



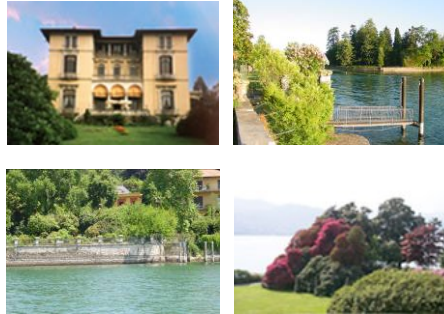
*Le Dipendenze di Villa Rusconi-Clerici  
Pallanza Verbania via Vittorio Veneto 16*



*Welcome to Pallanza!*



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*Welcome to Pallanza!*

**Dear guest,**

You rented one of the guest houses (DUET, TRIO, QUARTET) which have been revamped in the dependencies of Villa Rusconi-Clerici in Pallanza, a hamlet of the town Verbania.

Mr. Gianni Matuozzo and Mr. Roberto Tedeschi are our premises guardian and gardener; Gianni lives inside the property and is an excellent, very kind person. You will find him normally working in the garden or in his home, or you can give him a call at the home number +39/0323/557933.

During your stay, both will help you for any problem you may have: be aware that they understand only little English; should any major problem arise, don't hesitate to contact us directly:

**Violante Rusconi-Clerici** +39/335/6011486 or **Francesco Rusconi-Clerici**  
+39/335/6530970.

As you arrive (arrival time on Saturday after 4.00 p.m.), they will lead you to your suite and give you a set of keys and a door opener for the main car entrance.

Departure time is on Saturday morning before 10.00 a.m.; a young lady will be there to help you with the check-out and to see if everything is fine. Please make sure to give her the fee for the final cleaning as agreed after giving back to her keys and door opener.

You will find a safe box in each apartment in order to store your belonging, but please be aware that we are not liable in any case for currency or valuable items left in the premises.

**Have a wonderful stay!**

*Francesco & Violante*

P.S. We are at your disposal for any information you may need.

For any question, feedback or suggestion don't hesitate to contact us: [violrus@hotmail.com](mailto:violrus@hotmail.com)  
Once you're back at home, if you like to show the place of your holiday to your friends, you can visit the websites [www.villarusconiclerici.com](http://www.villarusconiclerici.com), with plenty of photos of house and garden.



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If you took some particular shots send them please to us and we will include them in the updates of the websites.

### ***Facilities***

Our housekeepers will provide you with the bicycles (we have 3) or the boat (1 wooden boat with 4 oars) at your request. Should you use the boat, they will provide you all safety equipment (lifesaving vests, oars, anchor, rope, etc.); all such equipment has to be kept strictly on board. Please remember that the lake may become extremely dangerous, and sudden storms can cause high waves; please be very cautious, especially if you bring children with you. If you have used the boat or the bikes, please tip the keepers at the end of your stay!

### ***The villa***

Villa Rusconi-Clerici is a national monument built at the end of 1800; furniture and stuccos are original. The building is seen as a typical example of eclectic architecture, with its astonishing spacious rooms. The owners often spend their weekends in Pallanza, and will be more than happy to meet you and guide you through the mansion and its history and to help you to organize mini tours in the surroundings.

### ***Verbania Child Friendly City***

In 2004 Verbania won the prize for "Città dei Bambini" and since then is one of the child friendly cities in Italy. They all have in common the determined aim to plan again the city with a new focus on children. The city promotes different projects to give back safe streets, public spaces and parks to children. Information on kids events and workshop (indoor & outdoor): Verbania Città dei Bambini tel. +39/0323/542273

### ***Garden***

The garden goes back to year 1830; you will see wonders! and is normally open to our guests. However, as you arrive, you will be notified if, during your stay, the garden or the pavilion is booked for weddings or functions, and the timetables. If this is the case, we kindly ask you to remain in the garden areas nearby the suites.

Our dog lives in the garden: Tota is a young very nice female of unspecified breed. Please handle her gently and she will become immediately your friend and will stroll around with you.

### ***Lake***

The beach and the landing bridge are normally available, except in case of functions mentioned above. The lake Maggiore is open for bathing and you can go swimming from the beach or by using the boat. If you like, you can fish and you will see many fishes; please be aware that fishing from the ground is normally tolerated even without license, while you will need it to fish from the boat.

### ***TV***

Each apartment has access to satellite TV with a wide range of free channels.

### ***Computer facilities***

We provide a Wi-Fi enabled broadband high speed ADSL access, free of charges.

### ***Electrical Equipment - Water - Heating***

Each suite has a centralized switchboard for the main electrical switch, lights switch and appliance switch. You should have more than enough electricity; however, it would be better not to use electrical stove and dishwasher at the same time. Should the main switch fail, please ask us for help; in case of emergency candles and matches are provided in each suite.

You can normally drink tap water, and will have plenty of warm water for your needs.

Each suite has heating equipment, controlled by thermostat.



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### ***Kitchen - Laundry***

Duet and Quartet suites have electrical kitchen and oven; a gas kitchen has been provided in the Trio suite. Please pay attention by cooking on the gas. The kitchen garden will offer you, in season, tomatoes, cabbages, eggplant, zucchini, basil, rosemary, sage...

Do not hesitate to cut a rose for your table!

Besides the suites, you can also find a common laundry room with washer and clothes drier, basin and iron.

### ***Common living room***

A large living room is set up as common area; here you can play ping pong, exercise with the cyclette, access Internet or use it as playing ground for your children or TV watching.

