

Directory

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ACCOMMODATION

Prices for accommodation quoted in this book are intended as a guide only. Accommodation rates fluctuate wildly; Tuscany is more expensive than Umbria, while prices across the board can double during summer weekends and festivals. Rates are at their lowest during the low season from January to early March and November to mid-December: in Florence many hotels close for two weeks in January.

High season – July and August – sees choice accommodation booked up months ahead. The same goes for holidays such as Easter or Christmas and the two weeks surrounding Ferragosto (15 August) when holidaying Italians are out in force. Through the entire busy season – June to early September – an advance reservation definitely eases arrival.

BOOK ACCOMMODATION ONLINE

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

Arriving late? Call ahead to ensure your host keeps your room.

In this book, 'budget' describes accommodation where a double with private bathroom costs a maximum of €70 a night, 'midrange' doubles €70 to €150 and 'top end' upwards of €150 a night.

Agriturismo

The most insightful way of discovering the region; see p309 for a complete low-down on what *agriturismo* (farm stay accommodation) really means and a selection of the region's best.

B&Bs

Small, family-run guesthouses offering bed and breakfast (B&B) in the intimacy of a private home make a handsome alternative to hotels. Many offer double rooms with a private bathroom and a copious breakfast greets guests in the morning. Several are listed in this guide and hundreds more can be found on the internet.

Camping

Camping is extremely popular, but costs can add up: separate charges for each adult, child, car, tent, caravan, motorcycle, dogs and so on makes it far from dirt-cheap – count on €30 to €40 for two adults, car and tent on a site near Florence; €20 to €25 for equivalent happy campers elsewhere in Tuscany and Umbria.

Most *campeggi* (camp sites) are a good trot from town, so public-transport users should factor in extra time for long walks or extra costs for bicycle rentals, buses or camp-site pick-ups. Camping rough is generally not permitted.

TCI publishes *Campeggi e Villaggi Turistici* (€20), an annual guide listing 2243 camp

PRACTICALITIES

- Italy uses the metric system for weights and measures.
- Videos use the PAL image registration system.
- Plugs have two or three round pins so bring an international adapter; the electric current is 220V, 50Hz.
- Gem up on Italian news with leading national dailies, *Corriere della Sera* (www.corriere.it in Italian) or Rome's centre-left *La Repubblica* (www.firenze.repubblica.it in Italian), which puts out a Florence edition. Regional broadsheet, Florence-based *La Nazione*, also runs national news, as does Turin's *La Stampa* (www.lastampa.it in Italian). *Corriere dell' Umbria* (www.corr.it in Italian) is the main Umbrian read.
- News, views, culture and classifieds fill the English-language pages of biweekly newspaper, the *Florentine* (www.theflorentine.net), freely distributed at select hotels, restaurants and bars in Florence. *Toscana News* (www.toscananews.com) and sister publication *Chianti News* (www.chiantinews.it) cover the region in English.
- Tune in to state-Italian RAI-1 (1332AM or 89.7FM), RAI-2 (846AM or 91.7FM) and RAI-3 (93.7FM) for classical and light music with news broadcasts; Radio 105 (www.105.net in Italian) airs contemporary and rock music throughout Italy out of Milan.
- Watch the box: Italy's commercial stations are Canale 5, Italia 1, Rete 4 and La 7, alongside state-run RAI-1, RAI-2 and RAI-3.

sites across Italy. The Istituto Geografico de' Agostini publishes a less-glossy equivalent (€19.90). Online, see www.campeggitalia.com and www.camping.it.

Convents & Monasteries

Many of the 50-odd convents and monasteries scattered about the region offer some form of accommodation to outsiders. Monk-like

rooms are far from luxurious, but they are quiet and clean. You almost always need to call or email ahead, and there is usually a two-night minimum stay and a curfew of around 10.30pm or 11pm. A handy resource, available in good travel bookshops in the region, is *Guida ai Monasteri d'Italia*, by Gian Maria Grasselli and Pietro Tarallo (€9.90); otherwise tourist offices have lists.

Hostels

Most hostels in the region are run by Rome-based Italian hostelling association *Associazione Italiana Alberghi per la Gioventù* (AIG; ☎ 06 487 11 52; www.ostellionline.org), affiliated with Hostelling International (HI). Only members can stay but hostels do sell one-night stamps (€3) and/or annual HI membership cards (€18).

Accommodation is usually in segregated dormitories and beds cost around €15 per night. Some hostels offer family rooms at a higher price. In the summer months you should book in advance, especially in Florence and Perugia. It is usually necessary to pay before 9am on the day of your departure, otherwise you could be charged for an additional night.

Hotels

Italian hotels are strictly regulated and classified on a scale of one to five stars. Most trade as

an *albergo* (hotel), although smaller, cheaper, family-run places might well call themselves *locande*, *affittacamere* or *pensione*.

One-star hotels are basic and usually tout one or two shared bathrooms on a corridor. Standards at two-star places are slightly higher, with most rooms these days at least having a private sink, toilet and shower. Arrive at three stars and you can expect stylish up-to-the-minute rooms with TV (flat-screen in the trendiest joints), telephone, wi-fi and/or internet access (right), modern bathroom and a lift to whisk up you and your bags; that said, quality can still vary dramatically. Four- and five-star hotels are sometimes part of a group of hotels, and offer facilities such as room service, laundry, restaurant, fitness centre perhaps and so on at an appropriately high price.


Use rates quoted in this book – the lowest and highest price year-round for a standard double – as a guide only. Prices peak in Florence and on Elba in July and August, when some hotels, especially along the beach, may impose a multnight stay. Many hotels do not have *camera singola* (single rooms) as such; rather singletons pay a slightly lower price for the use of a double room with *camera doppia* (twin beds) or double with *camera matrimoniale* (double bed).

Unless stated otherwise, rates do not include breakfast.

Rental Accommodation

Finding rental accommodation in the cities or countryside can be daunting and time-consuming. Rental agencies can assist (for a fee); the Tuscany and Umbria regional tourist offices (p409) have lists; and there's a plethora of websites online touting short- and long-term apartment and villa rental in the region: a one-room apartment with kitchenette in Florence or Perugia costs anything from €400

WHAT THE COMPUTER ICON MEANS

Throughout this guide, only hotels and other types of accommodation that have an actual computer for guests to access the internet are flagged with a computer icon like this: ; those that are wi-fi friendly, but have no computer, are not.

to €800 a month, and renting or sharing a room or studio starts at €200. Renting elsewhere is cheaper.

You can also look for rental ads in advert rags, such as Florence's *La Pulce* and *Panorama* or Perugia's *Cerco e Trovo*.

Rifugi

Those planning to hike in the Apennines can bunk down in a *rifugio* – a mountain hut kitted out with bunk rooms sleeping anything from two to a dozen or more people – usually run by *Club Alpino Italiano* (CAI; www.cai.it in Italian). Half-board (dinner, bed and breakfast) is often available. Most open mid-June to mid-September, although some at lower altitudes may remain open longer. Always call ahead, or have someone do so for you, to check that the *refugio* you are hiking to is (a) open; (b) has a bed for you. In addition to CAI *rifugi*, there are a handful of privately run ones and the occasional *bivacchio* – a rock-bottom basic, unstaffed hut.

Student Accommodation


Those planning to study in the region can often organise accommodation through the school or university they will be attending. Options include a room with an Italian family, or a share arrangement with other students in an independent apartment. If you're willing to chance it, you can look through newspapers and on university notice boards after you've

TOP TEN ONLINE RENTAL RESOURCES

For sites dealing exclusively with farm and other *agriturismi* properties, see p309; a couple listed share a go-slow, think-green philosophy.

- www.florenceandtuscany.com
- www.i-escape.com
- www.justtuscany.com
- www.knowital.com
- www.merrygoround.org
- www.responsibletravel.com
- www.slowtrav.com
- www.solemar.it
- www.tourism-in-tuscany.com
- www.viatraveldesign.com

HOTEL PARKING

Parking at rural and suburban accommodation is rarely a problem – unlike in larger towns and Florence where parking is, in short, nightmarish. In towns many three-star-plus hotels offer parking either on-site or give guests a validation for a nearby public car park. In Florence practically no hotels have parking of their own (those so lucky to do so are flagged in this book with a ) but rather offer guests the option of overnight parking in the nearest public car park (€18 to €24) or for valet service (€24 to €50), ie a friendly man in uniform escorts your vehicle to/from the same car park for you. The more stars in the hotel melting pot, the higher the parking charges. In hostels and smaller establishments in the city, you are, quite simply, on your own.

VILLAS & FARMHOUSES

Be it hanging in a hammock strung between poplars, dropping off beneath medieval frescoes or rising with the sun amid rolling hills, there is no better way to revel in the extraordinary peace and tranquillity of rural Tuscany and Umbria than by renting a villa, farmhouse or medieval hill-top village house.

Dreamy properties are as rife as vines. Rentals can be short- (some, but not all, can be rented per night, particularly in low season), medium- (one to four weeks) or long-term (more than a month); and there is ample chance to pick 'n' choose from those little luxuries in life that too many holidays require – infinity swimming pool, Jacuzzi, butler service, private chef, air-conditioning and so on.

Those in search of down-to-earth simplicity are equally spoiled for choice: organic farms are plentiful, many renovated with respect to original structures and using wholly natural materials. Heating is partially solar, pools in some instances are filtered naturally by aquatic plants and many have herb gardens. Farm produce (fruit, vegies, honey, olive oil, wine) is biodynamic and for sale, allowing self-catering guests to create their own splendid Tuscan feasts.

Prices range wildly, but split per person per night can vary over very good value. An apartment in a villa or farmhouse for up to two people costs upwards of €500 a week; most four- to eight-bed properties fall in the €800 to €2000 per week range. Many property owners live on site, speak English and are a font of local knowledge; contacting them directly to organise your rental inevitably saves the expense of an agency, of which the following include our favourites:

Cottages to Castles (% 01622-77 52 36; www.cottagestocastles.com) Enticing collection of properties from this UK company, with agents in New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, the US, Israel and across Europe.

Cuendet (% 0577 576 330, see website for toll-free numbers; www.cuendet.com) A large-scale operation since 1974 with several European offices, this Italian company in Monteriggioni Siena manages hundreds of villa rentals in Umbria and Tuscany; also arranges wine- and oil-tasting, golf, bike tours, cooking courses and hot-air ballooning.

Italian Villas (% 1-888-214 2170, international 1-514-908-8907; www.villaescapes.com) US-based company, managing several hundred villas and *agriturismi* in Italy catering to all price ranges.

Summer's Leases (% 0845-230 2223; www.sumlea.com) From a Real McCoy Medici villa with domestic help, cook and air-con to a straightforward studio for two in central Siena, this small London-based agency is a Tuscan and Umbrian specialist.

Traditional Tuscany (% 01553-810003; www.traditionaltuscany.co.uk) Specialist company in Norfolk, UK, with a wide range of villas and apartments in Tuscany and Umbria; car rental, activity holidays and last-minute special offers online.

Tuscan Way (% 800 766 2390; www.tuscanway.com) Based in the US, Tuscan Way has a slew of Tuscan villa apartments on its books; some organise cooking courses.

Tuscany Now (% Tuscany 0207 684 8884; www.traditionaltuscany.co.uk) Born in a family home just outside Florence, this Tuscan and Umbrian specialist with offices in Florence and London lets you search for your dream villa by four clever categories: honeymoon, luxury, secure pool and no need for a car.

Veronica Tomasso Cotgrove (% 020-7267 2423; www.vtitaly.com) Period properties to rent and buy in Tuscany and Umbria, hand-picked by London-based Veronica. Highly recommended.

Windows on Tuscany (% 055 26 85 10; www.windowsontuscany.com) The property arm of the Florentine Salvatore Ferragamo fashion-house empire, this Florence-based agency handles some of Tuscany's most prestigious rental properties.

arrived. Many hostels and B&Bs give a weekly discount.

BUSINESS HOURS

Shops are generally open 9am to 1pm and re-open in the afternoon from 3.30pm or 4pm to 7.30pm or 8pm Monday to Friday, but in main towns and cities it's increasingly popular for shops to remain open all day. Bank hours are

generally from 8.30am to 1.30pm and 3pm to 5pm on weekdays, but times can vary. Post offices open 8.30am to 1.30pm Monday to Friday and for several hours in the afternoon. In large towns, they might open on Saturday morning. Pharmacies open 9am to 12.30pm and 3.30pm to 7pm Monday to Friday, and are open on Saturday and Sunday mornings. It is the law that one pharmacy in every town has to stay

open on the weekend, and all other pharmacies list that location on their front door.

Restaurants usually serve from 12pm to 2.30pm and 7.30pm to 10pm. Bars usually open at 8am until the early hours. The law requires restaurants to close one day a week, but some ignore this rule and others close two days a week. Nightclubs open their doors at about 10pm but don't fill up until midnight.

CHILDREN

Most places happily accommodate children, with *agriturismi* and hotels usually supplying baby cots (free) and/or an extra bed (€25 to €35) for younger children. Few offer baby-sitting services though. Kids aged under 12 get discounts on public transport, museum and gallery admissions etc, and those aged under three are almost always free.

Small mouths are welcomed with open arms in restaurants. In larger towns many serve a special children's menu; those that don't go out of their way to cater to younger children's needs – serving a half-portion of pasta, dividing one portion between two, serving it at the same time as the adults' *antipasti*, supplying smaller hands with teaspoons and so on. The ritual basket of bread brought to the table at the start of every meal can temporarily appease hungry-kid grumps and grumbles but be warned, its lack of salt has been known to provoke severe tantrums in certain bread-mad five year olds. Despite such royal service, not that many restaurants have high chairs bizarrely.

