



Italy

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Best Places to Eat

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- ➔ All'Osteria Bottega (p463)
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- ➔ Marina Grande (p489)
- ➔ Antiche Carampane (p459)

Best Museums & Galleries

- ➔ Vatican Museums (p428)
- ➔ Galleria degli Uffizi (p465)
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- ➔ Museo e Galleria Borghese (p432)

Why Go?

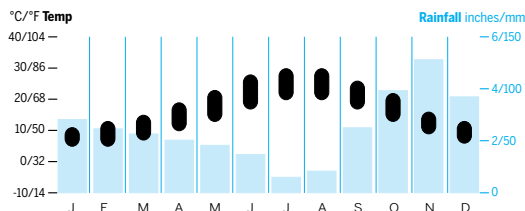
A favourite destination since the days of the 18th-century Grand Tour, Italy may appear to hold few surprises. Its iconic monuments and masterpieces are known the world over, while cities like Rome, Florence and Venice need no introduction.

Yet Italy is far more than the sum of its sights. Its fiercely proud regions maintain customs and culinary traditions dating back centuries, resulting in passionate festivals and delectable food at every turn. And then there are those timeless landscapes, from Tuscany's gentle hillsides to icy Alpine peaks, vertiginous coastlines and spitting southern volcanoes.

Drama is never far away in Italy and its theatrical streets and piazzas provide endless people-watching, ideally over a leisurely lunch or cool evening drink. This is, after all, the land of *dolce far niente* (sweet idleness) where simply hanging out is a pleasure and time seems to matter just that little bit less.

When to Go

Rome



Apr–May Perfect spring weather; ideal for exploring vibrant cities and blooming countryside.

Jun–Jul Summer means beach weather and a packed festival calendar.

Sep–Oct Enjoy mild temperatures, autumn cuisine and the *vendemia* (grape harvest).



Italy Highlights

- 1 Rome** (p422) Seeing awe-inspiring art and monuments.
- 2 Venice** (p452) Cruising past Gothic palaces, churches and crumbling piazzas.
- 3 Florence** (p464) Exploring this exquisite Renaissance time capsule.
- 4 Naples** (p479) Working

up an appetite for the world's best pizza.

- 5 Turin** (p444) Visiting Turin's regal palaces and magnificent museums.
- 6 Siena** (p474) Admiring glorious Gothic architecture and Renaissance art.
- 7 Amalfi Coast** (p487) Basking in inspiring sea views.
- 8 Verona** (p451) Enjoying an open-air opera in one of Italy's most romantic cities.
- 9 Bologna** (p462) Feasting on foodie delights and medieval architecture in hedonistic Bologna.
- 10 Syracuse** (p493) Revelling in drama at an ancient Greek theatre.