



EYEWITNESS TRAVEL

MILAN & THE LAKES



HISTORIC CENTRE

The area around the Duomo was the religious centre of Milan in the 4th century. Up to the 14th century it was the site of the basilicas of Santa Tecla and Santa Maria Maggiore and the Early Christian baptisteries, San Giovanni alle Fonti and Santo Stefano. These were all demolished to make room for the new cathedral. The political and administrative centre of the city was the nearby Palazzo della Ragione. At that time Milan was only slightly larger than the present-day historic centre; in fact, what is today Piazza della Scala was on the edge of town. Piazza del Duomo was the focus of small businesses until the

18th century, and a stage for the city's major religious and civic ceremonies. In the 19th century it became the nucleus from which avenues radiated. In the 1860s the decaying dwellings and the shops around the Duomo were demolished to make way for the construction of the then futuristic Galleria, the symbol of Milan after the unification of Italy. The damage caused by bombs in World War II created large empty areas later occupied by many modern buildings. The Historic Centre is always thronging with visitors, drawn by the world-famous churches, museums and galleries and also by the excellent shops.

Sights at a Glance

Streets, Squares and Historic Buildings

- 2 Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II
- 4 Palazzo Marino
- 6 Casa degli Omenoni
- 7 Casa Manzoni and Piazza Belgioioso
- 8 Piazza del Liberty and Corso Vittorio Emanuele II
- 10 Palazzo Reale
- 12 Piazza Mercanti
- 15 Palazzo Borromeo

Churches

- 1 Duomo see pp48–51
- 3 San Fedele

- 1 San Gottardo in Corte
- 14 San Sepolcro
- 16 San Giorgio al Palazzo
- 17 Santa Maria presso San Satiro

Galleries

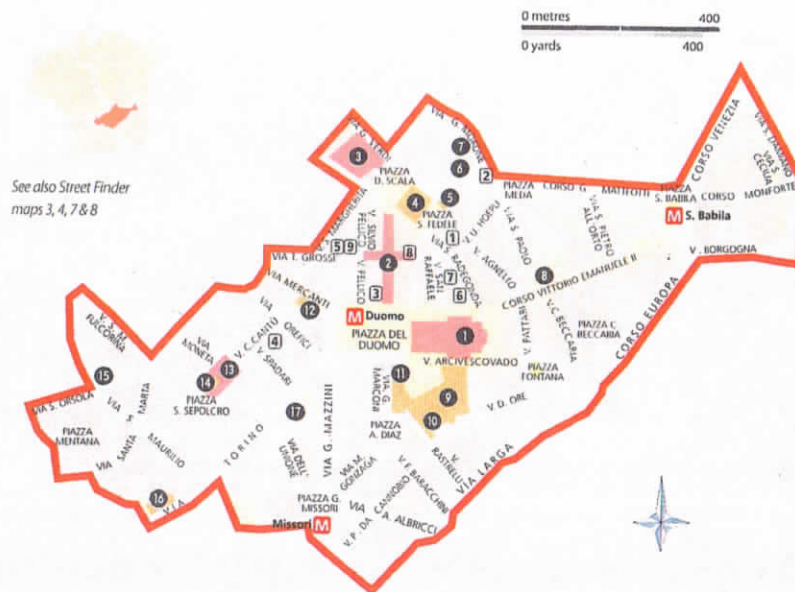
- 11 Museo del Novecento
- 13 Pinacoteca Ambrosiana see pp58–61

Theatres

- 3 Teatro alla Scala see pp54–5

Restaurants p170

- 1 Al Catinone
- 2 Boeucc
- 3 Camparino in Galleria
- 4 Cracco
- 5 La Cupola
- 6 La Rinascente Food Market
- 7 Le Noir
- 8 Savini
- 9 VUN



See also Street Finder maps 3, 4, 7 & 8

The expansive interior of Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II

For keys to symbols see Index B



NORTHEAST MILAN

Elegant Via Manzoni is the heart of a vast area stretching from the Brera quarter to Via Montenapoleone and Corso Venezia. Brera is known for its characteristic winding streets, some of which still have their 18th-century paving. The fashion district around Via Montenapoleone is the domain of the designer shops. Starting from Piazza San Babila and continuing through Corso Venezia,

with its many aristocratic palazzi, you will come to the Giardini Pubblici and the Villa Reale, home of the Modern Art Gallery. The area extending beyond the ramparts, which was undeveloped up to the early 19th century, includes the Cimitero Monumentale, the Stazione Centrale (main railway station) and the Pirelli building, Milan's tallest.