Car seats can be hired with rental cars for a sometimes extortionate fee, but if you plan to do a lot of travelling you might be better off taking your own (which will almost certainly be more comfortable than the nonadjustable, sparsely cushioned seats usually provided); if you are flying, check your luggage allowance.

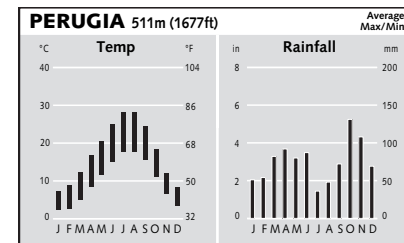
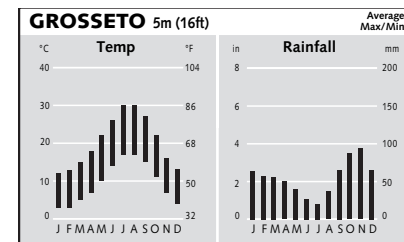
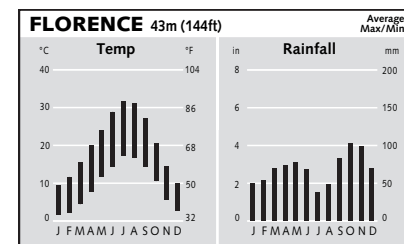
Farmacie (pharmacies) sell baby formula in powder or liquid form as well as sterilising solutions. Disposable nappies are widely available at supermarkets and pharmacies. Fresh milk is sold in cartons in supermarkets, corner shops and in bars touting a 'Latteria' sign: carrying a couple of emergency bottles of UHT milk is a good idea, not only because it doesn't need to be refrigerated prior to opening, but because it can also be found in screw-lid plastic bottles – way more practical for travelling than a carton.

Packing a pair of armbands or other inflatable floating device can be a life-saver for those with young children staying in a hotel or *agriturismi* with a swimming pool. Not all pools have shallow ends and very few are gated or closed in with a security fence to prevent wandering toddlers wandering in unaccompanied. An ample supply of water-resistant high-factor sunscreen, a robust sun hat, kid-friendly insect repellent and cream should your child be attacked by mosquitoes are other summer essentials. Depending where you are staying, a cot mosquito net might be useful for young babies.

For more information, see Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children*.

CLIMATE CHARTS

Tuscany and Umbria enjoy a typically Mediterranean climate, with a mean annual temperature of around 15°C. Summer time, especially in the cities, can be oppressive and



LETTER TO LONELY PLANET

I was crossing the piazza at Santa Maria Novella on the way to the train station in Florence last Friday morning when a very well-dressed 'Italian gentleman on his way to work' walked past me and pointed out gunk dripping down the front of the luggage I was wheeling behind me. My natural response was 'Gross! What's that?', and when he kindly offered me a tissue to clean it off, I took it rather than reaching into my own shoulder bag...which I stupidly set down to clean up the mess. He's the one who squirted the stuff (looked like runny baby cereal) on my luggage and then distracted me while his accomplice took off with my bag. This will hopefully help other travellers, since the US Consulate in Florence tells me it has become a very popular method of separating tourists from their valuables.

Janet C, USA

hot, with temperatures reaching a sweaty 35°C. For more information on when to go, see p17.

COURSES

Tuscany and Umbria are hot spots for those keen to twist their tongue around Italian; Florence, Perugia and Siena draw thousands of eager students. Universities and private schools provide all levels and types of language courses, many offering accommodation with families. Painting, ceramic, art history and restoration, sculpture, architecture, fashion, design, cooking and wine (p76) courses are equally widespread.

Online, find a slew of schools at www.it-schools.com.

CUSTOMS

Goods brought in and exported within the EU incur no additional taxes, provided duty has been paid somewhere within the EU and the goods are for personal consumption. There is no longer duty-free shopping within the EU; you have to be leaving Europe.

Coming from non-EU countries, duty-free allowances (for adults) are: 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars, 1L of spirits, 2L of wine, 50g of perfume, 250ml of eau de toilette and other goods up to the value of €183. Anything over the limit must be declared and paid for.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Theft

Pickpockets and bag snatchers operate in the more touristy parts of the bigger cities, at train stations and in some of the coastal resort towns. Invest in a money belt to keep your important items safe, and pay attention to what's going on around you. In Florence and around train stations and tourist areas, watch

out for groups of dishevelled-looking women and children, especially two or three together, holding some sort of distracting diversion such as a pile of papers or even a baby. Children as young as six or seven might be employed in the sleight-of-hand thefts, one of which is to have several children make a commotion in front of you or ask for money while an adult sneaks behind and cuts your bag straight off your back or shoulder. Never underestimate their skill – they are as fast as lightning and very adept. As soon as you notice a suspicious ruckus, hold on tight to all your possessions.

Parked cars, particularly those with foreign number plates or rental-company stickers, are also prime targets for thieves. Never leave valuables in your car, and make sure you are adequately insured. See p420 for more details. In case of theft or loss, always report the incident to the police within 24 hours and ask for a statement, otherwise your travel insurance company may not pay out.

Traffic

Italian driving varies dramatically between city and country, but expect to stay on your toes at all times. The city is fast, chaotic and not overly friendly to pedestrians. Crossing the street can be a life-threatening event, as Italians would rather swerve around a pedestrian than (god forbid) stop and wait. Scooter drivers often act more like bicyclists and it's not uncommon to see them driving on a footpath or going the wrong way down a one-way street. Always look both ways before crossing a street.

Driving in the countryside can be substantially more relaxing, but is not without its share of anxiety-provoking moments. Even secondary roads that look rather substantial on a map can be windy little two-lane roads.

DISCOUNT CARDS

Senior Cards

Seniors over 60 or 65 (the age limit depends on what you are seeking a discount for) can get many discounts simply by presenting their passport or ID card as proof of age.

Student & Youth Cards

These cards can get you worthwhile discounts on travel, and reduced prices at some museums, sights and entertainment spots. The International Student Identity Card (ISIC), for full-time students, and the International Teacher Identity Card (ITIC), for full-time teachers and professors, are issued by more than 5000 organisations around the world – the organisations are mainly student travel related, and often sell student air, train and bus tickets. In Australia, the USA or the UK, try **STA Travel** (www.statravel.com).

Anyone under 26 can get a Euro26 card. This gives similar discounts to the ISIC and is issued by most of the same organisations. See www.euro26.org for details.

Centro Turistico Studentesco e Giovanile (CTS; www.cts.it) youth and student travel organisation branches in Italy can issue ISIC, ITIC and Euro26 cards.

CTS Florence (☎ 055 324 50 78; Via Luigi Gordigliani 56)
 CTS Perugia (☎ 075 584 83 09; Via Orazio Antinori 57)
 CTS Pisa (☎ 050 220 03 47; Via San Bernardo 53)
 CTS Siena (☎ 0577 285008; Via Bandini Sallustio 21)

Note that many places in Italy give discounts according to age rather than student status. An ISIC may not always be accepted without proof of age (eg passport).

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Italian Embassies & Consulates

Several countries have consulates in more than one city; check with the main consulate's website to find the one closest to you.

Australia (☎ 02-6273 3333; www.ambcanberra.esteri.it; 12 Grey St, Deakin, Canberra, ACT 2600)
Canada (☎ 416-977 1566; www.constoronto.esteri.it; 136 Beverley St, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1Y5)
France (☎ 01 49 54 04 10; www.ambparigi.esteri.it; 51 rue de Varenne, 75343 Paris)
Germany (☎ 030 254 400; www.ambberlino.esteri.it; Hiroshmastr 1, 10785 Berlin)
Ireland (☎ 01-660 1744; www.ambdublno.esteri.it; 63-5 Northumberland Rd, Dublin 4)
New Zealand (☎ 04-4735 339; www.italy-embassy.org.nz; 34-8 Grant Rd, PO Box 463, Thorndon, Wellington)

Netherlands (☎ 070-302 1030; www.italy.nl; Alexanderstraat 12, 2514 The Hague)

UK (☎ 020-731 222 00; www.embitaly.org.uk; 14 Three Kings Yard, London W1K 4EH)

USA (☎ 212-439 8600; www.consnewyork.esteri.it; 690 Park Ave, New York, NY 10021)

Embassies & Consulates in Italy

There are few consulates in Florence; most countries have an embassy (and often a consulate too) in Rome.

Australia (☎ 06 85 27 21; www.italy.embassy.gov.au; Via Antonio Bosio 5, Rome)

Canada (☎ 06 85 44 41; www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canada-europa/italy; Via Zara 30, Rome)

France Florence (Map p103; ☎ 055 230 25 56; Piazza Ognissanti 2); Rome (☎ 06 686 011; www.france-italia.it; Piazza Farnese 67)

Germany Florence (Map p103; ☎ 055 29 47 22; Lungarno Amerigo Vespucci 30); Rome (☎ 06 49 21 31; www.rom.diplo.de; Via San Martino della Battaglia 4)

Ireland (☎ 06 697 91 21; www.ambasciata-irlanda.it; Piazza di Campitelli 3, Rome)

Netherlands Florence (☎ 055 475 249; www.olanda.it; Via Cavour 81); Rome (☎ 06 3228 6002; Via Michele Mercati 8)

New Zealand (☎ 06 441 71 71; www.nzembassy.com/italy; Via Zara 28, Rome)

UK Florence (Map pp100-1; ☎ 055 28 41 33, emergency 06 4220 2603; consular.florence@fco.gov.uk; Lungarno Corsini 2); Rome (☎ 06 4220 0001; consular.rome@fco.gov.uk; Via XX Settembre 80a)

USA Florence (Map p103; ☎ 055 266 951; <http://florence.usconsulate.gov>; Lungarno Amerigo Vespucci 38); Rome (☎ 06 4 67 41; <http://rome.usembassy.gov>; Via Vittorio Veneto 119a)

FOOD & DRINK

This section covers the nuts and bolts of dining and drinking. For a portrait of culinary culture, history and cuisine, see the Food & Drink chapter, p66.

Meal prices quoted within Eating listings of this guide are the average price you can expect to pay for a *primo* (first course, usually of pasta), *secondo* (main meat or fish course, *dolci* (dessert) and a 0.25L of house wine. Naturally meals in each respective place can cost a lot more or a lot less, depending on what you order.

We've used the term 'budget' to describe places where you can eat the above for less than €20; 'midrange' places cost between €20 and €45 a head, while a 'top-end' restaurant costs anything upwards of €45.

Eating places generally display their menu outside, although many have an additional board featuring that day's specials. Some of the smaller, most endearing and authentic trattorie simply have the day's market-dictated menu chalked up on a blackboard or rely on the waiter to tell you what's cooking. Generally speaking, if a place is full and loaded with locals, you should dine well. Treat any place featuring a menu translated into several languages and starring spaghetti Bolognese, lasagne and a fixed *menu turistico* as just that – a place geared first and foremost at the region's less-discerning tourist trade. For typical opening hours, see p400.

Fast food is slow and takes the form of a *panini* (sandwich) standing up at a bar, *pizza al taglio* (by the slice), tripe from a street cart in Florence (p137), or a cake or sugar doughnut from one of the region's many delectable *pasticcerie* (cake shops).

Vegetarians won't go hungry in this agricultural region where stuffed zucchini flowers, white beans dressed in olive oil and a bounty of other vegetable-based dishes titillate meat-free tastebuds. Be aware that many sauces contain meat or animal stock.

Vegans are in for a much tougher time. Cheese is often added on top of dishes or in many sauces, so you have to say '*senza formaggio*' when you order. Many types of pasta are made with eggs.

For dining with children, see p401.

DINING LEXICON

Places to eat come in all shapes and sizes in this food-driven part of Italy where it pays not to judge purely by appearance: the best meal of your travels could well be in the open air, on a farm or in a dingy old restaurant with cheap paper tablecloths. Bars meanwhile, far more than a drinking hole, double as the fastest food joint you'll find in these increasingly slow climates (p21) as locals grab a *panini* (sandwich) standing up chatting with friends.

In a nutshell, this is what you can expect:

Enoteca Wine bar; similar to an *osteria* (restaurant focussing on wine), but focused purely on a lengthy wine list with a few homemade dishes or cold appetisers thrown in to keep munchies at bay.

Fiaschetteria Tuscan fast food: serves small snacks, sandwiches and the like, usually at the bar over a glass of wine or two.

Osteria or hosteria Restaurant focussing on wine – atmospheric and intimate with good wholesome home cooking.

Pizzeria Just that.

Ristorante Generally too upmarket to fit into any of the above categories; think a line-up of cutlery and table cloths of the starched white rather than disposable paper variety.

Tavola calda Literally 'hot table', cooking up cheap, preprepared meat, pasta and vegetable dishes served buffet style; help yourself.

Trattoria Casual, relaxed, usually family-owned restaurant, serving local fare.

Drinks

Italian beers tend to be crisp, light Pilsener-style lagers, which younger Italians guzzle down with a pizza. Morena, Moretti, Peroni and Nastro Azzurro are all very drinkable and cheaper than imported varieties. If you want a local beer, ask for a *birra nazionale* in a bottle or *alla spina* (on tap).

Tap water is perfectly drinkable, but Italians generally drink bottled *acqua minerale* (mineral water) – *frizzante* (sparkling) or *naturale* (still) – which rarely costs more than €2 in a restaurant for a litre bottle.

