

The Evolved Traveler

Inspired travel for inspiring lives.

IGLTA FAM
Tuscany Immersion
by The Evolved Traveler

7 Days / 6 Nights
14 Guests
May 10, 2020 - May 16, 2020



Introduction

Thoughts of Tuscany can certainly evoke postcard images of Florence and its famed Duomo and Pisa's Leaning Tower, and some of the world's greatest artistic masterpieces. And, there is no doubt it is a treasure trove of art and architecture, but Tuscany is much more. It is a magnificent palate of rolling green vineyards, olive groves, medieval villages, distant hills crowned with majestic castles, and country roads lined with cypress sentinels. It is a way of life founded on simple joys – a bike ride through the countryside, strolling through lively village markets, a glass of Chianti at sunset, and a slow, graceful dinner made from seasonal ingredients. It is a life uncomplicated.

Set in an authentic Tuscan villa, our immersive journey is designed for no more than 14 Guests so you that you experience Tuscany in a truly intimate, unique, and personal style and to genuinely get "off-the-beaten" track." Our program includes a private guide and excursions, exclusive wine tastings, regional cooking lessons, meeting local artisans, countryside bike rides, and discovering villages, and towns that are truly hidden gems.

Our home for the week in Tuscany is Castello Vitigliano, an elegant and exclusive Tuscan villa situated in the scenic Chianti countryside between Florence and Siena.

Castello Vitigliano's authentic Tuscan architecture features brick ceilings, arched doorways, and wood beams while its interior décor sports a modern Italian design with all of the amenities one would expect of luxury accommodations. The villa's seven suites, of various sizes, are all furnished with king-size beds, separate sitting areas, and en-suite bathrooms.

Meals are served in one of four dining areas - three of them are alfresco! The villa is complete with an indoor and outdoor kitchen and BBQ area, wine cellar, a spacious swimming pool and deck, hot tub, exercise room, and a spa room to enjoy an indulgent spa treatment.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Two Tuscan cooking lessons with your personal villa chef
- Private visit to Chianti Classico winery with tasting and vineyard picnic
- Tuscan countryside bike ride
- Curator-led visit to the Piaggio (Vespa) Museum
- Vespa tour to the "hidden gem" village of Collodi, the birthplace of Pinocchio
- Visit medieval Lucca
- Gelato making in Siena
- Private dinner in the ballroom of the 11th-century Castello di Meleto
- Lunch in a local home in Greve, Chianti

We invite you to join us and experience this for yourself, to come and immerse yourself in all the wonders and joyful pleasures Tuscany holds in store for you.

Accommodation	Destination	Start	End	Basis	Room Type	Duration
Vitigliano Tuscan Relais & Spa	Tuscany	May 10	May 16	FB+	7x Double Room	6 Nights

Key

RO: Room only

FB+: Full Board Plus - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast, Lunch and Activities

Price**Category 1 - \$8,595 per person based on double occupancy**

- **Hideaway Suite (70sq):** King size bed, Ensuite bathroom with stand-alone shower & bathtub, Dual vanity, Bidet, Lounge area, Television, Stereo System, Espresso machine, Wine fridge, Safe, Private outdoor lounge area, Private entrance

Category 2 - \$8,095 per person based on double occupancy

- **Panzano Suite (55sq):** King size bed, Ensuite bathroom with stand-alone shower & bathtub, Bidet, Separate Living room, Television, Stereo System, Safe, Connecting door to Torre Suite
- **Ruffoli Suite (45sq):** King size bed, Ensuite bathroom with stand-alone shower & bathtub, Bidet, Separate Living room, Television, Safe
- **Casole (59sq):** King size bed, Ensuite bathroom with stand-alone shower, Dual Vanity, Bidet, Separate Living room, Television, Safe

Category 3- \$7,795 per person based on double occupancy

- **Torre Suite - 2-Level (48sq):** King size bed, Ensuite bathroom with stand-alone shower, sitting area, Television, Safe, Kitchenette, Connecting door to Panzano Suite
- **Giradino Suite (33sq):** 2 King size beds with connecting rooms, 2 Ensuite bathrooms with stand-alone shower & bathtub, Dual vanity, Bidet, Lounge area, 2 Televisions, 2 Safes, Private outdoor lounge area, Private entrance
- **Lamole Suite (38sq):** King size bed, Ensuite bathroom with stand-alone shower, Dual Vanity, Bidet, Separate Living room, Television, Safe

PLEASE NOTE: Due to limited space the single supplement is 100%.

