

# Directory

## CONTENTS

Accommodation	871
Business Hours	875
Children	875
Climate Charts	876
Courses	877
Customs Regulations	878
Dangers & Annoyances	878
Discount Cards	879
Embassies & Consulates	879
Food & Drink	880
Gay & Lesbian Travellers	880
Holidays	880
Insurance	881
Internet Access	881
Legal Matters	881
Maps	882
Money	882
Post	883
Shopping	884
Solo Travellers	884
Telephone	884
Time	885
Tourist Information	885
Travellers with Disabilities	886
Visas	887
Volunteering	888
Women Travellers	888
Work	888

## ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation in Italy can range from the sublime to the ridiculous with prices to match. Hotels and *pensioni* (guesthouses) make up the bulk of the offerings, covering a rainbow of options from cheap, nasty and ill-lit dosshouses near stations to luxury hotels considered among the best on the planet. Youth hostels and camping grounds are scattered across the country. Other options include charming B&B-style places that continue to proliferate, villa and apartment rentals, and *agriturismi* (farm stays). Some of the latter are working farms, others converted farmhouses (often with pool). Mountain walkers will find *rifugi* (alpine huts) handy. Capturing the imagination still more are the options to stay in anything from castles to convents and monasteries.

An original option born in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region is the **albergo diffuso** ([www.albergodiffuso.com](http://www.albergodiffuso.com)). In several villages, various apartments and houses are rented to guests through a centralised hotel-style reception in the village.

In this book a range of prices is quoted, from low to high season; these are intended as a guide only. Hotels are listed according to three categories (budget, midrange and top end). Half-board equals breakfast and either lunch or dinner; full board includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Prices can fluctuate enormously depending on the season, with Easter, summer and the Christmas–New Year period being the typical peak tourist times. There are many variables. Expect to pay top prices in the mountains during the ski season (December to March). Summer is high season on the coast, but in the parched cities can equal low season. In August especially, many city hotels charge as little as half price. It is always worth considering booking ahead in high season (although in the urban centres you can usually find something if you trust to luck).

As an average guide, a budget double room can cost up to €80, a midrange one from €80 to €200 and top-end anything from there to thousands of euros for a suite in one of the country's premier establishments. Price depends greatly on where you're looking. A bottom-end budget choice in Venice or Milan will set you back the price of a decent midrange option in, say, rural Campania. Where possible and appropriate, we have presented prices with the maximum low- and high-season rates thus: s €40–60, d €80–130, meaning that a single might cost €40 at most in low season and a double €130 at most in high season.

Some hotels barely alter their prices throughout the year. This is especially true of the lower-end places, although in low season there is no harm in trying to bargain for a discount. You may find hoteliers especially receptive if you intend to stay for several days.

For more on costs, see p20.

To make a reservation, hotels usually require confirmation by fax or, more commonly,

## PRACTICALITIES

- Use the metric system for weights and measures.
- Plugs have two or three round pins. The electric current is 220V, 50Hz, but older buildings may still use 125V.
- If your Italian's up to it, try the following newspapers: *Corriere della Sera*, the country's leading daily; *Il Messaggero*, a popular Rome-based broadsheet; or *La Repubblica*, a centre-left daily with a flow of Mafia conspiracies and Vatican scoops. For the Church's view, try the *Osservatore Romano*.
- Tune into Vatican Radio ([www.radiovaticana.org](http://www.radiovaticana.org); 93.3 FM and 105 FM in the Rome area) for a run-down on what the pope is up to (in Italian, English and other languages); or state-owned Italian RAI-1, RAI-2 and RAI-3 ([www.rai.it](http://www.rai.it)), which broadcast all over the country and abroad. Commercial stations such as Rome's Radio Centro Suono ([www.radiocentrosuono.it](http://www.radiocentrosuono.it)) and Radio Città Futura ([www.radiocittafutura.it](http://www.radiocittafutura.it)), Naples' Radio Kiss Kiss ([www.kisskissnapoli.it](http://www.kisskissnapoli.it)) and Milan-based left-wing Radio Popolare ([www.radiopopolare.it](http://www.radiopopolare.it)) are all good for contemporary music.
- Switch on the box to watch the state-run RAI-1, RAI-2 and RAI-3 ([www.rai.it](http://www.rai.it)) and the main commercial stations (mostly run by Silvio Berlusconi's Mediaset company): Canale 5 ([www.canale5.mediaset.it](http://www.canale5.mediaset.it)), Italia 1 ([www.italia1.mediaset.it](http://www.italia1.mediaset.it)), Rete 4 ([www.rete4.mediaset.it](http://www.rete4.mediaset.it)) and La 7 ([www.la7.it](http://www.la7.it)).

a credit-card number. In the latter case, if you don't show up you will be docked a night's accommodation.

## Agriturismo & B&Bs

Holidays on working farms, or *agriturismi*, are popular with travellers and property owners looking for extra revenue. Accommodation can range from simple, rustic affairs to luxury locations where little actual farming is done and the swimming pool sparkles. *Agriturismo* business has long boomed in Tuscany and Umbria, but is also steadily gaining ground in other regions.

Local tourist offices can usually supply lists of operators. For detailed information on *agriturismo* facilities throughout Italy check out **Agriturst** ([www.agriturist.com](http://www.agriturist.com)) and **Agriturismo.com** ([www.agriturismo.com](http://www.agriturismo.com)). Other sites include **Network Agriturismo Italia 2005** ([www.agriturismo-italia2005.com](http://www.agriturismo-italia2005.com)), which in spite of its name is updated annually, **Agriturismo-Italia.net** ([www.agriturismo-italia.net](http://www.agriturismo-italia.net)), **Agriturismoitalia.com** ([www.agriturismoitalia.com](http://www.agriturismoitalia.com)) and **Agriturismo Vero** ([www.agriturismovero.com](http://www.agriturismovero.com)).

B&B options include everything from restored farmhouses, city *palazzi* and seaside bungalows to rooms in family houses. Tariffs per person cover a wide range, from around €25 to €75. For more information, contact **Bed & Breakfast Italia** (☎ 06 687 86 18; [www.bbitalia.it](http://www.bbitalia.it); Corso Vittorio Emanuele II 282, Rome, 00186).

## Camping

Most camping grounds in Italy are major complexes with swimming pools, restaurants and supermarkets. They are graded according to a star system. Charges often vary according to the season, rising to a peak in July and August. Such high-season prices range from €6 to €20 per adult, free to €12 for children under 12, and from €5 to €25 for a site. In the major cities, grounds are often a long way from the historic centres. Many camping grounds offer the alternative of bungalows or even simple, self-contained flats. In high season, some only offer deals for a week at a time.

Independent camping is not permitted in protected areas but, out of the main tourist season, independent campers who choose spots that aren't visible from the road and who don't light fires shouldn't have too much trouble. Get permission from the landowner if you want to camp on private property.

Lists of camping grounds are available from local tourist offices or can be looked up on various sites, including [www.campeggi.com](http://www.campeggi.com), [www.camping.it](http://www.camping.it) and [www.italcamping.it](http://www.italcamping.it). The Touring Club Italiano (TCI) publishes the annual *Campeggi in Italia* (Camping in Italy), listing all camping grounds, and the Istituto Geografico de Agostini publishes *Guida ai Campeggi in Europa* (Guide

to Camping in Europe), sold together with *Guida ai Campeggi in Italia*. Both are available in major bookshops.

Other sites worth looking up are [www.canvasholidays.com](http://www.canvasholidays.com), [www.eurocamp.co.uk](http://www.eurocamp.co.uk), [www.keycamp.co.uk](http://www.keycamp.co.uk) and [www.select-site.com](http://www.select-site.com) (on this site it's possible to make individual site bookings).

## Convents & Monasteries

What about a night or two in monastic peace? Some convents and monasteries let out cells or rooms as a modest revenue-making exercise and happily take in tourists, while others are single sex and only take in pilgrims or people who are on a spiritual retreat. Many do not take in guests at all. Convents and monasteries generally impose a fairly early curfew. Charges hover around €40/75/100 for a single/double/triple, although some charge more like €65/100 for singles/doubles.

As a starting point, take a look at the website of the **Chiesa di Santa Susana** ([www.santasusanna.org/comingToRome/convents.html](http://www.santasusanna.org/comingToRome/convents.html)), an American Catholic church in Rome. On this site, it has searched out convent and monastery accommodation options around the country. Don't ask the church to set things up for you – staff has simply put together the information. Getting a spot is generally up to you contacting the individual institution – however one central booking agency for convents and monasteries (see below) has popped up recently. Note that some places are just residential accommodation run by religious orders and not necessarily big on monastic atmosphere.

It was probably just a matter of time before someone set up a central booking centre for monasteries – check out [www.monasterystays.com](http://www.monasterystays.com).

Another site worth a look is [www.initaly.com/agri/convents.htm](http://www.initaly.com/agri/convents.htm), for options in Abruzzo, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardy, Puglia, Sardinia, Sicily, Tuscany, Umbria and the Veneto. You pay US\$6 to access the online newsletter with addresses. At [www.realrome.com/accommconvents.html](http://www.realrome.com/accommconvents.html) you will find a list of Roman convents that generally take in young single women. A useful if ageing publication is Eileen Barish's *The Guide to Lodging in Italy's Monasteries*. Another is *Guida ai Monasteri d'Italia*, by Gian Maria Grasselli and Pietro Tarallo. It details hundreds of monasteries, including many that provide lodging.

## Hostels

*Ostelli per la Gioventù* (youth hostels) are run by the **Associazione Italiana Alberghi per la Gioventù** (AIG; Map p100; ☎ 06 487 11 52; [www.ostellionline.org](http://www.ostellionline.org); Via Cavour 44, Rome), affiliated with **Hostelling International** (HI; [www.hihostels.com](http://www.hihostels.com)). A valid HI card is required in all associated youth hostels in Italy. You can get this in your home country or direct at many hostels.

Pick up a booklet on Italian hostels, with details of prices, locations and so on, from the national head office of AIG. Nightly rates vary from around €16 to €20, which usually includes a buffet breakfast. You can often get lunch or dinner for €10.

Accommodation is generally in segregated dormitories and it can be basic, although many hostels offer singles/doubles (for around €30/50) and family rooms.

Hostels will sometimes have a lock-out period between about 9am and 1.30pm. Check-in is usually not before 1pm and in many hostels there is a curfew from around 11pm. It is usually necessary to pay before 9am on the day of departure.

A growing contingent of independent hostels offers alternatives to HI hostels. Many are barely distinguishable from budget hotels. One of many hostel websites is [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com).

## Hotels & Pensioni

There is often little difference between a *pensione* and an *albergo* (hotel). However, a *pensione* will generally be of one- to three-star quality and traditionally it has been a family-run operation, while an *albergo* can be awarded up to five stars. *Locande* (inns) long fell into much the same category as *pensioni*, but the term has become a trendy one in some parts and reveals little about the quality of a place. *Affittacamere* are rooms for rent in private houses. They are generally simple affairs.

Quality can vary enormously and the official star system gives only limited clues. One-star hotels/*pensioni* tend to be basic and usually do not offer private bathrooms. Two-star places are similar but rooms will generally have a private bathroom. At three-star joints you can usually assume reasonable standards. Four- and five-star hotels offer facilities such as room service, laundry and dry-cleaning.

Prices are highest in major tourist destinations. They also tend to be higher in northern

Italy. A *camera singola* (single room) costs from €25. A *camera doppia* (twin beds) or *camera matrimoniale* (double room with a double bed) will cost from around €40.

Tourist offices usually have booklets with local accommodation listings. Many hotels are also signing up with (steadily proliferating) online accommodation-booking services. You could start your search here:

**Alberghi in Italia** ([www.alberghi-in-italia.it](http://www.alberghi-in-italia.it))

**All Hotels in Italy** ([www.hotelsitalyonline.com](http://www.hotelsitalyonline.com))

**Hotels web.it** ([www.hotelsweb.it](http://www.hotelsweb.it))

**In Italia** ([www.initalia.it](http://www.initalia.it))

**Travel to Italy** ([www.travel-to-italy.com](http://www.travel-to-italy.com))

## Mountain Huts

The network of *rifugi* in the Alps, Apennines and other mountains in Italy is usually only open from July to September. Accommodation is generally in dormitories but some of the larger refuges have doubles. The price per person (which usually includes breakfast) ranges from €17 to €26 depending on the quality of the refuge (it's more for a double room). A hearty postwalk single-dish dinner will set you back another €11.50.

*Rifugi* are marked on good walking maps. Some are close to chair lifts and cable-car stations, which means they are usually expensive and crowded. Others are at high altitude and involve hours of hard walking. It is important to book in advance. Additional information can be obtained from the local tourist offices.

The **Club Alpino Italiano** (CAI; [www.cai.it](http://www.cai.it), in Italian) owns and runs many of the mountain huts. Members of organisations such as the Australian Alpine Club and British Mountaineering Council can enjoy discounted rates for accommodation and meals by obtaining a reciprocal rights card (for a fee).

## Rental Accommodation

Finding rental accommodation in the major cities can be difficult and time-consuming – rental agencies (local and foreign) can assist, for a fee. Rental rates are higher for short-term leases. A small apartment or a studio anywhere near the centre of Rome will cost around €1000 per month and it is usually necessary to pay a deposit (generally one month in advance). Expect to spend similar amounts in cities such as Florence, Milan, Naples and Venice. Apartments and villas for rent are listed in local publications such as Rome's weekly *Porta*

*Portese* and the fortnightly *Wanted in Rome*. Another option is to answer an advertisement in a local publication to share an apartment. If you are staying for a few months and don't mind sharing, check out university noticeboards for student flats with vacant rooms.

If you're looking for an apartment or studio to rent for a short stay (such as a week or two) the easiest option is to check out the websites of agencies dealing in this kind of thing:

**Guest in Italy** ([www.guestinitaly.com](http://www.guestinitaly.com)) An online agency, with apartments (mostly for two to four people) ranging from about €120 to €450 a night.

**Holiday Lettings** ([www.holidaylettings.co.uk](http://www.holidaylettings.co.uk)) Has hundreds of apartments all over the country.

**Homelidays** ([www.homelidays.com](http://www.homelidays.com)) Here you will find apartments for rent all over the country. Smallish flats in central Florence for two or three people can start at around €450 a week and rise to €700.

**Interhome** ([www.interhome.co.uk](http://www.interhome.co.uk)) Here you book apartments for blocks of a week, starting at around UK£500-600 for two or three people in central Rome.

In major resort areas, such as popular coastal areas in summer and the ski towns in winter, the tourist offices have lists of apartments and villas for rent.

## Villa Rentals

Long the preserve of the Tuscan sun, the villa-rental scene in Italy has taken off in recent years, with agencies offering villa accommodation – often in splendid rural locations not far from enchanting medieval towns or Mediterranean beaches – up and down the country. More eccentric options include renting *trulli*, the conical traditional houses of southern Puglia, or *dammusi* (houses with thick, whitewashed walls and a shallow cupola) on the island of Pantelleria, south of Sicily. You can start your search with the following agencies but there are dozens of operators.

For villas in the time-honoured and most popular central regions, particularly Tuscany and Umbria, check out the following:

**Cuendet** ([www5.cuendet.com](http://www5.cuendet.com)) One of the old hands in this business; operates from the heart of Siena province in Tuscany.

**Ilios Travel** ([www.iliosttravel.com](http://www.iliosttravel.com)) UK-based company with villas, apartments and castles in Venice, Tuscany, Umbria, Lazio, Le Marche, Abruzzo and Sardinia.

**Invitation to Tuscany** ([www.invitationtotuscany.com](http://www.invitationtotuscany.com)) Wide range of properties across Tuscany, Umbria & Liguria.

**BOOK ACCOMMODATION ONLINE**

For more accommodation reviews and recommendations by Lonely Planet authors, check out the online booking service at [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com). You'll find the true, insider lowdown on the best places to stay. Reviews are thorough and independent. Best of all, you can book online.

**Simpson** ([www.simpson-travel.com](http://www.simpson-travel.com)) Concentrates on Tuscany, Umbria, the Amalfi Coast and Sicily. It also has properties in Rome, Florence and Venice.

**Summer's Leases** ([www.summerleases.com](http://www.summerleases.com)) Properties in Tuscany and Umbria.

Some agencies concentrate their energies on the south (especially Campania and Puglia) and the islands of Sicily and Sardinia:

**Costa Smeralda Holidays** ([www.costasmeralda-holidays.com](http://www.costasmeralda-holidays.com)) Concentrates on Sardinia's northeast.

**Long Travel** ([www.long-travel.co.uk](http://www.long-travel.co.uk)) From Lazio and Abruzzo south, including Sardinia and Sicily.

**Think Sicily** ([www.thinksicily.com](http://www.thinksicily.com)) Strictly Sicilian properties.

**Voyages Ilena** ([www.voyagesilena.co.uk](http://www.voyagesilena.co.uk)) For Sardinia and Sicily.

Operators offering villas and other short-term let properties across the country:

**Carefree Italy** ([www.carefreeitaly.com](http://www.carefreeitaly.com)) Apartments and villas.

**Cottages & Castles** ([www.cottagesandcastles.com.au](http://www.cottagesandcastles.com.au)) An Australian-based specialist in villa-style accommodation in Italy.

**Cottages to Castles** ([www.cottagestocastles.com](http://www.cottagestocastles.com)) UK-based operator with properties across the country and agents worldwide.

**Parker Villas** ([www.parkervillas.co.uk](http://www.parkervillas.co.uk)) Has properties all over Italy.

**Veronica Tomasso Cotgrove** ([www.vtcitaly.com](http://www.vtcitaly.com)) This London-based company also acts in the sale of property in Tuscany and Umbria.

**BUSINESS HOURS**

Generally shops open from 9am to 1pm and 3.30pm to 7.30pm (or 4pm to 8pm) Monday to Saturday. Many close on Saturday afternoon and some close on a Monday morning or afternoon, and sometimes again on a Wednesday or Thursday afternoon. In major towns, most department stores and supermarkets have continuous opening hours from 10am to 7.30pm Monday

to Saturday. Some even open from 9am to 1pm on Sunday.

Banks tend to open from 8.30am to 1.30pm and 3.30pm to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. They close at weekends but exchange offices usually remain open in the larger cities and in main tourist areas.

Central post offices open from 8am to 7pm from Monday to Friday and 8.30am to 7pm (in some cases only until noon) on Saturday. Smaller branches tend to open from 8am to 2pm Monday to Friday and 8.30am to noon on Saturday.

*Farmacie* (pharmacies) are generally open 9am to 12.30pm and 3.30pm to 7.30pm. Most shut on Saturday afternoon, Sunday and holidays but a handful remain open on a rotation basis (*farmacie di turno*) for emergency purposes. Closed pharmacies display a list of the nearest ones open. They are usually listed in newspapers and you can also check out [www.miniportale.it](http://www.miniportale.it) (click on *Farmacie di Turno* and then the region you want).

Many bars and cafes open from about 8am to 8pm. Others then go on into the night serving a nocturnal crowd while still others, dedicated more exclusively to nocturnal diversion, don't get started until the early evening (even if they officially open in the morning). Few bars anywhere remain open beyond 1am or 2am. Clubs (*discoteche*) might open around 10pm (or earlier if they have eateries on the premises) but things don't get seriously shaking until after midnight.

Restaurants open noon to 3pm and 7.30pm to around 11pm or midnight (sometimes even later in summer and in the south), although the kitchen often shuts an hour earlier than final closing time. Most restaurants and bars close at least one day a week.

The opening hours of museums, galleries and archaeological sites vary enormously, although at the more important sites there is a trend towards continuous opening from around 9.30am to 7pm. Many close on Monday. Some of the major national museums and galleries remain open until 10pm in summer. See p886 for the opening hours of tourist offices.

**CHILDREN  
Practicalities**

Italians love children but there are few special amenities for them. Always make a point of asking staff members at tourist offices if

they know of any special family activities or have suggestions on hotels that cater for kids. Discounts are available for children (usually aged under 12 but sometimes based on the child's height) on public transport and for admission to sites.

If you have kids, book accommodation in advance to avoid any inconvenience and, when travelling by train, reserve seats where possible to avoid finding yourselves standing. You can hire car seats for infants and children from most car-rental firms, but you should always book them in advance.

You can buy baby formula in powder or liquid form, as well as sterilising solutions such as Milton, at pharmacies. Disposable nappies (diapers) are available at supermarkets and pharmacies. Fresh cow's milk is sold in cartons in supermarkets and in bars with a 'Latteria' sign. UHT milk is popular and in many out-of-the-way areas the only kind available. For info on eating out with children, see p880.

## Sights & Activities

Successful travel with children can require a special effort. Don't try to overdo things and make sure activities include the kids – older children could help in the planning of these. Try to think of things that might capture their imagination, like the sites at Pompeii (p674), the Colosseum (p112) and the Roman Forum (p114) in Rome, and Greek temples in the south and on Sicily. Another good bet is the volcanoes in the south.

Water activities, from lolling on a beach to snorkelling or sailing, are always winners.