Tè (tea) is not big. Those who do drink it only do so late afternoon in the company of a few *pasticcini* (small cakes). If warm doesn't suit your taste, ask for it *molto caldo* (very hot) or *bollente* (boiling).

Serious etiquette surrounds coffee, easily Europe's best.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

The age of consent for homosexuals in Italy is 16 and homosexuality is well tolerated in larger cities, including Florence, Pisa and Perugia. On the Tuscan coast, Versilia and Torre del Lago have a lively gay scene, best expressed by **Friendly Versilia** (www.friendlyversilia.it), a summer campaign that encourages gays and lesbians to revel in Torre del Lago's fun-in-the-sun frolics from late April to September.

Online, www.gayfriendlyitaly.com (connected to the Italian-language site [#### COFFEE LEXICON](http://www.gay</p>
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Know what to order when:

Un caffè Literally 'a coffee', meaning an espresso and nothing else.

Caffè corretto Espresso with a dash of grappa or other spirit.

Caffè doppio Double espresso shot.

Caffè freddo Long glass of cold, black, sweetened coffee.

Caffè freddo amaro Former minus the sugar.

Caffè granita Sweet and strong, traditionally served with a dollop of whipped cream.

Caffè latte Milkier version of a cappuccino with less froth.

Caffè lungo Literally 'long coffee', also called *caffè Americano*; an espresso with extra water run through the grinds to make it mug-length (and occasionally bitter).

Cappuccino Espresso topped with hot, frothy milk, only drunk by Italians at breakfast and during the morning (*never* after meals).

Cappuccino freddo Bit like an iced coffee, popular in summer.

Cappuccino senza schiuma Cappuccino minus the froth.

Espresso Short sharp shot of strong, black coffee, perfectly acceptable any time of day but the *only* coffee to end a meal with.

Latte macchiato Warmed milk 'stained' with a spot of coffee.

Macchiato 'Stained' coffee; an espresso with a dash of cold milk.

Macchiato caldo/freddo Espresso with a dash of hot, foamed/cold milk.

.it) helps with information on tour groups and gay-friendly hotels, and runs a homophobia rating system of Italian cities. Gay-friendly bars and clubs can be tracked down at www.gayfriendlyitaly.com or through local gay organisations, such as Italian gay association **ArciGay** (☎ 051 649 30 55; www.arcigay.it) or Florence-based **Azione Gay e Lesbica** (☎ 055 67 12 98; www.azionegaylesbica.it in Italian; Via Pisana 32r). See p148 for more on Florence's gay and lesbian scene.

HOLIDAYS

School Holidays

Avoid Tuscany and Umbria in mid-August when most Italians take their holidays, school kids in tow. Beaches are overly crowded and many restaurants and shops are closed, especially during the week of Ferragosto (15 August). The Easter break (*Settimana Santa*) is another busy holiday period when many schools take pupils on cultural excursions. Museums and places of interest may be more crowded than usual. Allow for long queues and be sure to make hotel reservations in advance, especially on weekends.

Public Holidays

In addition to these national public holidays, individual towns celebrate the feasts of their patron saints with their own public holidays; see regional chapters for details.

New Year's Day (Anno Nuovo) 1 January

Epiphany (Befana) 6 January

Easter Sunday (Pasqua) March/April

Easter Monday (Pasquetta) March/April

Liberation Day (Festa della Liberazione) 25 April – marks the Allied victory in Italy, the end of the German presence and Mussolini

Labour Day (Festa del Lavoro) 1 May

Foundation of the Italian Republic (Festa della Repubblica) 2 June

Assumption of the Virgin (Ferragosto) 15 August

All Saints' Day (Ognissanti) 1 November

Day of the Immaculate Conception (Concezione Immacolata) 8 December

Christmas Day (Natale) 25 December

St Stephen's Day/Boxing Day (Festa di Santo Stefano) 26 December

INSURANCE

See p423 for health insurance and p413 for car insurance.

Travel Insurance

A travel-insurance policy to cover theft, loss and medical problems is a good idea. Some policies specifically exclude dangerous activities, which can include scuba diving, motorcycling, even hiking.

You may purchase a policy that pays doctors or hospitals directly rather than you having to pay on the spot and claim later. If you have to claim later, ensure you keep all

COPIES

All important documents (passport data page and visa page, credit cards, travel insurance policy, air/bus/train tickets, driving licence etc) should be photocopied before you leave home. Leave one copy with someone at home and keep another with you, separate from the originals.

documentation. Check that the policy covers ambulances or an emergency flight home. Paying for your airline ticket with a credit card often provides limited travel accident insurance. Ask your credit card company what it's prepared to cover.

INTERNET ACCESS

Logging on can be hard work for wi-fi users in Tuscany and Umbria where public wi-fi access points remain few and far between. In Florence and other larger towns, more and more cafés with free wi-fi are opening every day; look for the gaggle of portable-computer users filling practically every table. Check sites like www.wifinder.com and www.wi-fihotspotlist.com for wi-fi hotspots nationwide.

Internet cafes are fairly abundant in towns and cities; they are listed under Information in the regional chapters. Expect to pay €3 to €5 per hour and don't forget your passport – a recent (much-ridiculed) antiterrorism law requires internet cafés to take a photocopy of your passport before they allow you online access.

If you're using your laptop, check it is compatible with the 220V current in Italy; if not you will need a converter. You'll also need a telephone plug adaptor. Having a reputable global modem will prevent access problems that can occur with PC-card modems brought from home.

If you do not go with a global Internet Service Provider (ISP; such as AOL), make sure your ISP has a dial-up number in Italy or sign up for a short-term account with an Italian internet provider, such as www.tiscali.it.

For useful travel websites, see p18.

LEGAL MATTERS

For many Italians, finding ways to get around the law is a way of life. Some Italians are likely to react with surprise, if not annoyance, if you point out that they might be breaking a law.

Few people pay attention to speed limits and many motorcyclists and drivers don't stop at red lights – and certainly not at pedestrian crossings. No-one bats an eyelid about littering or dogs pooping in the middle of the footpath, even though many municipal governments have introduced laws against these things. But these are minor transgressions when measured up against the country's organised crime, the extraordinary levels of tax evasion, and corruption in government and business.

The average tourist will probably have a brush with the law only if they are unfortunate enough to be robbed by a bag snatcher or pickpocket.

Drink Driving

The legal limit for blood-alcohol level is 0.05%. Random breath tests are carried out by the authorities, and penalties can range from an on-the-spot fine to the confiscation of your licence.

Drugs

Italy's drug laws are lenient on users and heavy on pushers. If you're caught with drugs that the police determine are for your own personal use, you'll be let off with a warning (and, of course, the drugs will be confiscated). If, instead, it is determined that you intend to sell the drugs, you could find yourself in prison. It's up to the police to determine whether or not you're a pusher, since the law is not specific about quantities. The sensible option is to avoid illicit drugs altogether.

Police

The *polizia* (police) are a civil force and take their orders from the Ministry of the Interior, while the *carabinieri* (military police) fall under the Ministry of Defence. There is a considerable overlap of their roles, despite a 1981 reform intended to merge the two forces.

The *carabinieri* wear a navy-blue uniform with a red stripe and drive navy-blue cars that also have a red stripe. Their police station is called a *caserma* (barracks).

The police wear powder-blue trousers with a fuchsia stripe and a navy-blue jacket, and drive light-blue cars with a white stripe and '*polizia*' written on the side. Tourists who want to report thefts, and people wanting to get a residence permit, will have to deal with

them. Their headquarters are called the *questura*. This is where you get your *permesso di soggiorno* (permit to stay; see p410).

Other varieties of police in Italy include the *vigili urbani*, basically traffic police, who you will have to deal with if you get a parking ticket, or your car is towed away; and the *guardia di finanza*, who are responsible for fighting tax evasion and drug smuggling.

In an emergency, just go to the nearest people in uniform. Even if they're not the right uniforms, they'll know who to contact.

Italy has some antiterrorism laws that could make life difficult if you happen to be detained by the police. You can be held for 48 hours without a magistrate being informed and you can be interrogated without the presence of a lawyer. It is hard to obtain bail and you can be held legally for up to three years without being brought to trial.

MAPS

Those motoring around Tuscany and Umbria will find the Istituto Geografico de Agostini's spiral-bound, 100-page *Atlante Turistico Toscana* (1:200,000) with 32 pages of city maps, 30 pages of regional maps and 14 pages of itineraries indispensable; local bookshops in the region sell it. In the UK and US, the road atlases for Italy published by the AA are likewise invaluable, if less detailed, for the region.

The AA also publishes regional maps for Tuscany and Umbria, as does Michelin whose excellent orange-jacketed *Tuscan, Umbria, San Marino, Marche, Lazio and Abruzzo* (1:400,000) includes two Florence city maps.

One of the best maps of Umbria is the Touring Club Italiano's *Carta Regionale* 1:200,000, a greenish topological foldout map available for free at most tourist offices and many hotels. It marks many features that make it extremely helpful: tertiary/dirt roads and sites of interest, including sanctuaries, Etruscan tombs, grottos, ruins and monasteries. On the reverse side are maps of major tourist towns, such as Perugia, Castiglione del Lago and Todi. Most maps of Umbria are combined with either Le Marche or Tuscany, except *Mappe Iter's Umbria* 1:200,000 *Carta Turistica e Automobilistica* (€6). (A note about the terrain: 94% of Umbria is hilly. Industrial complexes have taken advantage of the remaining flat 6%, so if you want attractive landscapes, don't go towards anything white

on your map, but the flat areas directly around Perugia or Terni. Bevagna and Montefalco are exceptions.)

The city maps in this book, combined with tourist-office maps, are generally adequate to get you around. Many bookshops, with good selections of maps and guidebooks, are listed in each section.

The quality of city maps available commercially varies considerably, depending on the city. Most tourist offices stock free maps of their city, and commercial maps of larger cities are available from newsstands and bookshops. For suggestions on maps for the other main cities covered in this book, refer to each destination.

Tuscany and Umbria are great destinations for those who love the outdoors. Edizione Multigraphic publishes a couple of series designed for walkers and mountain-bike riders, scaled at 1:50,000 and 1:250,000. Where possible you should go for the latter. Ask for the *Carta dei Sentieri e Rifugi* or *Carta Turistica e dei Sentieri*. Another publisher is Kompass, which produces 1:50,000 scale maps of Tuscany and the surrounding areas. Occasionally you will also come across useful maps put out by the Club Alpino Italiano (CAI). For cycling enthusiasts, Verlag Esterbauer produces a *Cycling Tuscany: Cycle Guide and Map*, a spiral-bound 1:100,000 guide detailing the best cycling spots in the region.

Those planning a driving holiday should consult the AA's *Best Drives: Tuscany & Umbria*, which contains hand-picked car tours, essential motoring tips and specially designed maps.

MONEY

The euro has been the official currency of Italy since 2002. One euro is divided into 100 cents or centimes, with one, two, five, 10, 20 and 50 centime coins. Notes come in denominations of five, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros. Euro notes and coins issued in Italy are valid throughout the other 11 countries in the euro zone: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

Exchange rates are given on the inside front cover of this book and a guide to costs can be found on p17.

ATMS

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) – known as *bancomat* in Italian – are the cheapest and

most convenient way to get money. ATMs are situated in virtually every town or half-way populated village in Tuscany and Umbria (though are more scarce in rural areas), and usually offer an excellent exchange rate. Many are linked to the international Cirrus, Plus and Maestro networks so that you can draw on your home account. Cash advances on credit cards are also possible at ATMs, but incur charges.

It's not uncommon for Italian ATMs to reject foreign cards for no reason whatsoever. If this happens, try a few branches or another day, and always make sure you're not down to your last *centesimi*. PIN codes need to be four digits.

Cash

You always get a better exchange rate in-country, though it's a good idea to arrive with enough local currency to take a taxi to a hotel if you have to. Carry as little cash as possible while travelling around. Bear in mind however that many smaller establishments (including some hotels) only accept cash.

Credit & Debit Cards

Credit and debit cards are convenient, relatively secure and will usually offer a better exchange rate than travellers cheques or cash exchanges. Visa and MasterCard (Access or Eurocard) are widely accepted; American Express (AmEx) cards are useful at more up-market establishments, and allow you to get cash at AmEx offices and certain ATMs. In general, all three cards can be used in shops, supermarkets, for train travel, car rentals, motorway tolls and cash advances. Don't assume that you can pay for a meal or a budget hotel with a credit card – inquire first.

Getting a cash advance against a credit card is usually an expensive way to go as fees (and interest) are charged. Debit card fees are usually much less.

For lost cards, these Italy-wide numbers operate 24 hours:

AmEx (☎ 800 914 912) The AmEx office in Florence (p95) can arrange on-the-spot replacements.

Diners Club (☎ 800 864 064)

MasterCard, Eurocard & Access (☎ 800 870 866)

Visa (☎ 800 819 014)

Travellers Cheques

Travellers cheques can be cashed at most banks and exchange offices (bring your pass-

port as proof of identity). AmEx, Thomas Cook and Visa are the most widely accepted brands in this region. Those in euros are less likely to incur commission on exchange than other currencies: AmEx and Thomas Cook don't charge commission, but other exchange places do.

POST

Italy's postal service (www.poste.it) is notoriously slow, unreliable and expensive. If you're sending a package, you might want to send your things home using DHL or FedEx. Shops such as Mail Boxes Etc can be found in most major towns.

