

ITALIA

THE OFFICIAL GUIDE FOR ITALIAN TOURISM



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ITALIAN TRAVEL
PROMOTION COUNCIL



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THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TOURIST BOARD NORTH AMERICA



ITALIA MUCH MORE

THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT
TOURIST BOARD
MR. RICCARDO STRANO
DIRECTOR FOR NORTH AMERICA

THE ITALIAN TRAVEL
PROMOTION COUNCIL
MR. MAURO GALLI
CHAIRMAN

A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT
TOURIST BOARD
NORTH AMERICAN STAFF

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EVENTNEXT

We invite you to begin your journey to Italy through the pages of this magazine. Take advantage of the information provided; it will be your travel companion during an unforgettable journey.

Whatever you seek in your vacation, whether it be the discovery of an artistic past, relaxation or fun, we invite you to take pleasure in Italy's idyllic beaches, to wander through the rolling hills of the countryside, to relax at a local *trattoria*, to indulge in the world of fashion, to treat yourself to a stroll around ancient ruins and to enjoy Italy's eternal magnificence.

Italy's love affair with the American traveler is one of the longest, most satisfying relationships between two civilizations. Italy appeals to the heart and soul of every American, whether young or old, traveling alone or in groups, on a budget or seeking luxury. Which is why, year after year, Italy ranks as the foreign destination visited most by Americans travelers.

Let Italy seduce you. Surrender to all it has to offer. Every day will provide a unique experience that will live in your memory forever.

A PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE



THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TOURIST BOARD
NORTH AMERICA



THE ITALIAN TRAVEL PROMOTION COUNCIL



**The Italian Government Tourist Board
North America**

Dear Traveler,
Thank you for choosing Italy as your travel destination.
Italy can satisfy your every desire. You will discover the food, flavor, music and folklore of your dreams. The beauty of Italy's landscape entices young people to fall in love and older couples to rekindle the romance of their youth. Young families revel in discovery as they learn first-hand about the colorful culture and ancient traditions of Italian villages. Art aficionados find themselves mesmerized by the classic art and sumptuous beauty of Italian cities. Yes, Italy is much more.

Prepare to be swept up in Italy. Prepare to be wrapped in the warmth and enthusiasm of the Italian people. Prepare for an awe inspiring peek of what to expect from an Italian vacation. Prepare to rush home and book your trip to Italy. Prepare for Italia and so much more.

Have a wonderful time and pleasant stay!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Strano'.

Riccardo Strano
Director
Italian Government Tourist Board North America



Italian Travel Promotion Council



On behalf of The Italian Travel Promotion Council, I welcome you to ITALY NOW, the essential tool for planning your vacation to Italy.

In this publication you will find useful information about the country, but more importantly the profiles of the best Tour Operators doing business with Italy, committed to giving American travelers the best possible experience while vacationing in Italy.

Indeed, ITPC members are the industry experts. Our organization, with a membership of 22 major operators, in conjunction with the honorary, permanent member, ENIT (the Italian National Tourist Office), created a strong alliance based on the love of the country. Our expertise in all aspects of vacation travel, our strong dedication to the industry and an equally strong commitment to persevere in achieving the realization of a perfect dream vacation for the American public are the qualities we consistently uphold.

The ITPC logo is the trademark recognized in the marketplace as the guarantee of quality, reliability and value. Our commitment is based on its selection of members who have a long and professional standing of services to the travel industry. Our members are reviewed and required to maintain the qualifications demanded by the standards of the organization.

We encourage you, the traveler, to look for the ITPC symbol of affiliation and be confident that the member you select will give you the best possible service, the greatest value and the knowledge and confidence that you have truly chosen an expert to create the trip to Italy you so deserve.

Featured in this issue is the beautiful island of Sardinia, surrounded by the pristine clear blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea. Vestiges of many civilizations, a food and wine paradise, authentic folklore and a splendid and luxurious landscape makes this island a vacation spot for all seasons.

I encourage you to read this publication and find the Tour Operator that fits your need.

Grazie

Mauro F. Galli
ITPC Chairman



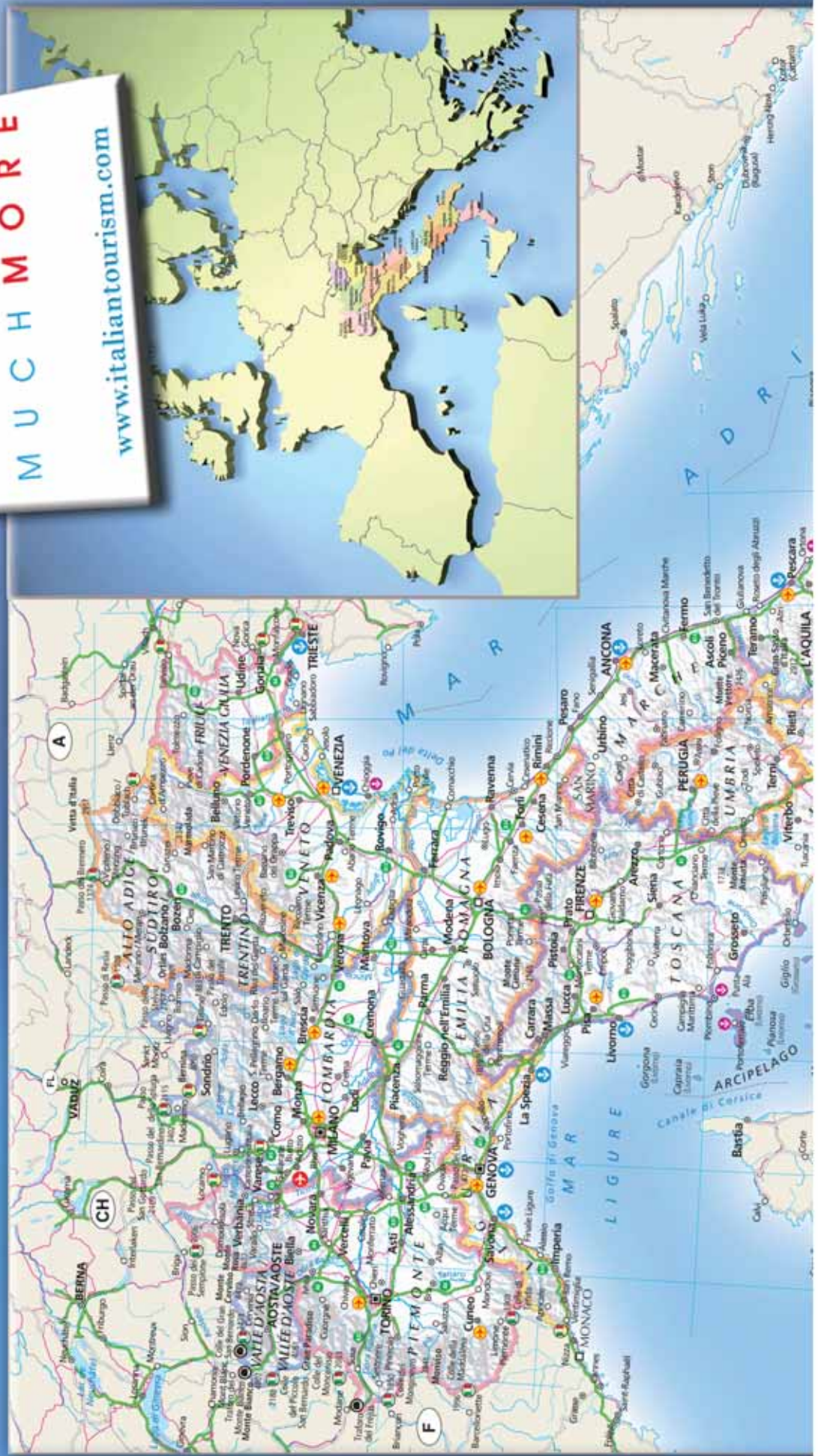
THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TOURIST BOARD

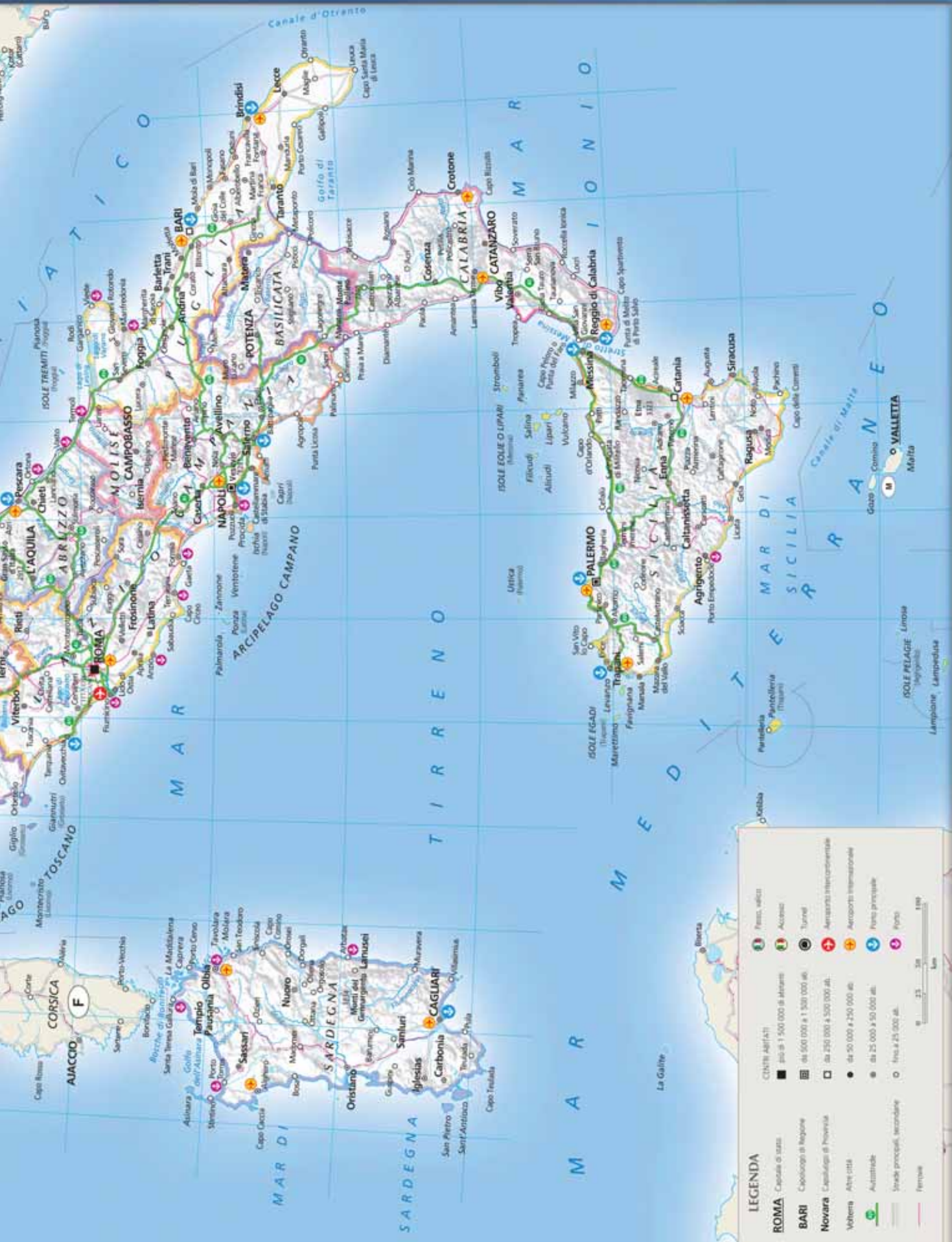
North America



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LEGENDA

ROMA Capitale di tutti

BARI Capoluogo di regione

Novara Capoluogo di Provincia

Altre città

Autostade

Strade principali, secondarie

Ferrovie

Centri abitati

- più di 1.500.000 di abitanti
- da 500.000 a 1.500.000 ab.
- da 250.000 a 500.000 ab.
- da 50.000 a 250.000 ab.
- da 25.000 a 50.000 ab.
- fino a 25.000 ab.

Porti

- Ferrovie
- Autostade
- Porto principale
- Aeroporto internazionale
- Turismo
- Acquedotti
- Ferrovie

Scala: 0 25 50 100 Km



Italian Travel Promotion Council

auto  europe®



Auto Europe offers Italy A la Carte with One Call Service. Auto Europe, a leader in European car rental services for over 54 years, can arrange all your transportation needs in Italy. Choose from the largest selection of self-drive cars at over 300 locations throughout Italy. In addition, we also offer the largest selection of prestige and sports car rentals, from Ferraris to Lamborghinis.

Chauffeur-driven service and transfer services are available in all major cities from executive sedans to limousines. Through our tour division, Destination Europe, travelers can

reserve coach, business class and first class airfare from across the USA to Europe. Combine your car rental with airfare or with any of the worldwide hotel properties that they also represent for guaranteed best savings on a complete package to Italy. Current savings include free GPS rentals with select car rental categories in Italy, 20% savings off any Mercedes Benz or Sports Car Rental and Winter Fly/Drive packages to Rome or Milan beginning at \$697 including airfare, fuel surcharge and a three-day economy car rental.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Auto Europe
800-223-5555
or visit our website at
www.autoeurope.com



Imad Khalidi



Italian Travel Promotion Council



BELLA VISTA

MEDITERRANEAN TOURS



BellaVista Tours was founded with the vision that truly exceptional tours begin with a thorough knowledge of the destination, and a willingness to provide clients with personalized service.

With over 12 years of travel experience, and an Italian-speaking staff with complete knowledge of the geography of Italy, BellaVista Tours promises to make your trip to Italy the experience of a lifetime. Our programs are created with your pleasure and enjoyment in mind. For example, all our itineraries are meticulously designed with superior hotels, regional cuisine, and interesting sightseeing. Bilingual guides make sure you don't miss any of the unique attractions that make Italy so special. We have inspected each hotel personally to ensure top quality at the category you select. If you participate in a group tour, you'll be led around in style and taken care of from beginning to end. If you choose to travel independently and set your own program, BellaVista Tours will advise and suggest your itinerary and coordinate all the logistics and

manage the little details through our offices in Italy, leaving you free to enjoy your vacation. Come and experience Italy "BellaVista" style!

Programs & Services

- Hotel accommodations throughout all regions of Italy from tourist class to deluxe.
- Sightseeing – including private guides if desired.
- Private transfers from airports and hotels
- Car rentals which give you the freedom of discovering all those out-of-the-way places.
- Villa and apartment rentals by the week.
- Train tickets and rail passes.
- Land-only arrangements or with air service from major US gateway cities to Italy and beyond.
- Contact numbers and support staff in Italy so you will never feel alone.



CONTACT INFORMATION

BellaVista Tours
 7 Marshall Street
 Boston, MA 02108
 Tel: 617-723-0802
 Toll free in U.S.: 877-723-0802
 Fax: 617-723-0803
 info@bellavistatours.com
 www.bellavistatours.com



April Bargout Antonio Lucente Stabile



Italian Travel Promotion Council



Since 1972, Celtic Tours has planned vacations for hundreds of thousands of satisfied people to Europe. The Travel Agent community in North America recognizes us as one of the leading independently owned and operated tour operators in the field of quality group and individual travel.

As active members of the United States Tour Operators Association, we are required to post a \$1 Million bond with USTOA to protect payments made to Celtic Tours. We are also active members of the National Tour Association and the American Society of Travel Agents.

Celtic Tours has a rich history of presenting a unique collection of Italian vacations for individual and group travel. Imagine a dream vacation at an Italian villa, winding your way through a "Southern Italian Odyssey" or enjoying a private chauffeur or rail tour. We are also specialists in family vacations. Let us help your clients realize their Italian dream vacation!



CONTACT INFORMATION

Celtic Tours World Vacations
1860 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203
800-833-4373
operations@celtictours.com
www.celtictours.com



Carol Dimopoulos



Italian Travel Promotion Council

Central Holidays™
Travel the Best of Europe and the Mediterranean



Whether you're looking to vacation with friends and family, travel as part of a group, or seek a romantic retreat for two, your ideal experience to Italy awaits you with Central Holidays. Our programs feature tour packages, car rentals, Mediterranean and river cruises, as well as ski vacation packages to single and multi-country destinations the world over. Launched by Joe and Fred Berardo in 1972, we have since been committed to sharing with travelers the treasures of their native land, Italy, and its surrounding Mediterranean neighbors.

Rest assured, we know Italy, and personalized service is our trademark. Our first class packages include escorted motor-coach tours, hosted as well as independent travel itineraries,

and customized group travel. We also provide niche-market packages, such as cooking classes, wine excursions, tours for art aficionados, as well as vacation rentals including villas, castles, and farmhouses.

A Central Holidays-escorted program always includes centrally-located hotels, and complimentary wine, mineral water, and coffee or cappuccino with meals. And, as innovators of dining out at renowned restaurants, we treat our guests to Italy with the tantalizing tastes of authentic regional cuisines. Central Holidays' high level of repeat travelers is a testimony to our dedication to quality and service. Come see for yourself what we can offer you. Experience the personalized service for which we are known and revered.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Central Holidays
800-935-5000
www.centralholidays.com
Email: info@centralholidays.com
Brochures: brochures@centralholidays.com



Fred Berardo

Joseph Berardo



Italian Travel Promotion Council



COUNTRY WALKERS®

Explore the world one step at a time®



Country Walkers, the leader in worldwide active adventures invites you to step into the heart of Italy. We welcome you to slow down and immerse yourself in sensational surroundings – and leave your worries behind. Italy is a destination of extraordinary beauty, vitality, and historic importance. The famously relaxed Italian way of life is a wonder all its own.

Walking is the best way to know Italy. With 10 distinct itineraries in Italy, our trips highlight Italy's beautiful coastlines, stunning islands, majestic mountains and lakes, and rolling, gentle hillsides - you're assured a complete immersion in this extraordinary country.

From the moment you arrive we take care of everything – including authentic accommodations, cultural events, and fresh, local cuisine. Regional wines are included with every dinner.

Best of all your experienced, professional guides are with you every step of the way.

Simply delightful companions, your guides are local to the regions in which they guide, providing amazing 'insider access.' Doors open for you, thanks to our guides. You could not be in better hands.

As Country Walkers celebrates its 31st anniversary in adventure travel, we renew our commitment to walking as the best way to make meaningful connections with a region, its culture, and the locals. Small groups (never more than 18), experienced local guides, guaranteed departures and our promise to deliver an experience of unsurpassed quality and value set us apart.

Come join us on a scheduled departure or a private tour designed specifically for you - every step of the way, live *la dolce vita* found only in Italy on a Country Walkers tour.



Timo Shaw

CONTACT INFORMATION

Country Walkers
PO Box 180 (93 Pilgrim Park, Suite 1)
Waterbury, VT 05676
Toll free 800-464-9255
info@countrywalkers.com
www.countrywalkers.com



Italian Travel Promotion Council



Distinctive Journeys
INTERNATIONAL



Offering Distinctive Experiences in Italy and Around the World!

Founded in 1994, Distinctive Journeys International (DJI) is a full-service tour operator specializing in deluxe, custom-designed travel programs to Italy and other international destinations for individuals, small groups and incentives.

DJI offers a wealth of creative ideas and a full range of services for everyone from first-time travellers to the most discerning repeat clientele. The team at DJI is professional, well-traveled, personable, and extremely knowledgeable, offering the utmost in service and reliability. Helping you with every step of your trip, DJI is there from the initial planning until the return home.

Distinctive Journeys International Programs and Services:

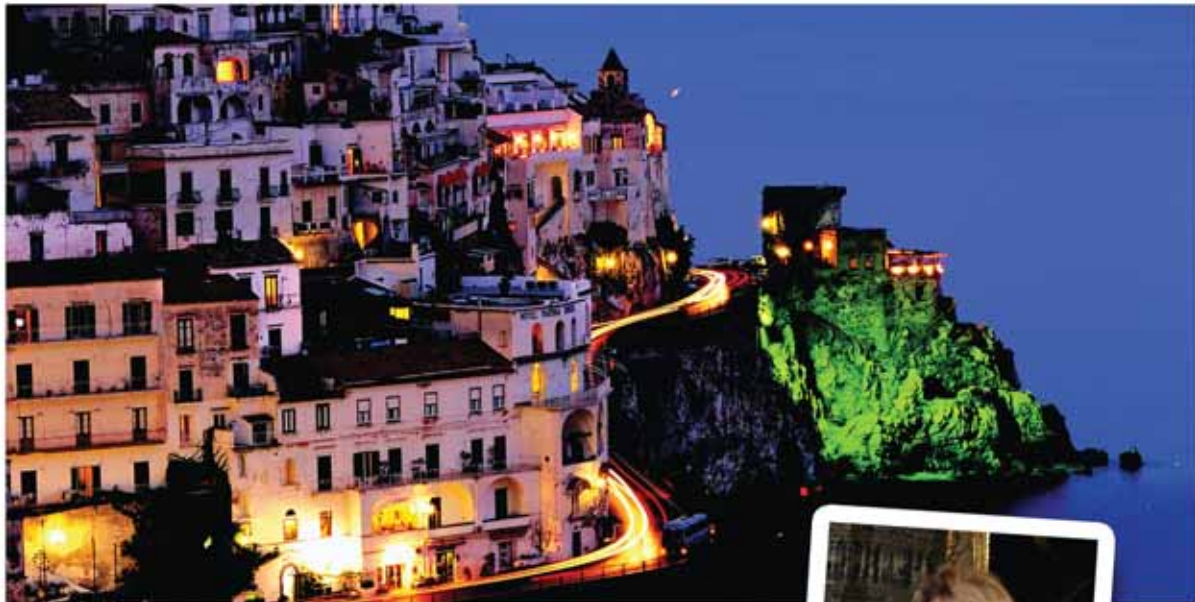
A wide range of deluxe overseas accommodations, transportation (chauffer-driven or rental car), private and public touring with highly qualified hand-picked guides, shore excursions, and special activities and interests from olive oil tasting to a morning Jewish focused tour, and other distinctive experiences,

Comprehensive, personalized documentation includes detailed itineraries with restaurant recommendations, driving directions, shopping tips, emergency contacts, maps, brochures and more!

NEW! DJI Express (For hotels only): Choose from an enormous inventory of accommodation in Italy and locations throughout the world. 3-5 star properties in a wide variety of styles – traditional, boutique, contemporary, villa-style, chateaux, etc. Book online at competitive prices. DJI Express offers convenience, ease and value.

NEW! Custom travel insurance: Experience peace of mind while travelling abroad! Whether you choose the Custom Travel Plus or Travel Lite through Distinctive Journeys International both policies include the following benefits:

- ◆ Cost Not Based on Age
- ◆ Door-to-Door Coverage (even if program not booked through DJI)
- ◆ Primary Insurance Coverage



CONTACT INFORMATION

Distinctive Journeys International, Ltd
930 Pitner Avenue, Suite #11
Evanston, IL 60202
800-922-2060 or 847-328-2566
anna@distinctivejourneys.com
Fax: 847-328-2568
www.distinctivejourneys.com



Anna Carroll



Italian Travel Promotion Council



"Every time I go to Italy I discover a new treasure," Kit Burns of Doorways, Ltd. says. "I got into the travel business simply because I fell in love with Italy. The first time I went, I departed from a cold and snowy Philadelphia only to end up in a villa in Tuscany the next day. I opened the window and saw the rolling hills and from that moment on, I was hooked."



Doorways, Ltd

"As a painter, I appreciated all of the different landscapes Italy had to offer—from the sea and mountains in Abruzzo, to the dry and western look of Maremma. Southeastern Tuscany remains my favorite after 15 years," Kit continues, "The scenery is simultaneously dramatic and peaceful. Looking at the Tuscan hills is like looking at waves of different colors that are restful to the eye and refreshing to the spirit." Each season has something unique to offer. During the summer, the blossoms and beaches come alive and travelers can choose between Rimini and Riccione for an active nightlife, or Sardinia and Sicily for diving and sailing. In the spring nature bursts with fragrance and color—a painter's delight! It is the ideal time to

explore museums or simply sit in a café enjoying a coffee and the local street scene. September marks the breaking of the heat, and the start of the grape and olive harvest. The cities are easy to navigate and the countryside offers other activities like truffle and mushroom hunting. In the winter, the Alps, Apennines and the Dolomites become a white

wonderland for skiers.

Doorways, Ltd. Italian Villa Vacations offers exquisite villas for vacations in Italy. Choose your dream property from a carefully vetted quality selection to ensure a wonderful experience.

- 333 premier villas, castles, cottages and city apartments
- 142 air-conditioned properties
- Professional and experienced staff
- Extra attention for families
- Special services in the villa (staff, chef, cooking classes)
- Weddings and honeymoons, special-interest groups
- Travel tips, restaurant guides, day-trip guides
- Quarterly newsletter



CONTACT INFORMATION

Doorways, Ltd.
900 County Line Road
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
610-520-0806
Fax 610-520-0807
800-261-4460
www.villavacations.com



Kit Burns



Italian Travel Promotion Council



EAC - europe at cost

"Superb vacations by design"

Since 1966



Europe At Cost© (EAC) is an Italian Group Tour Operator specializing solely in customized ground services in Europe since 1966; with offices in Milan, Rome, Nice, Washington & New York City.

We don't advertise extensively; but the fact that EAC has been successfully operating for over 43+ years, relying primarily on business attained via tremendous client loyalty and "word of mouth," is indicative of the degree of satisfaction

clients have with our services. EAC is considered somewhat of a hidden gem within the industry. EAC customizes tours for travelers who seek personal tours to Europe, with specific interests in mind, such as RELIGIOUS & PILGRIMAGES TOURS - EDUCATIONAL - ARCHITECTURE & ART - ARCHEOLOGY - WINE & GOURMET - HERITAGE - VILLA RENTALS, and much more. We supply many to Virtuoso agents and other travel associations.