The Giveback from your journey by The Evolved Traveler

- **80** trees will be planted in reforestation efforts in each guest's name through our partnership with Carbonfund.Org
- A **\$250** donation will be donated in each guest's name to the IGLTA Foundation

Included

- Planning, communication and operational set-up
- Accommodations in private, luxury Tuscan villa with a maximum of 14 Guests with a private chef
- All meals (except 1 lunch) and most beverages including wine
- Private excursions as noted in the itinerary
- Sightseeing provided by private deluxe A/C vehicles as noted in the itinerary when required
- Experienced English-speaking private guide for daily sightseeing as noted in the itinerary
- Entrance fees to all sites, monuments, and museums per itinerary
- Private transfer to Florence airport at the end of the trip

Excluded

- Gratuities to the local drivers and guides
- Airport and departure taxes
- Travel Insurance
- Any item not noted as included

VILLA FEATURES & AMENITIES

- Ice machine
- Wine fridge
- Wine cellar
- Formal dining area seating for 18
- Air conditioning
- Television
- Sound System
- Wi-Fi
- Fireplace
- Floor Heating
- Alarm System
- Exercise room
- Room & Hammam
- Washer/Dryer
- Wellness area

Day 1: Milan/Bologna/Tuscany**(Sun, May 10)**

Renowned as Italy's capital of gastronomy, Bologna is undoubtedly one of Italy's best kept secrets. Set in the picturesque Po Valley in Northern Italy, the city's gorgeous porticoed streets are brimming with an enchanting blend of exquisite blushing-pink palaces, impressive medieval and renaissance buildings, and a slew of world-class museums and galleries. As the home of the world's oldest university, this small city has the atmosphere of a progressive, liberal university-town and, despite its rich history, it feels young and vibrant in a way that many other Italian cities don't. It is also brimming with Italian locals in a way that many other tourist-packed Italian cities aren't. With its sublime cuisine, lively spirit, and largely undiscovered counter-culture art and music scene, Bologna is a truly unforgettable off-the-tourist-trail destination.

Day 1 Itinerary

This morning we bid our friends from the IGLTA conference "Arrivederci" and begin making our way to Tuscany and our home for the next week, Villa Vitigliano.

Enroute, we will stop in Bologna for lunch and a brief walking tour. Often overlooked by travelers, in favor of more famed neighboring cities or Italian hotspots, Bologna has plenty to offer its visitors. The bustling and historic capital of the Emilia-Romagna region, its Piazza Maggiore, is lined with arched colonnades, cafes, and medieval and Renaissance architecture and is renowned for its food, art, and hidden secrets!

We'll sample one of the city's specialties at Tamburini, a gourmet shop with a dining area which is quite renowned in town. Our guide will explain the traditional products that sold at Tamburini, including handmade tortellini, which is their masterpiece, and our lunch!

Well-fed and our legs stretched, we begin our final segment of the journey to our private villa through the picturesque countryside of the Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany regions.

Arriving mid-afternoon, we have time to settle in and explore our exciting home and surroundings for the week before our private chef prepares our welcome dinner complete with wine pairings.

Included

Lunch

Dinner

Day 2: Chianti**(Mon, May 11)****Day 2 Itinerary**

We'll enjoy a leisurely breakfast before our Tuscan adventure begins.

Midmorning, we will depart for Vecchie Terre di Montefili, a heritage winery in the heart of Chianti Classico, not far from our villa. This exceptional winery primarily grows Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon to produce top-quality Chianti Classico. What genuinely sets them apart is their altruistic approach to their vinification and business. In their own words, "Montefili is a promise, a commitment to the Earth, a key to unlock the potential of our land.