Francobolli (stamps) are available at post offices and authorised tobacconists (look for the official *tabacchi* sign: a big 'T', often white on black). Main post offices in the bigger cities are generally open from around 8am to at least 5pm; many open on Saturday morning too. Tobacconists keep regular shop hours.

Postcards and letters up to 20g sent by airmail cost €1 to Australia and New Zealand (zone 3), €0.85 to the USA, Asia and Africa (zone 2), and €0.65 within Europe (zone 1); mail weighing between 20g and 50g costs €1.80, €1.50 and €1.45 respectively. Within Italy, a letter up to 20/50g costs €0.60/1.40. You can also send express letters (*posta prioritaria*) and registered letters (*raccomandata*) at additional cost. Charges vary depending on the type of post and weight of the letter. Normal airmail letters can take up to two weeks to reach the UK or the USA, while a letter to Australia will take between two and three weeks. The service within Italy is not much better: local letters take at least three days and up to a week to arrive in another city.

SHOPPING

Some tour groups hit Tuscany simply to shop at the orgy of designer factory outlets on the outskirts of Florence (see p151) and the exclusive collection of boutiques selling leather goods, jewellery, clothes, shoes and handmade paper in central Florence (see p149). Be warned, though: despite supposed discounts of up to 70% at the outlets, prices are still high, especially for those coming from Canada and the US.

Umbria is Italy's ceramics capital, Deruta being particularly renowned for its centuries-old majolica technique (p333).

SOLO TRAVELLERS

Florence aside, there might not be the large numbers of solo travellers as in other places with an established backpacking culture, but those travelling alone will experience few problems in Tuscany and Umbria: you should not feel out of place and you certainly won't be made to feel uncomfortable. As with anywhere in the world, the same common-sense rules apply: avoid unlit streets and parks at night, and ensure your valuables are safely stored.

Single-room accommodation can be hard to find (you could well end up in a double; p397), although those on a tight budget could consider hostel accommodation.

TELEPHONE

Privatised Telecom Italia (www.telecomitalia.com) is Italy's largest phone company and its orange public pay phones are liberally scattered all over the place – on the street and in train stations, some big stores and unstaffed Telecom centres. Most only accept *carte/schede telefoniche* (phone cards), sold at post offices, tobacconists, newspaper stands and Telecom offices for €5 and €10 (snap off the perforated corner before use), although you might stumble upon the odd relic that still accepts coins. Most phones have clear instructions in English.

Telephone numbers change often in Italy, so check the local directory for up-to-date information. *Numeri verdi* (free phone numbers) usually begin with % 800 (some start with % 199 and % 848). For directory enquiries within Italy, dial % 12.

Mobile Phones

Italy uses GSM 900/1800, compatible with the rest of Europe and Australia, but not with the North American GSM 1900 or the totally different system in Japan (some North Americans have GSM 1900/900 phones that do work here).

If you have a GSM phone, check with your service provider about using it in Italy: beware of calls being routed internationally (very expensive for a 'local' call). Better still, once you arrive in Italy, sign up at any mobile-phone store for a pay-as-you-go plan. Pop in an Italian SIM card, buy *ricarica* minutes (prepaid minutes) and gab all you want, for about €0.20 within Italy and €0.60 to North America. Italy's main providers are TIM ([\[www.tim.it\]\(http://www.tim.it\)\), Omnitel Vodaphone \(\[www.190.it\]\(http://www.190.it\)\), Wind \(\[www.wind.it\]\(http://www.wind.it\)\) and H3G \(\[www.tre.it\]\(http://www.tre.it\) in Italian\).](http://www</p>
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Mobile-phone numbers always start with a three-digit prefix, such as % 330, % 339, % 347 etc – never a zero.

Phone Codes

The international access code is % 00 and the country code is % 39.

Telephone numbers comprise a one- to four-digit area code starting with zero followed by a number of four to eight digits. Area codes are an integral part of all telephone numbers and must always be dialled. When making domestic and international calls always dial the full number, *including* the initial zero.

TIME

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

TOURIST INFORMATION

Practically every village and town has a tourist office of sorts (listed under the relevant towns and cities throughout this book), operating under a variety of names but most commonly known as Pro Loco. It might deal with a town only or in some cases the surrounding countryside too. In the provincial capitals, Azienda di Promozione Turistica (APT) offices provide information on the provinces. English and French are widely spoken in Tuscany, but not in Umbria where you might well – even in tourist hotspots like Perugia or Assisi – struggle to understand or make yourself understood. Larger tourist offices often respond to written and telephone information requests.

Regional tourist offices, closed to the public but offering a wealth of information, itineraries and brochures online:

Tuscany (☎ 055 43 82 111; www.turismo.toscana.it; Via di Novoli 26, Florence)

Umbria (☎ 075 57 59 51; www.english.umbria2000.it; Via Mazzini 21, Perugia)

TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Tuscany and Umbria are far from easy for travellers with physical disabilities. Cobblestone streets pave many towns in the region

and are a darn nuisance for wheelchair users, as are many older public buildings (including many hotels and monuments), which have either a lift the size of a pocket handkerchief or no lift at all. Wheelchair-accessible ramps are likewise something of an enigma.

While some cities are making strides in the right direction, Assisi outpaces the lot: Go to www.assisiaccessibile.it (in Italian) to read a paraplegic Assisian's assessment of the wheelchair accessibility of the city's hotels, restaurants and monuments. In northern Umbria, Città di Castello is refreshingly free of hills and has several hotels with access for people with disabilities.

Another excellent resource is **Accessible Italy** (www.accessibleitaly.com), which publishes an on-line catalogue of accommodation suitable for travellers with disabilities, and organises both small group tours and independent travel for customers with physical or visual disabilities. It can coordinate an entire holiday, including airport pick-up and hotel reservations, and it also provides a listing of accessible monuments.

The Italian State Tourist Office in your country may be able to provide advice on Italian associations for the disabled and what help is available in the country. It may also carry a small brochure *Services for Disabled People*, published by the Italian railways, which details facilities at train stations and on trains. There's an airline directory that provides information on the facilities offered by various airlines on the disability-friendly website www.everybody.co.uk.

VISAS & PERMITS

The following information on visas was correct at the time of writing, but restrictions and regulations can change. Use the following as a guide only, and contact your embassy for the latest details. You may want to visit the websites of **Lonely Planet** (www.lonelyplanet.com), for useful links and up-to-date information, or the **Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (www.esteri.it), for updated visa information, including links to every Italian consulate in the world and a list of nationalities needing a visa.

TOP TEN TOURS

Be it an intimate trek for adventuring cyclists or a cattle-call bus tour led by an umbrella-wielding leader shouting into a microphone, the options for organised travel to Tuscany and Umbria are endless. Travellers from any country can join the following tours:

Arblaster & Clarke (☎ 01730-893 344; www.arblasterandclarke.com) Wine tours with VIP tastings at local wineries by specialist British wine-tours operator.

ATG Oxford (☎ 01865-315 678; www.atg-oxford.co.uk) With an impressive commitment to sustainable tourism, this company offers small walking, cycling and cultural tours, and arranges 'footloose' trips for independent walkers. Choose between comfortable strolls, grand hotels and wine-tasting or rugged hikes through mountains.

Backroads (☎ 800 462 2848; www.backroads.com) Family biking, easy biking or walking 'n cooking tours are what this outstanding US-based tour company is best at.

Beach's Motorcycle Adventures (☎ 1 716 773 4960; www.beachs-mca.com) Two-week motorcycling tours through Tuscany and Umbria's winding, scenic roads by US specialist. Riders need a motorcycle licence, preferably an international one.

Cyclists' Touring Club (☎ 0870-873 00 60; www.ctc.org.uk) This UK club can help you plan your own bike tour or organise a guided one for you.

Elderhostel (☎ 877-426-8056; www.elderhostel.org) Adults aged 55 or more and their companions (of any age) can join forces for an educational and adventurous look into Tuscan and Umbrian art, nature and culture.

Explore Worldwide (☎ 01252-760000; www.exploreworldwide.com) One of several companies in the UK offering well-priced organised walking tours in Tuscany.

GAP Adventures (☎ 800 465 5600; www.gapadventures.com) Hike, bike and raft the region or pursue a gourmand's dream with this Canadian outfitter: active tours made up of max 12 'Great Adventure People' is its market.

Headwater (☎ 01606-720033; www.headwater.com) UK-based Headwater lures an active set with its gourmet getaways, rural retreats and walking/cycling tours in the Florentine hills, around Siena and so on.

Martin Randall (☎ 020-8742 33 55; www.martinrandall.co.uk) Art, architecture, archaeology, gastronomy, history and music tours organised by the UK-based specialist take a cultured set around Michelangelo's Florence, Puccini's Trove del Lago, Lucca's art and architecture of Lucca.

Be sure to understand the difference between a visa and a *permesso di soggiorno* (see below). A visa gets you into the country and a *permesso di soggiorno* (permit to stay) allows you to stay. To apply for a visa, visit an Italian consulate in your home country. To apply for a *permesso di soggiorno*, apply at a *questura* (police station) within eight days of your arrival.

Permits

EU citizens do not need permits to live, work or start a business in Italy. They are, however, advised to register with a *questura* if they take up residence – in accordance with an anti-Mafia law that aims at keeping an eye on everyone's whereabouts.

PERMITS TO STAY

EU citizens do not require a *permesso di soggiorno*. All other *stranieri* (foreigners) staying in Italy for more than eight days are supposed to report to the police station to receive a *permesso di soggiorno*. Tourists staying in hotels are not required to do this.

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

The exact requirements change: depending on what type of *permesso di soggiorno* you're applying for, you might need to bring with you anything from eight extra passport-sized photos to a vial of the blood of a six-toed cat born on a Tuesday. In general you need at least: a valid passport (if possible containing a visa stamp indicating your date of entry into Italy); a special visa issued in your own country if you are planning to study; four passport-size photographs; and proof of your ability to support yourself financially. You can apply at the *ufficio stranieri* (foreigners' bureau) of the police station closest to where you are staying.

WORK PERMITS

Non-EU citizens wishing to work in Italy will need to obtain a *permesso di lavoro* (work permit). If you intend to work for an Italian company and will be paid in euros, the company must organise the *permesso di lavoro* and forward it to the Italian consulate in your country – only then will you be issued an appropriate visa.

If non-EU citizens intend to work for a non-Italian company or will be paid in foreign currency, or wish to go freelance, they must organise the visa and *permesso di lavoro* in their country of residence through an Italian consulate. This process can take many months, so look into it early.

Visas

Italy is one of 15 countries that have signed the Schengen Convention, an agreement where 13 of the original EU member countries (except the UK and Ireland), plus Iceland and Norway, have agreed to abolish checks at common borders. Legal residents of one Schengen country do not require a visa for another Schengen country. In addition, nationals of a number of other countries, including all other EU countries (including the UK) and Switzerland do not require a visa. Citizens of the US, Canada, Australia, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand and Mexico can stay for up to 90 days without a visa. There are several dozen countries whose citizens require tourist visas, including Bosnia and Hercegovina, Peru, India and South Africa. Check with your nearest Italian consulate.

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

STUDY VISAS

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

TOURIST VISAS

The standard tourist visa is the Schengen visa, valid for up to 90 days. A Schengen visa

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

It's mandatory to apply for a visa in your country of residence. You can apply for no more than two Schengen visas in any 12-month period, and they are not renewable inside Italy. For more information see www.eurovisa.info/SchengenCountries.htm.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Tuscany and Umbria are not dangerous regions for women, although many women travelling alone will sometimes find themselves with unwanted attention from local and foreign men. This attention is usually nothing more than whistles or overly long stares, but women travelling alone will want to keep an eye open for more sinister attention, especially in nightclubs or discos.

As in many parts of Europe, women travelling solo may at times find it difficult to be left alone. It is not uncommon for Italian men of all ages to try to strike up conversations with foreign women who just want to drink a coffee or are trying to read a book in the park. Usually the best response is to just ignore them, but if that doesn't work, politely tell them that you are waiting for your *marito* (husband) or *fidanzato* (boyfriend) and, if necessary, walk away. Florence can be a pain in this way, especially in the bars. It can also be an issue in some of the coastal resorts and on Elba.

Avoid becoming aggressive as this almost always results in an unpleasant confrontation. If all else fails, approach the nearest member of the police.

Avoid walking alone on deserted and dark streets, and look for centrally located hotels within easy walking distance of places where you can eat at night. Lonely Planet does not recommend hitchhiking, and women trav-

elling alone should be particularly wary of doing so.

WORK

It is illegal for non-EU citizens to work in Italy without a work permit (p411), but obtaining one can be time-consuming. EU citizens can work in Italy, but they still need a *permesso di soggiorno* (p411) from the main *questura* in the town where they have found work.

Baby-sitting and au pair work is possible if you organise it before you come to Italy. *The Au Pair and Nanny's Guide to Working Abroad* by Susan Griffith and Sharon Legg is a useful guide.

The easiest source of work for foreigners is teaching English, but even with full qualifications a native English speaker might find it difficult to secure a permanent position. Most of the larger, more reputable schools only hire people with a *permesso di lavoro*, but the attitude of the schools can become more flexible if the demand for teachers is high and they come across someone with good qualifications. The more professional schools will require at least a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) certificate. It is advisable to apply for work early in the year, in order to be considered for positions available in September (language-school years correspond roughly to the Italian school year: late September to the end of June).

Some people pick up private students by placing advertisements in shop windows and on university notice boards. Rates of pay vary according to experience.

