



Milan & Lombardia with Mary Ann Esposito

05-16 October 2024

About this Tour

Stretching from the Alps in the north to the fertile Po valley in the south, the region of **Lombardia** offers a wonderful culinary diversity. Historically separated from each other, the cuisine of each city and province is unique, with its own recipes and traditions. And while the sights, high-end fashion and business are vital to Lombardia's identity, its food is some of the richest and most decadent in all of Italy. Aged cheeses, expensive spices and prime cuts of meat take precedence – which is very good news for those who like to eat!

What better way to discover the delicious cooking of Milan and Lombardia than with **Mary Ann Esposito**, host of the longest running cooking show on public television, **Ciao Italia**, now entering its thirty-fifth season. Mary Ann will travel with the group throughout the tour and conduct **two hands-on cooking lessons** in which she'll help you to prepare her favorite regional recipes. Her husband, certified wine educator **Guy Esposito**, will also provide an ongoing course on the **wines** of Lombardia throughout the tour.



We'll spend five nights in Lombardia in the historic city of **Bergamo**, our base for exploring this beautiful region, including daytrips to Lake Garda for a weekly food market, to little known Lake Iseo with a winery in the nearby Franciacorta wine region, and the lovely city of Mantova with its famous Palazzo del Te. Then it's on to the city of **Milan**, the cosmopolitan fashion and business center of Italy, where our five-night stay will include visits to Cremona, the extraordinary violin capital of the world, nearby Vigevano- an architectural gem and Italy's shoemaking capital, beautiful Lodi with its breathtaking main piazza, plus local producers of gorgonzola cheese and the special rice used for making risotto. So don't miss this extraordinary opportunity to travel, cook with and get to know Mary Ann as we explore the wonders of Milan and Lombardia!

For Mary Ann's personal take on this beautiful trip, please visit www.ciaoitalia.com



About Your Host

This is our **twenty-second** year of touring with Mary Ann Esposito, host of the longest running cooking show on television, *Ciao Italia*, now entering its landmark **thirty-fifth season**. Since its debut in 1989, Mary Ann has brought her knowledge and passion for Italian food and culture to 1.4 million weekly viewers nationwide on more than 400 PBS public television stations. Mary Ann is the author of fourteen best-selling cookbooks and has appeared nationally on NBC, the Food Network, FOX, the Discovery Channel, and numerous commercial and public television stations across the country. She has been featured in many national publications and metropolitan newspapers, and she has appeared beside chefs Todd English, Daisy Martinez, Sara Moulton, Jacques Pepin, Martin Yan, and countless others. By order of the Italian president, Mary Ann received the prestigious Star of Italy award (“**Stella d’Italia**”) from the Italian government in 2013 for her outstanding contribution to the promotion of the Italian culture abroad.

Four Star Accommodations

BERGAMO Hotel Excelsior San Marco

The most comfortable hotel in lower Bergamo and conveniently located for its many shops and restaurants, the four-star Excelsior San Marco is also just a short walk from the funicular leading to the medieval upper town. Rooms are decorated in traditional style and are surprisingly quiet, due to the hotel’s setting in a large garden. All rooms for the tour are superior level, and include flat-screen television and Wi-Fi internet access. Facilities include a restaurant on the top floor with panoramic views and terrace seating, and hotel guests can pay to utilize the nearby spa and wellness center, which includes a swimming pool and fitness area.



Hotel Excelsior San Marco



Sina Hotel de la Ville

MILAN Sina Hotel de la Ville

A perfect choice in the center of Milan, the Hotel de la Ville is located just a few minutes on foot from the Duomo and the Galleria. The building is a modern glass and stone affair which doesn’t quite prepare you for what awaits inside: a surprisingly pretty reception area with a cozy lounge and an intimate cherry-paneled bar, in short, an ambiance of genteel old-world charm and elegance. Rooms maintain the same qualities, all are individually decorated, and all have modern bathrooms, beautifully done in marble. The hotel is a member of the very reputable SINA hotel group.