When choosing museums, throw in the odd curio that may be more likely to stir a young child's fascination than yet another worthy art gallery! Boys will probably like such things as Venice's Museo Storico Navale (p364), while girls might enjoy the idea of a little fashion shopping with mum in Milan's Golden Quad (p277) district. And while you're in northern Italy, make a stopover at Gardaland (p309), the amusement park near Lago di Garda in Lombardy, or at Italia in Miniatura (p471) in Emilia-Romagna.

Always allow time for kids to play, and make sure treats such as a whopping gelato or slice of their favourite pizza are included in the bag of tricks.

See also Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* or the websites [www.travelwithyourkids.com](http://www.travelwithyourkids.com) and [www.familytravelnetwork.com](http://www.familytravelnetwork.com).

## CLIMATE CHARTS

Situated in the temperate zone and jutting deep into the Mediterranean, Italy is regarded by many tourists as a land of sunny, mild weather. However, due to the north-south orientation of the peninsula and the fact that it is largely mountainous, the country's climate is variable. See p20 for more information on when to go.

In the Alps, temperatures are lower and winters can be long and severe. Generally the weather is warm from July to September, although rainfall can be high in September. While the first snowfall is usually in November, light snow sometimes falls in mid-September and heavy falls can occur in early October. Freak snowfalls in June are not unknown at high altitudes. Mind you, with climate change, many ski resorts can remain distressingly snow-free until early January (the exceptionally snowy winter of 2008-09 notwithstanding!).

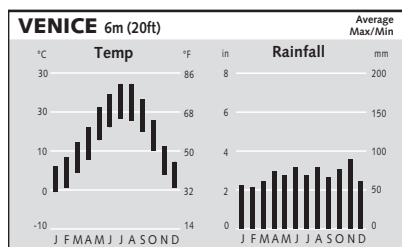
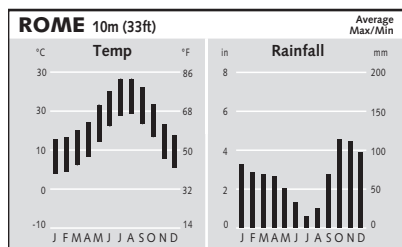
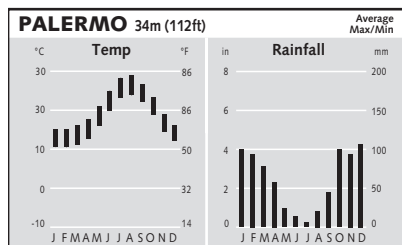
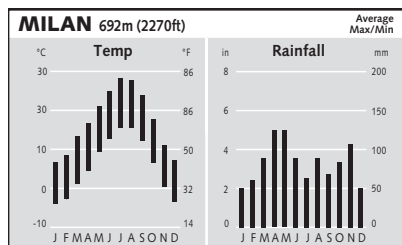
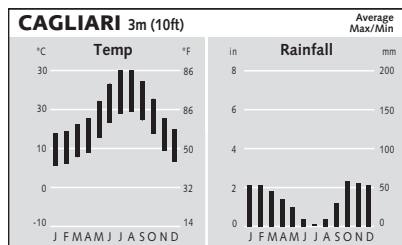
The Alps shield northern Lombardy and the Lakes area, including Milan, from the extremes of the northern European winter, and Liguria enjoys a mild, Mediterranean climate similar to that in southern Italy because it is protected by the Alps and Apennine range.

Winters are severe and summers torrid in the Po valley. Venice can be hot and humid in summer and, although not too cold in winter, it can be unpleasant if wet or when the sea level rises and *acque alte* (literally 'high waters') inundate the city. This is most likely in November and December. Along the Po valley, and in Venice especially, January and February can be surprisingly crisp and stunning.

In Florence, encircled by hills, the weather can be quite extreme but, as you travel towards the tip of the boot, temperatures and weather conditions become milder. Rome, for instance, has an average July and August temperature in the mid-20s (Celsius), although the impact of the sirocco (a hot, humid wind blowing from Africa) can produce stiflingly hot weather in August, with temperatures in the high 30s for days on end. Winters are moderate and snow is rare in Rome, although winter clothing (or at least a heavy overcoat) is still a requirement.

The south of Italy and the islands of Sicily and Sardinia have a Mediterranean climate. Summers are long, hot and dry, and winter temperatures tend to be relatively moderate, with daytime averages not too far below 10°C.





These regions are also affected by the humid sirocco in summer.

## COURSES

Holiday courses are a booming section of the Italian tourist industry and they cover everything – from painting, art, sculpture, wine, food, photography and scuba diving to even hang-gliding. You will find details on various local courses throughout this book. US students looking to sign up for courses in Italy might want to check out the offerings at **Study Abroad Italy** ([www.studyabroaditaly.com](http://www.studyabroaditaly.com)).

Apart from the following categories, possibilities range from history courses in Venice to fashion courses in Milan. **Learn4good** ([www.learn4good.com](http://www.learn4good.com)) is a good place to start your search.

## Cooking

Many people come to Italy just for the food so it is hardly surprising that cookery courses are among the most popular. Check out **Mama Margaret** ([www.italycookingschools.com](http://www.italycookingschools.com)) for ideas on courses throughout the country; see also p78 for details on specific courses.

## Language

Courses are run by private schools and universities throughout the country and are a great way to learn Italian while enjoying the opportunity to live in an Italian city or town. Among the more popular and reasonably priced options, the **Università per Stranieri di Perugia** ([www.unistrappi.it](http://www.unistrappi.it)) and the **Università per Stranieri di Siena** ([www.unistrasi.it](http://www.unistrasi.it)) are both set in beautiful medieval cities. Frequently these schools offer extracurricular or full-time courses in painting, art history, sculpture and architecture, too. One school in Siena, **Saenaiulia** (☎ 0577 441 55; [www.saenaiulia.it](http://www.saenaiulia.it)), has a web link listing language schools around the country.

Florence (p497) and Rome (p142) are teeming with Italian-language schools, while most cities and major towns have at least one.

The Istituto Italiano di Cultura (IIC), which has branches all over the world, is a government-sponsored organisation aimed at promoting Italian culture and language. This is a good place to start your search for places to study in Italy. The institute's numerous branches worldwide include Australia (Sydney), Canada (Montreal), the UK (London) and the USA (Los Angeles, New York and Washington). The website of the **Italian foreign ministry** ([www.esteri.it](http://www.esteri.it)) has a full list

of institutions; click on Diplomatic Network and then on Italian Cultural Institutes.

## Painting

Art and painting courses abound, especially in Florence. One place to start looking is at **Learn4good** ([www.learn4good.com](http://www.learn4good.com)), which has information on several art schools in Italy. **It-Schools.com** ([www.it-schools.com](http://www.it-schools.com)) is also worth checking out.

## Yoga

It will always be hard to close your senses to the food and drink of Italy, but another way to enjoy the country is with a little gentle body work. **Yoga in Italy** (☎ 0445 48 02 98; [www.yogainitaly.it](http://www.yogainitaly.it)) offers a variety of week-long holidays combining yoga with anything from walks in the Chianti countryside to white-water rafting.

## CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

Duty-free sales within the EU no longer exist (but goods are sold tax-free in European airports). Visitors coming into Italy from non-EU countries can import, duty free: 1L of spirits (or 2L wine), 50g perfume, 250mL eau de toilette, 200 cigarettes and other goods up to a total of €175; anything over this limit must be declared on arrival and the appropriate duty paid. On leaving the EU, non-EU citizens can reclaim any Value Added Tax (VAT) on expensive purchases (see p883).

## DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

It sometimes requires patience to deal with the Italian concept of service, which does not always seem to follow the maxim that the customer is always right. While often courteous and friendly, some people in uniform or behind a counter (including police officers, waiters and shop assistants) may regard you with supreme indifference.

Long queues are the norm in banks, post offices and government offices.

## Pollution

Problems in the major cities are noise and air pollution, caused mainly by heavy traffic. A headache after a day of sightseeing in Rome or Milan is likely to be caused by breathing in carbon monoxide and lead, rather than simple tiredness.

In summer (and occasionally other seasons) pollution alerts come as a wake-up call in cities like Rome, Milan, Naples and Florence. The

elderly, children and people with respiratory problems are warned to stay indoors. If you fit into one of these categories, keep yourself informed through the tourist office or your hotel. Often traffic is cut by half during these alerts by obliging drivers with odd and even number plates to drive on alternate days.

Watch where you step as dog poop on the pavements is a big-city irritation. Italian dog-owners are catching onto the idea of cleaning up their best friend's daily doings, but this is by no means a universal courtesy.

Italy's beaches can be polluted by industrial waste, sewage and oil spills from the Mediterranean's considerable sea traffic. The best and cleanest beaches are on Sardinia, Sicily, less-populated southern areas of the mainland and Elba.

## Smoking

Since early 2005, smoking in all closed public spaces (from bars to elevators, offices to trains) has been banned.

## Theft

Pickpockets and bag-snatchers operate in most cities, especially Naples and Rome. Reduce the chances of such petty theft by wearing a money belt (with money, passport, credit cards and important documents) *under* your clothing. Wear bags or cameras slung across the body to make it harder to snatch them. If your hotel has a safe, use it.

Watch for groups of dishevelled-looking women and children asking you for money. Their favourite haunts are train stations, tourist sights and shopping areas. If you've been targeted by a group, take evasive action (such as crossing the street) or shout '*Va via!*' (Go away!). Again, this is an issue mainly in Rome and Naples.

Parked cars, particularly those with foreign number plates or rental-company stickers, are prime targets. Try not to leave anything in the car and certainly not overnight. Car theft is a problem in Rome, Campania and Puglia.

In case of theft or loss, always report the incident to police within 24 hours and ask for a statement, otherwise your travel-insurance company won't pay out.

## Traffic

Italian traffic can seem chaotic, although it has improved a trifle now that Italian drivers



have point-system licences. Drivers are not keen to stop for pedestrians, even at pedestrian crossings, and are more likely to swerve. Where this is the case, follow the locals (even if they seem bent on suicide) by marching out into the (swerving) traffic.

Confusingly, in some cities, roads that appear to be only for one-way traffic have lanes for buses travelling in the opposite direction – always look both ways before stepping onto the road.

Signposting is often confusing. It is not uncommon to see signs to the same place pointing in two opposing directions at once. This can be especially unnerving for drivers navigating their way out of a city for the first time (although one becomes accustomed to these 'options' after a while).

City driving can be nerve-racking at first, with what seems a cavalier dodgem-cars element to it. Motorcyclists should be prepared for anything in the cities. Once you get the hang of Italian-style urban driving, though, you might come to like it!

## DISCOUNT CARDS

At museums and galleries, never hesitate to enquire after discounts for students, young people, children, families or the elderly. When sightseeing and wherever possible buy a *biglietto cumulativo*, a ticket that allows admission to a number of associated sights for less than the combined cost of separate admission fees.

## Senior Cards

Senior citizens are often entitled to public-transport discounts but usually only for monthly passes (not daily or weekly tickets); the minimum qualifying age is 65 years.

Seniors (over 60) travelling extensively by rail should consider the one-year Carta d'Argento (see p902).

Admission to most museums in Rome is free for over-60s but in other cities (such as Florence) often no concessions are made for nonresidents. In numerous places, EU seniors have free entry to sights, sometimes only on certain days. Always ask.

## Student & Youth Cards

Free admission to some galleries and sites is available to under-18s. Discounts (usually half the normal fee) are available for some sights to EU citizens aged between 18 and 25. An **International Student Identity Card** (ISIC; [www.isic.org](http://www.isic.org))

is no longer sufficient at many tourist sites as prices are usually based on age, so a passport, driver's licence or **Euro<26** ([www.euro26.org](http://www.euro26.org)) card is preferable.

An ISIC card may still, however, prove useful for cheap transport, theatre and cinema discounts, as well as occasional discounts in some hotels and restaurants (check the lists on the ISIC website); similar cards are available to teachers (International Teacher Identity Card, or ITIC). For nonstudent travellers under 25, the International Youth Travel Card (IYTC) offers the same benefits.

Student cards are issued by student unions and hostelling organisations as well as some youth travel agencies. In Italy, the **Centro Turistico Studentesco e Giovanile** (CTS; [www.cts.it](http://www.cts.it)) youth travel agency can issue ISIC, ITIC and Euro<26 cards.

## EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

For foreign embassies and consulates in Italy not listed here, look under 'Ambasciate' or 'Consolati' in the telephone directory. In addition to the following, some countries run honorary consulates in other cities.

**Australia** Rome (Map p95; ☎ 06 85 27 21, emergencies 800 877790; [www.italy.embassy.gov.au](http://www.italy.embassy.gov.au); Via Antonio Bosio 5, 00161); Milan (Map pp268-9; ☎ 02 7770 4217; [www.austrade.it](http://www.austrade.it); Via Borgogna 2, 20122)

**Austria** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 844 01 41; [www.bmaa.gv.at](http://www.bmaa.gv.at); Via Pergolesi 3, Rome, 00198)

**Canada** (Map p95; ☎ 06 85 44 41; [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canadaeuropa/italy](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canadaeuropa/italy); Via Zara 30, Rome, 00198)

**France** Rome (Map pp102-3; ☎ 06 68 60 11; [www.france-italia.it](http://www.france-italia.it); Piazza Farnese 67, 00186); Milan (Map pp268-9; ☎ 02 655 91 41; Via della Moscova 12, 20121); Naples (Map pp640-1; ☎ 081 598 07 11; Via Francesco Crispi 86, 80121); Turin (☎ 011 573 23 11; Via Roma 366, 10121); Venice (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 43 19; Palazzo Morosini, Castello 6140, 30123)

**Germany** Rome (Map p100; ☎ 06 49 21 31; [www.rom.diplo.de](http://www.rom.diplo.de); Via San Martino della Battaglia 4, 00185); Milan (Map pp268-9; ☎ 02 623 11 01; [www.mailand.diplo.de](http://www.mailand.diplo.de); Via Solferino 40, 20121); Naples (Map pp640-1; ☎ 081 248 85 11; [www.neapel.diplo.de](http://www.neapel.diplo.de); Via Francesco Crispi 69, 80121)

**Ireland** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 06 697 91 21; [www.ambasciata-irlanda.it](http://www.ambasciata-irlanda.it); Piazza Campitelli 3, Rome, 00186)

**Japan** Rome (Map p100; ☎ 06 48 79 91; [www.it.emb-japan.go.jp](http://www.it.emb-japan.go.jp); Via Quintino Sella 60, 00187); Milan (Map pp268-9; ☎ 02 624 11 41; Via Cesare Mangili 2/4, 20121)

**Netherlands** Rome (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 3228 6001; [www.olanda.it](http://www.olanda.it); Via Michele Mercati 8, 00197); Milan (Map pp266-7; ☎ 02 485 58 41; Via San Vittore 45, 20123); Naples (Map pp640-1; ☎ 081 551 30 03; Via Agostino Depretis 114,

80133); Palermo (Map p762; ☎ 091 58 15 21; Via Enrico Amari 8, 90139)

**New Zealand** Rome (Map p95; ☎ 06 853 75 01; www.nzembassy.com; Via Clitunno 44, 00198); Milan (Map pp266-7; ☎ 02 7217 0001; Via Terraggio 17, 20123)

**Switzerland** Rome (Map p95; ☎ 06 80 95 71; www.eda.admin.ch/roma; Via Barnaba Oriani 61, 00197); Milan (Map pp268-9; ☎ 02 777 91 61; www.eda.admin.ch/milano; Via Palestro 2, 20121); Naples (Map pp640-1; ☎ 081 734 11 32; www.eda.admin.ch/napoli; Centro Direzionale, Isola B3, 80143)

**UK** Rome (Map p95; ☎ 06 4220 0001; www.britishembassy.gov.uk; Via XX Settembre 80a, 00187); Florence (Map p488; ☎ 055 28 41 33; Lungarno Corsini 2, 50123); Milan (Map pp268-9; ☎ 02 72 30 01; Via San Paolo 7, 20121); Naples (Map pp640-1; ☎ 081 423 89 11; Via dei Mille 40, 80121)

**USA** Rome (Map pp102-3; ☎ 06 4 67 41; www.usis.it; Via Vittorio Veneto 119a, 00187); Florence (Map pp480-1; ☎ 055 26 69 51; Lungarno Amerigo Vespucci 38, 50123); Milan (Map pp268-9; ☎ 02 29 03 51; Via Principe Amedeo 2/10, 20121); Naples (Map pp640-1; ☎ 081 583 81 11; Piazza della Repubblica, 80122)

## FOOD & DRINK

Restaurant listings in this book are given in order of cheapest to most expensive, going by the price of a meal, unless otherwise stated. A meal in this guide consists of a *primo* (first course), a *secondo* (second course) and a dessert. Drinks are not included. The budget category is for meals costing up to €20, midrange is €20 to €45 and top end is anything over €45. These figures represent a halfway point between the expensive cities such as Milan and Venice and the considerably cheaper towns across the south. Indeed, a restaurant rated as midrange in one place might be considered cheap as chips in Milan. It is best to check the menu, usually posted by the entrance, for prices. Most eating establishments have a cover charge (called *coperto*; usually around €1 to €2) and *servizio* (service charge) of 10% to 15%.

A *tavola calda* (literally 'hot table') normally offers cheap, pre-prepared food and can include self-service pasta, roast meats and *pizza al taglio* (pizza by the slice).

A trattoria is traditionally a cheaper, often family-run version of a *ristorante* (restaurant) with less-alof service and simpler dishes. An *osteria* is likely to be either a wine bar offering a small selection of dishes with a verbal menu, or a small trattoria. You can sometimes get food to accompany your tipples in an *enoteca* (wine bar).

Bars are popular hang-outs, serving mostly coffee, soft drinks and alcohol. They often sell brioche (breakfast pastry), *cornetti* (croissants), *panini* (bread rolls with simple fillings) and *spuntini* (snacks) to have with your drink.

You'll find vegetarian and vegan restaurants in larger cities, such as Rome and Milan. Otherwise vegans can have a tough time. Many Italians seem to think cheese is vegetarian, so make sure your dish is '*senza formaggio*' (without cheese). The good news is that most places usually do some good vegetable starters and side dishes.

Children's menus are uncommon but you can generally ask for a *mezzo piatto* (half plate) off the menu. Kids are generally welcome in most restaurants but do not count on the availability of high chairs.

For an introduction to the famous Italian cuisine and wines, see p73 and p437. For information on the opening hours of restaurants, see p875.

## GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Homosexuality is legal in Italy and well tolerated in the major cities. However, overt displays of affection by homosexual couples could attract a negative response in the more conservative south, and smaller towns. The legal age of consent is generally 16 (there are some exceptions where people below that age are concerned, in which case it can drop to as low as 13).

There are gay clubs in Rome, Milan and Bologna, and a handful in places such as Florence. Some coastal towns and resorts (such as the Tuscan town of Viareggio or Taormina in Sicily) have much more action in summer. For clues, track down local gay organisations or publications such as *Pride*, a national monthly magazine, and *AUT* published by **Circolo Mario Mieli** (www.mariomieli.org) in Rome. The useful website **Gay.it** (www.gay.it, in Italian) lists gay bars and hotels across the country. **Arcigay & Arcilesbica** (☎ 051 649 30 55; www.arcigay.it; Via Don Minzoni 18, Bologna), is a worthy national organisation for gays and lesbians.

Check out the English-language **Gay FriendlyItaly.com** (www.gayfriendlyitaly.com), which is produced by Gay.it. It has information on everything from hotels to homophobia issues and the law.

## HOLIDAYS

Most Italians take their annual holiday in August. This means that many businesses and

shops close for at least a part of that month. The Settimana Santa (Easter week) is another busy holiday period for Italians.

Individual towns have public holidays to celebrate the feasts of their patron saints (see p25). National public holidays include the following:

**New Year's Day** (Capodanno or Anno Nuovo) 1 January

**Epiphany** (Epifania or Befana) 6 January

**Easter Monday** (Pasquetta or Lunedì dell'Angelo)

March/April

**Liberation Day** (Giorno della Liberazione) On 25 April – marks the Allied Victory in Italy, and the end of the German presence and Mussolini, in 1945.

**Labour Day** (Festa del Lavoro) 1 May

**Republic Day** (Festa della Repubblica) 2 June

**Feast of the Assumption** (Assunzione or Ferragosto)

15 August

**All Saints' Day** (Ognissanti) 1 November

**Feast of the Immaculate Conception** (Immacolata Concezione) 8 December

**Christmas Day** (Natale) 25 December

**Boxing Day** (Festa di Santo Stefano) 26 December

## INSURANCE

A travel-insurance policy to cover theft, loss and medical problems is a good idea. It may also cover you for cancellation or delays to your travel arrangements. Paying for your ticket with a credit card can often provide limited travel accident insurance and you may be able to reclaim the payment if the operator doesn't deliver. Ask your credit-card company what it will cover.

For information on health insurance, check out p903.

## INTERNET ACCESS

If you plan to carry your notebook or palm-top computer with you, carry a universal AC adaptor for your appliance (most are sold with these). Do not rely on finding wi-fi whenever you want it, as hot spots remain few and far between and often require payment. Another option is to buy a card pack with one of the Italian mobile-phone operators, which gives wireless access through the mobile telephone network. These are usually prepaid services that you can top up as you go.