CONTACT INFORMATION

EAC - Europe At Cost
315 Fifth Avenue
Suite 603
New York, NY, 10016
Tel. 800-322-3876 or 212-532-6947
Fax 212-532-8439
www.europeatcost.com
skype: europeatcost



Cristina Carta Villa



Italian Travel Promotion Council



Since 1985, **European Connection**, founded by its President Sandy Cutrone CTC, has been providing customized, imaginative itineraries for individuals and groups traveling to Italy.

We are the one-stop shop for expert assistance in planning, guidance and complete coordination of all trip details from start to finish. The knowledgeable and professional staff of our award-winning company has been internationally recognized as a reliable source for creating outstanding travel packages for discriminating travelers.

We are just a phone call away in the USA with cost-effective prices achieved by our direct contracts with hundreds of suppliers in every part of Italy. We can offer every type of hotel from top deluxe to charming country inns, all including breakfast daily, VAT and special added-value amenities. Our carefully selected Special Guides are assigned based on the suitability for and special needs of the travelers.

We have an extensive network throughout Italy of the finest Chauffeur-Driven Vehicles and Coaches for transfers, sightseeing and long-distance touring.

Ask about our Shore Excursions in every port and Special services such as Family Travel Packages, Children's Discovery Tours, pre-reserved museum tickets, bicycle excursions, ballooning, helicopter transfers, sightseeing, cooking classes, wine tasting, sports car driving, etc. *we can do it all.*

We are proud members of ~

Customized Services

- Comprehensive Itinerary Planning
- Shore Excursions
- Pre- & Post-Cruise Packages
- Wide Range of Hotels from 3* to top 5*
- Private Transfers, Touring & Sightseeing
- Scheduled Tours
- Museum Reservations
- Gourmet & Wine Programs
- Light Adventure
- Meetings, Incentives & Events



CONTACT INFORMATION

European Connection
6801 Jericho Turnpike • Suite 200
Syosset, New York 11791
800-345-4679 • 516-625-1800
FAX 516-625-1138
www.europeanconnection.com
info@europeanconnection.com



Sandy Cutrone



Italian Travel Promotion Council



EUROBOUND
tahitibound

Your Passport to Europe & Paradise

EuroBound was incorporated in January 1996 as one of the top tour operators dealing exclusively with **Europe**. We specialize in customized tours from economy to deluxe, for groups, as well as individual travelers. Our staff, who are mostly from Europe, are extremely knowledgeable in organizing custom tours throughout Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Central Europe, Greece and the United Kingdom. We offer hotel, air, rail and car rental programs, we specialize in custom tour arrangements and strive to offer innovative and off the beaten path ideas for itineraries that create memories that will last a lifetime.

Our goal is to handle all aspects of our clients' needs. We provide initial itinerary planning with no up front fee, have good international air carrier contracts to assure lower fares and we are bonded with the Airline Reporting Corporation.

As we approach our 14th year of providing personalized quality programs to the travel agency community, we are honored to be a member of the Italian Travel Promotion Council. Membership reflects Eurobound's commitment to Italian tourism.

Both owners of EuroBound have each been in the travel industry for over 25 years and recognize the importance of maintaining strong relationships with travel agencies. We always **enclose commission payments with documents**, accept client's credit cards, offer incentives and negotiate mutually rewarding individual contracts for preferred consortiums or Travel Agencies. Eurobound is a member of **IATA, and ASTA**, and is a registered seller of travel under California law.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Eurobound
9841 Airport Blvd., Suite 830
Los Angeles, CA 90045
Toll Free: 888 672-7476
reservations@eurobound.com
www.eurobound.com



Brigitte Armand Steve Stepanian



Italian Travel Promotion Council



Traveling with Experience Italy, Inc. is traveling with style and a sense of adventure. In the spirit of our slogan "Let the Journey Begin", we believe that travel is an extremely personal experience that we give the utmost importance to.

At Experience Italy Inc., YOU choose how and where you want to go and have a chance to be involved in designing the perfect trip that meets your specific needs and wishes. We continue to strive to achieve 'Il Migliore' (the best) Italian Journey for you, not to mention some incredible 'experiences'.

We plan your entire tour and package (based on the services selected and according to your budget) so that there is one total price. This eliminates any worry for you regarding currency transactions on hotel bills, getting the right rail ticket or missing out on an important museum because you weren't aware of its hours and days of operation.

Specializing in Italian Travel since 2001, we take great pride in our first-hand knowledge of the many regions that make up Italia. All recommended accommodations are personally reviewed, and tour companies and guides are chosen for their knowledge and command of the English language.

Programs & Services

- Cooking classes
- Wine tastings & tours
- Olive oil tastings
- Pecorino Cheese production tour
- Private (behind the scenes) tour of the Vatican
- Private (behind the scenes) tour of the Doge's Palace
- Private guided walking tours in Rome, Florence, Venice, Milan and many other cities
- Group walking tours in many major cities
- Museum Reservations - Opera Tickets
- Rail Tickets with seat reservations (where applicable)
- Car Rentals - Private Car & Driver
- Restaurant, Shopping & Sightseeing Recommendations



CONTACT INFORMATION

Experience Italy, Inc.
9744 E. Kiowa Ave
Mesa, AZ 85209
Tel. 480-988-7111
Fax 480-380-5142
info@expitaly.com
www.expitaly.com



Sherry Stebbeds



Italian Travel Promotion Council

GLOBUS. *family of brands*



For 80 years, the Globus family of brands has been providing a variety of products that address the needs of today's diverse traveler with unparalleled vacation experiences, full of discovery and insight.

We offer hundreds of unique itineraries all over North America, South America, Europe, Asia and Australia.

Whether it's a fully escorted, premium, independent, or river cruise vacation, with Globus, Cosmos, Monograms and Avalon Waterways you will get unmatched value, insider knowledge, and world-class customer service with every journey.



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Globus family of brands
5301 S. Federal Circle
Littleton, CO 80123
Direct: 303-703-7000
Toll Free: 800-851-0728
www.globusfamily.com



Scott Nisbet



Italian Travel Promotion Council



THE INTERNATIONAL KITCHEN

The International Kitchen, founded in 1994, is the foremost culinary tour company offering over 90 hands-on cooking vacations in Europe. Weeklong all inclusive programs include: accommodations at small and charming historic hotels, inns, villas, or farms in beautiful and scenic locations; hands-on cooking classes; all meals with local wine; market visits; wine, olive oil and cheese tastings; visits to historic sites and transportation throughout. Classes are led by a variety of teachers, from Michelin-star chefs, to local caterers and restaurateurs, to a "nonna" or grandmother who loves to pass on her family recipes with a fierce passion for her heritage. Programs can be confirmed for as few as two people and are never larger than eight to twelve.

Karen Herbst, founder and president, has established a policy that every program is personally visited and experienced by our staff so that we are certain we have created an outstanding program to provide you with an unforgettable and magical experience. If you do not have time for a full program, we offer shorter options as well as one-day classes in many locations. We offer a cultural experience as much as a culinary trip; what better way to get to know the local people than through their gastronomy, which is such an important part of their culture? Cook, eat, drink and laugh—and make memories that will last a lifetime.



CONTACT INFORMATION

The International Kitchen
www.theinternationalkitchen.com
info@theinternationalkitchen.com
1-800-945-8606



Karen Herbst



Italian Travel Promotion Council



Parker Villas

Certified Vacation Rentals in Italy



For Parker, it's not about how many homes or countries it offers. It's about the number of satisfied customers that return each year. With client satisfaction rated above 99%, Parker enjoys the industry's highest reputation for quality, accuracy and customer care. Parker is not a listing service. Only homes that meet stringent guidelines are represented. Parker's success is driven by three factors:

Certification—Parker's Italian office re-inspects properties to insure quality standards are maintained and provides unequaled in-country customer support.

Uniformity—For consumers to make accurate comparisons, Parker sets pricing based on size, location and amenities and relies solely on its own photos and descriptions.

Exclusivity—Property owners choose Parker exclusive of other agencies, portals or listing services. This eliminates confusion, overbooking and dramatically increases owner accountability.

While some may think we invented this business. We did not. However, since our inception in 1993, when screens or phones were virtually unheard of in Italian rentals, Parker set the industry on its heels. Today, air conditioning, WiFi access, washer-dryers, fully staffed villas and a host of other amenities are commonplace in many Parker properties. What's next? Ultimately, it's about the experience. Aside from significant savings over hotels, today's traveler seeks built-in activities with their home. Parker Villas goes beyond just renting a house. Some of our properties offer: pizza making classes using the villa's brick oven; private wine and olive tastings; cooking classes in the villa's kitchen; massage treatments by the pool; exotic truffle hunting and driving tours in vintage automobiles. For travelers not renting villas, Parker offers half-day classes ranging from cooking to ceramic making at Actividayz.com. Parker also offers three-day cooking programs to add pre- or post-rental, one in a private Florentine villa and the other in Abruzzo — the kitchen of Italy.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Parker Villas
152 Lynnway, Lynn, MA 01902
800-280-2811
www.parkervillas.com
italy@theparkercompany.com



Castello Ducale - Chianti



Italian Travel Promotion Council

PERILLO TOURS



Leaders to Italy since 1945.

From the major cities to the charming hill towns off the beaten path, Perillo's Italy tours have been honed and crafted through 65 years of experience.

You'll appreciate our balance of sightseeing, free time, optional activities and relaxation. Our itineraries are often imitated, but never surpassed.

Unmatched Meal Service

For many, Italy's food is as important an experience as visiting the Sistine Chapel (also included on our tours!). So we start each day with a full Italian/American buffet, including bacon and eggs. Dinners include antipasto, pasta, choice of 3 entrees, salad, desert, coffee, mineral water and one bottle of wine per couple. Most nights we include entertainment. Buon appetito!

First Class & Deluxe Hotels The Perillo name is as well known in Italy as in the States. We've established strong relationships with the best centrally located, 4- & 5-Star hotels throughout the country. When you travel Perillo, you're not just another tourist!

Great Guides & Sightseeing In Italy, being hired by Perillo Tours represents the pinnacle of any tour guide's career. We also employ the best expert local guides, many who have published books and have advanced degrees to their credit. Our sightseeing includes in-depth studies of the Sistine Chapel, Uffizi Gallery, Doges Palace, Pompeii, the Colosseum and the great Cathedrals of Italy.

Perillo's new Italy FIT Department

Did you know that Perillo's first 30 years in business were completely devoted to arranging customized trips to Italy? It was called Foreign Independent Travel in those days and in fact, travel professionals still call them "FIT's".

We're proud to be back in the FIT business! From a basic, first-timers tour of Italy to an in-depth visit to your grandparent's village in Calabria, Perillo Tours is here to assist you.

Receive a detailed, final quotation within 48 hours of your request. *"Chi viaggia con Perillo, viaggia tranquillo!"*



CONTACT INFORMATION

Perillo Tours
800-431-1515
www.perillotours.com



Steve Perillo



Italian Travel Promotion Council

SPLENDIDA ITALIA

By Picasso Travel



Since 1979, Picasso Travel has provided travel agents with highly competitive airfares to the four corners of the globe. Known for reliable, ethical customer service, Picasso quickly earned the nickname "the good consolidator," a distinction it continues to enjoy throughout the travel community today.

Begun in 1998, Splendida Italia by Picasso Travel was a natural outgrowth of Picasso's strong customer service and special affection for Italy as a tourism destination. Forging solid working relationships within the destination gave Splendida Italia's programs a distinctive personal touch favored by both travel agents and travelers. Year after year, by pairing value priced air fares with a variety of land packages

designed to suit the full range of travel budgets and travel preferences, Splendida Italia offers the best of Italy from the Swiss border to Sicily, from Murano to Capri to Sardinia and everything in between. Packages feature simple city modules—the building blocks for the design-your-own custom tours; escorted bus tours with time-tested itineraries that never lose their appeal; special interest touring with a focus on wine and culinary demonstrations; art classes and wellness programs—hotels, resorts, country inns, private villas—Splendida Italia is a showcase of the charms of Europe's most compelling destination.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Splendida Italia by Picasso Travel
11099 S. La Cienega Boulevard, Suite 242
Los Angeles, CA 90045
info@splendidaitalia.com
310-645-7527
800-995-7997
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Italian Travel Promotion Council



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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Chris Accomando



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Tourcrafters
www.tourcrafters.com
Toll Free: (800) 621-2259
Tel: (847) 816-6510
Fax: (847) 816-6717

ITPC

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Visit Italy Tours
20855 Ventura Blvd. Suite 10
Woodland Hills, CA 91364
Tel. 800-255-3537
Fax 310-649-6880
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info@visititalytours.com
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Veneto Region - Regional Government
Councillorship for Tourism and Agriculture
Palazzo Balbi - Dorsoduro, 3901
I - 30123 Venezia

Tourism and Food Promotion Department
Via Torino, 110
I - 30172 Venezia Mestre

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✓eneto for you



Veneto is the Italian region with the largest number of tourists, thus confirming the region to be the most important one for tourism. This success derives from the uniqueness of a region that is capable of meeting all the tourist's expectations providing the best of everything, and where, within an area of just a few kilometers, it is possible to immerse oneself in a cultural and naturalistic heritage so varied that it is unequalled.

From the charm of Venice to the delightfulness of the Lago di Garda, from the majesty of the Dolomites to the series of cities of art, the list of treasures that make this region a top tourist destination in every season is long. We cannot forget the fascinating natural landscape represented by our regional parks: six emerald jewels that are an integral part of the Veneto region's resources. That is not all. In addition to the numerous cultural, entertainment and sports events organized throughout the region, Veneto offers the pleasures of fine food and wine thanks to its rich and valued gourmet tradition.

This success resides in the uniqueness, variety and quality of the tourist attractions, enhanced by an organized promotional campaign managed by highly professional operators, who are well-recognized entrepreneurs.

This is a tool for going over the extraordinary heritage of Veneto: a region set between the earth and the sky.

Franco Manzato
*Vice President and Minister for Tourism
Veneto Region*

Itineraries





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Sea

The gold of the beaches

Endless beaches washed by one of the cleanest seas along the Italian coasts - the beaches in the Veneto have always been renowned worldwide for their unique natural setting. Perhaps because of the warm light of the lagoon that contrasts with the infinite expanse of the sea, the shade of the green pine forests surrounding the beaches, or the fascination of the small port towns that have preserved the atmosphere that once welcomed fisherman returning to Venice amidst the alleyways next to the sea.

Bibione, with its large golden beach and modern thermal spa, Caorle, with its delightful historical centre and a little further south, the "green pearl" of the Adriatic, Eraclea Mare, with its wavy beach of small dunes covered with tamarisks and immersed in lush vegetation, which makes it the ideal place for the whole family.

The Liberty atmosphere of the Venice Lido is evocative of the cultural climate of the early twentieth century when the European upper class would choose this destination for culture and relaxation. The fun and discos to be found on the beach in Jesolo make it extremely popular with the young, while Cavallino welcomes those who want to relax in an atmosphere amidst golden beaches and the immobile environment of the lagoon.

Not to mention Sottomarina and Chioggia, two towns that are bound by history and traditions - the former is a seaside resort boasting the most modern hotel accommodation, while the second is a town that deserves to be visited in peace and quiet, a "little Venice", where one can ride around by bike.

Finally, Rosolina Mare - a beach of fine sand, immersed in the natural setting of the lagoon, pools, and shoals dotted with the occasional little churches or brick huts.





Lake



The orange of the lake

Lake Garda is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Veneto region, an area where the intimacy of its hamlets and castles perched along the shores are combined with its luxuriant vegetation, with the bright colours of citrus trees, oleanders and the silvery shade of olive trees. The magic of this place comes from the mystery of its waters, calm on the surface but animated below, with winds that only the unique micro-climate of this lake can create, an underwater environment but one that is ideal for those





who love diving. In fact, this area is an unbelievable outdoor gym, ideal for windsurfing and sailing on the lake while the surrounding hills offer relaxing walks through greenery; during the winter Monte Baldo, as well as excursions, also offers enchanting slopes for ski lovers.

Centuries-old towns, Lazise, Bardolino, Garda, Peschiera, Brenzone, and Torri del Benaco are testimony of the transition of different cultures and histories and the Malcesine castle, made eternal by Goethe in one of his most evocative pages in Italian Journey, stands out as one of the most interesting testimonies.

The countless amusement and water parks offer the ideal opportunity for some fun for both children and adults, while the typical produce of the Mediterranean scrub cultivated here will delight the gourmets with its natural flavours.



Cities of art

The red of the seven cities of art

Seven splendid jewels preserved between the mountains and the sea are testimony to the splendour and variety of cultural changes that mark the Veneto region. A journey that starts in Belluno, immersed in the magic fascination of the Dolomites, continuing with Verona, the historical city that is home to the myth of Romeo and Juliet and is known worldwide for its Arena, the temple of opera.

Further to the east is Vicenza, a city where the genius of the great architect Andrea Palladio left his unmistakable mark on the urban fabric, making it an open-air museum.

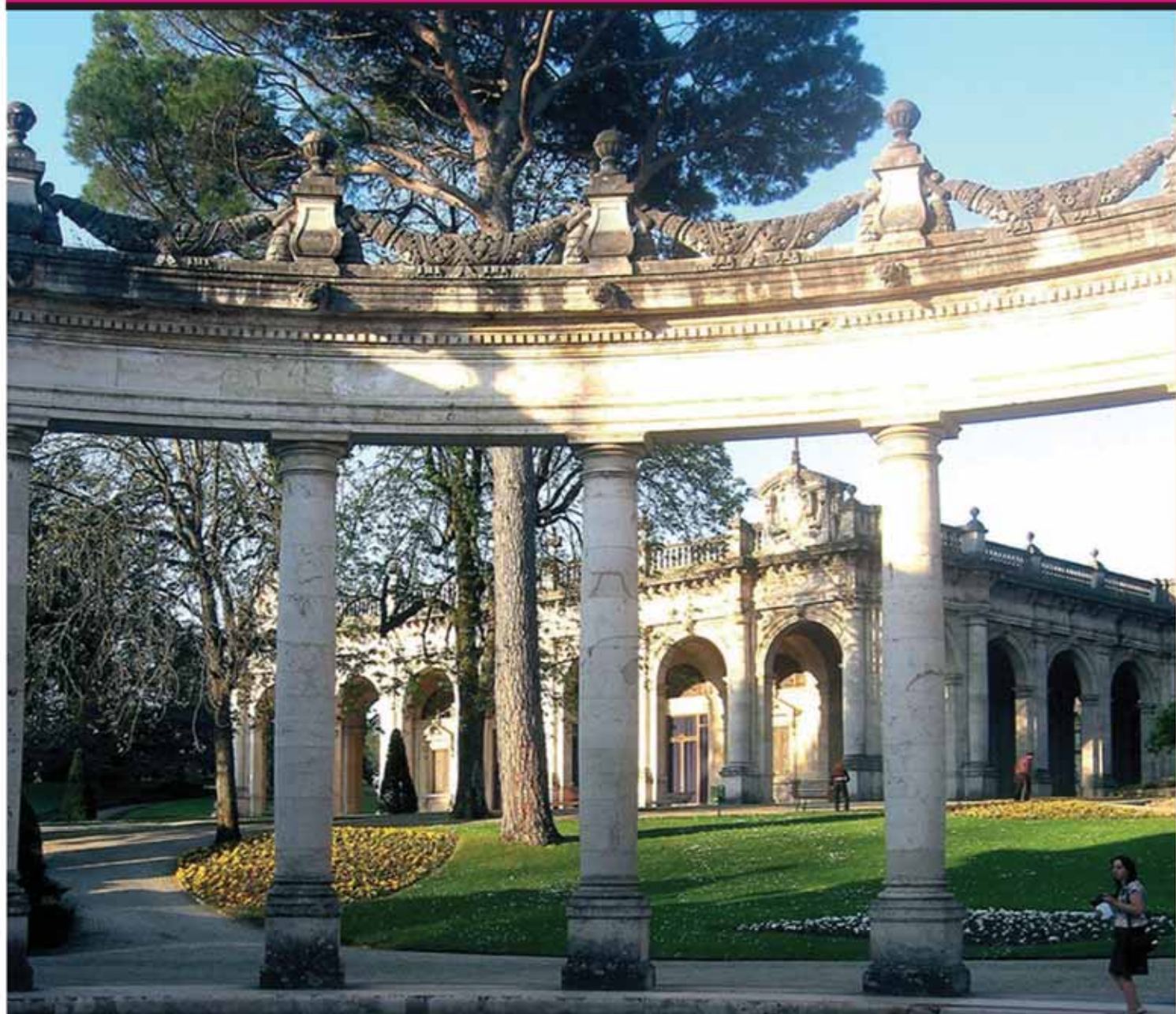




In Padua, home to one of the oldest universities in Italy, is the spectacular Prato della Valle, one of the biggest public squares in the world, crossed by a pilgrimage of countless followers going to the Basilica of Saint Anthony. The elegant and refined town of Treviso, however, is crossed by the peaceful Sile river, creating just the right atmosphere for a relaxing walk along its banks or, heading towards the centre, amidst its Mediaeval ruins. Venice, one of the world capitals of art, is a magical city to wander through, losing oneself in its labyrinths, amidst little squares and alleyways, and discovering one evocative view after another. Further to the south this journey comes to an end with the splendid art centre of Rovigo, the small regional centre of the alluvial plain, a city that is not used to tourism but that boasts an amazing centre with its Renaissance and Baroque monuments, embraced by the banks of the Po and Adige rivers.



Thermal Baths



The magenta of the thermal baths

The Veneto region is one of the areas with the most thermals sources in Italy.

The area of the Euganean hills is famous, with the cities of Abano Terme, Montegrotto Terme, Teolo, Galzignano Terme and Battaglia Terme. These are the ideal places to rediscover one's general wellbeing, in a setting in which each activity is linked to harmony between man and nature, where one can forget the stressful pace of everyday life and immerse oneself in pleasant regenerative therapies and focus on a healthier lifestyle. The secret lies in its waters which, sprouting from the basins of the Pre-Alps, finally come out from underground at a temperature of 87°C. This water is unique



worldwide and is the basis of the process for the maturation, conservation and regeneration of thermal muds, which have no equals regarding their properties and therapeutic capacity. To the north, Valgrande is the highest thermal resort in the world, a combination of health and wellbeing in a rare setting, dominated by the Dolomite group of the Popera. Towards the sea one can find the highly modern facilities of Bibione Thermae, while to the east of Verona is Caldiero, the name of which goes back to the ancient *Calidarium*, an expression used to refer to precisely those mysterious springs of hot water.

Finally, Recoaro Terme, which was already a thermal resort during the time of the Venetian Republic, was one of the most popular thermal centres at the end of the 1800's and beginning of the 1900's, as can be seen by its gardens, villas and Liberty-style architecture. An area that is also home to a great variety of unusual botany, giving the valley surrounding the town the name of "*Conca di smeraldo*" [Emerald Shell].



Parks and the Po Delta





The green of the parks

Six green jewels, each boasting their own unique kinds of nature, add further variety to the tourist offer in the Veneto. The River Po creates a unique, dream-like landscape that crosses the Padua plain to the Adriatic, where it leads to a delta that is one of the largest wetlands in Europe: the Regional Park of the Po Delta, a world that is the result of the infinite fight between land and sea, where an unreal silence reigns in the wilderness of nature.

The National Park of the Bellunese Dolomites stands out with its impressive panoramas, thanks to a mountain complex consisting of three Dolomite groups, separated by deep perpendicular valleys from the River Piave - it offers countless altimetric excursions that look steep, but that also cover pastures and gentle hills.

Amidst a crown of fascinating mountains lies the Regional Park of the Ampezzo Dolomites, a blaze of waterfalls and streams, where rare species of vegetation that are only to be found in this area have managed to survive.

The flow of the River Sile, a prized resurgence river, creates one of the longest natural parks in the world, a unique ecosystem with countless animals and aquatic plants, reed-beds, shrubs and forest vegetation that is transformed into a curtain of green of all shades.

Gently sloping lines alternated with pointed peaks and the dark walls of volcanic rock characterize the profile of the Regional Park of the Euganean Hills, the highest of which is Monte Venda, with its 601 metres.

Finally, the Natural Regional Park of Lessinia is karstic and is located near Lake Garda - a diversified world of nature and history, where nature blends with ethnic and linguistic values, bound by the ancient traditions of the Cimbrians who once used to live here.



Mountains in summer





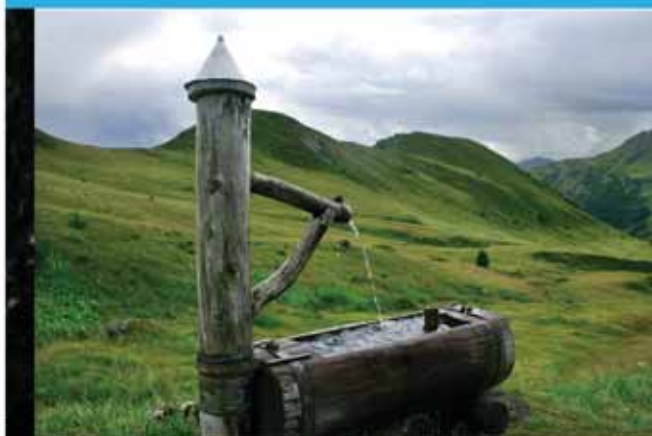
The turquoise of mountains in the summer

A desire for well-being and relaxation for both the body and mind in surroundings of unheard of beauty. In the summer the mountains are a refuge from the torrid heat, a place where one can enjoy nature immersed in unique landscapes surrounded by luxuriant nature at its best. With their diversified landscapes, the mountains in the Veneto area are an opportunity that should not be missed.

The walls of the Dolomites are ideal for extreme sports lovers - rock that is hard to conquer, and unforgettable landscapes awaiting you at the peaks, an endless expanse of craggy peaks, home only to birds of prey that soar in the skies.