"We believe that improvements come from a genuine and holistic dedication to perfection. We work as caretakers of the vineyard for future generations, nurturing with minimal intervention."

Our visit to Montefili will include a private tasting of their superb wines as well as picnic lunch in the vineyards.

After lunch, it's time for a leisurely bike ride through the beautiful Tuscan landscape taking in the fresh air and soaking in your new Tuscan life.

Returning to the villa, we have time to enjoy a swim or a spa appointment before the chef calls! Tonight, we join the chef in the kitchen for a hands-on cooking lesson to prepare dinner. The only question left for the day is to "dine-in or alfresco?"

Included

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Day 3: Pontedera/Collodi/Lucca**(Tue, May 12)**

Situated in Italy's Tuscany region, Lucca rests on the banks of the Serchio River. It serves as a great base for visitors to explore central and northern Tuscany including Versilia and its pristine beaches. Set at the foot of the Apuan Alps, this charming town boasts beautifully-preserved architecture lining the cobble-stoned streets of the picturesque historic centre which is encircled by ancient walls. Visitors can look forward to an array of attractions and activities such as cycling around the charming streets, sampling local Tuscan cuisine, or visiting the birthplace of the famous opera composer Puccini. Other highlights include: the charming Piazza dell'Anfiteatro, the 12th-century church of Saints Giovanni, and the Reparata, the city's first cathedral. Don't miss the opportunity to take a stroll along the top of the walls to soak up the incredible rooftop views.

Day 3 Itinerary

This day brings quite an adventure and what is sure to be one of the highlights of our "Tuscan Life!"

After breakfast, we depart for the Pontedera and the Piaggio Museum. The Piaggio is also known for being the "Vespa" museum, the iconic Italian scooter. And, like the Vespa, this is one cool museum!

The Piaggio company is the producer of the Vespa. The Piaggio Foundation celebrates the Vespa with an important exhibition looking at one of the most intriguing and evocative aspects of the history of the "world's best-selling scooter," whose devotees have continuously grown since it made its debut in _____. Launched in the immediate post-war period as a means of individual transport, to help get the whole country moving again, over the years the Vespa has established a legendary reputation as a symbol of freedom and movement, an inseparable companion for the first Sunday outings in the rapidly changing society of the 1950s. The Museum's Vespa Collection is its main attraction, bringing enthusiasts from around the world.

After a fun tour of the Piaggio, it is time to rev things up a bit. As we step outside after the tour, our own Vespa awaits! That's right; it's time to hit the road with our own Vespa! After a short safety and riding briefing, we'll begin making our way along more lightly traveled side-roads through the Tuscan countryside, to Collodi. Named for Carlo Collodi, the author and creator of Pinocchio, Collodi is the birthplace of the famed wooden boy and the epitome of a "hidden gem!"

Take some time to enjoy exploring Collodi independently before strapping on our helmet again and starting up your Vespa for the final leg of your journey to Lucca, a drive of about 30 -minutes.

Enchanting Lucca endears itself to everyone who visits. Hidden behind imposing Renaissance walls, its cobbled streets, piazzas, and shady promenades make it a perfect place to explore on foot.

Having worked up an appetite, arriving in Lucca, lunch will be waiting for us at Osteria Vecchia Noce.

After lunch, we will enjoy a short tour of Lucca's highlights, including the piazza and the church of San Michele, the Piazza Napoleone, and Piazza del Giglio passing by San Martino with the Cathedral. Two highpoints of our excursion will be Torre Guinigi and the bird's-eye view from the top of this medieval, 45m-tall red-brick tower adjoining it, and a walk along the top of the medieval walls for a view of the entire walled-city as you stroll the perimeter. At the tour's end, we can take some time to enjoy beautiful Lucca independently. This evening, we will enjoy an independent dinner in Lucca.

A full and fun day behind us, we'll depart Lucca around 8:00 PM this evening and return to our villa. Don't worry about a late-night; tomorrow, we have the whole day to relax!

Piaggio Museum

The Piaggio Museum is located in Pontedera and was inaugurated on March 2000. Set in the tooling department of an old factory, this is where the company transferred its production in the early 1920s.

