sixth floors of the Prada Foundation in *Galleria Vittorio Emanuele*, overlooking the octagon and the iron-glass structures designed by Giuseppe Mengoni.

From the height of the **Torrazzo in Cremona**, the second tallest bell tower in Italy at 110 metres, looming over the red roofs of the buildings in Stradivari’s hometown, visitors can admire the Po and its valley.

Another famous tower that serves as a perfect “urban balcony” is the **Bramante Tower in Vigevano**. Its terraces, located just below the belfry, offer the best view of that gem of Renaissance architecture that is *Piazza Ducale*, and of the *Sforza Castle*.

From the *chemin de ronde* of the **Venetian Walls**, which enclose **Bergamo’s upper town**, visitors can admire the view of the surrounding valley which stretches from Milan to Brescia all the

way to the slopes of the Bergamo Alps.

The **hill of Brescia Castle**, offers a unique view of the town’s historical centre, with its remnants of the Roman Empire and the stunning medieval complex of religious buildings now grouped together as the *Santa Giulia Museum*, and, beyond the confines of the city’s boundaries, the pre-alpine valleys.

The view from the top of the 844m high **Sacro Monte in Varese**, which can also be reached by the historical cable railway, is priceless.

Just a few metres above, on the terraces of **Campo dei Fiori’s** famous observatory, visitors can enjoy views of *Monte Rosa* massif and *Lake Maggiore*.

The **belvedere of Brunate** located in the heart of Como is also accessible via cable railway and offers spectacular views of the Lake Lario, the Alps and the surrounding valleys.

After crossing the Intelvi valley to reach the **Sighignola** belvedere, on the border between Italy and Switzerland, visitors can enjoy the breathtaking view of the *Ticino Alps* and of *Lake Lugano*.

Another amazing view of the Resegone mountain, the *town of Lecco*, and the *river Adda’s* outlet from Lake Como towards the valley, is from **Pian dei Resinelli**, in the foothills of the **Grigne** mountains.

Heading towards Lake Garda one of the best views is offered by the **Tignale upland** and the town of **Tremosine**, in the province of Brescia, dotted with colourful lemon groves, an unusual feature this far north in Italy.

And for those who want to admire the beauty of the night sky there is the **Piazzoli Observatory**, located in the heart of the Alps, in **Ponte Valtellina** in the province of Sondrio.



## Villas and Gardens

— *Reasons to visit...*

*Villas of delight surrounded by exquisite Italian gardens, statues, fountains and evocative water features; botanical gardens which house exotic plants such as cedar of lebanon and red beech trees, where visitors can take a relaxing break from the bustle of the city*



# The Vittoriale

— Gardone Riviera



Visiting the Vittoriale is like stepping into Gabriele D'Annunzio's mind, a man moved by great passions and boundless ambitions. His house, La Prioria, bears mute witness to the narcissism of a man determined to mould his own life into an artistic masterpiece. The exquisite stained glass windows, the fireplaces and architraves inscribed with mottos and aphorisms, about ten thousand objects and over thirty thousand books are all D'Annunzio's testament. The complex is now home to two museums: the first founded by D'Annunzio himself to

commemorate Italy's deeds in the Great War, today it is named after D'Annunzio the Hero and is a collection of objects related to his military career; the other, The Secret D'Annunzio, is a collection of the poet's everyday objects. In the Vittoriale's park visitors can admire Mas 96, the anti-submarine boat aboard which D'Annunzio participated in the famous Bakar raid. Since 2010 the *Tener-a-mente* festival has been held in the Vittoriale's amphitheatre, giving prestigious international singers and entertainers a unique stage against the backdrop of Lake Garda.

Via del Vittoriale 12, Gardone Riviera (BS) ★  
tel. +39 0365 296511. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: park, charge. House: only paid guided tours. [vittoriale@vittoriale.it](mailto:vittoriale@vittoriale.it)  
[vittoriale.it](http://vittoriale.it)



# The Villa Melzi d'Eril Gardens

— Bellagio



This magnificent villa was built at the start of the 19th century by Francesco Melzi d'Eril, vice-president of the Italian Republic established by his personal friend Napoleon. A large elegant white building in Neoclassical style which fits perfectly into its setting on the shores of Lake Como. But what attracts thousands of visitors every year are the gardens, which stretch for almost a kilometre along the lakeshore. Designed by Luigi Canonica and Luigi Villorresi, today the gardens constitute a magic retreat, a delight for the eyes and spirit alike.

Here are both venerable trees and exotic plants such as cedar trees from Lebanon, *Ginkgo balboa*, copper beeches and camphor trees, together with a superb collection of statues and monuments, some ornamenting the terrace overlooking the lake. Other features of the gardens include a private chapel, an aedicule in Moorish style, various Egyptian statues from Napoleon's campaign in Egypt and an orangerie, with a museum dedicated to memorabilia and prints from the Italian Republic established by Napoleon.

Via Lungolaro Manzoni, Bellagio (CO) ♿  
tel. +39 339 4573838. Open: March-October. Opening times: 9.30 am-6.30 pm.  
Admission: charge. [info@giardinidivillamelzi.it](mailto:info@giardinidivillamelzi.it)  
[giardinidivillamelzi.it](http://giardinidivillamelzi.it)



# Villa Carlotta

— Tremezzina



Villa Carlotta, located on the shores of Lake Como near the charming village of Tremezzo, is a triumph of natural and architectural beauty. It was built in the 17th century by order of the Marquis Giorgio Clerici, in the then fashionable Baroque style and surrounded by a magnificent Italian style garden. Today the villa is an art museum where visitors can admire the many masterpieces purchased by the owners through the centuries, including Antonio Canova's sculptures and Francisco Hayez's paintings. The 20 acres of park that surround the villa

are a testament to the different styles that have been fashionable since it was built, starting with the Italian style garden which surrounds the house with its perfectly trimmed hedges, statues and water features, followed by the less formal English style garden of the Romantic period to the late 19th century, with rhododendron woods, gorgeous camellias and azaleas, making the villa's grounds a true botanical garden.

Loc. Tremezzo, via Regina 2, Tremezzina (CO) 🚶 ⭐ ♿  
 tel. +39 0344 40405. Open: March-November. Opening times: variable.  
 Admission: charge, also open by request. [segreteria@villacarlotta.it](mailto:segreteria@villacarlotta.it)  
[villacarlotta.it](http://villacarlotta.it)



# Villa del Balbianello

— Lenno



At the very tip of the Dosso di Lavedo, a wooded promontory on the shores of Lake Como, is the Villa del Balbianello, built in the early 18th century, famous not only for its beauty but also for having hosted many well-known intellectuals in exile during the Italian Risorgimento. Commissioned by Cardinal Angelo Maria Durini and built over the remains of an ancient Franciscan monastery (although the facade of the original church is still intact), after the Cardinal's death it passed down to Count Luigi Porro Lambertenghi. The Count

was a very active supporter of the Unification of Italy and turned the villa into a hub for intellectuals who supported the Cause, even hiring the famous author Silvio Pellico as a tutor for his children. The superb Villa has been managed by the FAI, the Italian National Trust, since 1988, donated by its last owner, entrepreneur and explorer Guido Monzino, who wished it to be thrown open to the public.

Via Comoedia 5, Tremezzina (CO) 🚶 ♿ (with restrictions)  
 tel. +39 0344 56110. Open: January, March-December. Opening times: variable.  
 Admission: only paid guided tours. [faibalbianello@fondoaambiente.it](mailto:faibalbianello@fondoaambiente.it)  
[visitfai.it/villadelbalbianello](http://visitfai.it/villadelbalbianello)



# Villa Fogazzaro Roi

— Oria di Valsolda



Villa Fogazzaro Roi, the summer residence of writer Antonio Fogazzaro, is located in Oria on the Italian side of Lake Lugano. Antonio Fogazzaro loved this area and used to spend summers here surrounded by friends and colleagues, in the spacious villa that could accommodate all his guests. The villa's original furnishing has been maintained alongside a reconstruction of the author's study in the Alcove room, including his original desk where he wrote some of his masterpieces: *Piccolo Mondo Antico* (The Little World of the Past),

*Piccolo Mondo Moderno* (The Man of the World) and *Il Santo* (The Saint). The complex is made up of various buildings which were added to the original villa built in the 16th century. Visiting this villa is like taking a trip to the past, with its calm atmosphere giving visitors the impression time has stood still. The family photos and objects will give visitors a glimpse into the life of a middle-class family at the turn of the 19th century.

Via Antonio Fogazzaro 14, Oria di Valsolda (CO) ★  
tel. +39 335 7275054. Open: April-October. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: only paid guided tours. faifogazzaro@fondoambiente.it  
villafogazzarroi.it



# Villa Olmo

— Como



This imposing Neoclassical villa was built in 1812 by order of the Marquis Odescalchi; after changing hands multiple times it was acquired by the municipality of Como in 1925 and turned into a venue for art exhibitions and cultural events. The villa's English style park, with its over 800 trees including horse chestnut trees, cedars from Lebanon, sweetgum and planes, is one of the most historically interesting parks in the whole province. The villa's conservatories were added at the end of the 19th century and built in iron-glass in accordance to the

fashion of the time, a botanical garden was also added later to grow all the plants that have historically been a part of these gardens and for various native species. Villa Olmo is one of the stops on the Chilometro della Conoscenza ("Kilometre of Knowledge") a cultural itinerary and a green joint that stops at 12 different sites within three historical villas: Villa Olmo, Villa del Grumello and Villa Sucota.

Via Simone Cantoni 1, Como (CO) ★  
tel. +39 031 252352 - +39 031 576169. Open: all year. Opening times: Tuesdays-Sundays 10 am-6 pm.  
Admission: free. cultura@comune.como.it  
villamolcomo.it



# Villa Medici del Vascello

— San Giovanni in Croce



Villa Medici del Vascello's original structure was built in 1407 as a military fortification halfway between Cremona and Mantua, but as the political situation changed so did the area's military needs, which lead to the fort being converted into a residential villa. It later became the home of Cecilia Gallerani, Leonardo's model for *Lady with an Ermine*, wife of Count Ludovico Carminati of San Giovanni in Croce and mistress to Ludovico Sforza, the Renaissance Duke of Milan. Because of the many renovations and additions all that is left of the original structure is the *scarpa* (a sloped wall

at the base of the building, common in medieval architecture) and the four towers. The villa's vast English style gardens alone are worth a visit with their rich vegetation, including a maidenhair tree dating back to the 19th century, the Chinese pagoda, the Indian temple, the Dutch cottage, the lake and the Greek Doric style temple. The villa was acquired by the municipality of San Giovanni in Croce in 2005, and after an intense renovation project is opened to the public in 2014. Today it hosts also many cultural events.