If you are looking for peace and quiet and relaxation, Recoaro Terme and the "Conca di smeraldo" is a natural gym for countless kinds of sport - mountain biking, excursions of various difficulty, gliding and paragliding, with the comfort of a relaxing massage or sauna in one of the famous wellness centres in the area in the evening.

The mountain chain that acts as a barrier to the icy north winds makes the Asiago Plateau even more inviting in the summer. Various meadows, endless woods and for gourmets a visit to one of the mountain huts in the area to try their fresh and matured cheeses, produced on one of the most evocative plateaus in Italy. Finally, on the Monti Lessini you can choose whether you prefer the typical surroundings of the lower mountains, with their olive groves, vines, cherry and chestnut trees, or whether you prefer an alpine region further up, with rock of sedimentary and volcanic origins. A holiday that takes you on a journey through nature, experiencing the climate at different altitudes.



Mountains in winter

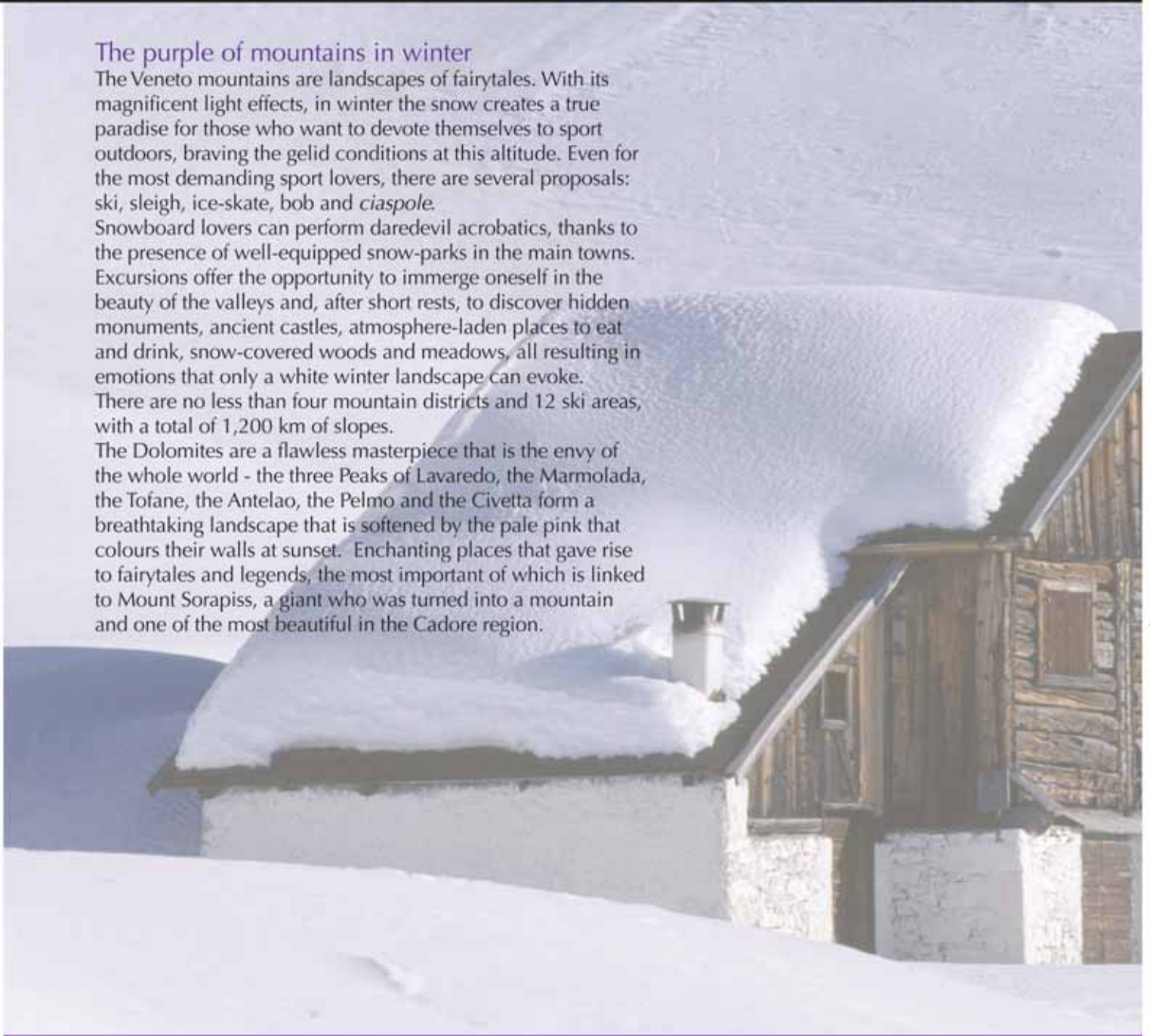
The purple of mountains in winter

The Veneto mountains are landscapes of fairytales. With its magnificent light effects, in winter the snow creates a true paradise for those who want to devote themselves to sport outdoors, braving the gelid conditions at this altitude. Even for the most demanding sport lovers, there are several proposals: ski, sleigh, ice-skate, bob and *ciaspole*.

Snowboard lovers can perform daredevil acrobatics, thanks to the presence of well-equipped snow-parks in the main towns. Excursions offer the opportunity to immerge oneself in the beauty of the valleys and, after short rests, to discover hidden monuments, ancient castles, atmosphere-laden places to eat and drink, snow-covered woods and meadows, all resulting in emotions that only a white winter landscape can evoke.

There are no less than four mountain districts and 12 ski areas, with a total of 1,200 km of slopes.

The Dolomites are a flawless masterpiece that is the envy of the whole world - the three Peaks of Lavaredo, the Marmolada, the Tofane, the Antelao, the Pelmo and the Civetta form a breathtaking landscape that is softened by the pale pink that colours their walls at sunset. Enchanting places that gave rise to fairytales and legends, the most important of which is linked to Mount Sorapiss, a giant who was turned into a mountain and one of the most beautiful in the Cadore region.





And how to forget the Asiago Plateau. Here cross-country skiers can slowly cross unforgettable views and enjoy both the snow and nature in unspoilt surroundings where every sound is softened by a white mantle on the peaks.

Recoaro Mille, Tonezza del Cimone and Monte Baldo are the littlest ski areas in the Veneto, but the marvellous nature where they are immersed makes them privileged places where to enjoy an amazing winter holiday.



Altopiano of Asiago

Asiago and its seven municipalities (sette comuni - Conco, Enego, Foza, Gallio, Lusiana, Roana and Rotzo) are situated on the Altopiano of Asiago (Asiago Plateau). It is a territory that covers 500 square kilometres, to the north of the province of Vicenza, and is easily accessible by the Valdastico motorway from the Po valley.

It is a fertile land, offering excellent food, history and traditions, the land of the ancient Cimbri people, and marked by the courage and determination of the soldiers in the First World War.



On the Malga Trail

Asiago, located in the centre of the Altopiano, is a popular resort, particularly for winter sports, but also a wonderful place to go for long walks in the valley. Stroll along the numerous paths that lead to some awe-inspiring beauty spots: dandelion-scattered meadows, woods and clearings, a natural habitat for birds and animals. You will discover the genuine taste of products, in particular the delicious Asiago cheese made in the Malgas, small dairies that are dotted all along the Altopiano that reveal the simple daily life of the inhabitants. These small dairies are only active for about 90 to 120 days in the year. They are surrounded by pastures, and usually



Useful tips



Asiago Cheese and other Typical Products

The "Malgas", smaller dairies and "Consorzio" (co-operatives) all produce this exquisite cheese, with the DOP brand (Denomination of Protected Origin). There are many varieties to choose from: Asiago pressato o fresco (pressed or freshly-made cheese), the more mature Asiago Allevato, La Dolchezza di Asiago (a soft cheese) and

Pennarone. Not only is Asiago famous for its cheeses, but there are other genuine products available: delicate honey, potatoes from Rotzo, celery from Rubbio, an infinite variety of distillates of local wild herbs such as Krumeto, Amaro Asiago, Amaro Cimbri, Kranebet and various types of grappas.



From Asiago to the Stars

The first thing that you see when you travel towards Asiago is the Sacrario Militare (Military Memorial) in remembrance of the First World War conflicts which took place here. In the town centre of Asiago there is a delightful square which is dominated by the parish church and the municipality



have a place for making the cheeses, stables, pig-pens, wells, herds of cows and a cowherd. These places are well worth visiting, for their interesting rural activities, and their economic, historic, environmental and tourist heritage.

The Paths of the Great War

The battles and military operations have left their scars on these rough peaks: mule trails, trenches and forts (some are restored and can be visited). Take the path to Monte Zebio, stronghold of Austrian military resistance that still conserve evident traces of trenches and shelters made by the Austrian troops.

Mountain Bike Adventures

The Altopiano of Asiago is a paradise for cycling on a mountain bike. There are 760 kilometres of upward and downward slopes, marked paths and a combination of these for free riders, which create an authentic "MTB Park". There are many alternatives to choose from, such as short trips covering a few kilometres to longer ones that take a few days, such as "Il Grand Tour dell'Altopiano" (The Grand Tour of the Plateau), or "Alpine Bike Park" (Mountain Bike Tournament). You can hire the bike, and on the way there are plenty of facilities, such as workshop assistance, bicycle wash and laundry services, and the transfer of baggage between stages.



built in Asiago stone after World War II. The museum is worth visiting for its natural exhibits.

If you are interested in astronomy, then the place to go is Pennar, which boasts a magnificent Astrophysical Observatory whose history is linked to the Specola in Padua. You can go on guided visits and

see the most important telescopes in Italy.

In Lusiana to the south of the Altopiano there is an "eco-cultural" theme park, where a network of marked roads and paths constitute an "open-air museum", leading you to the secrets that time and Nature have hidden in these valleys.

Contact

Consorzio Asiago 7 Comuni



Tel. +39 0424 464137

Fax +39 0424 464137

info@asiago7comuni.to

www.asiago7comuni.to

Caorle - Bibione

Caorle and Bibione are the most popular beaches on the northern Adriatic coast, immersed in uncontaminated nature, boasting architectural treasures, and delicious traditional cooking.

Hemingway's Lagoon

"Four boats sailed up the main canal towards the large lagoon in the north ...". It is here that one of the world's literary masterpieces was written: Ernest Hemingway's *Across the River and into the Trees*. You can relive these images by crossing the Lagoon to Caorle, discovering the "casoni", the characteristic straw huts built by fishermen.

The art of fishing has remained intact for generations in Caorle, thus ensuring the conservation of the Lagoon's heritage for the appreciation of present-day visitors.

Caorle

It is a wonderful experience to cross the Lagoon and arrive at Caorle, a pretty town built after the Venetian model, with its "calli" and "campielli", and its pastel-coloured houses. The best place to visit is the Romanesque Cathedral, built in 1038, with its bell tower nearby, built in 1070.

Caorle was once one of the oldest and busiest ports in Roman times, as the numerous merchant ships found underwater testify. Today this stretch of water has become an Archaeological Marine Park. Nowadays Caorle is one of the most interesting seaside resorts, thanks to its long golden beach and modern facilities.



Useful tips



Art Treasures

The towns of Concordia Sagittaria and Portogruaro are full of architectural treasures. Concordia Sagittaria is of Roman and early Christian origin, and Portogruaro is characterised by its splendid Gothic and Venetian style buildings, and its magnificent municipal building, the

oldest part dating from the fourteenth century. In Summaga you will discover the beautiful church that was once part of a now vanished Benedictine abbey.



Country walks

In Alvisopoli, a city that developed in the nineteenth century as a self-sufficient agricultural community, you can walk in the marvellous park, an oasis protected by the WWF for its rare species and natural alluvial soil. The basins of the river Lemene and river Reghena form a network of



Bibione

Visit San Gaetano, a town built by the Franchetti family, friend of Hemingway, and then continue on your voyage towards Bibione. The next place to stop at is Valle Grande, the large Lagoon where the writer stayed while hunting. Finally, leaving behind water and sedge, a paradise for rare birds, get off at Bibione. This is a modern seaside resort, characterised by kilometres of golden sand and today also a thermal centre, where you can enjoy various personalised treatments in a pinewood setting.



The Route of the Doges' Wines

Grapevines that have been grown for over three thousand years can be seen in the area between Pramaggiore, where you can find a wine shop with the finest wines in the Veneto region, and Annone Veneto. The most renowned wines are Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Chardonnay, Pinot Bianco, Refosco dal Peduncolo Rosso, Riesling Italico, Sauvignon, Tocai Italico and Verduzzo.



canals and irrigation ditches that host river parks. In the area of Gruaro, you should visit the fifteenth-century mills in Stalis and the mill in Boldara, where you can go for country walks.



Other Beaches

Porto Santa Margherita, developed around its shipyard that built pleasure boats, lies on the south bank of the river Livenza. Duna Verde is a town with pretty gardens that is appreciated for its peacefulness.

Contact

Consorzio di Promozione Turistica del Veneto Orientale



Bibione

Tel. +39 0431 437175

Fax +39 0431 446035

cptvo@bibione.com

www.bibione.com

Caorle

Tel. +39 0421 210506

Fax +39 0421 218399

promo@caorlevacanze.it

www.caorlevacanze.it

Cavallino Treporti

Cavallino Treporti is a strip of land ensconced between the sea and the lagoon, a natural park of extraordinary beauty, a magical environment to be visited and enjoyed in many ways and in complete freedom. This is the landscape you will find in the fifteen kilometers of sea shore making up Cavallino Treporti, where fresh water and salt water have formed a unique territory, located just around the corner from Venice and characterized by pleasant contrasts between lagoon landscapes, silent gardens, shady pinewoods and, just a little further away, the sea, where river waters merge with lagoon waters.

A plunge into history

Cavallino is the district that has given its name to the coastal area, because it is the oldest region: its origins go back to the beginning of the 16th century and its name goes back to the early medieval city of Equilium, from which the breeding of Venetian mares with brown manes comes down.

From the old town centre, a walk along the Canale Pordelio, toponym deriving from *par ellio* (meaning along the shore), and along the Litoranea Veneta, will lead you to the lagoon landscapes of the Canale Casson and of the Valle Cavallino, inhabited by dabchicks, little egrets and red heron.

Between the Porte del Cavallino (Gates of the Cavallino) and the Punta Sabbioni area, the landscape is dominated by some old military buildings, which made up the defences of the large sandy peninsula of the Cavallino from the first half of the 19th century.

The district of Treporti, comprising the island of Portosecco and the island of the church, is connected to the Cavallino coast by the Pordelio bridge and takes its name from that of the Porto dei Tre Porti, which was the name of the nearby harbour mouth in the medieval period. The two islands still contain the wide water basins, which include the beautiful Valle Saccagnana. There are numerous old farmhouses of historic importance with their typical fireplaces in the "vallesana" style, and the beautiful 17th century church of the Most Holy Trinity (SS. Trinità).



Useful tips



The fishing tradition

Given the district's commitment to promoting eco-sustainable tourism, at Cavallino Treporti, you can pass the day on a fishing boat next to fishermen and learn the secrets of the sandbank and of traditional fishing, and enjoy the taste of freshly fished seafood. Here you will find sandbanks partially rising out of the water, the

rustling of cane thickets moved lightly by the wind, birds in flight. You can experience all this by gliding slowly between the canals and cane thickets in a *bragozzo* (two-masted trawler from the Adriatic), immersed in a mysteriously fascinating ecosystem.



An explosion of tastes

A vacation at Cavallino Treporti means allowing oneself to be enthralled by the tastes of a land that has its roots in the gastronomic tradition of Venice. Fish is one of the most precious foods of this area. Not to be missed is the *brodeto*, a very tasty fish stew, and



The shades of the sand

The sand on the coast of Cavallino Treporti, carried downstream for thousands of years by the rivers, comes from the Dolomites, which are splendid pure white and rose-colored rocks which change color according to how the sunlight strikes them. This is why the shoreline, which is fifteen kilometers long and can reach a depth of four-hundred meters in some areas, varies so much from dawn to dusk. The beach is rich with a warm, dry golden sand, suitable for sand baths, while the water varies in clearness and lustre according to the different moments of the day.



The surrounding area

The area around Cavallino Treporti contains numerous ruins that give witness to the architectural settlements, among which the 16th century convent of the Mesole, one of the most ancient settlements in the area, whose name refers to the ancient convent built there in 1380, and the manor of Saccagnana, an original example of a Venetian mansion (16th century) set within the lagoon area. The Porte del Cavallino connect the Sile with the lagoon, which has been a necessary passage way for sea traffic to and from Venice for centuries. At Treporti, you should visit the old town centre with its two characteristic bell towers; a little further away is the charming village of Lio Piccolo, which was already inhabited around the year One-thousand, with its little 17th century church and small square overlooked by the Boldù palace.



bacalà in tocio (saltfish), often served with *polenta* (maize porridge). The generosity of nature has also given rise to a niche horticulture which yields some very refined vegetables.



Bicycle riding

The particular configuration of Cavallino Treporti makes the area especially suitable for taking bicycle rides. Take a ride immersed in the contemplative silence of a land set within waters, where you will find the company of a flight of birds and see the colors, the shades of the water and of the sky.

Contact

Consorzio Parco Turistico di Cavallino Treporti



Tel. +39 041 5309890
Fax +39 041 5300382
info@cavallino.info
www.cavallino.info

Chioggia - Sottomarina

Chioggia, a delightful maritime town also known as "Little Venice", dates back to Roman times and was the second most important town in the Repubblica Serenissima. The remarkable buildings and artworks bear witness to the relationship between the two cities. Nearby, separated by a bridge, is the antique market gardening town of Sottomarina, a small hamlet of Chioggia that divides the Lagoon from the Adriatic Sea. Today it is a popular seaside resort.



Between Sea and Lagoon

In order to appreciate the magical atmosphere of sea and Lagoon, it is worth starting from the town centre in Chioggia, with its maritime traditions, churches and masterpieces, and lively streets. The streets recall Venice with its "calli" and "campielli", and eight bridges that span the Canal Vena, especially the Vigo Bridge on the square of the same name overlooking the Lagoon. The bridges link Corso del Popolo to the parallel streets with its portico interiors, which shelter the fruit and vegetable market every morning. Another market not to be missed is the fish market, covered by a red awning both in summer and in winter, which filters an eerie light on the fish stalls. A walk along the canals will reveal the picturesque sight of fishermen's boats moored nearby to the fish stalls that they supply every morning, after fishing all night.

As you stroll around this bustling town, try not to miss the



excellent sacred and profane architecture of alternating styles and eras on the main streets: Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic, and Neoclassical. You should visit the Cathedral of Longhena (1633), the small temple of S. Martino (1392) and the Gothic Palazzo Granaio (1322). There is also the Column with a lion in Greek marble (1763) and the Ponte Vigo (Vigo Bridge) that leads to the small island of San Domenico, sacred to fishermen.

Useful tips



The Southern Lagoon Museum

In order to appreciate the historical and environmental development of this area more fully, it is well worth visiting this museum, located in the former monastery of San Francesco. The history of all the surrounding area is displayed on three floors, from late Jurassic to the present day.



Masterpieces of Nature

Bosco Nordio is one of the most popular woods in this area, due to its unchanging aspect of lush vegetation typical of the Mediterranean area, and rural structures used as shelters by hunters. Valle Averte is an experimental animal oasis run by the WWF, where you can go bird

watching and explore the hydraulic system of the Lagoon fishing areas. If you prefer peace and quiet, then the ideal place to visit is the new pedestrian and cycling route that goes from Sottomarina to Chioggia, offering a scenic view of the Lagoon of Lusenzo.



Sottomarina

The fine, sandy beach of Sottomarina is about ten kilometres long and in some places as much as 300 metres wide, extending to the mouth of the river Adige and the beach of Isolaverde. Both beaches are well equipped, with vast sandy shores set between the sea, Lagoon and Veneto countryside, offering a huge variety of leisure activities. These include parks, dockyards and small sailing harbours, tennis courts, volleyball, basketball, riding schools, and canoe and windsurfing.

Sottomarina-Isolaverde are resorts buzzing with activity and popular along the Adriatic coast, not only for the properties of its fine sand and sun-bathing, but also for the variety of accommodation present: hotels of all categories, residences immersed in green surroundings and campsites that have been mentioned in the super-plätze in 2005.



The Flavours of Sea and Land

The variety of scenery is reflected in the local dishes that bring together the fruits of the earth, such as the "rose of Chioggia" (local radicchio), and abundant seafood. Visit the numerous restaurants that offer dishes such as the *broeto*, a fish and seafood soup, the *saore*, a dish of fried sardines, marinated for a few days, and then imbued with fried onions and vinegar, with added raisins and pine nuts, vegetable risottos such as the *suca-ris* made with pumpkin, artichoke ends, and fried courgette flowers in batter. The Radicchio of Chioggia is ideal for salads and risottos or else mixed with carrots and honey to make the *torta ciosota*.



The Murassi

The Murassi (sea walls) were built between 1763 and 1770, to protect the coast. They stretch for 1255 metres. The last part of this Venetian work has been pulled down. In its place you can go for a refreshing pleasant stroll, or bicycle ride in the healthy sea breeze.



The Chioggia Pipe

The characteristics of the Chioggia pipe, comprising a bowl of baked clay and stem made of ilex or cherry, is its porosity that keeps back nicotine and humidity that is emitted by tobacco, permitting a healthier smoke.

Contact

Consorzio Con Chioggia Sì



Tel. +39 041 5501083 - +39 041 401846
 Fax +39 041 5540855
 info@conchioggiasi.com - info@chioggiapass.it
 www.conchioggiasi.com - www.chioggiapass.it

Dolomites

The Dolomites, pale mountains, owe their name to the dolomite rock formations. Their peaks are the dreams of intrepid mountain climbers and their extraordinary vertical rock faces have been scaled by the most famous mountaineers in history: from Tita Piazz to the revolutionary Reinhold Messner and the contemporary Manolo.

These mountains offer peace and tranquillity, with superb views and cosy hotels, fitness centres and enjoyable evenings out.



The Pearls of the Alps

Walking in these mountains is an experience that will refresh body and mind, captivated by the magical atmosphere of the valleys and the majestic peaks that are silhouetted against the Alpine sky.

The first stop is Belluno, which welcomes visitors with its squares, streets and typically graceful Venetian buildings. The picturesque Città Vecchia can be admired for its innumerable late Gothic and Renaissance buildings, its early sixteenth-century cathedral and the bell tower, designed by Filippo Juvara, considered one

of the finest examples of Italian Baroque. If you enter the tower, you will find works by Palma il Giovane and Andrea Brustolon, famous sculptor and engraver who was born in this town.

The Agordino District

On to the Dolomite valleys, to view the charming towns and villages, where the history and traditions of the inhabitants combine with modern hotels, restaurants, and sports facilities. Falcade is a popular summer and winter tourist resort, surrounded by quaint villages. Its lifestyle and culture follow natural rhythms.



Useful tips



A Taste of the Mountains

The cooking in the valleys is plain and simple, but is characteristic of the traditions of this area. Try the *casonziei*, pumpkin or *puina* (polenta) *gnoch*, polenta with speck, salami and cheeses, and in particular the soft but crunchy *spres frit* (fried cheese). Have a taste of mountain game, cakes

like *carfogn*, *canifili* and ice-cream from Val Zoldana. The grappas come in all sorts of flavours, ranging from juniper, bilberry, and gentian, to raspberry, Swiss mountain pine, or else nettle.



The Dolomite Parks

Why not discover a whole new world, full of thrilling walks and marvellous scenery in the two conservation areas in the Dolomites? There is the Park of the Belluno Dolomites, established in order to protect an extraordinary natural heritage and extending 32.000 hectares, comprising the Feltrine Peaks, the Monti



Alleghe, on the shores of Lake Alleghe, is a delightful village which is dominated by the Civetta District that in the summer offers mountain lovers infinite occasions for walking trips, and in the winter over eighty kilometres of slopes for skiers. The Marmolada is the highest mountain in the Dolomites, with a height of 3342 metres, and towers over Rocca Pietore and the Agordino district. Finally, there is the Val Zoldana, a pleasant summer and winter resort, and Arabba. This resort is located on the northernmost tip of the Alto Agordino district at the foot of the Gruppo del Sella mountains, near the border, and thus easily accessible by holidaymakers from other regions. It offers festivals, cultural occasions and places to visit all year round, such as the ruins of the Castle of Andraz, a fortress on a crag overlooking the meadows of Livinallongo.

Cortina d'Ampezzo

Cortina is one of the most exclusive resorts in the Dolomites, established as such at the turn of the last century, becoming a world famous tourist resort, favoured by intellectuals, artists, princes, and wealthy international jet-setters that have all contributed to its particular attraction. It is a modern winter resort nowadays, thanks to high quality hotel services, modern facilities and a refined environment. It offers 115 kilometres of skiing slopes and 75 kilometres for cross-country skiing, and 37 ski lifts.

In the summer you can take advantage of the breath-taking scenery and views of this part of the eastern Dolomites by walking, for example, up to the characteristic alpine huts, and taste genuine local mountain cooking. Cortina is not only the capital for holiday makers, but also a place of tradition and culture, offering art exhibitions, high level literary and cultural festivals, important structures, such as the Museum of Palaeontology "R. Zardini", or the Ethnographic Museum at Ampezzo, and the Rimoldi art gallery. There is plenty to do, from strolling in the town centre, shopping in one of the luxury shops along Corso Italia, to folklore and international sports events, like the World Cup of female mountain skiing.



Contact

del Sole, the Schiara, Talvena, and Prampér. The other Park (Regional Park of Ampezzo) extends over an area of 11.000 hectares and contains some of the more renowned rocky massifs of the eastern Dolomites (Tofane, Fanes, Croda del Béco, Croda Rossa, and Cristallo) amidst breathtaking natural scenery.



