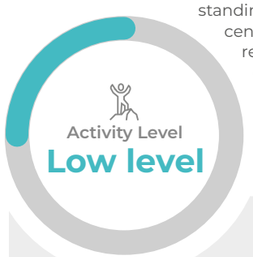
Discovering
The Italian Lakes

Italy is renowned for its rich history, stunning landscapes, and vibrant culture. From the ancient ruins of Rome to the romantic canals of Venice, the country is filled with world-famous landmarks and timeless beauty.

As the birthplace of the Renaissance, Italy is celebrated for its art, architecture, and museums, with Florence standing as a cultural centerpiece. Each region offers its own unique character: the rolling hills and vineyards of Tuscany, the dramatic coastlines of the Amalfi Coast, and the serene beauty of the Italian lakes.

Italian cuisine is cherished worldwide, with regional specialties ranging from pasta and pizza to fresh seafood, artisanal cheeses, and desserts such as gelato and tiramisu. Beyond its food, Italy's culture emphasizes family, tradition, and a passion for life, reflected in lively festivals, bustling street markets, and warm hospitality.Whether exploring historic cities, picturesque villages, or breathtaking landscapes, Italy offers an unforgettable travel experience that blends the past and present in extraordinary ways.



Please note: Please Note: The distances between the Italian Lakes range from 100 to 250 kilometers (62 to 155 miles). Transfer times vary accordingly and may take anywhere from 1 to 3 hours, depending on the route.

Visa Process

U.S. citizens may travel to **Italy and other Schengen Area** countries for up to **90 days within a 180-day** period for tourism or business **without a visa**. **Your passport must be valid for at least three months beyond your planned departure date from** the Schengen Area.

Credit Cards

Most businesses in Italy, including hotels, restaurants, cafes, taxis, and even many small shops, are required to accept credit cards. **Visa and Mastercard** are the most widely accepted, while **American Express** may be less commonly used.

Currency

Italy's official currency is the Euro (€). Credit and debit cards are widely accepted across the country, particularly in cities, hotels, restaurants, and larger shops. However, it is advisable to carry some cash for small purchases, tips, or when visiting rural areas and local markets. While cash is useful, paying by card is generally easier and recommended for most transactions.

Dining

Italian cuisine is world-renowned for its rich flavors, fresh ingredients, and regional diversity. From pasta and pizza to gelato and espresso, each dish reflects Italy's deep cultural heritage. Meals often highlight simple yet high-quality ingredients, such as olive oil, fresh produce, and local specialties, making dining in Italy a memorable culinary experience. Avoid drinking the water from fountains in cities as this tends to be recycled.

Check in Process

When checking into hotels in Italy, you will be required to present your passport or a valid form of identification. Standard check-in time is typically from **3:00 PM local time**.

Pharmacies

Pharmacies in Italy are typically open **Monday to Saturday, from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM**. Most are closed on **Sundays**, so if you require specific medications, it's best to plan ahead and make your purchases by Friday or Saturday.

Cultural Norms

Italy is a country rooted in tradition, where **family, food, and relationships** are central to daily life. Greetings often include a kiss on each cheek—starting with the left. Common expressions include **"Buongiorno" (Good morning)** and **"Buonasera" (Good evening).** Italians are known for their warmth and expressiveness, and conversations are often lively, accompanied by frequent gestures. Visitors are encouraged to embrace this openness while showing respect for local customs.

Transport

Public Transportation: Italy has an extensive and efficient public transportation network, especially in major cities. Travelers can rely on buses, trams, and metro systems to get around easily and affordably. Public transit is generally more cost-effective—and often more reliable—than using taxis.

Lake Travel: When exploring **Lake Como, Lake Garda, and Lake Maggiore,** ferries and boats offer a scenic and convenient way to travel between towns. This not only provides efficient transportation but also adds a memorable and picturesque element to the journey.

Uber: Uber is available only in select cities, and only **Uber Black** can be used—this means higher prices, nicer vehicles, and longer wait times.

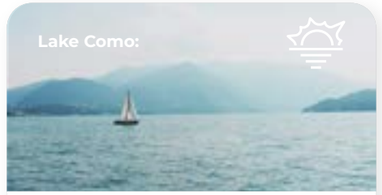
During the peak summer months of July and August, daytime temperatures typically range from 30°C to 35°C (86°F to 95°F). During heatwaves, temperatures can climb as high as 37°C (99°F). Evenings are generally cooler, with average nighttime temperatures around 18°C to 20°C (64°F to 68°F).