### ***Garbage Recycling***

Verbania town has a recycling program that requires keeping separate certain recyclable materials prior to their collection. Garbage has to be collected in 5 different bins:

1. mixed paper;
2. bottles, jars & glass;
3. plastic, cans & foil;
4. organic & food remains and
5. general non-recyclable garbage.

The recycling bins are located at the entrance yard and labeled for your convenience.

We hope that you will follow the above rules and feel sorry for any inconvenience.

### ***Information***

At walking distance from the house towards Pallanza downtown you can find the Tourist Office, with money exchange and teller machine. People in there will help you organizing tours with information and leaflets on the lake Maggiore and the Ossola surroundings. Don't miss to visit the botanic gardens of Villa Taranto and Isola Madre!

### ***Emergencies***

Inside all suites you will find emergency phone numbers; in any case, should anything unforeseen happen, please advise us immediately.

If any major problem should arise don't hesitate to call us directly.

### ***Flowers***

In the region are the best Italian producers of camellias, azaleas and rhododendrons. If you'd like to buy some, we would suggest the camellias; in Europe they can live almost everywhere and only need an acid soil by adding turf.

Here are two garden centres:

Fratelli Savioli in Verbania/Pallanza, Viale Azari 142 tel. +39/0323/501383

Compagnia del Lago in Verbania, Via ai Casoni 40 tel. +39/0323/586905)

### ***Shopping***

In East Piemonte, near Pallanza, specialized industrial districts have been established during last centuries. Several factory outlets are very interesting for your shopping: ALESSI, PIAZZA and LAGOSTINA, all close to the town of Omegna, are world wide known for their home design, decor and appliances.

Near Biella and in general in Valsesia you can find wool, cashmere and clothing factory outlets of LORO PIANA, CERUTTI, ZEGNA, TRABALDO TOGNA, etc...

You can also go to the Sesia shop district in Romagnano Sesia (Novara) 60 km from Pallanza or to the Vicolungo outlet in Vicolungo (Novara) 80 km from Pallanza.

The Tourist Office can give you all addresses and information.



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### **Food**

Large well furnished supermarkets ESSELUNGA, GS, UNI and BENNET (max 2 km) are open in Verbania Pallanza all day up to 9 p.m., Sunday included; LIDL is well known by German clients.

Each Saturday, until 4.00 p.m., you can shop in Verbania Intra in a 1000 years old open air TOWN MARKET, which covers several squares and streets offering a wide variety of goods. It's certainly worth a visit, especially if you taste the exquisite cheese (taste "tome di Crodo, Valsesia and Mottarone") and cold cuts of the surrounding mountains (taste "prosciutto della Val Vigezzo", "salame locale" and "mocetta")! Ask for the stall of CUSIO FORMAGGI for having the best choice.

If you like good wine you can visit the BOTTIGLIERIA in Piazza Castello in Intra. Our suggestions are:

- white piedmontese wines: Erbaluce, Gavi and Roero Arneis;
- red wines: Prunent, Nebbiolo, Lessona, Boca, Barbera del Monferrato and Dolcetto d'Alba.

### **Restaurants listed by distance**

- "Osteria dell'Angolo" in Verbania/Pallanza, Piazza Garibaldi 35, +39/0323/556362 200 m  
nice green terrace overlooking the Pallanza plaza; lake fish dishes.
- Hostaria Il Cortile, Via Albertelli 14, +39/0323/502816; easy atmosphere, try the "Crostone" and the "spaghetti alla carbonara".
- "Ristorante Milano" in Verbania/Pallanza, Corso Zanitello 2, +39/0323/556816 200 m  
international high level kitchen in a neo-Gothic edifice in the centre of Pallanza with a terrace overlooking the lake. Sample the lake fish: pesce persico (perch) and salmerino (char)
- "Ristorante Pizzeria Bolongaro" in Verbania/Pallanza, P.za 4 novembre, +39/0323/503254300 m  
good pizza (if you like garlic, we recommend Pizza Bolongaro!) and "pesce persico"
- "Osteria Il Boccon Di Vino" in Verbania/Suna, via Troubetzkoy, 86, +39/0323/504039 1,5 km  
small osteria serving assured cuisine: home-made pastas and hearty seconds belies the basic decor and the menu scribbled on the blackboard under vaulted ceilings
- "Il Monastero" in Verbania – Suna, Via Castelfidardo 5, +39/0323/502544 1,5 km  
intimacy and cozynes for a rustic restaurant in the old renovated horse stables
- "Osteria del Castello" in Verbania/Intra, Piazza Castello 9, +39/0323/516579 3 km  
good wines, meat and cheeses, very special atmosphere
- "Brasserie Isolino" in Verbania/Intra, Via S. Vittore, +39/0323/53897 3 km  
tasty menu
- "Osteria La Latteria" in Verbania/Intra, Piazza San Rocco 20-22, +39/0323/53447348 3 km  
very nice atmosphere
- "La Tavernetta" in Verbania/ Intra, Via San Vittore 22 , +39/0323/402635 3 km  
Italian dishes in an old chapel from an late '800 building with dehors for summer season
- "Chi ghinn" in Bée, Via Maggiore 21, +39/0323/56326 7 km  
Very special Lake Maggiore fish dishes on a garden terrace overlooking the lake from the hill!