Agordo

Agordo is the chief town of the Agordino district, and combines the aspect of a mountain village with many important architectural monuments. It was formerly a mining town, and is today a very popular summer resort for hikers. It is also famous for the production of glasses.

Consorzio Dolomiti



Tel. +39 0437 941148
 Fax +39 0437 944202
 info@belledolomiti.it
 www.belledolomiti.it

Euganean Spas

The Euganean spa area, the biggest one in Europe, lies at the heart of the Veneto Region amidst Nature and the soft, rolling Euganean Hills. It is only fifty kilometres away from Venice, and comprises the towns of Abano, Montegrotto, Battaglia, Galzignano and Teolo. This area offers a refined and relaxing environment and all sorts of leisure activities only a few minutes away from busy town life.

The Attraction of Water

The secret of the success of the Spas of Abano, Montegrotto and Galzignano, three thermal centres among the oldest in Europe, lies in the hospitable environment and thermal traditions that contribute to an unforgettable experience, even if brief. The area boasts an annual tourist

thermal season, with over a hundred fine hotels, all equipped with high-quality all-comfort self-sufficient spas. The mineral water, containing sodium chloride, bromide and iodide, at a temperature of 87°C, together with the thermal mud, contain therapeutic properties that have



been known since ancient times. The hotels are complete with swimming pools open all year round, and offer an atmosphere that contributes to a pleasant state of well-being.

The Pleasant Tranquillity of the Euganean Hills

Valsanzibio is immersed in the restful surroundings of the Euganean Hills. It is famous for the graceful residence of the Barbarigo family, famed for its magnificent seventeenth-century



Useful tips



Nature

A magical place to visit is Butterfly Arc, an enormous greenhouse which houses an endless variety of butterflies from Central and South America, Australia, Africa and Asia, with their exotic multi-coloured wings that are sure to captivate you. The greenhouse also has some rare and exotic plants from many parts of the world, transforming the place into a miniature natural Paradise.



Golf Clubs

There are many activities in the Euganean Hills that can contribute to fitness and well-being: walking, cycling, horse-riding, tennis, swimming, archery and even golf, with some of the best golf courses in Italy.



Montagnana Ham

One of the gastronomic specialities of this area is the uncooked Montagnana ham DOP (Denomination of Protected Origin) since 1996. It is sweet, not salty, with a maturing process that takes from fourteen to eighteen months, and is the best of its kind. Its characteristics are a rosy colour, a pleasant aroma and a sweet flavour.



Italian gardens, among the most important in the world. Cedars, cypresses and century-old trees embrace statues, fishponds and fountains, symbol of absolute harmony between Nature and Man, reminiscent of other times. At the heart of the park you can visit the enigmatic boxwood maze, a magnificent example of landscape gardening, and the delicate architecture of the pavilion of Diana the Huntress that offers a magnificent view of the park. The pavilion was once the landing place for the "Burchiello", the rowing boat that was used to go along the river Brenta, connecting Padua and Venice.



Nestling in the hills a few kilometres away is the town of Arquà Petrarca, home of the poet Petrarca. The town has kept its medieval architecture, with its narrow, cobbled streets and stone arches that reveal curious picturesque scenes of a thousand-year history.



Spas and Conferences

Abano is fortunate to be strategically placed, offering an ideal environment for conferences and out-of-season tourist incentives, together with its variety of high quality professional tourist activities. There are over a hundred buildings offering conference centres of every size and category (from three to five stars).



Contact



Este

The city of Este, which lies to the south of the Euganean area, is considered one of the capitals of ceramics. Its inhabitants have practised this art and tradition since prehistoric times, and the eighteenth and nineteenth century are considered the golden age of

production. You can admire archaeological exhibits at the Museum of Este, where its treasures (amphorae, vases, and oil lamps) bear witness to their ancient history and production.

Consorzio Terme Euganee



Tel. +39 049 8666609
 Fax +39 049 8666613
 consorzio@abanomontegrotto.it
 www.abanomontegrotto.it

Garda Lake

The Riviera of the Olive Trees, the name given to the eastern shore of Lake Garda, extends for fifty kilometres north-west in the province of Verona, running along the shores of the biggest lake in Italy. You will be enraptured by the alternating bays and coves, picturesque villages and castles surrounded by lush vegetation owing to a mild climate, such as citrus trees, oleanders, agave and palm trees, and above all olive trees, symbol of the territory. If you go on a short cruise, leaving from the fascinating setting of the gulf of Garda, you will be able to admire the exclusive, secluded spots on this coast, and visit some wonderful places to relax and enjoy yourself, like the quaint villages on the Bardolino coast, famous for the wine of the same name, and Lazise, with its unique castle and artistic buildings.

The Seven Wonders of the Lake

The main attractions of the lake, famous all over Italy, are its numerous parks. There are theme parks, water parks, safari parks, thermal parks and garden parks full of all kinds of flowers and plants that surround the lake and can be seen cruising along.

In the heart of the Valle del Mincio you can find the Cavour, an oasis of peace with tropical beaches, swimming pools, tennis courts and all kinds of sports.



Useful tips



Malcesine

A place that is worth visiting is Malcesine, paradise of sailing and windsurfing, characterised by its medieval lanes that climb up to the Veronese castle. Also worth seeing is the Madonna della Corona sanctuary, a holy place since medieval times eight hundred metres up on the western side of Monte Baldo.



Villas and Fortresses

There are many villas dotted along the lake's coast, such as the sixteenth-century Villa Fracastoro in Affi or Villa Guarienti in Garda, allegedly built by the great architect Sanmicheli, as is the fortress in Peschiera del Garda, built in the late sixteenth century.



Sports

At the Garda Lake you can experience a wide variety of sports like sailing, paragliding, bicycle riding, mountain bike, Nordic walking.



If you love animal and plants, then the Natura Viva is for you, a paradise setting for the protection of animals in danger of extinction, and very informative. Caneva World, the largest marine park, is unbeatable for excitement, with the island of Aqua Paradise, an enchanted island surrounded by tropical lagoons, with incredible slides, waves, rapids and waterfalls. If you prefer historical themes, there is Medieval Times, where you can watch medieval jousting. The Pico Verde is in Custozza, six kilometres from the lake, on a hill that overlooks the Padania plain. This resort has seven attractions, tennis courts and football pitches, and an Olympic swimming pool. You can visit the Acquapark Altomincio in the Parco del Mincio, in Salionze, a fun-filled theme park in the natural setting of the river Mincio, which starts from Peschiera on Lake Garda. Gardaland is the biggest theme park in Italia, with an enormous variety of fun-filled activities. With Gardaland - SEA LIFE you will enjoy a fascinating voyage of discovery around the magical marine world. Leaving behind the thrills and spills, you can go to the Parco Giardino Sigurtà in Valeggio sul Mincio, "temple of nature". Here you can walk seven kilometres along paths, through woods, meadows and along flower-bordered lanes.



Contact



The Delights of the Lake

The main products of the area are wines, extra-virgin olive oil, and river fish. Rare wines are produced here, such as Bardolino, Bianco di Custozza, Lugana and Valdadige, all appellation contrólée. So is the Garda extra-virgin olive oil produced from olives that grow on the steep slopes by the

shores of the lake near Verona. It is considered among the best types of oil in Italy.

Consorzio Lago di Garda è...



Tel. +39 045 7255279
 Fax +39 045 6270631
 info@lagodigarda-e.it
 www.lagodigarda-e.it

Jesolo - Eraclea

Jesolo Lido and Eraclea Mare, linked together by a thin strip of golden beach, are two of the most popular seaside resorts in Italy, thanks to their exciting and very welcoming atmosphere, where entertainment and leisure are combined with an extraordinary marine and lagoon environment.

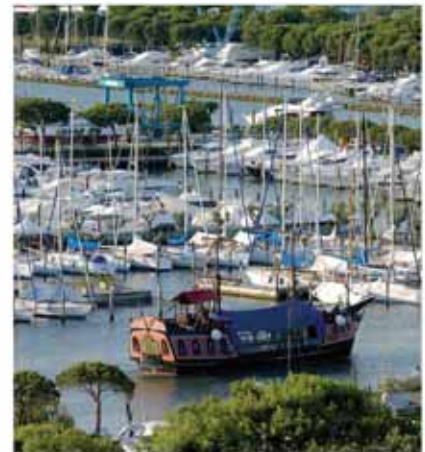


Nature and Endless Entertainment

Only a half-hour boat ride across the spectacular Lagoon separates Venice from the Jesolo Lido, (formerly the ancient Equilium) and its well-equipped port. The beach is 15 kilometres of fine, soft sand with piers stretching out into the sea. Discover Jesolo's perfect organisation and up-to-date facilities, whether at the beach, on the Lagoon, in the pinewoods, or in the lush countryside.

Jesolo

You will have a wonderful time in this town that offers all kinds of services and comfort in the countless hotels, and endless leisure activities: the modern dockyards, new golf courses, go-karting tracks and Aqualandia are the tourist's favourite fun-filled spots, not to mention the trendiest discotheques and night-clubs for night-time entertainment. When not on the beach, you can walk along the High street in Jesolo that has a pedestrian precinct twelve kilometres long, lined with plenty of boutiques and restaurants to choose from.



Useful tips



Museum of Land Reclamation in San Donà di Piave

This is an important cultural centre that concentrates on the historical and environmental transformation of the territory. There are five thematic sections, from archaeology to land reclamation that illustrate the drainage of the territory, thereby radically modifying its aspect, but all-important for agriculture and the health of the inhabitants.



Conferences, Business and Entertainment

Jesolo is also synonymous with tourism in the conference sector, thanks to the ultramodern structure of the Palazzo del Turismo, the ideal venue for meetings, conferences and events. This centre thrives on ideas and projects, as does the nearby Vivaldi Theatre and the Kursaal,



Ancient Equilibrium

Jesolum was once an ancient Roman town, as revealed by various archaeological artefacts. It became a flourishing port in the Lagoon Confederation in the period between the fall of the Roman Empire and the birth of Venice. In late medieval times Jesolo was also known as Equilibrium. There are few historic sites that have remained up to this day, but examples are the ruins of the ancient Porte Vinciane and the Basilica of S. Maria.



Eraclea

Whereas Jesolo has an urban structure that is similar to other towns nearby, with its long parallel streets, Eraclea is characterised by its green pinewoods, its quiet atmosphere, a pleasant climate and large golden beach full of tamarisk-covered dunes. The abundant vegetation slopes down to the sea, and apart from the seascape, the countryside is well worth exploring, criss-crossed with navigable canals. From the dockyard you can reach the Laguna Del Mort, a natural park hosting an abundant variety of fauna and flora.

The Archaeological Museum in Quarto d'Altino

The museum houses epigraphs, mosaic remains, architectural fragments, and sculptures originally from the excavations of the ancient Altinum and its burial ground. Furthermore, there are two archaeological sites to visit where you can see the remains of the north-eastern quarters of the Roman town.

Contact



Cortellazzo Port

offering a busy calendar: musical and theatrical performances, fairs, and exhibitions all year round.

This attractive ancient marine port is located where the river Piave flows into the Adriatic sea, and if you are lucky to get a rowing boat, gliding along you will see fisherman's nets and flourishing river vegetation.

Consorzio di promozione e sviluppo turistico Jesolo-Eraclea



Tel. +39 0421 92288 - Fax +39 0421 387742
info@fourseasons.it
www.jesolo.it - www.fourseasons.it/eraclea

Padua

Padua is one of the most culturally and economically dynamic cities in the Veneto Region, located geographically at the centre, between Milan and Venice. The city offers an infinite number of activities, from cultural events to exhibitions and fairs, reflecting the energetic pulse of the Paduan lifestyle, a perfect balance between ancient and modern customs.

In Giotto's Footsteps

You can admire this elegant and fascinating city starting from the Prato della Valle, a large, monumental elliptical square with its imposing Basilica of Saint Giustinian. Nearby is the famous Basilica of Saint Anthony, marvelled at by millions of pilgrims and visitors each year from all over the world, which houses some superb artistic masterpieces. When you arrive at the city centre, you can admire the historic Caffè



Pedrocchi opposite the Palazzo del Bo, historic seat of the prestigious University of Padua, still full today of student tradition and spirit. You can walk around the ancient squares, and see the imposing Palazzo della Ragione, the ancient Cathedral Baptistry, and buy from the picturesque market stalls. Visit the Cappella degli Scrovegni, and be stunned by the cycle of early fourteenth-century frescoes by Giotto, unrivalled masterpieces in Western art.



Useful tips



A Walk through History

You can go on foot or by bicycle along one of the two hundred paths in the Regional Park of the Euganean Hills, an infinite mosaic of natural beauty. There are twenty thousand hectares of woods and valleys that hide ancient towns, medieval forts, Venetian villas, hermitages and ancient abbeys.



Shopping

The Paduan area is full of arts and crafts that have made it famous worldwide. These range from Paduan glass and metal products, to the ceramics from Este, to furniture from Montagnana and Casale di Scodosia, to footwear from the Riviera del Brenta district.



Gastronomic Traditions

The must is the traditional Risotto prepared with chicken entrails, wild herbs, peas, quails and radish. Pasta is always home made: *bigoi* with duck sauce, *tagliatelle* with goose and pumpkin, *pappardelle*... Then the stuffed duck, the tasty famous Paduan Hen, the rabbit, fried



Padua Conferences and Padua Business

Owing to its cultural and scientific role in history, Padua undoubtedly represents a reference point for national and international conferences. It offers a variety of venues, guaranteeing an exclusive environment and high-quality personalised services for every kind of meeting and convention.

Dining in Style

You will be pleasantly surprised to discover fine interiors in sumptuous historic houses in the heart of the city, or refined open-air restaurants in the magical setting of the medieval squares, where you can have delicious meals based on traditional Paduan cuisine with famous local wines, while listening to delightful music.



City of Water

Discover the charm and history of Padua sailing along its numerous canals that make up the ancient water network between the river Brenta and the river Bacchiglione: coast among the Venetian Villas along the Brenta Canal to Padua and its historical centre and discover the secret hidden parts of the city, skirting the ancient Venetian Renaissance Walls, from Bastione Novo to Portello, the ancient river port.



chicken, stewed meat;
fresh jam tarts and the special *pinza*.
All with good wine of the Euganean
Hills.



Boat trips

Cruises to the Venetian Villas along the Brenta Riviera from Padua to Venice, along the old waterways of the ancient Venetian *burchielli* of the 18th century. Boat trips along the Rivers and through the inner waterways of Padua.

Contact

Consorzio di Promozione
Turistica di Padova



Tel. +39 049 8767916
Fax +39 049 650794
info@padovaincoming.it
www.padovaincoming.it
www.welcomepadova.it

The Po Delta

One of the most captivating nature parks in Italy and Europe lies on the southern border of the Veneto Region, linked to Venice by the Romea highway. River settling and land reclamation, as well as containment have transformed the area over the centuries. This has led to the creation of a unique and astonishing environment: immense spaces, wild and uncontaminated nature together with agriculture and fishing.

Aspects of River Life

Rosolina, a territory suspended between sea and river surrounded by verdant pinewoods, is a beach resort that was developed to meet the needs of the tourist and for the protection of an area of enormous environmental value. The fine, sandy shores with their dunes and ilexes, the Lagoon and the fishing areas contribute to a unique beach on the Venetian Adriatic Riviera.

Accommodation ranges from hotels, campsites and well-equipped holiday villages, to meet the needs of every tourist. Rosolina is perhaps the most positive example of quality tourism and harmony with nature.

Passing through the Via dei Valli Nord, you will arrive at the end of the mainland, and once you have crossed the bridge that is a few hundred metres long, you will arrive on the enchanting Albarella island, noted for its refined tourism. The island hosts numerous exclusive structures, such as villas, small flats and hotels, and offers plenty of leisure activities, boasting a renowned international golf course.

Board a motorship from the port of Albarella, and go up the river Po di Levante until you arrive at the tourist port of Marina Nuova. Here you can hire elegant houseboats to cruise around the fascinating world of the Po Delta with the help of the Environmental Education Centre.



Useful tips



Adria

This small town, which dates back to the fifth century BC, flourished by controlling the trade routes with Northern Europe, the lower Adriatic and the Aegean Sea, principally on the Canabianco, by the sea (hence its name) and on the Popillia Romana. The National Archaeological Museum

of Adria preserves the records of its cultural and economic history. Two important libraries, the Civic Library and the Chapter Library, are also worth visiting, as is the Old Cathedral which preserves within the remains of the primitive church decorated with seventh-century Byzantine frescoes.



Rovigo

The medieval town of Rovigo is the chief town of the province, and bears witness to many artistic and architectural masterpieces, such as the Beata Vergine del Soccorso Sanctuary, known as la Rotonda, the Longhena bell tower, and the Accademia dei Concordi Gallery that houses works



Going towards Valle Cà Pisani, you will cross the Via dei Valli Sud, which is completely aquatic, with the river on the left and fishing areas on the right.

Finally, it is worth going on a river trip along the branch of the Po di Maistra and along the main branch of the Po di Venezia, in order to experience a pollution-free environment with extraordinary fauna and flora.

River Trips

You can cruise along the seven branches of the Po and the Veneto coast on board well-equipped luxury pleasure boats, to explore small lagoons and an unpolluted habitat for all kinds of aquatic birds that enliven this corner of paradise.



The Land Reclamation Museum

In the area to the south of the Po you can visit the former centre for water-scooping machines in Cà Vendramin, and the Po Delta Land Reclamation Museum that offers interesting information on these complex machines for the drainage of marshy areas. The Museum is also a conference and study centre, an ideal place to get to know better the industrial architecture on the Po territory.

Local Products

Fish and seafood are the specialities on the coast, and there is an enormous variety to delight the eye and palate: shellfish, cuttle-fish, "caparozzoli" (clams), muscles, "masanete" (female crabs), bass, umbrine and eels.

Try the tasty hinterland traditional dishes: rice, polenta, radicchio, lettuce and pumpkin, together with meat and game such as duck, pork and "mussetto".

To know more about these products, a place worth visiting is Porto Tolle and the resort of Scardovari, where you can follow the processing of fish from this area. For special fruit and vegetable products, visit Rosolina and Lusia.



Contact

by the most important Venetian artists, such as Bellini, Palma il Vecchio, Piazzetta and Tiepolo.



The Regional Nature Park and Botanical Gardens

The entire area of the Regional Park of the Po Delta offers a unique varied natural environment. Beaches alternate with dunes, lagoons and sandbanks, shaped by the forces of nature and characterised by flourishing vegetation. You can explore this heritage walking through the Botanical Gardens in Porto Caleri, which extends for 24 hectares near Rosolina.

Consorzio Turistico CARD del Po Delta del Po e provincia di Rovigo



Tel. +39 0426 337824 - Fax +39 0426 339000
info@deltapocard.it - www.deltapocard.it

The province of Treviso is one of the richest and most productive in the Veneto Region. There are many important companies based here that specialise in clothing, footwear and in particular ski boots that are famous worldwide. The province is also renowned, however for its hills that produce distinguished wines, all appellation contrôllée, and for its countryside that produces some excellent fruit and vegetables. This fertile land displays a long history and culture, through its many medieval villages, towns and castles, and nowadays expresses a warm welcome to visitors.

Sparkling Vitality

Treviso can be likened to a refined, wealthy lady accompanying you along its streets, under porticoes, through lanes and squares, along the river Sile that flows through the town. Piazza dei Signori is the heart of the city. It is surrounded on three sides by noble palaces (Palazzo del Podestà, Palazzo Pretorio and Palazzo dei Trecento), and was originally an ancient Roman forum and the hub of Roman life. The cathedral is worth visiting, housing important sixteenth-century frescoes by G.A. Pordenone. So are the Church of San Nicolò, an architecturally unique and majestic Dominican construction, and the Church of San Francesco, a Romanesque-Gothic church that houses outstanding frescoes by Tommaso da Modena and his pupils.

Palladian Villas and Ancient Towns and Villages

If you would like to discover more about Treviso's origins, you should visit the characteristic towns and villages with their magnificent villas, symbol of a civilisation that has left its mark on the territory.

Castelfranco, one of the most beautiful towns in the province and birthplace of the painter Giorgione, will astonish you with its imposing walls and delightful centre. As you walk through its lanes, you can admire the Cathedral that houses Giorgione's famous altar-piece (currently under restoration), the Academy Theatre, built in the eighteenth century, and the romantic park at Villa Revedin Bolasco. As you go towards the rolling hills to the north of Treviso, stop at Villa Emo in



Useful tips



Wines of the Piave

For history and famous red wines, a wonderful place to visit is the lush countryside around the river Piave and river Livenza, where you can visit the wine cellars and admire the delightful medieval town of Portobuffolè, historically linked through trade and politics to the

Repubblica Serenissima, when its river port was busy. Another place to visit is Oderzo (formerly Opitergium in Roman times), where you can visit the Roman archaeological sites and visit the Eno Bellis Museum with its archaeological exhibits.



Delicious Specialities

Typical Treviso cuisine is to be found in many restaurants and inns in this area, with dishes that use seasonal products. There are many Gastronomic Exhibitions all year round, advertising typical seasonal products in the most important restaurants in and around Treviso. Try freshly made or mature cheese, such as Casatella and Imbriago (imbued with



Fanzolo di Vedelago, a marvellous creation by Palladio, with frescoes by G.B. Zelotti, and Villa Barbaro, a unique blend of architecture by Palladio and paintings by Paolo Veronese. Nearby is Asolo, a small, ancient town that inspired poets, intellectuals and artists, such as Henry James, Ernest Hemingway, Eleonora Duse, and was the home of the Queen of Cyprus, Caterina Cornaro.

The Prosecco Route

The home of the famous Prosecco wine and the more exclusive Cartizze starts at Valdobbiadene and proceeds over the hills that lead to Conegliano. You can visit the wine cellars on your way through the villages that weave history and tradition together, and watch the various stages in the process of wine-making and bottling of such wines as Prosecco, Cartizze, Marzemino, Verdiso, Refrontolo Passito or Torchiato.

Castles and Walled Cities

The imposing fourteenth-century castle of San Salvatore in Susegana is the first stop on a route that reflects another image of the history of this province. On the way, visit Conegliano, birthplace of G.B. Cima, where there is a cathedral that houses the famous altar-piece by this artist, the Enthroned Madonna with Saints, and the tenth-century castle. After Conegliano, the next town to visit is Vittorio Veneto, which has an extremely interesting historic centre with its cathedral, the sixteenth-century Seminario Episcopale and the Battaglia Museum, the Roman castrum and the eighteenth-century Duomo with its famous altar-piece by Titian.



wine), asparagus and various wild herbs, fish specialities, peas, mushrooms, chestnuts and products from the piedmont strip, or the exquisite red radicchio in the winter. Moreover, if you would like to know more about this delicious vegetable, you can explore the Radicchio Route and its farms that grow this product.



Conferences and Incentives

Conference centres are located in ancient Venetian villas or castles, offering professional organisational services that contribute to successful meetings.

Contact

MARCA TREVISO



Tel. +39 0422 541052

Fax +39 0422 591195

info@marcatreviso.it - info@marcatreviso.travel

www.marcatreviso.it - www.marcatreviso.travel

Venice, with its thousand-year-old history and unique city centre, has undergone important economic transformations over the last hundred years.

The industrial zone of Marghera, the vast agricultural area along the coast, the urban expansion of Mestre, the busiest commercial port on the Adriatic coast, the third largest airport in Italy for number of passengers have all contributed to making the world's art capital one of the most important cities in the Veneto Region.

The Treasures of the "Serenissima"

Tucked away in the lanes and squares ("calli" and "campielli") are places where authentic Venetian life goes on. Follow any of these routes and sooner or later you will arrive at Piazza San Marco, the heart of this city treasured as the world's patrimony. The square is a splendid stage offering the voices and faces of tourists from all over the world. The Basilica of St. Mark's dominates the square with its five impressive domes and its gold mosaics, closer to an Oriental style than a Christian one. Enter the Basilica, considered a masterpiece of Romanesque-Byzantine construction, and marvel at the interior, shimmering with mosaics, and full of priceless works of art such as the gold altar-piece studded with gems, created by Byzantine and Venetian goldsmiths.

The adjacent palace, the Palazzo Ducale, on the piazzetta overlooking the Lagoon, is an impressive building reflecting the power and glory of the Venetian "Serenissima". This was the Doge's residence, but also the seat of the government and judiciary system. It represents today one of the finest examples of Venetian Gothic and a masterpiece of seventeenth-century Renaissance art.



Useful tips



Venetian Hospitality

Venice is able to offer all types of accommodation, from the famous sumptuous hotels in St. Mark's, to the charming period-furnished hotels on the islands and in the city centre, to the most modern types of accommodation equipped with all modern conveniences, yet elegant at the same time.



The Lido and Pellestrina

The most exclusive beach on the northern Adriatic coast is on the island of Lido, which extends for twelve kilometres and is embraced both by the Lagoon and the sea. Walk along the leafy boulevards and admire the Art Nouveau style of the buildings and famous hotels, which contribute to an



Islands and Tradition

If you want to fully appreciate the beauty of Venice it is worth visiting the Lagoon and its remarkable but fragile ecosystem. As you cruise around the islands, note the extraordinary natural landscape, and visit the most famous islands in the Lagoon. Murano is famous for its glassworks and masters of glass blowing, and Burano for its pretty pastel-coloured houses and refined lace making.

Venice and Conferences

It will probably come as a surprise to most visitors to learn that Venice is also host to several conference centres, meeting the needs of the most demanding tourist operators. State-of-the-art conference centres are located inside the Cinema Palace, where the Venice Film Festival is held annually, in the city centre, on the island of Giudecca and in the most important hotels in the city.

