

travel counsellors



A GUIDE TO

Italy





Introducing Italy

Picture Italy. Are you exploring the cliffs of the Amalfi Coast, headed for those sparkling blue waters? Maybe you're biting into a slice of soft, chewy pizza, delivering phenomenal flavour you could only dream of? Or perhaps you're wandering amongst the ancient, famously ash-covered city of Pompeii.

Wherever your mind wanders to when you think of Italy, our guide to this fascinating country outlines why this is a country with seemingly endless possibilities.

Statistics

Population	59.2 Million
Capital	Rome
Currency	Euro (€)
Time zone	GMT+2
Flight time from London	2 Hours 30 Minutes
National anthem	Il Canto degli Italiani
Official language	Italian



AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURES: ROME (°C)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
8	9	12	14	21	23	26	24	22	18	13	10



Interesting facts

Italy is made up of 20 regions and 6 islands.

Italy has more famous fashion designers than anywhere else in the world.

Italy is home to the 54 UNESCO-listed World Heritage Sites - more than anywhere else in the world.

Italy has three volcanoes – Vesuvius, Etna and Stromboli.

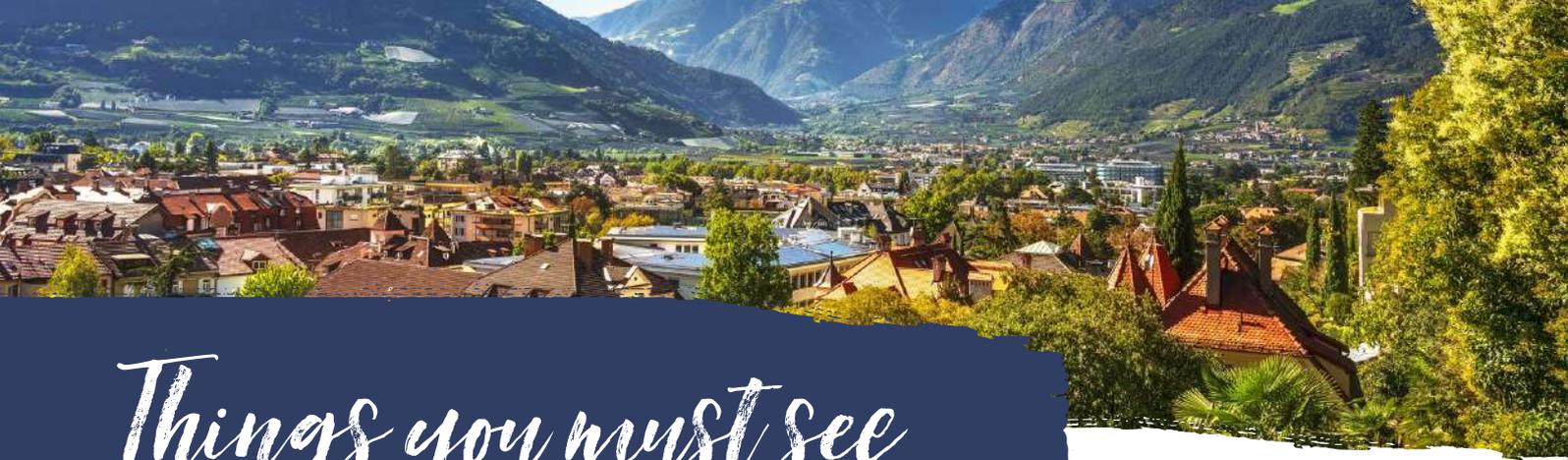
No country eats more pasta than Italy - almost two in three Italians consume pasta every day.

The Italians invented the thermometer and the piano!

Venice has over 400 footbridges!

Some of the world's greatest composers, such as Vivaldi, Verdi and Puccini, all hailed from Italy.





Things you must see...



St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City

This is the largest Basilica of Christianity in the world and holds up to 20,000 people at any one time. Iconic artists such as Rafael and Michelangelo have both worked on the building which is truly a must see when visiting Italy.



The Colosseum in Rome

Originally known as the Flavian Amphitheatre and was the site of many Roman gladiator fights. It's thought that construction of this iconic building began between 70 - 80 AD.



Trevi Fountain, Rome

The statuesque Trevi Fountain stands at 26 metres high and is one of the most recognisable fountains in the world. The tradition of throwing coins into the Trevi Fountain is ancient. One coin guarantees your return to Rome, the second promises new love and the third ensures marriage.