Most travellers make constant use of internet cafes and free web-based email such as Yahoo, Hotmail or Gmail. Internet cafes and centres are present, if not always abundant, in all cities and most main towns (don't forget your incoming mail server name, account

name and password). Prices hover at around the €5 to €8 mark per hour. For some useful internet addresses, see p24. By law, you must present photo ID (such as passport or drivers licence) to use internet points in Italy.

## LEGAL MATTERS

For many Italians, finding ways to get around the law is a way of life. This is partly because bureaucracy has long been seen by most (with some justification) as a suffocating clamp on just about all areas of human activity.

The average tourist will only have a brush with the law if robbed by a bag-snatcher or pickpocket.

## Alcohol & Drugs

Italy's drug laws were toughened in 2006 and possession of any controlled substances, including cannabis or marijuana, can get you into hot water. Those caught in possession of 5g of cannabis can be considered traffickers and prosecuted as such. The same applies to tiny amounts of other drugs. Those caught with amounts below this threshold can be subject to minor penalties.

The legal limit for blood-alcohol level is 0.05% and random breath tests do occur.

## Police

If you run into trouble in Italy, you are likely to end up dealing with the *polizia statale* (state police) or the *carabinieri* (military police).

The *polizia* deal with thefts, visa extensions and permits (among other things). They wear powder blue trousers with a fuchsia stripe and a navy blue jacket. Details of police stations, or *questure*, are given throughout this book.

The *carabinieri* deal with general crime, public order and drug enforcement (often overlapping with the *polizia*). They wear a black uniform with a red stripe and drive night blue cars with a red stripe. They are based in a *caserma* (barracks), a reflection of

### LEGAL AGE

- The right to vote: 18 years old
- Age of consent: 14 years old (both heterosexual and homosexual, but there are some exceptions to the general rules)
- Driving: 18 years old

their past military status (they came under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defence).

One of the big differences between the police and *carabinieri* is the latter's reach – even many villages have a *carabinieri* post.

Other police include the *vigili urbani*, basically local traffic police. You will have to deal with them if you get a parking ticket or your car is towed away. The *guardia di finanza* are responsible for fighting tax evasion and drug smuggling. The *guardia forestale*, aka *corpo forestale*, are responsible for enforcing laws concerning forests and the environment in general.

For national emergency numbers, see the inside front cover.

## Your Rights

Italy still has antiterrorism laws on its books that could make life difficult if you are detained. You should be given verbal and written notice of the charges laid against you within 24 hours by arresting officers. You have no right to a phone call upon arrest. The prosecutor must apply to a magistrate for you to be held in preventive custody awaiting trial (depending on the seriousness of the offence) within 48 hours of arrest. You have the right not to respond to questions without the presence of a lawyer. If the magistrate orders preventive custody, you have the right to then contest this within the following 10 days.

## MAPS

### City Maps

The city maps in this book, combined with tourist office maps, are generally adequate. More detailed maps are available in Italy at good bookshops, such as Feltrinelli. De Agostini, Touring Club Italiano (TCI) and Michelin all publish detailed city maps.

### Road Atlases

If you are driving around Italy, the Automobile Association's (AA) *Road Atlas Italy*, available in the UK, is scaled at 1:250,000 and includes 31 town maps. Just as good is Michelin's *Tourist and Motoring Atlas Italy*, scaled at 1:300,000, with 74 town maps.

In Italy, De Agostini publishes a comprehensive *Atlante Turistico Stradale d'Italia* (1:250,000), which includes 140 city maps (the AA *Road Atlas* is based on this). TCI publishes an *Atlante Stradale d'Italia* (1:200,000) divided into three parts – Nord, Centro and

Sud (€45 for the lot at [www.touringclub.com](http://www.touringclub.com)). They contain a total of 147 city maps.

Many of these are available online. Check out TrekTools.com ([www.trektools.com](http://www.trektools.com)).

## Small-Scale Maps

Michelin has a series of good foldout country maps. No 735 covers the whole country on a scale of 1:1,000,000. You could also consider the series of six area maps at 1:400,000. TCI publishes a decent map of Italy at 1:800,000, as well as a series of 15 regional maps at 1:200,000 (costing €7 each).

## Walking Maps

Maps of walking trails in the Alps and Apennines are available at all major bookshops in Italy, but the best are the TCI bookshops.

The best walking maps are the 1:25,000 scale series published by **Tabacco** ([www.tabaccoeditrice.com](http://www.tabaccoeditrice.com)), covering an area from Bormio in the west to the Slovene border in the east. It also does maps on a grander scale. **Kompass** ([www.kompass-italia.it](http://www.kompass-italia.it)) also publishes 1:25,000 scale maps of various parts of Italy, as well as a 1:50,000 series and several in other scales (including one at 1:7500 of Capri). The Club Alpino Italiano (CAI) produces many hiking maps too, and Edizioni Multigraphic Florence produces a series of walking maps concentrating mainly on the Apennines.

The series *Guide dei Monti d'Italia*, 22 grey hardbacks published by the TCI and CAI, consists of exhaustive walking guides with maps.

## MONEY

The euro is Italy's currency. The seven euro notes come in denominations of €500, €200, €100, €50, €20, €10 and €5. The eight euro coins are in denominations of €2 and €1, and 50, 20, 10, five, two and one cents.

Exchange rates are given on the inside front cover of this book. For the latest rates, check out [www.xc.com](http://www.xc.com). For some hints on costs in Italy, turn to p20.

## Cash

There is little advantage in bringing foreign cash into Italy. True, exchange commissions are often lower than for travellers cheques, but the danger of losing the lot far outweighs such gains.

## Credit & Debit Cards

Credit and debit cards can be used in a *bancomat* (ATM) displaying the appropriate sign.

Visa and MasterCard are among the most widely recognised, but others like Cirrus and Maestro are also well covered. Only some banks give cash advances over the counter, so you're better off using ATMs. Cards are also good for payment in most hotels, restaurants, shops, supermarkets and tollbooths.

Check any charges with your bank. Most banks now build a fee of around 2.75% into every foreign transaction. In addition, ATM withdrawals can attract a further fee, usually around 1.5%.

It is not uncommon for ATMs in Italy to reject foreign cards. Try a few more ATMs displaying your card's logo before assuming the problem lies with your card (although, unfortunately, this may trigger alarms with your bank and lead it to block your card – make sure you always have some cash for calls home to your bank to explain what happened!).

If your card is lost, stolen or swallowed by an ATM, you can telephone toll free to have an immediate stop put on its use:

**Amex** (☎ 06 7290 0347 or your national call number)

**Diners Club** (☎ 800 864064)

**MasterCard** (☎ 800 870866)

**Visa** (☎ 800 819014)

## Moneychangers

You can change money in banks, at the post office or in a *cambio* (exchange office). Post offices and most banks are reliable and tend to offer the best rates. Commission fluctuates and depends on whether you are changing cash or cheques. Generally, post-office commissions are lowest and the exchange rate reasonable. The main advantage of exchange offices is the longer hours they keep, but watch for high commissions and inferior rates.

## Taxes & Refunds

A value-added tax of around 20%, known as IVA (Imposta di Valore Aggiunto), is slapped onto just about everything in Italy. If you are a non-EU resident and spend more than €155 (€154.94 to be more precise!) on a purchase, you can claim a refund when you leave. The refund only applies to purchases from affiliated retail outlets that display a 'tax free for tourists' (or similar) sign. You have to complete a form at the point of sale, then have it stamped by Italian customs as you leave. At major airports you can then get an

immediate cash refund; otherwise it will be refunded to your credit card. For information, pick up a pamphlet on the scheme from participating stores.

## Tipping

You are not expected to tip on top of restaurant service charges but you can leave a little extra if you feel service warrants it. If there is no service charge, the customer should consider leaving a 10% tip, but this is not obligatory. In bars, Italians often leave small change as a tip, maybe only €0.10. Tipping taxi drivers is not common practice, but you are expected to tip the porter at top-end hotels.

## Travellers Cheques

Traditionally a safe way to carry money and possibly not a bad idea as a backup, travellers cheques have been outmoded by plastic. Various readers have reported having trouble changing travellers cheques in Italy and it seems most banks apply hefty commissions, even on cheques denominated in euros.

Visa, Travelex and Amex are widely accepted brands. Get most of your cheques in fairly large denominations to save on per-cheque commission charges. Amex exchange offices do not charge commission to exchange travellers cheques.

It's vital to keep your initial receipt, along with a record of your cheque numbers and the ones you have used, separate from the cheques. Take along your passport as identification when you go to cash travellers cheques.

Phone numbers to report lost or stolen cheques:

**Amex** (☎ 800 914912)

**MasterCard** (☎ 800 872050)

**Visa** (☎ 800 874155)

## POST

**Le Poste** (☎ 803160; [www.poste.it](http://www.poste.it)), Italy's postal system, is reasonably reliable. The most efficient mail service is *posta prioritaria* (priority mail). For post office opening hours, see p875.

*Francobolli* (stamps) are available at post offices and authorised tobacconists (look for the official *tabacchi* sign: a big 'T', usually white on black). Since letters often need to be weighed, what you get at the tobacconist for international airmail will occasionally be an approximation of the proper rate. Tobacconists keep regular shop hours (p875).



## Postal Rates & Services

The cost of sending a letter by *via aerea* (airmail) depends on its weight, size and where it is being sent. Most people use *posta prioritaria*, guaranteed to deliver letters sent to Europe within three days and to the rest of the world within four to eight days. Letters up to 20g cost €0.65 within Europe, €0.85 to Africa, Asia and North and South America and €1 to Australia and New Zealand. Letters weighing 21g to 50g cost €1.45 within Europe, €1.50 to Africa, Asia and the Americas, and €1.80 to Australia and New Zealand.

## Receiving Mail

Poste restante (general delivery) is known as *fermo posta* in Italy. Letters marked thus will be held at the counter of the same name in the main post office in the relevant town. Poste restante mail to Verona, for example, should be addressed as follows:

John SMITH,  
Fermo Posta,  
37100 Verona,  
Italy

You will need to pick up your letters in person and you must present your passport or national ID.

## SHOPPING

Italy is a shopper's paradise, so bring your plastic well charged up and even an empty bag for your purchases (or buy a new one while in Italy).

Fashion is probably one of the first things that springs to the mind of the serious shopper. The big cities and tourist centres, especially Milan, Rome and Florence, are home to countless designer boutiques spilling over with clothes, shoes and accessories by all the great Italian names, and many equally enticing unknowns.

Foodies and wine lovers will want to bring home some souvenirs for the kitchen, ranging from fine Parma ham to aromatic cheeses, from class wines (especially from Tuscany, Piedmont and the Veneto) to local tipples (such as Benevento's La Strega, grappa from Bassano del Grappa, the almond-based Amaretto, and *limoncello*, the lemon-based liqueur common in Naples and Sicily as well as other parts of the south).

Many cities and provinces offer specialised products. Sicily is known for its ceramics, as is the town of Gubbio in Umbria. Shoes and leathergoods are one of Florence's big calling cards. In Venice, seek out beautifully hand-made Carnevale masks, along with Murano glassware and Burano lace.

## SOLO TRAVELLERS

The main disadvantage for solo travellers in Italy is the higher price they generally pay for accommodation. A single room in a hotel or *pensione* usually costs around two-thirds of the price of a double.

## TELEPHONE

### Domestic Calls

As elsewhere in Europe, Italians choose from a host of providers of phone plans and rates, making it difficult to make generalisations about costs. A local call from a public phone costs €0.10 every minute and 10 seconds. For a long-distance call within Italy you pay €0.10 when the call is answered and then €0.10 every 57 seconds. Calling from a private phone is cheaper.

Telephone area codes all begin with 0 and consist of up to four digits. The area code is followed by a number of anything from four to eight digits. The area code is an integral part of the telephone number and must always be dialled, even when calling from next door. Mobile-phone numbers begin with a three-digit prefix such as 330. Toll-free (free-phone) numbers are known as *numeri verdi* and usually start with 800. Nongeographical numbers start with 840, 841, 848, 892, 899, 163, 166 or 199. The range of rates for these makes a rainbow look boring – beware that some can be costly. Some six-digit national rate numbers are also in use (such as those for Alitalia, rail and postal information).

## International Calls

Direct international calls can easily be made from public telephones by using a phone-card. Dial ☎ 00 to get out of Italy, then the relevant country and area codes, followed by the telephone number.

To call home, use your country's direct-dialling services paid for at home-country rates (such as AT&T in the USA and Telstra in Australia). Get their access numbers before you leave home. Alternatively, try making calls from cheap-rate call centres or using



international call cards, which are often on sale at newspaper stands.

To call Italy from abroad, call the international access number (usually 00), Italy's country code (☎ 39) and then the area code of the location you want, including the leading 0.

## Directory Enquiries

National and international phone numbers can be requested at ☎ 1254 (or online at <http://1254.alice.it>). Another handy number, where operators will respond in several languages, is ☎ 89 24 12. These services have varying costs and can be dear.

## Mobile Phones

Italy uses GSM 900/1800, which is compatible with the rest of Europe and Australia but not with North American GSM 1900 or the totally different Japanese system (though some GSM 1900/900 phones do work here). If you have a GSM phone, check with your service provider about using it in Italy and beware of calls being routed internationally (very expensive for a 'local' call).

Italy has one of the highest levels of mobile-phone penetration in Europe, and you can get a temporary or prepaid account from several companies if you already own a GSM, dual- or tri-band cellular phone. You will usually need your passport to open an account. Always check with your mobile-service provider in your home country to ascertain whether your handset allows use of another SIM card. If yours does, it can cost as little as €10 to activate a local prepaid SIM card (sometimes with €10 worth of calls on the card).

Of the four main mobile phone companies, TIM (Telecom Italia Mobile) and Vodafone have the densest networks of outlets across the country.

## Payphones & Phonecards

Partly privatised Telecom Italia is the largest telecommunications organisation in Italy and its orange public payphones are liberally scattered about the country. The most common accept only *carte/schede telefoniche* (phonecards), although you'll still find some that take cards and coins. Some card phones accept credit cards.

Telecom payphones can be found in the streets, train stations and some stores as well

as in Telecom offices. Where these offices are staffed, it is possible to make international calls and pay at the desk afterwards. You can buy phonecards (most commonly €2.50 or €5) at post offices, tobacconists and newsstands. You must break off the top left-hand corner of the card before you can use it. Phonecards have an expiry date. This is usually 31 December or 30 June, depending on when you purchase the card.

Other companies, such as Infostrada and BT Italia, also operate a handful of public payphones, for which cards are usually available at newsstands.

You will find cut-price call centres in all of the main cities. Rates can be considerably lower than from Telecom payphones for international calls. You simply place your call from a private booth inside the centre and pay for it when you've finished. Alternatively, ask about international calling cards at newsstands and tobacconists. They can be hit-and-miss but are sometimes good value.

## TIME

Italy is one hour ahead of GMT. Daylight-saving time, when clocks are moved forward one hour, starts on the last Sunday in March. Clocks are put back an hour on the last Sunday in October. Italy operates on a 24-hour clock.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

The quality of tourist offices in Italy varies dramatically. Three tiers of tourist office exist: regional, provincial and local. They have different names, but roughly offer the same services, with the exception of regional offices, which are generally concerned with promotion, planning and budgeting.

### Local & Provincial Tourist Offices

Throughout this book, offices are referred to as tourist offices rather than by their more elaborate titles. The Azienda Autonoma di Soggiorno e Turismo (AAST) is the local tourist office in many towns and cities of the south. AASTs have town-specific information and should also know about bus routes and museum opening times. The Azienda di Promozione Turistica (APT) is the provincial (ie main) tourist office, which should have information on the town you are in and the surrounding province. Informazione

e Assistenza ai Turisti (IAT) has local tourist office branches in towns and cities, mostly in the northern half of Italy. Pro Loco is the local office in small towns and villages and is similar to the AAST office. Most tourist offices will respond to written and telephone requests for information.

Tourist offices are generally open from 8.30am to 12.30pm or 1pm and 3pm to 7pm Monday to Friday. Hours are usually extended in summer, when some offices also open on Saturday or Sunday.

Information booths at most major train stations tend to keep similar hours but in some cases operate only in summer. Staff can usually provide a city map, list of hotels and information on the major sights.

English, and sometimes French or German, is spoken at tourist offices in larger towns and major tourist areas. German is spoken in Alto Adige and French in much of the Valle d'Aosta.

## Regional Tourist Authorities

As a rule, the regional tourist authorities are more concerned with planning and marketing than offering a public information service, with work done at a provincial and local level. Addresses of local tourist offices appear throughout the guide. Following are some useful regional websites. In some cases you need to look for the Tourism or Turismo link within the regional site. At the website of the **Italian National Tourist Office** ([www.enit.it](http://www.enit.it)) you can find details of all provincial and local tourist offices across the country.

**Abruzzo** ([www.abruzzoturismo.it](http://www.abruzzoturismo.it))

**Basilicata** ([www.aptbasilicata.it](http://www.aptbasilicata.it))

**Calabria** ([www.turiscalabria.it](http://www.turiscalabria.it))

**Campania** ([www.in-campania.com](http://www.in-campania.com))

**Emilia-Romagna** ([www.emiliaromagnaturismo.it](http://www.emiliaromagnaturismo.it))

**Friuli Venezia Giulia** ([www.turismo.fvg.it](http://www.turismo.fvg.it))

**Lazio** ([www.turislazio.it](http://www.turislazio.it))

**Le Marche** ([www.le-marche.com](http://www.le-marche.com))

**Liguria** ([www.turismoinliguria.it](http://www.turismoinliguria.it))

**Lombardy** ([www.turismo.regione.lombardia.it](http://www.turismo.regione.lombardia.it))

**Molise** ([www.regione.molise.it/turismo](http://www.regione.molise.it/turismo), in Italian)

**Piedmont** ([www.regione.piemonte.it/turismo](http://www.regione.piemonte.it/turismo), in Italian)

**Puglia** ([www.pugliaturismo.com](http://www.pugliaturismo.com))

**Sardinia** ([www.sardegnoturismo.it](http://www.sardegnoturismo.it))

**Sicily** ([www.regione.sicilia.it/turismo](http://www.regione.sicilia.it/turismo))

**Trentino-Alto Adige** ([www.trentino.to](http://www.trentino.to), [www.provincia.bz.it](http://www.provincia.bz.it))

**Tuscany** ([www.turismo.toscana.it](http://www.turismo.toscana.it))

**Umbria** ([www.umbria.org](http://www.umbria.org))

**Valle d'Aosta** ([www.regione.vda.it/turismo](http://www.regione.vda.it/turismo))

**Veneto** ([www.veneto.to](http://www.veneto.to))

## Tourist Offices Abroad

Information on Italy is available from the **Italian National Tourist Office** (ENIT; ☎ 06 497 11; [www.enit.it](http://www.enit.it); Via Marghera 2, Rome, 00185) in the following countries:

**Australia** (☎ 02 9262 1666; [italia@italiantourism.com.au](http://italia@italiantourism.com.au); Level 4, 46 Market St, Sydney, NSW 2000)

**Austria** (☎ 01 505 16 39; [delegation.wien@enit.at](mailto:delegation.wien@enit.at); Kärntnering 4, Vienna, A-1010)

**Canada** (☎ 416 925 4882; [www.italiantourism.com](http://www.italiantourism.com); Suite 907, South Tower, 175 Bloor St East, Toronto, M4W 3R8)

**France** (☎ 01 42 66 03 96; [enit.direction@wanadoo.fr](mailto:enit.direction@wanadoo.fr); 23 rue de la Paix, Paris, 75002)

**Germany** Berlin (☎ 030 247 8398; [enit.berlin@t-online.de](mailto:enit.berlin@t-online.de); Kontorhaus Mitte, Friedrichstrasse 187, 10117); Frankfurt (☎ 069 237 069; [enit ffm@t-online.de](mailto:enit ffm@t-online.de); Neue Mainzerstrasse 26, 60311); Munich (☎ 089 531 317; [enit.muenchen@t-online.de](mailto:enit.muenchen@t-online.de); Prinzregentenstrasse 22, 80333)

**Japan** (☎ 03 3478 2051; [enittky@dream.com](mailto:enittky@dream.com); 2-7-14 Minami Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 107-0062)

**Netherlands** (☎ 020 616 82 46; [amsterdam@enit.it](mailto:amsterdam@enit.it); Stadhouderskade 2, 1054 ES Amsterdam)

**Switzerland** (☎ 043 466 40 40; [info@enit.ch](mailto:info@enit.ch); Uraniastrasse 32, Zurich, 8001)

**UK** (☎ 020 7399 3562; [italy@italiantouristboard.co.uk](mailto:italy@italiantouristboard.co.uk); 1 Princes St, London W1B 2AY)

**USA** Chicago (☎ 312 644 09 96; [enitch@italiantourism.com](mailto:enitch@italiantourism.com); [www.italiantourism.com](http://www.italiantourism.com); 500 North Michigan Ave, Suite 2240, IL 60611); Los Angeles (☎ 310 820 1898; [enitla@italiantourism.com](mailto:enitla@italiantourism.com); 12400 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 550, CA 90025); New York (☎ 212 245 5618; [enitny@italiantourism.com](mailto:enitny@italiantourism.com); 630 Fifth Ave, Suite 1565, NY 10111)

## TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Italy is not an easy country for disabled travellers and getting around can be a problem for wheelchair users. Even a short journey in a city or town can become a major expedition if cobblestone streets have to be negotiated. Although many buildings have lifts, they are not always wide enough for wheelchairs. Not an awful lot has been done to make life for the deaf and/or blind any easier either.