The Museum was created to preserve and highlight the value and the historical legacy of one of the oldest Italian companies and focuses on the reconstruction of Piaggio activities in the area. It has become the largest and most comprehensive Italian museum dedicated to two wheels with a surface area of 5000 square meters and more than 250 pieces exhibited.

The Museum halls contain fundamental testaments to Piaggio pre-war aeronautical and rail production, the rich and admired Vespa collection, and the Piaggio three- and four-wheels collection. Numerous pieces belonging to the motorcycle and sports history of the Group brands from Aprilia, Gilera, and Moto Guzzi are also featured

Collodi

Located in the municipality of Pescia in Tuscany, Collodi is a small village dating back to 12th century. The village is said to be named after Carlo Lorenzini who wrote The Adventures of Pinocchio. The writer often took the pseudonym of Carlo Collodi for his works. The village is also well-known for its magnificent fortress and Villa Garzoni with its beautiful gardens.

Lucca

Situated in Italy's Tuscany region, Lucca rests on the banks of the Serchio River. It serves as a great base for visitors to explore central and northern Tuscany including Versilia and its pristine beaches. Set at the foot of the Apuan Alps, this charming town boasts beautifully preserved architecture lining the cobble-stoned streets of the picturesque historic centre which is encircled by ancient walls. Visitors can look forward to an array of attractions and activities such as cycling around the charming streets, sampling local Tuscan cuisine, or visiting the birthplace of the famous opera composer Puccini. Other highlights include: the charming Piazza dell'Anfiteatro, the 12th-century church of Saints Giovanni, and the Reparata, the city's first cathedral. Don't miss the opportunity to take a stroll along the top of the walls to soak up the incredible rooftop views.

Included

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Day 4: At leisure (Wed, May 13)

Day 4 Itinerary

Today is a full day of leisure to enjoy our Tuscan villa. Book a spa appointment or two at the villa! We can spend some time practicing our Italian poolside or maybe, a leisurely walk through the beautiful countryside.

There will also be an option of visiting the nearby Chianti Sculpture Park, another unique, hidden and often overlooked gem. A visit to the park will be approximately two-hours.

The park is unique in that it intends to integrate art and nature and to highlight the diversity of cultures by having artists from around the world contribute to the installation. Each artist has been invited to visit the wooded park to choose a specific site for their work. This accounts for the harmony of the sculptures with the natural elements of the park. These man-made works do not extend beyond the limits of nature; instead, they integrate with it and enhance it.

The remainder of the day is at leisure.

This evening, we venture to nearby Castello di Meleto, a medieval Tuscan castle dating back to the 11th-century, for what is sure to be a truly majestic and memorable evening. The evening begins feeling as if we have traveled back in time as we step into Castello di Meleto's 17th-century theater for a private concert before being welcomed into the castle's ballroom where we will be the Guests of Honor for an exclusive four-course dinner complete with wine pairings.

We will return to your villa later this evening after a wonderfully relaxing day and an unforgettable evening.

Castello di Meleto

Located near Gaiole in Chianti, Castello Di Meleto is a beautiful 11th-century castle overlooking the Massellone Valley. The castle is said to have belonged to a group of monks of the nearby Badia a Coltibuono in the 11th century and was later entrusted to the Di Meleto branch of the wealthy Firidolfi family. The strategic location of the castle near the border of Sienna and Florence meant that it was often the scene of violent encounters between various rivalling factions over the centuries.

In 1478 the castle was occupied by the Aragonese army, allies of Sienna, who added two large, cylindrical and machicolated towers near the southern end of the castle and on the northern end, two brick reinforcements were added. All these additions helped the castle to withstand a siege in 1529 by the imperial army. The castle was transformed and modified into a villa in the 18th century and up till today, the decor of the halls and theatre echo this bygone era.

Today the castle is owned by a wine-producing company whose vineyards stretches throughout the 1,400-acre property.