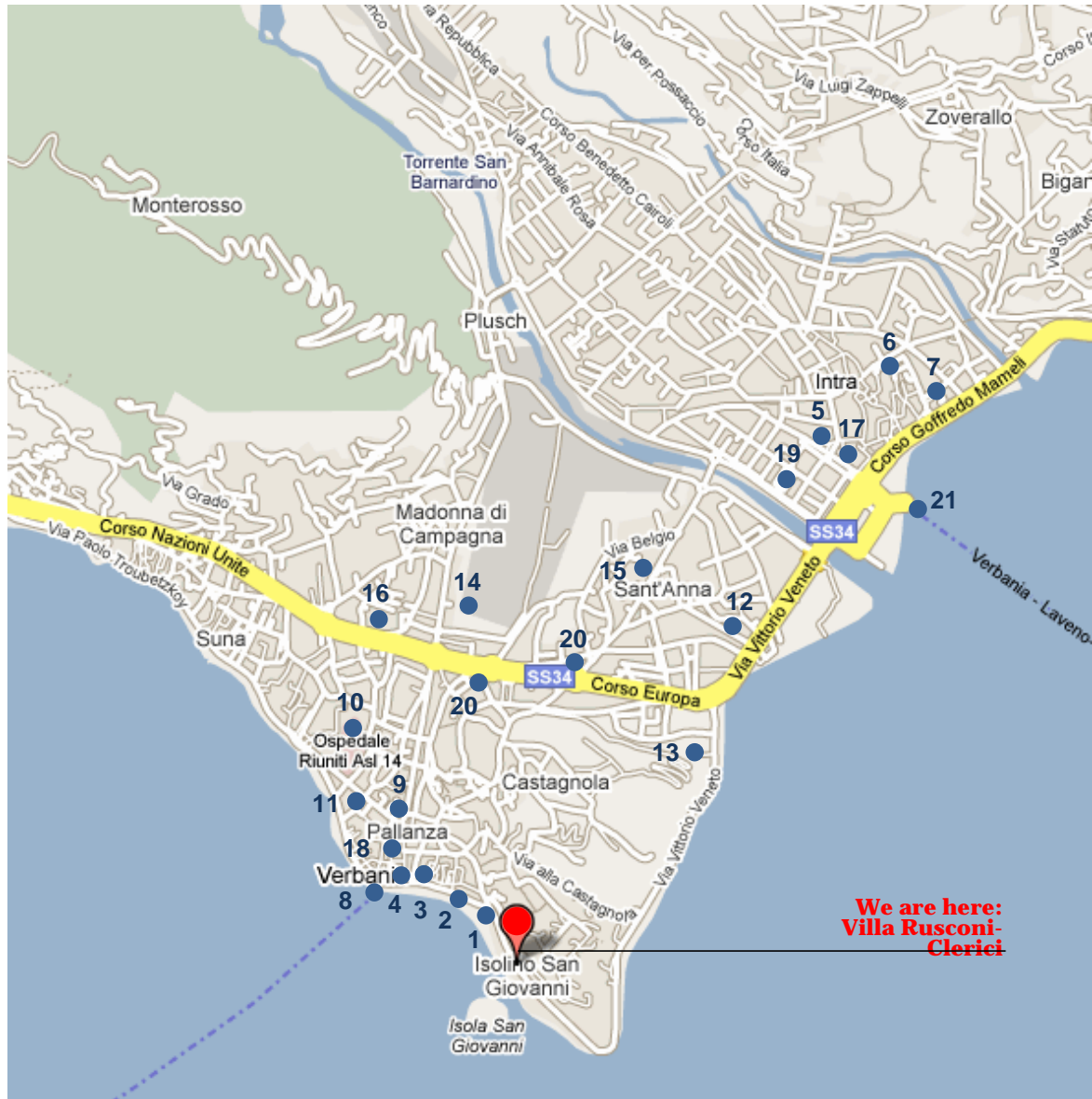
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- “Il Clandestino in Stresa, Via Rosmini 5, +39/0323/30399 fantastic disse prepared with the best product from all Italy. 10 km
- Ristorante “Piccolo Lago” in Verbania/Fondotoce Via Turati 87 Lago di Mergozzo, 10 km  
+39/0323/586792 an excellent restaurant for lakeside dining drawn by Chef Marco Sacco.  
**2 stars Michelin☆☆**
- “Il Birrificio” in Anzola, Via F.lli Borghini 34, +39/0323/83031, 20 km  
ham and cheese from the mountain and a self brewed very good beer
- Ristorante “Lo Scalo” in Cannobio, piazza Vittorio Emanuele 32, +39/0323/71480 . 20 km  
The best of Piemontese cooking with inventive touches and a generous use of vegetables and lake fish. Nice location on the Cannobio’s main plaza
- Ristorante “Divin Porcello” Fraz. Cresta 11, Masera, +39/0324/35035 25 km  
local specialities based on salumi, game, alpine cheese, homemade pasta, "Lausciera" - the main course of the restaurant, wine cellar with over 300 wines, home dessert. **Slow Food Rated** 🌀
- “La Vecchia Arona” in Arona, Via Marconi 17, +39/0322/242469 30 km  
Franco Carrera is an enthusiastic and innovative reinterpreter of “traditional” dishes.
- “La Zucca” Chef Marinella Beltrami Regione Bolco, 7 Via Colma, 18bis 28891 Arola 30 km  
+39/0323/821114
- Hotel Ristorante “Verbano” on Isola dei Pescatori Stresa, Via Ugo Ara 2, +39/0323/30408 by boat  
wide, flowered terrace is the ideal setting for al fresco, romantic dinners with good home-made pasta