Via Giuseppina 8, San Giovanni in Croce (CR) ★ ♿  
tel. +39 370 3379804. Open: Sundays and bank holidays. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: only paid guided tours. [villamedici@comune.sangiovanniincroce.cr](mailto:villamedici@comune.sangiovanniincroce.cr)  
[villamedicidelvascello.it](http://villamedicidelvascello.it)



# Villa Manzoni

— Lecco



"Alessandro Manzoni owned this villa until 1818 and it was here he drew the inspiration for his *Hymns*, *Adelchi*, and *The Betrothed* to immortalise our places, our customs, our stories and himself". The inscription added by the Scola family after they bought the property from the Manzoni family informs visitors of what awaits them inside. This was Alessandro Manzoni's family home, where he spent his childhood and youth. At the centre of the Neoclassical villa is a beautiful garden, somewhat reduced in size by subsequent additions and surrounded by a

portico of sandstone columns. The rooms on the ground floor are still furnished as they were in 1818, when Manzoni sold the villa. Today the villa houses both a museum, where visitors can admire manuscripts, first editions and memorabilia belonging to the writer, and an art gallery with a collection of artwork by local painters, in particular the works of Ennio Morlotti, originally from Lecco, deceased in 1992.

Via Guanella 1, Lecco (LC) ♿  
tel. +39 0341 481247. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. Group ticket. [segreteria.museo@comune.lecco.it](mailto:segreteria.museo@comune.lecco.it)  
[museilecco.org/museomanzoniano.htm](http://museilecco.org/museomanzoniano.htm)



# Villa Monastero

— Varenna



Villa Monastero's history spans nine centuries, making it one of Varenna's best-known landmarks, despite its current eclectic style from renovations in the 19th century. Built around 1100 AD as a convent for Cistercian nuns, the building has had many owners and purposes through the centuries and each one left its mark through various renovation projects which have given the villa its unique style. The villa is now a museum showcasing an amazing collection of items left by its various owners, an incredible record

of four centuries of history. From the 19th century, the villa was a hub for prominent artists, musicians, writers and actors and to this day the stimulating artistic and cultural climate of the era is in the air. The villa is also surrounded by a beautiful botanical garden, home to plants from every corner of the globe, which flourish thanks to the temperate climate of the lake.

Via Giovanni Polvani 4, Varenna (LC)   
tel. +39 0341 295450. Open: January-October. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. [villa.monastero@provincia.lecco.it](mailto:villa.monastero@provincia.lecco.it)  
[villamonastero.eu](http://villamonastero.eu)



# Bosco Virgiliano

— Mantua



In 1930, to commemorate the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Virgil, a park dedicated to the renowned Latin poet was instituted with the intent of featuring every plant, tree and flower mentioned in his works. The construction of the Bosco Virgiliano was overseen by Giuseppe Roda, who picked the location for the park in the south-east side of the town. It is accessed through a long, poplar-lined boulevard culminating in a round piazza with a bust of Virgil, the starting point for many different pathways. Today the Bosco

is the biggest park in the town and is managed by the Associazione Anticittà, an association dedicated to the preservation of green urban spaces, which also manages the park's annexed structures. The old conservatories are now home to various butterfly colonies, whereas cultural and entertainment activities and events take place in the park's green spaces.

Via Parma, Mantua (MN)   
tel. +39 0376 432432. Open: all year.  
Admission: free.  
[comune.mantova.gov.it](http://comune.mantova.gov.it)



# The Bertone Park

— Goito



The Bertone Park is located near Goito, in the province of Mantua. The whole area used to belong to the De Bertoni family, next to the Gonzaga family lands. After changing hands several times, the estate was bought by the D'Arco family who, at the end of the 19th century, built a villa, with stables and a guesthouse which was to serve as their summer residence. Today visitors can use the many paths and walkways to explore the villa's grounds and admire the lake and the rich vegetation of the English style garden

with local and exotic plants, in the fashion of the 19th century. The park is also home to the Centre for the Reintroduction of White Storks which takes care of a colony of birds which are initially reared in special aviaries and later set free. Most of the time the storks prefer to stay in the park and make their nests on the trees present in the park.

Strada Bertone Colarina, Goito (MN)   
tel. +39 0376 39155020. Open: March (dates may vary)-October. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge, also open by request. [didattica@parcodelmincio.it](mailto:didattica@parcodelmincio.it)  
[parcodelmincio.it](http://parcodelmincio.it)



# The Guastalla Gardens

— Milan



This Italian style garden was founded in 1555 by the Countess Paola Ludovica Torelli della Guastalla and was remodelled in 1938. Today it is one of Milan's most beautiful green areas, located near the Duomo. Points of interest include the Baroque fishpond, built in lieu of the original 16th-century pond, a 17th-century aedicule depicting the Virgin Mary and angels and a small Neoclassical temple designed by Luigi Cagnola. The gardens are also home to many different tree species such as tulip trees, trifoliate orange

trees, Atlas cedars and horse chestnuts, making it a quiet and peaceful retreat in the heart of one of the country's busiest cities. Given the garden's diminutive size, visitors will make short work of exploring it, but it's worth taking a moment to sit down on one of the benches and enjoy the peace and beauty.

Via Francesco Sforza, Milan (MI)   
tel. +39 02 88455555. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free.  
[comune.milano.it](http://comune.milano.it)



# Leonardo's Vineyard

— Milan



In 1919 the architect Piero Portaluppi began renovating the Casa degli Atellani residence – in front of the Santa Maria delle Grazie church – just as another architect, Luca Beltrami, an expert on Leonardo da Vinci's life and work, discovered that the villa's garden was actually a vineyard given to Leonardo by his patron, Ludovico il Moro, Duke of Milan. Duly inspected, Beltrami found it miraculously intact. Unfortunately the vineyard was later destroyed by a fire and some questionable urban planning choices, and it wasn't until 2015, the year of the World Expo

in Milan, that the owners of the house and the Portaluppi Foundation restored it to its original glory by planting the same strain of vines. Today Leonardo's Vineyard and the Atellani residence are open to the public, and while strolling around the gardens it's not hard to imagine Leonardo coming home after a long day's work at the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, where he was painting the *Last Supper* commissioned by Ludovico il Moro, and going out into those same gardens to check on his vines.

Corso Magenta 65, Milan (MI) 📍 ⭐  
tel. +39 02 4816150. Open: all year. Opening times: 9 am-5.30 pm.  
Admission: charge. [info@vignadileonardo.com](mailto:info@vignadileonardo.com)  
[vignadileonardo.com](http://vignadileonardo.com)



# The Brera Botanical Gardens

— Milan



The botanical gardens hidden within the Palazzo di Brera are a quiet oasis in the chaos of central Milan. This interesting complex was built in 1774 on the orders of Empress Maria Theresa of Austria and spans five thousand square metres accommodating over 300 species of plants, including two of the oldest maidenhair trees in Europe, a rare Caucasian walnut tree and a majestic, over forty metres tall linden tree, not to mention the conservatory designed by Giuseppe Piermarini and the 18th-century water lily and iris pond. The flowerbeds are also home

to a variety of medicinal herbs, vegetables and a collection of flower bulbs selected with the collaboration of the International Flower Bulb Centre in Hillegom, Holland. Since 2005 the botanical gardens and the adjacent observatory, built in the same years, have become a museum complex managed by the University of Milan. A visit during the *Fuorisalone*, the series of events and exhibitions that take place during *Milan Design Week*, to enjoy the art installations and events at the botanical gardens is an absolute must.

Via Brera 28, Milan (MI) 📍 ⭐  
tel. +39 02 50314683 - +39 335 6474184. Open: all year, partially closed in August.  
Opening times: variable. Admission: free. [ortobotanicodibrera@unimi.it](mailto:ortobotanicodibrera@unimi.it)  
[ortobotanici.unimi.it](http://ortobotanici.unimi.it)



# Villa Arconati

— Bollate



This villa's incredible artistic, architectural and historic value is now getting a new lease on life thanks to a project aimed at turning the villa into a centre where people can enjoy and create art in the city of Milan. Located in the Parco delle Groane and widely considered the Italian Versailles, the villa had been abandoned for decades and its furnishings sold at auction in the 1980s before it became the headquarters of the Augusto Rancilio Foundation. The vast estate includes the villa, the village, the woods, the farmland and church of San Guglielmo.

It reopened to the public in 2015 and since 1989 has hosted the prestigious music festival of Villa Arconati, where musicians from all over the world have performed, and many cultural events such as *Terraforma*, now in its fourth edition, an event dedicated to artistic experimentation and environmental sustainability.

Loc. Castellazzo, via Fametta 1, Bollate (MI)   
tel. +39 393 8680934. Open: April-October. Opening times: Sundays 10.30 am-6.30 pm.  
Admission: charge. [info@villaarconati.it](mailto:info@villaarconati.it)  
[villaarconati-far.it](http://villaarconati-far.it)



# Villa Necchi Campiglio

— Milan



Those who know Milan well know that its beauty is often hidden from the eyes of casual visitors, superficial tourists and hurried citizens. Villa Necchi Campiglio is one of these hidden beauties, a true architectural and artistic treasure, tucked away in Via Mozart, near the Duomo. Built between 1932 and 1935 by architect Piero Portaluppi and commissioned by Angelo Campiglio, this extravagant home is the perfect example of the glamorous and modern style that used to be fashionable with Milan's hard-working, wealthy middle class. A style somewhat attenuated by the

renovations carried out by architect Tomaso Buzzi after the war, which gave the building's interior a more classic look. The villa was donated to the Italian National Trust in 2001 by the Necchi sisters and is today open to the public. Visitors can admire the home's original furniture and decor and two art collections: Alighiero de Micheli and over 130 masterpieces from the 18th century; Claudia Gian Ferrari, and her works inspired by the 20th-century avant-garde movement.

