



# Italy



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# Itineraries



## 9 DAYS Italian Highlights

A perfect introduction to Italy, this easy tour ticks off some of the country's most seductive sights, including Roman ruins, Renaissance masterpieces and the world's most beautiful lagoon city.

Start with three days in mighty **Rome**, punctuating blockbuster sights like the Colosseum, Palatino (Palatine Hill) and Sistine Chapel with market grazing in the Campo de' Fiori, boutique-hopping in Monti and late-night revelry in Trastevere.

On day four, head to Renaissance **Florence**. Drop in on Michelangelo's *David* at the Galleria dell'Accademia and pick your favourite Botticelli at the Galleria degli Uffizi. For a change of pace, escape to the Tuscan countryside on day six for a day trip to Gothic **Siena**, home of the biannual Palio horse race.

The following day, continue north for three unforgettable days in **Venice**. Check off musts like the mosaic-encrusted Basilica di San Marco, art-slung Gallerie dell'Accademia and secret passageways of the Palazzo Ducale, then live like a true Venetian, scouring seafood-laden stalls at the Rialto Market, noshing on the city's famous *cicheti* (Venetian tapas) and toasting with a Veneto prosecco.



**2**  
WEEKS

## Northern Jewels

This two-week route takes in some of northern Italy's most extraordinary assets, from cultural-powerhouse cities to one of Italy's most arresting stretches of coastline.

Begin with a trio of days in **Venice**, its trading-port pedigree echoed in the Near East accents of its architecture and the synagogues of its 500-year-old Ghetto. Don't miss big-hitters like the Basilica di San Marco and the Gallerie dell'Accademia, but leave time for less well trodden treasures, among them the Chiesa della Madonna dell'Orto. Day four, continue to **Ravenna**, former capital of the Western Roman Empire and home to eight Unesco World Heritage-listed sites, including the basilicas of San Vitale and Sant'Apollinare Nuovo adorned with extraordinary Byzantine mosaics.

Spend days six and seven in erudite **Bologna**, home to the world's fifth-largest church and its oldest university. The university district is the location of the Pinacoteca Nazionale, its powerhouse art collection including works by regional master Parmigianino. Delve into Bologna gastronomy in the Quadrilatero, a district bursting with produce stalls, fragrant delis, restaurants and an appetite-piquing food hall.

Burn off those excess calories with three days exploring **Florence** on foot. Find some of Western art's most revered works, including Michelangelo's chiselled *David* and Botticelli's ethereal paintings *Primavera* and *La nascita di Venere*. The city's Renaissance credentials extend to its architecture, which includes Filippo Brunelleschi's show-stopping Duomo. Even the city's gardens are manicured masterpieces, exemplified by the supremely elegant Giardino di Boboli.

On day 11, pit-stop in **Pisa** to eye-up the architectural ensemble that makes up the Piazza dei Miracoli, then continue to **Lucca**. Pedal 'n picnic atop its centuries-old city walls and meditate on Tintoretto's soul-stirring *Last Supper* in Cattedrale di San Martino. Human ingenuity and natural beauty merge on Liguria's World Heritage-listed **Cinque Terre** – the five colourful villages seemingly defy their precarious natural setting. Enjoy two days exploring medieval village streets, remarkable terraced gardens, *muretti* (dry stone walls) and breathtaking coastal walks.

4  
WEEKS

## The Grand Tour

From elegant northern cities and lakes to ancient southern coasts and dwellings, this grand tour encapsulates Italy's inimitable natural and cultural diversity.

Start in style with two days in **Milan**. Shop among coveted boutiques, dine at hot-spot restaurants and demand an encore at the gilded La Scala. Come day three, continue to **Lago di Como** (Lake Como), basing yourself in Como or Bellagio and spending two romantic days among its sublime waterside villas and villages. If you haven't been wooed by Hollywood royalty, continue to **Venice** on day five, where the following trio of days burst with Titians and Tintoretos, artisan studios and convivial *bacari* (bars).