Some travellers are able to pick up kitchen and bar work in the more touristy restaurants, particularly in Florence.

Further reading resources include *Work Your Way around the World* and *Teaching English Abroad*, both by Susan Griffith, and *Live & Work in Italy* by Victoria Pybus and Huw Francis, or *Living, Studying & Working in Italy* by Travis Neighbor and Monica Larner.

Transport

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GETTING THERE & AWAY

ENTERING & LEAVING THE COUNTRY

As an alternative to air travel, arriving by car, bus or train will leave a lighter carbon footprint. Entering Italy is relatively simple. If you are arriving from a neighbouring EU country, you do not require a passport check.

Italian airports, as everywhere, have tightened up on security measures, especially when you leave the country. Plan to arrive around two hours before an international flight. Check the current policy regarding restrictions on hand luggage, any electronic items and liquids before you travel, as these regulations are subject to change. Many airlines now allow only one piece of hand luggage on board – so if you're also carrying a handbag you'll need to pop it inside your main hand luggage. At the time of writing, there were severe restrictions on taking liquids, gels and foams in hand luggage. To avoid any delays, simply pack such items in your hold baggage and only keep essential liquids (such as baby milk or medicines – if you have a prescription you will probably be permitted to carry the liquid) for your hand luggage.

Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services.

Passport

All citizens of EU member states can enter Italy with their national identity cards (except the British, who haven't got around to them yet). All non-EU nationals must have a valid passport. If applying for a visa, check that the expiry date of your passport is at least some months off. See p410 for more information about obtaining a visa.

An entry stamp may not be made in your passport, but if you plan to remain in the country for an extended period or wish to work, you should insist on having one. Without a stamp non EU-nationals could encounter problems when trying to obtain a *permesso di soggiorno* – in effect, permission to remain in the country (see p411).

AIR

Whatever your point of departure, competition between the airlines means you should be able to pick up a reasonably priced fare to Italy. In particular, budget companies fly in from many European cities and standard carriers, such as Alitalia and British Airways, often offer comparably low fares.

High season for air travel to Italy is June to September. Shoulder season will often run from mid-September to the end of October and again in April. Low season is generally November to March, but fares around Christmas and Easter often increase or are sold out well in advance.

THINGS CHANGE...

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

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

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

Flying & climate change

Pretty much every form of motorised travel generates CO₂ (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon offset schemes

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

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

For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.

Airports & Airlines

Pisa's increasingly important **Galileo Galilei airport** (PSA; % 050 50 07 07; www.pisa-airport.com) is the most convenient destination for Tuscany and Umbria. From it, more than 20 airlines serve nearly 50 national and international destinations.

From the small **Amerigo Vespucci airport** (FLR; % 055 37 34 98; www.aeroporto.firenze.it), just outside of Florence, **Meridiana** flies to/from Amsterdam and London (Gatwick), while **Lufthansa** serves Frankfurt and Air France serves Paris (Charles de Gaulle).

From Umbria's even tinier **Sant'Egidio airport** (PEG; % 075 59 21 41; www.airport.umbria.it), on the outskirts of Perugia, there are flights to/from Milan (Malpensa) and London (Stansted; Ryanair).

Most long-haul flights use Rome's **Leonardo da Vinci** (Fiumicino; FCO; % 06 659 51; www.adr.it) or **Milan's Malpensa** (% 02 748 522 00; www.sea-aeroportmilano.it) airports.

Airlines flying into the region:

Air Berlin (AB; hub Nuremberg; % 848 39 00 54; www.airberlin.com)

Air France (AF; hub Paris; % 848 88 44 66; www.airfrance.com)

Air One (AP; hub Rome; % 199 20 70 80; www.flyairone.it)

Alitalia (AZ; hub Rome; % 06 22 22; www.alitalia.it)

British Airways (BA; hub Heathrow; % 199 712 266; www.ba.com)

Delta (DL; % 848 78 03 76; www.delta.com; hub Atlanta)

EasyJet (U2; hub Luton; % 899 67 89 90; www.easyjet.com)

Jet2 (LS; hub Leeds Bradford; % 199 309 240; www.jet2.com)

Lufthansa (LH; hub Frankfurt; % 199 400 044; www.lufthansa.com)

Meridiana (IG; hub Olbia; % 199 111 333; www.meridiana.it)

Ryanair (FR; hub London Stansted; % 899 67 89 10; www.ryanair.com)

Thomsonfly (TOM; hub Coventry; % 02 36 00 3582; www.thomsonfly.com)

Tickets

World aviation has never been so competitive, and the internet is fast becoming the easiest way to find reasonably priced seats.

Full-time students and those under 26 have access to discounted fares. You have to show a document proving your date of birth or a valid International Student Identity Card (ISIC) when buying your ticket. Other cheap deals are the discounted tickets released to travel agents and specialist discount agencies. Most major

newspapers carry a Sunday travel section with ads for these agencies, often known as brokers in Europe and consolidators in the US.

Check the websites directly for budget carriers, such as Ryanair, Jet2 and EasyJet. Be on the alert; many aren't as low cost as their come-on publicity alleges, once you factor in taxes and fuel charges. Some even charge for hold luggage (Ryanair, for example, slaps on a minimum of €6 per piece).

Major travel websites that can offer competitive fares:

Cheap Flights (www.cheapflights.com)

Ebookers.com (www.ebookers.com)

Expedia (www.expedia.com)

Kayak (www.kayak.com)

Last minute (www.lastminute.com)

Orbitz (www.orbitz.com)

Priceline (www.priceline.com)

Travelocity (www.travelocity.com)

Australia

Flights between Australia and Europe generally make a stop in one of the Southeast Asian capitals. The major players are Qantas and British Airways. Also well worth considering are Malaysia Airlines and the Star Alliance (www.staralliance.com) carriers, such as Thai Air, Singapore Airlines or Austrian Air.

Quite a few travel offices specialise in discount air tickets. Some travel agencies, particularly smaller ones, advertise cheap air fares in the travel sections of weekend newspapers, such as the *Age* in Melbourne and the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

STA Travel (% 134 782; www.statravel.com.au) has offices in all major cities and on many university campuses. **Flight Centre** (% 133 133; www.flightcentre.com.au) has offices throughout Australia.

Canada

Alitalia has direct flights between Toronto and Milan. Air Transat (www.airtransat.com) flies nonstop from Montreal to Rome in summer. Scan the budget travel agencies' advertisements in the *Toronto Globe & Mail*, *Toronto Star* and *Vancouver Province*.

Air Canada flies daily from Toronto to Rome, direct and via Montreal and Frankfurt. British Airways, Air France, KLM and Lufthansa all fly to Italy via their respective home countries.

Canada's main student travel organisation is **Travel Cuts** (% 866 246 9762; www.travelcuts.com), which has offices in all major cities.

Mainland Europe

All national European carriers offer services to Italy. The larger ones, such as British Airways, Air France, Lufthansa and KLM, have representative offices in major European cities. Italy's national carrier, Alitalia, has a huge range of offers on all European destinations. Several airlines, including Alitalia, Qantas and Air France, offer cut-rate fares between cities on the European legs of long-haul flights.

But usually the cheapest way to go is aboard one of the burgeoning number of low-cost airlines.

Air Berlin (www.airberlin.com) Berlin.

Air One (www.flyairone.it) Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg, London.

Clickair (www.clickair.com) Valencia.

Central Wings (www.centralwings.com) Krakow, Warsaw.

Sky Europe (www.skyeurope.com) Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, Vienna.

SN Brussels Airlines (www.flysn.com) Brussels.

Vueling (www.vueling.com) Barcelona, Madrid and Seville.

Wizz Air (www.wizar.co) Bucharest, Sofia.

Virgin Express (www.virgin-express.com) has a whole host of flights out of Brussels, including five daily flights to Rome. Details of its offices in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany and Greece can be found on the website.

New Zealand

Singapore Airlines flies from Auckland through Singapore to Rome's Fiumicino airport – sometimes with more than one stop. New Zealand Air flies via London. The *New Zealand Herald* has a travel section in which travel agencies advertise fares. **Flight Centre** (% 0800 24 35 44; www.flightcentre.co.nz) has a central office in Auckland and many other branches throughout the country. **STA Travel** (% 0800 47 44 00; www.statravel.co.nz) has offices in Auckland, as well as in Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

UK & Ireland

The cheapest air route between the UK or Ireland and Italy is the no-frills way. EasyJet flies to Pisa from London (Gatwick) and Bristol. Its other northern Italian destinations are Milan (Malpensa and Linate), Rome, Turin, Rimini and Venice. Its main competitor is Ryanair, who flies to both Pisa and Perugia. In nearby regions, Ryanair also serves Milan, Parma,

Rome, Bologna, Genoa, Venice, Rimini, Verona and Ancona. Some of these routes are seasonal. Prices vary wildly according to season and depend on how far in advance you can book them.

The two national airlines linking the UK and Italy are British Airways and Alitalia. Both have regular flights to Pisa. Other Italian destinations that they share include Rome, Milan, Bologna, Venice and Verona.

Discount air travel is big business in London. Advertisements for many travel agencies appear in the travel pages of the weekend newspapers, such as the *Independent* and the *Guardian* on Saturday and the *Sunday Times*, as well as in publications such as *Time Out*, the *Big Issue* and *Exchange & Mart*.

STA Travel (% 0870 160 0599; www.statravel.co.uk) and **Traillfinders** (% 020 7292 18 88; www.trailfinders.com), both of which have offices throughout the UK, sell discounted and student tickets.

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

USA

Delta Airlines and Alitalia have nonstop daily flights from New York's JFK airport to Rome's Fiumicino and Milan's Malpensa airports, while Continental (www.continental.com) flies nonstop to both from Newark. American Airlines (www.aa.com) flies from Chicago and JFK to Rome.

Discount travel agencies in the USA are known as consolidators. They often advertise in Sunday newspaper travel sections, especially in the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

STA Travel (% 800 781 4040; www.statravel.com) has offices in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco. Fares vary wildly depending on season, availability and a little luck. **Discover Italy** (% 866 878 74 77; www.discoveritaly.com) offers flight-, hotel- and villa-booking services.

Discount and rock-bottom options from the USA include charter, standby and courier flights. Stand-by fares are often sold at 60% of the normal price for one-way tickets. **Courier Travel** (% 303 570 7586; www.couriertravel.org) is a comprehensive searchable database for courier and standby flights.

You might find it cheaper to take a cut-price flight to London, then make a cheap no-frills hop onwards to Pisa or another major Italian airport. Low-cost transatlantic flyers include **Zoom** (www.flyzoom.com), **Aer Lingus** (www.aerlingus.com) and **Jetblue** (www.jetblue.com).

LAND

There are plenty of options for reaching Tuscany and Umbria by train, bus or private vehicle. If time does not equal money, bus travel is the cheapest option, but it takes significantly longer and is less comfortable than travelling by train.

Border Crossings

The main points of entry to Italy are the Mont Blanc Tunnel from France at Chamoinix, which connects with the A5 for Turin and Milan; the Grand St Bernard tunnel from Switzerland, which also connects with the A5; and the Gotthard tunnel from Switzerland. The brand-new, 34km-long Swiss Lötschberg Base Tunnel, the world's longest beneath land, connects with the century-old Simplon tunnel into Italy. To the east, the Brenner Pass from Austria leads to the A22 to Bologna. All are open year-round. Mountain passes are often closed in winter and sometimes even in autumn and spring, making the tunnels a more reliable option. Make sure you have snow chains if driving in winter.

Regular trains on two lines connect Italy with the main cities in Austria, Germany, France and Eastern Europe. Those crossing the frontier at the Brenner Pass go to Innsbruck, Stuttgart and Munich. Those crossing at Tarvisio in the east proceed to Vienna, Salzburg and Prague. Trains from Milan head for Switzerland, then on into France and the Netherlands. The main international train line to Slovenia crosses near Trieste.

Bus

Eurolines (www.eurolines.com) is a consortium of European coach companies that operates across Europe with offices in all major European cities. Italy-bound buses head to Milan, Rome, Florence, Siena or Venice and all come equipped with on-board toilet facilities (necessary for journeys such as London to Rome, which take about 30 hours). its multilingual website gives comprehensive details of prices, passes and travel agencies throughout Europe where you can book tickets. There are

discounts for seniors and travellers under 26 years.

Another option is the backpacker-friendly **Busabout** (% 020 7950 1661; www.busabout.com), which covers at least 60 European cities and towns with a hop-on, hop-off pass – the shortest is a six-stop ticket. Its season runs from May to October and buses usually leave between large cities every other day. In Tuscany, its buses call by Florence, Siena and Pisa. You can book onward travel and accommodation aboard the bus or on its website.

Car & Motorcycle

Coming from the UK, you can take your car across to France by ferry or via the Channel Tunnel on **Eurotunnel** (% 08705 35 35 35; www.eurotunnel.com). The latter runs at least 10 crossings (35 minutes) daily between Folkestone and Calais year-round. You pay for the vehicle only and fares vary according to time of day, season and advance purchase, starting at £49 one way.

For breakdown assistance both the **British RAC** (% 0800 55 00 55; www.rac.co.uk) and **Automobile Association** (AA; % 0800 085 28 40; www.theaa.com) offer comprehensive cover in Europe. In the US, try **AAA** (www.aaa.com) or contact the automobile association in your own country for more information.

In Italy, assistance can be obtained through the **Automobile Club Italiano** (ACI; % 803 116, 24hr information 02 66 165 116; www.aci.it in Italian).