Included

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Day 5: Siena

(Thu, May 14)



The city is spread across three hills in the heart of Tuscany, the compact city of Siena is a historic jewel centred around the sloping Piazza del Campo. Watched over by the glorious Palazzo Pubblico, the town is known worldwide for the famous Palio run, a horse race run around the piazza twice every summer. Siena has managed to retain its quaint old-world charm to a remarkable degree. Its beautiful Gothic buildings include the city's Duomo, arguably one of Italy's most impressive Gothic cathedrals, as well as numerous other architectural treasures. The town is also home to a wealth of exceptional early Renaissance art. At the same time, the city bustles with modern life, and the 17 neighbourhoods into which the city was historically divided are each as captivating as the next.

Day 5 Itinerary

In Siena, the architecture soars, and it would seem your spirit does as well. Once you step into this magnificent town, there is no mistaking you are somewhere special. Effectively a giant, open-air museum, its medieval monuments line the vibrant, cobble-stoned streets where every third door is a restaurant, enoteca or café. Siena is Italy before the Renaissance and magically still intact for us to be transported back in time.

Arriving in Siena, we start the day (as every day should!) with a unique interactive gelato experience in one of the best-known gelateria in Siena. Here, the owners will explain how the famous Italian gelato is produced, which ingredients are to be used and how to understand and taste if an ice-cream has used all-natural ingredients. Of course, there will be time for gelato tastings and even stirring up our own batches of this delightful treat!

The morning off to a fun start, we'll head out to begin our exploration starting with a "deep-dive" into Siena's unique culture of the "Contrada." A *Contrada* is a district, or a ward, a division of the cities dating back to the medieval times. The most famous ones are the 17 Contrade in the town of Siena, competing during the Palio, a horse race held in the main square of the city twice a year, on July 2nd and August 16th. However, the competition among the different districts goes far beyond the Palio itself. Everyday life in Siena is profoundly marked by a very complex organization that derives from medieval times and is still very much alive nowadays. To get a better understanding of this culture, and competition, you will visit the headquarters of one of the Contrada to learn how the organization affects the everyday life of the people living in Siena. It is a complicated system that involves how members of the same Contrada support each other and what happens when two members of opposing Contrade want to get married and what happens with their children. It is a fascinating and unique story, and one can only fully understand when visiting Siena.

Before enjoying time for an independent lunch and exploration, our tour will also include the famed Palazzo Pubblico and Siena Cathedral.

We will return to the villa late this afternoon and take some time to relax before enjoying the casual BBQ dinner the chef has prepared for us.

Included

Breakfast

Dinner

Excluded

Lunch (on own in Siena)

Day 6: Greve & Gaiole in Chianti

(Fri, May 15)



The postcard-perfect Gaiole in Chianti, one of the five Chianti towns, lies roughly 40 kilometres southeast of Florence in Tuscany, one of Italy's most popular wine regions. Named by Forbes as 'Europe's most idyllic place to live', the town draws visitors with its gorgeous, pastoral landscape of rolling hills covered with fields of vineyards, olive groves, and cypress trees. However, it is not overcrowded, which adds to its charm. History enthusiasts can spend days exploring

impressive castles, exquisite villas, medieval stone villages, solitary abbeys, and charming farmhouses. Gourmands will delight in the various wine tasting tours on offer. Visit the area's historic estate wineries to sample some of the sumptuous food and wine for which the Chianti is famous. Must-see surrounding villages include the hamlets of Montefioralle and Volpaia, and the beautiful towns of Greve, Panzano, Radda and Castellina.

Day 6 Itinerary

Today, we spend some final time getting to know your Tuscan neighborhood and neighbors in Chianti.

We will head out after breakfast with our villa chef to the weekly local market in Greve - shopping list in hand! Everyone will be given ingredients to buy for this evening's cooking lesson, to help prepare the farewell dinner.

Take some time to enjoy the market and some time to wander through Greve before we meet our local hosts who will welcome us into their homes for lunch and what is sure to be a fun and engaging cultural exchange.

After lunch, you will have the option of returning to your villa or enjoying some further exploration of Chianti and maybe some last-minute wine tasting.