Via Mozart 14, Milan (MI)  (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 02 76340121. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: Villa, only paid guided tours. Garden, free admission. [fainecchi@fondoambiente.it](mailto:fainecchi@fondoambiente.it)  
[visitfai.it/villanecchi](http://visitfai.it/villanecchi)



# Villa Visconti Borromeo Litta

— Lainate



With its mosaics, statues, frescoes, fountains and water features, Villa Litta is the perfect example of the “pleasure villas” so popular in Lombardy between the 16th and 17th century, when it was built on the order of Count Pirro I Visconti Borromeo and designed by some of the best architects of the time. The result is breathtaking. The villa’s best-known feature is probably the Nymphaeum, which is one of the best examples of this type of architecture in the area, thanks to the grand embellishments and the effect of the water features, still working today, powered by

the sophisticated plumbing designed by some of the era’s best fountain makers. The park won the 2016 title of Most Beautiful Public Park in Italy thanks to its green houses, fountains, irrigation canals, the hornbeam tunnel made of over 300 plants, 800 metres long and 4 metres in height and width, and the Verzura theatre, the natural arena used for theatrical and musical performances. Today the villa and the park host many cultural events such as shows, workshops and exhibitions.

Largo Vittorio Veneto 12, Lainate (MI) 🌟♿ (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 339 3942466. Open: May-October. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. [segreteria@villalittalainate.it](mailto:segreteria@villalittalainate.it)  
[villalittalainate.it](http://villalittalainate.it)



# Belgioioso Castle

— Belgioioso



This castle was most likely founded by Gian Galeazzo II in the 14th century, since he stayed here often and was very fond of this area. It is the perfect example of the charm, sophistication and opulence of the noble courts in Lombardy. After multiple owners, in the 17th century it was acquired by Don Antonio Barbiano, who renovated and expanded the building, embellished the gardens and restored the conservatories. Today the beautiful villa, including the stunning Neoclassical park, hosts many festivals and events that attract people

from all over Italy such as *Parole Nel Tempo* (a fair for minor publishers), *Officinalia* (organic foods, nature, environment), *Armonia* (holistic wellbeing for the mind, body and spirit), *Taiji Festival* (Taiji Quan) and *Next Vintage* (vintage fair), which have become the castle’s trademark events.

Via Dante Alighieri 2, Belgioioso (PV) 🌟♿  
tel. +39 0382 97052-5. Open: only during events. Opening times: 10 am-8 pm, times may vary during events. Admission: charge. [info@belgioioso.it](mailto:info@belgioioso.it)  
[belgioioso.it](http://belgioioso.it)



# The Pietra Corva Alpine Gardens

— Romagnese



The Pietra Corva Alpine Gardens – located in the heart of site Sassi Neri-Pietra Corva – was instituted in 1967 by doctor Antonio Ridella, a veterinarian with a passion for botany, who wished to create a botanical garden dedicated to the flora of the Alps which he had observed on his frequent hiking trips to the Alps and Apennines but also on the Pyrenees, the Carpathian Mountains, the Caucasus, the Andes and the Himalaya. The gardens are located on the side of the Pietra di Corvo Mountain, at an altitude of over 950 metres.

Today they are managed by the Province of Pavia and house over 1200 plant species, divided by country and natural habitat, and offer guided tours, workshops, courses and lectures on the purposes of botanical gardens. At the garden's guesthouse and visitor centre one can learn more about the territory, the garden's flora and its habitat.

Fraz. Grazzi Superiore, loc. Pietra Corva, Romagnese (PV)  
tel. +39 0383 597865. Open: April-September. Opening times: Tuesdays-Sundays 9 am-noon and 3 pm-7 pm.  
Admission: charge. [emanuela.piaggi@provincia.pv.it](mailto:emanuela.piaggi@provincia.pv.it)  
[provincia.pv.it](http://provincia.pv.it)



# The Pavia Botanical Gardens

— Pavia



The botanical gardens of the university of Pavia, built at the end of the 18th century for the purpose of study and research, have stayed intact despite the troubled years of World War II and its aftermath.

The gardens cover 5 acres and contain such a rich variety of flora that they attract experts and casual visitors in equal measure. It's hard to describe the feeling one gets exploring this beautiful garden, and even harder to list all the attractions but here a few highlights: the orchid conservatory, which currently houses

plants from America and Asia; the tropical conservatory built in 1974 under the direction of famous botanist Ruggero Tomaselli, where the rarest and most extraordinary plants are housed, making it an explosion of colour and smells. And, of course, a visit would not be complete without a stop at the majestic plane tree which was planted over 250 years ago when the botanical gardens were founded.

Via S. Epifanio 14, Pavia (PV) 🌟 🚶 (with restrictions)  
tel. +39 0382 984848. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free. [orto.botanico@unipv.it](mailto:orto.botanico@unipv.it)  
[www-3.unipv.it/orto1773](http://www-3.unipv.it/orto1773)



# The Rezia Alpine Botanical Gardens

— Bormio



Established in 1979, this botanical garden is the newest in Italy. Located 1500 metres above sea level at the foot of Mount Reit, near the Stelvio National Park north of Bormio, it occupies nearly 15 000 square metres and is home to over 2500 types of plants divided into four macrohabitats: the National Park's flora, flora from European and international mountain ranges, Arctic and Antarctic species. The park is popular not only with experts, but also with amateur photographers and families who want to give their children a

chance to learn more about the environment and teach them to love and respect nature. It plays an acknowledged scientific role and is popular with school outings, as well gathering, preserving and reproducing rare plants.

Via Giacinto Sertorelli, Bormio (SO)  
tel. +39 0342 900855. Open: July-September. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free. giardino.rezia@stelviopark.it  
stelviopark.it



# Palazzo Salis

— Tirano



Palazzo Conti Sertoli Salis, in Tirano, is one of the most architecturally important buildings in the whole of Valtellina: the palazzo was built in the 16th century by the union of four pre-existing buildings and is today a remarkable historic home museum maintaining its original decor, frescoes and furniture. The museum comprises ten beautiful halls, the most remarkable being the Saloncello, with vaulted ceilings painted in the *trompe-l'oeil* technique. For centuries this room was where the most prominent political and clerical figures

of the Valtellina met. The palazzo's Italian style gardens, a rarity this close to the Alps, are also noteworthy, with the boxwood hedges forming four separate square mazes, numerous fruit trees and an imposing 200-year-old Lebanese cedar. The palazzo hosts exhibitions, festivals, cultural and food and wine events.

Via Salis 3, Tirano (SO) 🌟 ♿  
tel. +39 340 0640653. Open: April-October. Opening times: Mondays-Saturdays 10 am -3.30 pm; by request for group. Admission: charge, also open by request. info@palazzosalis.com  
palazzosalis.com



# Palazzo Vertemate Franchi

— Piuro



Palazzo Vertemate Franchi is without a shadow of doubt one of the most charming 16th-century noble residences in Lombardy. The building's elegant and sober exterior gives little clue to the opulence of the interior. It was commissioned by two brothers, both in trade, and despite the villa's suburban location, no expense was spared for its construction, although unfortunately we do not know the names of the architects, designers and artists that helped create this magnificent place. However a visit still gives an idea of the opulence and luxury the two brothers

wanted to project, especially with the Halls of Jupiter and Mercury, the statue of Juno and the Hall of Perseus with their triumph of frescoes and richly-decorated painted vaulted and wooden ceilings, all different from one another. The palazzo also hosts many cultural events, some of which take place on the beautiful terrace overlooking the vineyard.

Loc. Prosto, via del Palazzo Vertemate, Piuro (SO) ★ ♿  
tel. +39 0343 37485. Open: March–November. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: only paid guided tours. [consorzioturistico@valchiavenna.com](mailto:consorzioturistico@valchiavenna.com)  
[palazzovertemate.it](http://palazzovertemate.it)



# The Gardens of Palazzo Estense

— Varese



Palazzo Estense and its gardens are the result of Francesco III D'Este's passion for the town of Varese. Legend has it that the Duke of Modena and Governor of the Duchy of Milan was so enchanted with Varese that he begged the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria to entrust it to his rule. His request was granted, Varese was to be his fiefdom although it was not to be passed down to his heirs, but would revert to the imperial crown. And this is where the villa's history begins: the Duke bought it in 1765 and entrusted architect Giuseppe Bianchi with

the renovations necessary to turn it into his summer residence. The gardens behind the villa were transformed into French formal gardens and Italian gardens inspired by the grounds of the royal residence of Schönbrunn. One of the park's main attractions is the parterre, lined with flowerbeds and low growing plants, where the main fountain is located. Together with the grounds of Villa Mirabello, the Palazzo Estense gardens are now open to the public, with hundreds of visitors admiring their beauty daily.

Via Luigi Sacco 5, Varese (VA) ♿  
tel. +39 0332 255111. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free. [urp@comune.varese.it](mailto:urp@comune.varese.it)  
[varesecittagiardino.it](http://varesecittagiardino.it)



# The Gardens of Villa Toeplitz

— Varese



Villa Toeplitz is a beautiful villa of eclectic architecture located in the Varese district of Sant'Ambrogio, at the foot of the Italy's Sacro Monte hill, with a series of chapels leading up to the brow of a hill to echo Calvary. The villa owes its name to banker Giuseppe Toeplitz, originally from Poland, who bought it in 1914, renovated and expanded it, making the gardens particularly impressive through the addition of water features, including a magnificent flight of steps in porphyry stone decorated with fountains and waterfalls. The gardens cover 20 acres and

are the result of various interventions over the years. The park is in the same eclectic style as the villa, the fountains and basins inspired by the oriental gardens that Toeplitz's wife admired during one of her many trips to the Far East. The estate was purchased by the town council in 1972 and is now an important tourist attraction both for its beauty and unique grounds and the wildlife, such as great spotted woodpeckers, European green woodpeckers and many types of squirrels.