The Leaning Tower of Pisa

One of the most famous attractions in the world. The clay foundations means that even though the tower stood upright for five years it began to subside heavily to one side later. The tower is also slightly curved as a result of various architects attempting to prevent it falling.



Try something different



Admire Florence's Uffizi Gallery

Explore the renowned galleries of the Uffizi, which focus on works from the Renaissance including da Vinci's *The Annunciation* – a painting that brings a sense of nature into the mystical and religious themes.



Discover the ash-covered city of Pompeii

Pass the towering summit of Mount Vesuvius through the gates of the ancient city of Pompeii. It's impossible not to be impressed with the natural conservation and sheer expanse of the ash-covered city.



Milan Evening Beer and Bites Walking Tour

Explore the vibrant district of Navigli and walk along the charming canals at night. Sample some of the best Italian craft beers with two matching appetizers and learn all about food culture in Milan.



Florence Segway Guided Tour by Night

Enjoy a 1.5-hour segway tour at night in Florence with an expert guide. This tour includes a Segway tour with local guide (1 hour), training (30 minutes), helmet and rain vest.

A taste of Italy

Lemons so sweet you can eat them like oranges, decadent gelato that's impossible to resist, melt-in-the-mouth mozzarella made that morning...there's no end to the wonderful stories about the delights of Italian food. But when you're visiting Italy for the first time, where do you start?

One of the first points to bear in mind is that each of Italy's regions have specialty ingredients and dishes, and it's worth seeking them out. Heading to Central Italy (Tuscany, Umbria, Marche, Lazio)?

Make sure you visit the wineries. Travelling to Emilia-Romagna or Southern Italy (Campania, Basilicata, Abruzzo, Molise, Puglia, Calabria)? These regions are famous for their culinary traditions so prepare to gorge!

Italy never struggles to dish up delicious cuisine. From Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese to Bologna's truffles and Veneto's Prosecco, Italy is a foodie's dream and each region specialises in something different.

We've compiled our five favourite nibbles and tipples, and more importantly, where you should try them...



Burrata



Pizza



Barolo



Prosciutto di Parma



Un Caffè

Burrata from Puglia

Imagine a perfectly poached egg as a bright orange yolk magnificently oozes out. Tear open a gently wobbling ball of burrata, filled with a mouthwatering concoction of salted fresh cream mixed and slivers of mozzarella. It's a delight that you'll immediately devour!

Pizza from Naples

Wander the bustling streets of Naples and you'll soon stumble across the best pizza you've ever had. Come the next day and you'll feast on another pizza that'll probably taste even better. This is Naples in a nutshell - home of the pizza. Tip: Keep things simple with a margherita or marinara - it might seem boring but each flavour has space to breathe. Pizza frita (deep-fried stuffed pizza) is a street food classic that has to be tried too.

Barolo from Piedmont

Opulent notes of rose, red berries, and tar, a deep ruby hue, and a rich, fragrant taste with powerful tannins. You're sipping a Barolo, one of Italy's finest wines. Nestled on rolling green hills in the chalky, limestone soil are rows of vines, full of the black Nebbiolo grape which ripens under the Autumn sun and is transformed into a wine loved by enthusiasts worldwide.

Un Caffè

Make like a local and embrace Italian coffee culture by drinking your caffè whilst standing at the bar, and only ordering a cappuccino - or any other milky coffee, for that matter - in the morning! Ordering "Un caffè" gets you a single shot of espresso by default. Drink your shot quickly at the bar, gobble a sfogliatella (a moreish, clamshaped, flaky pastry filled with sweet ricotta) and carry on with your sightseeing. Another tip: Don't order coffee with your lunch or dinner - save your caffè until after your meal.

Prosciutto di Parma

Parma ham comprises just three ingredients but the artisans who create these nutty, wafer-thin slices follow a strict set of rules governed by the Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma. And it's this process that creates the melt-in-the-mouth texture and distinctive, sweet flavour. Only specific breeds of pig can be used for prosciutto di Parma and the process to create Parma ham is a long one with the curing last at least a year alone.



Our recommendations

Our Travel Counsellors know the world better than anyone else. We quizzed a handful of them for their tips and recommendations when it comes to Italy...