Summer Average	Winter Average
77-84°F	59-68°F



Summer Average	Winter Average
72-82°F	41-50°F



Summer Average	Winter Average
73-81°F	39-46°F

Plug Sockets

Italy uses three types of plug sockets: **Type C, Type F**, and **Type L**. **Type C:** Two round pins (common across Europe). **Type F:** Two round pins with two grounding clips on the side. **Type L:** Three round pins in a straight line.

The standard voltage is 230 V with a frequency of 50 Hz. U.S. travelers will need a power adapter, and in many cases, a voltage converter for devices that are not dual-voltage.

Language

Italian is the **official language of Italy**. However, **English is commonly spoken** in major cities, hotels, and tourist areas. In smaller towns and rural regions, English may be less widely understood, so learning a few basic Italian phrases (such as greetings or how to order food) can be helpful and appreciated.

Gratuities

It is customary to tip your Tour Manager or Guides and drivers €5 per person per day for the service they provide throughout your tour. Tipping in restaurants or cafes is not mandatory but suggested as a gesture of appreciation for good service.





Lake Como

Lake Como, known for its dramatic scenery, is surrounded by mountains and charming villages. It's a popular retreat for celebrities and offers luxurious villas and gardens.

Emergency Information

Emergency Services: Dial **112** anywhere in Italy for police, fire, or medical assistance. Emergency response is efficient and widely accessible. **Medical Care:** Ambulance services are free of charge. However, treatment in the emergency room may involve costs for visitors and will depend on your travel insurance coverage. **Travel Documents:** Keep a copy of your passport and other important documents in a safe place. **Embassy Support:** Have the contact details of the nearest **U.S. embassy or consulate** readily available in case of emergencies.



Lake Maggiore

Located just south of the Alps, this is the second-largest lake in Italy and extends into Switzerland. It's characterised by its colorful fishing villages, the tiny Borromean Islands off its south-western shore and the delicious cuisine found in the villages around it. Blessed with a mild climate all year round, the surrounding landscapes burst with a mesmerizing array of Mediterranean vegetation and exotic plants.

Bernina Express

The Bernina Red Train does not request a dress code on board. For the winter and early spring, we would recommend warm clothing as the weather can often be very cold and snowy.



Lake Garda

Lake Garda, the largest lake in Italy, is located between the regions of Lombardy, Veneto, and Trentino-Alto Adige. Known for its diverse landscape.



What to pack

Essentials:
Passport & Visa: Carry your valid U.S. passport, any required visas, and supporting travel documents. Keep photocopies in a separate location. **Travel Insurance:** Strongly recommended to cover medical emergencies, trip delays, or other unexpected situations. **Money:** Bring a mix of Euros (€) in small denominations. **Health Kit:** Pack prescription medications in their original containers, along with a copy of the prescription. Include basic over-the-counter medicines, and keep them in your carry-on luggage.

Clothing:
Pack a versatile selection of clothing to adapt to Canada's varied weather conditions. **Consider bringing:**Lightweight clothing for warmer days. Warm layers for cooler evenings or unexpected temperature changes. A waterproof jacket for rain or coastal climates. A hat and light scarf/shawl for added comfort and warmth. Comfortable walking shoes for sightseeing. Sandals for casual wear insummer months

Personal Items:
Toiletries: Pack essentials such as toothpaste, shampoo, soap, and any specific personal items you use regularly. **Sun Protection:** Sunscreen and sunglasses are recommended, particularly in summer or when visiting higher altitudes. **Insect Repellent:** Useful for added protection, especially in rural or wooded areas.

Electronics:
Phone & Charger: With a local SIM card, you can have better connectivity and avoid high roaming charges. **Camera:** A camera is great for capturing your trip. Don't forget extra memory cards and spare batteries.

Other Useful Items:
Small Backpack/Daypack: Ideal for day trips and carrying essentials such as snacks, a jacket, or travel documents. **Reusable water bottle:** Convenient for staying hydrated; refill with safe drinking water. **Hand Sanitiser:** Useful for maintaining cleanliness while on the go.