Via del Casluncio, Varese (VA)   
tel. +39 0332 281590 - +39 3349687111. Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free. [urp@comune.varese.it](mailto:urp@comune.varese.it)  
[varesecittagiardino.it](http://varesecittagiardino.it)



# Villa Cicogna Mozzoni

— Bisuschio



Villa Cicogna Mozzoni is one of the most exquisite examples of Renaissance art in Lombardy. This is a perfect example of the "pleasure villas" so popular in Italy during the 16th century, with its long tree-lined drive leading up to a forecourt, its beautifully manicured flowerbeds, and the villa itself built in a traditional "U" shape and overlooking a courtyard nestled between two rows of Greek Doric columns in Viggiù stone and a red porphyry pavement which opens onto the Italian style gardens. Visitors can imagine life in the

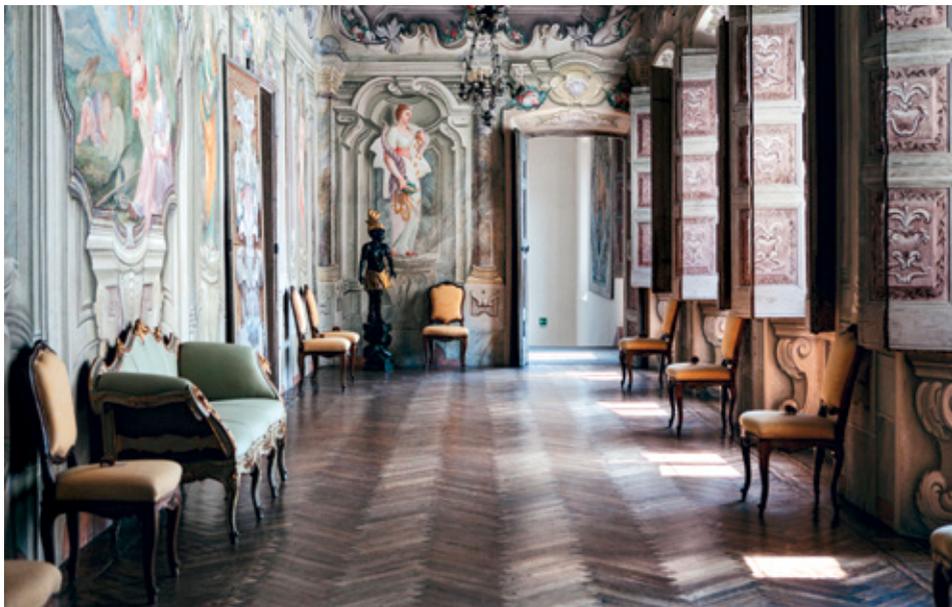
magnificent ballrooms with their frescoes, the grand entrance, the bedrooms with their four poster beds and coffered ceilings. The library is one of the most interesting rooms in the building, a place where jesters and minstrels would entertain guests with music, singing and dancing or reciting poetry in honour of the villa's illustrious owners. The grandiose ballroom, with its magnificent fireplace, accesses a "secret garden", hidden away on the north side of the property.

Viale Cicogna 8, Bisuschio (VA)   
tel. +39 0332 471134. Open: March (variable)-October. Opening times: Sundays 9.30 am-noon and 2.30 pm-7 pm. Admission: charge. Open also by request. [info@villacicognamozzoni.it](mailto:info@villacicognamozzoni.it)  
[villacicognamozzoni.it](http://villacicognamozzoni.it)



# Villa della Porta Bozzolo

— Casalzuigno



Villa Bozzolo, with its Rococo *trompe-l'oeil*, frescoed vaulted ceilings and walls and Baroque decor, is one of Lombardy's best-known "pleasure villas", extravagant country residences built for their owners' entertainment and refreshment. The villa is built in the U shape typical of the time with an exquisite ceremonial central courtyard. In the great hall and the gallery of the piano nobile visitors can admire some of the most representative paintings in the style popular in 18th-century Lombardy, the work of

Milanese painters Salvione and Bosso. The gardens are also justly famous, with four terraces descending the hillside linked by magnificent stone steps. A feature of the park is its theatre, a vast, slightly sloping lawn delineated by an artificial fishpond. Today the villa is managed by the FAI, the Italian National Trust, which has furnished the villa with authentic period pieces because the originals have been lost or stolen.

Viale Camillo Bozzolo 5, Casalzuigno (VA) ⓘ  
tel. +39 0332 624136. Open: March-November. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. Children's recreational activities. [faibozzolo@fondoaambiente.it](mailto:faibozzolo@fondoaambiente.it)  
[visitfai.it/villadellaportabozzolo](http://visitfai.it/villadellaportabozzolo)



# Villa Menafoglio Litta Panza

— Varese



Built in the 18th century as the Marquis of Menafoglio's "palace of delights", the place where he held his parties and events, after changing owners a few times, the villa was bought in the 1950s by Count Giuseppe Panza di Biumo, a man with a passion for contemporary art. From this point onwards Giuseppe Panza turned the villa into a veritable artistic hub, with renowned painters and sculptors coming and going, leaving their mark on the villa's decor with masterpieces of environmental and conceptual art. Today

Villa Panza can boast a collection of over 100 masterpieces which blend in perfectly with the decor and furnishings all from different eras from the 18th to the 20th century, making the villa's interior truly unique. In 1996 the owners donated the villa to the FAI, the Italian National Trust, who carried out the necessary renovations and opened it to the public in 2001: from then on Villa Panza has been a Mecca for art lovers and tourists who come to admire the villa and visit the contemporary art exhibitions it hosts.

Piazza Litta 1, Varese (VA) ⓘ  
tel. +39 0332 283960. Open: all year. Opening times: Tuesdays-Sundays and bank holidays 10 am-6 pm.  
Admission: charge. Children's recreational activities. [faibiumo@fondoaambiente.it](mailto:faibiumo@fondoaambiente.it)  
[visitfai.it/villapanza](http://visitfai.it/villapanza)

Photo

Right\_ MUBA, Children's Museum.

# Family Friendly Adventures

— *Travel ideas*

From castle dungeons and towers to amusement parks and interactive museums, Lombardy offers a wide variety of exciting outings for children of all ages.

The region of Lombardy offers a wide array of cultural and tourist activities that will keep your children and teenagers entertained, providing the whole family with a few hours of fun. We begin in Milan, which in itself offers many interesting activities for families and young children, while just outside the city there is a variety of family-friendly destinations.

**Milan**, located near the Rotonda di Via Besana, behind the Palace of Justice, in the Porta Vittoria area, is the **MUBA Children's Museum**, which opened in 2014 in the former church of what used to be the cemetery of the Policlinic of Milan. The centre is open all year round and offers a vast array of exhibitions, play areas and educational workshops.

The **gardens of Porta Venezia**, dedicated to the famous journalist **Indro Montanelli**, are home to two historically family-friendly attractions: the **Civic Museum of Natural History**, with its spectacular permanent exhibitions devoted to palaeontology and the dioramas depicting different planetary habitats, also hosts many educational events throughout the year.

The nearby **Planetarium** is the perfect place to learn more about the stars and the night sky. **Parco Sempione**, in the heart of the city, is an excellent choice for a walk, a bicycle ride and to play some football.

Within the park there are two other child-friendly attractions: the **Civic Aquarium**, to explore the sounds and shapes of the underwater world, and the **Sforza Castle** with its museums – the ones dedicated to *ancient Egypt* and *armoury* are always a hit with young visitors – but children also enjoy exploring the

castle's well preserved halls, the battlements and the dungeons.

Milan offers other three museums: the **Archaeological Museum**, which has been rearranged to include specific child-friendly areas; **Triennale Kids**, an exhibition that introduces children to the world of design; and, of course, **WOW. Comics Space**.

Just outside Milan, in **Cormano**, is the **Museum of Toys and Childhood**, home to the biggest collection of toys in Europe, a children's library and musical and multi-media workshops. Another perfect place for children is **Esplorazione**, the interactive workshop set up in the **Science Museum** in **Treviglio**.

For aviation enthusiasts and future pilots a trip to **Somma Lombardo**, in the province of Varese, to visit the **Volandia** park and flight museum is a must.

In the province of Cremona, at **Rivolta d'Adda**, visitors can enjoy the over thirty pre-historical reconstructions located along the green banks of the river in the **Parco della Preistoria**. But the best way to truly enjoy the river **Adda** is by boat: from Trezzo d'Adda the ferry will take you up the river towards Lake Como; the ferry that sails along the Naviglio Martesana, which connects the river to Milan, also stops along the way to visit the most important historical villas and castles on the canal.

For active families who love spending time outdoors, there are two great parks located near **Livigno**: the **Mottolino Fun Mountain**. Open all year round, with the **Bike Park** where visitors can take free riding lessons, or high altitude hikes at the **Larix Park**; or the **Carosello 3000 Livigno**, a very

popular ski centre during the winter that turns into a great running and biking circuit in the summer. Those seeking action and excitement should head to **Civenna**, in the province of Como, to the **Jungle Raider Park**, an adventure park with four different obstacle courses which include Tarzan-style rope bridges and obstacle courses of varying difficulty levels depending on the height from the ground.

History enthusiasts will enjoy a visit to the **Zavattarello Castle** – in the heart of the Oltrepò Pavese – which organises frequent medieval re-enactments and hosts many educational and interactive events for young children. The castle also has its own mysteries: legend has it that the ghost of count Pietro dal Verme, who was poisoned by his wife Chiara Sforza, still haunts these halls.



Photo

Right\_ Panoramic view of Lake Como from Villa del Balbianello.



# Action!

## — Travel ideas

Lombardy's breathtaking scenery has served as the backdrop for many international and independent films.

Through the years Lombardy has been the set of many films. Apart from the many films set in Milan, which are enough to fill the pages of a book, plenty have been filmed in more provincial, domestic and modest settings and in the aristocratic and grand historical villas on the lakes.

So let's begin with the villas of delight that have been the backdrop of famous films; in 1932 the historic **Grand Hotel** in **Tremezzo** became the title of an American film directed by Edmond Goulding, with a star-studded cast: Greta Garbo, John Barrymore and Joan Crawford.

Ten years later, in the more sombre **Villa Pliniana**, in **Torno**, on Lake Como, Mario Soldati filmed *Malombra*, an adaptation of the book with the same name by Antonio Fogazzaro.

But it was George Lucas's decision in 2002 to use **Villa del Balbianello** in **Lenno** – which has since been acquired by the FAI, the Italian National Trust – to film the famous kiss between Anakin Skywalker and Princess Amidala in the second episode of the *Star Wars* saga, that made the villas and historical houses in the region so popular with international directors and writers. Many scenes in *Ocean's Twelve* (2004), directed by Steven Soderbergh and starring Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Julia Roberts and Catherine Zeta Jones, take place on **Lake Como**. The cast and crew were guests at their co-star George Clooney's Villa Oleandra, in Laglio, during shooting. The villas in **Cernobbio** are also featured in *The Luzhin Defence* (2001) directed by Marleen Gorris, starring John Turturro and Emily Watson, which was filmed in **Villa Erba**, and the thriller *The Other Man* (2008) directed by Richard Eyre, starring Liam Neeson, Laura

Linney and Antonio Banderas, is set in the beautiful **Villa d'Este**.