The Italian National Tourist Office (above) in your country may be able to provide advice on Italian associations for the disabled and information on what help is available. It may also carry a small brochure, *Services for Disabled Passengers*, published by Italian railways, which details facilities at stations

and on trains. It also has a national helpline at ☎ 199 303060.

A handful of cities also publish general guides on accessibility, among them Bologna, Milan, Padua, Reggio Emilia, Turin, Venice and Verona.

Some organisations that may help:

**Accessible Italy** (☎ +378 94 11 11; [www.accessibleitaly.com](http://www.accessibleitaly.com)) A San Marino-based company that specialises in holiday services for the disabled, ranging from tours to the hiring of adapted transport. It can even arrange romantic Italian weddings. This is the best first port of call.

**Consorzio Cooperative Integrate** (COIN; ☎ within Italy 800 271027; [www.coinsociale.it](http://www.coinsociale.it)) Based in Rome, COIN is a great reference point for disabled travellers. It provides information on the capital (including transport and access) and is happy to share its contacts throughout Italy.

**Holiday Care** (☎ 0845 124 9971; [www.holidaycare.org.uk](http://www.holidaycare.org.uk)) Has information on hotels with access for disabled guests, where to hire equipment and tour operators dealing with disabled travellers.

You can also check out **Tour in Umbria** ([www.tourinumbria.org](http://www.tourinumbria.org)) and **Milano per Tutti** ([www.milanoportutti.it](http://www.milanoportutti.it)) for information on getting around those destinations.

## VISAS

Italy is one of 25 member countries of the Schengen Convention, under which 22 EU countries (all but Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland, Romania and the UK) plus Iceland, Norway and Switzerland have abolished permanent checks at common borders. For detailed information on the EU, including which countries are member states, visit <http://europa.eu.int>.

Legal residents of one Schengen country do not require a visa for another. Residents of 28 non-EU countries, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand and the USA, do not require visas for tourist visits of up to 90 days (this list varies for those wanting to travel to the UK and Ireland).

All non-EU nationals (except those from Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) entering Italy for any reason other than tourism (such as study or work) should contact an Italian consulate, as they may need a specific visa. They should also have their passport stamped on entry as, without a stamp, they could encounter problems when trying to obtain a residence permit (*permesso di soggiorno*). If you enter the EU via another member state, get your passport stamped there.

The standard tourist visa is valid for up to 90 days. A Schengen visa issued by one Schengen country is generally valid for travel in other Schengen countries. However, individual Schengen countries may impose additional restrictions on certain nationalities. It is worth checking visa regulations with the consulate of each country you plan to visit.

You must apply for a Schengen visa in your country of residence. You can apply for only two Schengen visas in any 12-month period and they are not renewable inside Italy. If you are going to visit more than one Schengen country, you should apply for the visa at a consulate of your main destination country or the first country you intend to visit.

EU citizens do not require any permits to live or work in Italy but, after three months' residence, are supposed to register themselves at the municipal registry office where they live and offer proof of work or sufficient funds to support themselves. Non-EU foreign citizens with five years' continuous legal residence may apply for permanent residence.

## Copies

All important documents (passport data page and visa page, credit cards, travel insurance policy, tickets, driver's licence etc) should be photocopied before you leave home. Leave a copy with someone at home and keep one with you, separate from the originals.

## Permesso di Soggiorno

Non-EU citizens planning to stay at the same address for more than one week are supposed to report to the police station to receive a *permesso di soggiorno* (a permit to remain in the country). Tourists staying in hotels are not required to do this.

A *permesso di soggiorno* only really becomes a necessity if you plan to study, work (legally) or live in Italy. Obtaining one is never a pleasant experience; it involves long queues and the frustration of arriving at the counter only to find you don't have the necessary documents.

The exact requirements, like specific documents and *marche da bollo* (official stamps), can change. In general, you will need a valid passport (if possible containing a stamp with your date of entry into Italy), a special visa issued in your own country if you are planning to study (for non-EU citizens), four passport photos and proof of your ability to support

yourself financially. You can apply at the *ufficio stranieri* (foreigners' bureau) of the police station closest to where you're staying.

EU citizens do not require a *permesso di soggiorno*.

## Study Visas

Non-EU citizens who want to study at a university or language school in Italy must have a study visa. These can be obtained from your nearest Italian embassy or consulate. You will normally require confirmation of your enrolment, proof of payment of fees and adequate funds to support yourself. The visa covers only the period of the enrolment. This type of visa is renewable within Italy but, again, only with confirmation of ongoing enrolment and proof that you are able to support yourself (bank statements are preferred).

## VOLUNTEERING

### Concordia International Volunteer Projects

(☎ 01273 422218; [www.concordia-iyv.org.uk](http://www.concordia-iyv.org.uk); 19 North St, Portslade, Brighton BN41 1DH, UK) Short-term community-based projects covering the environment, archaeology and the arts. You might find yourself working as a volunteer on a restoration project or in a nature reserve.

**European Youth Portal** ([http://europa.eu.int/youth/working/index\\_eu\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/youth/working/index_eu_en.html)) Has various links suggesting volunteering options across Europe. Narrow down the search to Italy, where you will find more specific links on volunteering.

### Italian Association for Education, Exchanges & Intercultural Activities (AFSAI)

(☎ 06 537 03 32; [www.afsai.org](http://www.afsai.org); Viale dei Colli Portuensi 345, Rome) Financed by the EU, this voluntary program runs projects of six to 12 months for those aged between 16 and 25 years. Knowledge of Italian is required.

### World Wide Organisation of Organic Farming

([www.wwof.it](http://www.wwof.it)) For a membership fee of €25 this organisation provides a list of farms looking for volunteer workers.

## WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Italy is not a dangerous country for women to travel in. Clearly, as with anywhere in the world, women travelling alone need to take certain precautions and, in some parts of the country, be prepared for more than their fair share of unwanted attention. Eye-to-eye contact is the norm in Italy's daily flirtatious interplay. Eye contact can become outright staring the further south you travel.

Lone women may find it difficult to remain alone. In many places, local *Lotharios* will try it on with exasperating insistence, which

can be flattering or a pain. Foreign women are particular objects of male attention in tourist towns like Florence and more generally in the south. Usually the best response to undesired advances is to ignore them. If that doesn't work, politely tell your interlocutors you're waiting for your *marito* (husband) or *fidanzato* (boyfriend) and, if necessary, walk away. Avoid becoming aggressive as this may result in an unpleasant confrontation. If all else fails, approach the nearest member of the police.

Watch out for men with wandering hands on crowded buses. Either keep your back to the wall or make a loud fuss if someone starts fondling your behind. A loud '*Che schifo!*' (How disgusting!) will usually do the trick. If a more serious incident occurs, report it to the police, who are then required to press charges.

Women travelling alone should use their common sense. Avoid walking alone in dark streets, and look for hotels that are central (unsafe areas are noted in this book). Women should avoid hitchhiking alone. Use some dress sense, too. Skimpy beachwear is not a good idea in the south (except perhaps at the beach), and especially in more conservative areas, such as the smaller towns.

## WORK

It is illegal for non-EU citizens to work in Italy without a *permesso di lavoro* (work permit), but trying to obtain one can be time-consuming. EU citizens are allowed to work in Italy but, like Italian citizens, require a *codice fiscale* (tax-file number).

Immigration laws require non-EU workers to be 'legalised' through their employers, and this applies even to cleaners and babysitters. The employers then pay pension and health-insurance contributions. This doesn't mean there aren't employers willing to take people without the right papers.

Work options depend on a number of factors (eg location, length of stay, nationality and qualifications) but, in the major cities at least, job possibilities for English speakers can be surprisingly plentiful. Go armed with a CV (if possible in Italian) and be persistent.

Jobs are advertised in local newspapers and magazines, such as Rome's *Porta Portese* (weekly) and *Wanted in Rome* (fortnightly) or *Secondamano* in Milan, and you can also place an ad yourself. A useful guide is *Living*,

*Studying and Working in Italy* by Travis Neighbor Ward and Monica Larner.

The most easily secured jobs are short-term work in bars, hostels, on farms, babysitting and volunteering (in return for accommodation and some expenses paid; see opposite). An obvious work source for English-speaking foreigners is teaching English. Most of the reputable language schools will only hire people who hold a work permit. The more professional schools will require you to have a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) certificate.

Some useful organisations to start the job hunt:

**Au Pair International** (☎ 051 636 01 45; [www.au-pair-international.com](http://www.au-pair-international.com); Via Sante Vincenzi 46, Bologna) Organises au pair jobs in Italian families for women aged 18 to 30. EU citizens are preferred, but citizens of countries such as Australia, Canada and the USA can be placed for up to three months.

**British Institutes** (Map pp268-9; ☎ 02 439 00 41; [www.britishinstitutes.it](http://www.britishinstitutes.it); Via Leopardi 8, Milan) Recruits English-speaking teachers. Italian essential.

**Cambridge School** (☎ 045 800 31 54; [www.cambridge-school.it](http://www.cambridge-school.it); Via Rosmini 6, Verona) Another major employer of English teachers.

**Center for Cultural Exchange** (☎ 312 944 25 44; [www.cci-exchange.com](http://www.cci-exchange.com); 746 North LaSalle Dr, Chicago, IL 60654, USA) A nonprofit cultural-exchange organisation that offers short-term internships in Italy.

**European Youth Portal** ([http://europa.eu.int/youth/working/index\\_eu\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/youth/working/index_eu_en.html)) Has various links suggesting work and volunteering options across Europe. You can narrow down the search to Italy, where you will find pages of general work links and more specific links on things like au pair opportunities, seasonal work and volunteering.

**Recruitaly** ([www.recruitaly.it](http://www.recruitaly.it)) For graduates looking for long-term employment in Italy, this useful website links up to professional employers.

# Transport

## CONTENTS

<b>Getting There &amp; Away</b>	<b>890</b>
Entering The Country	890
Air	890
Land	893
Sea	896
<b>Getting Around</b>	<b>896</b>
Air	896
Bicycle	896
Boat	897
Bus	897
Car & Motorcycle	897
Hitching	900
Local Transport	900
Train	900

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

Competition between airlines means you should be able to pick up a reasonably priced fare to Italy, even from as far away as Australia. If you live in Europe, you'll often find good deals to and from many Italian cities with a variety of low-cost airlines. On the other hand, the per person carbon emissions of flying are greater than, say, travelling by train. There are plenty of rail and bus connections, especially with northern Italy. Car and passenger ferries operate to ports in Albania, Corsica, Croatia, Greece, Malta, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey.

Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked online at [www.lonelyplanet.com/travel\\_services](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services).

### THINGS CHANGE

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

## ENTERING THE COUNTRY

Citizens of the 27 European Union (EU) member states and Switzerland can travel to Italy with their national identity card alone. If such countries do not issue ID cards – as in the UK – travellers must carry a full valid passport. All other nationalities must have a valid passport.

If applying for a visa (see p887), check that your passport's expiry date is at least six months away. If not an EU citizen, you may be required to fill out a landing card (at airports).

By law you are supposed to have your passport or ID card with you at all times. It doesn't happen often, but it could be embarrassing if you are asked by the police to produce a document and you don't have it with you. You will need one of these documents for police registration when you take a hotel room.

In theory, there are no passport checks at land crossings from neighbouring countries, as all are members of the Schengen zone (in which border controls have been eliminated). In fact, random customs controls still take place when crossing between Italy and Switzerland.

Airport security is tighter than ever. Check the latest restrictions on what can and cannot be carried on flights as hand-held luggage.

## AIR

High seasons are generally June to September, Christmas and Easter, although it depends in part on your destination. Shoulder season is often from mid-September to the end of October and again in April. Low season is generally November to March.

### Airports & Airlines

The country's main intercontinental gateway is the **Leonardo da Vinci Airport** (Fiumicino; ☎ 06 6 59 51; [www.adr.it](http://www.adr.it)) in Rome, but many low-cost carriers land at Rome's **Ciampino Airport** (☎ 06 6 59 51; [www.adr.it](http://www.adr.it)) – see p174 for more details. Regular intercontinental flights also serve Milan's **Malpensa Airport** (☎ 02 7485 2200; [www.sea-aeroportomilano.it](http://www.sea-aeroportomilano.it)), which is located 50km



from the city. Plenty of flights from other European cities fly to regional capitals (see p892 for more information).

Many European and international airlines compete with the country's national carrier, Alitalia. Listed here are some of the more frequent carriers, with Italian contact telephone numbers unless otherwise stated:

**Aerlingus** (E); ☎ 02434 5 83 26; www.aerlingus.com)

**Air Berlin** (AB); ☎ 199 400737; www.airberlin.com)

**Air Canada** (AC); ☎ 06 6501 1462; www.aircanada.com)

**Air Dolomiti** (EN); ☎ 045 288 61 40; www.airdolomiti.it)

**Air France** (AF); ☎ 848 884466; www.airfrance.com)

**Air Malta** (KM); ☎ 199 259103; www.airmalta.com)

**Air Transat** (TS); ☎ 800 873233; www.airtransat.it)

**Alitalia** (AZ); ☎ 06 22 22; www.alitalia.com)

**American Airlines** (AA); ☎ 06 6605 3169; www.aa.com)

**Blu Express** (BV); ☎ 199 419777; www.blu-express.com)

**Blue Panorama** (BV); ☎ 06 9895 6666; www.blue-panorama.com)

**BMI** (BD); ☎ in UK 0870 6070555; www.flybmi.com)

**British Airways** (BA); ☎ 199 712266; www.britishairways.com)

**Brussels Airlines** (SN); ☎ 899 800903; www.flysn.com)

**Clickair** (XG); ☎ 800 25425247; www.clickair.com)

**EasyJet** (U2); ☎ 899 676789; www.easyjet.com)

**Emirates Airlines** (EK); ☎ 06 4520 6070; www.emirates.com)

**Eurofly** (GJ); ☎ 800 4590581; www.eurofly.it)

**FlyGlobeSpan** (Y2); ☎ in UK 08712 710415; www.flyglobespan.com)

**Germanwings** (4U); ☎ 91 625 97 04, in Germany 0900-1919100; www15.germanwings.com)

**Jet2** (LS); ☎ 199 404023; www.jet2.com)

**KLM** (KL); ☎ 199 414207; www.klm.com)

**Lufthansa** (LH); ☎ 199 400044; www.lufthansa.com)

**Meridiana** (IG); ☎ 892928; www.meridiana.it)

**MyAir** (8I); ☎ 892444; www.myair.com)

**Qantas** (QF); ☎ 848 350010; www.qantas.com.au)

**Ryanair** (FR); ☎ 899 678910; www.ryanair.com)

**Singapore Airlines** (SQ); ☎ 02 777 29 21; www.singaporeair.com)

**Sky Europe** (NE); ☎ 166 205304; www.skyeurope.com)

**Swiss** (LX); ☎ 848 868120; www.swiss.com)

**Thai Airways International** (TG); ☎ 02 890 03 51; www.thaiair.com)

**Thomson Fly** (TOM); ☎ in UK 0871 231 4691; www.thomsonfly.com)

**Transavia** (HV); ☎ 899 009901; www.transavia.com)

**TUIfly** (X3); ☎ 199 192692; www.tui.com)

**United Airlines** (UA); ☎ 02 6963 3707; www.united.com)

**US Airways** (US); ☎ 848 813177; www.usairways.com)

**Vueling** (VY); ☎ 199 308830; www.vueling.com)

**Windjet** (IV); ☎ 892020; w2.volawindjet.it)

**Wizz** (W6); ☎ 199 259100; http://wizzair.com)

## Tickets

The internet is increasingly becoming the easiest way of locating and booking reasonably priced seats. This is especially so for flights from around Europe, regardless of whether you are flying with major carriers like Alitalia or low-cost airlines.

Full-time students and those under 26 sometimes have access to discounted fares, especially on longer-haul flights from beyond Europe. You have to show a document proving your date of birth or a valid International Student Identity Card (ISIC) when buying your ticket. Other cheap deals include the discounted tickets released to travel agents and specialist discount agencies.

There is no shortage of online agents:

- www.bookingbuddy.com
- www.cheapflights.com
- www.cheaptickets.com
- www.discount-tickets.com
- www.ebookers.com
- www.expedia.com
- www.flightline.co.uk
- www.flynor.com
- www.kayak.com
- www.lastminute.com
- www.openjet.com
- www.opodo.com
- www.orbitz.com
- www.planesimple.co.uk
- www.priceline.com
- www.skyscanner.net
- www.travelocity.co.uk
- www.tripadvisor.com

## Africa

From South Africa many major airlines fly to Italy, including British Airways from Cape Town and Johannesburg through the UK; Air France with connections throughout Europe; and Lufthansa connecting through Germany. Ethiopian Airlines has connecting flights from many African capitals to Rome via Addis Ababa. In South Africa, try **Flight Centre** (☎ 0860 400 727; www.flightcentre.co.za) or **STA Travel** (☎ 0861 781 781; www.statravel.co.za).

## Asia

STA Travel proliferates in Asia, with branches in **Bangkok** (☎ 02-236 0262; www.statravel.co.th), **Singapore** (☎ 6737 7188; www.statravel.com.sg), **Hong Kong** (☎ 2730 2800; www.hkst.com) and **Japan** (☎ 03 5391 2922; www.statravel.co.jp). Another resource in Japan is **No 1 Travel**

## CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely on, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel as a global benefit but believes we have a responsibility to limit our personal contribution to global warming.

### Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motorised travel generates CO<sub>2</sub> (the main cause of human-induced climate change), but planes are the worst offenders – not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a year.

### Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the level of greenhouse gases they are responsible for with financial contributions to sustainable schemes that reduce global warming – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, supports the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff travel.

For more information check out our website: [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com).

(☎ 03 3205 6073; [www.no1-travel.com](http://www.no1-travel.com)); in Hong Kong try **Four Seas Travel** (☎ 2200 7760; [www.fourseastravel.com](http://www.fourseastravel.com)).

Singapore Air flies nonstop to Rome from three to seven times per week. Thai Airways runs regular flights direct from Bangkok to Rome, as well as to Milan's Malpensa airport.

### Australia

Flights from Australia to Europe generally go via Southeast Asian capitals. Qantas and Alitalia have occasional direct flights or, more regularly, trips that make one stop en route. Most of the major Asian airlines have flights between Australian state capitals and Rome, with a change of flight in Asia along the way. Flights from Perth can be a few hundred dollars cheaper.

**STA Travel** (☎ 134 782; [www.statravel.com.au](http://www.statravel.com.au)) and **Flight Centre** (☎ 133 133; [www.flightcentre.com.au](http://www.flightcentre.com.au)) are major dealers in cheap airfares, although discounted fares can also be found at your local travel agent. For online bookings, try [www.travel.com.au](http://www.travel.com.au).

### Canada

Alitalia flies direct to Milan from Toronto, with connections on to Rome. Air Transat flies nonstop from Montreal to Rome in summer.

Air Canada flies daily from Toronto to Rome, direct and via Montreal and Frankfurt. British Airways, Air France, KLM and Lufthansa all fly to Italy via their respective home countries. Canada's main student travel organisation is **Travel Cuts** (☎ 1 866 246 9762; [www.travelcuts.com](http://www.travelcuts.com)), with offices in all major cities.

### Continental Europe

All national European carriers offer services to Italy. The largest, Air France, Lufthansa and KLM, have offices in all major European cities. Italy's national carrier, Alitalia, has a huge range of offers on many European destinations. Check out the low-cost airlines too (see Airports & Airlines, p890).

### New Zealand

Singapore Airlines flies from Auckland through Singapore to Rome's Fiumicino – sometimes with more than one stop. Air New Zealand flies via London. **Flight Centre** (☎ 0800 243544; [www.flightcentre.co.nz](http://www.flightcentre.co.nz)) and **STA Travel** (☎ 0800 474400; [www.statravel.co.nz](http://www.statravel.co.nz)) have offices in Auckland as well as in various other cities.

### UK & Ireland

The cheapest way to fly between the UK or Ireland and Italy is, generally, the no-frills way. **EasyJet** ([www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)) flies to Milan, Naples, Palermo, Pisa, Rome and Venice. Irish **Ryanair**

([www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)) has numerous destinations connecting various airports in the UK (especially London Stansted) and Ireland (and elsewhere in Europe) with Italian destinations, including Alghero, Ancona, Bergamo, Bologna, Brescia, Brindisi, Bari, Cagliari, Cuneo, Genoa, Lamezia (Calabria), Milan, Olbia, Palermo, Parma, Perugia, Pescara, Pisa, Rimini, Rome, Trapani, Trieste, Turin and Venice. Some of these routes are seasonal. **BMI Baby** ([www.bmibaby.com](http://www.bmibaby.com)) flies from Birmingham to Bergamo and Rome. Prices vary wildly according to season and depend on how far in advance you book.

The two national airlines linking the UK and Italy are British Airways and Alitalia, both operating regular flights to Rome, Milan, Venice, Florence, Naples, Palermo, Turin and Pisa.