Fifty Years of Open-Air Hospitality

The campsites and holiday villages in Cavallino-Treporti represent one of the most important examples of open-air eco-sustainable tourism. The beach is one of the best known in the area and the most visited in camping circles. It is a different and less conventional way of having a holiday, in harmony with the environment. Only fifty years have passed since the first campers arrived on this part of the coast. Today this beach is the capital of open-air tourism and can boast three campsites that are at the top of the list in the ADAC Superplätze.

Villas in the Miranese

It is worth visiting the mainland in the province of Venice, which covers seven boroughs, to discover charming villas set in elegant green parks and gardens. Re-live the unique experience of residing where the nobles once had their summer residences, breathing in splendour and tranquillity in the Venetian countryside. While here, try the enormous variety of delicious traditional dishes and products, accompanied by distinctive wines from the Veneto Region.



Contact

exclusive and refined atmosphere. The island of Pellestrina lies opposite Alberoni Beach, the southernmost tip of the Lido, and is a paradise between Lagoon and sea, full of vegetable gardens and small houses. It is a fisherman's land, a place brimming with fascinating ancient cultural traditions.



Consorzio Promovenezia s.c.p.a.

PROMOVE

Tel. +39 041 2770586
Fax +39 041 2411844
segreteria@promovenezia.it
www.promovenezia.it

Nowadays Verona is a dynamic and lively city. Poets, writers and musicians like Dante and Shakespeare, Byron and Mozart have been inspired by this magical city throughout the centuries, but you can also see the signs of rapid economic growth thanks to its geographical position, which is between the Brennero and Padania plain, and also to structural development that has contributed to its role as the crossroads of European trading.



A Romantic City

If you want to travel back in time to the origins of the historic centre, visit Piazza Bra where you can find the imposing Arena, one of the most famous open-air opera arenas in the world and symbol of Verona.

The building dominates the piazza with its perfect harmonious form, alternating arches and fascinating interplay of masonry which is red and white. The Via Mazzini starts from here, lined with chic shops and fashionable showrooms, and leads to the charming Piazza delle Erbe, originally an ancient Roman forum, which will surprise you with its variety of medieval, Renaissance and seventeenth and eighteenth-century architecture.

Further on, you can visit Giulietta's famous house, in Via Cappello, which overlooks lovers from all over the world as



Useful tips



The Valley of Mezzane

One of the most beautiful valleys in Veronese territory is to be found in the wine and olive district in the hills. After tasting exquisite dishes and refined wines, you can visit the still working ancient seventeenth-century oil press in Mezzane di Sotto. The wheel was moved by water from the

river Dugal, and in the past worked the nearby flour mill in the summer and the oil press in the winter. It is still possible to imagine being back in the past in these surroundings and take in the aroma of olive oil, authentic sustenance of this land.



Valpolicella

The Valpolicella area is rich in works of art and tradition, and above all famous for its rare wines and world leader in quality granite and marble. Visit the delightful Romanesque parishes of San Giorgio and San Floriano, Palladian villas surrounded by romantic gardens and many wine cellars to enjoy the magic and enchantment of these places.



they go by. Go through the door, and you will see a small courtyard with the balcony famous for the meeting between Shakespeare's heroine and her beloved Romeo.

Verona, Home of Fairs and Conferences

Verona's energy is also channelled into international fairs and conferences, such as Veronafiore, which has over a hundred years of experience and is rightly considered as having an important role in proposing important exhibitions and shows at a high level, in all kinds of sectors. The Centre has an all-purpose structure equipped with state-of-the-art technology and services for meetings and exhibitions. Another place which has a fascinating setting for important events is the Palazzo della Gran Guardia, a magnificent masterpiece of architecture built between the sixteenth and nineteenth century. It has recently been restored, and now can host all kinds of conferences. Moreover, it lies in the heart of the city and is easily reached from anywhere. Verona is highly competitive as regards conferences, also thanks to the many hotels and sumptuous historic residences on its territory. These structures can offer a refined environment in a particularly elegant setting.



The Lessinia: a Natural Experience

The regional park of Lessinia has an inestimable natural heritage. It extends to the mountains north of Verona, a place where nature, history and culture blend together. There are the fascinating rock forms of the Valle delle Sfini, and the majestic Ponte di Veja, a unique example of a natural bridge produced by karstic phenomena. You can also enjoy the play of the Molina waterfalls, the fauna and flora of the Malga Derocon, or visit the Ethnographic Museum in Bosco Chiesa Nuova and see fossil fish and other forms of life and traditions of the Lessini Mountains.

Contact



Wines and Flavours

The Veronese valleys are famous for the quality and variety of their wines (from fine red wines like Valpolicella, Amarone, Recioto and Valdadige, to renowned white wines like Soave, Arcole, Lessini Durello and Custoza), and also for their unmistakable cheeses, such as Monte Veronese

cheese, produced in the Lessinia mountains, the famous extra-virgin olive oil from the olive trees in Mezzane, the typical Vialone Nano rice from the southern side of the region and the almond cake from Cologna Veneta.

Consorzio Verona TuttIntorno



Tel. +39 045 8009461 - Fax +39 045 8013142
info@veronaitaly.it
www.veronaitaly.it

Vicenza lies in the heart of the Veneto Region, in a fertile area of the Padanian plain between the Berici and Lessini Hills. It is only fifty kilometres from Venice and Verona. The



city is a symbol of elegance and culture, witnessing a rapid growth in the economic sector, above all famous world-wide for its gold and leather products.

The Image of Elegance

Andrea Palladio, Vincenzo Scamozzi and Carlo Scarpa are all linked to this city, and great writers like Wolfgang Goethe, Antonio Fogazzaro and Albert Camus were all seduced by its atmosphere that is reflected in their works, and will also capture you as you walk along the streets, surrounded by well-proportioned Palladian masterpieces, fifteenth-century Gothic buildings, and churches. A walk immersed in art, from the Palladian Palazzo Chiericati, to the Olympic Theatre, last work by that great architect and finished by Scamozzi, and the temple of Saint Corona, containing works by G. Bellini and P. Veronese. Walk further on, to find Palazzo Leoni Montanari and the palaces of Contrà Porti, until you reach Piazza dei Signori, where you can marvel at the Loggia del Capitaniato, and the Palladian Basilica, symbols of Vicenza that dominate the square.



Useful tips



Gastronomic Traditions

There are a wide variety of gastronomic specialities in Vicenza: the "bigoli con l'arna" (egg pasta served with duck bolognese), cod with polenta, white asparagus, salami produced with the DOP brand (Denomination of Protected Origin), and the irresistible sweet cherries

from Marostica. These dishes are accompanied by delicious local wines produced with the DOC brand: cabernet from Breganze, red Tokai or Gambellara exported worldwide by wine producers such as Maculan and Zonin.



Exhibitions and Conferences

Vicenza is also a city for conferences, exhibitions and fairs, thanks to its important Conference Centre in the fair district, and the refined atmosphere of the Dimore Storiche capable of hosting meetings, conferences and conventions in an impressive environment.



The Villas in Vicenza

Perhaps the most well-known image of Vicenza and its province is that linked to the splendid classical-style villas, many designed by the great architect Andrea Palladio and others inspired by his creative genius. You will go on a cultural journey back in time to the "civilisation of the villa", stopping at Villa Capra Valmanara, known as "la Rotonda", the most well-known and imitated Palladian model; Villa Cordellina, symbol of unity between Man and Nature that hosts some magnificent frescoes by G.B Tiepolo; Villa Godi Malinverni, considered the first "house-villa" by Palladio with its rigorously simple Venetian architecture.



Bassano, Marostica and Thiene

The province of Vicenza offers many traditions and gastronomic specialities, and a place to visit is certainly Bassano, home of the grappa and prestigious ceramics, along with its harmonious medieval and Venetian style buildings. Not far away is the town of Marostica, an architectural jewel nestling within the ancient walls of its castles, with its famous square with a huge chessboard where every two years a live game of chess is re-enacted. On the way back to Vicenza it is worth stopping at Thiene for its fine wines from the Breganze area.



Contact



The Pleasures of Nature

If you want to get away from busy city life for a while, then there is no better place to go than Tonzetta and the Fiorentini plateau, Recoaro Mille and the Small Dolomites in the province of Vicenza, where you can still find natural, unspoilt areas to relax and enjoy active tourism in.



The Spas of Recoaro

The spas of Recoaro, a hydrotherapeutic centre renowned since the eighteenth century, offers hotels complete with spa treatment, warm baths and mud immersions, set in a pleasant, natural environment, rightly called the "emerald valley".

Consorzio Vicenza è



Tel. +39 0444 964380
Fax +39 0444 994779
info@vicenzae.org
www.vicenzae.org
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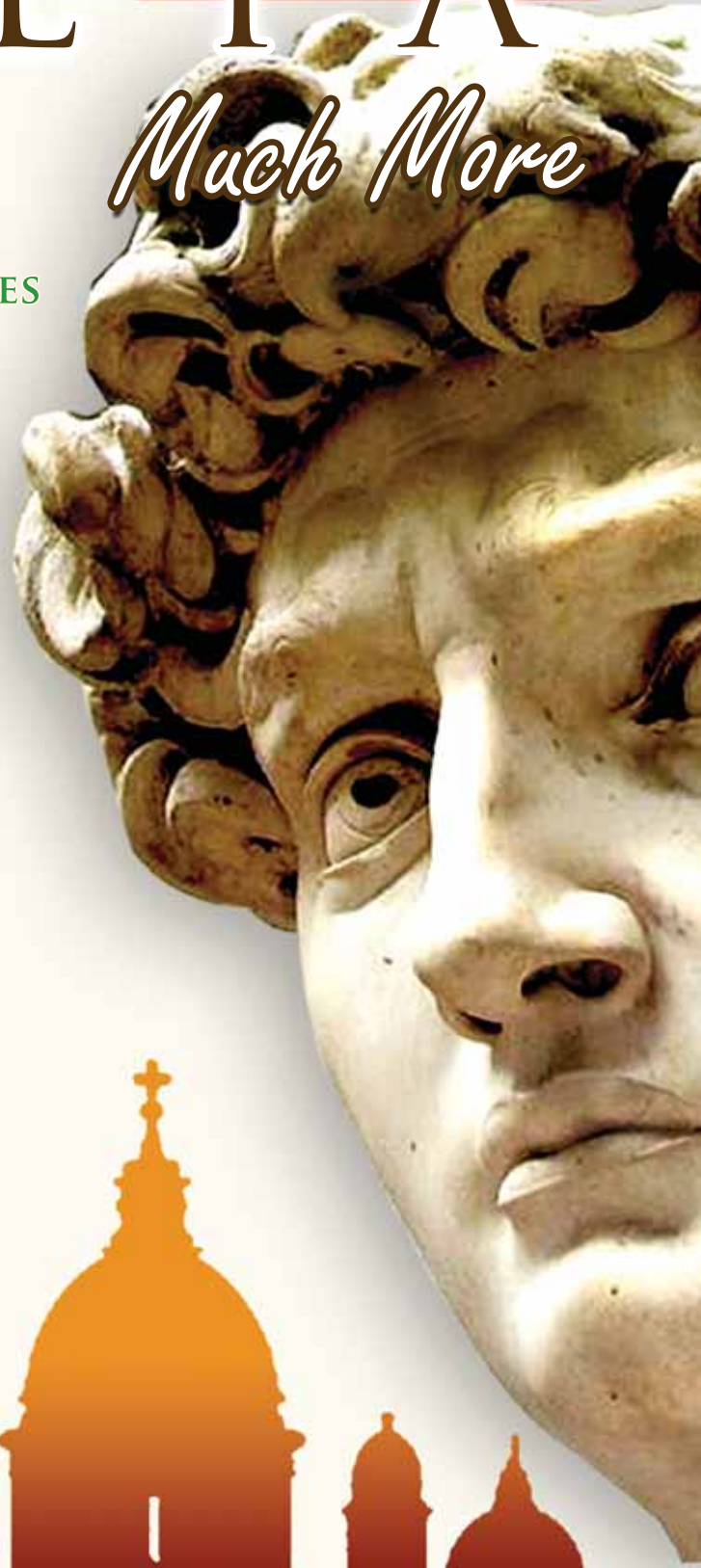
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WHICH IS YOUR ITALY

Italy appeals to the heart and soul of every USA traveler, whether young or old, traveling alone or with a group, on a budget or seeking luxury. Which is why, year after year, Italy ranks as the most requested foreign destination by all US citizens.

Romantic Couples

Fall for Italy's inspiring beauty, as seen in cities like Venezia, Roma and Verona, home of Romeo and Juliet. All along the Amalfi coast places like Positano, Sorrento, Praiano and Ravello offer spectacular views of the coral-blue sea and the fabled islands of Capri and Ischia. From a secluded B&B or a whitewashed Villa tucked amongst floral cliffs this land beckons to anyone who is in love with someone special and with life itself. Custom-designed trips known as Foreign Independent Tours allow couples to customize their vacation, ensuring lifelong memories.

Families

Families experience Italy in a wholly unique way, creating moments that will last forever, bringing history and culture to life in the eyes and minds of the children. Imagine them gazing at the Coliseum for the first time, riding a gondola in Venezia, marveling at the Leaning Tower of Pisa or the David in Firenze. Family travel can be independent with your own Rental Car, and can include Hotels, Villas and Sightseeing Tours along the way. Or you could travel between the cities by High-Speed Rail, a perennial children's favorite.

Singles

Italy offers to singles an opportunity to travel simply and comfortably. The Italians are a warm, welcoming people. You'll find yourself making new friends with other travelers and locals on daily sightseeing tours, while shopping, and especially at the nightclubs, cafés and restaurants. Hosted Tours or customized trips, known as Foreign Independent Tours, are an ideal way for singles to begin their lifelong affair with Italy.

Students

For students of History and the Arts, Italy is a must, with treasures from civilizations dating back thousands of years. Etruscan, Roman and Greek temples lie side by side with medieval fort towns and majestic Renaissance cities. Over forty percent of the world's known works of art are found in Italy, while architectural wonders seem to fill every corner: Bernini's columns in Roma, Brunelleschi's dome in Firenze, Palladio's villas in Veneto, the list is endless. Design a Custom Tour with friends or take a set itinerary that fits your cultural interests. Whatever your budget, what awaits you is priceless.





THE LIVING PAST

ITALY'S MUSEUMS AND HISTORIC SITES

Few countries can claim as extensive a heritage of artistic expression. To experience Italy's art firsthand is to touch the soul of the country. From archeological sites to architecture, museums and galleries, you will discover the many ways Italy's craftsmen and artists have articulated their unique talents.

ROMA

Capitoline Museums

Two palaces designed by Michelangelo, The Palazzo Nuovo and the Palazzo dei Conservatori, containing numerous paintings and classical sculptures.

www.museicapitolini.org

The Palatine

One of the city's premier ancient sites of Roma, displaying ruins ranging from the simple to the very luxurious.

www.romaturismo.com

Palazzo Corsini and the National Gallery of Antique Art

Originally the Palace of the Corsini Family who, upon the state's acquisition, donated their many paintings, essentially founding the national art collection.

www.galleriaborghese.it

Museo Nazionale

One of the world's leading museums of Classical art housing many antiquities. It

has five branches: Palazzo Altemps, the Baths of Diocletian, the Aula Ottagona, the Crypta Balbi and the Palazzo Massimo.

www.archeoroma.beniculturali.it

Vatican Museums

Residence of the Sistine Chapel and the Raphael Rooms, including many of the most important and unique art collections on earth.

www.vatican.va

Roman Forum

The central area around which the commerce of ancient Roma developed in the 2nd century BC. Its vivid remains demonstrate the use of municipal places during the era.

www.capitolium.org

The Pantheon

Completed in 27 BC this round temple, dedicated to "all the gods," is Roma's most well-preserved ancient building.

www.romaturismo.com

The Coliseum

Roma's greatest amphitheatre, capable of seating 55,000 spectators. It was used for deadly gladiatorial combats and ferocious animal fights staged by the emperors and wealthy citizens.

www.colosseo-roma.it

Museum of Contemporary Art

Built at the beginning of the 20th century on a large industrial complex, is now a dynamic center of cultural activity.

www.macro.roma.museum

FIRENZE

Galleria dell'Accademia

Founded in 1563, the first school in Europe to teach the methods of painting, drawing and sculpture.

www.firenzemusei.it

Bargello Museum

Formerly a town hall and prison, this houses Italy's finest collection of Renaissance sculpture.

www.firenzemusei.it



Archeological Museum

Home to a vast collection of Roman, Greek, Egyptian and Etruscan artifacts.

www.firenzemusei.it

Museo dell'Opera del Duomo

Features works, carvings and tools by Donatello, Brunelleschi and Luca della Robbia, plus a section dedicated to the history of the Duomo.

www.operaduomo.firenze.it

Museum of the History of Science

Dedicated to astronomy, mathematics and navigation.

www.imss.fi.it

Brancacci Chapel

Built inside the church of Santa Maria del Carmine, famous for the frescoes on the Life of St. Peter started by Masolino and his pupil Masaccio, and completed by Filippino Lippi.

www.firenzemusei.it

Santa Croce

A Gothic church containing the tombs of famous Florentines, such as Michelangelo, Machiavelli and Galileo. Alongside is the Pazzi Chapel designed by Brunelleschi.

www.santacroce.firenze.it

Pitti Palace

Built by Brunelleschi for banker Luca Pitti, later purchased by the Medici, contains several museums including the Palatine Gallery, the Royal Apartments, the Silverware Museum, the Modern Art Gallery and the Boboli Gardens.

www.palazzopitti.it

Uffizi Gallery

Italy's supreme art gallery, created by the architect Vasari, contains an unparalleled collection of paintings from Italy's best known masters.

www.uffizi.firenze.it

San Lorenzo

The Medici family parish church contains the Medici Chapels and mausoleum, as

well as works by Donatello, Michelangelo and Brunelleschi.

www.sanlorenzo.firenze.it

VENEZIA

Accademia

An incomparable collection of paintings spanning five centuries through the Byzantine, Baroque, Renaissance and International Gothic periods.

www.galleriaaccademia.org

Ca' d'Oro

Sitting on the Grand Canal, the "House of Gold" is a public gallery boasting an ornate, gold-leaf Gothic façade.

www.cadoro.org

Basilica di San Marco

The most famous church in Venezia, set in St. Mark's Square, famous for its elaborate Byzantine exterior, façade mosaics and the four bronze horses that sit atop the entrance.

www.basilicasanmarco.it

Museo Correr

The heart of this museum comprises the magnificent collection of Theodoro Correr, donated to the city of Venezia.

www.museiveneziani.it

Doge's Palace

A Gothic work of art on the Grand Canal, founded in the 9th century, this is the official residence of each ruler ("doge") of Venezia, with the offices of several political institutions within.

www.museiveneziani.it

Peggy Guggenheim Collection

A small museum in the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni on the Grand Canal, home of the art collection of the niece of Solomon R. Guggenheim.

www.guggenheim-venezia.it

Museo Vetrario (Murano)

This breathtaking museum showcases wonderful antique pieces of glass from the 16th and 17th centuries, when Murano

was the main glass-producing center in Europe. www.museiveneziani.it

MILANO

Pinacoteca di Brera

Milano's most esteemed museum, where the Accademia di Belle Arti was founded in the 1700's, its 38 rooms host a fine art collection covering Renaissance and Baroque art from the 15th to 20th century.

www.brera.beniculturali.it

The Museum of Contemporary Art (CIMAC)

Opened in 1984, located on the 2nd floor of Palazzo Reale, showcasing the cream of modern Italian and international artists.

www.visitamilano.it/turismo

Il Duomo (Milano Cathedral)

This grandiose Gothic Cathedral in the city's main square is made of white marble, with a roof of 135 spires and countless statues and gargoyles, and can hold up to 40,000 worshippers.

www.duomomilano.it

Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II

A glorious glass- and steel-covered arcade connected to Piazza della Scala, known for its high-end stores and restaurants.

www.visitamilano.it/turismo

Teatro alla Scala

Perhaps the definitive opera house, opened in 1778, the theatre also houses the Museo Teatrale, featuring a remarkable array of opera costumes, paintings, scripts, statues and other materials.

www.teatroallascala.org

Santa Maria delle Grazie

Built between 1465 and 1482, this Renaissance church is famous for the fresco depicting the Last Supper by Leonardo Da Vinci.

www.cenacolovinciano.org



NAPOLI

Palazzo Reale di Capodimonte

This museum holds the works of Raphael, Perugino, Titian and Botticelli.

<http://capodimonte.spmn.remuna.org>

National Archeological Museum

One of the world's most important archeological museums, rebuilt in the late 1600's as the core of Napoli University.

<http://marcheo.napolibeniculturali.it>

The Royal Palace

Behind its beautiful façade are great halls of furniture and paintings, the Biblioteca Nazionale and a small private theater.

www.palazzorealenapoli.it

Filangieri Museum

Built within the Renaissance Palazzo Cuomo this museum offers collections of porcelain, paintings, archeological finds, manuscripts and embroidery.

<http://filangieri.napolibeniculturali.it>

Duomo di San Gennaro

Within the Duomo is the very lavish San Gennaro Chapel housing the relics of the patron Saint of Napoli.

www.duomodinapoli.it

TORINO

Museo Egizio

The Egyptian Museum of Torino (the second in the world after the Cairo Museum) was established in 1824, with antiquities from about 4000 BC to 639 AD.

www.museoegizio.it

Palazzo Reale

The seat of the royal Savoy family until the 1861 unification of Italy took place, displaying ornately decorated apartments, and splendid ceilings painted by Seyter, Miel and Morello.

www.visitatorino.com/palazzo_reale.htm

Armeria Reale

A wing of the Palazzo Reale opened in 1837 containing one of the richest

collections of arms and armory.

www.artito.arti.beniculturali.it

Mole Antonelliana

This is Torino's awesome and original symbol, the Mole was designed by architect Alessandro Antonelli and built between 1863 and 1889. Since 2000, the building houses the National Museum of Cinema.

www.visitatorino.com

Museo dell'Auto

One of the largest auto museums in the world and the only one of its kind in Italy, this stylistically modern building houses a collection of 170 cars.

www.museoauto.it

Pinacoteca Agnelli

Architect Renzo Piano built this structure atop the Fiat building, featuring the private collection of Giovanni and Marella Agnelli, including works from Canaletto, Canova and Matisse.

www.pinacoteca-agnelli.it



REMAINS TO BE SEEN

Pompeii along with Herculaneum, was destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD.

www.pompeiiisites.org

Metapontum is an ancient city on the Gulf of Taranto settled by Greeks around 700 BC, where Pythagoras taught in the sixth century.

www.aptbasilicata.it

Segesta in northwest Sicily, was first a Trojan colony, then a Carthaginian dependency after 400 BC.

www.regione.sicilia.it/turismo

Agrigento & the Valley of the Temples are majestic Greek structures, dating back to the 6th and 5th centuries BC, and

one of UNESCO's World Heritage sites.

www.lavalledeitempli.it

Cerveteri is a vast Etruscan necropolis in Lazio; this spectacular network of mysterious tombs, shadowy crypts and burial mounds dates back to the 7th century BC.

www.turislazio.it

Ostia Antica, with its colorful frescoes and detailed mosaics, show how life once was in this thriving port on the Tiber river.

www.ostiaantica.net

The Matera Sassi is an intricate labyrinth of ancient rock dwellings in the Gravina of Matera, comprising alleys and stairways, caves, arches,

galleries, gardens and terraces.

www.sassidimatera.it

Nuraghi, these extraordinary Bronze Age towers of stone, spiraling upward into cones, number over 7,000 and span the island of Sardegna. How they were actually built and maneuvered into place remains a mystery. The nuraghi group Su Nuraxi, near Barumini, is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Its complex network of towers linked to walls and ramparts were probably used as dwellings, fortresses, tombs and meeting places for ancient peoples.

www.sardegnaturismo.it



PERFORMING ARTS

Nowhere on earth are the performing arts celebrated so joyously as in Italy. From drama to opera to music to film, here are just some of the places where you can indulge your particular passion.

CONCERT HALLS AND THEATERS



Teatro Carlo Felice (Genova)

A perfect example of the traditional Italian horseshoe design originally built in the early 1800's, refurbished in the 1990's after damage from World War II, with a scenic triangular tower and striking façade.

www.carlofelice.it

Teatro Comunale (Bologna)

Built by Antonio Galli Bibiena in 1763 and decorated with paintings by Luigi Busi and Luigi Samoggia from the mid-19th century, this theater reopened in 1981.

www.tcbo.it

Gran Teatro la Fenice (Venezia)

Destroyed in a fire in 1996, for the second time, this Venezia landmark was rebuilt entirely in a 19th-century style.

www.teatrolafenice.it

Teatro Rossini Lugo (Ravenna)

The theatre, named Rossini in 1859, still sports in its 18th century style, an austere façade with ornamental pillars and plaster cornices at each story.

www.teatrorossini.it

Anfiteatro Romano (Cagliari)

A 2nd century Roman amphitheater carved out of the quarry rock, complete with

underground cages attesting to its gladiatorial history.

www.teatroliricodicagliari.it

Teatro Massimo (Palermo)

Designed by a father and son team in the 1800's, combining a classical exterior and Liberty-style interior, the theater was renovated and reopened to the public in 1997, after almost 20 years of disuse.

www.teatromassimo.it

Teatro Massimo Bellini (Catania)

Renowned for the acoustics of its extravagant interior, and one of Europe's most beautiful entrance halls, this glorious venue was built to pay homage to composer Vincenzo Bellini.

www.teatromassimobellini.it

Teatro Dell'Opera (Roma)

Also known as Teatro Costanzi.

www.operaroma.it

Teatro Regio (Parma)

A 19th century opera house, built in 1821-29, this neo-classical building is considered one of the most important and famous shrines of Italian music.

www.teatroregioparma.org

Sferisterio (Macerata)

The Sferisterio was inaugurated on 5 September, 1829 and is famous for its

harmonious open air structure that ensures perfect visibility and wonderful acoustics.

www.sferisterio.it

Arena di Verona (Verona)

A Roman amphitheatre in Verona, Italy, which is internationally famous for the large-scale opera performances given there. It is one of the best preserved ancient structures of its kind.

www.arena.it

Teatro San Carlo (Napoli)

After being destroyed by a fire in 1816, the theater was rebuilt within ten months and now hosts an orchestra pit conceived by Giuseppe Verdi in 1872.

www.teatrosancarlo.it

Teatro alla Scala (Milano)

This famous neo-classical theater, originally built in 1776 on the site of Santa Maria della Scala, has an imposing façade and one of the world's largest stages.

www.teatroallascala.org

Teatro Verdi (Firenze)

Established in 1854, this theater has undergone three separate restorations over the past 50 years, while retaining its classical Italian structure.

www.teatroverdifirenze.it

A FEAST FOR THE SENSES

Italian food is an extraordinary feast for the senses. Ranging from simple to hearty, sweet to spicy, subtle to strong, each dish and delicacy is prepared with the freshest of ingredients. It's no secret that Italy's cuisine is in a league of its own, but you may not know how to enjoy it to the fullest. Here's a helpful guide to exploring and savoring Italy's culinary bounty.

