



Luxury by the *lago*

A new collection of luxury properties make Lake Garda even more of a must-visit – regularly – destination

It's hard to pin down what entices the most about Lake Garda. There are the visitor attractions – such as Vittoriale degli Italiani, the former home of Italian poet Gabriele d'Annunzio, or the André Heller botanical gardens, where more than 3000 plants from around the world are grown. There are the Art Nouveau buildings and magnificent private villas dotted around the hillsides and the vineyard-hopping opportunities to the south.

There's the general sense of pulse-raising *gioia di vivere* in the biscotti-tin villages surrounding a wind-ruffled, crystal-clear body of water that, despite being the largest and busiest of Italy's lakes, always – in huge part thanks to its being flanked by the Dolomites – feels blissfully remote from the rest of humanity.

Now, thanks to an €80 million (£68.8 million) development of the Villa Eden Gardone resort which combines the creative nous of esteemed architects David Chipperfield, Richard Meier, Matteo Thun and Sphere, a new batch of individually designed villas have been built within an impeccably landscaped 840,000-square-foot resort in the elegant south-west Gardone region, surrounded by a hillside vegetation incorporating lemon, olive and palm trees leading down to the lake.

The main hotel building offers a spa complete with a sun deck, sauna, steam bath and indoor and outdoor swimming pool, as well as a gym, bar, library, terrace area and cigar room for guests' use. But we get the impression you may struggle to leave your apartment: as you may agree, having beheld the pictures we've selected here, of the best apartments still available both for purchase and rent.

The phrase 'lakeside' – especially for those hailing from the southeast of England – just took on an altogether more romantic glimmer. – NICK SCOTT

The pool (top) and living area (right) in the villa designed by architect Richard Meier; (below) colourful interiors in Villa Sphere Ovest



Villa Eden Gardone,
+39 (0) 365 520027,
villa-eden-gardone.com.

Villa rental prices are between €25,000 and €80,000 a week including butler service.

Villas are on sale for between €12 and €15 million and include 24-hour security, gardening service, cleaning and laundry service, concierge, childcare on request and private catering. A double room in the hotel is from €300 (based on two people sharing, including breakfast).