As far back as 1984 the region's villas were appearing on the big screen thanks to the scenes filmed at **Villa Melzi d'Eril** in **Bellagio** for Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in America*. The villa's beauty and the breathtaking scenery captured everyone's imagination, Robert De Niro included.

The charming towns of **Varenna** and **Villa Monastero** on the shores of Lake Como are the perfect backdrops to the dreamy *Uomo d'acqua dolce* (1996) by Antonio Albanese, who directed and starred in it. Just two years earlier, in 1994, *Come due cocodrilli*, an elegant comedy directed by Giacomo Campiotti, starring Giancarlo Giannini, Fabrizio Bentivoglio and Valeria Golino, was filmed in the province of Lecco, in the town of **Lierna**.

The charming town of **Pavia**, with its towers, the university's courtyards and covered bridge was the perfect background for the cinematic adaptation of Nikolaj Gogol's novel *The Overcoat* (1952) directed by Alberto Lattuada and starring Renato Rascel; and for *Love and Fear* (1988), an adaptation of Anton Chechov's play *Three Sisters*, directed by Margarethe Von Trotta, starring Fanny Ardant, Greta Scacchi and Valeria Golino; and the mystery/drama *Ghost of Love* (1981) directed by Dino Risi, starring Marcello Mastroianni and Romy Schneider. In the nearby farms and woods of the **Ticino**, Vittorio de Sica shot his drama *Sunflower* (1970) starring Marcello Mastroianni and Sophia Loren. Some of the scenes were shot on the iconic floating bridge of **Beregardo**. Another floating bridge, the one in **Torre d'Oglio**, in the province of Mantua, appears in the film *Radiofreccia* (1998)

directed by singer Luciano Ligabue. **Cremona's** historical town centre with its Duomo, the Torrazzo and the Broletto set the scene for Alessandro D'Alatri's *The Fever* (2004) starring Fabio Volo and Valeria Solarino, and for the thriller *La cura del gorilla* (2006) written and directed by Sandrone Dazieri. Ermanno Olmi filmed his 2001 film *The Profession of Arms* in both the **Castle in Mantua** and **Rocca Sforzesca in Soncino**. In 2009 he returned to the region to film his documentary *Rupi di Vino* set in the **wineries of Valtellina**. The Milanese poet and photographer Antonia Pozzi and her dramatic, tumultuous life, culminating in her suicide in 1938, inspired two documentaries (*Poesia che mi guardi*, 2009, and *Il cielo in me*, 2014) and a film (*Antonia*, 2016) set in **Valsassina**, in the town of **Pasturo**, where the Pozzi family owned their summer residence.



# Collecting Emotions

Travelling #inLombardia with #ilPassaporto delle destinazioni (Passport of Destinations). Unique and numbered, it allows you to create a personal narrative of your experiences. With a stamp for each stop or special event. Get yours now!



## Castelli, Ville e Giardini #inLombardia

An exciting journey through an atmosphere of pure enchantment for a glimpse of life in days gone by.



## Sapore #inLombardia

A journey among unique flavours and local products. Collect stamps of your food and wine experiences!



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11 Art Capitals, 11 Cult Cities, rich in history and culture. Discover them one after the other and collect your emotions.



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A different way of exploring the landscape. Choose Lombardy by bike. Places and events to be experienced at a slow pace.



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25 natural parks, green expanses, the magic of lakes. Many wonderful places to live and explore for a holiday full of emotions.



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## Relax & Wellness #inLombardia

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Visit [passaporto.in-lombardia.it/en](http://passaporto.in-lombardia.it/en) Request your #inLombardia Passport and find out where to put a stamp on your experiences! Full list available on the website.

# Castles, Villas and Gardens #inLombardia

## — Other enchanting places

Over 110 historical sites, attractions, monuments, things to see and things to do.

### Key

 restaurants  exhibitions and events  wheelchair accessibility  access for the visually impaired

### Disclaimer

All information correct at time of printing, however opening hours and disabled access may be subject to variation and should be checked prior to visits.

## Castles

### Bergamo

Cavernago Castle   (with restrictions)  
via Castello di Cavernago 1, Cavernago (BG)  
tel. +39 035 840024.

Open only by request with charge during events.  
[residenzedepoca.it/matrimoni/s/location/castello\\_di\\_cavernago](http://residenzedepoca.it/matrimoni/s/location/castello_di_cavernago)

Colleoni Castle   
piazza B. Colleoni 1, Solza (BG)  
tel. +39 035 4948138. Open: April-September, every last Sunday of the month.  
Opening times: 3.30 pm-6 pm.  
Admission: only free guided tours.  
[info@castellocolleoni.it](mailto:info@castellocolleoni.it) [castellocolleoni.it](http://castellocolleoni.it)

Conti Calepio Castle   
via Conti Calepio 22, Castelli Calepio (BG)  
tel. +39 035 4420817 - +39 3483036243.  
Open: all year. Opening times:  
Sundays 3 pm-6.30 pm. Admission: charge, also open by request. [castello@fondazioneconticalepio.it](mailto:castello@fondazioneconticalepio.it).  
[fondazioneconticalepio.it](http://fondazioneconticalepio.it)

Grumello Castle     
via Fosse 11, Grumello del Monte (BG)  
tel. +39 035 4420817 - +39 3483036243.  
Open: all year by request. Admission: charge.  
[info@castellodigrumello.it](mailto:info@castellodigrumello.it) [castellodigrumello.it](http://castellodigrumello.it)

Lurano Castle   (with restrictions)  
via Mazzini 13, Lurano (BG) tel. +39 035 800530-717.  
Open: only during events.  
[info@associazionegiovaniseccosuardo.it](mailto:info@associazionegiovaniseccosuardo.it).  
[pianuradascoprire.it/cultura/il-castello-di-lurano-198](http://pianuradascoprire.it/cultura/il-castello-di-lurano-198)

Suardi Castle   
via degli Asini 6, Bianzano (BG) tel. +39 039 380374  
+39 3483515018. Open: July-August. Opening  
times: Thursdays and Saturdays, paid guided tours at  
5.30 pm or by request. [cortedeisuardo.com](http://cortedeisuardo.com)

Visconti Castle   
via Vittorio Emanuele II 36/A, Brignano Gera d'Adda  
(BG) tel. +39 0363 815011. Open: every first Sunday  
of the month. Opening times: 2.30 pm-5 pm.  
Admission: charge. [proloco@comune.brignano.bg.it](mailto:proloco@comune.brignano.bg.it).  
[comune.brignano.bg.it](http://comune.brignano.bg.it)

Visconti Castle of Pagazzano   (with  
restrictions) piazza Castello 1, Pagazzano (BG)  
tel. +39 0363 814629 - +39 3291923261. Open:  
March-June and September-November, first and  
third Sunday of the month.  
Opening times: 10 am-6.30 pm. Admission: charge.  
[info.castello@comune.pagazzano.bg.it](mailto:info.castello@comune.pagazzano.bg.it).  
[castellodipagazzano.it](http://castellodipagazzano.it)

Rocca of Urgnano   
via Rocca, Urgnano (BG) tel. +39 035 4871519.  
Courtyard and park: open all year. Opening times:  
9 am-9 pm, times may vary during events and  
festivals. Admission: Courtyard and park, free. Rocca:  
only paid guided tours by request for group and  
during events (also individual). [cultura@urgnano.eu](mailto:cultura@urgnano.eu).  
[urgnanoturistica.it](http://urgnanoturistica.it)

### Brescia

Bonoris Castle  
piazza S. Maria 36, Montichiari (BS)  
tel. +39 030 9650455. Open: April-October. Opening  
times: Saturdays 3 pm-7 pm, Sundays 10 am-noon

and 3 pm-7 pm. Admission: charge, also open by  
request. [montichiarimusei.it](http://montichiarimusei.it)

Bornato Castle and Villa Orlando  (with  
restrictions) Loc. Bornato, via Castello 24, Cazzago  
San Martino (BS) tel. +39 030 725006  
+39 339 1667402. Open: all year. Opening times:  
Sundays 10 am-noon and 2.30 pm-6 pm.  
Admission: charge, also open by request.  
[castellodibornato.com](http://castellodibornato.com)

Breno Castle    
piazza Gen. Ronchi, Breno (BS) tel. +39 0364 22970  
+39 0364 322623 - +39 333 4505194. Open:  
April-September. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge. [prolocobreno.info](http://prolocobreno.info)

Carmagnola Castle of Clusane   
Loc. Clusane, via Castello 1, Iseo (BS)  
tel. +39 030 989019. Open: December-October.  
Admission: free guided tours by request.  
[rosmonda.it](http://rosmonda.it)

Dello Castle  (with restrictions)  
via Roma 71, Dello (BS) tel. +39 3420765550.  
Open only during events.

Gorzone Castle   (with restrictions)  
Loc. Gorzone, vicolo della Foresta 8, Darfo Boario  
Terme (BS) tel. +39 3484595374.  
Open: only by request. Admission: charge.  
[lontanoverde.it](http://lontanoverde.it)

Oldofredi Castle    
Loc. Peschiera Maraglio, Monte Isola (BS)  
tel. +39 3283177915 - +39 030 9825294.  
Open by request. Admission: free.  
[oldofrediresidence.it](http://oldofrediresidence.it)

Padenghe Castle    
via Castello 1, Padenghe sul Garda (BS)  
tel. +39 030 9908889. Open only during events.  
[comune.padenghesulgarda.bs.it](http://comune.padenghesulgarda.bs.it)

Polpenazze del Garda Castle    
piazza Biolchi, Polpenazze del Garda (BS)  
tel. +39 0365 674012. Walls open all year 0-24.  
Admission: Walls, free. Keep: free, only by request.  
[lagodigarda.it/Castello-di-Polpenazze-del-Garda/1103-82-1.html](http://lagodigarda.it/Castello-di-Polpenazze-del-Garda/1103-82-1.html)

Portese Castle    
Loc. Portese, via C. Ciano, San Felice del Benaco (BS)  
tel. +39 0365 62541.  
Accessible during events, exterior only.  
[comune.sanfelicedelbenaco.bs.it](http://comune.sanfelicedelbenaco.bs.it)