On day eight, shoot southwest to **Florence**, allowing three days to tackle its heavy-weight art collections and sink your teeth into its *bistecca alla fiorentina* (T-bone steak). Gluttonous acts are forgiven on day 11 as you travel to the pilgrimage city of **Assisi**, its Gothic basilica lavished with Giotto frescoes. Head southwest to **Rome** on day 13 and spend three full days exploring its two-millennia-worth of temples, churches, piazzas and artistic marvels.

On day 17, slip south to **Naples** and its explosion of baroque architecture and subterranean ruins. Day-trip to the ruins of Pompeii on day 19, then sail to **Capri** on day 20 for three seductive days of boating, hikes and piazza-side posing. If it's high season, catch a ferry directly to laid-back **Sorrento** on day 23, spending a night in town before hitting the hairpin turns of the glorious **Amalfi Coast**. Allow two days in chi-chi Positano, where you can hike the heavenly Sentiero degli Dei (Walk of the Gods). Spend day 26 in historic Amalfi before continuing to sky-high Ravello, long-time haunt of composers and Hollywood stars. Stay the night to soak up its understated elegance, and spend the following morning soaking up its uber-romantic gardens.

After an evening of bar-hopping in upbeat **Salerno**, shoot inland to **Matera** on day 28 to experience its World Heritage-listed *sassi* (former cave dwellings) and dramatic Matera Gravina gorge. Come day 30, continue through to architecturally astounding **Lecce**, the 'Florence of the South' and your final cross-country stop.





**2**  
WEEKS

## Venice to Milan

Aristocratic villas, renegade frescoes, star-struck lovers and cult-status wines; this easy two-week journey serves up a feast of northern assets. Begin with a couple of days in **Venice**, sampling the city's enviable art, architecture and seafood. In the 16th century the Venetian summer began early in June, when every household loaded onto barges for a summer sojourn along the nearby **Brenta Riviera**. You too can make like a Venetian on a boat trip along the Riviera, marvelling at the Tiepolo frescoes of Villa Pisani Nazionale and snooping around Palladio's Villa Foscari.

Boat trips along the Brenta Riviera end in **Padua** where you can overnight overlooking the Basilica di Sant'Antonio. Book ahead to see Padua's crowning glory, Giotto's frescoed Cappella degli Scrovegni.

Day six train it to **Vicenza**. Spend the afternoon watching sunlight ripple across the soaring facades of Palladio's *palazzi* (mansions) and illuminate the Villa Valmarana 'ai Nani', with frescoes by father and son Giambattista and Giandomenico Tiepolo, then head to **Verona** for three or four days. Here you can view Mantegnas at Basilica di San Zeno Maggiore, ponder modern art at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna Achille Forti, and find tranquillity in the 16th-century oasis of Giardino Giusti. Listen to opera in the Roman Arena and wander balconied backstreets where Romeo wooed Juliet. From Verona, consider also a day trip northwest to **Valpolicella** to sip prized Amarone (red wine), or back east to **Soave** for a sampling of its namesake DOC white wine.

Day 11 dip southwest to **Mantua** for an impressive display of dynastic power and patronage at the Gonzagas' fortified family pad, Palazzo Ducale. Finish with a two-day stop in **Cremona**, where you can chat with artisans in one of the 100 violin-making shops around Piazza del Comune before hearing the instruments in action at the Teatro Amilcare Ponchielli. Wrap up your tour in Italy's financial and fashion epicentre, **Milan**. On-trend shopping and dining aside, the city is home to a string of artistic treasures, among them Leonardo da Vinci's iconic *The Last Supper*.



Top: Venice's Grand Canal and the Basilica di Santa Maria delle Salute (p371)

Bottom: Palazzo Ducale (p314), Mantua



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## 1 WEEK Lakes Tour

Tickling the snowcapped Alps, Italy's glacial lakes have lured romantics for centuries, from European royalty to American silver-screen pin-ups.

