



OPENED 3<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 2022

**PASSALACQUA** - AN EXQUISITE HISTORIC ESTATE  
REIMAGINED AS A 24-SUITE RETREAT ON THE SHORES OF LAKE  
COMO

- Restoration of the main Villa, ancient stables 'Palazz' and the Casa Al Lago lakeside garden suites
- Celebrating Italy's finest craftsmanship and heritage in a magnificent garden setting



*Last summer, Passalacqua – one of Lake Como's most spectacular private homes opens its doors as a 24-suite retreat after three years of restoration. Standing above the village of Moltrasio, with 7 acres of terraced gardens, sweeping down to the lake's shore, this 18<sup>th</sup> Century Villa is steeped in history, having played host to some of the world's most brilliant minds in music, literature, art and politics from Napoleon Bonaparte to Bellini to Winston Churchill.*

*Passalacqua has become the passion project of one of Italy's leading hoteliers – the De Santis family, owners of the iconic Grand Hotel Tremezzo. The family's aim is to bring this mansion and its secular park back to life with love, respect and thoughtfulness recreating the unique timeless charm of 'vivere Italiano'. Every single aspect of the property's interiors including the meticulous restoration of the frescoes, handblown glass chandeliers to mirrored secret mini bars, has been personally overseen and curated, with not one suite being the same.*

**AN HISTORIC HOME**

*Built on land originally owned by Pope Innocent XI, the villa was constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century by Count Andrea Lucini-Passalacqua, who worked with architect Felice Soave and designer Giocondo Albertolli to bring his vision of making one of the largest villas on Lake Como come to life. In the years that followed, the villa became a gathering place for some of Italy's most prominent figures. Vincenzo Bellini made Villa Passalacqua his home in 1829, composing two of his most famous operas, Norma and Sonnambula. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century iteration of Passalacqua will feature 24 suites spread across three accommodation offerings – each*

with their own distinctive character and charm. The main historic residence, the **Villa**, features 12 sumptuous suites, which celebrate the grand Italian baroque style and original frescoes, including a double height

balustraded music room, where Bellini played the piano. The **Palazz** or 'ancient stables', comprises 8 suites with centuries-old, exposed beam work, glossy damask walls and a striking spiral staircase. A Spa will be located in what was the cow's manger, with two treatment cabins offering Barbara Sturm treatments, a relaxation area with columns and vaulted ceilings. A hidden humid area with sauna and steam bath is situated within the secret tunnels of the villa. Down by the lake, the intimate **Casa Al Lago** is ideal for exclusive use, with four suites, each appointed with a private garden – all sharing a beautiful dining area and fireplace.

### **MADE IN ITALY – A TRIBUTE TO THE COUNTRY'S SKILL**

The De Santis family has worked tirelessly with local artisans and small, generations-old Italian companies, drawing on their personal relationships to ensure that a sense of place, heritage and high quality craftsmanship resonates throughout the property.

For the lighting in the villa, the family has sought the skills of **Barovier & Toso**, a Venetian company established in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and renowned for its handblown Murano glass chandeliers – standout pieces include a five metre tall chandelier in the Sala della Musica and a special installation comprising six chandeliers for the entrance of the main staircase. Metal artisans, **Il Bronzetto** from Florence have handmade brass lamps and **Fortuny** has created traditional silk tiered lampshades within the Palazz. More than 20 different types of Italian marble have been sourced with **Antolini** from caves in Verona and Carrara to clad the bathrooms including the unique Breccia Pontificia also used in The Vatican, which looks more like art than stone. The impressive salons of the villa have been restored in the original Terrazzo Veneziano style using marble dating back to 1787. The bedroom floors have been laid with traditional Cotto Lombardo tiles or restored original wood. All mirrors have been individually made to measure by Venetian glass specialists – **Barbini**, a small family run company dating back to 1927, that has also custom-made mirrored chests to reveal secret in-suite minibars.

For the fabrics – the bed linen will be made by **Beltrami** in 'fibra di legno', natural fibre derived from birch trees, which are softer than silk. The curtains will be made from silk taffeta sourced in Como. For the rest of the soft furnishings, the family went to **Rubelli**, an historic company from Venice to match the distinctive colour palette of each interior space – from the classical frescoes of the Villa to the warm burgundy and green of the Palazz and the fresh garden suites of Casa Al Lago. The De Santis family has painstakingly trawled through local markets and auction houses to source antique furniture, precious print and artwork and vintage carpets, to suit the character of each space – from the grand Italian style of the Villa to the more laidback comfort of the Palazz or the garden inspired interiors of Casa al Lago. Stripy, cupola-shaped awnings crowning mosaiced **Bisazza** tables, faintly reminiscent of hot air balloons, designed by **Guido Toschi** make the outdoor restaurant look like a fairytale.

A traditional family run bottega (studio) **Bottega Conticelli** from Orvieto has crafted room details and objets d'arts from leather and wood, including vintage style steamer trunks, which conceal in-suite televisions. Bathroom amenities will be scented with the villa's own original fragrance, **Aqua Como 1787** and discreet hotel staff will be dressed in the chicest uniforms designed by **Giuliva Heritage**.

### **A GARDEN OF DELIGHTS**

The majestic, terraced gardens, which overlook Lake Como are simply extraordinary, featuring private hideaways and more than 15 enchanting water fountains. They are full of centuries old trees considered to be some of the most historic, beautiful and well-maintained in all of Italy. The Italian Gardens are located at the highest point of the estate and have the vantage point of spectacular lake views, while the ancient

*Winter Garden looks out onto a 20 metre swimming pool, surrounded by vibrant parasols and sun loungers, furnished in a vibrant patterned fabric custom made especially for Passalacqua by fashion designer JJ Martin. Next to the Rose Garden, the Magnolia Garden will offer the perfect space for practising yoga, under the trees. Guests are invited to collect freshly laid eggs from the chicken shed and forage for fruit – cherries, apricots, kiwis, dependent on the season in the fruit garden. A game of 'bocce' is available for all to play within the middle of the vegetable garden. A second Winter Garden will feature a state-of-the-art al fresco gym, which in turn looks out onto the estate's ancient olive grove, where the oil has been pressed for generations. A clay tennis court is located lakeside, with plans to set up an open-air cinema next door. Guests can spend time on the water, setting sail from Passalacqua's private dock, on board two vintage boats – 'Giumello' is a traditional wooden boat with a unique shape and the second 'Didi', will be furnished in Loro Piana fabrics and will offer plenty of space for sunbathing.*

### **'ATHOME' DINING**

*Passalacqua will eschew formal dining areas for a relaxed 'home away from home' approach. Guests will be treated to authentic and simple Italian home cooking, using fresh 'garden to table' ingredients. House Executive Chef Alessandro Rinaldi is truly a 'chef di casa'. Guests are encouraged to visit the kitchens and speak to the team to discuss their menu for the day, bearing freshly foraged vegetables to contribute to the meal or partake in an ad hoc pasta making session. All are invited to choose their own location to dine within the property, whether that might be on one of the terraces, in the Rose Garden or down by the lake – staff will be on hand to set up tables accordingly, the idea is to have an extremely personalised dining experience.*

**PRICES:** start from €1,500 per night based on two people sharing on a B&B basis and excluding taxes /  
For more details log onto [passalacqua.it](http://passalacqua.it)

**HOW:** By air - 45 minutes drive from Milan Malpensa International airport. By train - 36 minutes from Milan Centrale or Milano Porta Garibaldi station to Como san Giovanni Station Lake Como. By boat – 15 minute boat ride from Moltrasio to Como.

- **Ends** -