

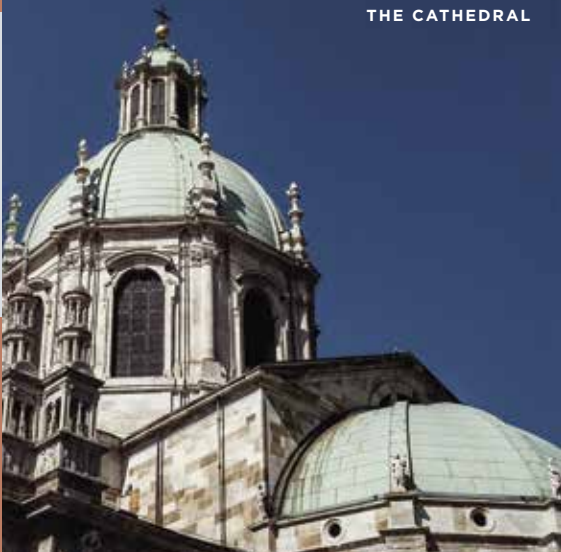


ITINERARY 1 • CLASSIC COMO

PALAZZO VENEZIA

Palazzo Venezia, which after careful renovation, became home to the Vista Palazzo | Lago di Como in 2018, is an important architectural testimony to the dual identity of Como - a renowned tourist destination on the one hand and on the other a city known for centuries as the source of some of the world's finest silk. The prestigious building was erected in 1870, following the demolition of a dye works, and immediately after the reclamation of what is now Piazza Cavour from the old port in 1869. Originally the headquarters of the Schmidt & Lorenzen silkworks, Palazzo Venezia is distinguished by a neo-Gothic façade, unique in Como, dominated by Venetian palace inspired single- and triple-lancet windows, with their characteristically slender columns that give the building an almost weightless luminosity. Another distinctive feature is the clock affixed to the corner of the building that dates back to 1904, making it the oldest of the 120 such clocks scattered throughout the city. The Vista Palazzo revives the original tradition of the eastern flank of the piazza, where Como's first deluxe hotels opened in the early 1800s. At the Tate Gallery in London (or on its website) you can admire a watercolor, *Como: Sunset*, painted by the great William Turner in 1843 through a window of the former Dell'Angelo Hotel, now home to a bank, where Franz Liszt's daughter, Cosima, was born on Christmas Eve of 1837.

THE CATHEDRAL



SANT'ABBONDIO



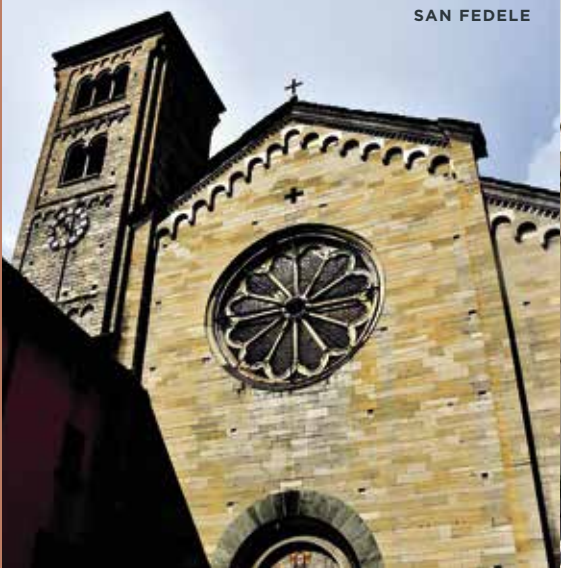
THE CATHEDRAL

Dedicated to the Blessed Virgin of the Assumption, it is the third largest religious structure in Lombardy, after the Duomo of Milan and the Certosa of Pavia. Interestingly, all three buildings originated in 1396 as inscribed on a stone at the center of the rear façade. Construction of the cathedral, built largely of marble from the Musso quarries in Lake Como, continued for three-and-a-half centuries until 1744, when the dome was completed. A notable curiosity is the Porta della Rana, or "door of the frog," on the side of the cathedral facing the lake, featuring a bronze frog believed to bring good luck. Today, it is almost invisible, worn away from centuries of superstitious caresses.

BASILICA OF SANT'ABBONDIO

One of the most important examples of Romanesque architecture in Italy, it was consecrated by Pope Urban II in 1095. Built on the remains of a 5th-century church, it bears the name of the patron saint of Como, who is buried there. The complex, located on the ancient Via Regina that connected Italy with Europe, also includes the cloister, a monastery until 1783 - now the seat of the University of Insubria - and the church of Saints Cosmas and Damian. A late 19th-century restoration brought the distinctive double bell tower back to life. The anonymous fresco cycle in the presbytery is among the most significant of the Lombard Trecento.

SAN FEDELE



TEATRO SOCIALE



BASILICA OF SAN FEDELE

Como's first cathedral, built in the 5th century along with the nearby church of San Pietro in Atrio - now an exhibition space - and the baptistry of San Giovanni in Atrio (the columns of which were reused in 1800 for the portico of the high school on Via Cantù named after Alessandro Volta), was originally dedicated to Saint Euphemia. Between the 10th and 12th centuries it was rebuilt in the Romanesque style and dedicated to San Fedele, protomartyr of the 4th century, whose remains were found in Sorico (where the temple of San Fedelino stands) and moved to the basilica in 984. The rear portal is decorated with allegorical zoomorphic figures.

TEATRO SOCIALE

Built between 1811 and 1813, it was the site of the 13th-century Castello della Torre Rotonda. It is part of the circuit of Traditional Lombard Theatres and, from 1943 to 1946, hosted La Scala, whose Milan home was bombed during the war. A temple of opera, the stage of the Teatro Sociale has hosted the likes of Paganini, Liszt, Mascagni, Pasta, Toscanini and Muti. The hall is in the shape of a cello case, with a capacity of 999 people. For the 2013 bicentenary, restoration was done on the outdoor arena at the rear with its historic velarium showcasing Alessandro Sanquirico's painting of the death of Pliny the Elder.