The afternoon will be at leisure before the chef calls for our cooking lesson and some fun preparing our final Tuscan dinner. It is sure to be a perfect night for a candle-lit, alfresco dinner taking in the scenery, and reflecting on a genuinely memorable week and our time in Italy.

Included

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Day 7: End of Itinerary**(Sat, May 16)****Day Itinerary**

Time to bid our new friends and Tuscan home "Arrivederci, " or better still, "until next time!"

Private transfers are provided to the Florence airport, a distance of about one hour.

(Transfers can be arranged to other airports or cities for a supplement.)

Included

Breakfast

Transport

Transfers

Date	Start	Stop	Time	Vehicle
10 May	Milan IGLTA Conference Hotel	Bologna Centrale		Transfer
10 May	Bologna Centrale	Vitigliano Tuscan Relais & Spa		Transfer
16 May	Vitigliano Tuscan Relais & Spa	Florence Airport Peretola [FLR]		Transfer

Travel Information



It is easy to understand why Italy is one of the world's most celebrated tourist destinations. This is a country that truly does have it all: exquisite landscapes, an abundance of art and architectural treasures, world renowned museums and a national obsession with decadent food and fine wine. Not to mention the country's sun-kissed olive groves, glacial lakes, fiery volcanoes and snow-capped peaks. Dive the clear green waters of the Mediterranean, browse the market stalls in Naples or experience the diverse wildlife inhabiting the country's national parks. And if you find the vast range of choices overwhelming, take some advice from the locals: sit back, relax and take a moment to indulge in the "bella vita" (the good life). As they say: when in Rome!

Banking and Currency

Currency

Italy uses the European monetary unit, the euro (€).

Euro bills come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500; coins are worth 1 cent of a euro, 2 cents, 5 cents, 10 cents, 20 cents, 50 cents, 1 euro, and 2 euros. Local merchants may refuse to accept €200 and €500 bills due to the prevalence of counterfeit bills.

Traveller's cheques, cheques and foreign money can be changed at banks, railway stations and airports and very often at major hotels (albeit usually at a less advantageous exchange rate). It is expensive to change foreign currency in Italy; exchange bureau fees are high. Banks will only exchange currency for their own customers.

There are no restrictions on the import or export of local or foreign currency. However, amounts exceeding €10,000 or equivalent must be declared if travelling from or to a country outside the European Union.

Banking

Bank opening hours are regulated by law, they open at 08h30 and close at 13h30 for lunch. They open again in the afternoon at 15h00 and close at 16h00 from Monday to Friday. There are banks that open on Saturdays.

ATMs in Italy are known as Bancomat and can be found anywhere in large cities as well as in small towns. Using a credit card, or even better, a debit card or your local bank (ATM) card is very easy. One must first locate either the Cirrus, Plus, VPay, or BankMate symbol (on the Bancomat and on your card), to ensure the card is usable at that particular unit. If you are unsure about the compatibility or the banking systems, contact your credit card company or local bank.

Travel, Transport and Getting Around

Alitalia (AZ) (www.alitalia.com) is the main domestic carrier. Other local budget operators are Meridiana (www.meridiana.it), Air One (www.flyairone.it), Windjet (www.volawindjet.it) and AirAlps (www.airalps.at). For the best deals on flights to Italy, travel out of season. Otherwise book ahead at peak times such as Easter week, the summer holiday period of July and August, and Christmas.

Italy has many regional airports offering good coverage of the whole peninsula. While flying may be the best option when travelling the length and breadth of the country, shorter routes are better served by the high-speed train network. Italy has well developed public and private transportation options. The Italian rail network is extensive, especially in the north, generally eclipsing the need for an alternative such as bus or air (both of which, however, exist to some extent). While a number of private railroads exist and provide mostly commuter-type services, the national railway, Ferrovie dello Stato, also provides a sophisticated high-speed rail service that joins the major cities of Italy from Naples through northern cities such as Milan and Turin

Self-drive car hire services are available in most cities, airports and resorts. Many international and Italian firms operate this service. Booking online, in advance, generally yields the best prices. The minimum driving age is 18. Speed limits are 50kph (31mph) in urban areas, 90kph (55mph) on ordinary roads, 110kph (68mph) on dual carriageways and 130kph (80mph) on motorways. Dipped headlights are compulsory outside built-up areas during the day. All vehicles must carry a red warning triangle. Seat belts are compulsory. Note: Fines for driving offences are on-the-spot and particularly heavy.