Every vehicle travelling across an international border should display a nationality plate of its country of registration.

Train

Florence is an important hub, so it's easy to get to Tuscany and Umbria from many points in Europe. The *Thomas Cook European Timetable* has a complete listing of train schedules. It's updated monthly and available from **Thomas Cook** offices worldwide for about €15. It is always advisable, and sometimes compulsory, to book seats on international trains to and from Italy. Some of the main international services include transport for private cars – an option worth examining to save wear and tear on your vehicle before it arrives in Italy.

Consider taking long journeys overnight, as a sleeper fee for around €20 costs substantially less than a night in a hotel.

Train timetables at stations generally display *arrivi* (arrivals) on a white background

and *partenze* (departures) on a yellow one. Imminent arrivals and departures are also signalled on electronic boards.

For more information, see p421.

SEA

Ferries connect Italy with its islands and countries all over the Mediterranean. However, the only options for reaching Tuscany directly by sea are the ferry crossings to Livorno from Sardinia, Corsica and Sicily. See p218 for more details.

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

GETTING AROUND

Most towns and cities in the region have a reasonable bus service, but you'll probably find that amenities and places of interest are usually within walking distance. You buy town bus tickets from newsagents, *tabacchi* (tobacconists) or kiosks before travelling and validate them in the machine on board.

Buses and trains connect Pisa's Galileo Galilei airport with Pisa and Florence, while buses link Amerigo Vespucci airport, just outside Florence, with central Florence. Buses from Piazza Italia coincide with flights at Perugia's Sant'Egidio airport.

Taxis are widely available. It's sensible to use only the official taxis, which are easily identifiable.

BICYCLE

Cycling is a national pastime in Italy. You cannot take bikes onto the autostrada.

Bikes can be taken on any train carrying the bicycle logo. The cheapest way to do this is to buy a separate bicycle ticket (€3.50, or €5 to €12 on Intercity, Eurostar and Euronight trains), available even at the self-service kiosks. You can use this ticket for 24 hours, making a day trip quite economical. Bicycles that are dismantled and stored in a bag can be taken for free, even on night trains, and all ferries allow free bicycle passage. Check out p410 for organised bicycle tours and p88 for areas that offer the most satisfying pedalling.

motorcycles for touring. The average rental cost for a 50cc scooter is around €20/150 per day/week.

Most agencies will not rent motorcycles to people aged under 18. Many require a sizeable deposit, and you could be responsible for reimbursing part of the cost of the bike if it is stolen.

You don't need a licence to ride a moped under 50cc. The speed limit is 40km/h, you must be 14 or over and you can't carry passengers. To ride a motorcycle or scooter up to 125cc, you must be aged 16 or over and have a licence (a car licence will do). For motorcycles over 125cc you will need a motorcycle licence. Helmets are compulsory for motorcyclists and their passengers, whatever the size of the bike.

On a motorcycle, you can ride freely in the heart of cities such as Florence that have restricted traffic areas. Traffic police generally turn a blind eye to motorcycles or scooters parked on footpaths. There is no lights-on requirement for motorcycles in daylight hours.

Check out p410 for information on motorcycle tours.

Insurance

Third-party motor insurance is a minimum requirement in Italy. If your vehicle is registered outside Italy, you need an International Insurance Certificate, also known as a Carta Verde (Green Card); your car-insurance company will issue this. Also ask it for a European Accident Statement form, which can simplify matters in the event of an accident. Never sign statements you don't understand – insist on a translation.

PASSING

You might call it passing or overtaking, but Italians call it a national pastime. On first glance, it seems as if the overtaker is going to be reunited soon with an undertaker, but there are actually a few rules in place.

The major hard-and-fast rule is: stay in the right lane unless you're passing or going Italian-driver-on-three-espressos fast!

Italians joke that they don't use their rear-view mirrors when driving. This means that you don't have to, either. When a driver is on your tail at 160km/h, it's not your responsibility to pull over or slow down. If they want to pass, they will have to wait until it is safe (or not seriously dangerous) to do so. If they pass when another car is passing on the opposite side of the road, you can manoeuvre gently to the right with a turn signal indicator to allow the cars not to careen into each other, but that's your only choice.

When you pass, make sure you have your left-turn signal on. Wait until the solid yellow middle line turns into dots or dashes. Don't even think about passing on a curve. Oh, yes, and make sure there isn't a car coming from the opposite direction.

Purchase

Rock-bottom prices for a reasonable car that won't break down instantly will run about €2000 to €3000. The cost of a second-hand Vespa ranges from €200 to €700.

To find vehicles for sale, look in the classified sections of newspapers or go to an online auction site such as www.ebay.it.

Road Rules

Italians, like all mainland Europeans, drive on the right side of the road and overtake on the left. On three-lane roads, the middle lane is reserved for overtaking. At crossroads and roundabouts, give way to traffic from the right, unless otherwise indicated.

The driver and all passengers must wear a seatbelt, wherever fitted. If you're caught with it unbuckled, you're in for a hefty, on-the-spot, non-negotiable fine. Children under 12 must travel in the back seat, and those under four must use child seats.

A warning triangle (to be used if you have a breakdown) is also compulsory. Recommended accessories are a first-aid kit, spare-bulb kit and fire extinguisher. If your car breaks down at night, take great care if you get out of the vehicle. You could be fined steeply unless you wear an approved yellow or orange safety vest (available at bicycle shops and outdoor stores).

Traffic police conduct random breath tests. If you are involved in an accident while you are under the influence of alcohol, the penalties are severe. The blood-alcohol limit is 0.05%. Speeding fines are determined by how many kilometres you are caught driv-

ROAD SIGNS

You can save yourself a degree of grief in Tuscany and Umbria by learning what some of the many road signs mean:

- *entrata* – entrance (eg onto an autostrada)
- *incrocio* – intersection/crossroads
- *lavori in corso* – roadworks ahead
- *parcheeggio* – car park
- *passaggio a livello* – level crossing
- *rallentare* – slow down
- *senso unico* – one-way street
- *senso vietato* – no entry
- *sosta autorizzata* – parking permitted (during times displayed)
- *sosta vietata* – no stopping/parking
- *svolta* – bend
- *tutte le direzioni* – all directions (useful when looking for the town exit)
- *uscita* – exit (eg from an autostrada)

ing over the speed limit – they can reach up to €260.

Drivers usually travel at high speeds in the left-hand fast lane on the autostrada, so use that lane only if you need to pass other cars. There's a toll, which can be paid by credit card, to use the autostrada. For up-to-date information on road tolls and passes, call the *Società Autostrade* (☎ 840 04 21 21; www.autostrade.it in Italian) or consult its comprehensive website.

In built-up areas the speed limit is usually 50km/h, rising to 90km/h on secondary roads, 110km/h (caravans 80km/h) on main roads and up to 130km/h (caravans 100km/h) on the autostrada.

Motoring organisations in various countries have publications that detail road rules for foreign countries. If you get an IDP, it should also include a road rules booklet. The website www.drivingabroad.co.uk has some useful tips and background information for driving in Italy.

HITCHING

Hitching is rare in Tuscany and Umbria. Locals never hitch, and you might find yourself stranded for hours on end.

TAXI

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

TRAIN

The train network throughout Tuscany and Umbria is widespread so you can get to most tourist areas by train, with relatively few exceptions (such as the Chianti region in Tuscany and Monti Sibillini in Umbria). A Regionale or Interregionale train stops at nearly all stations, while faster trains such as the Intercity (IC), call only at major towns and cities.

Trenitalia (☎ 800 89 20 21 Italian speaking; www.trenitalia.com) is the partially privatised state train system, which runs most of the services in Italy. We indicate the few other private Italian train lines within relevant sections.

In Umbria, there's an extremely helpful free information source (☎ 800 51 21 41; www.trasporti.regione.umbria.it) for regional train, bus and ferry details. You will rarely be connected to someone who speaks English, but usually, if your number is in Italian and you can tell them the city, they'll patiently tell you the prices and departure times.

Most Italian train stations have either a guarded left-luggage office or self-service lockers. The guarded offices are usually open 24 hours or 6am to midnight and charge around €3 per 12 hours for each piece of luggage.

VALIDATE, VALIDATE, VALIDATE!

Almost all trains (and several bus) journeys require passengers to validate their tickets *before* boarding. You just punch them in the yellow *convalida* machines installed at the entrance to all train platforms. On local buses and trains run by some private railway companies, you validate your ticket on the bus or train itself. Getting caught freeloading or with a ticket that hasn't been validated risks a fine of up to €50. This is paid on the spot to an inspector who will be kind enough to escort you to an ATM if you don't have the cash on you. Don't even think about trying the *'Ma sono turista!'* line; it won't wash.

TRAIN ROUTES



Classes & Costs

There are 1st and 2nd classes on most Italian trains; a 1st-class ticket costs just under double the price of a 2nd-class one. There are special deals for families and group travel.

To travel on Intercity you pay a supplement (€3 to €16), determined by the distance you are travelling. If you are simply travelling to a town a stop or two up the line, check whether the short journey on the train you're thinking of requires a supplement. You might arrive 10 minutes earlier, but pay €5 or more for the privilege. Check up-to-date prices of routes on www.trenitalia.com.

Reservations

Reservations on trains are not essential but without one you may not be able to find a seat on certain trains. Bookings can be made when you buy your ticket, and usually cost an extra €3.

You can make train bookings at most travel agencies and in many cases on the internet. Alternatively, you can buy your ticket on arrival at the station. Most have automatic machines that accept both cash and credit cards.

Train Passes

If you're just travelling within Tuscany and Umbria, train travel is inexpensive and a train pass doesn't make financial sense.

If you are planning to travel more widely, Trenitalia offers a variety of passes. These include the free Cartaviaggio Smart. Armed with this, those aged from 12 to 26 can then buy a Ticket Sconto Smart, which has a 10% discount (25% discount for international tickets). If you get the Cartaviaggio Relax (also free) and are over 60, you can buy a Ticket Sconto Relax (€30; free for those over 75), which entitles you to discounts of 15% on 1st- and 2nd-class tickets and 20% on couchettes. Children who are aged between four and 12 years are entitled to receive a 50% discount; those who are under four travel free.

The Trenitalia Pass allows four to 10 days of travel within a two-month period. Only available to nonresidents, it's on sale at all major train stations or through a travel agent in your home country. Prices for four/six/eight/ten days of 2nd-class travel are €174/210/246/282.

Health

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BEFORE YOU GO

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

INSURANCE

If you're an EU citizen, arm yourself with the European Health Insurance Card, a handy piece of plastic, valid for two years, that entitles you to emergency treatment throughout the EU. Order online or through your local health office. This card supersedes the E111 form that previously entitled you to treatment within the EU.

Citizens from other countries should find out if there is a reciprocal arrangement for free medical care between their country and Italy.

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

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS

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

INTERNET RESOURCES

The WHO's publication *International Travel and Health* is revised annually and is available online at www.who.int/ith/. Other useful websites include www.mdtravelhealth.com (daily health recommendations for every country), www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk (general travel advice), www.ageconcern.org.uk (advice on travel for the elderly) and www.maristopes.org.uk (information on women's health and contraception).

IN TRANSIT

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Blood clots may form in the legs during plane flights, chiefly because of prolonged immobility; the longer the flight, the greater the risk. The chief symptom of DVT is swelling or pain of the foot, ankle or calf, usually but not always on just one side. When a blood clot travels to the lungs, it may cause chest pain and breathing difficulties. Travellers with any of these symptoms should immediately seek medical attention. To prevent the development of DVT on long flights you should walk about the cabin, contract your leg muscles while sitting, drink plenty of fluids, and avoid alcohol and tobacco.

JET LAG

To avoid jet lag try drinking plenty of non-alcoholic fluids and eating light meals. Upon

arrival, get exposure to natural sunlight and readjust your schedule (for meals, sleep etc) as soon as possible.

IN TUSCANY & UMBRIA

AVAILABILITY & COST OF HEALTH CARE

If you need an ambulance anywhere in Italy, call 96 118. For emergency treatment, go straight to the *pronto soccorso* (casualty) section of a public hospital, where you can also get emergency dental treatment.

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

TRAVELLERS' DIARRHOEA

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

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Heatstroke

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

Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. As ever, proper preparation will reduce the risks of getting it. Even on a hot day in the mountains, the weather can change rapidly, so carry waterproof garments, wear warm layers and a hat, and inform others of your route. Hypothermia starts with shivering, loss of judgment and clumsiness. Unless rewarming occurs, the suf-

ferer deteriorates into apathy, confusion and coma. Prevent further heat loss by seeking shelter, warm dry clothing, hot sweet drinks and shared body warmth.

Bites, Stings & Insect-Borne Diseases

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

Italy's only dangerous snake, the viper, is found throughout Tuscany and Umbria. To minimise the possibilities of being bitten, always wear boots, socks and long trousers when walking through undergrowth where snakes may be present. Don't put your hands into holes and crevices, and be careful when collecting firewood. Viper bites do not cause instantaneous death and an antivenin is widely available in pharmacies. Keep the victim calm and still, wrap the bitten limb tightly, as you would for a sprained ankle, and attach a splint to immobilise it. Seek medical help, if possible with the dead snake for identification. Don't attempt to catch the snake if there is a possibility of being bitten again. Tourniquets and sucking out the poison are now comprehensively discredited.

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

bite. Again, medical help must be sought in these instances.

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

TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN

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

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Emotional stress, exhaustion and travelling through different time zones can all contribute to an irregular menstrual pattern.