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### City map



**We are here:  
Villa Rusconi-  
Clerici**

#### GENERAL

- 1. Tourist Office
- 8. Ship Yard Pallanza VB
- 9. Post Office
- 10. First Aid
- 11. Carabinieri Station
- 12. Police Station
- 13. Villa Taranto
- 18. Museo Del Paesaggio
- 20. Gas Station
- 21. Ship Yard Intra VB

#### RESTAURANTS

- 2. Ristorante Milano
- 3. Ristorante Il Torchio
- 4. Pizzeria Bolongaro
- 5. Osteria Castello
- 6. Brasserie Isolino
- 7. Ristorante Latteria

#### SHOPPING

- 14. Esselunga
- 15. Bennet
- 16. Lidl
- 17. Wine Shop
- 19. Intra Market



### ***Recommended itineraries***

- **Visit to the BOTANICAL GARDENS OF VILLA TARANTO in PALLANZA**  
*By foot or by bicycle, distance 2 Km.*  
Pallanza main sight is the landscaped garden of Villa Taranto. These are considered one of the most important botanical gardens in Italy. The Botanic Gardens of Villa Taranto cover an area of about 18 hectares on the promontory of Castagnola in Verbania Pallanza. The gardens were established 1931-1940 by Scotsman Neil McEacharn who bought an existing villa and its neighboring estates, cut down more than 2000 trees, and undertook substantial changes to the landscape, including the addition of major water features employing 8 km of pipes. They opened to the public in 1952, and after McEacharn's death in 1964 have been run by a non-profit organization. You can wander the English-landscaped gardens filled with exotic plants and rare species. The gardens are famous for huge rhododendrons but they are laid out with plants of interest for all seasons of the year
  
- **Visit to the MUSEO DEL PAESAGGIO (Landscape Museum) in Pallanza**  
*By foot, distance 300 m.*  
The 17th-century palazzo Viani-Dugnani in Pallanza is the site of the Museo del Paesaggio. Located on Via Ruga, in the heart of an old district with houses from the 18th century, the museum is still recognized as the historical art museum of Verbania and adjacent districts. This museum, founded 300 years ago is still very much alive. As well as an important collection of notable Lombardese and Piedmontese painters from 1850-1950, the museum houses one of the most interesting collections from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: the gypsoteque belonging to Paolo Troubetzkoy. Troubetzkoy is considered one of the most interesting "Italian" sculptors of the period, even though he was the son of a Russian prince, ambassador for the Tsar at the first court of the king of Italy in Florence in 1860. While here also visit the historic centre of PALLANZA, which is slowly being restored.
  
- **Visit to INTRA**  
*By ferry, by rowing boat, by bicycle or on foot, distance 2,5 Km.*  
With 2 rowers it will take 1 hour on each direction. From PALLANZA just follow the coast around the magnificent PUNTA DELLA CASTAGNOLA to INTRA. At INTRA moor the boat in the port and have lunch at the *Bottiglieria del Castello (+39/0323/516579)*, about 50 m. from the port. At the next door wine shop you can find a selection of excellent Piedmonts' wines. On Saturdays, near the port there is a lively open air market, where you can find everything from clothes to local food specialties such as the cheeses from the Piedmonts' valleys. The historic centre of INTRA is very interesting and relatively untouched.
  
- **Visit to the ISOLE BORROMEE**  
*By rowing boat, by ferry from Pallanza, or by motorboat from the villa's own boat dock (see below for contacts)*  
From the 1650s to today, the trio of tiny islets in the middle of Lake Maggiore has drawn admirers for the gracious palaces and ornate gardens built by the local ruling Borromeo family, who still own everything but the fishing village on Isola dei Pescatori.
  
- **ISOLA BELLA**  
ISOLA BELLA has been famous all over Europe since the 17<sup>th</sup> century - it is the symbol of Lake Maggiore. Here you will find an outstanding example of Italian garden. The vast Borromeo Palace and its grounds dominate the island. The palace is largely 17<sup>th</sup> century, but wasn't finished until 1959. The sumptuous rooms have stucco ceilings and are filled with inlaid dressers, Murano chandeliers and fine paintings.



- **ISOLA MADRE**

At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the ISOLA MADRE was transformed from a citrus orchard into an English style botanical garden thick with exotic flora and populated by colorful exotic birds. From then on plants from all over the world were imported and acclimatized and plants and seeds were recorded. All the azaleas, camellias and rhododendrons found on Lake Maggiore originated from here, and from Lake Maggiore they have been exported to the rest of Europe for two centuries.

- **Excursion to the mountains above PALLANZA**

*By car or mountain bike*

Take a trip to the mountains above PALLANZA to discover the old villages (CAPREZZO, INTRAGNA, AURANO, SCARENO etc.) and the woods and wild rivers (the SAN GIOVANNI river is good for rafting); and marvelous views over the lake. From the village of IL COLLE you may take the unmade road towards MONTE ZEDA and see the fortifications built before the 1<sup>st</sup> WW against a possible German invasion through Switzerland. Return to the lake by the TRAREGO road through the pretty village of CANNERO.

At COSSOGNO there is a delightful farmhouse B&B, *Villa Cresta*, which offers lunch and dinner at weekends (reservation is required tel. +39/0323/468185)

- **Walk on MONTEROSSO**

*By foot, or by mountain bike, circuit 5 Km.*

Starting from PALLANZA you may take a very interesting walk to the village of CAVANDONE on MONTEROSSO, following the path indicated on the map distributed by the tourist office in Pallanza.

