Why Go?

Italians really do know how to live well. Ever since the Etruscans came, liked what they saw and decided to stay and party, the locals have embraced the finer things in life. Here, family, faith, friendship, food and wine reign supreme, contributing to the famous Italian 

dolce vita

(sweet life).

Travellers have been falling under Italy’s spell ever since the days of the 18th-century Grand Tour, enticed by its sun-kissed landscape, delectable cuisine and extraordinary art. This is the home of gently rolling Tuscan hills and postcard-perfect coastlines, and the place where simple dishes such as pizza and pasta regularly attain culinary perfection. It’s where Michelangelo shocked the establishment with his assertively humanist sculptures and Caravaggio shocked everyone else with his criminal highjinks and darkly atmospheric paintings.

So make like Julius Caesar. Come and see – you’re bound to be conquered.

When to Go

Rome

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Apr & May

Perfect spring temperatures and blooming wildflowers make hikers happy.

Jul

Summer means beach weather and a packed festival calendar.

Oct

Enjoy mild temperatures, autumn cuisine and the vendemmia (grape harvest).
One Week
A one-week whistle-stop tour of Italy is enough to take in the country’s three most famous cities. After a couple of days exploring Venice’s unique canal-scape, head south to Florence, Italy’s great Renaissance city. Two days will whet your appetite for the artistic and architectural treasures waiting to be discovered on your final days in Rome.

Two Weeks
After the first week, continue south for some sea and southern passion. Spend a day dodging traffic in Naples, a day investigating the ruins at Pompeii and a day or two admiring the Amalfi Coast. Then backtrack to Naples for a ferry to Palermo and the gastronomic delights of Sicily, or to Cagliari and Sardinia’s magical beaches.

Essential Food & Drink
» Pizza Two varieties: Roman, with a thin crispy base; and Neapolitan, with a higher, more doughy base. The best are always prepared in a forno a legna (wood-fired oven).
» Gelato Popular ice-cream flavours include fragola (strawberry), nocciola (hazelnut) and stracciatella (milk with chocolate shavings).
» Wine Ranges from big-name reds such as Piedmont’s Barolo to light whites from Sardinia and sparkling prosecco from the Veneto.
» Caffè Join the locals for a morning cappuccino or post-lunch espresso, both taken standing at a bar.