



# THE ROUGH GUIDE to The Italian Lakes

INCLUDES MILAN AND VERONA



**Canal boat cruises** Naviglio Lombardi (02 9227 3118, @navigliolombardi.it/navigare/in-barca) organises five cruise itineraries along the Navigli (€12/person) mainly from April–Oct.

**City Sightseeing Milano** @milano.city-sightseeing.it. A hop-on hop-off bus tour with two different routes around central Milan in an open-top bus. Daily every

30–45min 9.30am–7.20pm; €25/24hr, multi-language headphone commentaries included.

**Gran Tour di Milano** @zaniviaggi.it. The Gran Tour di Milano is a coach and walking tour (Tues–Sun 9.30am; 3hr 30min; €65) that includes entrance to the castle, La Scala museum and *The Last Supper*. Advance booking highly recommended.

## ACCOMMODATION

Much of Milan's accommodation is geared towards business-travellers and, as a result, prices are high, rooms can be characterless and many hotels are booked up all year round. You'd be wise to **reserve ahead**, especially during the spring (mid-Feb) and autumn (from late-Sept) fashion weeks and during the Salone del Mobile in April. Hotel prices can more than double during these periods. In August, on the other hand, visitors are so scarce that some hotels shut up shop for the month and those that don't might be prepared to negotiate over prices.

## HOTELS

The hotels below have been divided into three areas – the Station area, covering places within a twenty-minute walk of the Stazione Centrale, and districts north and south of Piazza Duomo. The area around Stazione Centrale, and across to Porta Venezia, is home to a good proportion of the city's cheaper hotels, and although many cater to the area's considerable red-light trade, you should be fine at any of the chosen places below. As you go towards the centre, prices rise, but deals can be had in some of the side streets off the city's main thoroughfares.

### STAZIONE CENTRALE AND AROUND

**BioCity Hotel** Via Edolo 18 02 6670 3595, @biocityhotel.it; @Sondrio or @Central F.S; map pp.58–59. An excellent budget choice with immaculate, tastefully furnished rooms 750m north of Stazione Centrale. The hotel prides itself in being eco-friendly – complimentary beauty products are biological and biodegradable, bathrooms feature recycled toilet paper while breakfast includes homemade cakes, organic jams and eggs. €89

### NORTH OF PIAZZA DUOMO

**Antica Locanda dei Mercanti** Via San Tomaso 6 02 805 4080, @locanda.it; @Cairoli; map p.63. Tucked away by the Sforzesco Castle in a smart eighteenth-century building is this elegant *locanda*. Bright, airy rooms have hardwood floors, light coloured furnishings and modern amenities – some also have lovely private terraces where guests can enjoy breakfast €225

**Antica Locanda Solferino** Via Castelfidardo 2 02 657 0129, @anticolocandasolferino.it; @Moscova; map pp.58–59. An intimate, atmospheric nineteenth-century *palazzo* in the side streets of Brera popular with actors, singers and other celebs for several generations. Ask for a room away from the street. €260

**Enterprise Hotel** Corso Sempione 91 02 318 181, @enterprisehotel.com; tram 1; map pp.58–59.

A comfortable business hotel north of Parco Sempione, offering functional a/c soundproof rooms with modern amenities and tea and coffee making facilities. The large buffet breakfast is excellent. €232

**Espressohotel** Via Francesco Baracca 19 02 4537 7800, @espressohotel.it; bus 73; map pp.58–59. Just 600m from Linate airport, this is one of the country's first "social" hotels – the idea is to encourage guests to socialise and share their experiences in the city through complimentary iPads. €100

**Hotel de la Ville** Via Ulrico Hoepli 02 879 131, @delavillemilano.com; @Duomo or @San Babila; map p.63. Just a few steps from La Scala, this large hotel offers a selection of classic and contemporary rooms, some in better shape than others, along with a compact gym, steam room, sauna and small swimming pool with sun deck. €260

**Hotel Milano Scala** Via dell'Orto 7 02 870 961, @hotelmilanoscala.it; @Cairoli or @Montenapoleone; map p.63. A stone's throw away from La Scala, this four-star hotel has attractive rooms decorated with large images of opera, dance and backstage scenes from the Historical Archives of La Scala. The suites are each named after a different opera, and most feature whirlpool tubs and scented candles. Breakfast is accompanied by harp music – a soothing way to start the day. €250

**Palazzo Parigi** Corso di Porta Nuova 1 02 625 625, @palazzoparigi.com; @Montenapoleone or @Turati; map p.63. This newly opened five-star hotel in the heart of Milan features sumptuous marble interiors, with rich wood furniture and luxurious fabrics. Well-appointed rooms with modern amenities, all have private open-air terraces with garden or city views, while convivial *Caffé Parigi*, with seating in a leafy garden, is the perfect spot for coffee or an afternoon tea. €560

**Straf** Via San Raffaele 3 02 805 081, @straf.it; @Duomo; map p.63. A stylish minimalist hotel with bare cement walls, oxidized copper and black slate fittings. The

