



ITINERARY 3 • ART NOUVEAU ALBERGO TERMINUS

A fine example of Art Nouveau style, the Hotel Terminus was built in the first decade of the 20th century on the Lungo Lario di Levante (renamed Lungo Lario Trieste during World War I) by the architect Italo Zanolini. The name Terminus, preserves the memory of its original function as the “thermal spa” of the nearby Grand Hotel Plinius, built in 1900 for the the celebration of the centenary of Alessandro Volta’s invention of the first electric battery. The site had previously been occupied by a group of buildings known as “Barsega,” which included a dye works that supported Como’s textile tradition. Upon the conclusion of the 1927 bicentenary of Volta’s birth, the Plinius closed down for a long period due to unsustainable costs, and in 1928, Terminus was born as the Hotel Meublé Terme. During the Nazi-Fascist occupation of Northern Italy (1943-45), the hotels on the lakefront were requisitioned by the Germans. Terminus was used to house high-ranking officers, their interpreters and secretaries until April 28, 1945, when the Allies were welcomed in Piazza Cavour by throngs of Italians. In recent times, the hotel has been renovated, maintaining the original style and details, such as the exterior railings, cast iron lamps, stained glass windows, stuccoes, and, in the ground floor lobby and hallways, the wall and ceiling decorations. Common to many Art Nouveau buildings is the turret, which houses a two-story suite with a vaulted ceiling and 360-degree view that spans from the Duomo to the lake.

COMO-BRUNATE
FUNICULARCAMPARI
FOUNTAIN

COMO-BRUNATE FUNICULAR

Starting from Hotel Terminus, you can take a stroll back in time through the Belle Époque and the Art Nouveau style neighborhood. Walking east, you first encounter the Como Lago train station, whose original canopy remains intact, and then the funicular station, reminiscent of a mountain chalet. From here, elegant carriages of Liberty design are pulled by a steel cable for a seven minute ascent of 700 meters to the village of Brunate, a prestigious holiday destination of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The funicular was built in 1894, and since 1912 a cannon is fired every day at noon.

THE ART NOUVEAU ROAD OF BRUNATE

The village of Brunate, known as the "Balcony of the Alps," is an open-air Art Nouveau museum: 62 villas were built there between 1890 and 1915. At 50 meters from the lower exit of the funicular, you will find Villa Giuliani the only one open to the public – characterized by balconies and floral decorations that create a wonderful dialogue with the surrounding nature. Next to it is the Campari Fountain, another precious legacy of the Belle Époque. Starting from the church of Brunate is the Via del Liberty, or "Art Nouveau Road," lined on both sides by spectacular villas, leading up to a scenic overlook that offers an unforgettable view of the lake.

CONCORDIA STEAMER

BERNASCONI
MANSION

CONCORDIA STEAMER

Would you like to experience the thrill of a cruise during the the Belle Époque period? Take a ride on the steamer Concordia, the oldest such vessel still active on Lake Como. Baptized in 1926, it is powered by a steam engine that drives a series of paddle wheels. At the stern are two cabins in perfect Art Nouveau style. The same style characterizes some of the village piers on the lake, the most famous of which is at Cernobbio, with an elegant circa 1906 iron and glass canopy. It isn't difficult to understand why the Concordia is often used as a movie set and for celebrity weddings like that of Emily Blunt and John Kasinski.

BERNASCONI MANSION IN CERNOBBIO

Completed in 1906 as the home of the textile magnate Davide Bernasconi and his family, since 2017 Villa Bernasconi has hosted the first "talking museum," dedicated to Art Nouveau, silk and the villa's original owners. The exteriors are rich in decorative elements designed by the architect Alfredo Campanini: among the floral motifs are the butterflies of silkworms, which refer to the activity of the munificent patron. The interiors are no less detailed, from the staircase to the stain glass windows with metal bindings. A turret soars above the main structure of the villa.