A short drive northwest of Malpensa airport, **Milan**, brings you to the edge of serene Lago Maggiore. Start with three nights in belle époque **Stresa** and visit the lavish **Borromean Islands**: Isola Madre for its romantic gardens and wisteria-clad Staircase of the Dead; and Isola Bella for its art collection, ballrooms and shell-encrusted grotto. Take the funicular up to **Monte Mottarone** and day-trip to **Lago d'Orta** and **Isola San Giulio**.

Day four, head north from Stresa to **Verbania**, picnicking amid the tulips of Villa Taranto before gliding east across the lake to **Laveno** and onto celebrity haunt **Como**. Amble the flower-laden lakeside to view art exhibits at Villa Olmo, hire a boat and/or hike the mountainous Triangolo Lariano. If you're ambitious you can walk to chic **Bellagio**. Otherwise, take the high and exhilarating 32km lakeside road from Como to Bellagio, lunching with magnificent views before one last romantic night lakeside.

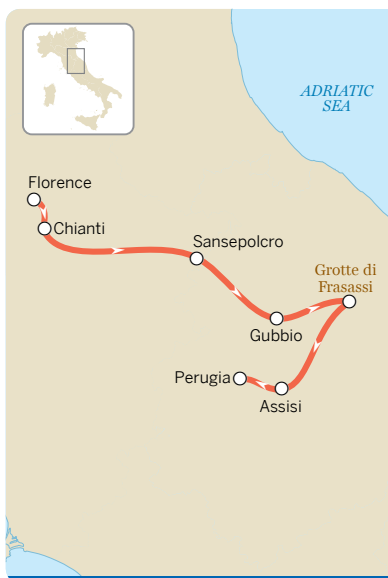


## 2 WEEKS Southern Coastal Route

Graeco-Roman ruins, a Bourbon palace and beautiful coastline: crank up the romance on this two-week journey through the sun-baked south.

Enjoy three days in exhilarating **Naples**, day-tripping it to **Caserta** to explore Italy's largest royal palace. On day four, head south to the Amalfi Coast for two nights in **Positano** and a day in **Amalfi**. Overnight in **Ravello** en route to **Salerno**. Week two, continue to the World Heritage-listed temples of **Paestum**, then through the **Parco Nazionale del Cilento, Vallo di Diano e Alburni** to cognoscenti coastal jewel **Maratea**. Spend two nights in town, followed by lunch in **Tropea** (one of Calabria's most beautiful coast towns) on your way to **Villa San Giovanni**.

Sail to Sicily and treat yourself to a couple of nights in fashionable **Taormina**, Sicily's former Byzantine capital and home to the world's most spectacularly located Greek amphitheatre. Sun-kissed and relaxed, continue to **Catania** on day 13, taking two days to soak up the city's ancient sites, baroque architecture, vibrant market life and charismatic bar scene.



## 10 DAYS Central Italian Escape

Revered vineyards, medieval hilltop towns and Unesco-lauded artwork: this trip takes in evocative landscapes, from well-trodden Tuscany to lesser-known Umbria and Le Marche.

Begin with two cultured days in **Florence**, then enjoy a pair of decadent days in **Chianti**, toasting to the area's vino and indulging in lazy lunches and countryside cycling. On day five, head east, pit-stopping in tiny **Sansepolcro** to meditate on Pietro della Francesca's trio of masterpieces and calling it a night in the Umbrian hilltop town of **Gubbio**. Spend the following day exploring the town's Gothic streets, then drive into Le Marche on day seven for a guided tour of the incredible **Grotte di Frasassi** cave system.

The same day, head back into Umbria to **Assisi**, one of Italy's most beautiful medieval towns. Stay two nights, taking in the frescoes of the Basilica di San Francesco and finding peace on the hiking trails flanking Monte Subasio. Come day nine, make your way to the lively university city of **Perugia**, where your adventure ends with brooding Gothic architecture and world-famous Baci Perugina chocolates.



## 2 WEEKS Northeastern Interlude

Laced with cross-cultural influences, hot-list wines, world-famous charcuterie and stunning Alpine landscapes, this lesser-known corner of the country is ripe for discovery.