MANCIA MANCIA

"Pizza al taglio" - Pizza by the slice, typically a lunch item found at bakeries and offered in many different varieties.



Spuntino - a snack, usually eaten in-between meals.

Aperitivo - an aperitif type of drink, usually wine, which is drunk in order to stimulate the appetite before the meal.

Prima colazione - breakfast, the first meal of the day.

Pranzo - lunch, the midday meal from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm, when activity stops.

Merenda - an afternoon snack.

Cena - dinner, usually eaten late, between 8 pm and 11 pm.

Scarpetta - whatever is left on your plate is "scooped" up with a morsel of fresh bread.

MAKE A MEAL OF IT, ITALIAN STYLE

Italian meals consist of 3-4 courses:



Antipasto - a starter (hot or cold), meant to stimulate the appetite.

Primo - the first course, usually a soup, rice or pasta dish.

This can be topped with a variety of sauces.

(Taste Tip: Never put cheese on any pasta containing seafood. Never chop pasta with a knife, twirl the strands on your fork like an Italian!)



Secondo - the main dish, meat or fish served with a contorno (side dish) of vegetables or salad.

(Taste Tip: Don't mix meat and seafood in the same meal. If your first course is sauced with fish, don't order a second course of meat.)



Dolce - Dessert or fruit and cheese, followed by coffee or a digestivo such as grappa.

THE ART OF COFFEE

Making "caffé" is an art in itself and ordering un "caffé" in Italy usually means an espresso. This means "to press," and refers to the pressure applied to the hot water forced through the ground beans, creating this strong, flavorful mixture, whose main variations are listed below.



Lungo - More water (about double) is filtered through the grinds, giving a weaker taste, but still stronger than normal coffee.

Ristretto - Less water, yielding a stronger taste.

Corretto - With a dash of liquor.

Americano - Diluted with hot water.

Macchiato - With a drop of steamed milk.

Con panna - With cream on top.

THE COOL OF GELATO

Gelato (ice cream) is the true taste of an Italian summer. Here's the scoop on the terms you need to learn before you lick.

Cono - cone.

Coppa - cup.

Con panna - with whipped cream on top.

Gelateria - ice cream place.

Granita - shaved ice with assorted fruit juices and sugar.

Tip: Pay first at the cassa (cash register), then present your receipt when you order.



Tips on Tipping

A coperto is a cover charge, an unavoidable "add-on" that basically covers bread and water and is charged per person. Even though tax and services are usually included in the menu prices, it is typical and courteous to leave a small tip of around 10 percent.

WINE ITALY'S GLORY IN A GLASS

Home to an astounding 2,000 home-grown grape varieties, Italy produces and exports more wine than any other country, also offering the largest variety of categories. To guide consumers and ensure quality control, the Denominazione

di Origine Controllata or DOC (Controlled Denomination of Origin) was introduced in the early 60's. Responsible for a significant enhancement in the quality of Italian wines, this regulation bears a little explanation to assist your discovery of one of Italy's true treasures. DOC wines are produced in specific well-defined regions, according to precise rules designed to preserve the traditional wine-making practices. For example, the rules for making Barolo differ markedly from that of Chianti Classico. In 1980, however, Italian authorities established a superior classification of DOC wines: DOCG (Controlled and Guaranteed Denomination of Origin).

DOCG wines spring from the wine regions recognized as the finest in the country. They produce less yield, but with superior quality, DOCG wines must pass a tasting committee before they can be bottled. Among the DOCG regions are: Barbaresco, Barolo, Brunello di Montalcino, Chianti (in seven subzones), Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Albana di Romagna, Gattinara, Carmignano (red only) and Torgiano Rosso riserva. You can find most wines at an enoteca or a vineria. An enoteca is a public or private place where a variety of wines are displayed, sold or tasted. A winery, or vineria, is a regional establishment with sales, wine and food tastings.



OLIVE OIL OUR LIQUID GREEN GOLD

Olives are grown all throughout Italy, from the northern shores, to as far as Sicilia and Puglia, meaning each region naturally claims to be the best producer of olive oil. Here's a brief look inside this fascinating industry, to help you pick out the perfect bottle on your next trip.

How do oils differ?

Within 24 hours of harvest, olives are crushed whole to maintain their naturally low acidity. The pulp is pressed and the liquid obtained comprises water and several oils, the two most common of which are:

Extra-virgin olive oil - The highest quality oil, noticeably green, with acidity of less than 1%, made by cold-pressing the olives - though the use of heat provides more quantity of the oil, the lack of it provides for a better quality.

Virgin olive oil - Produced with no chemical treatment, occasionally cold pressed method, with slightly higher acidity between 1% and 3%.

There are three distinct categories of extra-virgin olive oil, each suited to specific dishes and preparations.

Mild - Light and buttery, ideal for raw meats and carpaccio, fish, vegetables, soups and pasta sauces.

Fruity - Slightly stronger and fruitier flavor complements grilled meats, pastas or rice in mild sauces, cooked vegetables and bruschetta.

Fruity-Spicy - Aggressive taste, perfect for accompanying rustic dishes like the panzanella, Tuscan bread and tomato salad; ribollita, Tuscan vegetable soup; or pasta with beans.



THE PLEASURE OF FOOD SHOPPING

Although there are many supermarket chains, shopping for food in the specialty shops makes for a richer, more interesting experience.



Panetteria, Forno or Fornaio - bread shop.

Macelleria - meat and salami.

Pasticceria - cakes, pastries and cookies.

Latteria - for milk and yogurt.

Alimentari - pasta, ham, cheese, general food.

Pescheria - fish.

Mercato - markets, mainly for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Enoteca - wide selection of wine.

Food is sold by the etto (100 grams = 4 oz.), the kilo (kilo: 1 = 2.2 lbs), or simply in numbers, such as 2 bananas.

NATURAL THERAPY ITALY'S SPAS

Physical fitness, healthy eating, relaxation, and renewal are the pillars of a good spa stay where the number one rule is to recover your well being, a need which tends to get trampled by the stress of daily life.

Rich in thermal and mineral waters, with a mild climate and stunning scenery, Italy has long been a destination for spa tourism, for therapeutic or pampering reasons.

Thermal Hot Springs: focuses on health problems and medical healing, detoxification and anti-stress treatments, weight loss programs, rest relaxation.

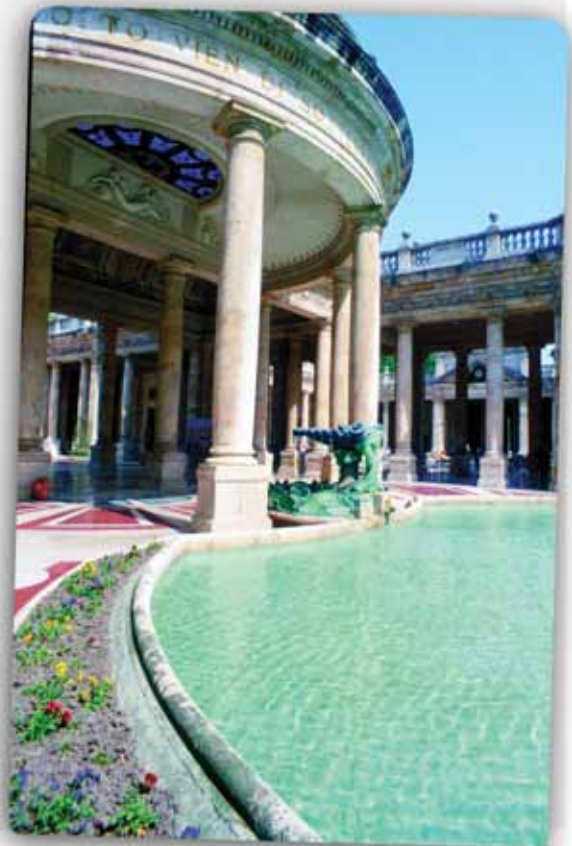
Health and Beauty Spas emphasize beauty treatments, massage and holistic medicine and are usually available in most luxury hotels and resorts and the thermal spas.

Thermal Baths feature mineral-rich mud and water treatments from natural hot springs and are usually visited for medical purposes.

Beauty is how you feel inside, and it reflects in your eyes. It is not something physical.



Since Roman times taking care of and cleansing the body has been a central part of the culture, as borne out by famed, popular spa sites such as Abano, Salsomaggiore, Chianciano, Montecatini, Fiuggi and Ischia. These are ideal holiday resorts in their own right, close to historical artworks and places of great beauty, featuring world-class accommodations.



ITALY'S TEMPERATE CLIMATE

Italy's weather is mild, thanks to the moderating influence of the seas and the Alps that protect her from north winds, but conditions vary considerably according to how far one is from these two elements. The winter is very cold in the Alps, misty in the Po Plain and the central Apennines; mild and even warm on the Ligurian coast, the Neapolitan coast and in Sicilia. The summer is hot and dry, but this is offset by coastal breezes, while in the Apennines and Alps it is pleasantly cool.

For last-minute forecasts visit: www.eurometeo.com/english

City	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Amalfi	48	52	52	56	64	71	78	80	71	63	54	50
Bari	48	48	52	56	63	71	78	79	70	63	55	50
Bologna	35	39	48	57	68	71	75	77	70	57	47	38
Bolzano	34	39	47	54	62	68	73	71	65	54	42	35
Cagliari	50	51	53	57	63	71	79	80	72	65	57	52
Capri	47	47	51	55	64	70	76	75	70	61	52	48
Firenze	41	44	48	55	62	69	73	73	68	59	50	42
Genova	48	48	53	56	63	69	75	76	71	63	54	49
Milano	35	38	45	51	60	67	73	72	65	54	43	36
Napoli	48	52	52	56	64	71	80	81	71	63	54	50
Palermo	55	55	57	60	66	73	84	83	76	70	62	58
Perugia	40	42	47	54	61	68	73	74	68	58	49	42
Reggio C.	53	53	55	59	66	74	81	81	76	69	61	55
Roma	47	48	52	55	63	69	75	75	71	64	55	49
Taormina	54	54	56	60	67	74	83	84	76	69	62	57
Torino	36	39	47	52	60	68	73	71	65	55	44	37
Trieste	42	44	49	56	64	70	75	74	69	60	50	45
Venezia	35	39	44	53	60	68	73	71	64	55	44	37

Keep in mind that the temperatures listed above are an estimated average and that they can often vary.



ITALY BY REGION

REGIONS OF THE NORTH



Italy's northern regions are a symphony of breathtaking contrasts. Liguria stretches along the Mediterranean, and the jagged peaks of the Alps extend throughout Valle d'Aosta and Piemonte, complemented by Lombardia's rolling plains. The snowy Dolomites provide the backdrop to the Trentino Alto-Adige and the Veneto regions, while Venezia and the sea maintain their delicate, dramatic relationship and the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia yields a treasure trove of Roman remains.

VALLE D'AOSTA

www.regione.vda.it/turismo

This is the most mountainous region of Italy, dominated by Alpine peaks, glaciers, valley streams, pine forests and high pasturelands, and accessed by the tunnels at the historic passes of Monte Bianco and Gran San Bernardo. The capital, Aosta, recognizes both Italian and French as its native tongues, and offers visitors such sights as the 11th century Romanesque Cathedral, Sant'Orso Church and the perfectly preserved forts of the Aosta Valley.

Temptations

- Valle d'Aosta Müller Thurgau (DOC), white
- Valle d'Aosta Torrette Superiore (DOC), red
- Chambave Passito (DOC), dessert wine
- Genepy, herbal alpine liqueur

Tastes

- Fontina, a semi-soft, smooth whole

milk cheese

- Renette apples and Martin Sec pears
- Chestnuts from the Lillianes municipality
- Tegole almond cookies from Aosta
- Beefsteak alla valdostana, a breaded veal cutlet fried and topped with fontina and ham, then reheated in the oven on a slice of polenta.

Arts & Crafts

- Sabots, the famous wooden clogs from Val d'Ayas
- Hand-woven wool draps (covers) and rustic upholstery fabrics from Valgrisenche
- Lace clothing, curtains and tablecloths from the Cogne valley

Just for Kids

Gran Paradiso National Park, set in the Valleys of Cogne, Valsavarenche and Rhemes, is rich in chestnuts, oaks, white fir and locust-trees, as well as wildlife such as royal owls, woodpeckers, martens, partridges and the alpine finch.

PIEMONTE

www.regione.piemonte.it

A region rippling with Alpine streams flowing into the Po, and dominated in the east by the lakes of Maggiore and d'Orta. The capital, Torino, features cultural and artistic influences from the Romanesque-Gothic and Baroque styles, while Sestriere and Bardonecchia offer fantastic skiing resorts.

Temptations

- Barolo (DOCG), red
- Barbaresco (DOCG), red
- Barbera (DOCG), red
- Nebbiolo (DOC), red
- Dolcetto (DOC), red
- Asti Spumante (DOCG), sparkling white

Tastes

- White truffles from Alba
- Risotto with rice from Vercelli, a dish made with beef stock, veal bone marrow and saffron
- Castelmagno cheese is a cylindrical pressed, semi-fat semi-hard cheese tinged with blue mold
- Robiola from Murazzano is creamy fresh cheese, superb with olive oil and

fresh herbs

- Bicerin is Torino's signature blend of coffee, milk and chocolate.

Arts & Crafts

- Wickerwork from Alessandria
- Ceramics and stoves from Castellamonte
- Silverware and jewelry from Valenza

Just for Kids

Safari Parks in Murazzano, in the Langhe region, with a variety of 300 animals to observe, and in Pobia, showcasing various endangered

LOMBARDIA

www.turismo.regione.lombardia.it

Spreading over the Po Valley and bordered to the north by the Alps, this region is a veritable lake district, including eastern Maggiore, Varese, Iseo, Como and northern Garda. Each major city contains striking monuments to Romanesque and Gothic architecture, such as the Cathedral of Milano, while sumptuous Renaissance palaces and churches abound – some containing examples of the Lombard painting movement, which peaked during the fifteenth

century.

Temptations

- Franciacorta Spumante (DOCG), sparkling white
- Bonarda (DOC), red
- Lugana (DOC), white
- Valtellina Superiore Inferno (DOCG), red

Tastes

- Torrone from Cremona, a traditional sweet made of almonds, nougat and honey
- Risotto alla Milanese, sautéed rice cooked in broth and saffron
- Ossobuco, shank of veal with its bone and marrow
- Pavese Soup, a clear broth served with toasted bread and eggs
- Bresaola from Valtellina, a cured thin-sliced meat

Arts & Crafts

- Violin-making in Cremona, home to the world-famous Stradivari
- Legendary accordions from Stradella
- Pottery from Lodi, suppliers to many European noble houses
- Printing and dyeing silk in Como

Just for Kids

The Leonardo da Vinci Museum of



Science and Technology in Milano is a wonderful way to witness the inventions of the great man; the fabulous Toy Museum in Canneto sull'Oglio near Mantova; Fantasy World provides a miniature version of Italy for children to play in; they also love climbing the spiral stairs to the top of the Duomo Cathedral, the world's largest Gothic cathedral.



TRENTINO AND SOUTH TYROL

www.provincia.bz.it
www.sudtirol.info

A dramatic Alpine province, rich in rivers and lakes, and clusters of mountains and valleys, bisected by the Adige river. Three natural parks, Adamello-Brenta, Paneveggio-Pale of

S. Martino and Stelvio conserve the native flora and fauna, including bears.

Straddling Germany and northern Italy, the capital Trento combines both diverse cultures to create a fascinating artistic aesthetic.

Temptations

- Caldaro (DOC), red
- Santa Maddalena (DOC), red
- Marzemino (DOC), red
- Teroldego Rotaliano (DOC), red
- Riesling (DOC), white
- Muller Thurgau (DOC), white
- Merlot (DOC), white
- Pinot Bianco (DOC), white
- Bianco Val d'Adige (DOC), white
- Moscato, amber dessert wine

Tastes

- Speck, a smoked ham
- Biroidi, blood sausages filled with nuts, nutmeg, cloves and cinnamon
- Gamsfleisch, Alpine chamois goat with red wine vinegar, salt pork, herbs and sour cream
- Orzetto, a barley soup with onion, garlic, vegetables and herbs simmered with speck

- Copper articles from Cavalese
- Wrought iron from Malè

Arts & Crafts

• Wooden sculptures and masks from the Moena and Pozza are hand carved and hand painted, called faceres and used in the Ladin Carnival period

Just for Kids

Topolino Junior Ski Trophy, Madonna di Campiglio, second week of February 2006, with races, competitions and displays hosted by Mickey and Minnie Mouse.

Kids Fun Park in the Alta Badia is a winter wonderland, including a toddler's play area and a solarium for adults.

Visit the Clifftop Castles, such as the Churburg (Castel Coira) in Sluderno, Castle Tyrol in Merano, Schloss Runkelstein in Bolzano and the Castle Kastelbell west of Merano.

The Archeology Museum of the Upper Adige in Bolzano specializes in the Stone, Copper and Bronze Ages, and is home to the 200-year-old mummified Ice Man.



FRIULI VENEZIA-GIULIA

www.turismoFriuliVeneziaGiulia.it

A broad, flat province stretching from the Tagliamento River and to the Adriatic coastline, dotted with lagoons, interesting geological formations and countless grottoes. The regional capital is Trieste; major towns include Udine, Gorizia and Pordenone. Evidence of older civilizations is abundant: Aquileia is a noted Roman archeological center, also with magnificent mosaics in its Romanesque Gothic Basilica.

Temptations

- Colli Orientali del Friuli: Tocai Friulano (DOC), white
- Collio Goriziano Cabernet (DOC), red
- Ramandolo (DOCG), dessert white

Tastes

- San Daniele Prosciutto, renowned sweet air-cured ham
- Montasio, a creamy, rich, hard cheese made from cow's milk
- Musèt, a spicy pork sausage
- Iota from Trieste, a traditional soup with beans, potatoes and sauerkraut

Arts & Crafts

- Hand-crafted wooden chairs from Manzano
- Ceramics from Udine
- Mosaic work from Spilimbergo

Just for Kids

Aquasplash in Lignano Sabbiadoro, is a spectacular water park that suits thrill lovers and families.

Take in the Punta Verde Wildlife Park, Lignano Sabbiadoro, home to 1500 animals, plant life and small lakes.

VENETO

www.veneto.to

Bordered by the eastern part of the Po Valley, this extensive plain comprises the majestic Dolomites of Cadore and the lagoon zone, including Venezia, the region's agelessly beautiful capital. Here, Byzantine influences abound, in San Marco's and the Cathedral of Torcello, while there are innumerable glorious examples of Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance art and architecture. Other treats include the Venetian islands of Murano, Burano and Torcello; Chioggia; the canals of the Brenta and the Veneto villas.

Temptations

- Recioto di Soave (DOCG), a golden, fruity white
- Bardolino Superiore (DOCG), red
- Prosecco di Valdobbiandene (DOC), sparkling white
- Tocai (DOC), white
- Amarone della Valpolicella - (DOC) dry, light, harmonious red

Tastes

- Pandoro, a Christmas bread cooked in butter, sprinkled with fine white sugar
- Fegato alla Veneziana, calf's liver sautéed in onions, parsley and sage with butter, oil and a hint of vinegar
- Pasta e Fasoi, noodles and

beans in a thick broth flavored with onion, carrot, celery and pork rind



- Sardele in Saor, fried sardines in oil with onions and vinegar, marinated with pine nuts, raisins and lemon peel
- Tiramisu, coffee-flavored cream of mascarpone and eggs layered with ladyfingers and topped with bitter chocolate

Arts & Crafts

- Murano glass, uniquely hand-blown, fused and tinted
- Burano lace, crafted entirely by needle
- Venezia Carnival masks, made with papier-mâché and hand painted

Just for Kids

Gardaland, Castelnuovo del Garda, is the largest amusement park in Italy. Caneva World, also on Garda, is another theme park with movie studios, water rides and themed restaurants.



LIGURIA

www.turismo.liguriairete.it

Centered around the Gulf of Genova on the Tyrrhenian Sea, Liguria is a mountainous region formed by the Maritime Alps and the Apennines, leaving only a narrow coastline. The region is divided at Genova, the capital, into the Riviera di Ponente (west to Ventimiglia), and the Riviera di Levante (east to La Spezia) – the tail end of which is the beautiful, unspoiled “Le Cinque Terre” (the Five Lands). Throughout Liguria, you can find superb examples of Roman ruins, Romanesque and Baroque architecture and many medieval forts, towers, walls and castles.



Temptations

- Sciacchetra (DOC), white
- Pigato (DOC), white
- Vermentino (DOC), white
- Rossese di Dolceacqua (DOC), red

Tastes

- Basil Pesto, a cold sauce of fresh basil, olive oil and pine nuts

- Focaccia, flat bread with salt and olive oil ovens.

- Farinata, a thin pancake made of chick pea flour and baked in wood

Arts & Crafts

- White and blue ceramics from Albisola
- Handmade lace, macramé, from Chiavari
- Plush velvet from Zoagli
- Lace and embroidery from Portofino

Just for Kids

Genova Aquarium is the biggest in Europe, featuring sandbar sharks, seals and dolphins. Also visit Le Caravelle Water Park, in Ceriale.



ITALY'S CENTRAL REGIONS



Central Italy abounds with diverse landscapes and towns rich in art, architecture and culture. From Toscana's transcendent treasures amid countless towers, palaces and churches, to the "green heart" of Le Marche and Umbria, to the lush Po Delta in Emilia Romagna and Lazio, home to Roma and the independent papal state, Vatican City.

EMILIA ROMAGNA

www.emiliaromagnaturismo.it

Half mountain range (the Apennines), half coastal plain along the Adriatic Apennines, this region's capital is Bologna, a famous university town. Historically, important Roman traces can be found in Rimini and Ravenna, once capital of the Western Roman Empire. Romanesque Lombardian style is showcased by the Cathedrals of Modena and Piacenza e Ferrara, while Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque styles are all well represented in the main towns.

Temptations

- Albana di Romagna (DOCG), white
- Sangiovese di Romagna (DOC), red wine
- Trebbiano di Romagna (DOC), sparkling white
- Lambrusco di Sorbara (DOC), sparkling red and rosé

- Castell'Arquato Nocino walnut great food.

liquor

Tastes

- Aceto Balsamico vinegar from Modena
- Parmigiano Reggiano cheese from Parma
- Tortellini in Brodo, pasta filled with Mortadella, prosciutto and veal, in a meat broth

Arts & Crafts

- Ceramics from Faenza
- Graffito ceramics from Ferrara
- Clay pots from Montetiffi
- Golden mosaics from Ravenna

Just for Kids

Mirabilandia is an amusement park in Savio with 36 rides, 14 waterfalls, ice skaters, fireworks, acrobatic parrots, stuntmen, flowers and gardens, plus a small town, "Bimbopoli" for very little ones.

Italia in Miniatura in Rimini is the most famous miniature park in Italy, with rides, games, monuments and

TOSCANA

www.turismo.intoscana.it

Stretching gently down the Apennines to the Tyrrhenian Sea, this region is a geographically charming mix of hilly landscapes and long sandy expanses, headlands and archipelagos. With Firenze as its capital, Toscana is unrivaled as a cradle of art and monuments to Italy's many eras and civilizations: Etruscan, Roman, Gothic and Romanesque. From Fiesole to Chiusi, Volterra to Siena, Pisa to Elba, Toscana's beauty and appeal is as varied as it is enchanting.

Temptations

- Bianco di Pitigliano (DOC), white
- Vernaccia di San Gimignano (DOCG), white
- Chianti (DOC & DOCG), red
- Brunello di Montalcino (DOCG), red



Tastes

- Ribollita, a popular Florentine vegetable soup with black cabbage
- Bistecca Fiorentina, a regionally unique T-bone steak
- Pecorino & Raveggiolo cheeses, from sheep's milk in the Sienese hills

Arts & Crafts

- Ceramics and terracotta from an ancient tradition dating back to the Etruscan era
- Jewelry from Firenze and Arezzo
- Marble from Massa Carrara
- Il Toscano, a long, slim cigar with an intense, strong aroma
- Any leather goods, from jackets to handbags

Just for Kids

Parco Collodi near Pistoia is a park devoted to Pinocchio (named after his creator Carlo Collodi).

The Viareggio Carnival Parades, with floats and papier-mâché puppets take place each February.

Near Siena is the Museum for Kids, to introduce children to the world of visual arts through labs, excursions, visits and arts and crafts. Also Cavallino Matto, near Livorno, is an exciting theme park deep in the pine

forest along the Tyrrhenian coast.