- **Excursion to the mount MOTTARONE (1.491 m. asl)**

*By car or from the villa in motorboat (mobile +39/33/236132)*

From the Lido of STRESA CARCIANO, with the cableway, in 20 minutes you can reach the top of the Mottarone, a beautiful natural balcony from where the eye sweeps over 360°, overlooking the Alps, especially Mount Rosa, the Po Valley and seven lakes.

On the Mottarone you can practice winter sports and trekking or descend on properly marked paths by renting a mountain bike. At the intermediate stop of the cableway we suggest to visit the botanical garden ALPINIA, with over 500 herbs and flowers solely from the Alps.

- **Tour along the river TOCE and to LAKE MERGOZZO**

*By bicycle, circuit 30 Km*

Leaving from PALLANZA take the road as far as FONDOTOCE (attention this is a busy road) then you may take the unmade up road or side roads along the FIUME TOCE and then to LAKE MERGOZZO. On your way home you could stop to eat at MERGOZZO (restaurant "La Pagul" tel. +39/0323/800949).

If you wish to go further continue from MERGOZZO along the VAL D'OSSOLA; visit VOGOGNA, the antique capital of the valley, with a Visconti castle and important palaces. At NIBBIO there is a friendly trattoria *Asprimonti* (tel. +39/0323/880105); or at VOGOGNA you could eat at the restaurant *del Vecchio Borgo* (tel. +39/0324/87504)



- **Special Nature Reserve of FONDOTOCE**

*By car or bicycle*

This Nature Reserve comprises the last stretch of the river Toce and the reed beds of Golfo Borromeo, over 365 hectares. The reed beds are especially interesting because they are rare in this area and because they are home to many reptile species, such as the water snake and the pond turtle, as well as to amphibian species, mammals and many varieties of insects. The reed beds are also a place where many species that live in the lake reproduce, as well as being a place where many varieties of birds winter nest and stop off. A Centre for Migration Studies operates here especially to study migrating birds. The aquatic flora is enriched by a variety of water chestnut endemic to this area: the "Trapa natans verbanensis". For visitors who want to 'explore' the Nature Reserve, there is also a self-guided tour that lasts one hour and is open all year round. [www.parchilagomaggiore.it](http://www.parchilagomaggiore.it)

- **Excursions in VAL GRANDE**

*By foot or mountain bike.*

If you go by car or bicycle towards CICOGNA, inland from INTRA, you can turn towards the VAL GRANDE by foot from PONTE CASLETTO (dangerous!), or continue on foot as far as CICOGNA and ALPE POGALLO. VAL GRANDE is the largest wilderness area in Italy. If you wish to visit it you should ask for information at the PALLANZA Tourist Office as you will need a guide. If you descend from ROVEGRO to the SAN BERNARDINO river you will cross the so called Roman bridge (in fact Mediaeval) in a lovely gorge.

- **Tour of the VAL D'OSSOLA – VAL VIGEZZO – upper LAKE MAGGIORE.**

*By car or bicycle(!!!), circuit 90 Km*

Take the road from PALLANZA to FONDOTOCE which goes along the shore of LAKE MERGOZZO; visit MERGOZZO and see the church.

Continue up the VAL D'OSSOLA along the road on the north side of the valley (do not take the expressway!) Visit the centre of VOGOGNA, mediaeval capital of the valley.

Continue as far as TRONTANO and from there go on up the valley to SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE.

If you are travelling by bicycle, in DOMODOSSOLA you may take the delightful little train which twists and turns its way up to SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE to avoid a tiring hill climb. From there the roads are on the flat or downhill.

Visit the centre of SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE, a small town with a very interesting past. People used to emigrate from here to France in search of work and to make their fortunes. Those who succeeded returned and built houses in perfect Parisian style! They were expert in many crafts from chimney sweeps (one of whom saved a French king from plotters whom he had overheard while cleaning out the chimney) to goldsmiths (the Mellerio family were jewelers to Louis XIV!) to house painters specialized in stucco and fake marble (to this day the valley is known as the "valley of painters".)

Every year in September there is a meeting of chimney sweeps from all over Europe.

The inventor of the famous brand of Eau de Cologne 4711 came from VAL VIGEZZO.

You MUST visit the picturesque village of CRAVEGGIA, 2 Kms from SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE, to see the houses with their stone roofs and very tall chimneys.

From CRAVEGGIA descend towards the lake along the VAL CANNOBINA, a narrow rocky alpine valley that terminates in the gorge of SANT'ANNA (which you should try to see if you have time; there is also a good trattoria here.)

Along the valley there are side roads to incredible little villages, such as GURRO, which was founded in 1500 by Scottish deserters and where up until 100 years ago a Scottish dialect was still spoken. One arrives at CAVAGLIO over a hanging bridge.

When you have returned to the lake visit the fascinating lakeside town of CANNOBIO. Return to PALLANZA along the lake. You will see the Isles of CANNERO, with the



remains of a castle conquered around 1420 by the Borromeos who overthrew a family of pirates in the pay of one of the ancestors of the writer of these notes!

