



# Villa Monastero

VARENNA

“

*Those who met  
and listened to him,  
Can still see him in the bright light  
of the classroom in  
Villa Monastero,  
speaking with his peculiar  
enthusiasm that,  
thanks to his knowledge,  
he was able to convey to others*

”

*Giovanni Polvani, reminiscing about Enrico Fermi's lessons*



## PROVINCE OF LECCO

*“Villa Monastero is a year-round attraction and home to several conventions attended by people from all over the world. The Province of Lecco, owner of the property, is now striving to increase its value with the aim of making it an even more popular destination.”*

*The President, **Daniele Nava***

*“Villa Monastero is - together with twenty other museums - one of the flagship buildings of the area. Each section of the property, from the botanic Garden to House Museum with its enchanting rooms and precious collections, is a source of pride and joy”.*

**Marco Benedetti**, *Municipal Councillor for Culture, Cultural Heritage and Traditions.*



## VARENNA

Villa Monastero lies on the eastern shore of the Lake Como, in the picturesque village of Varenna. The village, dominated by a sheer mountain with Castello di Vezio on top, has ancient origins. Its name first appeared in documents dating back to 493, although initial evidence of its existence was only found in 769.

Varenna was once known as “Insula Nova” (New Island) due to the landing of the inhabitants of Isola Comacina in 1169. The streets, that are very regular and divided into sections, are believed to have Roman origins, as well as the square that was home to the court. San Giorgio church, instead, was probably built on the foundations of a Roman temple.



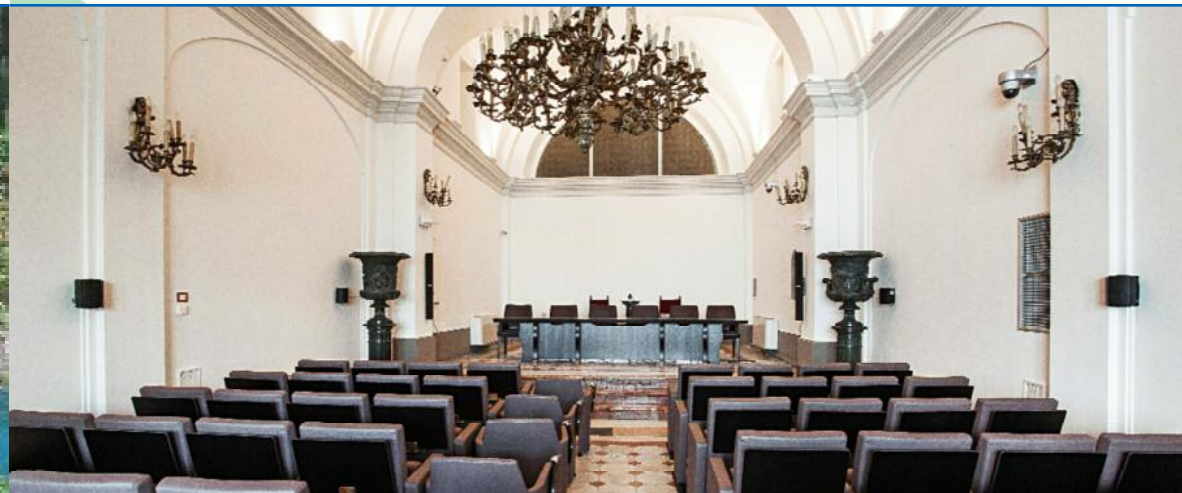
## VILLA MONASTERO

The events of Villa Monastero in Varenna took place over a long period of time. What is now a late 18th century dwelling is actually the result of several interventions made in over nine centuries. The Villa was initially a Cistercian nunnery dedicated to the Holy Virgin, that had been built at the end of the 12th century in connection with the nunnery in nearby Lenno. In the mid 16th century, the Mornico family bought the property that remained in their ownership for over three centuries and was known as "Villa Leliana". The Villa was then sold to other Italian and foreign purchasers until 1939, when it was donated and became a regional property and a museum.



## CONFERENCE CENTRE

What was formerly a nunnery and a noble dwelling, is today an internationally renowned conference centre where institutions, universities, companies, organisations and research centres hold seminars, conventions, training courses, workshops and other events in a wonderful, historically remarkable setting. The Villa features several rooms to suit every need; technological equipment is also available. The most outstanding room is undoubtedly the Fermi Hall with its enchanting view of the lake, where Noble Prize winner Enrico Fermi taught some physics lessons.



## HOUSE MUSEUM

Today Villa Monastero is also a House Museum where a vast number of objects belonging to its several owners are displayed. Style and taste characterise this unique jewel that has been shining on the Lake Como for four centuries. In the 18th century, Italian and foreign prominent personalities of the cultural and artistic scene frequented the Villa, which was then inhabited. The 14 rooms of the house are completely furnished. All of them, from the Pool Hall to the Music Hall, from Mornico Parlour to the Main Room, offer visitors the opportunity to go back to the past through the various styles, the precious materials and the luxurious decorations.

## BOTANIC GARDEN

Villa Monastero is surrounded by a Garden with several rare botanic species. The Garden, being set up in terraces, has been structured in different patterns over the years yet maintaining a main recurring theme. The mild climate, peculiar to the lake, allows numerous botanic species from all over the world to grow. More species are added every year. In 2013, over 1.000 new species were planted. At every time of the year visitors can enjoy a true explosion of colours, shapes and perfumes.





## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Young students can take part in learning activities regarding history, art and nature. Teachers and programmes vary according to the students' age and use a strongly interactive method to engage even the youngest learners. Workshops involve a large number of activities, including technical and artistic production.





Provincia di Lecco



Villa  
Monastero  
VARENNA

VILLA MONASTERO  
via Giovanni Polvani, 4  
23829 Varenna LC (Italia)  
Ph +39 0341.295450  
Fax +39 0341.295333  
[www.villamonastero.eu](http://www.villamonastero.eu)

PROVINCE OF LECCO  
Administrative Offices  
piazza Lega Lombarda, 4  
23900 Lecco (Italia)  
Ph +39 0341.295450  
Fax +39 0341.295333  
[www.provincia.lecco.it](http://www.provincia.lecco.it)

