



## VILLA LA CASSINELLA

**Villa La Cassinella** is technically not a private island. In fact, the 18th-century estate is not even on an island—it is perched on a secluded peninsula in Italy's Lake Como. But this gloriously restored landmark, which can only be accessed by boat, offers all the comforts, cachet, and exclusivity of the world's finest private-island resorts—if not all the privacy.

Cassinella is well known in the Como area, and boats frequently cruise by packed with photo-snapping passengers. “*Bellissimo!*” the guides exclaim at the sight of the golden-hued villa with its wrought-iron gate and stately columns of cypress trees. For guests, however, privacy is always close at hand, thanks to such features as sun shades that work like one-way interrogation windows and a swimming pool that is obscured from view.

English interior designer Maggie Austin—who spent hours in a rowboat looking up at the villa from the lake, considering where to hide the pool—completed a four-year restoration of Cassinella in 2008. She was originally hired to finish the property as a private residence, but the owner, whom Austin had worked with on three previous projects, had a last-minute change of heart. “Cassinella will be a rental,” he instructed, “the best villa rental there ever could be.”

Austin's meticulous makeover and the villa's staff of 10 (press the portable butler button from anywhere on the property to summon an English-trained attendant) have proved the owner prescient. —JENNIFER RYAN

**Villa La Cassinella**, +39.0344.55.411, [www.villalacassinella.com](http://www.villalacassinella.com); available through In Villas Veritas, 203.987.4280; prices from \$95,870 per week for as many as six people to \$178,000 for as many as 15 people



**ACCESS** Just over an hour's drive from Milan to the village of Lenno, on Lake Como's western shore, followed by a three-minute boat ride.

**OVERNIGHT** Impeccably decorated and maintained six-bedroom villa with large formal drawing and dining rooms on the ground floor, four bedrooms with en suite bathrooms on the second floor, and a sitting room and two additional bedrooms on the third floor. Two additional guest suites in the Terrace House.

**FEATURES** Gardens, cinema and media room, Technogym-equipped workout room, swimming pool, and lighted tennis court. Feast on homemade tortellini and gnocchi from Cassinella's in-house chef in the dining room or on the patio.

**DIVERSIONS** Lake excursions aboard Cassinella's 20-foot Boston whaler and 18-foot Marinello; architectural and villa tours; hiking, wakeboarding, and waterskiing; trips to local villages for shopping, dining, and gelato.