UMBRIA

www.umbria-turismo.it

The “cuore verde” (green heart) of Italy comprises an undulating landscape dominated by woods, valleys and water – most notably the lake known as the Trasimeno, and Falls of the Marmore, which are the highest in Italy. Etruscan traces are abundant in Todi, Bettona, Orvieto and Perugia, while Spoleto and Spello feature impressive Roman remains; Spello is a city, where the Romans left some impressive of Romanesque style are embodied in the Cathedrals of Assisi, St. Silvestro and St. Michele in Bevagna. The Renaissance still lives through magnificent monuments in towns like Perugia and Gubbio, to name but two.

Temptations

- Colli Perugini (DOC), red and white
- Torgiano Rosso Riserva (DOCG), red
- Sagrantino (DOCG), dry dessert wine

Tastes

- Black truffles of Norcia, Cascia, Spoleto; earthy, distinct and strong flavor
- Honey from Valnerina, a delicate, mixed flower fragrance and flavor
- Budellaccio salami from Norcia, flavored with salt, pepper, and fennel seeds, dried fireside
- Porchetta, pork, cooked on a spit over a wood fire, stuffed with minced liver, heart and lungs, pepper, garlic, salt and wild fennel

Just for Kids

Citta' della Domenica in Perugia is a nature park and zoo with hundreds of wildlife and exotic animals, even a reptile house, a huge play area and a little train to tour visitors.

Arts & Crafts

- Pottery from Deruta, with a unique color scheme
- Pottery from Gubbio, based on a 16th-century luster technique that causes red-golden reflections
- Tablecloths from Perugia woven in the “occhio di pernice” (eye of a partridge) design of white linen embellished with blue bands and geometric decorations



MARCHE

www.turismo.marche.it

A rugged region, facing the Adriatic Sea, with narrow valleys, deep gorges and numerous rushing streams that meet a coastline of gently rolling hills and flat plains. The regional capital is Ancona, and remarkable Roman remains exist in Ascoli, Fano, Ancona, Fermo, Urbisaglia and near Macerata. The presence of local artists such as Raphael and Bramante made this area one of the hotbeds of Renaissance art. Beauty can also be found in natural form in the stunning views from cities such as Pesaro and Urbino.

Temptations

- Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi (DOC), white
- Piceno Red (DOC), red

Tastes

- Olive all'ascolana, delicious deep fried stuffed olives
- Brodetto, a simple, tasty fish soup
- Arrosto segreto, a fish dish, cooked on both sides at the same time
- Porchetta, a very flavorful dish of roast pig
- Fabriano Salame, very spicy cured beef from Fabriano
- Fossa, cheese aged while buried in a pit, great with jam

Arts & Crafts

- Lace pillows, a delicate, timeless art
- Accordions and other high-quality

musical instruments from Castelfidardo

- Engraved and decorated furniture

Just for Kids

Gran Sasso & Monti della Laga National Park, in Casa del Parco di Arquata del Tronto.

ABRUZZO

www.regione.abruzzo.it

The region embraces the highest and hugest massifs of Central Italy, with peaks which often are higher than 2,000 meters, as well as a steep and rocky Adriatic coast. The capital L'Aquila has strong Roman and Renaissance influences, but the most creative period was during the Middle Ages, as seen in many wonderful cathedrals, abbeys and sculptures. Goldsmithing is also a renowned craft, dating back to the 16th century. Adding to the drama of this area, the National Park of Abruzzo is home to species like the Marsican Bear and the Gray Wolf.

Temptations

- Montepulciano d'Abruzzo (DOCG), red
- Cerasuolo (DOC), rosé
- Trebbiano (DOC), white
- Centerbe, a liqueur from various aromatic plants

Tastes

- Saffron, the pride of the Navelli plains

- Purple-red garlic, exclusively from the fields of Sulmona
- Black lentils from Santo Stefano di Sessanio

• Maccheroni alla Chitarra, a handmade pasta cut in thin strips using a fine wireframe similar to the strings of a guitar

- Confetti, sugar-coated almonds, a traditional wedding treat from Sulmona
- Parozzo, a rich chocolate cake, a Christmas favorite

Arts & Crafts

- Laces from Scanno, artfully crocheted
- Blankets, rugs and tapestries from Taranta Peligna, with flowers, birds, and vivid artistic sceneries
- Gold and silver jewelry from Sulmona and L'Aquila's goldsmiths
- Iron and copper artifacts: gates, housewares from Guardiagrele, Manoppello and Pescocostanzo

Just for Kids

The National Park of Abruzzo, The National Park of Gran Sasso-Laga, the Regional Parks of Sirente-Velino and Maiella-Morrone, numerous State Reserves and three World Wildlife Fund Oases, are all natural sanctuaries where stunning landscapes house recognizable and rare animals, extraordinary flowers and plants to enrapture a young traveler.



LAZIO

www.turislazio.it

Billowing between the Apennines and the Tyrrhenian Sea, this varied region combines coastal flatlands, and extinct volcanoes that form the lakes of Bolsena, Vico, Bracciano, Albano and Nemi. Roma is, of course, the capital of Italy, as well of the region, which itself is incredibly rich in outstanding relics of all the different periods, and has always been the center of an intensive artistic life from the Middle Ages to the 18th century – and contains the hub of the Papacy in Vatican City.

Temptations

- Frascati (DOC), white
- Montefiascone Est!Est!Est! (DOC), white
- Torre Ercolana (DOC), red
- Fiorano (DOC), red
- Colle Picchioni (DOC), red

Tastes

- Puntarelle, spears resembling endives
- Bruschetta, homemade bread oven toasted and topped with garlic, tomatoes, olive paste
- Carciofi alla Giudea, artichokes deep-fried in olive oil and garlic, seasoned with mint
- Spaghetti alla Carbonara, a cream sauce with bacon, garlic and chili peppers mixed in a bowl with raw eggs
- Bucatini all'Amatriciana, slender pasta tubes with tomato sauce and salt pork, and grated pecorino cheese
- Abbacchio alla Cacciatora, baby lamb cooked with rosemary, garlic, anchovies and vinegar
- Porchetta, roasted pork from the Castelli Romani, an area south of Roma

Arts & Crafts

- Ciocia, a local peasant leather sandal from Ciociaria

Just for Kids

Pulcinella Puppet Theatre, on the

Gianicolo Hill in Roma has free daily shows, though donations are appreciated.



Bioparco, the Roma zoo has a vast array of animals in a natural setting. For older kids, head to the Capuchin Crypt, an eerie secret vault filled with monks' skulls! Outside of Roma, try the Giardini di Bomarzo, a garden located near Viterbo, featuring statues of mythical monsters in a surreal setting.



REGIONS OF THE SOUTH



Blending sheer spectacle with a plethora of architectural remains, the south of Italy presents much to enchant today's visitor. See the breathtaking Roman ruins preserved at Pompeii, the Greek influence and magnificent beaches of Sicilia and the mystifying ancient structures in Sardegna called nuraghi. Admire the Romanesque and Baroque style from Puglia to Campania. Bliss out on the Amalfi Coast or lose yourself in the forested landscape of Abruzzo and Molise, the rugged countryside and bustling fishing ports of Basilicata and Calabria.

CAMPANIA

www.regione.campania.it

This region is renowned for having one of Italy's most beautiful coastlines, backed by irregular massifs punctuated by valleys and plains. Among Campania's riches are the isles of Capri, Ischia and Procida in the Gulfs of Napoli (the regional capital) and Salerno, as well as examples of classic antiquity, such as those in Herculaneum, Pompeii, Paestum and Cuma, where amphitheaters, triumphal arches, villas, bridges and tombs are plentiful. Baroque design is strikingly expressed in The Royal Palace of Caserta, and even Paleolithic Art is represented in Napoli and Nocera, while relics of the Longobard Age can be found in Capua and Benevento.

Temptations

- Biancolella (DOC), white

- Falerno del Massico (DOC), red & white

- Lacryma Christi (DOC) red, white & rosé

Tastes

- Mozzarella, moist, fresh and pungent, from Campania buffalo's milk
- Sweet, fragrant lemons from Sorrento
- Zuppa di vongole e cozze, a savory clam and mussel soup flavored with tomatoes and spices.
- Neapolitan Pizza, crisp yet soft to the bite, inimitable
- Sfogliatelle, shell pastry filled with ricotta cheese, scallop-shaped and dotted with candied citrus peel

Arts & Crafts

- Ceramics from Vietri sul Mare, dazzling majolica earthenware
- Handmade paper from Amalfi
- Coral cameos from Torre del Greco
- Leather sandals from Positano,

Capri or Palinuro; original designs or crafted to order

Just for Kids

Vesuvio National Park, in San Sebastiano al Vesuvio (Napoli) offers a "hands-on" sensory trail where kids can discover, touch, smell and observe the diverse colors and scents of the local plant life.

Edenlandia, in Napoli, is a theme park with a host of rides, live music and dance shows, 3-D theatre, games and more.

For an educational excursion, Citta della Scienza, Napoli, is a science center and planetarium with workshops and displays exploring nature, science and the environment. The Villa Comunale Aquarium in Napoli is one of the oldest in Europe (1873) and houses many varieties of marine life.



MOLISE

www.regione.molise.it/turismo

Molise is a hilly continuation of Abruzzo's landscape, crossed by many rivers that flow into the Tyrrhenian Sea. The region's place in the history of Italian art is secured by the cycle of ninth-century frescoes in the crypt of San Lorenzo in San Vincenzo al Volturno. Elsewhere there are plenty of examples of Romanesque, medieval and Baroque-style architecture – of which Roman- and Neapolitan-influenced design can be seen in the civic palaces.

Temptations

- Biferno (DOC), red, white & rosé
- Pentro di Isernia (DOC), red, white & rosé

Tastes

- Giant white celery from Campobasso
- Calcioni di ricotta rustici, rounds of pasta dough filled with ricotta, provolone and prosciutto fried in olive oil
- Picellati, honey pastries with nuts and grapes

Arts & Crafts

- Engraved church bells of Agnone
- Zampogne, homemade bagpipes called from Scapoli
- Steel fretwork, such as firearms, knives, scissors from Campobasso

- Hand-crocheted pillow lace from Isernia

Just for kids

The Association of Folklore and Culture in Vinchiaturro gives kids 5 years and up experience of the local traditions with local dances and songs.

BASILICATA

www.basilicata.travel

An arid, rocky region of two coastlines, one in the center of the Gulf of Taranto in the Ionian Sea, and a tiny one on the Tyrrhenian Sea, with the famous resort of Maratea. Potenza is the capital of this archaeologically blessed area. Other ruins can be found in Metaponto (the Palatine Tables), while remains of the Roman Age can be seen in Venosa. Medieval art is featured in Venosa and Cerenza (Romanesque style), with Arab-Byzantine and French-influenced architecture in Melfi and Lagopesole and Matera – where visitors can also see the “Sassi,” typical houses and Relics of the Greek era churches literally dug into the “tufa” crag.

Temptations

- Aglianico del Vulture, red
- Moscato del Vulture, dessert wine

Tastes

- Diavolicchio, a chili pepper found in many local recipes

- Luganiga, a salt-cured meat kept in lard or olive oil stuffe with potatoes and stewed in tomatoes
- Pignata di Pecora, ewe cooked with potatoes, tomatoes, onions, pork and pecorino in a clay pot called pignata

Arts & Crafts

- Carpet woven from sheep's wool
- Enameled, patinated brass cowbells from Stigliano
- Hand-carved wood, in chestnut, oak, beech, fir, cherry and pear depicting pastoral life and historical traditions
- Clay for the manufacture of majolica, porcelain and ceramics



Just for Kids

Walk through the labyrinthine alleyways of the Sassi of Matera, or take a tour with the pollicino bus. Lago di San Giuliano is surrounded by a thick forest and is a breeding ground for water birds and the ideal habitat for many kinds of fish.



PUGLIA

www.pugliaturismo.com

Occupying the easternmost part of the peninsula with a long coastline on the Ionian and the Adriatic Seas, Puglia is essentially flat and dry, with occasionally plunging cliffs. Of great cultural interest are the megalithic monuments at Dolmens and Menhirs, as well as the great archeological complexes at Canne della Battaglia and Ignazia. Roman remains are especially noteworthy throughout the region, and there are superb Romanesque cathedrals at Trani, Barletta, Molfetta, Bitonto and Ruvo di Puglia and Bari – where majestic castles of thirteenth-century Byzantine-Arab style can also be found. Also Alberobello can't be missed with its typical "trulli" houses.

Temptations

- Aleatico (DOC), red
- Moscato di Trani (DOC), white

Tastes

- Orecchiette e rape, the classic pugliese's pasta course
- Tarallucci e vino, a simple appetizer of salty and spicy donuts, great with wine
- Cosciotto di capretto in creta, an ancient recipe featuring a goat cooked on clay

Arts & Crafts

- Nativity figurines made out of clay

- Pietra Leccese, a soft stone perfect for intricate detail work; visible all over Lecce throughout its baroque architecture



Just for Kids

Zoosafari, the largest safari park in Italy, and Fasanolandia, an amusement park, are both located in Fasano.

CALABRIA

www.regionecalabria.it

The extreme south-western region of Italy, washed by the Tyrrhenian and Ionian Seas, dominated by a high central Apennine ridge, overgrown with thick woods, and wild coastal landscapes. Catanzaro is the capital of this region, which yields abundant evidence of previous artistic civilizations and ancient colonies in Sibari, Crotona, Catanzaro, Locri, Vibo Valentia. In Cosenza and Reggio Calabria are baths, theaters and bridges of the Roman Age, while the religious buildings show Byzantine influences, reflecting the region's time under

the Empire of Byzantium. Gothic, Renaissance and baroque influences and styles are also well represented in art, design and monuments.

Temptations

- Cirò (DOC), red, white & rosé
- Greco (DOC), white
- Savuto (DOC), red
- Lamezia (DOC), red, white and rosé

Tastes

- Aubergines, pickled, fried, stuffed or added to scrumptious pasta sauces
- Maccaroni and lasagna, stuffed with cured meats, sausage, hard-boiled eggs and cheese.
- Soffritti and morsello, a distinctive dish of tripe and innards boiled and cooked with tomatoes and spices
- Capocollo, cured, aged pork tenderloin from the neck or upper shoulder, seasoned with salt and spices
- Caciocavallo silano, cheese from cow's milk, formed and strung oval-shaped pairs
- Bergamot, a fragrant citrus fruit whose essence is used in teas, candies and liqueurs carefully carved



Arts & Crafts

- Colorful pottery from Seminaria
- Tapestries and blankets from Longobucco, created on looms worked by hand and foot
- Chestnut wood wickerwork from San Giorgio Morgeto
- Briarwood smoking pipes carefully carved from Reggio di Calabria

Just for kids

Natural Museum Libero Gatti Copanello, has a botanical garden overlooking the reefs of the Ionic Sea with over 1,000 specimens of beautiful shells from all over the world.

During the summer kids can enjoy the Aquarium and Marine Park of Isola di Capo Rizzuto, observing fish and marine life while learning about the protected zones of the Calabrian coastline.

Zambrone Aquapark and Odissea 2000 in Rossano are two of the largest water parks in the south, filled with thrilling water slides and various pools.

SICILIA

www.regione.sicilia.it/turismo

mainland, Sicily is the largest island in the Mediterranean and the southernmost region of Italy. Famous for its blue skies and mild winter climate Sicily is also home to Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano. This fertile paradise was settled by Siculi, Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Moors, Normans, Spaniards and Bourbons among others, and the remnants of these astounding cultures cover the entire island, from the temples of Agrigento to the priceless mosaics of Piazza Armerina and the ancient capital of Siracusa. Smaller islands, such as the Aeolian, Aegadean and Pelagian chains as well as Pantelleria, just 90 miles off of the African coast, are also part of Sicily, offering superb beaches.

- Cerasulo di Vittoria (DOCG), rosé
- Bianco Alcamo (DOC), white
- Moscato (DOC), white
- Gold, Amber and Ruby Marsala, dessert wine

Tastes

- Delicate and fruity extra virgin olive

- Sea salt from Trapani
- Sicilian honey, pistacchios and succulent blood oranges
- Almond paste marzipan shaped into colorful miniature fruits
- Ricotta-filled cannoli
- Delicious cassata cake with ricotta and pistacchio

Temptations

- Nero d'Avola (DOC), red
- Aglianico del Taburno (DOC), red & white
- Sambuca di Sicilia (DOC), red & white

Arts & Crafts

- Red coral artwork from Trapani
- Hand-painted tambourines
- Medieval style puppets on a string
- Fanciful Sicilian carts in all sizes
- Artistic objects made from glazed bread in Salemi

Just for Kids

The creepy catacombs of San Giovanni beneath Siracusa date back almost 3000 years.

Museo Internazionale delle Marionette, an entire museum dedicated to the Sicilian art of puppetry.

Midway between the temples of



Agrigento and the Roman-era mosaics of Piazza Armerina kids can enjoy a fun-filled afternoon at the Parco Acquatico Conte, a water world theme park in Sommatino.

Il Piccolo Teatro dei Pupi, also in Siracusa, showcases medieval puppetry most summer evenings.

In Bagheria, near Palermo, is the Museo dei Giocattoli Pietro Piranio with over 700 toys from the last four centuries.

In Palermo itself, discover the Museo Internazionale delle Marionette, an entire museum dedicated to the Sicilian art of puppetry.

SARDEGNA

www.sardegnaturismo.it

The second largest island in the Mediterranean, formed by a series of mountainous massifs, hills and narrow highlands, has jagged, rocky coasts concealing marvelous beaches and countless picturesque inlets and islets. Cagliari is the capital, ruled by a special statute. Pre- and post-historic

eras are expressed by the megalithic "Tombs of the Giants"; the "domus dejanas" (houses of the witches), tombs dug into the rock; and the mysterious "nuraghi," around 7,000 truncated cone towers found all over the island. Phoenician and Roman remains have come to light at Tharros and Nora; there are Roman relics at Porto Torres and Cagliari and the Gothic-Catalonian style survives from the rule of the Spanish House of Aragon.

Temptations

- Vernaccia (DOC), white
- Malvasia (DOC), white
- Nuragus (DOC), white
- Cannonau (DOC), red & rosé

Tastes

- Pecorino, cheese made from sheep's milk, eaten either fresh or aged to a sharp, piquant flavor and grated
- Porcheddu, roast suckling pig flavored with herbs and spices and then spit-roasted
- Fiore sardo, golden cheese from

sheep's milk

Arts & Crafts

- Wrought-gold or filigree creations make lovely jewelry
- Filet lace from Bosa and Osilo, with delicately embroidered flowers, fruits, geometric shapes and folk scenes
- Basket-making from the Campidano area, where straw is woven into spirals around a small brocade fabric center

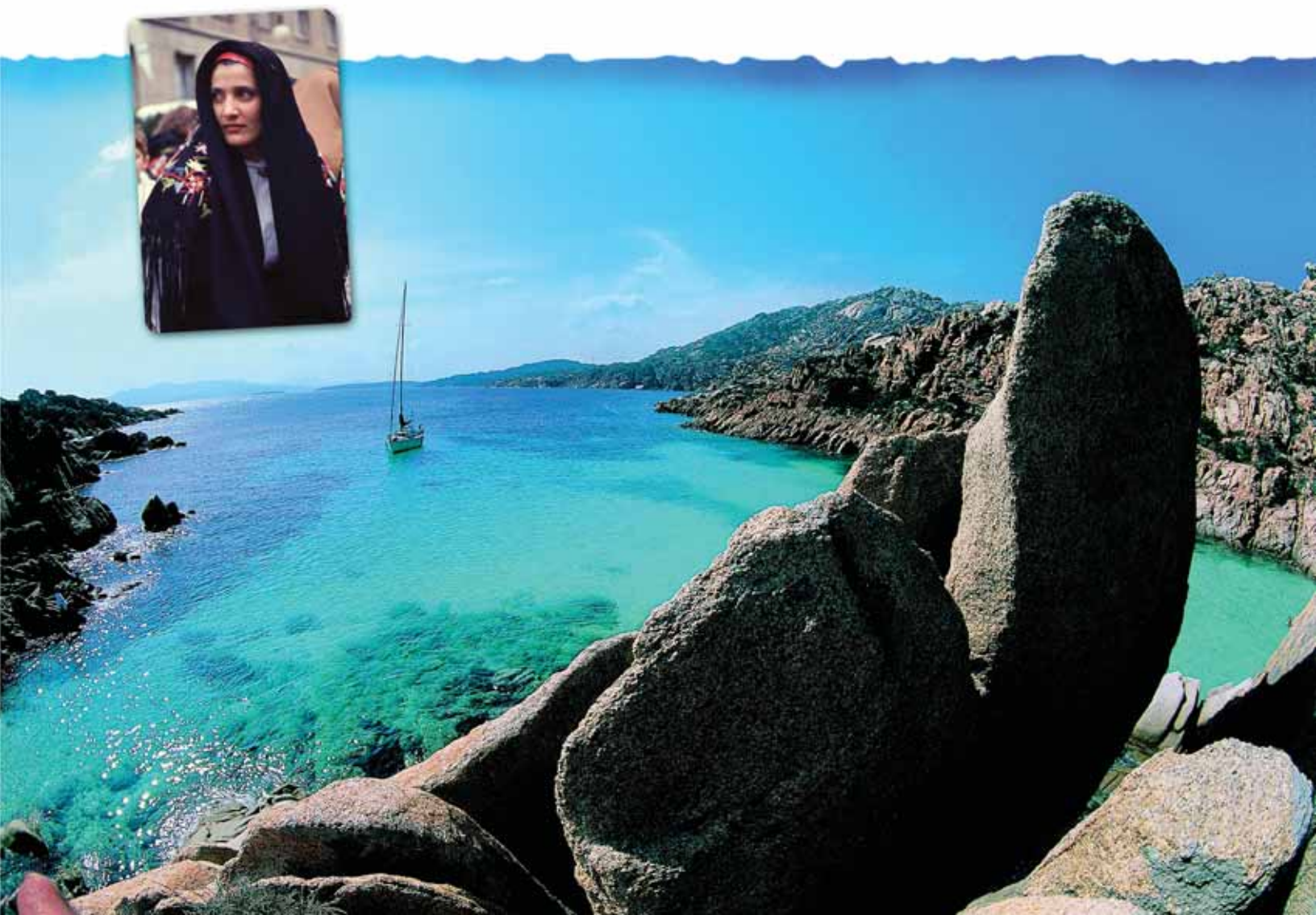
Just for Kids

Aquarium Laguna di Nora in Pula reveals the fish and flora of the seas of Sardegna.

Aquadream is a major water theme park with twisting slides, games, miniature golf and more.

Water Paradise in Sorso offers pools with artificial waves as well as "kiddie" pools, water slides, whirlpools and more.

To better understand this extraordinary island, visit a perfectly detailed, scaled-down model at Sardegna in Miniatura, Barumini.



BAROQUE ART IN SOUTHERN ITALY

The word Baroque originally comes from the Portuguese word "barroco" that means an irregularly-shaped pearl, an obvious reference to the ornate sculptural motifs distinctive of Baroque architecture.

In Italy the Baroque period began at the end of the 1500s, clearly with a lot of local art trends that become parts of local culture.

It's clearly not a mistake to intend Baroque as a resultant of the influence of the Renaissance and part of Romanesque and Gothic art periods. Clearly "Proto-Baroque" forms are palpable in the work of Michelangelo, while Bernini's works are almost entirely in Baroque style. The movement emerged between the Mannerist and Rococo periods, and especially in southern Italy persisted as a predominant form till the end of the eighteenth century. Baroque art is encountered in residential architecture (palaces) as much as ecclesiastical buildings like churches and monasteries. Baroque churches are typified by wide naves and, compared to Gothic structures, rather low ceilings crowned by high cupolas (domes). Painting, music and even philosophy also expressed this art spirit, with its emphasis on glorification of the human and divine spirit.



Sicilian Baroque

Baroque in Sicilia was historically introduced a few decades later than the rest of Italy. Many observers say that the Baroque art and architecture of Sicilia may not constitute a distinct style within the Baroque movement, but they reflect a deep regionalization evident in many parts of Italy.

In Sicilia, Ragusa and Noto are celebrated for their Baroque architecture. Catania's old district is more or less entirely Baroque, and most of Palermo and other smaller Sicilian cities have numerous Baroque structures. While many of Sicilia's churches and palaces built in the eighteenth century are more properly described as part of the Rococo period, their style is often a close picture of the pure Baroque style.

Historically, because the Catholic Church came to consider the Baroque as the essence of artistic expression of the glorification of God, an unfortunate attempt to redesign medieval churches into Baroque ones was born. Palermo Cathedral suffered this fate, and so did many smaller churches built during the Norman and Swabia periods. Some have been restored to their former original states, though this has met with varying degrees of success. New street plans were developed and a number of churches and palaces were built in a novel "Sicilian Baroque" after the 1693's earthquake which virtually destroyed a number of southeastern towns (Noto, Ragusa) and heavily damaged Catania. This new "Sicilian Baroque" style started originally from the movements then prevalent in Roma, Madrid and the rest of Italy. Therefore, a degree of stylistic division may be drawn among the products of this new Baroque movement and the new structures erected in Catania after the volcanic eruption of 1669 which destroyed most of that city. The baroque city that emerged after the eruption in Catania was created mostly by Giovanni Battista Vaccarini (1702-1769), who devoted 3 decades of his life to pulling a new Baroque Catania out of the ashes.

The "Sicilian Baroque" movement reached its height in the 1740s, but within a few decades the Neo-Classical movement was becoming popular, and the facades and naves of various new or restored churches actually featured essentials of both styles.



Most of Sicilia's Norman-Arab and Romanesque-Gothic churches were built to be viewed in their entirety, from every imaginable angle, inside and out. Many of the new Baroque ones, however, were built with impressive facades rich of ornaments on the external side, as if they were element of a theatrical stage. And in a certain sense, they most likely were the physical symbol of the society's prosperity.