**STA Travel** (☎ 0871 230 0040; [www.statravel.co.uk](http://www.statravel.co.uk)) and **Trailfinders** (☎ 0845 050 5945; [www.trailfinders.com](http://www.trailfinders.com)), with offices throughout the UK, sell discounted and student tickets.

Most British travel agents are registered with the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA). If you have paid for your flight with an ABTA-registered agent who then goes bust, ABTA will guarantee a refund or some alternative.

## USA

Alitalia has nonstop daily flights from New York's JFK airport to Rome Fiumicino and Milan Malpensa. Various European and US airlines fly into Rome and Milan, mostly via other European hubs such as Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Paris.

Discount travel agencies in the USA are known as consolidators. San Francisco is the ticket-consolidator capital of America, though good deals can be found in other big cities.

**STA Travel** (☎ 800 781 40 40; [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com)) has offices in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco and many more locations. Fares vary wildly depending on season, availability and luck. **Discover Italy** (☎ 1 866 878 7477; [www.discoveritaly.com](http://www.discoveritaly.com)) offers flight, hotel- and villa-booking services.

## LAND

There are plenty of options for entering Italy by train, bus or private vehicle. Bus is the cheapest option, but services are less frequent, less comfortable and significantly longer than the train. Check whether you require a visa to pass through any countries on your way.

## Border Crossings

The main points of entry to Italy from France are the coast road from Nice, which becomes the A10 motorway along the Ligurian coast, and the Mont Blanc tunnel near Chamonix, which connects with the A5 for Turin and Milan. From Switzerland, the Grand St Bernard tunnel also connects with the A5 and the Simplon tunnel connects with the SS33 road that leads to Lago Maggiore. From Austria, the Brenner Pass connects with the A22 to Bologna. The Gotthard tunnel (which will have a new parallel railway tunnel, the Gotthard Base tunnel, possibly by 2015) in Switzerland crosses the Swiss Alps into the Swiss canton of Ticino, from where the N2 highway heads south into Italy via Lugano. All these tunnels are open year-round. Other mountain passes are often closed in winter and sometimes even in autumn and spring. Make sure you have snow chains if driving in winter.

Regular trains on two lines connect Italy with France in the west (one along the coast and the other via the French Alps to Turin). Trains from Milan head for Switzerland and on into France and the Netherlands. Two main lines head for the main cities in Austria and on into Germany, France or Eastern Europe. Those crossing the frontier at the Brenner Pass go to Innsbruck, Stuttgart and Munich. Those crossing at Tarvisio in the east proceed to Vienna, Salzburg and Prague. The main international train line to Slovenia crosses near Trieste.

## Bus

**Eurolines** ([www.eurolines.com](http://www.eurolines.com)) is a consortium of European coach companies that operates across Europe with offices in all major European cities. Italy-bound buses head to Milan, Rome, Florence, Siena, Venice and other Italian cities and all come equipped with on-board toilet facilities.

### BUS PASSES

**Eurolines** ([www.eurolines.com](http://www.eurolines.com)) offers a low-season pass valid for 15/30 days that costs €199/299 (€169/229 for under-26s and senior citizens over 60). This pass allows unlimited travel between 40 European cities. Italian cities on the route are Milan, Venice, Florence, Siena and Rome. Fares increase to €329/439 (€279/359) between June and mid-September.

## Car & Motorcycle

### CONTINENTAL EUROPE

When driving in Europe, always carry proof of ownership of a private vehicle and evidence of third-party insurance. If driving a vehicle registered and insured in an EU country, your home country insurance is sufficient. Theoretically, the International Insurance Certificate, also known as the Carta Verde (Green Card), is no longer required for EU-registered cars. Unfortunately, in case of an accident, police may still ask for it!

Ask your insurer for a European Accident Statement (EAS) form, which can simplify matters in the event of an accident.

A European breakdown assistance policy is a good investment. If you don't have one, assistance can be obtained through the Automobile Club d'Italia (see p898).

Every vehicle travelling across an international border should display a nationality plate of its country of registration (unless it has the standard EU number plates with the blue strip and country ID).

You can book a car before you leave home (for multinational car-rental agencies see p898), but you can sometimes find better deals by dealing with local agencies as you go (check individual chapters for contact information). Check with your credit-card company to see if it offers a Collision Damage Waiver, which covers you for additional damage if you use that card to pay for the car. Many car-rental agencies request that you bring the car back with the tank filled and will charge you extra if it's not. Many companies do not rent cars or bikes to drivers aged 25 and younger.

Italy is made for motorcycle touring, and motorcyclists swarm into the country in summer to meander along the scenic roads. With a bike you rarely have to book ahead for ferries and can enter restricted-traffic areas in cities. Crash helmets are compulsory. The US-based **Beach's Motorcycle Adventures** (☎ 1 716 773 4960; [www.beachs-mca.com](http://www.beachs-mca.com)) can arrange two-week tours around various parts of Italy in May and October. Riders need to have a motorcycle licence – an international one is best.

One interesting way to get around Italy is to rent or buy a camper van. Check **IdeaMerge** ([www.ideamerge.com](http://www.ideamerge.com)) for where you can lease or buy vehicles.

## UK

You can take your car across to France by ferry or via the Channel Tunnel on **Eurotunnel** (☎ 0870 535 3535; [www.eurotunnel.com](http://www.eurotunnel.com)). The latter runs four crossings (35 minutes) an hour between Folkestone and Calais in the high season.

For breakdown assistance, both the **AA** (☎ for European breakdown cover 0800 085 7253; [www.theaa.com](http://www.theaa.com)) and the **RAC** (☎ in UK 08705 722722; [www.rac.co.uk](http://www.rac.co.uk)) offer comprehensive cover in Europe.

## Train

In the era of low-cost air travel, rail seems to have become outmoded. Hold your horses! Depending on distances travelled, rail can be highly competitive. Those travelling from neighbouring countries to northern Italy will find it is frequently only marginally longer and/or more expensive. There are advantages. You avoid all the airport hassle and generally can rely on trains being on time. Trains are generally more civilised than cattle class on airplanes, with more space and dining cars.

Those travelling longer distances (say, from London, Spain, the northern half of Germany or Eastern Europe) will no doubt find flying cheaper and quicker. Even then, if you have time, loathe airports, have a fear of flying or simply enjoy moving a little more slowly, trains can have a charm all of their own.

It is also a much greener way to go – the same trip by rail can contribute up to 10 times less carbon dioxide emissions per person than by air. As Europe's cutting-edge, high-speed rail network is expanded in coming years, it will become increasingly difficult to talk of rail travel being slow!

## CONTINENTAL EUROPE

Thomas Cook's *European Rail Timetable* has a complete listing of train schedules. The timetable is updated monthly and available from Thomas Cook offices worldwide and online ([www.thomascookpublishing.com](http://www.thomascookpublishing.com)) for around UK£14. It is always advisable, and sometimes compulsory, to book seats on international trains to/from Italy. Some of the main international services include transport for private cars. Consider taking long journeys overnight, as the €20 or so extra for a sleeper costs substantially less than Italian hotels.

## UK

The passenger train **Eurostar** (☎ 08705 186186; [www.eurostar.com](http://www.eurostar.com)) travels between London and

Paris, and London and Brussels. Alternatively you can get a train ticket that includes crossing the Channel by ferry.

For the latest fare information on journeys to Italy, including the Eurostar, contact the

**Rail Europe Travel Centre** (☎ in UK 08448 484064; [www.raileurope.co.uk](http://www.raileurope.co.uk)). Another source of rail information for all of Europe is **Rail Choice** ([www.railchoice.com](http://www.railchoice.com)). Travel times depend in large measure on what connections you make in Paris.

## RAIL PASSES

The InterRail Pass is available to people who have lived in Europe for six months or more. It can be bought at most major stations and student travel outlets.

Eurail passes are for those who have lived in Europe for less than six months and are supposed to be bought outside Europe. They are available from leading travel agencies and online at [www.eurail.com](http://www.eurail.com).

Seniors travelling from the UK should ask at the Rail Europe Travel Centre about possible discounts on rail travel in continental Europe (see opposite).

### InterRail Passes

**InterRail** ([www.interrail.net](http://www.interrail.net), [www.interrailnet.com](http://www.interrailnet.com)) passes are for people who have been resident in Europe for more than six months. A Global pass encompassing 30 countries comes in four versions, ranging from five days' travel in 10 days to a full month's travel. These in turn come with three prices: adult 1st class, adult 2nd class and youth 2nd class. The one-month pass costs, respectively, €809/599/399. The InterRail one-country pass for Italy can be used for three, four, six or eight days in one month. For the eight-day pass you pay €309/229/149/154.50/114.50 for adult 1st class/adult 2nd class/youth 2nd class/child 1st class/child 2nd class. Children's passes are for kids aged 4 to 11, youth passes for people aged 12 to 25, and adult passes for those 26 and over. Children aged three and under travel for free. Cardholders get discounts on travel in the country where they purchase the ticket.

### Eurail Passes

Eurail passes are good for travel in 20 European countries (not including the UK), but forget it if you intend to travel mainly in Italy. People aged over 26 pay for a 1st-class Global Pass and those aged under 26 for a 2nd-class-pass version.

Passes are valid for 15 days, 21 days, or for one, two or three months; the 1st-class adult pass costs €511/662/822/1161/1432. The 2nd-class youth version comes in at €332/429/535/755/933. Children aged between four and 11 pay half-price for the 1st-class passes.

The 1st-class Saver is for groups of two or more and brings a 15% reduction in the standard Global Pass adult prices. Another option is a Global Pass for 10/15 days' travel within two months, which costs €603/792. The 15-day version costs €675/515 for the Saver/2nd-class youth versions.

### Eurail Selectpasses

This provides between five and 15 days of unlimited travel within a two-month period in three to five bordering countries (from a total of 23 possible countries). As with Global passes, those aged over 26 pay for a 1st-class pass, while those aged under 26 can get a cheaper, 2nd-class pass. The basic five-day pass for three countries costs €324/275/211 for the 1st-class adult/Saver/2nd-class youth versions.

### Regional & National Passes

Eurail also offers an Italy national pass and several two-country regional passes (France-Italy, Spain-Italy and Greece-Italy). Choose from three to 10 days' train travel in a two-month period for any of these passes. Single-country and regional passes come in five versions: 1st- and 2nd-class adult, 1st-class and 2nd-class adult Saver, and 2nd-class youth. The 10-day regional pass for Italy and France costs €442/386/386/338/295. The 10-day Italy pass costs €335/271/285/231/221. As with all Eurail passes, make sure you will be covering a lot of ground to make these worthwhile. Check some sample prices in euros of where you intend to travel on the **Trenitalia** ([www.trenitalia.com](http://www.trenitalia.com)) website to compare.

## SEA

Dozens of ferry companies connect Italy with virtually every other Mediterranean country. The helpful search engine **Traghettonline** ([www.traghettonline.com](http://www.traghettonline.com), in Italian) covers all the ferry companies in the Mediterranean; you can also book online. Tickets are most expensive in summer, and many routes are only operated in summer. Prices for vehicles usually vary according to their size.

Ferry companies and their destinations:

**Agoudimos Lines** (☎ 0831 52 14 08; [www.agoudimos.it](http://www.agoudimos.it); Via Giannelli 23, Brindisi) Brindisi to Vlore (Albania) and Corfu, Igoumenitsa, Paxos (Greece), Bari to Durrës (Albania) and to Cephalonia, Igoumenitsa and Patras (Greece).

**Blue Star Ferries** (☎ 080 52 11 416; [www.bluestarferries.com](http://www.bluestarferries.com)) Bari and Ancona to Patras and Igoumenitsa (Greece).

**Endeavor Lines/Hellenic Mediterranean Lines** (☎ 0831 52 85 31; [www.ferries.gr](http://www.ferries.gr); Corso Garibaldi 8, Brindisi) Brindisi to Corfu, Igoumenitsa and Patras, and to Cephalonia – from where you can get a ferry to Zante (all in Greece).

**Grandi Navi Veloci** (☎ 010 209 45 91; [www1.gnv.it](http://www1.gnv.it)) Genoa to Tangiers (Morocco) via Barcelona (Spain), and Tunis (Tunisia).

**Grimaldi Ferries** (☎ 081 49 64 44; [www.grimaldi-ferries.com](http://www.grimaldi-ferries.com)) Plies the Mediterranean from Civitavecchia, Livorno, Salerno and Palermo to Tunis (Tunisia), Porto Vecchio (Corsica), Toulon (France) and Barcelona (Spain).

**Jadrolinija** (☎ in Croatia 51 666 111; [www.jadrolinija.hr](http://www.jadrolinija.hr)) From Ancona to destinations along the Croatian coast, including Split and Zadar and from Bari to Dubrovnik.

**Marmara Lines** (☎ 071 207 61 65; [www.marmaralines.com](http://www.marmaralines.com)) Ancona to Cesme (Turkey).

**Minoan Lines** (☎ in Greece 2810 399800; [www.minoan.gr](http://www.minoan.gr)) Venice and Ancona to Igoumenitsa, Corfu or Patras (Greece).

**Montenegro Lines** (☎ 080 578 98 11; [www.morfimare.it](http://www.morfimare.it)) Reservations via Morfimore Travel Agency (see p708); Bari and Ancona to Bar (Montenegro).

**Skenderbeg Lines** (☎ 0831 52 54 48; [www.skenderbeglines.com](http://www.skenderbeglines.com); Corso Garibaldi 88, Brindisi) Brindisi to Vlore (Albania).

**SNAV** (☎ 071 207 61 16; [www.snav.it](http://www.snav.it)) Brindisi to Corfu and Paxos (Greece), Ancona to Split (Croatia) and Pescara to Hvar (Croatia).

**Superfast** (☎ 080 528 28 28; [www.superfast.com](http://www.superfast.com)) Ancona and Bari to Igoumenitsa and Patras (Greece), Bari to Corfu (Greece).

**Tirrenia Navigazione** (☎ 892123; [www.tirrenia.it](http://www.tirrenia.it)) Bari to Durrës (Albania) and Genoa to Tunis (Tunisia).

**Ventouris Ferries** (☎ Greece/Albania line 080 521 76 99/521 27 56; [www.ventouris.gr](http://www.ventouris.gr)) Bari to Igoumenitsa, Corfu (Greece), and Durrës (Albania).

**Virtu Ferries** (☎ 095 53 57 11; [www.virtuferries.com](http://www.virtuferries.com)) Catania and Pozzallo to Malta.

## GETTING AROUND

You can reach almost any destination in Italy by train, bus or ferry, and services are efficient and cheap; for longer distances there are plenty of domestic air services.

Your own wheels give you the most freedom, but *benzina* (petrol) and autostrada (motorway) tolls are expensive and Italian drivers have a style all their own: the stress of driving and parking in a big Italian city could outweigh the delights of puttering about elsewhere in the country. One solution might be to take public transport between large cities and rent a car only for country drives.

## AIR

The privatised national airline, Alitalia, is the main domestic carrier. Smaller airlines have brought competition, although tough times have seen some close. Among those listed at the beginning of the chapter (see p890) EasyJet, Meridiana, MyAir and Windjet operate domestic flights. **AirAlps** (A6; ☎ 06 2222; [www.airalps.at](http://www.airalps.at)) has short-range domestic flights – book through Alitalia.

Alitalia is generally fairly expensive, but you should enquire about possible discounted rates for young people, families, seniors and weekend travellers, as well as advance-purchase deals. Airport taxes are factored into the price of your ticket.

## BICYCLE

Cycling is a popular pastime in Italy. There are no special road rules, but you would be wise to equip yourself with a helmet and lights. With good reason, you cannot take bikes onto the autostradas. If you plan to bring your own bike, check with your airline for any additional costs. The bike will need to be disassembled and packed for the journey. Make sure you include a few tools, spare parts and a hefty bike lock and chain.

Bikes can be taken on any train carrying the bicycle logo. The cheapest way to do this is to buy a separate bicycle ticket (€3.50, or €5 to €12 on Intercity, Eurostar and Euronight trains), available even at the self-service kiosks. You can use this ticket for 24 hours,



making a day trip quite economical. Bikes dismantled and stored in a bag can be taken for free, even on night trains, and all ferries allow free bicycle passage.

In the UK, **Cyclists' Touring Club** (☎ 0844 736 8450; [www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk)) can help you plan your tour or organise a guided tour. Membership costs £12 for under-18s and students, and £36 for adults.

## Hire

Bikes are available for hire in most Italian towns, and many places have both city and mountain bikes. In Florence, for instance, there are several private outlets and a municipal scheme. Rental costs for a city bike start at €10/30 per day/week.

## Purchase

If you shop around, bargain prices for bikes range from about €100 for a standard women's bike without gears to €210 for a mountain bike with 16 gears.

## BOAT

*Navi* (large ferries) service Sicily and Sardinia, and *traghetti* (smaller ferries) and *aliscafi* (hydrofoils) service the smaller islands. The main embarkation points for Sardinia are Genoa, Livorno, Civitavecchia and Naples; for Sicily the main points are Naples and Villa San Giovanni in Calabria (near Reggio Calabria). The main points of arrival in Sardinia are Cagliari, Arbatax, Olbia and Porto Torres; in Sicily they're Palermo and Messina.

For a comprehensive guide to all ferry services into and out of Italy, check out **Traghettonline** ([www.traghettonline.com](http://www.traghettonline.com), in Italian). The website lists every route and includes links to ferry companies, where you can buy tickets or search for deals.

**Tirrenia Navigazione** (☎ 892123; [www.tirrenia.it](http://www.tirrenia.it)) is the main national ferry company and services most Italian ports.

Detailed information on ferry companies, prices and times for Sicily can be found on p894, and for Sardinia on p835. For other relevant destinations, see the Getting There & Away sections of individual chapters.

Many ferry services operate overnight, and travellers can choose between cabin accommodation in a two- to four-person cabin or even a dorm, or a *poltrona*, which is an airline-type armchair. Deck class (which allows you

to sit/sleep in the general lounge areas or on deck) is available only on some ferries. Most ferries carry vehicles.

## BUS

Numerous companies provide bus services in Italy, ranging from local routes meandering between villages to fast and reliable intercity connections. Buses are not always cheaper than the train but are often the only way to get to smaller towns.

It is usually possible to get bus timetables from local tourist offices. In larger cities most of the intercity bus companies have ticket offices or operate through agencies. In some villages and even good-size towns, tickets are sold in bars or on the bus.

Although it's usually not necessary to make reservations on buses, booking is advisable in the high season for overnight or long-haul trips.

## CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Italy boasts an extensive privatised network of autostradas, represented on road signs by a white A followed by a number on a green background. The main north-south link is the Autostrada del Sole (the 'Motorway of the Sun'), which extends from Milan to Reggio di Calabria (called the A1 from Milan to Rome, the A2 from Rome to Naples, and the A3 from Naples to Reggio di Calabria).

On most of the motorways you pay a toll. You can pay by cash or credit card as you leave the autostrada. For information on road tolls and passes, contact **Autostrade per l'Italia** (☎ 840 042121; [www.autostrade.it](http://www.autostrade.it), in Italian), where you can also get information on the latest traffic situation.

Off the beaten path you'll be doing most of your travelling on the larger system of *strade statali* (state highways). On maps they're represented by 'S' or 'SS' and can vary from toll-free, four-lane highways to two-lane main roads. The latter can be extremely slow, especially in mountainous regions. Two other categories, in descending order, are the similar *strade regionali* (highways administered by the regions, coded SR or R) and *strade provinciali* (administered at provincial level, SP or P), which you'll find in rural areas and connecting small villages. Finally there are *strade locali*, which might not even be paved or mapped. You'll often find the most beautiful scenery off the provincial and local roads.

## Automobile Associations

The ever-handy **Automobile Club d'Italia** (ACI; [www.aci.it](http://www.aci.it); Via Colombo 261, Rome) is a driver's best resource in Italy. To reach the ACI in a roadside emergency, dial ☎ 803116 from a land-line or ☎ 800 116800 from a mobile phone. Foreigners do not have to join but instead pay a per-incident fee. The numbers operate 24 hours a day.

## Bring Your Own Vehicle

Cars entering Italy from abroad need a valid national licence plate and an accompanying registration card. A car imported from a country that does not use the Latin alphabet will need to have its registration card translated at the nearest Italian consulate before entering the country. See also p894.

If you plan to ship your car, be aware that you must have less than a quarter of a tank of petrol. Unfortunately, you can't use your vehicle as a double for luggage storage; it's supposed to be empty apart from any necessary car-related items. All vehicles must be equipped with any necessary adjustments for the Italian market; for example, left-side-drive cars will need to have their headlamps adjusted.

## Driving Licence

All EU member states' driving licences are fully recognised throughout Europe. Those with a non-EU licence are supposed to obtain an International Driving Permit (IDP) to accompany their national licence, which your national automobile association can issue. It's valid for 12 months and must be kept with your proper licence. In practice, many non-EU licences (such as Australian, Canadian, New Zealand and US licences) are generally accepted by car-hire outfits in Italy. People who have held residency in Italy for one year or more must apply for an Italian driving licence (those holding an EU-country licence will have to exchange this for the Italian version). If you want to hire a car or motorcycle you'll need to produce your driving licence.