Puegnago del Garda Castle    
piazza Beato Don Baldo, Puegnago del Garda (BS)  
tel. +39 0365 555311. Open: all year.  
Opening times: 0-24. Admission: free.  
[comune.puegnagodelgarda.bs.it](http://comune.puegnagodelgarda.bs.it)

Quistini Castle   (with restrictions)  
via Sopramura 3/A, Rovato (BS)  
tel. +39 3208519177. Open: May-June. Opening  
times: Sundays and bank holidays. Admission: only  
paid guided tours, 11 am and 4 pm, also by request.  
[castelloquistini.com](http://castelloquistini.com)

Soiano del Garda Castle   
via Castello, Soiano del Lago (BS)  
tel. +39 3337733577. Open: June-August (opening  
days may be extended to September). Opening times:  
Fridays-Sundays 7 pm-9 pm, times may vary - see  
events calendar. Admission: free. [prolocosoiandellago.it](http://prolocosoiandellago.it)

Castle and Torre del Popolo   
via Torre del Popolo, Palazzolo sull'Oglio (BS)  
tel. +39 030 7405522. Courtyard: open all year.  
Tower, walks and dungeons: times may vary - see  
events calendar. Admission: Courtyard, free. Tower,  
walks and dungeons: only free guided tours during  
events, or by request.  
[comune.palazzolosulloglio.bs.it](http://comune.palazzolosulloglio.bs.it)

Palazzo Torri, Corte Franca   (with restrictions)  
Loc. Nigoline, via S. Eufemia 5, Corte Franca (BS)  
tel. +39 030 9826200 - +39 3355467191.  
Admission: only paid guided tours by request.  
[palazzotorri.it](http://palazzotorri.it)

Rocca of Anfo   
SS237, Anfo (BS) tel. +39 0365 83224.  
Open: May-September, Saturdays-Sundays.  
Admission: only paid guided tours by request.  
[roccadanfo.eu](http://roccadanfo.eu)

Rocca Viscontea Veneta    
via Rocca 2, Lonato del Garda (BS)  
tel. +39 030 9130060. Open: all year.  
Opening times: variable. Admission: charge, also open  
by request. [fondazioneugodacomito.it](http://fondazioneugodacomito.it)

### Como

Baradello Castle   
via Castel Baradello, Como (CO)  
tel. +39 031 211131. Open: June-September.  
Opening times: Sundays and bank holidays  
10 am-5.30 pm. Admission: only paid guided tours.  
[spinaverde.it](http://spinaverde.it)

### Cremona

San Lorenzo de' Picenardi Castle   
Loc. San Lorenzo de' Picenardi, via Verdi 25,  
Torre de' Picenardi (CR) tel. +39 0375 395012  
+39 3356931143. Opening times: only guided tours  
by request and during events. [castellosanlorenzo.it](http://castellosanlorenzo.it)

Stello Castello    (with restrictions)  
Mina della Scala     
via Eugenio Montale 6, Casteldidone (CR)  
tel. +39 3476098163 - +39 3490599041.

Open: April-October. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: only paid guided tours, also by request.  
[ostellocastellominadellascala.com](http://ostellocastellominadellascala.com)

## Lecco

Corenno Plinio Castle  
Loc. Corenno Plinio, Dervio (LC)  
tel. +39 0341 804113. Open: May-September, every first Saturday of the month. Admission: free.  
Reservation recommended. [biblioteca@comune.dervio.lc.it](mailto:biblioteca@comune.dervio.lc.it). [dervio.org](http://dervio.org)

Rocca dell'Innominato  
Loc. Valletta, via Don Morazzone, Vercurago (LC)  
tel. +39 0341 420525. Open: all year.  
Opening times: variable. Admission: free.  
[santuariosangirolamo.org](http://santuariosangirolamo.org)

Tower of Orezza Castle  
Loc. Castello, Dervio (LC) tel. +39 0341 804450  
+39 3400727285. Open: May-September. Opening times: Saturdays-Sundays 10 am-noon and 2 pm-6 pm. Admission: tower, charge, also by request.  
[vicepresidente.proloco.dervio@outlook.it](mailto:vicepresidente.proloco.dervio@outlook.it). [dervio.org](http://dervio.org)

Maggiana Tower known as «del Barbarossa»  
Loc. Maggiana, via della Torre di Federico 2, Mandello del Lario (LC) tel. +39 0341 732912  
+39 3384028061. Open: April-September. Opening times: Sundays 10 am-noon. Admission: free or by request. [museotorremaggiana@gmail.com](mailto:museotorremaggiana@gmail.com).  
[prolocolario.it](http://prolocolario.it)

Visconti Tower  
piazza XX Settembre, Lecco (LC)  
tel. +39 0341 282396. Open: September-July.  
Opening times: variable. Admission: free.  
[cultura@comune.lecco.it](mailto:cultura@comune.lecco.it). [comune.lecco.it](http://comune.lecco.it)

## Mantua

Castiglione delle Stiviere Castle  
via S. Carlo Borromeo 1, Castiglione delle Stiviere (MN) tel. +39 0376 638037. Open: all year. Opening times: Sundays 10 am-noon and 3 pm-6 pm.  
Admission: free offer, only by request.  
[gardasistemaculturale.it/result.asp?id=216](http://gardasistemaculturale.it/result.asp?id=216)

Monzambano Castle  
via Castello 30, Monzambano (MN)  
tel. +39 0376 800502. Open: May-August. Opening times: 3.30 pm-7 pm. Admission: free, only guided tours.  
[monzambano.gov.it](http://monzambano.gov.it)

Ponti sul Mincio Castle  
via Castello, Ponti Sul Mincio (MN)  
tel. +39 0376 813351. Open: April-October. Opening times: variable. Admission: only paid guided tours.  
[comune.pontisulmincio.mn.it](http://comune.pontisulmincio.mn.it)

Scaligero Castle  
via Tione 8, Villimpenta (MN) tel. +39 0376 667508.  
Open: May-September. Opening times: Saturdays 5.30 pm-7.30 pm, Sundays 10.30 am-3 pm.  
Admission: free, also by request and during events.  
[castelloscaligerovillimpenta.it](http://castelloscaligerovillimpenta.it)

Palazzo Gonzaga  
Volta Mantovana  
via Beata Paola Montaldi 15, Volta Mantovana (MN) tel. +39 0376 803114. Open: all year. Opening times: variable. Admission: charge.  
[enotecagonzaga.com](http://enotecagonzaga.com)

Palazzo Te  
viale Te 13, Mantua (MN) tel. +39 0376 323266.  
Open: all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge.  
[museicivici.mn.it](http://museicivici.mn.it)

Rocca of Solferino  
via Vicinale del Castello, Solferino (MN)  
tel. +39 3487303150 - +39 3804187911. Open: March-September. Opening times: Tuesdays-Sundays 9 am-12.30 pm and 2.30 pm-6.30 pm. Admission: charge, also open by request.  
[prolocosolferino.it](http://prolocosolferino.it)

Tower of Suzzara  
piazza Castello 1, Suzzara (MN)  
tel. +39 0376 5131 - +39 3333759171. Opening times: times and dates may vary - see events calendar.  
Admission: free during events or by request.  
[comune.suzzara.mn.it](http://comune.suzzara.mn.it)

Villa Arrighi  
Loc. Castellaro Lagusello, via Castello 66, Monzambano (MN) tel. +39 0376 88855. Open: March-December. Opening times: Saturdays-Sundays 10.30 am-1 pm and 3 pm-7.30 pm. Admission: only paid guided tours, or by request.  
[monzambano.gov.it](http://monzambano.gov.it)

## Milan

Borromeo d'Adda Castle  
piazza G. Perrucchetti 3, Cassano d'Adda (MI)  
tel. +39 0363 360221. Open only during events.

Mediceo Castle  
piazza Vittoria 10, Melegnano (MI)  
tel. +39 02 982081. Open: March-June and September-October. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge, also open by request.  
[procomelegnano.it](http://procomelegnano.it)

San Colombano al Lambro Castle  
via Ricetto, San Colombano al Lambro (MI) tel. +39 3292165986 - +39 3332930003.  
Open: April-July and September-October. Opening times: 4 pm. Admission: only paid guided tours.  
[visitasancolombano.com](http://visitasancolombano.com)

Visconti Castle of Abbiategrasso  
piazza Castello 9, Abbiategrasso (MI)

tel. +39 02 94692458. Open: all year (except second and third weeks in August). Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free.  
[comune.abbiategrasso.mi.it](http://comune.abbiategrasso.mi.it)

Visconti Castle of Cusago  
piazza Soncino, Cusago (MI)  
tel. +39 02 901661 - +39 3493108542.  
Temporarily closed.  
[prolococusago.org](http://prolococusago.org)

Visconti Castle of Trezzo sull'Adda  
via Valverde 33, Trezzo sull'Adda (MI) tel. +39 02 9092569. Open: March-September. Opening times: Sundays and bank holidays 3 pm-6 pm. Admission: only paid guided tours, or by request.  
[prolocotrezzo.com](http://prolocotrezzo.com)

## Pavia

Beccaria Litta Castle  
piazza Castello, Gambolò (PV) tel. +39 0381 938256.  
Open: September-June. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: charge, also open by request.  
[archeolomellina.altervista.org](http://archeolomellina.altervista.org)

Beregardo Castle  
via Castello 2, Bereguardo (PV)  
tel. +39 0382 930362. Open only by request.  
[comune.beregardo.pv.it](http://comune.beregardo.pv.it)

Cozzo Castle  
via G. Marconi 13, Cozzo (PV)  
tel. +39 3331840870. Open: only by request.  
[agriturismoalcastellodicozzo.it](http://agriturismoalcastellodicozzo.it)

Lardirago Castle  
via F.lli Zoncada, Lardirago (PV)  
tel. +39 0382 3786217. Open: all year.  
Admission: free, only by request.  
[ghislieri.it](http://ghislieri.it)

Lomello Castle  
piazza Castello 1, Lomello (PV)  
tel. +39 0384 1085241. Open: April-June and September-October. Opening times: Saturdays and Sundays 3 pm-6 pm. Admission: only paid guided tours, or by request.  
[prolocolomello.blogspot.it](http://prolocolomello.blogspot.it)

Malaspina Castle  
piazza Umberto I, Varzi (PV) tel. +39 3469588786.  
Admission: only paid guided tours by request.  
[castellodivarzi.com](http://castellodivarzi.com)

