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Villa d'Este lights up Natale al Lago

The traditional holiday light switch-on was held at Villa d'Este on Thursday 28 November, marking the official start to the festive season.

Cernobbio, 29 November 2024 – Last night, Villa d'Este, the hospitality legend on Lake Como, marked the start of the holiday season with the much-awaited **light switch-on event**, turning the hotel and its historic grounds into a magical kingdom. The fairytale atmosphere is accentuated by **dreamy settings crafted by Vincenzo Dascanio**, providing guests with a unique visual experience.

The evening began in the lobby decorated in golden and champagne-coloured trees with a welcome by **Davide Bertilaccio**, CEO of Villa d'Este S.p.A, who reiterated the drive to make Lake Como into a year-round destination, even in the winter, emphasizing how *"Villa d'Este is striving to deseasonalize the lake's tourism offering by creating an ambience that continues to enchant and embrace travellers at cooler times of the year. We have stayed open through to early January for the last three years, organizing exclusive events and dinners that shine a spotlight on the lake's charms in the winter, making this season just as memorable and desirable as the summer."* **Carlotta Fontana**, Board Member of Villa d'Este S.p.A, also extended a warm welcome to guests, remembering how *"Villa d'Este is a place where tradition goes hand in hand with creativity. This Christmas, we wanted to celebrate the beauty of the holidays as well as crafting unforgettable and authentic moments for our guests."*

One such example is the partnership between Villa d'Este and **Biologique Recherche**, which has resulted in the exclusive Beauty Maison pop-up in Villa Malakoff for an unparalleled beauty experience that is also available for external clients.

Immediately after the lights were switched on, the **Anthony Morgan's Inspirational Choir of Harlem** gospel choir from Blue Note in Milan, which is partnering with Villa d'Este for the Friday Jazz nights this November and December, gave a rousing performance that delighted guests. The evening continued with a cocktail party in the Greenhouse to the



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sound of gospel music. Featuring warm wooden tones, elegant velvet and lush greenery this year, the lounges are inspired by **Lucie**, the iconic boats on Lake Como, set up outside the Greenhouse with wooden finishes, cushioned green seats and arches wreathed in fairy lights. A second greenhouse brings something new to this winter: an elegant lakeside lounge next to the Sala Colonne, which is home to the **Chocolate Room** serving the finest delicacies handcrafted by the pastry chefs of Villa d'Este.

The festive season continues with a busy calendar of events. The essence of Christmas at Villa d'Este can be experienced in a magical setting at unique culinary occasions on the most special days of the year.

19 December – Truffle Night

Thursday 19 December will be focused on Italian truffles at a "*Dine & Learn*" dinner for a select number of diners in the striking Sala Napoleone. Gathered around a long table, the diners will be able to interact with a truffle hunting expert and the chefs of Villa d'Este, discovering all of the secrets of this prized ingredient. Served with a selection of fine wines, the original menu celebrates Italian traditions with contemporary touches.

The Christmas celebrations ensue with **Christmas Eve Dinner**, **Christmas Day Lunch** and **New Year's Eve**, in line with tradition. Group Executive Chef Michele Zambanini and his team have designed menus centred on local flavours paired with fine wines to accentuate every course and make the experience even more exclusive.

These events are also open to non-hotel guests with a limited number of places. Further information and reservations can be made on the official website or by contacting Villa d'Este directly.

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PRESS INFORMATION – Villa d'Este

Villa d'Este, the iconic five-star luxury hotel in Cernobbio, on Lake Como, sets the standard in international luxury hospitality. A member of The Leading Hotels of the World, it is part of the Villa d'Este Hotels group, which also includes the five-star Villa La Massa, by the River Arno just outside Florence, Tuscany, the renowned Harry's Bar and Hotel Miralago in Cernobbio, as well as being the majority shareholder of Circolo Golf Villa d'Este. The group also manages the four-star hotels Palace Hotel and Barchetta Excelsior as well as Ceccato Garden Bar, all in Como city centre. Regarded as one of the finest expressions of mid-sixteenth-century architecture, converted into a luxury hotel in 1873 and set in ten hectares of parkland lined with age-old trees, statues and flowers, Villa d'Este has been a symbol of timeless elegance for more than 150 years. The property consists of 152 rooms and suites across the Cardinal Building and Queen's Pavilion, in addition to four private villas on the grounds. Villa Belinzaghi was acquired recently, which will undergo full restoration. Led by Executive Chef Michele Zambanini, Villa d'Este has three restaurants: the elegant Veranda with lake views, serving classic Italian-inspired cuisine with contemporary and international touches; the Grill for casual dining, where quintessential meat and fish dishes take centre stage; and the Platano, which reawakens memories of authentic Mediterranean and Japanese flavours blended with influences from around the world. Bar Canova is a preferred place on Lake Como for sipping world-class cocktails matched with delicious snacks in a refined ambience. In the summer, the Sundeck, situated next to the floating pool, is the perfect spot for a light lunch while savouring a cocktail from the recently revised list. The hotel's amenities include the Beauty Center and Sporting Club with a heated indoor pool, a gym, sauna, steam room, squash court, a putting green, outdoor fitness equipment and 8 tennis courts. The famous floating pool on the lake is heated and there is a children's pool nearby. Davide Bertilaccio is CEO of Villa d'Este Hotels.

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