## Fuel & Spare Parts

Italy is covered by a good network of petrol stations. Prices are among the highest in Europe and vary from one service station (*benzinaio, stazione di servizio*) to another. Lead-free (*senza piombo*; 95 octane) costs up

to €1.11 per litre. A 98-octane variant costs as much as €1.20 per litre. Diesel (*gasolio*) comes in at €1.06 per litre. Prices fluctuate with world oil prices.

For spare parts, try the 24-hour ACI motorist assistance number, ☎ 803116, although it may be easier to seek out a garage.

## Hire

### CARS

Most tourist offices and hotels can provide information about car or motorcycle rental. To rent a car in Italy you have to be aged 25 or over and you have to have a credit card. Most firms will accept your standard licence or IDP for identification purposes. Consider hiring a small car, which you'll be grateful for when negotiating narrow city lanes.

Multinational car rental agencies:

**Autos Abroad** (☎ in UK 0845 029 1945; [www.autosabroad.com](http://www.autosabroad.com))

**Avis** (☎ 199 100133; [www.avisautonoleggio.it](http://www.avisautonoleggio.it))

**Budget** (☎ 199 307373; [www.budgetautonoleggio.it](http://www.budgetautonoleggio.it))

**Europcar** (☎ 199 307030; [www.europcar.com](http://www.europcar.com))

**Hertz** (☎ 08708 44 88 44; [www.hertz.it](http://www.hertz.it))

**Italy by Car** (☎ 800 846083; [www.italybycar.it](http://www.italybycar.it))

**Maggiore** (☎ 199 151120; [www.maggiore.it](http://www.maggiore.it))

### MOTORCYCLES

You'll have no trouble hiring a small Vespa or scooter. There are numerous rental agencies in cities where you'll also be able to hire larger motorcycles for touring. The average cost for a 50cc scooter (per person) is around €20/150 per day/week. Note that many places require a sizable deposit, and you could be responsible for reimbursing part of the cost of the bike if it is stolen.

Most agencies will not hire motorcycles to people under 18. See below for more details.

## Insurance

You need insurance when bringing your own car to Italy. See the Continental Europe section, p894.

Car-hire companies offer various insurance options. Be careful to understand what your liabilities and excess are and what waivers you are entitled to in case of accident or damage to the hire vehicle.

## Road Rules

In Italy, as in the rest of continental Europe, cars drive on the right side of the road and overtake on the left. Unless otherwise indi-

### Road Distances (km)

Bologna	681																
Florence	784	106															
Genoa	996	285	268														
Milan	899	218	324	156													
Naples	322	640	534	758	858												
Palermo	734	1415	1345	1569	1633	811											
Perugia	612	270	164	432	488	408	1219										
Reggio di Calabria	490	1171	1101	1325	1389	567	272	816									
Rome	482	408	302	526	626	232	1043	170	664								
Siena	714	176	70	296	394	464	1275	103	867	232							
Trento	892	233	339	341	218	874	1626	459	1222	641	375						
Trieste	995	308	414	336	420	948	1689	543	1445	715	484	279					
Turin	1019	338	442	174	139	932	1743	545	1307	702	460	349	551				
Venice	806	269	265	387	284	899	799	394	1296	567	335	167	165	415			
Verona	808	141	247	282	164	781	1534	377	1139	549	293	97	250	295	120		
		Bari	Bologna	Florence	Genoa	Milan	Naples	Palermo	Perugia	Reggio di Calabria	Rome	Siena	Trento	Trieste	Turin	Venice	

**Note**  
Distances between Palermo and mainland towns do not take into account the ferry from Reggio di Calabria to Messina. Add an extra hour to your journey time to allow for this crossing.

cated, you must always give way to cars entering an intersection from a road on your right. It is compulsory to wear front seat belts, as well as rear seat belts if the car is fitted with them. If you are caught not wearing a seat belt, you will be required to pay an on-the-spot fine.

A warning triangle (to be used in the event of a breakdown) is compulsory throughout Europe. Recommended accessories are a first-aid kit, spare-bulb kit and fire extinguisher. If your car breaks down and you get out of the vehicle, you risk a fine if you neglect to wear an approved yellow or orange safety vest (available at bicycle shops and outdoor stores).

Random breath tests take place in Italy. If you're involved in an accident while under the influence of alcohol, the penalties can be severe. The blood-alcohol limit is 0.05%.

The speed limit on the autostradas is 130km/h (on some motorways with three lanes in either direction, the limit can be raised to 150km/h), and on all other highways it is 110km/h. On minor, non-urban roads, it is up to 90km/h. In built-up areas,

the limit is 50km/h. Speeding fines follow EU standards and are proportionate with the number of kilometres that you are caught driving over the speed limit, reaching up to €2000 with possible suspension of your driving licence.

You don't need a licence to ride a scooter under 50cc but you should be aged 14 or over and you can't carry passengers or ride on an autostrada. Indeed, you should not venture on to an autostrada with a bike of less than 150cc. On all two-wheeled transport, helmets are required. The speed limit for a moped is 40km/h. To ride a motorcycle or scooter up to 125cc, you must be aged 16 or over and have a licence (a car licence will do). Helmets are compulsory. For motorcycles over 125cc you need a motorcycle licence.

You'll be able to enter most restricted traffic areas in Italian cities on a motorcycle without any problems, and traffic police generally turn a blind eye to motorcycles or scooters parked on footpaths.

All vehicles must use headlights at all times (day and night) on the autostradas. It is advisable for motorcycles on all roads at all times.

## HITCHING

Hitching is uncommon in Italy. Public transport is reliable (save for regular train and bus strikes) and most Italians would rather give up an arm than their car. Hitchhikers can be stranded for hours and women would be extremely unwise to hitch.

## LOCAL TRANSPORT

All the major cities have good transport systems, with bus and underground-train networks usually integrated. In Venice, your only options are by *vaporetti* (small passenger ferries) or to go on foot.

## Bus & Underground Trains

You must buy bus tickets before you board the bus and validate them once on board. If you get caught with an unvalidated ticket you will be fined on the spot (up to €50 in most cities).

There are *metropolitane* (underground systems) in Rome, Milan, Naples and Turin (which has built the country's first automated metro line). Again, you must buy tickets and validate them before getting on the train, with fines of up to €50 if you don't. You can get a map of the network from tourist offices in the relevant city.

Every city or town of any size has an efficient *urbano* (city) and *extraurbano* (city, suburbs and outlying areas) system of buses that reach even the most remote of villages. Services can be limited (or nonexistent) on Sundays and holidays.

Tickets can be bought from a *tabaccaio* (tobacconist), newsstands, ticket booths or dispensing machines at bus stations and in underground stations, and usually cost around €1 to €1.20. Most large cities offer good-value 24-hour or daily tourist tickets.

## Taxi

You can usually find taxi ranks at train and bus stations or you can telephone for radio taxis. It's best to go to a designated taxi stand, as it's illegal for them to stop in the street if hailed. If you phone a taxi, bear in mind the meter starts running from when you've called rather than when it picks you up.

Charges vary somewhat from one region to another. In Milan, for instance, there is a minimum charge ranging from €3 to €6.10, depending on the time of day or night, plus €0.98 per km (rising to €1.47 per km after the

first €13.25). Most short city journeys cost between €10 and €15. Generally, no more than four people are allowed in one taxi.

## TRAIN

Trains in Italy are relatively cheap compared with other European countries, and the better categories of train are fast and comfortable.

**Trenitalia** (☎ 892021 in Italian; [www.trenitalia.com](http://www.trenitalia.com), [www.ferroviedellostato.it](http://www.ferroviedellostato.it)) is the partially privatised, state train system that runs most services. Other private Italian train lines are noted throughout this book.

There are several types of trains. Some stop at all or most stations, such as *regionale* or *interregionale* trains. Intercity (IC) trains are fast services that operate between major cities. Eurocity (EC) trains are the international version. High-speed *pendolini* and other fast services are collectively known as Eurostar Italia (ES), and some make fewer stops than others.

Quicker still, the Alta Velocità (High Speed) services (variously known as AV and ESA) that began operation on the new Turin–Milan–Bologna–Florence–Rome–Naples–Salerno line in late 2009 have revolutionised train travel on that route. Nonstop trains between Milan and Rome take three hours, at least 2½ hours less than any other standard service (an Intercity train takes 6¼ hours!) With stops in Bologna and Florence, the time is 3½ hours. Already in early 2009, fast trains using standard track had cut traditional travel times (3½ and four hours, respectively, on the Milan–Rome route). Prices vary according to the time of travel and how far in advance you book.

## Classes & Costs

There are 1st and 2nd classes on most Italian trains; a 1st-class ticket typically costs from a third to half more than the 2nd-class ticket.

### STAMP IT!

Countless foreigner travellers in Italy learn the hard way that their train tickets must be stamped in the yellow machines (usually found at the head of rail platforms) just before boarding. Failure to do so usually results in fines, although the cry of 'I didn't know' sometimes elicits an indulgent response from ticket controllers. So stamp that ticket!



Travel on Intercity, Eurostar and Alta Velocità trains means paying a supplement, determined by the distance you are travelling. This is included in the ticket, but if you have a standard ticket for, say, an *interregionale* and end up hopping on to a faster IC train, you will have to pay the difference on board. You can only board a Eurostar or Alta Velocità

train if you have a booking, so the problem does not arise in those cases.

For longer trips, the faster trains are generally worth the extra paid. On the Rome–Milan run, for instance, the difference in price in 2nd class between the 6¼-hour IC train and the 3½-hour run on the AV is €22.50.

For shorter hops (say, Venice–Padua or even Milan–Turin, for which there is at most a half-hour time gain for up to three times the price of a *regionale* ticket), the time gain is often not worth the extra money.

### Reservations

Reservations are obligatory on Eurostar and AV trains. Otherwise they're not and, generally, you should be fine without them. You can do this at railway station counters, selected travel agents and, when they haven't broken down, at the automated machines sprinkled around most stations. Reservations generally carry a fee of an extra €3.

### Train Passes

Trenitalia offers various discount passes. The one-year Carta Verde (Green Card, €40) is

for people between the ages of 12 and 26, and the Carta d'Argento (Silver Card, €30) is for seniors over 60. They provide discounts of between 10% and 15% on most trains and up to 25% off standard fares on international journeys beginning or ending in Italy. They're worth considering if you are staying in Italy for a while and planning to cover a fair amount of ground. Apply at train stations and most travel agents.

Other discount possibilities include the Amica and Familia options. The former can get you up to 20% off certain trips that are booked ahead, while the latter offers discounts for families of three to five people, of whom at least one must be an adult and one a child under 12. Ask at stations.

For information on various rail passes you can acquire before arrival in Italy, see p895.



# Health

## CONTENTS

<b>Before You Go</b>	<b>903</b>
Insurance	903
Recommended Vaccinations	903
Internet Resources	903
<b>In Transit</b>	<b>903</b>
Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)	903
Jet Lag	904
<b>In Italy</b>	<b>904</b>
Availability of Health Care	904
Traveller's Diarrhoea	904
Environmental Hazards	904
Travelling with Children	905
Women's Health	905
Sexual Health	905

## BEFORE YOU GO

While Italy has reasonable health care (although public hospitals tend to be less impressive the further south you travel), prevention is the key to staying healthy while abroad. A little planning before departure, particularly for pre-existing illnesses, will save trouble later. Bring medications in their original, clearly labelled containers. A signed and dated letter from your physician describing your medical conditions and medication, including generic names, is also a good idea. If carrying syringes or needles, be sure to have a physician's letter documenting their medical necessity. If you are embarking on a long trip, make sure your teeth are OK (dental treatment is expensive in Italy) and take your optical prescription with you.

### INSURANCE

If you're an EU citizen (or from Switzerland, Norway or Iceland), a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) covers you for most medical care in public hospitals free of charge, but not for emergency repatriation home or non-emergencies. The card is available from health centres and (in the UK) from post offices. Citizens from other countries should find out if there is a reciprocal arrangement for free medical care between their country and Italy (Australia,

for instance, has such an agreement; carry your Medicare card). If you do need health insurance, make sure you get a policy that covers you for the worst possible scenario, such as an accident requiring an emergency flight home. Find out in advance if your insurance plan will make payments directly to providers or reimburse you later for overseas health expenditures.

### RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS

No jabs are required to travel to Italy. The World Health Organization (WHO), however, recommends that all travellers should be covered for diphtheria, tetanus, the measles, mumps, rubella and polio, as well as hepatitis B.

### INTERNET RESOURCES

The WHO's publication *International Travel and Health* is revised annually and is available online at [www.who.int/ith](http://www.who.int/ith).

Other useful websites:

**[www.ageconcern.org.uk](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk)** Advice on travel for the elderly.

**[www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk)** General travel advice for the layperson.

**[www.mariestopes.org.uk](http://www.mariestopes.org.uk)** Information on women's health and contraception.

**[www.mdtravelhealth.com](http://www.mdtravelhealth.com)** Travel health recommendations for every country; updated daily.

## IN TRANSIT

### DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Blood clots may form in the legs during a plane flight, chiefly because of prolonged immobility (the longer the flight, the greater the risk).

The chief symptom of DVT is swelling or pain of the foot, ankle or calf, usually but not always on just one side. When a blood clot travels to the lungs, it may cause chest pain and breathing difficulties. Travellers with any of these symptoms should seek medical attention immediately.

To prevent the development of DVT on long-haul flights, you should walk about the cabin, contract the leg muscles while sitting,

drink plenty of fluids and avoid alcohol and tobacco.

## JET LAG

To avoid jet lag try drinking plenty of non-alcoholic fluids and eating light meals. Upon arrival, get exposure to natural sunlight and readjust your schedule (for meals, sleep etc) as soon as possible.

# IN ITALY

## AVAILABILITY OF HEALTH CARE

If you need an ambulance anywhere in Italy, call ☎ 118. For emergency treatment, head straight to the *pronto soccorso* (casualty) section of a public hospital, where you can also get emergency dental treatment.

Excellent health care is readily available throughout Italy, but standards can vary significantly. Pharmacists can give you valuable advice and sell over-the-counter medication for minor illnesses. They can also advise you when more specialised help is required and point you in the right direction. In major cities you are likely to find English-speaking doctors or a translator service available.

## TRAVELLER'S DIARRHOEA

If you develop diarrhoea, be sure to drink plenty of fluids, preferably in the form of an oral rehydration solution such as Dioralyte. If diarrhoea is bloody, persists for more than 72 hours or is accompanied by fever, shaking, chills or severe abdominal pain, you should seek medical attention.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

### Bites, Stings & Insect-Borne Diseases

Italian beaches are occasionally inundated with jellyfish. Their stings are painful but not dangerous. Dousing in vinegar will deactivate any stingers that have not fired. Calamine lotion, antihistamines and analgesics may reduce the reaction and relieve pain.

Italy's only dangerous snake, the viper, is found throughout the country except on Sardinia. To minimise the possibilities of being bitten, always wear boots, socks and long trousers when walking through undergrowth where snakes may be present. Don't put your hands into holes or crevices, and be careful when collecting firewood. Viper

bites do not cause instantaneous death, and an antivenin is widely available in pharmacies. Keep the victim calm and still, wrap the bitten limb tightly, as you would for a sprained ankle, and attach a splint to immobilise it. Seek medical help, if possible with the dead snake for identification. Don't attempt to catch the snake if there is a possibility of being bitten again. Tourniquets and sucking out the poison are now comprehensively discredited.

Always check all over your body if you have been walking through a potentially tick-infested area, as ticks can cause skin infections and other more serious diseases such as Lyme disease and tick-borne encephalitis. If a tick is found attached, press down around the tick's head with tweezers, grab the head and gently pull upwards. Avoid pulling the rear of the body as this may squeeze the tick's gut contents through the attached mouth parts into the skin, increasing the risk of infection and disease. Lyme disease begins with the spreading of a rash at the site of the bite, accompanied by fever, headache, extreme fatigue, aching joints and muscles, and severe neck stiffness. If untreated, symptoms usually disappear, but disorders of the nervous system, heart and joints can develop later. Treatment works best early in the illness – medical help should be sought. Symptoms of tick-borne encephalitis include blotches around the bite, which is sometimes pale in the middle, and headaches, stiffness and other flu-like symptoms (as well as extreme tiredness) appearing a week or two after the bite. Again, medical help must be sought.

Rabies is still found in Italy but only in isolated areas of the Alps. Any bite, scratch or even lick from a mammal in an area where rabies does exist should be scrubbed with soap and running water immediately and then cleaned thoroughly with an alcohol solution. Medical help should be sought.

Leishmaniasis is a group of parasitic diseases transmitted by sandflies and found in coastal parts of Italy. Cutaneous leishmaniasis affects the skin tissue and causes ulceration and disfigurement; visceral leishmaniasis affects the internal organs. Avoiding sandfly bites by covering up and using repellent is the best precaution against this disease.

## Heatstroke

Heatstroke occurs following excessive fluid loss with inadequate replacement of fluids and salt. Symptoms include headache, dizziness and tiredness. Dehydration is already happening by the time you feel thirsty – aim to drink sufficient water to produce pale, diluted urine. To treat heatstroke, drink water and/or fruit juice, and cool the body with cold water and fans. It is also recommended to drink rehydration fluids or salts, available from any pharmacy.

## Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. As ever, proper preparation will reduce the risks of getting it. Even on a hot day in the mountains, the weather can change rapidly, so carry waterproof garments, warm layers and a hat, and inform others of your route. Hypothermia starts with shivering, loss of judgment and clumsiness. Unless rewarming occurs, the sufferer deteriorates into apathy, confusion and coma. Prevent further heat loss by seeking shelter, warm, dry clothing, hot, sweet drinks and shared bodily warmth.

## TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN

Make sure children are up to date with routine vaccinations and discuss possible travel vaccines well before your departure as some vaccines are not suitable for children under a year. Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* includes travel health advice for younger children.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH

Emotional stress, exhaustion and travelling through different time zones can all contribute to an upset in a woman's menstrual pattern.

If using oral contraceptives, remember that some antibiotics, diarrhoea and vomiting can stop the pill from working. Time zones, gastrointestinal upsets and antibiotics do not affect injectable contraception.

Travelling during pregnancy is usually possible, but always consult your doctor before planning your trip. The most risky times for travel are during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and after 30 weeks.

## SEXUAL HEALTH

Condoms are readily available but emergency contraception is not, so take the necessary precautions.

# Language

## CONTENTS

Pronunciation	906
Accommodation	907
Conversation & Essentials	907
Directions	908
Eating Out	908
Health	908
Language Difficulties	909
Numbers	909
Emergencies	909
Paperwork	909
Question Words	909
Shopping & Services	909
Time & Dates	910
Transport	910
Travel With Children	911

Italian is a Romance language related to French, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian. The Romance languages belong to the Indo-European family, which includes English. In addition, as English has borrowed many words from Romance languages, you will recognise many Italian words.

Modern literary Italian began to develop in the 13th and 14th centuries, predominantly through the works of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, who wrote chiefly in the Florentine dialect. The language drew on its Latin heritage and many dialects to develop into the standard Italian of today. Although many dialects are spoken in everyday conversation, standard Italian is the national language of schools, media and literature, and is understood throughout the country.

If you've managed to gain more than the most fundamental grasp of the language, you will need to be aware that many older Italians still expect to be addressed by the third person polite, that is, *Lei* instead of *tu*. Also, it is not considered polite to use the greeting *ciao* when addressing strangers, unless they use it first; it's better to say *buongiorno* 'good day' (or *buona sera* 'good evening', as the case may be) and *arrivederci* 'goodbye' (or the more polite form, *arrivederla* 'goodbye'). We have used the

polite address for most of the phrases in this guide. Use of the informal address is indicated by 'inf'.

Italian has both masculine and feminine forms (in the singular they often end in 'o' and 'a' respectively). Where both forms are given in this guide, they are separated by a slash, with the masculine form first.

If you'd like a more comprehensive guide to the language, pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's *Italian Phrasebook*.

## PRONUNCIATION

Italian pronunciation isn't very difficult to master once you learn a few easy rules. Although some of the vowels and stress on double letters require careful practice for English speakers, it's easy enough to make yourself understood.

## Vowels

Vowel sounds are generally shorter in unstressed syllables:

- a** as in 'art', eg *caro* (dear); sometimes short, eg *amico* (friend)
- e** short, as in 'let', eg *mettere* (to put); long, as in 'there', eg *mela* (apple)
- i** short, as in 'it', eg *inizio* (start); long, as in 'marine', eg *vino* (wine)
- o** short, as in 'dot', eg *donna* (woman); long, as in 'port', eg *ora* (hour)
- u** as the 'oo' in 'book', eg *puro* (pure)

## Consonants

The pronunciation of most Italian consonants is similar to that of their English counterparts. Pronunciation of some consonants depends on certain rules:

- c** as the 'k' in 'kit' before **a**, **o**, **u** and **h**; as the 'ch' in 'choose' before **e** and **i**
- g** as the 'g' in 'get' before **a**, **o**, **u** and **h**; as the 'j' in 'jet' before **e** and **i**
- gli** as the 'lli' in 'million'
- gn** as the 'ny' in 'canyon'
- h** always silent (ie not pronounced)
- r** a rolled 'rr' sound
- sc** as the 'sh' in 'sheep' before **e** and **i**; as 'sk' before **a**, **o**, **u** and **h**
- z** at the beginning of a word, as the 'dz' in 'adze'; elsewhere as the 'ts' in 'its'

Note that when **ci**, **gi** and **sci** are followed by **a**, **o** or **u**, the 'i' is not pronounced unless the accent falls on the 'i'. Thus the name 'Giovanni' is pronounced joh-*vahn*-nee.