Venice

Despite all the water, Venice demands some comfy walking shoes to get around all the must-see sights, advises Travel Counsellor Lizzie...

Venice is a unique city-break destination with global appeal but it is comparatively small so getting around on foot is viable and healthy. Exploring is part of the Venetian experience and is to be embraced wholeheartedly.

Drop by the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, which displays over 50 Tintoretto paintings, making it the largest collection anywhere in the world. Climb the Bovolo Staircase - hard to locate but well worth the effort for the uncrowded space and views across the Venetian rooftop vista.

Florence is like a work of art in itself, says Travel Counsellor Suzanne...

Florence is tightly linked with the Renaissance movement so the whole city feels like a work of art with fountains, sculptures and statues everywhere.

The Ponte Vecchio bridge, which crosses the river, doesn't feel like a bridge at all as it is adorned with jewellery shops and just feels like another street. If you want to do the museums of Florence, I would advise taking a three-day break as you can't do it in a single day unless you like queuing.



Florence

Travel Counsellor Joanne explains why Milan should be your next weekend break away...

Milan is not the most obvious destination for a weekend break, but it is a city that comes with an image of industry and glamour, and it lives up to the reputation.

The large imposing Duomo has to be seen. With 135 spires and 3,159 statues, it dominates the piazza and it's well worth venturing up to the roof to get a closer look at the amazing statues.

Next door is the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele - a shopping mall with small boutiques and restaurants that's a great place to sit and just listen to the locals around you, looking chic going about their daily life.



Milan



Rome

Italy is the most-booked destination for Travel Counsellor Madeleine...

Italy has been my most popular destination to book this year and Rome is perfect for a city break as there are so many sights to see. It has the weather and of course lovely Italian food everywhere.

We joined a small group tour of 'Colosseum, Roman Forum and Palatine Hill' which lasted three hours. I've visited the Colosseum before but enjoyed it so much more as part of a tour with a knowledgeable guide.

After the tour ended, we were free to explore the Roman forum for longer ourselves. It's definitely worth walking to the top of the gardens for the views over the city.

Spending Money

Wondering how much spending money you'll need for your travels? To help you plan your trip, here's a rough guide to the cost of some of the things you might be buying whilst you're there!



€1.30

Cappuccino



€2

A scoop of Gelato



€5

A litre of house wine in a restaurant



€1.50

Single Bus Ticket (Local)



€8-10

Margherita Pizza



Chat with the Locals

Can't speak Italian? Fear not, we've compiled some useful phrases for you to practice before you go. You might not be able to pronounce the words like a local but you'll be able to feel like one when you order a scoop or two of Gelato in Italian!

Hello there!

Hello!
Ciao!

Good morning!
Buon giorno!

Good day!
Buon pomeriggio!

Good evening!
Buona sera!

Goodbye.
Arrivederci.

Please.
Per favore.

Thank you.
Grazie.

Thank you very much.
Grazie tante

Pardon me.
Mi scusi.

I don't speak Italian.
Non parlo italiano

Do you speak English?
Parla inglese?

Let's Explore

A map of the city, please.
Una pianta della città, per favore.

Excuse me, where is...?
Mi scusi, dov'è...?

Can you show me on the map?
Potete mostrarmelo sulla carta?

Take me to this address, please.
Mi porti a questo indirizzo, per favore.

May I take photos?
Posso fare fotografie?

Turn off the flash.
Togli il flash.

I'm lost.
Mi sono perso (if you're male)
Mi sono persa (if you're female)

How much does it cost?
Quanto costa?

I would like to book a guided tour of...
Vorrei prenotare una visita guidata per...

Two tickets please.
Due biglietti, per favore.

When is it open?
Quando é aperto?

When does it close?
Quando si chiude?

Let's get a bite to eat

Two cappuccinos, please.
Due cappuccini, per favore.

I'd like two flavours of ice cream, please.
Vorrei un gelato con due gusti, per favore

It's delicious!
È delizioso

A table for two, please.
Una tavola per due, per favore.

Do you have vegetarian dishes?
Avete dei piatti vegetariani?

What are your specialities?
Quali sono le specialità della casa?

A bottle of wine, please.
Una bottiglia di vino, per favore.

Where is the toilet?
Dov'è la toilette?

The bill, please.
Il conto, per favore.

Is the tip included?
Il servizio è incluso?

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