Montesegale Castle  
Loc. Castello, piazza del Municipio, Montesegale (PV) tel. +39 0383 99030. Opening times and dates may vary - see events calendar. Admission: free during events and exhibitions.  
[comune.montesegale.pv.it](http://comune.montesegale.pv.it)

Mornico Castle  
via C. Bevilacqua 2, Mornico Losana (PV)  
tel. +39 3920502526. Open: only during events.  
[castellodimornico.it](http://castellodimornico.it)

Oramala Castle  
Loc. Oramala, Val di Nizza (PV) tel. +39 3496431041.  
Open: June-October. Open: Sundays. Admission: only paid guided tours at 3 pm, 4 pm and 5 pm.  
[spinoforito.com](http://spinoforito.com)

Procaccini Castle (Cusani-Visconti)  
via Stazione, Chignolo Po (PV) tel. +39 347 4246765. Open: March-November. Opening times: Sundays 3 pm-6 pm. Admission: only paid guided tours, or by request.  
[castellodichignolo.po.it](http://castellodichignolo.po.it)

San Gaudenzio Castle  
Loc. San Gaudenzio, Cervesina (PV) tel. +39 0383 3331. Open: only during events.  
[castellosangaudenzio.it](http://castellosangaudenzio.it)

Sant'Alessio Castle  
via Luigi Cadorna 2, Sant'Alessio con Vialone (PV) tel. +39 0382 94139. Open: February-November (reduced opening times). Admission: charge.  
[oasisantalesio.it](http://oasisantalesio.it)

Sartirana Castle  
piazza Ludovico di Breme 4, Sartirana Lomellina (PV)  
Open: all year.  
Opening times: 9 am-noon and 2 pm-7 pm.  
Admission: free offer, guided tours by request.  
[sartirana.arte.it](http://sartirana.arte.it)

Scaldasole Castle  
piazza Castello, Scaldasole (PV) tel. +39 0382 907925 - +39 3387340233.  
Open: only by request.  
[castellodiscaldasole.it](http://castellodiscaldasole.it)

Valeggio Castle  
via Vittorio Emanuele 13, Valeggio (PV) tel. +39 0384 1851853 - +39 02 303126195.  
Open: only free guided tours by request.  
[castellodivaleggio.it](http://castellodivaleggio.it)

Voghera Castle  
piazza della Liberazione, Voghera (PV) tel. +39 0383 3361. Open: September-October. Opening times may vary - see events calendar.  
Admission: free, during events and exhibitions.  
[comune.voghera.pv.it](http://comune.voghera.pv.it)

## Sondrio

Palazzo Besta  
via Fabio Besta 8, Teglio (SO) tel. +39 0342 781208.  
Open: May-September. Opening times: Tuesdays-Saturdays 9 am-1 pm and 2 pm-5 pm, Sundays and bank holidays 8 am-2 pm. Times may vary.  
Admission: only paid guided tours.

Visconti Venosta Castle  
via S. Faustino, Grosio (SO) tel. +39 0342 847233  
+39 346331405. Open: all year.  
Opening times: variable.

Admission: free, only with the visit of the Parco delle Incisioni Rupestri in Grosio. [parcoincisionigrosio.org](http://parcoincisionigrosio.org)

## Varese

Masnago Castle     (with restrictions)  
via Cola di Rienzo 42, Varese (VA)  
tel. +39 0332 820409.

Opening times: Tuesdays-Sundays, 9.30 am-12.30 pm and 2 pm-6 pm. Admission: charge.  
[museo.masnago@comune.varese.it](mailto:museo.masnago@comune.varese.it). [comune.varese.it](http://comune.varese.it)

Visconti Castle of Fagnano Olona   
piazza Cavour 9, Fagnano Olona (VA) tel. +39 0331 616511. Open: only guided tours during events.  
[presidente@proloco-fagnanooolona.org](mailto:presidente@proloco-fagnanooolona.org).  
[proloco-fagnanooolona.org](http://proloco-fagnanooolona.org)

Visconti di San Vito Castle   (with restrictions)  
piazza P.C. Scipione 2, Somma Lombardo (VA)  
tel. +39 0331 256337. Open: April-October.  
Opening times: Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays 10 am-11.30 am, 2.30 pm-6 pm. Admission: only paid guided tours. [castellovisconti@libero.it](mailto:castellovisconti@libero.it).  
[castelloviscontidisavitto.it](http://castelloviscontidisavitto.it)

## Royal Residences

### Milan

Villa Reale - Galleria d'Arte Moderna       
via Palestro 16, Milan (MI) tel. +39 02 88445947  
+39 02 45487400. Open: all year.  
Opening times: Tuesdays-Sundays, 9 am-5.30 pm.  
Admission: charge. [gam-milano.com](http://gam-milano.com)

## Villas and Gardens

### Bergamo

Botanical Garden «Lorenzo Rota»   
-Valle della Biodiversità  
via Astino, Bergamo (BG) tel. +39 035 286060.  
Open: April-October. Times may vary.  
Admission: free. Children's recreational activities.  
[ortobotanicodibergamo.it](http://ortobotanicodibergamo.it)

Palazzo Agliardi   (with restrictions)  
via Pignolo 86, Bergamo (BG) tel. +39 035 225422.  
Admission: charge only by request. [visitbergamo.net](http://visitbergamo.net)

Palazzo Moroni   
via Porta Dipinta 12, Bergamo (BG)  
tel. +39 035 244870 - +39 3478441906.  
Only paid guided tours, by request.  
Admission charge during the museum exhibitions.  
[info@fondazionepalazzomoroni.it](mailto:info@fondazionepalazzomoroni.it).  
[fondazionepalazzomoroni.it](http://fondazionepalazzomoroni.it)

Palazzo Terzi    
piazza Terzi 2, Bergamo (BG) tel. +39 035 233350

+39 345 7770615. Only paid guided tours, by request. [info@palazzoterzi.it](mailto:info@palazzoterzi.it)

Villa Giuseppe Faccanoni   
via Vittorio Veneto 56, Sarnico (BG)  
tel. +39 035 910900. Open: only during events.  
[info@prolocosarnico.it](mailto:info@prolocosarnico.it). [iseolake.info](http://iseolake.info)

Villa Grismondi Finardi   
via Volturmo 11/A, Bergamo (BG)  
tel. +39 035 234066. Open: only during events.  
[info@villagrismondifinardi.it](mailto:info@villagrismondifinardi.it).  
[villagrismondifinardi.it](http://villagrismondifinardi.it)

Villa Pesenti Agliardi    
via Agliardi 8, Paladina (BG) tel. +39 333427379  
+39 035 225422. Admission: charge by request.  
[mariacarolina.agliardi@gmail.com](mailto:mariacarolina.agliardi@gmail.com).  
[bergamogiardinedimore.it](http://bergamogiardinedimore.it)

### Brescia

Vivione Alpine Botanical Garden     
Loc. Paisco, via Nazionale 74, Paisco Loveno (BS)  
tel. +39 0364 636160 - +39 328 2278539.  
Open: April-September. Opening times: 0-24.  
Admission: free.  
[consorziovalleallione.it](http://consorziovalleallione.it)

Heller Garden    
via Roma 2, Gardone Riviera (BS)  
tel. +39 336 410877. Open: March-October.  
Opening times: 9 am-7 pm. Admission: charge.  
[hellergarden.com](http://hellergarden.com)

Il Giardino dei sensi  
via Panoramica 23, Gardone Riviera (BS)  
tel. +39 0365 21022. Admission: free, only by request. [dimorabolosone.it](http://dimorabolosone.it)

Coniferae Botanical Garden   
Loc. Paradiso, Ome (BS) tel. +39 030 652177.  
Open: all year. Opening times: 0-24. Admission: free.  
[comune.ome.bs.it](http://comune.ome.bs.it)

Villa Bettoni Cazzago    
SS45 bis, Gargnano (BS) tel. +39 0365 72082.  
Admission: terrace, free, only during events.  
[gargnanosulgarda.it](http://gargnanosulgarda.it)

Villa Mazzotti    
viale Mazzini 39, Chiari (BS) tel. +39 030 70082369.  
Park open all year. Opening times: variable.  
Admission: park, free. Villa, free during events or by request. [comune.chiari.brescia.it](http://comune.chiari.brescia.it)

Villa, park and garden of Isola del Garda    
(with restrictions - Part of the garden is accessible by golfcar. Only manual wheelchairs)  
Loc. Isola del Garda, San Felice del Benaco (BS)  
tel. +39 3286126943. Open: March-October,

Tuesdays-Fridays and Sundays. Admission: only paid guided tours, or by request.  
[isoladelgarda.com](http://isoladelgarda.com)

### Como

Villa Carcano   
via Piave 4, Anzano del Parco (CO)  
tel. +39 3409462516. Park: open only one weekend every month, June-September. Villa, variable opening.  
Admission: park, charge. Villa free during events.  
[villacarcano.it](http://villacarcano.it)

Villa Mylius Vigoni  (with restrictions)  
Loc. Loveno, via G. Vigoni 1, Menaggio (CO)  
tel. +39 0344 36111 - +39 0344 361232.  
Open: January-July and September-November.  
Opening times: Thursdays 2.30 pm.  
Admission: only paid guided tours.  
[villavigoni.it](http://villavigoni.it)

Villa Raimondi    
viale Raimondi 54, Vertemate con Minoprio (CO)  
tel. +39 031 900224. Opening times and dates may vary - see events calendar. Admission: charge, only during events and exhibitions.  
[fondazioneeminoprio.it](http://fondazioneeminoprio.it)

### Lecco

Botanical Garden  
via Fatebenefratelli 6, Valmadrera (LC)  
tel. +39 0341 581960 - +39 3488826415.  
Open: March-October. Opening times: Saturdays 2 pm-6 pm. Admission: free, also by request.  
[serviziocivici@comune.valmadrera.lc.it](mailto:serviziocivici@comune.valmadrera.lc.it).  
[valmadrera.gov.it](http://valmadrera.gov.it)

Gaspere De Ponti Botanical Garden   
via A. Galli 48, Calolziocorte (LC)  
tel. +39 0341 240724 - +39 0341 621011.  
Open: March-July. Opening times: Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Admission: free.  
[info@comunitamontana.lc.it](mailto:info@comunitamontana.lc.it). [comunitamontana.lc.it](http://comunitamontana.lc.it)

Giardino di Eva  
largo G. Agnesi, Montevicchia (LC)  
tel. +39 3358145937. Open: all year. Opening times: variable. Admission: free, only by request.  
[lorenzolimonta.ll@gmail.com](mailto:lorenzolimonta.ll@gmail.com).