A double consonant is pronounced as a longer, more forceful sound than a single consonant. This can directly affect the meaning of a word, eg *sono* (I am), *sonno* (sleep), but the context of a sentence will usually get the message across.

## Word Stress

Stress is indicated in our pronunciation guide by italics. Word stress generally falls on the second-last syllable, as in *spaghetti*, pronounced spa-ge-tee; but when a word has an accent, the stress falls on that syllable, as in *città*, pronounced chee-ta (city).

## ACCOMMODATION

<b>I'm looking for a ...</b>	<i>Cerco ...</i>	<i>cher-ko ...</i>
<b>guest house</b>	<i>una pensione</i>	<i>oo-na pen-syo-ne</i>
<b>hotel</b>	<i>un albergo</i>	<i>oon al-ber-go</i>
<b>youth hostel</b>	<i>un ostello per la gioventù</i>	<i>oon os-te-lo per la jo-ven-too</i>

### Where is a cheap hotel?

*Dov'è un albergo* do-ve oon al-ber-go  
*a buon prezzo?* a bwon pre-tso

### What is the address?

*Qual'è l'indirizzo?* kwa-le leen-dee-ree-tso

### Could you write the address, please?

*Può scrivere l'indirizzo,* pwo skree-ve-re leen-dee-ree-tso  
*per favore?* per fa-vo-re

### Do you have any rooms available?

*Avete camere libere?* a-ve-te ka-me-re lee-be-re

<b>I'd like (a) ...</b>	<i>Vorrei ...</i>	<i>vo-ray ...</i>
<b>bed</b>	<i>un letto</i>	<i>oon le-to</i>
<b>double room</b>	<i>una camera</i>	<i>oo-na ka-me-ra</i>
<b>(with double bed)</b>	<i>matrimoniale</i>	<i>ma-tree-mo-nya-le</i>
<b>room with a bathroom</b>	<i>una camera con bagno</i>	<i>oo-na ka-me-ra kon ba-nyo</i>
<b>room with two beds</b>	<i>una camera doppia</i>	<i>oo-na ka-me-ra do-pya</i>
<b>single room</b>	<i>una camera singola</i>	<i>oo-na ka-me-ra seen-go-la</i>
<b>to share a dorm</b>	<i>un letto in dormitorio</i>	<i>oon le-to een dor-mee-to-ryo</i>

<b>How much is it ...?</b>	<i>Quanto costa ...?</i>	<i>kwan-to ko-sta ...</i>
<b>per night</b>	<i>per la notte</i>	<i>per la no-te</i>
<b>per person</b>	<i>per persona</i>	<i>per per-so-na</i>

## MAKING A RESERVATION

(for phone or written requests)

<b>To ...</b>	<i>A ...</i>
<b>From ...</b>	<i>Da ...</i>
<b>Date</b>	<i>Data</i>
<b>I'd like to book ...</b>	<i>Vorrei prenotare ...</i>
<b>in the name of ...</b>	<i>a nome di ...</i>
<b>for the night(s) of ...</b>	<i>per la notte/le notti di ...</i>
<b>Please confirm availability and price.</b>	<i>Prego confermare disponibilità e prezzo.</i>

<b>credit card (...)</b>	<i>(... della) carta di credito</i>
<b>number</b>	<i>numero</i>
<b>expiry date</b>	<i>data di scadenza</i>

### May I see it?

*Posso vederla?* po-so ve-der-la

### Where is the bathroom?

*Dov'è il bagno?* do-ve eel ba-nyo

### I'm/We're leaving today.

*Parto/Partiamo oggi.* par-to/par-tya-mo o-jee

## CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

<b>Hello.</b>	<i>Buongiorno./</i>	<i>bwon-jor-no/</i>
	<i>Ciao. (inf)</i>	<i>chow</i>
<b>Goodbye.</b>	<i>Arrivederci./</i>	<i>a-ree-ve-der-chee/</i>
	<i>Ciao. (inf)</i>	<i>chow</i>
<b>Yes.</b>	<i>Sì.</i>	<i>see</i>
<b>No.</b>	<i>No.</i>	<i>no</i>
<b>Please.</b>	<i>Per favore./</i>	<i>per fa-vo-re/</i>
	<i>Per piacere.</i>	<i>per pya-chay-re</i>
<b>Thank you.</b>	<i>Grazie.</i>	<i>gra-tsye</i>
<b>That's fine./</b>	<i>Prego.</i>	<i>pre-go</i>
<b>You're welcome.</b>		
<b>Excuse me.</b>	<i>Mi scusi.</i>	<i>mee skoo-zee</i>
<b>I'm sorry.</b>	<i>Mi scusi./</i>	<i>mee skoo-zee/</i>
	<i>Mi perdoni.</i>	<i>mee per-do-nee</i>

### What's your name?

*Come si chiama?/* ko-me see kya-ma/  
*Come ti chiami? (inf)* ko-me tee kya-mee

### My name is ...

*Mi chiamo ...* mee kya-mo ...

### Where are you from?

*Da dove viene?/* da do-ve vye-ne/  
*Di dove sei? (inf)* dee do-ve se-ee

### I'm from ...

*Vengo da ...* ven-go da ...

### I (don't) like ...

*(Non) mi piace ...* (non) mee pya-che ...

### Just a minute.

*Un momento.* oon mo-men-to

## DIRECTIONS

### Where is ...?

*Dov'è ...?* do-ve ...

### Go straight ahead.

*Si va sempre diritto/* see va sem-pre dee-ree-to/

*Vai sempre diritto. (inf)* va-ee sem-pre dee-ree-to

### Turn left.

*Giri a sinistra.* jee-ree a see-nee-sra

### Turn right.

*Giri a destra.* jee-ree a de-sra

### at the next corner

*al prossimo angolo* al pro-see-mo an-go-lo

### at the traffic lights

*al semaforo* al se-ma-fo-ro

### behind

*dietro* dye-tro

### far (from)

*lontano (da)* lon-ta-no (da)

### in front of

*davanti* da-van-tee

### near (to)

*vicino (a)* vee-chee-no (a)

### opposite

*di fronte a* dee-fron-te a

### beach

*la spiaggia* la spya-ja

### bridge

*il ponte* eel pon-te

### castle

*il castello* eel kas-te-lo

### cathedral

*il duomo* eel dwo-mo

### island

*l'isola* lee-so-la

### (main) square

*la piazza* la pya-tsa

*(principale)* (preen-chee-pa-le)

### market

*il mercato* eel mer-ka-to

### old city

*il centro* eel chen-tro

*storico* sto-ree-ko

### palace

*il palazzo* eel pa-la-tso

### ruins

*le rovine* le ro-vee-ne

### sea

*il mare* eel ma-re

### tower

*la torre* la to-re

## EATING OUT

### I'd like to reserve a table.

*Vorrei riservare un tavolo.* vo-ray ree-ser-va-re oon ta-vo-lo

### I'd like the menu, please.

*Vorrei il menù, per* vo-ray eel me-noo per

*favore.* fa-vo-re

### Do you have a menu in English?

*Avete un menù in* a-ve-te oon me-noo een

*inglese?* een-gle-ze?

### What would you recommend?

*Cosa mi consiglia?* ko-za mee kon-see-lya?

### I'd like a house/local speciality.

*Vorrei una specialità* vo-ray oo-na spe-cha-lee-ta

*della casa/zona.* de-la ka-za/zo-na

### Is it made in house?

*È fatto/a in casa? (m/f)* e fa-to/a een ka-za?

### We'd like to share ...

*Vorremo dividere ...* vo-ray-mo dee-vee-de-re ...

## SIGNS

### Aperto

Open

### Camere Libere

Rooms Available

### Chiuso

Closed

### Completo

Full/No Vacancies

### Gabinetti/Bagni

Toilets

### Donne

Women

### Uomini

Men

### Informazione

Information

### Ingresso/Entrata

Entrance

### Polizia/Carabinieri

Police

### Proibito/Vietato

Prohibited

### Questura

Police Station

### Uscita

Exit

### Could you make that without ...?

*Potrebbe farlo senza ...?* po-tre-be far-lo sen-tsa ...

### I'm a vegetarian.

*Sono vegetariano/a.* (m/f) so-no ve-je-ta-rya-no/a

### I'm a vegan.

*Sono vegetariano/a.* (m/f) so-no ve-je-ta-ly-a-no/a

### Please bring me the bill.

*Mi porta il conto, per* mee por-ta eel kon-to per

*favore.* fa-vo-re

## HEALTH

### I'm ill.

*Mi sento male.*

mee sen-to ma-le

### It hurts here.

*Mi fa male qui.*

mee fa ma-le kwee

### I'm ...

*Sono ...*

*so-no ...*

### asthmatic

*asmatico/a* (m/f)

az-ma-tee-ko/a

### diabetic

*diabetico/a* (m/f)

dee-a-be-tee-ko/a

### epileptic

*epilettico/a* (m/f)

e-pee-le-tee-ko/a

### I'm allergic ...

*Sono*

*so-no*

*allergico/a ...* (m/f) a-ler-jee-ko/a ...

### to antibiotics

*agli anti-*

a-lyee an-tee-

*biotici*

bee-o-tee-chee

### to aspirin

*all'aspirina*

a-la-spe-ree-na

### to penicillin

*alla*

a-la

*penicillina*

pe-nee-chee-lee-na

### to nuts

*alle noci*

a-le no-chee

### antiseptic

*antisettico*

an-tee-se-tee-ko

### aspirin

*aspirina*

as-pee-ree-na

### condoms

*preservativi*

pre-ser-va-tee-vee

### contraceptive

*contraccettivo*

kon-tra-che-tee-vo

### diarrhoea

*diarrea*

dee-a-re-a

### medicine

*medicina*

me-dee-chee-na

### sunblock cream

*crema solare*

kre-ma so-la-re

### tampons

*tamponi*

tam-po-nee



## LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

### Do you speak English?

*Parla inglese?* *par-la een-gle-ze*

### Does anyone here speak English?

*C'è qualcuno che parla inglese?* *che kwal-koo-no ke par-la een-gle-ze*

### How do you say ... in Italian?

*Come si dice ... in italiano?* *ko-me see dee-che ... een ee-ta-ly-a-no*

### What does ... mean?

*Che vuol dire ...?* *ke vvol dee-re ...*

### I understand.

*Capisco.* *ka-pee-sko*

### I don't understand.

*Non capisco.* *non ka-pee-sko*

### Please write it down.

*Può scriverlo, per favore?* *pwo skree-ver-lo per fa-vo-re*

### Can you show me (on the map)?

*Può mostrarmelo (sulla piantina)?* *pwo mos-trar-me-lo (soo-la pyan-ta)*

## NUMBERS

0	<i>zero</i>	<i>dze-ro</i>
1	<i>uno</i>	<i>oo-no</i>
2	<i>due</i>	<i>doo-e</i>
3	<i>tre</i>	<i>tre</i>
4	<i>quattro</i>	<i>kwa-tro</i>
5	<i>cinque</i>	<i>cheen-kwe</i>
6	<i>sei</i>	<i>say</i>
7	<i>sette</i>	<i>se-te</i>
8	<i>otto</i>	<i>o-to</i>
9	<i>nove</i>	<i>no-ve</i>
10	<i>dieci</i>	<i>dye-chee</i>
11	<i>undici</i>	<i>oon-dee-chee</i>
12	<i>dodici</i>	<i>do-dee-chee</i>
13	<i>treddici</i>	<i>tre-dee-chee</i>
14	<i>quattordici</i>	<i>kwa-tor-dee-chee</i>
15	<i>quindici</i>	<i>kween-dee-chee</i>
16	<i>sedici</i>	<i>se-dee-chee</i>
17	<i>diciassette</i>	<i>dee-cha-se-te</i>
18	<i>diciotto</i>	<i>dee-cho-to</i>
19	<i>diciannove</i>	<i>dee-cha-no-ve</i>
20	<i>venti</i>	<i>ven-tee</i>
21	<i>ventuno</i>	<i>ven-too-no</i>
22	<i>ventidue</i>	<i>ven-tee-doo-e</i>
30	<i>trenta</i>	<i>tren-ta</i>
40	<i>quaranta</i>	<i>kwa-ran-ta</i>
50	<i>cinquanta</i>	<i>cheen-kwan-ta</i>
60	<i>sessanta</i>	<i>se-san-ta</i>
70	<i>settanta</i>	<i>se-tan-ta</i>
80	<i>ottanta</i>	<i>o-tan-ta</i>
90	<i>novanta</i>	<i>no-van-ta</i>
100	<i>cento</i>	<i>chen-to</i>
1000	<i>mille</i>	<i>mee-le</i>
2000	<i>due mila</i>	<i>doo-e mee-la</i>

## EMERGENCIES

### Help!

*Aiuto!* *a-yoo-to*

### There's been an accident!

*C'è stato un incidente!* *che sta-to oon een-chee-den-te*

### I'm lost.

*Mi sono perso/a.* (m/f) *mee so-no per-so/a*

### Go away!

*Lasciami in pace!/  
Vai via! (inf)* *la-sha-mi een pa-che/  
va-ee vee-a*

### Call ...!

*Chiami ...!* *kee-ya-mee ...*

### a doctor

*un dottore/* *oon do-to-re/*

*un medico* *oon me-dee-ko*

### the police

*la polizia* *la po-lee-tsee-ya*

## PAPERWORK

<b>name</b>	<i>nome</i>	<i>no-me</i>
<b>nationality</b>	<i>nazionalità</i>	<i>na-tsyo-na-lee-ta</i>
<b>date/place of birth</b>	<i>data/luogo di nascita</i>	<i>da-ta/lwo-go dee na-shee-ta</i>
<b>sex (gender)</b>	<i> Sesso</i>	<i>se-so</i>
<b>passport</b>	<i>passaporto</i>	<i>pa-sa-por-to</i>
<b>visa</b>	<i>visto</i>	<i>vee-sto</i>

## QUESTION WORDS

<b>Who?</b>	<i>Chi?</i>	<i>kee</i>
<b>What?</b>	<i>Che?</i>	<i>ke</i>
<b>When?</b>	<i>Quando?</i>	<i>kwan-do</i>
<b>Where?</b>	<i>Dove?</i>	<i>do-ve</i>
<b>How?</b>	<i>Come?</i>	<i>ko-me</i>

## SHOPPING & SERVICES

### I'd like to buy ...

*Vorrei comprare ...* *vo-ray kom-pra-re ...*

### How much is it?

*Quanto costa?* *kwan-to ko-sta*

### I don't like it.

*Non mi piace.* *non mee pya-che*

### May I look at it?

*Posso dare un'occhiata?* *po-so da-re oo-no-ky-a-ta*

### I'm just looking.

*Sto solo guardando.* *sto so-lo gwar-dan-do*

### It's cheap.

*Non è caro/a.* (m/f) *non e ka-ro/a*

### It's too expensive.

*È troppo caro/a.* (m/f) *e tro-po ka-ro/a*

### I'll take it.

*Lo/La compro.* (m/f) *lo/la kom-pro*

### Do you accept credit cards?

*Accettate carte di credito?* *a-che-ta-te kar-te dee kre-dee-to*

<b>I want to change ... money travellers cheques</b>	<i>Voglio cambiare ... del denaro assegni di viaggio</i>	<i>vo-lyo kam-bya-re ... del de-na-ro a-se-nyee dee vee-a-jo</i>
--	--	--

<b>more less smaller bigger</b>	<i>più meno più piccolo/a (m/f) più grande</i>	<i>pyoo me-no pyoo pee-ko-lo/a pyoo gran-de</i>
---------------------------------	--	---

<b>I'm looking for ...</b>	<i>Cerco ...</i>	<i>cher-ko ...</i>
<b>a bank</b>	<i>un banco</i>	<i>oon ban-ko</i>
<b>the church</b>	<i>la chiesa</i>	<i>la kye-za</i>
<b>the city centre</b>	<i>il centro</i>	<i>eel chen-tro</i>
<b>the ... embassy</b>	<i>l'ambasciata di ...</i>	<i>lam-ba-sha-ta dee ...</i>
<b>the market</b>	<i>il mercato</i>	<i>eel mer-ka-to</i>
<b>the museum</b>	<i>il museo</i>	<i>eel moo-ze-o</i>
<b>the post office</b>	<i>la posta</i>	<i>la po-sta</i>
<b>a public toilet</b>	<i>un gabinetto</i>	<i>oon ga-bee-ne-to</i>
<b>the telephone centre</b>	<i>il centro telefonico</i>	<i>eel chen-tro te-le-fo-nee-ko</i>
<b>the tourist office</b>	<i>l'ufficio di turismo</i>	<i>loo-fee-cho dee too-reez-mo</i>

## TIME & DATES

### What time is it?

<i>Che ore sono?</i>	<i>ke o-re so-no</i>
<b>It's (8 o'clock).</b>	
<i>Sono (le otto).</i>	<i>so-no (le o-to)</i>

<b>in the afternoon</b>	<i>di pomeriggio</i>	<i>dee po-me-ree-jo</i>
<b>in the evening</b>	<i>di sera</i>	<i>dee se-ra</i>
<b>in the morning</b>	<i>di mattina</i>	<i>dee ma-tee-na</i>

<b>today</b>	<i>oggi</i>	<i>o-jee</i>
<b>tomorrow</b>	<i>domani</i>	<i>do-ma-nee</i>
<b>yesterday</b>	<i>ieri</i>	<i>ye-ree</i>

<b>Monday</b>	<i>lunedì</i>	<i>loo-ne-dee</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>martedì</i>	<i>mar-te-dee</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>mercoledì</i>	<i>mer-ko-le-dee</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>giovedì</i>	<i>jo-ve-dee</i>
<b>Friday</b>	<i>venerdì</i>	<i>ve-ner-dee</i>
<b>Saturday</b>	<i>sabato</i>	<i>sa-ba-to</i>
<b>Sunday</b>	<i>domenica</i>	<i>do-me-nee-ka</i>

<b>January</b>	<i>gennaio</i>	<i>je-na-yo</i>
<b>February</b>	<i>febbraio</i>	<i>fe-bra-yo</i>
<b>March</b>	<i>marzo</i>	<i>mar-tso</i>
<b>April</b>	<i>aprile</i>	<i>a-pree-le</i>
<b>May</b>	<i>maggio</i>	<i>ma-jo</i>
<b>June</b>	<i>giugno</i>	<i>joo-nyo</i>

## ROAD SIGNS

<b>Dare la Precedenza</b>	<i>Give Way</i>
<b>Deviazione</b>	<i>Detour</i>
<b>Divieto di Accesso</b>	<i>No Entry</i>
<b>Divieto di Sorpasso</b>	<i>No Overtaking</i>
<b>Divieto di Sosta</b>	<i>No Parking</i>
<b>Entrata</b>	<i>Entrance</i>
<b>Passo Carrabile/Carraio</b>	<i>Keep Clear</i>
<b>Pedaggio</b>	<i>Toll</i>
<b>Pericolo</b>	<i>Danger</i>
<b>Rallentare</b>	<i>Slow Down</i>
<b>Senso Unico</b>	<i>One-Way</i>
<b>Uscita</b>	<i>Exit</i>

<b>July</b>	<i>luglio</i>	<i>loo-lyo</i>
<b>August</b>	<i>agosto</i>	<i>a-gos-to</i>
<b>September</b>	<i>settembre</i>	<i>se-tem-bre</i>
<b>October</b>	<i>ottobre</i>	<i>o-to-bre</i>
<b>November</b>	<i>novembre</i>	<i>no-ven-bre</i>
<b>December</b>	<i>dicembre</i>	<i>dee-chem-bre</i>

## TRANSPORT

### Public Transport

<b>What time does the ... leave/ arrive?</b>	<i>A che ora parte/ arriva ...?</i>	<i>a ke o-ra par-te/ a-ree-va ...</i>
--	-------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

<b>boat</b>	<i>la nave</i>	<i>la na-ve</i>
<b>(city) bus</b>	<i>l'autobus</i>	<i>low-to-boos</i>
<b>(intercity) bus</b>	<i>il pullman</i>	<i>eel pool-man</i>
<b>plane</b>	<i>l'aereo</i>	<i>la-e-re-o</i>
<b>train</b>	<i>il treno</i>	<i>eel tre-no</i>

<b>I'd like a ... ticket.</b>	<i>Vorrei un biglietto ...</i>	<i>vo-ray oon bee-lye-to ...</i>
<b>one-way</b>	<i>di solo andata</i>	<i>dee so-lo an-da-ta</i>
<b>return</b>	<i>di andata e ritorno</i>	<i>dee an-da-ta e ree-toor-no</i>
<b>1st class</b>	<i>di prima classe</i>	<i>dee pree-na kla-se</i>
<b>2nd class</b>	<i>di seconda classe</i>	<i>dee se-kon-da kla-se</i>

