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PLAN YOUR TRIP

YOUR PLANNING TOOL KIT
Photos, itineraries, lists and suggestions
to help you put together your perfect trip

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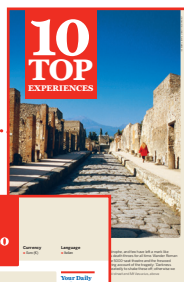
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UNDERSTAND SOUTHERN ITALY

GET MORE FROM YOUR TRIP
Learn about the big picture, so you
can make sense of what you see

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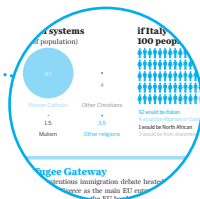
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Language

Standard Italian is taught and spoken throughout Italy. Regional dialects are an important part of identity in many parts of the country, but you'll use the standard language most of the time. This chapter is the best to figure it out. You'll find out how to handle common situations and what to say in Italian, which can be very useful in this chapter. The appendix at the end of the book contains all the words in English that you'll need to know to handle common situations and what to say in Italian, which can be very useful in this chapter.

Yes Sì
No No
Excuse me Scusi (m)
Scuse (f)
Please Per favore
Thank you Grazie
Instructions Pagine
Emergency Chiamata (sp) (sp)
Police Polizia
Fire Incendio
Help Aiuto
What's your name? Come si chiama?

THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

Cristian Bonetto,
Gregor Clark, Olivia Pozzan



Look out for these icons:



Our author's
recommendation



A green or
sustainable option



No payment
required

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Southern Italy

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beauties (p164)

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Tackle Europe's volcanic
heavyweight (p183)

Agrigento

Greek temples and
Mediterranean views (p194)



CALABRIA

Paola

Cosenza

Parco Nazionale della Sila

Golfo di Squillace

Tropea

Scilla

Montalto (1955m)

Parco Nazionale dell'Aspromonte

Reggio di Calabria

Taormina

Ionian Coast

Catania

Mt Etna (3340m)

Syracuse

Noto

Ragusa

Modica

Agrigento

Palermo

Cefalù

Marsala

Favignana

Levanzo

Erice

Trapani

Marcitimo

Ustica

Pantelleria

39°N

38°N

37°N

18°E

17°E

16°E

15°E

14°E

13°E

12°E

39°N

37°N

Tyrrhenian Sea

Ionian Sea

MEDITERRANEAN SEA



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Cristian Bonetto

Coordinating Author, Naples & Campania As an ex-writer of farce and TV soap, it's not surprising that Cristian clicks with Campania. The Italo-Australian writer has been hooked on the region for years, his musings on it appearing in print from Sydney to London. Cristian has contributed to a dozen Lonely Planet titles, including *Naples & the Amalfi Coast*, *Rome Encounter* and *Copenhagen Encounter*. When he's not putting on weight in Italy, chances are you'll find him guzzling coffee in New York, Scandinavia or his hometown, Melbourne.



Gregor Clark

Sicily Gregor caught the Italy bug at age 14 during a year in Florence in which his professor dad trundled the family off to see every fresco, mosaic and museum within a 1000km radius. He's lived in Venice and Le Marche, led northern Italian bike tours, and huffed and puffed across the Dolomites while researching Lonely Planet's *Cycling Italy*. Highlights of his latest Sicily trip include celebrating his birthday at Segesta and racing up Etna at sunset to see an unexpected eruption.



Olivia Pozzan

Puglia, Basilicata & Calabria Although born and raised in Australia, Olivia's Italian heritage continually draws her back to the 'home country'. Having contributed to Lonely Planet's *Puglia & Basilicata* guide, she was keen to revisit the region to face a delicious onslaught of pasta, pizza and red wine. As an adventurous outdoors enthusiast, she has hiked mountain ranges, led caving expeditions and worked for an Arabian prince. When not exploring the world's most exotic places she lives the Aussie beach lifestyle, and is a practising veterinarian.

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itineraries

Whether you've got nine days or 21, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to lonelyplanet.com/thorntree to chat with other travellers.



Two Weeks Southern Overview

Start your sojourn with three days in **Naples**, indulging in its architectural, artistic and culinary riches. On day four, time travel in **Pompeii** before some evening *dolce vita* in buzzing **Sorrento**. Hairpin turns and unforgettable vistas define day five as you hit the enigmatic Amalfi Coast. Spend two romantic nights in **Positano**, from where you can walk some of the breathtaking **Sentiero degli Dei** (Walk of the Gods). Spend another two days in deeply historic **Amalfi** and panoramic **Ravello**, the latter well known for its summer-long arts fest. On day nine, continue east to upbeat **Salerno** to sample the city's fabulous seafood, pastries and street life. Spend day 10 roaming the Greek ruins of **Paestum** before heading east to Basilicata's even older **Matera**. Spend a couple of days exploring the town's extraordinary *sassi* (former cave dwellings) and hiking through the dramatic Matera Gravina gorge. Cap your trip off with two days in Puglia's Valle d'Itria, checking out World Heritage *trulli* (conical abodes) in **Alberobello** and sampling local *vino bianco* (white wine) in **Locorotondo**. From here, it's an easy onward jump to transport hub **Bari**.