## A MILANESE PICNIC

There are **street markets** throughout the city every day except Sunday. The perfect places to assemble a picnic, they sell all the cheese, salami and fruit you might need; a complete list is given daily in the *Corriere della Sera* under "Mercati". Alternatively, the *mercato comunale* in Piazza Wagner has similar fresh produce to the street markets, but under one, large and colourful roof. There is also an Esselunga supermarket at Viale Piave 38, near Porta Venezia, while the excellent food emporium Eataly on Piazza XXV Aprile houses restaurants and cafés, and sells local produce, from freshly baked bread to speciality cold-cuts.

bathrooms are fitted with designer sinks and stylish mirrors while the hotel bar, also open to non-guests, features recycled furniture and hosts renowned DJ sets and live music events. €341

### SOUTH OF PIAZZA DUOMO

**Ariston** Largo Carobbio 2 02 7200 0556, @aristonhotel.com; @Duomo, then tram 2, 3 or 14; map p.63. A moderate three-star hotel within walking distance of the Duomo and the Navigli. Rooms are a little cramped, but all are en suite and there's a decent breakfast included. Book a room on the eighth floor for good city views. €150

**Hotel Magna Pars Suites** Via Forcella 6 02 833 8371, @magnapars-suitesmilano.it; @Pta Genova; map pp.58–59. In the Navigli area just a few steps from bustling Via Tortona, stylish rooms in a former perfume factory that has been converted into a swish architectural complex. The chic suites open onto a leafy interior courtyard and facilities include a fitness centre, steam room and roof deck. €580

**Hotel Milano Navigli** Piazza Sant'Eustorgio 2 02 3655 375, @hotelmilanonavigli.com; @Pta Genova; map p.74. In an enviable location 300m from the bustling Navigli, this three-star business hotel offers spick-and-span rooms decorated in earthy colours. The top floor rooms have lovely views over the piazza and beyond. €180

**Petit Palais** Via Molino delle Armi 1 02 584 891, @petitpalais.it; @Missori; map pp.58–59. A small luxury hotel in a seventeenth-century mansion just a few hundred yards from the Navigli. Rooms are decorated with period furniture, Murano chandeliers and oriental rugs; all have modern amenities including tea and coffee making facilities, a/c and satellite TV. €300

### B&Bs AND APARTMENTS

As many of the mid-range hotels are rather dingy you may want to look into B&B alternatives. Check out the website @bed-and-breakfast.it for more options.

**B&B Porta Garibaldi** Viale Pasubio 8 02 2906 1419 or 02 335 804 4030, @portagaribaldi.it; @Pta Garibaldi; map pp.58–59. This colourful B&B close to Porta Garibaldi station features a comfortable mini-apartment with kitchenette. The friendly owner lives next

door and is always happy to help with suggestions. Complimentary bicycles, too. €100

**Five Stars** 02 338 1820 717, @fivestars.it Five tastefully furnished apartments sleeping from four to eight people. All the apartments feature modern amenities and the friendly landlady will make you feel at home – guests will find complimentary food upon arrival as well as tea, coffee and toiletries. €70

**LaFavia Four Rooms** Via Carlo Farini 4 02 0347 784 2212, @lafavia4rooms.com; @Pta Garibaldi; map pp.58–59. A charming B&B in a nineteenth-century building with warm and welcoming rooms decorated in different styles, featuring retro armchairs and lamps, hand-woven carpets and designer wallpaper. Breakfast is served on the leafy roof terrace garden. €110

**San Pietro all'Orto** 6 Via San Pietro all'Orto 6 02 781 147, @allegroitalia.it; @San Babila; map p.63. In an enviable location just a few steps from the Duomo, this secure hotel offers luxurious modern apartments fitted out in Armani Home furnishings; all have flatscreen TVs and fully equipped kitchenettes. €700

### HOSTELS AND CAMPSITES

**Città di Milano** Via G. Airaghi 61 02 4820 7017, @campingmilano.it; @M1 to De Angeli, then bus 72; map pp.58–59. Next to an aquapark and the nearest campsite to the centre, but still a metro trip and a bus ride away. Open all year. Camping for two €6.50, doubles €70, bungalows €90

**Gogol' Ostello** Via Chieti 1 02 3675 5522, @gogolostello.it; tram 1; map pp.58–59. This pleasant hostel and literary café to the north of Parco Sempione hosts cultural events including book presentations and theatre performances. Communal areas are warm and colourful with books scattered here and there, while the dorms are neat and tidy. Bike rental, too (€10/day). Dorms €28, doubles €40

**Ostello Bello** Via Medici 4 02 3658 2720, @ostellobello.com; @Missori; map p.63. An award-winning hostel with mismatched coloured furniture, terraces with hammocks and a communal area dotted with curbs including guitars and a pair of old wooden skis. Welcoming dorms have reading lamps and lockers, and there's a cosy kitchen for guests' use. Dorms €30, doubles €98