Sights at a Glance

Churches

- 1 San Marco
- 2 Santa Maria del Carmine
- 3 San Simpliciano
- 4 Sant'Angelo
- 5 Santa Maria Incoronata

Streets, Squares and Historic Buildings

- 1 Via Manzoni
- 2 Archi di Porta Nuova
- 3 Palazzo Cusani
- 4 Pirelli Building
- 5 Stazione Centrale
- 6 Bastioni di Porta Venezia
- 7 Corso Venezia see pp124-5

Museums and Galleries

- 1 Museo Poldi Pezzoli
- 2 Museo Bagatti Valsecchi
- 3 Palazzo Morando - Costume Moda Immagine

- 1 Pinacoteca di Brera see pp116-19

- 2 Planetarium
- 3 Museo di Storia Naturale
- 4 Villa Belgiojoso Galleria d'Arte Moderna

Gardens and Cemeteries

- 1 Cimitero Monumentale
- 2 Giardini Pubblici

Restaurants pp173-5

- 1 10 Corso Como
- 2 Akropolis
- 3 Alla Cucina delle Langhe
- 4 Bulgari
- 5 Café Verdi di Rosso Maria
- 6 Da Giannino
- 7 Da Ilia
- 8 Giglio Rosso
- 9 Hong Kong

- 10 Il Baretto al Baglioni
- 11 Il Coriandolo
- 12 Il Teatro
- 13 Joia
- 14 Lon Fon
- 15 Malavoglia
- 16 Nobu Armani
- 17 Obikà
- 18 Osteria del Treno
- 19 Osteria La Piola
- 20 Piccola Cucina
- 21 Princi
- 22 Rigolo
- 23 Serendib
- 24 Tomoyoshi Endo
- 25 Trattoria Al Matarè

0 metres 600
0 yards 600



See also Street Finder maps 3 & 4

◀ Napoleon as Mars the Peacemaker in the courtyard of Pinacoteca di Brera

For keys to symbols see back flap

SOUTHWEST MILAN

Religious complexes once covered this district, preventing further building until the early 19th century. The suppression of the monasteries in the late 18th century paved the way for the urbanization of the area between the medieval and Spanish walls, crossed by two large avenues, Corso Italia and Corso di Porta Ticinese. Beyond Porta Ticinese, which leads to the southern part of Milan, is Corso San Gottardo. The area is bordered by the inner ring road,

which follows the course of the medieval walls, and the outer ring road, which replaced the Spanish walls. Further on is the Naviglio canals quarter, with the Naviglio Grande and the Pavese, the last vestiges of what was once a major network for communications and commerce. Barges used the Naviglio Grande to transport the Candoglia marble used to build the Duomo and, in the 1950s, the material for postwar reconstruction.

Sights at a Glance

Streets, Squares and Historic Buildings

- 2 Piazza della Vetra and medieval Porta Ticinese
- 3 Largo Carrobbio and Via Torino
- 4 Via Circo

Churches

- 1 San Lorenzo alle Colonne see pp82-3
- 9 San Bernardino alle Monache
- 8 Sant'Ambrogio see pp86-9
- 6 San Vittore al Corpo
- 10 Sant'Eustorgio

- 11 Santa Maria dei Miracoli presso San Celso
- 12 San Paolo Converso
- 13 Sant'Alessandro

Museums and Galleries

- 7 Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia Leonardo da Vinci
- 9 Museo Diocesano

Restaurants pp171-2

- 1 Al Pont de Ferr
- 2 Al Porto
- 3 Alla Collina Pistoiese
- 4 Dal Bolognese
- 5 L'Oca Giuliana
- 6 L'Ulmet
- 7 Osteria del Binari
- 8 Osteria di Via Pre
- 9 Osteria Porta Cicca
- 10 Pizzeria Tradizionale con Cucina di Pesce
- 11 Premiata Pizzeria
- 12 Trattoria Aurora



◀ Magnificent golden ceiling in the basilica of Sant'Ambrogio

For keys to symbols see back flap



Exploring Sant'Ambrogio

The fact that the church of Sant'Ambrogio houses the remains of the city's patron saint, the church's founder, makes it a special place for the Milanese. Most of its present-day appearance is the result of rebuilding in the 10th and 12th centuries by the Benedictines from the nearby monastery, who made it a model of Lombard Romanesque religious architecture. All that remains of the 4th-century basilica are the triumphal arch and its columns, which became part of the apse. In 1937–40 and in the postwar period the Romanesque structure and delicate colours were restored. From the Pusterla (gate) there is a marvellous view of the church, with its two bell towers and atrium, flanked by the rectory and museum.