Before CANNERO you could stop to eat at the *Ristorante Cà Bianca* on the lake edge with a marvelous terrace overlooking the islands. (to book tel. ++39/0323/788038)

The road continues through CANNERO, OGGEBBIO and GHIFFA, charming villages with a delightful climate and vegetation. Above GHIFFA there is the interesting church of the Holy Trinity. It is interesting to note that the lakeside road to Switzerland did not exist until 1880 and previously all communication was by boat or over the mountains!

#### - **Excursions to the lateral valleys of VAL D'OSSOLA**

*By car*

From PALLANZA go along the shore of LAGO DI MERGOZZO and then continue along the road on the north side of VAL D'OSSOLA as far as DOMODOSSOLA. Continue all along VALLE FORMAZZA until the end of the tarmac road.

The whole of VALLE FORMAZZA is very beautiful, with isolated farmhouses, waterfalls and valleys. You should try the local cheeses.

You could also visit the lateral valleys off VAL D'OSSOLA. For example, if you go towards MACUGNAGA along the VALLE ANZASCA you will come close to MONTE ROSA and an area inhabited by the Walser, a community with Swiss/German origins, traditions and language, who moved to various parts of the Alps in 1500. The houses are built in wood in a Nordic style, very different from the traditional Latin stone and brick buildings.

You can also visit the valleys of ANTRONA, BOGNANCO, DIVEDRO, DEVERO etc.

In each valley at the end of the tarmac roads you will find footpaths, once used by woodcutters, hunters, shepherds and smugglers, now for magnificent walks.

#### - **Visit to LAKE ORTA**

*By car.*

From PALLANZA go to LAGO D'ORTA via GRAVELLONA and OMEGNA.

You should park at the outskirts of the town and visit the beautiful town of ORTA. If you have time you should also visit the ISOLA DI SAN GIULIO (ferry crossing), seat of the Bishops of Orta who were the rulers of this region up until 1800. Look at the beauty of the houses and palaces. It is also highly interesting to visit the SACRO MONTE with its 12 chapels of the Via Crucis decorated with life-size statues from about 1600.

On the way back (or there) if you have time, you could take a trip up the VAL STRONA as far as CAMPELLO MONTI. If you look carefully you can see several Roman bridges as this zone is peppered with very old mines. Some of these actually produced metal up until 1930. In the valley craftsmen produced pewter ware and you may still be able to find some pieces. Today there are also craftsmen working in wood.

The antique metal working tradition has given rise to an industrial area specialized in kitchenware between GRAVELLONA and OMEGNA.

ALESSI and LAGOSTINA are two internationally famous names and you may wish to visit their factory outlets at CASALE CORTE CERRO and OMEGNA.



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- **Visit to SAFARI PARK in VARALLO POMBIA**  
*By car tel. +3/032/956431*  
The Safari Park is an huge animal and leisure park. You can visit the Zoological Park by having an exciting safari drive with your own car through lions, rhinos and tigers. The Amusement Park offers different rides and shows for children and adults. There is also a Jurassic park with six full scale dinosaurs.
  
- **Horse riding & Equestrian Training:**  
*By car or bicycle*  
Associazione Ippica Le Felci tel. +39/0323/496450 mobile +39/393/9805029  
Via Piano Grande 14/c, Verbania-Fondotoce (VB) [www.lefelci.com](http://www.lefelci.com)
  
- **Golf:**  
Golf and Sporting Club Verbania (9 holes) [www.golfverbania.it](http://www.golfverbania.it)  
Strada Statale 34 Verbania-Fondotoce (VB) tel. +39/0323/80800  
  
Golf Club Alpino di Stresa (9 holes) [www.golfalpino.it](http://www.golfalpino.it)  
viale Golf Panorama 48, Vezzo (VB) tel. +39/0323/20642  
  
Golf Club Des Iles Borromées (18 holes) [www.golfdesilesborromees.it](http://www.golfdesilesborromees.it)  
Località Motta Rossa, Brovello Carpugnino (VB) tel. +39/0323/929285
  
- **Motor Boat Rental:**  
Cantiere del Verbano s.a.s. di Bottagisio  
S.S. Sempione, 10 - 28835 Feriolo di Baveno (VB) tel. +39/0323/28280  
[www.cantieredelverbano.com](http://www.cantieredelverbano.com)
  
- **Taxi / Motor Boat Service:**  
Sig. Pier Bertinato mobile +39/336236132  
Sig. Daniele mobile +39/3402455815  
Sig. Vidoli mobile +39/3488814751  
[www.lagomaggioreboat.it](http://www.lagomaggioreboat.it)
  
- **Sailing Boat rental:**  
EVEN MORE S.r.l. [www.charterlagomaggiore.com](http://www.charterlagomaggiore.com)  
Base Nautica Solcio di Lesa (NO)  
Lago Maggiore ITALY
  
- **Web addresses:**  
Weather Forecast [www.rtsi.ch/meteo](http://www.rtsi.ch/meteo)  
Railroad Timetable [www.trenitalia.it](http://www.trenitalia.it)  
Municipality Of Verbania [www.comune.verbania.it](http://www.comune.verbania.it)  
Lake Navigation [www.navlaghi.it/maggiore](http://www.navlaghi.it/maggiore)  
Lake Maggiore [www.lagomaggiore.net](http://www.lagomaggiore.net)  
Music In Stresa [www.settimanemusicali.net](http://www.settimanemusicali.net)  
Canton Ticino [www.maggiore.ch](http://www.maggiore.ch)  
Lake Maggiore Tourist District [www.lagomaggiore.it](http://www.lagomaggiore.it)  
Piemonte Feel (EN,DE & FR) [www.piemontefeel.org](http://www.piemontefeel.org)
  
