



## Lugano Switzerland

### General Itinerary

Lugano is often referred to as “Little Italy” as a result of its close proximity to northern Italy and the subsequent influence on food, culture, and even the people. Although there is a definite Italian presence here one cannot help but admire the Swiss Alps looming in the backdrop, the welcoming Swiss people and the centuries of Swiss traditions.

Our kayak adventures on Lake Lugano will focus on two main regions of the lake, a lake that is unusually shaped with many arms. Each section we paddle by kayak takes us to a village that offers unique experiences and sights to see. Old buildings, architectural feats, narrow alleyways, historic sites, and more await our discovery. Easy to moderate hiking trails lead us to other hidden treasures and scenic overlooks, and our stays at various accommodations provide us with the whole Swiss experience. Here is the general outline for our trip which may be modified based on the weather conditions, the group, and/or other factors beyond our control.

- May 23 Arrive in Milan and be transferred by van to Lugano where we will check into the hotel, have some time to walk around the old town and then enjoy our first taste of Switzerland.
- May 24 Kayak on Lake Lugano exploring Grandia, the small fishing village that lies at the foot of Mount Bre. Its angular lanes, steep staircases, and courtyards provide a special ambience to the place. Many of the buildings dating back as far as 1645 have been preserved.
- May 25 Kayaking to the village of Morcotte, a village full of small alleys, arcades of old patrician homes, valuable architectural monuments and natural beauty. A particular highlight is a trip up to the church of Santa Maria del Sasso, an important Renaissance building with a late Romanesque bell tower offering outstanding views.
- May 26 Stretch the legs with a walk along Sentiero di Grandia or Sassiato de Caslona and enjoy an evening exploring Lugano’s shopping streets and strolling along its beautiful waterfront park.
- May 27 Transfer to Tirano and climb aboard the Unesco World Heritage Red Train to St. Moritz located in the Engadine valley, a beautifully deep cut valley that runs northwest to south and supports many little villages tucked in its depths. Breath-taking views waiting to be captured on your camera are present around every bend of the tracks.
- May 28 Kayak Lake Sils surrounded by snow-covered peaks of the Alps and visit the fairytale village of Guarda, a small picturesque village perched on top of a sunny terrace, surrounded by forests. Stunning views of lower Engadine valley, pretty houses, flowers, cobbled-stone streets, and a peaceful atmosphere make Guarda a true fairytale village.
- May 29 Drive back to Ticino and hike in Valle Verzasca, popular for its beauty, unspoiled nature, and its many opportunities for exploration. Arguably, nowhere else in the world is there a more spectacular valley entrance than that of this valley: it consists of the 220 meter high dam wall made famous by the jump in the James Bond film *GoldenEye*. The magical jade green waters of the Verzasca river flow peacefully over smooth polished rocks, passing under the picturesque double arches of the Ponte dei Salti in Lavertezzo. Our accommodations for the evening are the renovated rooms in a mountainside

village built completely of stone, with less than 13 full-time residents still living here.

May 30

After breakfast, transfer to Milan for flight home