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

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

SEXUAL HEALTH

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

Language

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Italian is a Romance language related to French, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian. The Romance languages belong to the Indo-European group of languages, which includes English. Indeed, as English and Italian share common roots in Latin, you'll recognise many Italian words.

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

While standard Italian was essentially born out of the Florentine dialect, anyone who has learned Italian sufficiently well will find many Florentines surprisingly hard to understand, at least at first. Whether or not they have their own localised nonstandard vocabulary you could argue about at length, but no-one can deny the peculiarity of the local accent. Here, and in other parts of Tuscany, you are bound to hear the hard 'c' pronounced as a heavily aspirated 'h'. *Voglio una cannuccia per la Coca Cola* (I want a

straw for my Coca Cola) in Florence sounds more like *voglio una hannuccia per la Hoha Hola!* Over the regional border in Umbria, you'll be spared the anomalies of Tuscan pronunciation, and understanding the local accent should be a lot easier.

You need to be aware that many older Italians still expect to be addressed in the third-person polite form, *Lei* instead of *tu*; using *Lei* is a bit like using the terms 'he/she', rather than 'you' in English (you may hear something similar in royal dramas where a King or Queen is addressed directly, but in the third person). It is also not good form to use the greeting *ciao* when addressing strangers, unless they use it first; it's better to say *buon giorno* (or *buona sera*, as the case may be) and *arrivederci* (or the more polite form, *arrivederla*). We've used the polite address for most of the phrases in this guide. Use of the informal address is indicated by (inf). Like other Latin-based languages, Italian has both masculine and feminine forms (in the singular they often end in 'o' and 'a' respectively). Where both forms are given in this guide, they are separated by a slash, with the masculine form first.

Lonely Planet's *Italian Phrasebook*, packed with practical phrases and simple explanations, fits neatly into your pocket.

PRONUNCIATION

Vowels

Vowels are generally more clipped than in English:

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

Consonants

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

c	as the 'k' in 'kit' before a, o and u; as the 'ch' in 'choose' before e and i
ch	as the 'k' in 'kit'
g	as the 'g' in 'get' before a, o, u and h; as the 'j' in 'jet' before e and i
gli	as the 'lli' in 'million'
gn	as the 'ny' in 'canyon'
h	always silent
r	a rolled 'rr' sound
sc	as the 'sh' in 'sheep' before e and i; as 'sk' before a, o, u and h
z	as the 'ts' in 'lights'; at the beginning of a word, it's most commonly as the 'ds' in 'suds'

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

A double consonant is pronounced as a longer, more forceful sound than a single consonant.

Word Stress

Stress is indicated in our pronunciation guide by italics. Word stress generally falls on the second-last syllable, as in *spa-ghet-ti*, but when a word has an accent, the stress falls on that syllable, as in *cit-tà* (city).

ACCOMMODATION

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

Where is a cheap hotel?

<i>Dov'è un albergo a buon prezzo?</i>	<i>do-ve oon al-ber-go a bwon pre-tso</i>
--	---

What is the address?

Qual'è l'indirizzo? *kwa-le leen-dee-reet-so*

Could you write the address, please?

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

Do you have any rooms available?

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

I'd like (a) ...	<i>Vorrei ...</i>	<i>vo-ray ...</i>
bed	<i>un letto</i>	<i>oon le-to</i>
single room	<i>una camera singola</i>	<i>oo-na ka-me-ra seen-go-la</i>
room with two beds	<i>una camera doppia</i>	<i>oo-na ka-me-ra do-pya</i>

MAKING A RESERVATION

For inclusion in letters, faxes and emails:

To ...	<i>A ...</i>
From ...	<i>Da ...</i>
Date	<i>Data</i>
I'd like to book ...	<i>Vorrei prenotare ... (see the list on this page for room/bed options)</i>
in the name of ...	<i>in nome di ...</i>
for the night/s of ...	<i>per la/le notte/i di ...</i>
credit card ...	<i>carta di credito ...</i>
number	<i>numero</i>
expiry date	<i>data di scadenza</i>

Please confirm availability and price.	<i>Prego confermare disponibilità e prezzo.</i>
--	---

double room	<i>una camera matrimoniale</i>	<i>oo-na ka-me-ra ma-tree-mo-nyo-le</i>
room with a bathroom to share a dorm	<i>una camera con bagno un letto in dormitorio</i>	<i>oo-na ka-me-ra kon ba-nyo oon le-to een dor-mee-to-nyo</i>
How much is it ...?	<i>Quanto costa ...?</i>	<i>kwan-to kosta ...</i>
per night	<i>per la notte</i>	<i>per la no-te</i>
per person	<i>per persona</i>	<i>per per-so-na</i>

May I see it?

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

Where is the bathroom?

Dov'è il bagno? *do-ve eel ba-nyo*

I'm/We're leaving today.

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

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

Hello.	<i>Buongiorno. Ciao. (inf)</i>	<i>bwon-jor-no chow</i>
Goodbye.	<i>Arrivederci. Ciao. (inf)</i>	<i>a-ree-ve-der-chee chow</i>
Good evening. (from early afternoon onwards)	<i>Buonasera.</i>	<i>bwo-na-se-a</i>
Good night.	<i>Buonanotte.</i>	<i>bwo-na-no-te</i>
Yes.	<i>Sì.</i>	<i>see</i>
No.	<i>No.</i>	<i>no</i>
Please.	<i>Per favore. Per piacere.</i>	<i>per fa-vo-re per pya-chay-re</i>
Thank you.	<i>Grazie.</i>	<i>gra-tsy-e</i>
That's fine/ You're welcome.	<i>Prego.</i>	<i>pre-go</i>

Excuse me. *Mi scusi.* mee skoo-zee
 Sorry (forgive me). *Mi scusi/ Mi perdoni.* mee skoo-zee/ mee per-do-nee

What's your name?
Come si chiama? ko-me see kya-ma
Come ti chiami? (inf) ko-me tee kya-mee

My name is ...
Mi chiamo ... mee kya-mo ...

Where are you from?
Da dove viene? da do-ve vye-ne
Di dove sei? (inf) dee do-ve see-ee

I'm from ...
Vengo da ... ven-go da ...

I (don't) like ...
(Non) Mi piace ... (non) mee pya-che ...

Just a minute.
Un momento. oon mo-men-to

DIRECTIONS

Where is ...?
Dov'è ...? do-ve ...

Go straight ahead.
Si va sempre dritto. see va sem-pre dee-ree-to
Vai sempre dritto. (inf) va-ee sem-pre dee-ree-to

Turn left.
Giri a sinistra. jee-ree a see-nee-stra

Turn right.
Giri a destra. jee-ree a destra

at the next corner
al prossimo angolo al pro-see-mo an-go-lo

at the traffic lights
al semaforo al se-ma-fo-ro

behind *dietro* dye-tro
 in front of *davanti* da-van-tee
 far (from) *lontano (da)* lon-ta-no (da)
 near (to) *vicino (di)* vee-chee-no (dee)
 opposite *di fronte a* dee-fronte a

SIGNS

Ingresso/Entrata Entrance
 Uscita Exit
 Informazione Information
 Aperto Open
 Chiuso Closed
 Proibito/Vietato Prohibited
 Polizia/Carabinieri Police
 Questura Police Station
 Gabinetti/Bagni Toilets
 Uomini Men
 Donne Women

EMERGENCIES

Help!
Aiuto! a-yoo-to
 There's been an accident!
C'è stato un incidente! che sta-to oon een-chee-der-te
 I'm lost.
Mi sono perso/a. mee so-no perso/a
 Go away!
Lasciami in pace! la-sha-mi een pa-che
Vai via! (inf) va-ee vee-a
 Call ...!
Chiama ...! kee-ya-mee ...
Chiama ...! (inf) kee-ya-ma ...
 a doctor *un dottore/ un medico* oon do-to-re/ oon me-dee-ko
 the police *la polizia* la po-lee-tsee-ya

beach *la spiaggia* la spy-a-ja
 bridge *il ponte* eel pon-te
 castle *il castello* eel kas-te-lo
 cathedral *il duomo* eel dwo-mo
 island *l'isola* lee-so-la
 (main) square *la piazza (principale)* la pya-tsa (preen-chee-pa-le)
 market *il mercato* eel mer-ka-to
 old city *il centro storico* eel chen-tro sto-ree-ko
 palace *il palazzo* eel pa-la-tso
 ruins *le rovine* le ro-vee-ne
 sea *il mare* eel ma-re
 tower *la torre* la to-re

HEALTH

I'm ill. *Mi sento male.* mee sen-to ma-le
 It hurts here. *Mi fa male qui.* mee fa ma-le kwee
 I'm ... *Sono ...* so-no ...
 asthmatic *asmatico/a* az-ma-tee-ko/a
 diabetic *diabetico/a* dee-a-be-tee-ko/a
 epileptic *epilettico/a* e-pee-le-tee-ko/a

I'm allergic ... *Sono ...* so-no ...
 to antibiotics *allergico/a ... agli antibiotici* a-ler-jee-ko/a ... a-lyee-an-tee-bee-otee-chee
 to aspirin *all'aspirina* a-la-spe-ree-na
 to penicillin *alla penicillina* a-la-pe-nee-see-lee-na
 to nuts *ai noci* a-ee-no-chee
 antiseptic *antisettico* an-tee-sa-tee-ko
 aspirin *aspirina* as-pee-ree-na

condoms *preservativi* pre-zer-va-tee-vee
 contraceptive *contraccettivo* kon-tra-che-tee-veo
 diarrhoea *diarrea* dee-a-re-a
 medicine *medicina* me-dee-chee-na
 sunblock cream *crema solare* kre-ma so-la-re
 tampons *tamponi* tam-po-nee

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

Do you speak English?
Parla inglese? par-la een-gle-ze

Does anyone here speak English?
C'è qualcuno che parla inglese? che kwal-ko-no ke par-la een-gle-ze

How do you say ... in Italian?
Come si dice ... in italiano? ko-me see dee-che ... een ee-ta-ly-a-no

What does ... mean?
Che vuol dire ...? ke vwool dee-ere ...
 I understand. *Capisco.* ka-pee-sko

I don't understand.
Non capisco. non ka-pee-sko
 Please write it down.
Può scriverlo, per favore. pwo skree-ver-lo per fa-vore

Can you show me (on the map)?
Può mostrarmelo (sulla pianta)? pwo mos-trar-me-lo (soo-la pyan-ta)

NUMBERS

0 zero dzero
 1 uno oono
 2 due doo-e
 3 tre tre
 4 quattro kwa-tro
 5 cinque cheen-kwe
 6 sei say
 7 sette sete
 8 otto oto
 9 nove no-ve
 10 dieci dye-chee
 11 undici oon-dee-chee
 12 dodici do-dee-chee
 13 tredici tre-dee-chee
 14 quattordici kwa-for-dee-chee
 15 quindici kween-dee-chee
 16 sedici se-dee-chee
 17 diciassette dee-cha-sete
 18 diciotto dee-cho-to
 19 diciannove dee-cha-no-ve
 20 venti ven-tee
 21 ventuno ven-too-no
 22 ventidue ven-tee-doo-e
 30 trenta tren-ta
 40 quaranta kwa-ran-ta
 50 cinquanta cheen-kwan-ta

60 sessanta se-san-ta
 70 settanta se-tan-ta
 80 ottanta o-tan-ta
 90 novanta no-van-ta
 100 cento chen-to
 1000 mille mee-le

PAPERWORK

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

QUESTION WORDS

Who? *Chi?* kee
 What? *Che?* ke
 When? *Quando?* kwan-do
 Where? *Dove?* dove
 How? *Come?* ko-me

SHOPPING & SERVICES

I'd like to buy ...
Vorrei comprare ... vo-ray-kom-pra-re ...
 How much is it?
Quanto costa? kwan-to kosta
 I don't like it.
Non mi piace. non mee pya-che
 May I look at it?
Posso dare un'occhiata? po-so da-re oo-no-ky-a-ta
 I'm just looking.
Sto solo guardando. sto so-lo gwar-dan-do
 It's cheap.
Non è caro/cara. non e ka-rol ka-ra
 It's too expensive.
È troppo caro/a. e tro-po ka-rol ka-ra
 I'll take it.
Lo/La compro. lo/la kom-pro
 Do you accept credit cards?
Accettate carte di credito? a-che-ta-te kar-te dee kre-dee-to

I want to change ... *Voglio cambiare ...* vo-lyo kam-bya-re ...
 money *del denaro* del de-na-ro
 travellers *assegni dee* a-sen-ye-e dee
 cheques *viaggio* vee-a-jo

more *più* pyoo
 less *meno* meno
 smaller *più piccolo/a* pyoo pee-ko-lo/la
 bigger *più grande* pyoo gran-de

I'm looking for ... <i>Cerco ...</i>	<i>cher-ko ...</i>	
an ATM	<i>un Bancomat</i>	oon ban-ko-mat
a bank	<i>un banco</i>	oon ban-ko
the church	<i>la chiesa</i>	la kye-za
the city centre	<i>il centro</i>	eel chen-tro
the market	<i>il mercato</i>	eel mer-ka-to
the museum	<i>il museo</i>	eel moo-ze-o
the post office	<i>la posta</i>	la po-sta
a public toilet	<i>un gabinetto</i>	oon ga-bee-ne-to
the tourist office	<i>l'ufficio di turismo</i>	loo-fee-cho dee too-reez-mo

TIME & DATES

What time is it? <i>Che ore sono?</i>	<i>ke o-re so-no</i>	
It's (one o'clock). <i>È (l'una).</i>	<i>e (loo-na)</i>	
It's (8 o'clock). <i>Sono (le otto).</i>	<i>so-no (le o-to)</i>	
When? <i>Quando?</i>	<i>kwan-do</i>	
today	<i>oggi</i>	o-je
tomorrow	<i>domani</i>	do-ma-nee
yesterday	<i>ieri</i>	ye-ree
in the morning	<i>di mattina</i>	dee ma-tee-na
in the afternoon	<i>di pomeriggio</i>	dee po-me-ree-jo
in the evening	<i>di sera</i>	dee sera

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

January	<i>gennaio</i>	je-na-jo
February	<i>febbraio</i>	fe-bra-jo
March	<i>marzo</i>	mar-tso
April	<i>aprile</i>	a-pree-le
May	<i>maggio</i>	ma-jo
June	<i>giugno</i>	jo-nyo
July	<i>luglio</i>	loo-lyo
August	<i>agosto</i>	a-gos-to
September	<i>settembre</i>	se-tem-bre
October	<i>ottobre</i>	o-to-bre
November	<i>novembre</i>	no-ven-bre
December	<i>dicembre</i>	dee-chem-bre

TRANSPORT

Public Transport

What time does the ... leave/arrive?	<i>A che ora parte/arriva ...?</i>	a ke o-ra partel a-ree-va ...
(city) bus	<i>l'autobus</i>	low-to-boos
(intercity) bus	<i>il pullman</i>	eel pool-man
plane	<i>l'aereo</i>	la-e-re-o
train	<i>il treno</i>	eel tre-no

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

I want to go ...