- **Emergency phone numbers:**  
Police 113



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Police Station	0323/51151
Carabinieri	112
Carabinieri Station	0323/404343
Fire Brigade	115
Emergency Medical Assistance	118
Verbania's Hospital	0323/5411
Coast Guard	0323/519100

- **Helpful phone numbers:**

Lake Shipping	0322/233200
Motorboat Service	336/236132
Verbania Railway Station	0323/496037
Taxi	0323/503577 Or 0323/403200
Verbania Tourist Office	0323/542250

We hope that our suggestions are of interest to show you also places that are a little off the beaten track. We would suggest that you avoid the main roads at weekends as traffic is very heavy. If you find any mistake in these notes please tell us, so that we can amend them for next guests.

The Tourist Office in Pallanza is 100 m. from the villa towards the town square and can supply brochures, maps and useful information (tel. 39/0323/542250).

**Have a wonderful stay!**

*Francesco & Violante*

Francesco Rusconi-Clerici +39/335/6530970      Violante Rusconi-Clerici +39/335/6011486



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## ***History of the Villa Rusconi-Clerici***

The villa Rusconi-Clerici is situated in the hamlet of Pallanza Verbania, in surroundings of extraordinary beauty and boasts a romantic style garden which is almost two centuries old, as the exceptional specimens of magnolias, camphor trees, camellias and rhododendrons bear witness. The town of Verbania itself is set below the green promontory of Castagnola, on the shore of Lake Maggiore, and is very antique, having originally been a Roman settlement.

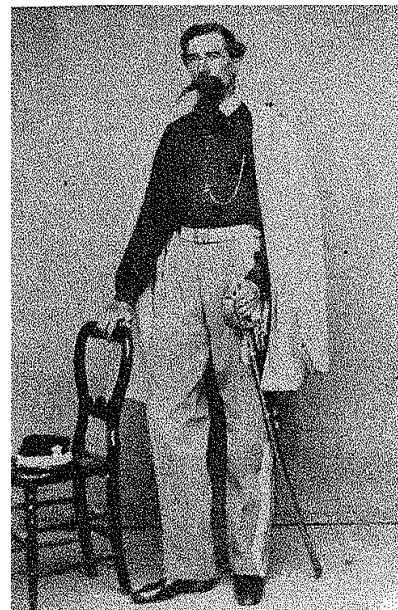
The Piedmontese shore of Lake Maggiore was “discovered” by the Italian upper classes only after Italy’s independence from Austrian domination (1859). During the War of Liberation, battles and daring raids were fought along the lake’s shores by patriots and Garibaldi’s soldiers. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the development of the railways and the increase in steam ferries sealed the destiny of the lake as a holiday destination.

Along the coast from Arona to Cannobio, summer villas of ever increasing size were built, often by aristocrats from northern Europe. The English, German and Russian visitors were attracted by the mild climate and by the romantic atmosphere made famous by the tradition of the Grand Tour, when the sons of the principal families of Europe took the road over the Simplon in search of the classical antiquities from Rome to Florence, from Venice to Naples, and on to the East.

The cultural and social importance of the lake was characterized by the presence of most of the famous Italian painters of this period. In addition the end of the century saw the lively progress of industry: the valleys surrounding the lake were rich sources of wood, of labor and the energy to use them. Intra, near Pallanza is the site of the world’s first hydroelectric power station and the first electric streetlights! The digging of the Simplon Tunnel and the opening of the world’s first motorway – from Milan to the lake – crowned the area’s development.

Pallanza has a number of very lovely villas, many of which can be found on the lakeshore. At the time, “modern” botanical gardens were being planted in Northern Italy, in the footsteps of the great English style gardens like Caserta and the botanical gardens of Lucca and Florence. Exotic plants brought to Europe from the East by travelers and gardeners: azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias, camphor trees and magnolias, enriched the rigid layout of the traditional Italian Garden with exceptional flowers.