Pusterla di Sant'Ambrogio

The Pusterla di Sant'Ambrogio, one of the minor gates on the medieval walls, is a good starting point for a visit to the church. Rebuilt in 1939, it houses a museum with old weapons and instruments of torture.



A decorated capital in the atrium

Anspert's Atrium

Just before the atrium, to the left, is the isolated Roman Colonna del Diavolo (Devil's Column), with two holes halfway up which, according to tradition, were made by the Devil's horns while he was tempting Sant'Ambrogio. The present-day atrium, with its blind arches, dates from the 12th century and replaced one built by Archbishop Anspert in the 9th century.

This large courtyard acts as an entrance foyer for the church proper and sets off the façade. A row of piers (some Roman) with sculpted capitals continues into the basilica. The rhythmic pattern of the arches, half columns and small

suspended arches, as well as the proportions, match those in the church, creating a harmonious continuity between exterior and interior. The atrium houses finds and tombstones from this area, which was once an Early Christian cemetery.

The fourth side of the atrium, or narthex, has five bays and is part of the façade, which has an upper loggia with five arches. In the narthex is the main portal (8th–10th centuries), with small columns with figures of animals and the Mystic Lamb, while its wooden wings (1750) have reliefs of the *Life of David*.



The atrium, with finds and tombstones from the surrounding area

The Interior

The nave provides the best view of the interior, revealing the basilica in all its splendour. The nave has two side aisles divided by arcades supporting the women's galleries with piers with carved capitals. At the beginning of the nave is the Serpent's Column, said to have been erected by Moses in the desert. Beside it, to the left, excavations show the level of the original 4th-century floor.

The pulpit (or ambo) is made of pieces saved when the dome collapsed in 1196. This magnificent monument is decorated with an eagle and a seated man, symbols of the evangelists John and Matthew. Underneath is the sarcophagus of Stilicho (4th century) with reliefs representing (going clockwise) *Christ Giving the Law to St Peter*, four scenes from the Old Testament, *Christ among the Apostles* and the *Sacrifice of Isaac*. Under the octagonal cupola is the ciborium (10th century), the heart of the basilica, supported by columns taken from the 4th-century ciborium. Its painted stucco sides depict various episodes: on the front is *Christ Giving the Keys to St Peter* and the *Law to St Paul*. The ciborium acts as a baldachin for the Golden Altar, an embossed work that Archbishop Angilberto commissioned from Volvinus in the 9th century. On the back, a silver relief narrates the *Life of Sant'Ambrogio* and has the artist's signature. On the same side, two small doors allowed the faithful to worship the body of St Ambrose, once kept under the altar. The front is made of gold and jewels, and narrates the *Life of Christ*. Behind the ciborium is the wooden choir with the *Life of Sant'Ambrogio* (15th century) and, in the middle, the bishop's throne (4th and 9th centuries), also used by



The Serpent's Column, at the beginning of the nave

the kings of Italy crowned here. Part of the large mosaic in the apse dates from the 6th and 8th centuries. The scene on the left, a *Benedictory Christ*, is of the same period, while the one on the right is the result of 18th-century and postwar reconstruction.

Next to the presbytery is the stairway to the crypt, decorated with stucco (c.1740). Under the Golden Altar, an urn (1897) has the remains of Saints Ambrogio, Gervasio and Protasio. Back upstairs, at the end of the south aisle is the stunning San Vittore in



The Risen Christ by Bergognone (c.1491)

Ciel d'Oro Sacellum, the 4th-century funerary chapel of the martyr, which was later incorporated into the basilica. The 5th-century mosaics on the walls show various saints, including Saints Ambrogio, Gervasio and Protasio.

The South Aisle

Returning to the entrance in the south aisle, you will see the monks' chapels, built in different eras. St George's chapel – sixth from the entrance – houses an altarpiece of the *Madonna and Child with*

the *Infant St John the Baptist* by Bernardo Lanino, who frescoed the *Legend of St George* on the sides (1546). The Baroque chapel of the Holy Sacrament, the fifth, contains the frescoes *The Death of St Bernard* by

Filippo Abbiati (17th and 18th century respectively). In St Bartholomew's chapel (the second) are the *Legends of Saints Vittore and Satiro* (1737) by Tiepolo, detached from the San Vittore Sacellum; they demonstrate the cultural openness of the Cistercians,

who commissioned the work. The altarpiece in the second chapel, *The Virgin Mary with St Bartholomew and St John the Baptist*, is attributed to Gaudenzio Ferrari, as is the 1545 *Deposition* in the next chapel, which also has frescoes by Luini on the pillars.

