

GARDENS IN AND AROUND MILAN: GREEN LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Elesta Travel is a team of Italian journey designers based in Milan. We offer an unforgettable experience of Italy, unveiling the beauty of a country with glorious landscapes and a magnificent past, opening the door to many hidden places and treasures that lie off the beaten track. With a community of collaborators that combine competencies in art, culture, and history, we help you, the discerning traveller, to explore your interests and realise your passions, guiding you through Italy's varied and matchless cultural heritage.



GARDEN'S ART

Italian, English or French: who is versed in gardens knows they aren't all the same! Every style represents an era, a vision of the open air and a way to organize noble and urban spaces.

Milan safeguards several precious gardens and with this itinerary Elesta will explore with you one in particular: the **Garden Castellini Portaluppi, in Casa degli Atellani**. Here, you can discover **Leonardo's Vineyard**, where, you can get to know all about the grape variety grown by Leonardo, just in front of the **Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie and The Last Supper**.

We will then take you to a marvellous **private hidden garden in the centre of Milan**, rich of centuries-old plants and with a fascinating 14th century's courtyard by the architect Bramante. Once a cloister of nuns and now belonging to a family from generations, here you will take a rest from the noisy streets.

THE ENCHANTED VALLEY

If you want to explore beautiful parks and gardens, here is the right itinerary for you: the wonderful and unique **Park Burcina Felice Piacenza** on the hills of **Biella**, in the region of Piedmont. The Park hosts several species of flowers and plants, so in every season you will admire the beauty of nature. From the spring's magnificent and luxuriant flowering of the astonishing **Rhododendron Valley** - with colours from white to rose and from red to lilac - to the magical autumn's nuances. We will then move to visit **the Burcina Park President private garden**, who allows us to enter his exclusive "soul's place", with a fascinating *Art Nouveau* glasshouse inside it: this harmonious garden safeguards centuries-old trees, flowers groomed with daily passion and medical plants selected with patience.

THE PERFECT BALANCE BETWEEN NATURE AND ARCHITECTURE

For centuries art was for the few, but now we can all appreciate the beauty of private villas that tell the history of a magnificent past. Immersed in a **wonderful natural setting**, visit with Elesta the interiors of the wonderful **Villa Cicogna Mozzoni in Bisuschio, in the green Varese province near Switzerland**, and stroll in its gardens, admiring the **romantic park** and the surrounding landscapes. Here **one member of the family owners will welcome you** and guide you through the frescoed rooms and the gardens of this jewel of the Lombard Renaissance. He will tell you about the family's history during the centuries, showing secrets about his house and accompanying you in the many **terraced Italian gardens**. It's a special place where architecture and nature interpenetrate mutually creating an elegant and harmonious balance. An harmony that culminates in the **aerated loggias**, that let the garden light into the halls and reception rooms **with their frescoed floral, garlands and wine branches ceilings**.



ANCIENT WATER GAMES

In Lainate, very close to **Milan**, you can discover with us the charming **Villa Borromeo Visconti Litta**, famous for its original XVI century guest entertainment: **the Water Palace, or Nymphaeum**. Enjoy the magic and coolness of water games, particularly pleasant in a hot summer evening. The Villa Litta Nymphaeum is considered one of the most important examples in Europe, for **the richness of decorations and the variety of water games**. Since the XVI century it has grabbed the interest of the visitors: an astonishing succession of artificial caves decorated with tuff stalactites, shells and hard stones, and rooms covered with mosaics made of white, black and coloured pebbles. Water jets rise and cross, waterfalls and unexpected rain come from the floors and the walls, creating a magical atmosphere. Then end the visit in the **historical garden, strolling among rare and ancient trees and two Art Nouveau's glasshouses**.



THE ENCHANTED FOREST OF ORTA SAN GIULIO

The "*Sacro Monte*" (Sacred Mountain) is a group of chapels assembling an hill path integrated into the surrounding natural landscape: visiting this gem means to immerse yourself in an **oasis of peace**. Among the most enigmatic and spiritual sites in Northern Italy, **recognized by UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Sacro Monte di San Francesco in Orta San Giulio** is the only one dedicated to a single Saint. Enjoy its amazing life-size polychrome statues, its renaissance baroque architecture and its hundreds of square meters of frescos authored by the greatest colour and art masters of their time. This **path of twenty chapels is surrounded by a luxuriant wood**, and from the top of the hill you can admire the small but very fascinating **Lake Orta**, that reflects the high mountains on its waters. Here, art, architecture and landscape reinforce each other to create a unique surrounding. We will take you also to **Orta, a beautiful village** from where you can take a boat to a little nearby island, **inhabited since Neolithic times** and now almost totally occupied by the Mater Ecclesiae Abbey.



NOBLE JEWELS ON THE LAKE

A journey to discover a **paradise on the water: the Borromeo islands, belonging to the ancient and noble Borromeo family**.

They will reveal their luxuriant gardens and superb architecture, offering a unique view of the surrounding area, which overlooks the **Lake Maggiore**. Since your arrival by boat, you will admire the **buildings immersed in their terraced gardens and parks rich of several botanical species**.

We suggest you start from the *Isola Bella*, the 'Beautiful Island', that hosts the astonishing Borromeo Palace and its superb garden, where the family still lives in the upper floors. Then by boat to the little and charming *Isola dei Pescatori*, the 'Fishers' Island', still inhabited by locals, where you can admire the town of Stresa, stroll in calm narrow streets and taste the local food in lovely restaurants.

The trip continues to the *Isola Madre*, the 'Mother Island', where you'll visit another Borromeo family Palace. Enjoy with Elesta the Venetian living room but more than anything be surprised by the unique botanical garden.



Itineraries are one day journeys that can be dedicated to individual visitors or groups of up to 15 people. All tours can be tailored upon preferences of guests. We partner with licensed guides and create original itineraries with professionals and experts in art, architecture, design, crafts and archeology. We reserve to our guests a gift as a souvenir of the visit

WHERE & WHEN

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