Daily Schedule

- Sat 05 Oct: Departing flight from North America to Milan MXP (air transport not included).
- Sun 06 Oct:
(Day 1) Arrival at Milan Malpensa airport and hello to your **tour director!** **Private transfer** to the **Hotel Excelsior San Marco** in **Bergamo** (5 nights). Free afternoon to relax. Early evening meet **Mary Ann Esposito** and **winetasting lesson** with **Guy Esposito**. Welcome **dinner** at a local restaurant in Bergamo (included).
- Mon 07 Oct:
(Day 2) Morning guided walking tour of **Bergamo upper city** with our Bergamo guide. Free time for lunch. Afternoon visit to a local **seed producer** (Plant. Harvest. Cook!). **Dinner** at a local restaurant in the Bergamo area (included).
- Tue 08 Oct:
(Day 3) Morning visit to the weekly food market in the lakefront town of **Desenzano** on Lake Garda and tour of the town center. After the tour departure for Mantova. **Lunch** at a local restaurant in **Mantova** (included). Afternoon tour of the famous Palazzo Ducale and Palazzo del Te. Free evening for dinner on your own in Bergamo.
- Wed 09 Oct:
(Day 4) Daytrip to little known **Lake Iseo** and the Franciacorta wine region. Morning tour of the charming lake towns of Lovere and Riva di Solto. **Lunch** at a local restaurant in the Lake Iseo area (included). Afternoon tour and winetastings at a winery in the **Franciacorta** production zone. Free evening for dinner on your own in Bergamo.
- Thu 10 Oct:
(Day 5) Morning visit to the Agnelli **Cookware Museum** and **Cooking Lesson** with Mary Ann at the **Agnelli Cooking Lab** near **Bergamo** followed by **full-course lunch** (included). Free afternoon in Bergamo and free evening for dinner on your own.
- Fri 11 Oct:
(Day 6) Check out and departure for Milan with visits en route. Morning tour of a local **gorgonzola** dairy farm and walking tour of **Gorgonzola** town center. Free time for lunch. After lunch guided tour of lovely **Monza** town center. Late afternoon arrival at **Hotel de la Ville** in **Milan** (5 nights). **Dinner** at a local restaurant (included).
- Sat 12 Oct:
(Day 7) Morning guided walking tour of **Milan** city center with our Milan guide. Free time for lunch in Milan. After lunch departure for a specialty rice producer (“riseria”) near Cavagliano west of the city. Guided tour of the **riseria**. End of the day return to Milan. **Dinner** at a local restaurant (included).
- Sun 13 Oct:
(Day 8) Daytrip to **Cremona** with guided walking tour of the city and its famous violin museum. **Lunch** at a local restaurant in the Cremona area (included). Afternoon departure for beautiful **Lodi** and walking tour of the town center. Free evening for dinner in Milan.
- Mon 14 Oct:
(Day 9) Morning **Risotto Cooking Lesson** with Mary Ann in Milan followed by **full-course lunch** (included). After lunch departure for the nearby town of **Vigevano** and walking tour of this architectural gem. Free evening for dinner on your own in Milan.
- Tue 15 Oct:
(Day 10) **Free Day in Milan.**
Farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Milan (included).
- Wed 16 Oct:
(Day 11) **Private transfer** from the hotel to Milan Malpensa MXP airport. Goodbye to your tour director and return flight to North America.



Milan & Lombardia with Mary Ann Esposito 2024 tour pricing includes:

Ten nights accommodations as listed, double occupancy rooms

All breakfasts (buffet)

All ground transportation in luxury motorcoach with commercially licensed driver

Arrival airport transfer from Milan Malpensa MXP airport to Bergamo hotel

Departure airport transfer from Milan hotel to Milan Malpensa MXP airport

Ciao Italia host **Mary Ann Esposito** to accompany the group for the entire tour

Our professionally licensed **tour director** at disposition for the entire tour

Our professionally licensed **local tour guides** for **eight** half-day walking tours as follows:

- Bergamo, Mantova, Lake Iseo, Monza, Milan, Cremona, Lodi & Vigevano

Two hands-on cooking lessons (one full-course & one risotto) with Mary Ann Esposito

Five full-course dinners (including beverages & wine) as follows:

- Two dinners at local restaurants in the Bergamo area
- Three dinners at local restaurants in Milan

Five full-course lunches (including beverages & wine) as follows:

- Three lunches at local restaurants in Mantova, Iseo-Franciacorta area and Cremona
- Two lunches following the cooking lessons in Bergamo & Milan

All **special visits** and **special events** as listed in the daily schedule

All museum and site entry fees during guided tours

All gratuities for local guides and drivers, all portorage, and all taxes

Tour pricing is **land only** and **does not** include:

- Air transportation
- Lunches or dinners except those listed as included
- Gratuity for your tour director
- Personal items such as laundry, beverages in hotel rooms, or telephone calls

Milan & Lombardia with Mary Ann Esposito

\$ 6,920 per person land

Reservation deposit of **\$500 per person** is required

Final payment is due 60 days prior to departure

Single supplement **\$980** (double room for single use)

Arrival and departure Milan **Malpensa MXP** airport

SOLD OUT!