After three days in **Venice**, head east to Trieste via the Roman ruins of **Aquileia** and the medieval heart of **Grado**. Take two days in **Trieste** for its gilded cafes, literary heritage and central European air, then catch a ferry to **Muggia**, the only Italian settlement on the Istrian peninsula. Day seven, head inland for celebrated whites in the **Collio** wine region. Spend two days in **Udine**, dropping in on the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art and sidestepping to **Cividale dei Friuli**, home to Europe's only surviving example of Lombard architecture and artwork.

On day 10, pit-stop in **San Daniele del Friuli** for Italy's best prosciutto before hitting breathtaking mountain scenery on your way to ski town **Cortina d'Ampezzo**. Allow two days to hit the slopes, on winter skis or in summer hiking boots. Head south on day 14 for afternoon bubbles in the prosecco heartland of **Conegliano** before wrapping things up in Venice.

# Behind the Scenes

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## OUR READERS

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# Map Legend

## Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

## Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

## Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping
- Hut/Shelter

## Eating

- Eating

## Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

## Entertainment

- Entertainment

## Shopping

- Shopping

## Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

## Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

## Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

## Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

## Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

## Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

## Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

## Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



**Stephanie Ong**

**Milan & the Lakes** Stephanie Ong is a writer/editor who's lived in Melbourne, Barcelona, London and now finds herself based in Milan, Italy. She's written travel pieces for various publications, including coffee-table books and guidebooks for Lonely Planet and Le Cool Publishing. When she's not immersed in the world of writing and travel, she's eating well and complaining about tax – like every good Italian.



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**Regis St Louis**

**Turin, Piedmont & Cinque Terre** Regis grew up in a small town in the American Midwest – the kind of place that fuels big dreams of travel – and developed an early fascination with foreign dialects and world cultures. He spent his formative years learning Russian and a handful of Romance languages, which has served him well on journeys across much of the globe. Regis has contributed to more than 50 Lonely Planet titles, covering destinations across six continents. His

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For Lonely Planet she explores the cobbled lanes of Rome and the azure seas of Sardinia, samples oysters in Brittany and careens through hill-top villages in Provence; and adventures along Iceland's surreal lava fields, sparkling fjords

and glacier tongues. A travel writer for over two decades, Alexis has lived in Antarctica for a year, crossed the Pacific by sailboat and written books on her journeys through Asia, Europe and the Americas. She's also a painter – visit [www.alexisaverbeck.com](http://www.alexisaverbeck.com) – and promotes travel and adventure on video and television.

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## 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 Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, 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

**Naples & Campania; Sicily** Cristian has contributed to over 30 Lonely Planet guides to date, including *New York City, Italy, Venice & the Veneto, Naples & the Amalfi Coast, Denmark, Copenhagen, Sweden and Singapore*. Lonely Planet work aside, his musings on travel, food, culture and design appear in numerous publications around the world, including the *Telegraph* (UK) and *Corriere del Mezzogiorno* (Italy). When not on the road, you'll find the reformed playwright

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**Trentino & South Tyrol; Sicily** Gregor is a US-based writer whose love of foreign languages and curiosity about what's around the next bend have taken him to dozens of countries on five continents. Chronic wanderlust has also led him to visit all 50 states and most Canadian provinces on countless road trips through his native North America. Since 2000, Gregor has regularly contributed to Lonely Planet guides, with a focus on Europe and the Americas. Gregor earned

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### Peter Dragicovich

**Venice & the Veneto** After a successful career in niche newspaper and magazine publishing, both in his native New Zealand and in Australia, Peter finally gave into Kiwi wanderlust, giving up staff jobs to chase his diverse roots around much of Europe. Over the last decade he's written dozens of guidebooks for Lonely Planet on an oddly disparate collection of countries, all of which he's come to love. He once again calls Auckland, New Zealand, his home – although his current nomadic existence means he's often elsewhere.



### Duncan Garwood

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OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

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