Villa Bertarelli Garden   (with restrictions)  
via Bertarelli 11, Galbiate (LC)  
tel. +39 0341 542266. Open: all year. Opening times: Saturdays 8.30 am-11.30 am. Admission: free.  
[info@parcobarro.it](mailto:info@parcobarro.it).  
[parcobarro.lombardia.it](http://parcobarro.lombardia.it)

Villa Cipressi    (with restrictions)  
via IV Novembre 18, Varenna (LC)  
tel. +39 0341 830113. Gardens: open March

(variable)-November (variable).  
Opening times: 8 am-6 pm. Admission: charge.  
[info@hotelvillacipressi.it](mailto:info@hotelvillacipressi.it).  
[hotelvillacipressi.it](http://hotelvillacipressi.it)

Villa Greppi   
via Monte Grappa 21, Monticello Brianza (LC)  
tel. +39 039 9207160. Open: all year.  
Admission: free, only by request and during events.  
[info@villagreppi.it](mailto:info@villagreppi.it).  
[villagreppi.it](http://villagreppi.it)

Villa Sommi Picenardi   
viale Sommi Picenardi 8, Olgiate Molgora (LC)  
tel. +39 3880960728 - +39 3204988295.  
Open: April-September (also October variable).  
Admission: charge, only by request and in fixed date from July to October.  
[info@villasommipicenardi.it](mailto:info@villasommipicenardi.it).  
[villasommipicenardi.it](http://villasommipicenardi.it)

Villa Subaglio   
via E. Bianchi 1, Merate (LC)  
tel. +39 039 9992716 - +39 3939682989.  
Open: only during events.  
[info@villasubaglio.it](mailto:info@villasubaglio.it).  
[scoprirelabrianza.com/it/villa-subaglio.html](http://scoprirelabrianza.com/it/villa-subaglio.html)

### Lodi

Palazzo Rho   
piazza Gen. Dalla Chiesa 1, Borghetto Lodigiano (LO)  
tel. +39 0371 260111. Open: all year.  
Opening times: variable. Admission: free, only by appointment. [comuneborghetto.lo.it](http://comuneborghetto.lo.it)

Villa Litta Carini   
via Montemalo 28, Orio Litta (LO)  
tel. +39 0377 944591 - +39 3394396148.  
Open: only by request. [villalitta.it](http://villalitta.it)

### Mantua

Hunting Lodge  
Gonzaga di Bosco della Fontana    
strada Mantova 29, Marmirolo (MN)  
tel. +39 0376 295933. Open: all year.  
Opening times: variable. Admission: variable.

Villa Bisighini    
SP Ferrarese 35, Carbonara di Po (MN)  
tel. +39 0386 41549. Open: all year (reduced opening times in August). Opening times: variable.  
Admission: free.

Villa Mirra    
via Porta Antica 32, Cavriana (MN)  
tel. +39 0376 811430 - +39 0376 804053.  
Park: open all year. Opening times: 7 am-11 pm.  
Admission: free. Villa free admission, only by request.  
[comune.cavriana.mn.it](http://comune.cavriana.mn.it)

## Milan

«Indro Montanelli» Gardens ★ ♿  
via Palestro 16, Milan (MI) tel. +39 02 88455555.  
Open: all year. Opening times: variable. Admission: free. [comune.milano.it](http://comune.milano.it)

Villa Reale Garden ★ ♿  
via Palestro 16, Milan (MI) tel. +39 02 88455555.  
Open: all year. Opening times: variable. Garden: free, only for children under the age of 12 with an adult. [comune.milano.it](http://comune.milano.it)

Parco Sempione ♿ ★ ♿  
viale Emilio Alemagna, Milan (MI)  
tel. +39 02 88455555. Open: all year. Opening times: variable. Admission: free. [comune.milano.it](http://comune.milano.it)

Villa Clerici ★ ♿  
via Giovanni Terruggia 14, Milan (MI)  
tel. +39 02 6470066. Open: all year. Opening times: variable. Admission: free, also by request. [villaclerici.it](http://villaclerici.it)

Villa Litta Modignani ★ ♿  
viale Affori 21, Milan (MI) tel. +39 02 88462522.  
Opening period may vary. Opening times: Library: Mondays-Saturdays 9.30 am-7.30 pm. Wednesdays 2 pm-7.30 pm. Park: 6 am-11 pm. Admission: free. [milano.it/biblioteche](http://milano.it/biblioteche)

## Monza

Palazzo Arese Borromeo ★ ♿  
via S. Carlo Borromeo 41, Cesano Maderno (MB)  
tel. +39 0362 513455. Open: September-July.  
Opening times: variable. Admission: charge. [comune.cesano-maderno.mb.it](http://comune.cesano-maderno.mb.it)

Villa Bagatti Valsecchi ★ ♿ (with restrictions)  
via Vittorio Emanuele II 48, Varedo (MB).  
Opening times and dates may vary - see events calendar. Admission: free during events, also paid guided tours by request. [villabagattivalsecchi.it](http://villabagattivalsecchi.it)

Villa Cusani Confalonieri ★ ♿  
via B. Caprotti 7, Carate Brianza (MB)

tel. +39 0362 987350. Open: park all year. Library, variable. Admission: park, free. [comune.caratebrianza.mb.it](http://comune.caratebrianza.mb.it)

Villa Trivulzio ♿  
Loc. Omate, piazza Trivulzio 1, Agrate Brianza (MB)  
tel. +39 039 634091 - +39 3484781311. Opening times: only during events. [villatrivulzio.it](http://villatrivulzio.it)

## Pavia

Villa Fornace ★ ♿ (with restrictions)  
Loc. Villa Fornace, Villa Fornace 11, Rocca de' Giorgi (PV) tel. +39 0385 241171. Open: April-July and November-December. Admission: only by request. [contevistarino.it](http://contevistarino.it)

## Varese

Villa Cagnola ♿ ★ ♿  
via Cagnola 21, Gazzada Schianno (VA)  
tel. +39 0332 461304. Open: museum second and last Sunday of the month. Opening times: only guided tours by request at 4 pm. [info@villacagnola.it](mailto:info@villacagnola.it)

Villa Mylius ♿ (with restrictions)  
via Fiume 38, Varese (VA) tel. +39 348 2736242.  
Garden open: spring and summer 8 am-8 pm, autumn and winter 8 am-6 pm. Admission: free. [urp@comune.varese.it](mailto:urp@comune.varese.it)

Villa Recalcati ★ ♿ (with restrictions)  
via Francesco Daverio, Varese (VA)  
tel. +39 0332 252111. Open: all year. Opening times: park, variable. Admission: park free, villa only during events. [provincia.va.it](mailto:cultura@provincia.va.it)

Ville Ponti ★ ♿ (with restrictions)  
piazza Litta 2, Varese (VA) tel. +39 0332 239130 - +39 0332287738. Open: all year. Botanical garden, times variable. Admission only guided tours. [villeponti@va.camcom.it](mailto:villeponti@va.camcom.it) [assflova@virgilio.it](mailto:assflova@virgilio.it) [villeponti.it](http://villeponti.it)

# Castles, Villas and Gardens #inLombardia

## — Info

### Abbonamento Musei Lombardia Milano

365 days of free access to Lombardy's historical sites. Prices available at [lombardia.abbonamentomusei.it](http://lombardia.abbonamentomusei.it)

## Bergamo

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Bergamo Alta +39 035 242226  
Bergamo Bassa +39 035 210204  
Orio al Serio Airport  
+39 035 320402  
> [visitbergamo.net](http://visitbergamo.net)  
> WiFi BergamoWiFi

## Cremona

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Piazza del Comune 5  
+39 0372 407081  
> [turismocremona.it](http://turismocremona.it)  
> WiFi WiFi Area Linea Com

## Mantua

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Piazza Mantegna 6  
+39 0376 432432  
> [turismo.mantova.it](http://turismo.mantova.it)  
> [mantova2017.it](http://mantova2017.it)  
> [comune.mantova.gov.it](http://comune.mantova.gov.it)  
> WiFi Mantova free WI-FI

## Pavia

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Via del Comune 18  
+39 0382 079943  
Piazzale Stazione  
+39 0382 538769  
> [vivipavia.it](http://vivipavia.it)  
> WiFi Hot Spot Pavia

## Brescia

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Centro, Via Trieste 1  
+39 030 2400357  
Piazzale Stazione  
+39 030 8378559  
Piazza del Foro 9  
+39 030 3749438  
> [turismobrescia.it](http://turismobrescia.it)  
> WiFi BresciaWiFi

## Lecco

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Piazza XX Settembre 23  
+39 0341 295720  
> [comune.lecco.it](http://comune.lecco.it)  
> [lakecomo.it](http://lakecomo.it)  
> WiFi Wi-Fi Lecco

## Milan

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Galleria Vittorio Emanuele  
angolo Piazza della Scala  
+39 02 88455555  
> [turismo.milano.it](http://turismo.milano.it)  
> WiFi OpenWiFiMilano

## Sondrio

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Palazzo Pretorio  
Piazza Campello 1  
+39 0342 526299  
Via Tonale 13  
+39 0342 219246  
> [sondrioevalmalenco.it](http://sondrioevalmalenco.it)  
> [valtellina.it](http://valtellina.it)  
> WiFi SondrioFree

## Como

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Broletto, Piazza Duomo  
+39 031 304137  
> [visitcomo.eu](http://visitcomo.eu)  
> WiFi FreeWiFiComo

## Lodi

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Piazza Broletto 4  
+39 0371 409238  
> [turismolodi.net](http://turismolodi.net)  
> WiFi FreeLuna\_COMUNE\_LODI

## Monza

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Piazza Carducci 2  
+39 039 323222  
Piazza della Stazione  
> [turismo.monza.it](http://turismo.monza.it)  
> WiFi bWiFiFree-ComuneMonza

## Varese

Tourist Infopoint inLombardia  
Piazza Monte Grappa 5  
+39 0332 281913  
> [comune.varese.it](http://comune.varese.it)  
> WiFi Varese Wifi

Castles, Villas and Gardens #inLombardia  
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**Castles, Villas  
and Gardens  
#inLombardia**  
— Magazine

*A journey through the  
timeless enchantment  
of the castles, royal  
residences, villas  
and gardens of a  
Lombardy waiting to be  
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