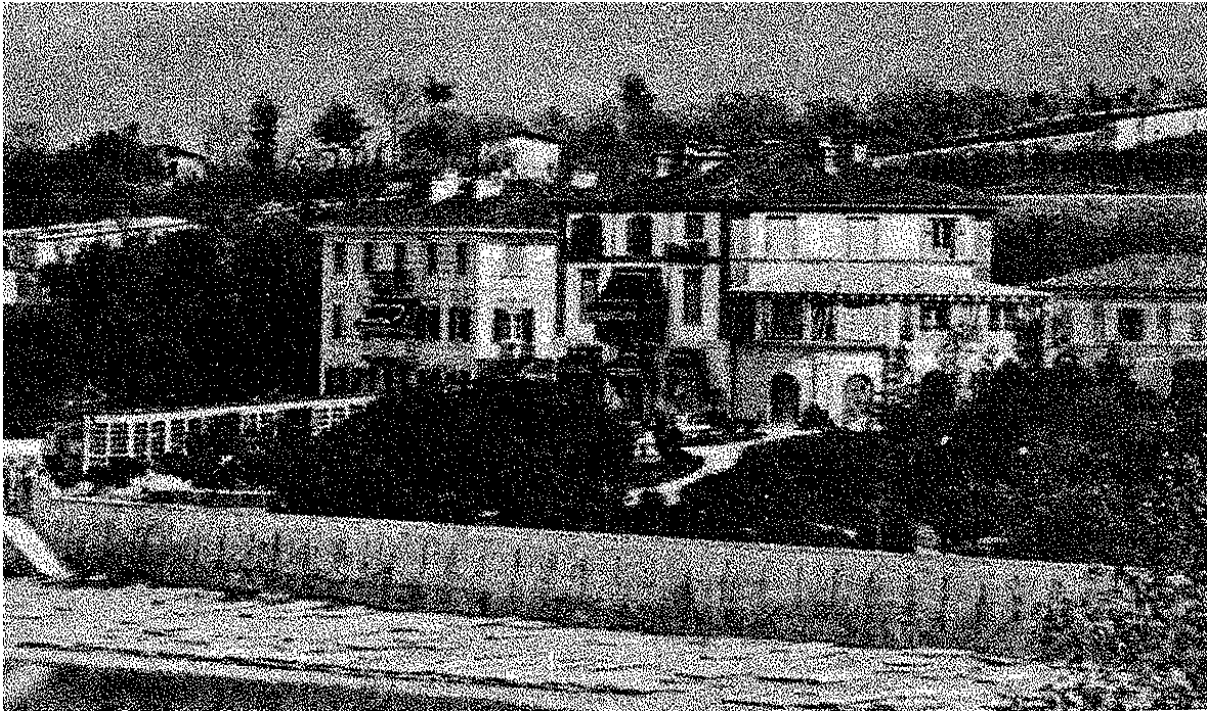
After the war of 1859 the Hungarian patriot and colonel in Garibaldi’s army, Stefano Türr took up residence in the Bozzotti villa, where the Rusconi-Clerici villa now stands.





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We like to think that it was he who planted the magnificent magnolia that still recently spread its branches towards the lake, and that the first camellias and rhododendrons in the garden were planted by this idealist who came to Italy to fight for a romantic ideal of liberty.



***The garden in a photograph of 1865***

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the original villa which Türr had lived in was demolished, and in its place a new villa in the Eclectic style, with rich neo-baroque interiors, was built.



***The new villa on 1905***

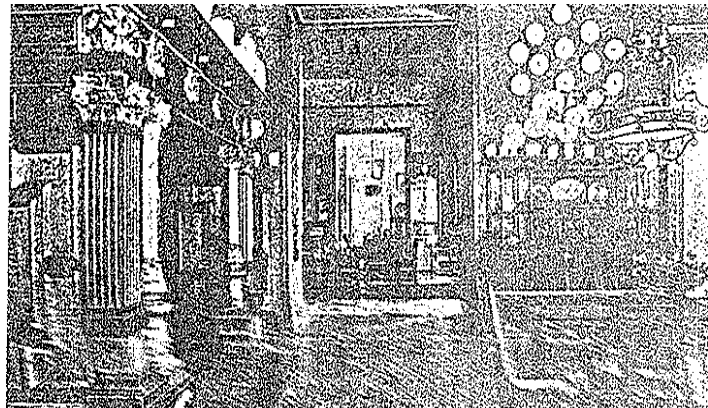


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This villa was on a much larger scale, perhaps because the new owner, Ferdinando Biffi and his son were both over 6'6" tall and requested that many details of the new house be sized for them. The project was entrusted to the Architect Giovanni Giachi from Milan who also designed the interior decoration. The lady of the house, Cristina Biffi Pirinoli was an amateur painter who had trained at the Academy, and she herself painted the lake scenes in some of the villa's rooms, thus softening the effect of the coffered ceilings and neo-gothic furniture.



The house has a particular grandeur which strikes the visitor even today, notably the grand staircase in serpentine marble with a balustrade in wood and wrought iron which anticipated the Art Nouveau style.



### ***The hall in period photographs***

The original garden has been enriched with a winter garden in *rocaille*, a lemon house and a spacious boat-house where the kingfishers can often be seen. Numerous very rare camellia species have been transferred from the nearby Rovelli nursery, where Queen Margaret of Savoy used to love to go to discuss gardening.



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In those years the house was the scene of great marriage celebrations, ceremonies and grand parties. Artists such as Troubetzkoy, Tominetti and Ranzoni, military men such as General Cadorna and Commandant Rizzo della Beffa di Buccari, the aristocratic families from the other villas on the lake: the Pallavicinos the Manca di Villahermosas, the Ammans, the Melzi d'Erils, the Francforts, the Branca di Romanicos, the Browne Casanovas, and the families of the increasingly wealthy industrialists all came to this villa on the lake.



In its long history the villa has seen births and deaths, tragedies and wars; during the Second World War the drawing room on the ground floor was used as a Gestapo headquarters, and Fascist commando units tried to requisition the villa, the island of San Giovanni and the Villa Eremitaggio, apparently to house a fleet of small war boats.

But peace returned, and now the house has embarked on its second century and the Biffi family have been succeeded by the Count Rusconi-Clericis. They have brought their dedication and commitment to bear in keeping intact the allure of this great house and its historic garden. The garden was born of the love of a foreigner for our beautiful lake, and many years later, reborn to greater splendour thanks to the strong personality of another foreigner from the north - my Prussian mother.

Today the villa continues to receive its guests with the colors of the azaleas, enchant them with the perfume of the olea fragrans and fascinate them with the romanticism of the lake. The water birds, the swans and the ducks all nest on the nearby island of Saint Giovanni, which was the post-war home of the great conductor Arturo Toscanini. The lake is once again clean, its waters clear.

Civilization may yet prevail in the future.



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