<i>Voglio andare a ...</i>	<i>vo-lyo an-da-re a ...</i>	
The train has been cancelled/delayed.	<i>Il treno è soppresso/ in ritardo.</i>	eel tre-no e so-pre-so/ een ree-tar-do

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

Private Transport

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

Where's a service station?

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

<i>Il pieno, per favore.</i>	<i>eel pye-no per fa-vo-re</i>
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I'd like (30) litres.

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

<i>gasolio/diesel</i>	<i>ga-zo-lyo/ dee-zel</i>
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petrol

<i>benzina</i>	<i>ben-dzee-na</i>
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Is this the road to ...?

<i>Questa strada porta a ...?</i>	<i>kwe-sta stra-da por-ta a ...</i>
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(How long) Can I park here?

<i>(Per quanto tempo) Posso parcheggiare qui?</i>	<i>(per kwan-to tempo) po-so par-ke-ja-re kwee</i>
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Where do I pay?

<i>Dove si paga?</i>	<i>do-ve see pa-ga</i>
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I need a mechanic.

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

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

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

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

The car/motorbike won't start.

<i>La macchina/moto non parte.</i>	<i>la ma-kee-na/ mo-to non parte</i>
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I have a flat tyre.

<i>Ho una gomma bucata.</i>	<i>o oo-na go-ma boo-ka-ta</i>
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I've run out of petrol.

<i>Ho esaurito la benzina.</i>	<i>o e-zo-ree-to la ben-dzee-na</i>
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I've had an accident.

<i>Ho avuto un incidente.</i>	<i>o a-vo-o-to oon een-chee-den-te</i>
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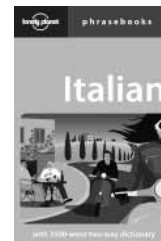
TRAVEL WITH CHILDREN

Is there a/an ...?

<i>C'è ...?</i>	<i>che ...</i>
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I need a/an ...

<i>Ho bisogno di ...</i>	<i>o bee-zo-nyo dee ...</i>
baby change room	
<i>un bagno con fasciatoio</i>	oon ba-nyo kon fa-sha-to-yo
car baby seat	
<i>un seggiolino per bambini</i>	oon se-jo-lee-no per bam-bee-nee
child-minding service	
<i>un servizio di babysitter</i>	oon ser-vee-tsyo dee be-bee-see-ter
children's menu	
<i>un menu per bambini</i>	oon me-noo per bam-bee-nee
(disposable) nappies/diapers	
<i>pannolini (usa e getta)</i>	pa-no-lee-nee (oo-sa e je-ta)
formula (infant milk)	
<i>latte in polvere</i>	la-te in pol-ve-re
(English-speaking) baby-sitter	
<i>un/una baby-sitter (che parli inglese)</i>	oon/oo-na be-bee-see-ter (ke par-lee een-gle-ze)
highchair	
<i>un seggiolone</i>	oon se-jo-lo-ne
potty	
<i>un vasino</i>	oon va-zee-no
stroller	
<i>un passeggino</i>	oon pa-se-jee-no
Do you mind if I breastfeed here?	
<i>Le dispiace se allatto il/la bimbo/a qui?</i>	le dees-pya-che se a-la-to eel/la beem-bo/a kwee
Are children allowed?	
<i>I bambini sono ammessi?</i>	ee bam-bee-nee so-no a-me-see



Also available from Lonely Planet:
Italian Phrasebook

Glossary

abbazia – abbey
aeroporto – airport
affittacamere – rooms for rent (relatively inexpensive and not part of the classification system)
agriturismo – farm-stay accommodation
albergo – hotel
alimentare – grocery shop
alloggio – lodging (relatively inexpensive and not part of the classification system)
alto – high
ambulanza – ambulance
anfiteatro – amphitheatre
appartamento – apartment, flat
arco – arch
autobus – local bus
autostazione – bus station/terminal
autostop – hitching
autostrada – motorway, highway

baldacchino – canopy supported by columns over the altar in a church
basilica – Christian church with a rectangular hall, aisles and an apse at the end
battistero – baptistry
benzina – petrol
biblioteca – library
bicicletta – bicycle
biglietteria – ticket office
biglietto – ticket
biglietto cumulativo – combined ticket that allows entrance to a number of associated sights
binario – platform
borgo – ancient town or village

cabinovia – two-seater cable car
calcio – football
camera doppia – room with twin beds
camera matrimoniale – double room with a double bed
camera singola – single room
campanile – bell tower
campeggio – camping
campo – field
cappella – chapel
carabinieri – military police
carnevale – carnival period between Epiphany and Lent
carta d'identità – identity card
carta telefonica – phonecard (also *scheda telefonica*)
cartolina (postale) – postcard
casa – house, home
castello – castle

cattedrale – cathedral
cava – quarry
cena – evening meal
centesimi – cents
centro – city centre
centro storico – (literally, 'historical centre') old town
chiaroscuro – (literally, 'light-dark') artistic distribution of light and dark areas in a painting
chiesa – church
chiostro – cloister; a covered walkway around a quadrangle, which is usually enclosed by columns
circo – oval or circular arena
codice fiscale – tax number
colle – hill
colonna – column
comune – equivalent to a municipality; town or city council; historically, a commune (self-governing town or city)
contado – district around a major town (the area surrounding Florence was known as the *contado di Firenze*)
contrada – town district
convalida – ticket-stamping machine
coperto – cover charge
corso – main street, avenue
cortile – courtyard
cupola – dome

deposito bagagli – left luggage
distributore di benzina – petrol pump (see also *stazione di servizio*)
duomo – cathedral

enoteca – wine bar

farmacia – pharmacy
ferrovia – train station
fiesta – festival
fiore – flower
fiume – river
fontana – fountain
foro – forum
francobollo – postage stamp
fresco – painting method in which watercolour paint is applied to wet plaster
funicolare – funicular railway
funivia – cable car

gabinetto – toilet, WC
golfo – gulf
grisaille – technique of monochrome painting in shades of grey

grotta – cave
guardia di finanza – fiscal police

HI – Hostelling International

intarsio – inlaid wood, marble or metal
isola – island

lago – lake
largo – (small) square
lavanderia – laundrette
lavasecco – dry-cleaning
lettera – letter
libreria – bookshop
lido – beach
locanda – inn, small hotel (relatively inexpensive and not part of the classification system)
loggia – covered area on the side of a building; porch
lungomare – seafront road, promenade

macchia – scrub, bush
mare – sea
mercato – market
monte – mountain, mount
motorino – moped
municipio – town hall
museo – museum

navata centrale – nave; central part of a church
navata laterale – aisle of a church
nave – ship
necropoli – (ancient) cemetery, burial site

oggetti smarriti – lost property
ostello per la gioventù – youth hostel
osteria – simple, trattoria-style restaurant, often with a bar

palazzo – palace; a large building of any type, including an apartment block
parco – park
passaggio ponte – deck class
passaggiata – traditional evening stroll
pensione – small hotel
permesso di lavoro – work permit
permesso di soggiorno – residence permit
piazza – square
piazzale – (large) open square
pietà – (literally, 'pity' or 'compassion') sculpture, drawing or painting of the dead Christ supported by Madonna
pinacoteca – art gallery
pool
poltrona – (literally, 'armchair') airline-type chair on a ferry
polyptych – altarpiece consisting of more than three panels (see also *triptych*)

ponte – bridge
porta – door, city gate
portico – walkway, often on the outside of buildings
porto – port
presepio – nativity scene
profumeria – perfumery
pronto soccorso – first aid
pullman – long-distance bus

questura – police station

rifugio – mountain hut, alpine refuge
rocca – fort

sagra – festival (usually with a culinary theme)
sala – room in a museum or a gallery
santuario – sanctuary
scalinata – flight of stairs
scavi – excavations
scheda telefonica – phonecard
servizio – service fee
spiaggia – beach
spiaggia libera – public beach
stazione – station
stazione di servizio – service/petrol station (see also *distributore di benzina*)
stazione marittima – ferry terminal
strada – street, road
superstrada – expressway; highway with divided lanes (but no tolls)

tabaccheria/tabaccaio – tobacconist's shop/tobacconist
teatro – theatre
telefonino – mobile phone
tempio – temple
terme – thermal bath
tesoro – treasury
torre – tower
torrente – stream
traghetto – ferry
trattoria – simple restaurant
triptych – painting or carving over three panels, hinged so that the outer panels fold over the middle one, often used as an altarpiece (see also *polyptych*)

ufficio postale – post office
ufficio stranieri – (police) foreigners' bureau
uffici – offices

via – street, road
via aerea – airmail
via ferrata – climbing trail with permanent steel cables to aid walkers, usually in a hilly area
vicoli – alley, alleyway
vigili urbani – traffic police, local police

Saints Glossary

Italy has some 3500 recorded saints, who give their names to towns, villages, *vias* (streets) and *viales* (boulevards). You'll frequently come across apostles, such as San Giovanni (St John) and San Pietro (St Peter), or international stars like San Giorgio (St George), the dragon slayer, and San Sebastian, pierced by arrows and perpetually suffering.

Here are some of Tuscany and Umbria's home-grown *santi* (saints):

Sant'Agnese di Montepulciano (1268–1317) – b Graciano near Montepulciano, Tuscany. Appointed abbess when only 20, cured illnesses simply by her presence and could multiply loaves when the convent bakery ran short. A sweet-scented liquid dribbled from her hands and feet long after her death.

San Benedetto (c 480–547) – b Norcia, Umbria. Patron: Europe, cavers, farmers. Good against: witchcraft, gall stones, nettle rash. St Benedict divided his life between directing his monastery and living as a hermit. He was the founder of the Benedictine order.

San Bernadino di Siena (1380–1444) – b Massa Maritima, Tuscany. Patron: advertising, communications. Good against: compulsive gambling, chest complaints. Urging listeners to fling objects of temptation into 'bonfires of vanities', his public preaching attracted thousands. In later life, he became head of the Franciscan order in Italy.

Santa Caterina di Siena (1347–80) – b Siena, Tuscany. Patron: nurses, firefighters. Good against: sickness, sexual temptation. Her 300-plus surviving letters are considered masterpieces of early Tuscan literature. Now somewhat dispersed – her head and right thumb in Siena, body in Rome and foot in Venice.

Santa Chiara (1194–1253) – b Assisi, Umbria. Patron: goldsmiths, telephone, TV. Good against: sore eyes, bad weather. A devotee of St Francis, St Clare founded the order that still bears her name. Members go barefoot and mostly observe silence.

San Filippo Neri (1515–95) – b Florence, Tuscany. Patron: Rome, US special forces. Founded a lay fraternity to support impoverished pilgrims visiting Rome.

San Francesco (1182–1224) – b Assisi, Umbria. Patron: animals, merchants, the environment. Good against: fire. After a wild youth, St Francis assumed extreme humility and founded the Franciscan order of friars. He lived with animals, cared for lepers and received stigmata, which bled during the last years of his life.

Santa Rita (1381–1457) – b Spoleto, Umbria. Patron: parents, widows. Good against: desperate cases, difficult marriages. Widowed after an abusive marriage, spent 40 years as a nun. The deep, unhealing gash on her forehead was reputedly caused by a thorn from Christ's crucifixion.

Sant'Ubaldo (c 1100–60) – b Gubbio, Umbria. Patron: sick children. Powerful against: demonic possession, migraines. Except for a brief period of study in Vienna, lived all his life in his home town, where, revered for both his fervour and humility, he served as abbot of the local monastery.

Santa Zita (1218–72) – b Monsagrati, near Lucca, Tuscany. Patron: servants, waiters. Good against: losing keys. Became a domestic servant when only 12 and spent her whole life in service, where she would share her meagre rations with the poor. One day, when her master accused her of stealing the bread that bulged beneath her apron, Zita gave it a shake and out tumbled flowers.

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