All EU member states' driving licenses are recognised in Italy. In practice, many car hire agencies also accept many non-EU licences such as those from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the US. Drivers from other countries will need an International Driving Permit. Visitors must carry their logbook, which must be in their name as owner, or have the owner's written permission to drive the vehicle. A driving licence or a motorcycle driving licence is required for motorcycles over 49cc.

There is a very efficient inter-city bus service. The buses are modern, comfortable, fast and well equipped. They also provide a very economical way of traveling around the country.

There are a lot of islands off the coast of Italy, including the major ones of Sardinia and Sicily, so naturally there are a lot of ferries traveling backwards and forwards.

Food, Drink and Cuisine Advice

Standards of hygiene, in relation to food health and safety in Italy, are generally high in hotels, restaurants, pubs and nightspots. Restaurants are subject to food safety control legislation, which is implemented by local government. Regulations include certification and regular inspections by health inspectors to ensure hygienic standards are maintained.

It is safe to eat fresh fruit, vegetables and salads, and to put ice in your drinks. Italy's fish, meat and chicken are of excellent quality, so there is no need to limit yourself when enjoying the local cuisine.

There are two cardinal rules of Italian cuisine - eat locally and eat seasonally. Imported foods are changing this picture, but faithful Italian cooks would never eat asparagus, tomatoes or artichokes out of season. Food is part of the rhythm of life, and so Italians eagerly await the arrival of seasonal ingredients from mushrooms in the fall to wild strawberries in the spring.

Tap water throughout Italy is safe to drink and to cook with when taken from taps in urban areas. Not all tap water in rural areas is safe for consumption, so take precautions if necessary.

Climate and Weather

The climate varies considerably from the north to the south of Italy. In the north of the country - the area between the Alps and the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines - the climate is harsh, with very cold winters and very hot, particularly humid summers. In central Italy the climate is milder, with a smaller difference in temperature between summer and winter and a shorter and less intense cold season than in the north; summers are longer, but the sultriness of the northern cities is mitigated by the sea. In southern Italy and the islands winters are never particularly harsh, and spring and autumn temperatures are similar to those reached in the summer in other areas of Italy.

Clothing and Dress Recommendations

Summers can be steamy, but shorts are still regarded as resort wear by most Italians. Cotton slacks or capri pants for women are a stylish alternative. The appeal of jeans is universal, and a quality pair matched with a sports shirt or blouse is acceptable casual wear in Italy. Pack a sweater or light jacket for travel in spring or early fall. Winters, even in the south, can be chilly, and a wool jacket or coat is a wise choice. Italians tend to regard down jackets and vests as ski resort wear. A small raincoat or travel umbrella is a smart accessory to have year-round.

Women should dress modestly in Italy; churches and some museums often require it. Signs outside many churches detail clothing that is not permitted: usually shorts, bare arms, low-cut dresses and short skirts for women; and shorts, bare arms and tank tops for men.

Electricity and Plug Standards

For the most part, electrical sockets (outlets) in Italy (Repubblica Italiana) are their own standard, the "Type L" Italian CEI 23-16/VII. Also reported to be in use is the "Type C" European CEE 7/16 Europlug. If your appliance's plug doesn't match the shape of these sockets, you will need a travel plug adapter in order to plug in. Travel plug adapters simply change the shape of your appliance's plug to match whatever type of socket you need to plug into. If it's crucial to be able to be able to plug in no matter what, bring an adapter for both types.

Electrical sockets (outlets) in Italy (Repubblica Italiana) usually supply electricity at between 220- and 240-volts AC. If you're plugging in an appliance that was built for 220-240-volt electrical input, or an appliance that is compatible with multiple voltages, then an adapter is all you need. If your appliance is not compatible with 220-240 electrical output, a voltage converter will be necessary.