The North Aisle

Go up this aisle from the baptistery (first chapel), which has a porphyry font by Franco Lombardi with the *Conversion of St Augustine* (1940), the saint baptized by

Sant'Ambrogio in Milan. It is dominated symbolically by Bergognone's *The Risen Christ* (c.1491).

In the third chapel is an interesting painting by Luini, a *Madonna with Saints Jerome and Rocco*.

Museo della Basilica

At the end of the north aisle you come out into the Portico della Canonica, the presbytery portico, which was left unfinished by Bramante (1492–4) and rebuilt after World War II. The columns of the central arch, sculpted to resemble tree trunks, are unusual. The entrance to the Basilica Museum, with six rooms featuring objects and works of art from the church, is here. Among the most interesting pieces are a 12th-century multicoloured tondo of St Ambrose; a cast of Stilicho's sarcophagus; St Ambrose's bed; fragments of the apse mosaics and four wooden panels from the 4th-century portal. The museum also has a *Triptych* by Bernardo Zenale (15th century) and *Christ among the Doctors* by Bergognone. In the garden opposite is St Sigismund's oratory, already famous by 1096, with 15th-century frescoes and Roman columns.

UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA DEL SACRO CUORE

Plaque of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

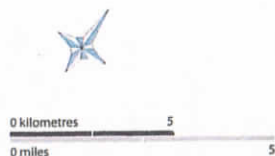
On the right-hand side of the church (entrance at No. 1 Largo Gemelli), in the former Benedictine monastery, is the university founded by padre Agostino Gemelli in 1921. Its two cloisters, with Ionic and Doric columns, were two of the four Bramante had designed in 1497. In the refectory is *The Marriage at Cana* by Callisto Piazza (1545).

Lake Como

This lake, which is also known as Lario, is the third largest in Italy and the deepest (410 m, 1,345 ft). It is shaped like a sprawling upside-down Y, with the arms of Como, Lecco and Colico. The Como shore is the most developed, with numerous restaurants and hotels, as well as a scenic road that follows the ancient Strada Regina, lined with elegant villas and aristocratic gardens. The Lecco area has more stark scenery and small coves. You may spot the typical "Lucia" boats, named after the heroine in Manzoni's *The Betrothed*, which was partly set here.



1 ★ Como
Construction of Como's Duomo began in 1396 and ended in 1740 with the huge dome. Next to it is the elegant 13th-century Broletto, the old town hall.



Key

— Ferry routes

2 Cernobbio
The 16th-century Villa d'Este in Cernobbio, now a famous hotel, is surrounded by beautiful landscaped gardens with many fountains.



10 ★ Bellagio
Its position at the junction of the arms of the lake and the spectacular view from the Spartivento point make this one of the most popular spots on Lake Como.

The bell tower on Santa Maria Maddalena at Ossuccio is one of the symbols of the lake.



7 Gravedona
Santa Maria del Tiglio in Gravedona is the most famous Lombard Romanesque construction in the Alto Lario region. Its main features are the layers of black and white stone and the unusual octagonal bell tower set into the façade.



The "crotti" are typical mountain caves in the upper Lario region, used as wine cellars since the 19th century.

The medieval Vezio castle, built on the site of a Roman tower, is a 20-minute walk from Varenna and offers a stunning panoramic view.

VISITORS' CHECKLIST

Practical Information

7 Local information bureaux.
W navlaghi.it

Transport

FS: Milan–Chiasso line (89 20 21); Ferrovie Nord Milano: (031-30 48 00 or 800 500 005). **ASF** Autolinee, Piazza Matteotti, Como (031-24 72 47). **Navigatione** Lago di Como (800-55 18 01 (freephone) or 031-57 92 11).

Lake Mezzola, separated from the Lario region by silt from the Adda river, is a nature reserve inhabited by grey herons.



10 Varenna
Some of the paths in this village, one of the best preserved on the lake, consist of steps and raised boardwalks perched over the water.

Sights at a Glance

- 1 Como
- 2 Cernobbio
- 3 Isola Comacina
- 4 Lenno
- 5 Tremezzo
- 6 Menaggio
- 7 Gravedona
- 8 Abbazia di Piona
- 9 Bellano
- 10 Varenna
- 11 Lecco
- 12 Bellagio
- 13 Torno

For keys to symbols see back flap