Three Weeks Best of Sicily

Sicily is sweet, sour, spicy and intriguing. For a taste, fly into **Palermo** and take three days to savour its crumbling, magnificent streets and lip-smacking street food. Dive into the city's souk-like markets and eye-up the East-meets-West exotica of its churches and mosaics. Spend day four roaming the evocative temple and amphitheatre at **Segesta** and continue on to the foodie mecca of **Trapani** to sample its Arabesque cuisine. Come morning, it's time to hop on the funicular to medieval **Erice**, one of Italy's most arresting medieval hilltop towns. Come back down to spend day six sipping sweet local wine in elegant **Marsala** and day seven roaming the Greek ruins of **Selinunte**. More ancient survivors await on day eight as you head to the incredible Valle dei Templi in **Agrigento**, its five Doric structures spectacularly perched on a ridge overlooking the Mediterranean coast. On day nine, shoot southeast to the Val di Noto and spend a couple of days exploring the baroque splendour of its Unesco World Heritage towns, especially **Ragusa**, **Modica** and **Noto**. Modica is also renowned for its chocolate, so prepare for a memorable sugary high. Change gear on days 12 and 13 with a stay in youthful, worldly **Catania**, a city famed for its baroque buildings, market and kicking nightlife. Pumped, head straight up to the crater rim of **Mt Etna** (Europe's highest active volcano) on day 14 before two indulgent days of wining, dining and coastal posing in the chic resort town of **Taormina**. Assuming you manage to pull yourself away, head further northeast to **Messina** to catch a hydrofoil to the **Aeolian Islands**. Here, enjoy five unforgettable days of island-hopping along this bubbling, pyrotechnic volcanic ridge. Luxuriate in thermal mud on Vulcano, catch the Sciara del Fuoco on Stromboli, and work on that must-have southern tan.



Two Weeks Puglia

For the majority of visitors to Italy, a trip ‘south’ means Naples and the Amalfi Coast. What a shame! Puglia, which forms the heel of Lo Stivale (‘the Boot’), is one of the country’s most underrated regions. To see what you’ve been missing out on, start in dynamic **Bari**, with its ancient historic centre and huge Romanesque basilica. The latter is home to the relics of San Nicola (aka Father Christmas). After writing your Christmas wish list, strike out south, via **Polignano a Mare**, to the famous **Grotte di Castellana**, Italy’s longest network of subterranean caves. From here, a two- to three-day drive south will take you through some of the finest Valle d’Itria towns, including **Alberobello**, with its hobbitlike, Unesco-lauded *trulli* houses, wine-producing **Locorotondo**, beautiful baroque **Martina Franca** and chic, whitewashed **Ostuni**. Just outside Ostuni you’ll find Il Frantoio, one of the region’s top *masserie* (farmhouses). Consider checking in for a day or two of long, lazy lunches and general bucolic bliss. In Martina Franca, you get just a small taste of what is awaiting you in **Lecce**, otherwise known as the ‘Florence of the South’ for its operatic architectural ensembles and scholarly bent. Hire a bike and spend at least three or four days here before moving on to **Galatina**, its basilica awash with astounding frescoes. From here, head east to the fortified port of **Otranto**. Hit the sugar-soft, white-sand beaches of the Baia dei Turchi, and then push south along the wild, vertiginous coastline to **Santa Maria di Leuca**, the very tip of the Italian stiletto. Watch the Adriatic and Ionian seas kiss and make up before heading north to the island city of **Gallipoli**. Dive into its elegant old town and savour the flavour of its famous raw sea urchins and octopuses. You’ve earned it.



Nine Days The Deep South

Start your soul saunter in the cave city of **Matera**. Spend a couple of days exploring its famous *sassi*, as well as the *chiese rupestri* (cave churches) on a hike along the Gravina. From here, continue south to the **Parco Nazionale del Pollino** for a serious nature fix in Italy's largest national park. Base yourself in **Terranova di Pollino** for four days, hiking through pine woods and beech forest to Basilicata's highest peak, Monte Pollino, and dancing to the *zampogne* in the Albanian villages of **San Paolo Albanese** and **San Costantino Albanese**. Don't leave the park without spotting the rare Bosnian pine tree, *pino loricato*. Lungs filled with mountain air, it's time to head west to the gorgeous coastal gem of **Maratea**. Pass a couple of days soothing your muscles in the town's crystalline Tyrrhenian waters, kicking back at local bars and feasting on fresh seafood. From here, head south to Calabria on the SS18 coastal road. If it's September, you might catch a chilli-eating competition in **Diamante**. Otherwise, keep moving until you reach Calabria's most arresting coastal town, **Tropea**, where your journey ends with piercing views and sunsets.

Nine Days Campanian Island Hop

Three islands stud the Bay of Naples, and each has its own distinct feeling and appeal. Fly into **Naples** and dive into the city's heady jumble of hyperactive street life, castles and art-crammed palaces. On the third day catch a hydrofoil to **Capri**, your first island stop. Amble lazily through the chichi laneways of Capri Town and Anacapri, roam the ruins of an imperial Roman villa, and be rowed into the world's most stunning grotto. On day five catch a ferry west to **Ischia**, the biggest of the bay islands. Spend your three days rambling through luxurious gardens and soaking in the island's famous thermal waters. Sample some of the island's renowned white wine and tuck into its most celebrated dish, *coniglio all'ischitana* (Ischian-style rabbit). If you can manage to pull yourself away, catch a ferry across to tiny **Procida** on day eight for two days of lo-fi bliss. Relive scenes from the film *Il Postino* in pastel-hued Marina Corricella, eat seafood by the beach and take a dive to explore the island's rich marine life.

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