### I want to go to ...

<i>Voglio andare a ...</i>	<i>vo-lyo an-da-re a ...</i>
----------------------------	------------------------------

### The train has been cancelled/delayed.

<i>Il treno è soppresso/ in ritardo.</i>	<i>eel tre-no e so-pre-so/ een ree-tar-do</i>
--	---

<b>the first</b>	<i>il primo</i>	<i>eel pree-mo</i>
<b>the last</b>	<i>l'ultimo</i>	<i>lool-tee-mo</i>
<b>platform (two)</b>	<i>binario (due)</i>	<i>bee-na-ryo (doo-e)</i>
<b>ticket office</b>	<i>biglietteria</i>	<i>bee-lye-te-ree-a</i>
<b>timetable</b>	<i>orario</i>	<i>o-ra-ryo</i>
<b>train station</b>	<i>stazione</i>	<i>sta-tsyo-ne</i>

## Private Transport

<b>I'd like to hire</b>	<i>Vorrei</i>	<i>vo-ray</i>
<b>a/an ...</b>	<i>noleggiare ...</i>	<i>no-le-ja-re ...</i>
<b>car</b>	<i>una macchina</i>	<i>oo-na ma-kee-na</i>
<b>4WD</b>	<i>un fuoristrada</i>	<i>oon fwo-ree-stra-da</i>
<b>motorbike</b>	<i>una moto</i>	<i>oo-na mo-to</i>
<b>bicycle</b>	<i>una bici(cletta)</i>	<i>oo-na bee-chee-(kle-ta)</i>

## Is this the road to ...?

<i>Questa strada porta a ...?</i>	<i>kwe-sta stra-da por-ta a ...</i>
-----------------------------------	-------------------------------------

## Where's a service station?

<i>Dov'è una stazione di servizio?</i>	<i>do-ve oo-na sta-tsyo-ne dee ser-vee-tsyo</i>
--	---

## Please fill it up.

<i>Il pieno, per favore.</i>	<i>eel pye-no per fa-vo-re</i>
------------------------------	--------------------------------

## I'd like (30) litres.

<i>Vorrei (trenta) litri.</i>	<i>vo-ray (tren-ta) lee-tree</i>
-------------------------------	----------------------------------

## (How long) can I park here?

<i>(Per quanto tempo) posso parcheggiare qui?</i>	<i>(per kwan-to tem-po) po-so par-ke-ja-re kwee</i>
---	---

<b>diesel</b>	<i>gasolio/diesel</i>	<i>ga-zo-lyo/dee-zel</i>
<b>petrol/gasoline</b>	<i>benzina</i>	<i>ben-dzee-na</i>

## Where do I pay?

<i>Dove si paga?</i>	<i>do-ve see pa-ga</i>
----------------------	------------------------

## I need a mechanic.

<i>Ho bisogno di un meccanico.</i>	<i>o bee-zo-nyo dee oon me-ka-nee-ko</i>
------------------------------------	--

## I have a flat tyre.

<i>Ho una gomma bucata.</i>	<i>o oo-na go-ma boo-ka-ta</i>
-----------------------------	--------------------------------

## I've run out of petrol.

<i>Ho esaurito la benzina.</i>	<i>o e-zo-ree-to la ben-dzee-na</i>
--------------------------------	-------------------------------------

## The car/motorbike has broken down (at ...).

<i>La macchina/moto si è guastata (a ...).</i>	<i>la ma-kee-na/mo-to see e gwas-ta-ta (a ...)</i>
--	--

## The car/motorbike won't start.

<i>La macchina/moto non parte.</i>	<i>la ma-kee-na/mo-to non par-te</i>
------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

## I've had an accident.

<i>Ho avuto un incidente.</i>	<i>o a-voo-to oon een-chee-den-te</i>
-------------------------------	---------------------------------------

## TRAVEL WITH CHILDREN

### Do you mind if I breastfeed here?

<i>Le dispiace se allatto il/la bimbo/a qui? (m/f)</i>	<i>le dees-pya-che se a-la-to eel/la beam-bo/a kwee</i>
--	---

### Are children allowed?

<i>I bambini sono ammessi?</i>	<i>ee bam-bee-nee so-no a-me-see</i>
--------------------------------	--------------------------------------

### Is there ...?

<i>C'è ...?</i>	<i>che ...</i>
-----------------	----------------

### I need ...

<i>Ho bisogno di ...</i>	<i>o bee-zo-nyo dee ...</i>
--------------------------	-----------------------------

### a baby change room

<i>un bagno con fasciatoio</i>	<i>oon ba-nyo kon fa-sha-to-yo</i>
--------------------------------	------------------------------------

### a car baby seat

<i>un seggiolino</i>	<i>oon se-jo-lee-no</i>
----------------------	-------------------------

### a child-minding service

<i>per bambini</i>	<i>per bam-bee-nee</i>
--------------------	------------------------

### a children's menu

<i>un servizio di babysitter</i>	<i>oon ser-vee-tsyo dee be-bee-see-ter</i>
----------------------------------	--

### (disposable) nappies/diapers

<i>un menù per bambini</i>	<i>oon me-noo per bam-bee-nee</i>
----------------------------	-----------------------------------

### an (English-speaking) babysitter

<i>pannolini (usa e getta)</i>	<i>pa-no-lee-nee (oo-sa e je-ta)</i>
--------------------------------	--------------------------------------

### formula (milk)

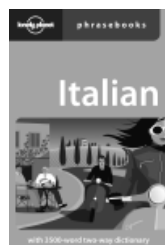
<i>un/una</i>	<i>oon/oo-na</i>
---------------	------------------

### a highchair

<i>babysitter (che parla inglese) (m/f)</i>	<i>be-bee-see-ter (ke par-lee een-gle-ze)</i>
---	---

<i>latte in polvere</i>	<i>la-te in pol-ve-re</i>
-------------------------	---------------------------

<i>un seggiolone</i>	<i>oon se-jo-lo-ne</i>
----------------------	------------------------



Also available from Lonely Planet:  
*Italian Phrasebook*

# Glossary

What follows is a general glossary of common terms you may come across while in Italy. For architectural lingo, turn to the Architecture Glossary (p916), while foodies can get some handy restaurant vocab on p79. For those with a more devout sensibility, a quick look at the Saints Glossary (p915) should be enlightening.

**AAST** – Azienda Autonoma di Soggiorno e Turismo; city or town tourist office (mostly in southern Italy)

**abbazia** – abbey

**ACI** – Automobile Club Italiano (Italian Automobile Association)

**acquacalda** – hot spring (Sicily)

**affittacamere** – rooms for rent in private houses

**agriturismo** – tourist accommodation on farms; farm stays

**AIG** – Associazione Italiana Alberghi per la Gioventù (Italian Youth Hostel Association)

**(pizza) al taglio** – (pizza) by the slice

**albergo** – hotel

**alimentari** – grocery shop; delicatessen

**aliscafo** – hydrofoil

**Alleanza Nazionale** – National Alliance; right-wing political party

**alto** – high

**ambasciata** – embassy

**ambulanza** – ambulance

**anfiteatro** – amphitheatre

**aperitivo** – before-evening-meal drink and snack

**APT** – Azienda di Promozione Turistica; local town or city tourist office

**autonoleggio** – car hire

**autostrada** – motorway; highway

**autunno** – autumn

**AV** – Alta Velocità, high-speed trains that entered service Turin–Milan–Bologna–Florence–Rome–Naples–Salerno line in late 2009

**bambino** – child

**bancomat** – ATM

**battistero** – baptistry

**benzina** – petrol

**bianco** – white

**biblioteca** – library

**biglietto** – ticket

**biglietto cumulativo** – a cumulative ticket that allows entrance to a number of associated sights

**borgo** – archaic name for a small town, village or town sector (often dating to Middle Ages)

**Brigate Rosse** – BR; Red Brigades (terrorist group)

**cambio** – money-exchange office

**camera** – room

**campo** – field; also a square in Venice

**cappella** – chapel

**carabinieri** – police with military and civil duties

**Carnevale** – carnival period between Epiphany and Lent

**caruggio** – dark, narrow alley (Liguria)

**casa** – house

**castello** – castle

**cattedrale** – cathedral

**cena** – evening meal

**centro** – city centre

**centro storico** – historic centre

**certosa** – monastery belonging to or founded by Carthusian monks

**chiesa** – church

**cima** – summit

**città** – town; city

**città alta** – upper town

**città bassa** – lower town

**colle** – hill

**colonna** – column

**comune** – equivalent to a municipality or county; a town or city council; historically, a self-governing town or city

**contrada** – district

**convalida** – validation (eg of train ticket)

**coperto** – cover charge in restaurants

**corso** – boulevard

**CTS** – Centro Turistico Studentesco e Giovanile; student/youth travel agency

**cuccetta** – couchette; bed in train carriage

**dammuso** – house with thick whitewashed walls and a shallow cupola (on Pantelleria)

**Democratici di Sinistra** – DS; Left Democrats; political party

**Democrazia Cristiana** – DC; Christian Democrats; former Italian political party

**diretto** – direct, slow train

**discoteca** – nightclub

**dolina** – pl *doline*; sinkhole created by collapsing caves; see *foiba*

**douja** – terracotta wine jug unique to Asti

**duomo** – cathedral

**ENIT** – Ente Nazionale Italiano per il Turismo; Italian National Tourist Board  
**enoteca** – wine bar  
**ES** – Eurostar Italia; fast train  
**espresso** – express mail; express train; short black coffee  
**est** – east  
**estate** – summer

**faraglione** – rock tower projecting out of water off the coast

**fermo posta** – poste restante (general delivery)

**ferrovia** – railway

**fešta** – feast day; holiday

**Feste di Pasqua** – Easter Holy Week

**fiume** – river

**foiba** – pl *foibe*; sinkhole created by collapsing caves; see *dolina*

**fondaco** – trading house and hotel (Venice)

**fontana** – fountain

**fornaio** – bakery

**foro** – forum

**Forza Italia** – Go Italy; political party

**francobollo** – postage stamp

**frazione** – municipal division

**funicolare** – funicular railway

**funivia** – cable car

**gabinetto** – toilets; WC

**gasauto, GPL** – liquid petroleum gas, LPG

**gasolio** – diesel

**gelateria** – ice-cream shop

**giardino** – garden

**golfo** – gulf

**grotta** – cave

**guardia forestale** – forest ranger

**IAT** – Informazione e Assistenza ai Turisti; local tourist office

**IC** – Intercity; fast train

**interregionale** – long-distance train that stops frequently

**inverno** – winter

**isola** – island

**IVA** – Imposta di Valore Aggiunto; value-added tax

**lago** – lake

**largo** – small square

**lavanderia** – laundrette

**Lega Nord** – Northern League; political party

**lido** – beach

**locanda** – inn; small hotel

**lungomare** – seafont road/promenade

**mar, mare** – sea

**marito** – husband

**masseria** – manor farm

**mattanza** – tuna slaughter

**mercato** – market

**Metropolitana (Met)** – the Rome and Naples underground transport systems

**MM** – Metropolitana Milano (aka il metrò); Milan's underground transport system

**monte** – mountain

**motorino** – scooter

**municipio** – town hall

**Natale** – Christmas

**necropoli** – ancient name for cemetery or burial site

**nord** – north

**nuraghe** – megalithic stone fortress in Sardinia

**osmizza** – little roadside shack or house in which to drink wine, eat cheese and so on

**ostello per la gioventù** – youth hostel

**osteria** – simple, trattoria-style restaurant, usually with a bar

**ovest** – west

**palazzo** – mansion; palace; large building of any type, including an apartment block

**palio** – contest

**parco** – park

**Partito della Rifondazione Comunista** – PRC; Refounded Communist Party; political party

**passeggiata** – traditional evening stroll

**pasticceria** – cake/pastry shop

**pensione** – guesthouse

**permesso di lavoro** – work permit

**permesso di soggiorno** – residency permit

**piazza** – square

**piazzale** – large open square

**pietà** – literally 'pity' or 'compassion'; sculpture, drawing or painting of the dead Christ supported by the Madonna

**pinacoteca** – art gallery

**polena** – statuette that graced the prows of vessels

**polizia statale** – state police

**poltrona** – airline-type chair on a ferry

**ponte** – bridge

**porta** – gate; door

**portico** – covered walkway, usually attached to the outside of buildings

**porto** – port

**posta** – post office; also *ufficio postale*

**presepio** – nativity scene; also *presepe*

**primavera** – spring

**pronto soccorso** – first aid; casualty

**putto** – cherub

**quartiere** – district

**questura** – police station

**reale** – royal

**regionale** – slow local train

**rifugio** – mountain hut; accommodation in the

Alps

**ristorante** – restaurant

**rocca** – fortress

**rosticceria** – shop selling roast meats; rotisserie

**sala** – room; hall

**salumeria** – delicatessen

**sassi** – literally 'stones'; stone houses built in two ravines in Matera, Basilicata

**scalinata** – staircase

**scavi** – excavations

**sci alpinismo** – ski mountaineering

**sci alpino** – downhill skiing

**sci di fondo** – cross-country skiing

**servizio** – service charge in restaurants

**sestiere** – city district in Venice

**settimana bianca** – literally 'white week'; winter-sports holiday

**spiaggia** – beach

**stazione** – station

**stazione marittima** – ferry terminal

**strada** – street; road

**strada provinciale** – main provincial road; sometimes just a country lane

**strada statale** – state highway, toll free and sometimes multilane

**sud** – south

**superstrada** – expressway; highway with divided lanes

**tavola calda** – literally 'hot table'; pre-prepared meat, pasta and vegetable selection, often self-service

**teatro** – theatre

**tempietto** – small temple

**tempio** – temple

**terme** – thermal baths

**tesoro** – treasury

**torrente** – stream

**traghetto** – ferry

**trattoria** – simple restaurant

**Trenitalia** – Italian State Railways; also known as Ferrovie dello Stato (FS)

**trullo** – conical house in Perugia

**ufficio postale** – post office; also *posta*

**ufficio stranieri** – foreigners bureau

**vaporetto** – small passenger ferry (Venice)

**vendemia** – grape harvest

**via** – street; road

**viale** – avenue

**vico** – alley; alleyway

**vigili del fuoco** – fire brigade

**vigili urbani** – local police; traffic police

**villa** – town house; country house; also the park surrounding the house



# Saints Glossary

**San Ambrogio** (c 337–397) – b Trier, Germany. Patron: beekeepers, domestic animals. Feast day: 7 December. This Bishop of Milan regularly incurred the ire of the emperor with his principle that ‘the emperor is within the church, he is not above it’. He is numbered among the four great doctors of the church (with Augustine, Jerome and Gregory the Great).

**San’Angela Merici** (1474–1540) – b Desenzano, near Brescia. Patron: sickness, handicapped people. Feast day: 27 January. Orphaned early, Angela began giving catechism lessons to the children of her village with such success that she was invited to do similar work in Brescia. Founded the Company of St Ursula (Ursuline nuns), the first teaching order of women to be established.

**San Antoni di Padova** (1195–1231) – b Lisbon, Portugal. Patron: barrenness, elderly people, pregnant women. Feast day: 13 June. Anthony joined the Franciscans and came to Italy after missionary work in Morocco. Had an unusual gift for preaching and a remarkable knowledge of the Bible. Many miracles have been attributed to his intercession and his shrine in Padua is a major pilgrimage location.

**San Benedetto da Norcia** (c 480–547) – b Norcia, Umbria. Patron: farmers. Feast day: 11 July. St Benedict divided his life between directing his monastery and living as a hermit. He was the founder of the Benedictine order.

**San Bernadino di Siena** (1380–1444) – b Massa Maritima, Tuscany. Patron: advertising, communications. Feast day: 20 May. Urging listeners to fling objects of temptation into ‘bonfires of vanities’, his public preaching attracted thousands.

**Santa Caterina di Siena** (1347–80) – b Siena, Tuscany. Patron: nurses, fire-fighters. Feast day: 29 April. Her 300-plus surviving letters are considered masterpieces of early Tuscan literature. Now somewhat dispersed – her head and right thumb in Siena, body in Rome and foot in Venice.

**Santa Cecilia** (unknown) – Patron: musicians and church music. Feast day: 22 November. Honoured as a virgin and martyr, Cecilia founded a church in the Trastevere quarter of Rome and was martyred after being charged with being an obstinate Christian.

**Santa Chiara** (1194–1253) – b Assisi, Umbria. Patron: goldsmiths. Feast day: 11 August. A devotee of St Francis, St Clare founded the order that still bears her name. Members – known as the ‘Poor Clares’ – go barefoot and mostly observe silence.

**San Francesco** (c 1181–1226) – b Assisi, Umbria. Patron: animals, merchants, the environment. Feast day: 4 October. After a wild youth, St Francis assumed extreme humility and founded the Franciscan order of friars. He lived with animals, cared for lepers and received stigmata.

**Santa Francesca Romana** (1384–1440) – b Rome. Patron: automobile drivers. Feast day: 9 March. The daughter of Roman aristocrats, Frances of Rome was married aged 13 and led an exemplary life dedicated to self-denial and good deeds.

**San Francesco di Girolamo** (1642–1716) – b near Taranto, Puglia. Feast day: 11 May. A member of the Society of Jesus, St Francis of Girolamo preached in prisons, brothels and galleys in and around Naples and also converted Turkish and Moorish prisoners. Many miraculous cures are attributed to him.

**Gregory the Great** (c 540–604) – b Rome. Patron: musicians, singers, students and teachers. Feast day: 3 September. Gregory came from a patrician family, worked as a magistrate and joined the church aged 35, becoming pope in 590.

**Ignatius of Loyola** (1491–1556) – b Loyola, Spain. Patron: soldiers. Feast day: 31 July. The founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) was the youngest son of a Basque nobleman. He was ordained in Rome aged 47 and established the Jesuit order shortly afterwards.

**San Giovanni Melchior Bosco** (1815–1888) – b Turin. Patron: editors, publishers, schoolchildren, young people. Feast day: 31 January. Raised in a peasant family, John Bosco was drawn to working among boys and young men from an early age. He opened workshops for the teaching of trades and a boarding house for apprentices. His followers are called Salesians.

# Architecture Glossary

**apse** – a vaulted semicircular or polygonal recess, especially at the end of a choir in a church

**architrave** – 1. the part of the entablature that holds columns in place; 2. a band of mouldings or other ornamentation atop or around openings or panels

**baldachin** – canopy, usually over a high altar in a basilica

**baptistry** – a church building in which baptism is/was administered

**basilica** – 1. in Roman times, a large rectangular building, typically with aisle on either side of a long nave and often with an apse at one or both ends, which was used as a place to meet or dispense justice; 2. an early or medieval Christian church with a ground plan similar to or derived from the Roman basilica

**campanile** – bell tower

**chiostro** – cloister; covered walkway, usually enclosed by columns, around a quadrangle

**coffer** – ornamental sunken panel in a ceiling

**colonnade** – a series of columns set at regular intervals, and usually supporting an entablature, a roof or a series of arches

**cornice** – 1. a horizontal moulded projection that crowns or finishes a wall or building; 2. the uppermost division of an entablature, resting on the frieze; 3. the moulding(s) between the walls and ceiling of a room

**cruciform** – cross-shaped

**crypt** – underground chamber or vault used as a burial place

**cupola** – a rounded vault or dome

**entablature** – sits on top of a row of columns on a classical facade; includes an architrave, the decorative frieze atop that and the triangular pediment to cap it off

**font** – receptacle, usually of stone, that holds the water used in baptisms

**frieze** – the part of an entablature between the architrave and the cornice, commonly ornamented with sculpture

**insula** – apartment block (antiquity)

**loggia** – covered area on the side of a building; porch; lodge

**mausoleo** – mausoleum; stately and magnificent tomb

**narthex** – vestibule along the facade of an early Christian church

**nave** – the main body, or middle part (lengthwise), of a church, flanked by aisles and extending typically from the entrance to the apse

**nymphaeum** – grotto or cave for recreation or worship (antiquity)

**pediment** – a low triangular gable crowned with a projecting cornice, especially over a portico or porch at the end of a gable-roofed building

**pietra serena** – greenish-grey 'serene stone'

**podium** – a low continuous structure serving as a base or terrace wall

**portico** – a structure consisting of a roof supported by columns or piers forming the entrance to a church or other building

**pulpit** – a platform or raised structure in a church from which a priest delivers a sermon

**quadriporto** – four-sided porch (antiquity)

**relief** – an apparent projection of parts in a sculpture or frieze giving the appearance of the third dimension

**rustification** – stone with a chiselled, rough-hewn look

**sacristy** – room in a church where the sacred vessels, vestments etc are kept

**santuario** – sanctuary; 1. the part of a church above the altar; 2. an especially holy place in a temple (antiquity)

**sgraffito** – a surface covered with plaster, then scratched away to create a three-dimensional trompe-l'oeil effect of carved stone or brick

**spolia** – creative reuse of ancient monuments in new structures

**torre** – tower

**transept** – the transverse portion(s) of a cruciform church

**travertine** – limestone used in paving and building

**tridinium** – banqueting hall (antiquity)

**vault** – arched structure forming a ceiling or roof

**vestibule** – passage, hall or antechamber between the outer door and interior parts of a building

**vomitoria** – entrance arches to Roman amphitheatres (antiquity)

© Lonely Planet. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'