Many observers either love or hate Baroque style. Indifference is rare, and in church architecture there is a subtle rivalry between the Gothic and Baroque camps, sometimes an expression of Protestant versus Catholic sentiment. Compromises can be bizarre. For example, Palermo's main Jesuit church, Casa Professa, is a masterpiece of intricate Baroque lines and ornate Rococo stone inlay, but the latest addition of stained-glass windows (a "Gothic" characteristic missing in most Baroque churches whose magnificence relies on unfiltered sunlight) creates an overwhelming effect beyond the imagination of even the most adamant proponents of the Baroque.

In Palermo, the Quattro Canti crossroads remains today the most generous example of the overly adorned squares and streets. Private palaces were also richly adorned, with sculptures ranging from angels to nymphs to gargoyles.

Giacomo Serpotta, the master of Palermo's celebrated oratories, born in Palermo in 1656, was specialized in adorning churches with molded plasterwork in ornamental frames. His masterpieces "Palermo's Oratory of the Rosary", is in the church of Santa Zita.

Noto, in southeastern Sicilia, is another city that was rebuilt in the baroque style after the earthquake. The unity of the baroque style in the "Noto Valley" remains unequalled anywhere else on the island and for this reason has been included by Unesco in their prestigious, coveted World Heritage List. The city is about 30 km from Siracusa, and has an extraordinary homogeneous town planning. It was built into an octagonal plan and is crossed through by the main streets.

This "stone garden", as it is commonly called come, contains a never ending number of Baroque monuments that appear on the streets and squares. The material most commonly used is limestone, which creates an extremely spectacular effect at sunset, when the sunlight brings out a pinkish hue from the majestic facades. Piazza Municipio in the center of the town has an impressive stairway that takes up to the Cathedral of San Giorgio, surrounded by imposing other Baroque buildings such as Palazzo Vescovile, Palazzo Ducezio and Palazzo Landolina di Sant'Alfano. Another Baroque city is Ragusa. With his San Giorgio Cathedral it's a precious example of the Sicilian Baroque. Erected on the old Church of San Nicolò, it was destroyed by the 1693 earthquake. The reconstruction was initiated in 1738 and completed in 1775. The design, whose project is still preciously preserved, belongs to Rosario Gagliardi from Siracusa, a major author of the post-quake reconstruction of the Noto Valley.

LECCESE BAROQUE

Lecce, in the heart of Salento, has always been considered a noble city, the noblest one in the southern region of Puglia, admired for the fine cultural heritage reflected in its architecture, churches and old palaces. The city is indeed a refined and precious Baroque gem, offering its citizens and guests a delicate brocade of amazing sights: a play of light and shadow, the vine-laced contours of a well, the leaves of an ancient capital, the cherub's wings.

The period from the late 1500's to the mid-1600's marks Lecce's finest period, and a lot of monuments and religious buildings continue to testify its prosperous history. The city is still today one the Italian symbol of baroque, perhaps the most exceptional.

Both monarchy and church considered art a way to celebrate their glory, and desired to leave an enduring symbol of it over history. The baroque of Lecce is quite singular and different for the standard style, and can be discovered through



the lovely balconies, windows and doors all decked out in stony floral garlands. Art often reveals the soul of a population, and Lecce's baroque is representative of the town but also of the entire region. The unique Lecce's stone, contributed to make this town elegant and refined, rich in history and culture. This extremely ductile and friable particular white stone, different from the ones in the rest of Italy, has permitted the creation of unique masterpieces of art. Used in buildings, facades of churches and in the richly decorated altars inside them, the characteristic use of this stone is always of an exceptional beauty.



The recurring presence of fruits, flowers, anthropomorphisms and mythological references in the delicate carvings that are upon the architectural structures of the city evoke the antique myths and tradition that are a fundamental part of Salento folklore. Today Lecce is like an open air stage, showing bas-reliefs, statues of saints, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic caryatids, griffins, winged horses, "putti" and large flower and fruit trophies. The facades of the churches and the altars chiseled by the imagination of the artists, intentionally glorified the great quantity of fruits offered by this land and as reminder of the agricultural spirit of this culture. So the baroque can be considered not only a hymn to the Lord to thank Him for His generosity and grace, but also a symbol of the city itself, full of pride and coquetry. For its critical geographical position hard to defend, many times Lecce was victim of attacks. The



city began a peaceful era after the defeat of the Turkish fleet at Lepanto in 1571. The following arrival of religious orders (Jesuits, the Teatini and Franciscans) brought a large extent of wealth which was reflected in the building of magnificent churches and palaces and it's this architectural extravagance that still characterizes the city. The "Barocco Lecce" flowery style owed as much to the material to hand as to the ability of the artist: the soft white local sandstone could be intricately carved and then hardened.



"Sant'Oronzo" square, in the heart of the old part of Lecce, is characterized in his south side by the 20,000 seated spectators of the "Anfiteatro Romano", which was built in the time of roman emperor Hadrian. The best baroque churches are all at short distance from the main "Sant'Oronzo" square. The finest, certainly the most spectacular, is the Basilica of Santa Croce, whose elaborate facade, the effort of the local architect Antonio Zimbalo, took almost 150 years to be finished, its upper half a riot of ornamental garlands and flowers around a central rose window. Not far from it, the Church of Santa Chiara, is a must stop; filled of decoration, its interior is full of small chapels groaning with garlands and gilt. The decorated facade with twisting columns of the Church of San Giovanni Battista by the Porta Rudiae in the southwest corner of town is another Zimbalo's baroque masterpiece to see.

ITALIAN DESIGN

Cars, Scooters and...



In addition to cars, the firms design everything from forklifts to sailboats. Creativity has been applied to the bodywork, starting from the sheets that cover the frames, to the building of a limited quantity of prototypes, up to the project of the automobile. Very often, engineers' talent influences modern design, as in the case of Pininfarina, Michelotti, Zagato and Frua, who are directly involved in the automobile design. Others, such as Bertone and Ghia, commit to successful designers such as Giugiaro, Fioravanti or Scaglione. So far, concept cars have always contributed to show the designers' talent, the engineers' vision for style and safety and the great potentials of the Italian automobile industry.



Like most of Italy's other designers, Torino car stylists prefer to work in small studios rather than in large corporate design centers. "I think we are delivering our best when the organization is not so huge," says Ramaciotti. "We're very individualistic people with taste rooted in the Renaissance. The stereotype of Italy as a land of creative people is true." Even if you haven't driven a Ferrari or worn a Versace lately, it's a difficult argument to refute.

Italian style has always been associated with creativity and elegance. One of the most successful areas of Italian design has been automobiles, where designers like Pininfarina have created works of art like the Ferrari and more down-to-earth cars like the Fiat 500 and the Fiat Uno. There are 10 top design firms for cars, all concentrated around Torino, the center of Italian auto manufacturing.



"Italian design has become a universal language of car design," says Lorenzo Ramaciotti, general manager of Pininfarina, which employs 2,000 people as modelers and engineers to support the tiny design team. "An American car is expected to be solid and a little flamboyant. An Italian car is expected to be aggressive, sportive and very sexy."



Ferrari: The Emblem



Enzo Ferrari: "The story of the prancing horse is simple and fascinating. The horse was painted on the fuselage of the fighter plane flown by Francesco Baracca, a heroic Italian pilot who died on Mount Montello: the Italian ace of aces of the First World War. In 1923, when I won the first Savio circuit, which was run in Ravenna, I met Count Enrico Baracca, the pilot's father, and subsequently his mother, Countess Paolina. One day she said to me, "Ferrari, why don't you put my son's prancing horse on your cars; it would bring you luck." I still have Baracca's photograph with the dedication by his parents, in which they entrusted the emblem to me. The horse was black and has remained so; I added the canary yellow background because it is the color of Modena."



The Vespa Scooter

Vespa scooter was created immediately after Second World War because the company Piaggio decided that making warplanes was, perhaps, no longer an appropriate way to make a living (the company had been practically destroyed by American bombers). A German scooter (one that had been used by paratroopers) was found in a wreck, and it became the prototype of a transport that was practical and easy to drive, easy to handle, inexpensive, and easy to repair. The Vespa ("Wasp") was born and was an immediate success.



The Lambretta Scooter

In 1945-1946 engineer Pierluigi Torre was assigned to design a new scooter that would employ a steel tube frame construction. The new scooter was named the Lambretta after the factories location in the Lambrate quarter of Milano. Production for the new Lambretta A 125cc started in 1947 a year after Piaggio started production of the Vespa 98cc.

The Lambretta A 125cc came with a three speed gear box and foot operated gear changer. The scooter had no body panels to cover the tube frame and engine but did come with a rear seat. Lambrettas were license built in many other countries. By 1970 scooter sales were down. In 1971 Innocenti stopped manufacturing Lambretta scooters and in 1972 the tooling for manufacturing DL series scooters was sold to Scooters of India. Vintage Italian Lambrettas and Vespas are great scooters and are sought out by enthusiasts all over the world...

Fashion

Elegance is in the Italian blood and fashion is a natural passion that you can admire around the various piazzas, restaurants and streets. Italy is a nation that cherishes outward appearances, so it is no wonder that some of the world's best sartorial artists are from Italy. Italian men and women have had some of the best fashion visionaries watching over what they wear: be it clothes, perfume, shoes, jewelry or hair do, for all the last century. This is why Italian fashion is actually all about a superior attitude.



ITALY BY BIKE

If Bicycling is one of the true passions in your life

Then you've come to paradise for no other country in the world is in love with the bicycle like the Italians. The terrain and scenery here are simply unmatched: from flats to rolling hills to steep climbs, Italy has it all. The villages, history, art and landscape will inspire you every day with new surprises.

Recommended Periods

The routes can be covered all year round, but the ideal seasons (therefore the ones we recommend) are the "transitional" ones, that are spring and autumn. Avoid the central summer period, when the weather is really hot, and winter too, for the problems associated with the bitter cold, snow and/or ice.

Bike Road and Signal Rules

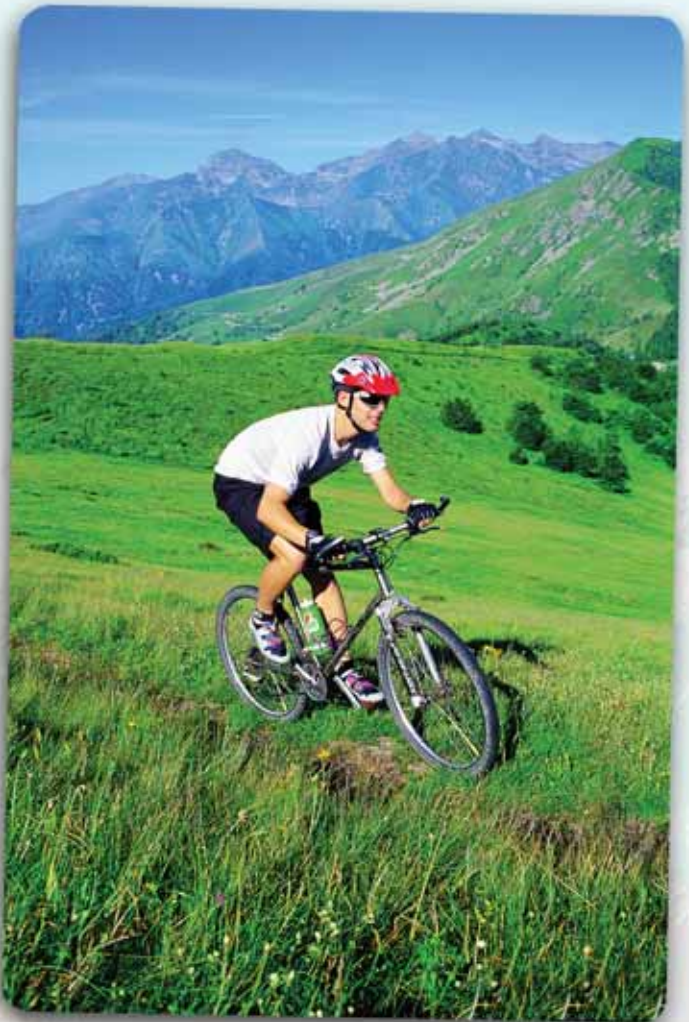
Bicycles comply with the same rights and rules like any other motor or mechanical vehicle; in regard to civil and penal liabilities, a cyclist answers for any damage caused to things and/or persons following reckless maneuvering that departs from the Highway Code.



So take heed on trafficked roads and at bends, always keep right, let motor vehicles overtake you and respect road signals. For group bicycle excursions, always ride with

care. Do not ride in pairs, let alone in three or more. Never leave litter on the ground, do not trespass public or

private property, or rather, ask permission to transit/access, give pedestrians right of way, slowing down and signaling your presence, check your speed and take bends anticipating obstacles, adjust your pace to the terrain type and to your skills, never frighten animals and respect the environment.



For more information visit the Italian Bicycle Federation website: www.feder ciclismo.it or www.fiab-onlus.it/english

GENERAL INFORMATION

Passport

A passport is valid for 6 months beyond the date of the return flight. US citizens with a valid passport can stay in Italy 90 days. If a longer period is required they must obtain a visa. Note: Minors under 18 years of age not traveling with their parents require a declaration from both parents or their legal guardian, authorizing their independent travel.

Italian Embassy in Washington

3000 Whitehaven Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
Tel.: (202) 612-4400
Fax: (202) 518-2151
www.italyemb.org

Italian Consulates in the U.S.

Boston , Tel. 617 722 9201	www.consboston.esteri.it
Chicago , Tel. 312 467 1550	www.conschicago.esteri.it
Detroit , Tel. 313 963 8560	www.consdetroit.esteri.it
Houston , Tel. 713 850 7520	www.conshouston.esteri.it
Los Angeles , Tel. 310 826 6207	www.conslosangeles.esteri.it
Miami , Tel 305 347 6322	www.consmiami.esteri.it
Newark , Tel. 973 643 1448	www.consnewark.esteri.it
New York , Tel. 212 737 9100	www.consnewyork.esteri.it
Philadelphia , Tel 215 592 7329	www.consfiladelfia.esteri.it
San Francisco , Tel. 415 931 4924	www.conssanfrancisco.esteri.it

Airline Carriers USA - ITALY

Alitalia
American Airlines
Continental
Delta
Eurofly
US Airways

GENERAL INFORMATION

Major Italian Airports

Ancona (AOI)	www.aeroportodiancona.it	Napoli (NAP)	www.gesac.it
Bari (BRI)	www.aeroportodibari.com	Olbia (OLB)	www.geasar.it
Bergamo (BGY)	www.sacbo.it	Palermo (PMO)	www.aeroporto.palermo.it
Bologna (BLQ)	www.bologna-airport.it	Perugia (PEG)	www.airport.umbria.net
Brindisi (BDS)	www.aeroportodibrindisi.com	Pescara (PSR)	www.abruzzo-airport.it
Cagliari (CAG)	www.aeroportodicagliari.com	Pisa (PSA)	www.pisa-airport.com
Catania (CTA)	www.aeroporto.catania.it	Reggio Calabria (REG)	www.aeroportodellostretto.it
Firenze (FLR)	www.aeroporto.firenze.it	Roma Ciampino (CIA)	www.adr.it
Genova (GOA)	www.airport.genova.it	Roma Fiumicino (FCO)	www.adr.it
Lamezia Terme (SUF)	www.sacal.it	Torino (TRN)	www.aeroportoditorino.it
Milano Linate (LIN)	www.sea-aeroportimilano.it	Venezia (VCE)	www.veneziaairport.it
Milano Malpensa (MXP)	www.sea-aeroportimilano.it	Verona (VRN)	www.aeroportoverona.it

From the Roma (FCO) airport to Roma and vice versa visit: www.adr.it or www.trenitalia.it

From the Milano (MXP) airport to Milano and vice versa visit: www.milanoshuttle.it or www.malpensaexpress.it

Official Regional Tourist Board Websites



Region	Official Regional Tourist websites
Lombardia	www.turismo.regione.lombardia.it
Valle d'Aosta	www.regione.vda.it/turismo
Piemonte	www.regione.piemonte.it
Liguria	www.turismo.liguria.inrete.it
Trentino A.A.	www.provincia.bz.it www.sudtirol.info
Veneto	www.veneto.to
Friuli V.G.	www.turismoFriuliVeneziaGiulia.it
Emilia R.	www.emiliaromagnaturismo.it
Toscana	www.turismo.intoscana.it
Umbria	www.umbria-turismo.it
Marche	www.turismo.marche.it
Abruzzo	www.regione.abruzzo.it
Molise	www.regione.molise.it/turismo
Lazio	www.turislazio.it
Puglia	www.pugliaturismo.com
Campania	www.regione.campania.it
Basilicata	www.basilicata.travel
Calabria	www.regionecalabria.it
Sicilia	www.regione.sicilia.it/turismo
Sardegna	www.sardegnaturismo.it

GENERAL INFORMATION

Duty Free

The following goods may be imported into Italy without incurring customs duty by passengers over 18 years of age arriving from countries outside the EU.

- 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 100 cigarillos or 250g of tobacco 2 liters of wine and 1 of spirits (over 22 per cent) or 2 liters of fortified or sparkling wine
- 50ml of perfume and 250ml of eau de toilette
- 500g of coffee or 200g of coffee extract (if over 15 years of age)
- 100g of tea or 40g of tea extract
- gifts not exceeding \$200.00 (if entering from a non-EU country)

Tax-Free Shopping in Italy (I.V.A. Refund)

The tax (VAT) on the purchases you make in Italy can be 20%, 10% or 4%, depending on what kind of goods you are buying, and it is included in the sales price. All visitors residing outside of the European Union are entitled to claim back the tax, if they spend 154,94 Euro (VAT included) or more in one shop in one day (except accommodations, dining or tourist services). It must be a store participating at the TAX-FREE program. Usually the symbol TAX-FREE is exposed on the front window of the store.

The goods need to be exported within three months plus the month of purchase.

The goods purchased and the relevant invoice must be shown at the Customs of exit from the EU territory.

The Customs office, after having ascertained that all the requirements are met endorses the invoice. Note that the goods must be shown at the customs office: if the traveler intends to carry them by plane, he must go to the Customs office to declare them before checking in the baggage. Alternatively, there are some TAX-FREE companies that can grant immediate VAT cash refund when the goods leave the Italian or Community territory, i.e. without the passenger to return the invoice to the seller: however you can use this procedure only at the most important airports or Customs borders. For further information:

www.globalfund.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Travel within Italy

Air

Domestic and low-cost airlines connect all country's airports as well as most European cities.

Ferries

Regular boat and hydrofoil services run to most of the islands, including Capri, Elba, Giglio, Sardegna, Sicilia and the Aeolian Islands. There are also some links along the coast. Ferry service from main ports connects most of the ports of the Mediterranean countries, included Greece, Croatia, Slovenia, Albania, Malta, and the island of Corsica. For information visit: www.ferriesonline.com

Rail

There are nearly 16,000 km (9,400 miles) of track in the country. The Italian State Railroad, Trenitalia, runs a nationwide network at very reasonable fares, calculated on the distance traveled, and there are a number of excellent reductions. A new rail pass, the Trenitalia Pass, is the only pass available to people resident outside of Italy (it supersedes the old Italy Flexicard, Railcard and Kilometric ticket). This allows from 4 to 10 days of unlimited travel within a two-month period. Any train in Italy can be used, although a small supplement is payable on Eurostar Italia services. The pass also entitles the holder to discounts on

some Italy-Greece ferry routes, hotels and other special offers. Both first and second class passes are available. Children aged from 4 to 11 pay half the adult fare, and there is a reduced rate Youth Pass for travelers under 26. Please note that once you purchase your train ticket you must validate it at the yellow box at the beginning of the train tracks, otherwise it will be invalid. For information visit www.ferroviedellostato.it.

For information on the local trains in between the Napoli area, Pompeii and the Amalfi Coast visit: www.vesuviana.it

Road

The highway (AUTOSTRADA, symbolized by AA) has tolls and charge according to distances and size of the motor vehicle. Gas stations along the highway are open 24/7. State roads (SS) are also very good and require no tolls. Gas stations on the secondary roads are usually closed from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Visitors should check locally about exact hours of operation.

The road signs are usually international. Italian highways do accept credit cards: pick the lane that reads Via Card and any major credit card will be accepted by the machine. For information visit: www.autostrade.it or www.aci.it



GENERAL INFORMATION

Traffic Regulations

Traffic drives on the right. Italy recognizes driving licenses and other traffic documents that are valid in other countries. US driving licenses are valid in Italy but the license must be accompanied by a translation or an international license.

Passengers are required by law to wear seat belts. Speed limits are 50 km/h (30 mph) in urban areas, 90/110 km/h (55/65 mph) on country roads, 130 km/h (80 mph) on highways.



High beams are prohibited, especially in towns and cities, but are permitted when an emergency arises, when driving through darkness but only when no vehicles are coming in the opposite way. Lights are required by law to be ON at all times by law. Red warning triangle on board is mandatory.

Note: Fines for speeding and other driving wrongdoings are particularly heavy and on the spot **Limited traffic areas** (Zona Traffico Limitato).

Limited traffic areas have been created in most of the historical centers of Italian cities. This measure has

been taken to increase pedestrian areas, commercial activities, and reduce pollution to preserve historical sites. In these limited traffic areas only authorized vehicles are allowed to drive, such as: buses, police cars, ambulances, etc. Residents have access as well. All of the authorized vehicles have their license plate registered with the Municipal Police.

If a vehicle crosses a limited traffic area, cameras will take a picture of the license plate.

The photo is automatically sent back to a computer of the Municipal Police and if the license plate is not registered a violation ticket is generated and sent to the owner of the vehicle.

The limited traffic areas are clearly indicated with a sign marked with a white circle with red borders, stating the hours in which the area is restricted.

Please Note:

Due to the law and the authority that is held by the local Municipal Police, the Italian Government Tourist Board cannot act as an intermediary in settling disputes over traffic violations.

Road Service

In case of vehicle breakdown, dial 116 at the nearest telephone and tell the operator your location and car description and the nearest Automobile Club of Italy (ACI) office will be notified for immediate assistance.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Money Matters

For more information visit: www.xe.com

Currency Exchange

Traveler's cheques and foreign money can be changed at banks, railway stations and airports, and very often at major hotels (generally at a less convenient rate, depending on the denominations of currency being bought or sold). Check with banks for details and current rates.

Credit Cards

Most reputable establishments will accept major credit cards. Those establishments accepting credit cards will post the logos in their front windows, just as they do in USA. Most of the credit card companies charge a fee for overseas purchases.

Traveler's Checks

In major Italian cities and tourist areas traveler checks are accepted. Please note that the amount exchanged is subject to a service fee (5 - 6.5 % varying from bank to bank).

Currency Restrictions

Check with the embassy before departure. Import and export of both local and foreign currency is limited to Euro 12,500. If it is intended to import or export amounts greater than this, the amount should be declared and validated in Italy on form V2.

Banking Hours

These vary from city to city but, in general, Mon-Fri 8:30 am-1:30 pm and 3:00 pm-4:00 pm, Sat 8:30 am-1:00 pm, although many banks are closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

ATM Card

Using your ATM card is the easiest and most convenient way to get cash when needed. Just make sure that your card has logos on the back reading NYSE – MAESTRO and PLUS or CIRRUS, and that your pin code is numeric only. Check with your bank for restrictions

Electricity

In Italy the current is 220 volts, compared to the North America 110 volts. If you plan on using your own 110-volt appliances, you will need a voltage converter, unless your appliance is designed to also work with 220 volts electricity (dual voltage). For example, most laptops and some electric shavers are designed to work both at 110 and 220 volts. Plugging in an appliance that is not designed to run on 220 volts electricity without using voltage converter will damage it. Regardless of voltage, you will need an adapter.

Single European currency (Euro)

The Euro is the official currency. The first Euro coins and notes were introduced in January 2002; the Italian lira was still in circulation until 28 February 2002, when it was completely replaced by the Euro. The Euro is divided as follows: bills of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500; coins of 1 & 2 Euro and 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Public Transportation

All Italian cities rely on bus transportation. Larger ones also have also tram and subway service: the fare structure is integrated between the various modes. Tickets can be purchased from tobacco shops or newsstands or automatic ticket vendors.

Taxi

Taxi service is available in all towns and cities. Government-regulated taxis are most of the times either white or yellow. Avoid taxis that are not metered. There are extra charges for night service, luggage and taxis called by telephone. All charges are listed on a rate card displayed in the cab with an English translation. Taxis can only be hailed at strategically located stands or booked by telephone. One cannot hail a cab from the streets. A 10% tip is expected by taxi drivers and this is sometimes added to the fare for foreigners. Taxi fares may differ from town to town.

Communications

Telephones

Full IDD (International Direct Dial) service is available.

- Italy country code is 39, so from USA, dial 011 39 followed by 06 for Roma, 02 for Milano, 011 for Torino, 081 for Napoli, 041 for Venezia and 055 for Firenze), drop the 0 if calling an Italian cellular number.
- Outgoing international code: 001, USA city area code and telephone number.

Telephone booths now only accept phone cards, which can be purchased at post offices, tobacco shops and certain newsstands and are available for 5, 10 and 20 Euros.

Internet

Internet corner booths operated by Telecom Italia are available for public access and can be found at airports,

major hotels and in other public places. Many Internet cafes are scattered throughout all main towns. Wireless connection for laptops is not available in all Italian airports.

Mobile Telephones

GSM 900 and 1800 networks.

Network operators are TIM - Telecom Italia Mobile www.tim.it, Vodafone www.vodafone.it, Wind www.wind.it and H3G www.h3g.it.

If you are traveling to Italy and want to use your cell phone, you most likely won't be able to do so. Unless you have a GSM tri-band phone, you will need to make special arrangements with your cellular carrier. Another alternative is to rent a cell phone. In fact, most tour operators from our list will be happy to arrange this.



ITALIA

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