

TRAVEL TIPS



For our guests traveling to Italy

This guide is to help you experience Italy as a seasoned traveler. Our goal is for you to avoid surprises, hassles or guesswork to have the best trip possible.

Compiled by Chuck Cinelli and Cynthia Shutt

Accommodations All of our hotels are equipped with air conditioning and heat. In an effort to be more energy efficient, government regulations are in place throughout Italy to determine the specific time of year when air conditioning and heating systems will be switched on and off at hotels. Please note that air conditioners and heaters will not always be turned on during the fall and spring due to these regulations. Most hotels in Italy do not offer swimming pools, due to their location and lack of space. Those that do will typically operate their swimming pools in the summer months only, between June and August, depending on the weather.

Accommodations On some programs, there are a limited number of single and triple rooms. Double rooms usually consist of 2 beds. Triple rooms are normally a standard double room with 2 beds. A cot or rollaway bed may be added to the double room at some hotels, based on room size and fire codes. When triples are not available, appropriate charges for single and twin accommodations will be assessed. We make every effort to accommodate your specific requests and forward them to the hotels. These requests cannot be guaranteed as hotels may not always be able to honor them. Check-in times are set by individual hotel properties and vary by hotel. Depending on your arrival time, there may be a delay in gaining access to your room as most hotels offer afternoon check-in. We ask guests to observe check-out times at all properties as designated by the hotel. Some hotels require a credit card imprint or your passport information upon check-in in order to activate telephones in the rooms and for potential incidental charges. Most hotels charge an access fee for using phones in hotel rooms. Please check with the front desk personnel at each hotel for specific policies. Hotel membership programs are not applicable. In certain countries, hotel rooms tend to be smaller than standard U.S. accommodations. Please be assured that we use high quality properties throughout each country.

ADA The Americans with Disabilities Act does not apply outside of the United States. We will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the special needs of tour participants. Persons requiring individual assistance must be accompanied by a companion who is capable of, and totally responsible for, providing the necessary assistance. Neither our personnel nor its suppliers may physically lift or assist clients onto transportation vehicles. We regret that we cannot provide individual assistance to a tour member who has special mobility, dietary or other like needs.

Arrival Day Suggestions If you have time before your tour begins to explore Rome, you'll find plenty to do! Rome is a city full of history and art. Here are some ideas of places to visit: **BOCCA DELLA VERITA:** Visit the 'mouth of truth' made famous in the movie Roman Holiday. **PANTHEON/PIAZZA NAVONA:** The Pantheon is a magnificent Roman building, once a temple and now a church. Piazza Navona, one of Rome's most elegant squares, is just around the corner and also worth a visit. **PIAZZA DEL CAMPIDOGGIO:** Visit Rome's Capitol Hill, realized by Michelangelo, but founded in ancient Rome. It houses three important museums. **CAPITOLINE MUSEUMS:** This is one of the most important Roman museums holding important works of ancient Rome as well as great works by Bernini and Caravaggio. **Piazza del Campidoglio.** **ROMAN NATIONAL MUSEUM:** This Museum houses one of the most important archaeological collections in the world, with important sculptures, mosaics, and frescoes coming from Roman bath complexes and villas. **SAINT PETER IN CHAINS CHURCH (San Pietro in Vincoli):** Visit the church which houses one of Michelangelo's greatest masterpieces, the statue of Moses and the original chains they used to imprison St. Peter in Rome. **CASTEL SANT'ANGELO:** This castle was built by the emperor Adrian as his mausoleum and now contains an art and military museum. See beautiful views of the Tiber River and Rome down below. **BORGHESE COLLECTION:** An art gallery containing a mixture of Roman sculptures and modern art collected by the Borghese family. It is exclusive and requires tickets to be purchased in advance. **SYNAGOGUE and the JEWISH GHETTO:** This beautiful synagogue was built in 1904 and houses an important museum with an exhibition dedicated to the Jewish Community of Rome. Don't forget to walk around the old Jewish Ghetto (since 1556) if you are in the area. **ROMAN FORUM AREA:** The forum was the center of daily life for the Romans. Many sections of the old city can be visited, including the Palatine Hill, Trajan's Markets and the Imperial Forum. **ST. PETER'S DOME:** Climb to the top of the basilica's dome for the best views of the city of Rome and Vatican city down below. **RESTAURANTS:** Great areas to try for local restaurants include Trastevere, Piazza Navona, near the Trevi Fountain and the Campo dei Fiori area. If you need to take a taxi to explore on y

Arrival Day Suggestions Due to varied flight schedules and arrival times of our tour guests, there are no scheduled activities prior to dinner on arrival day. Should your flight schedule allow for an early arrival, enjoy this opportunity for some independent exploration. If you are staying post tour, your Tour Manager will be available to offer suggestions for your additional time in the area.

Clothing & Packing Tips If you are taking prescription medication, please be sure to take an adequate supply for your tour and a few additional days, in original prescription containers. Medication should be packed in your carry-on baggage. Do not place it in your checked luggage. You may want to carry an extra prescription in a separate bag in case medication is lost.

Clothing & Packing Tips As you prepare to explore Italy, enjoy a casual dress style and be sure to pack comfortable walking shoes as there is a good amount of walking throughout the museums and hilly cobblestone streets. Shorts and sleeveless shirts are not permitted when visiting churches throughout Italy. It is recommended to bring clothing that may be worn in layers that may be added or removed as the temperature changes. The fall and early spring months can be rainy at times; therefore, rain gear is suggested. You will find items such as a raincoat, umbrella and waterproof shoes useful. In the colder months, it is not uncommon for Venice to flood for a few hours, in which case boots can come in handy. Rubber boots are also sold at many local shops. For special evenings, smart casual attire is preferred. Jeans, shorts and sneakers are not recommended.

Communicating to Home Leave a copy of your tour itinerary at home with your emergency contact person and a copy of your passport. If there is an emergency at home and your family is not able to reach you at your hotel or ship, please direct them to call Collette's emergency line at +401-727- 9000 and they will be directed to press 1 for 24-hour assistance. The emergency response person will act swiftly to determine your whereabouts and ensure you are notified to call home immediately. If you are considering using your cell phone while traveling internationally, it's a good idea to check with your cell provider concerning the accessibility and data charges for overseas calls, texting and emailing for your specific destination.

Currency Your personal bank card may work at local ATM machines in the destination you are traveling to and would dispense local currency. This may be most convenient and offer the best available exchange rate especially since the availability of exchange houses and banks that will exchange money are decreasing. Please contact your bank to determine if this option is available, that your PIN number will be accepted, to inform them that you are traveling and to determine if any charges apply for each transaction. Most banks will charge a small fee for European ATM transactions. You may exchange your money at airports, exchange bureaus, some banks and at some hotels (although the exchange rate and fee is usually higher at hotels). In most cases, a commission charge will be assessed to exchange your money. Locations in the city usually offer a better currency exchange rate than airports. We recommend carrying only a few major credit cards. Credit card purchases often provide an extra guarantee on your purchase (check with your specific credit card company for details and fees). It is advisable to contact any credit card company you intend utilizing while on tour before you depart to notify them where you will be traveling, to avoid any rejection of services. The currency is the Euro. Please note that many places in Europe will not accept 50 and 100 US dollar bills as there has been a high rate of counterfeit notes circulating. Local currency will be needed for lunches, gratuities and small items such as postcards and postage. If optional tours are made available to purchase, please note that credit cards must have an expiration date of greater than 30 days from the start of the tour.

Disclaimer Any person entering or leaving the EU and carrying cash of a value of €10,000 or more must declare it. The term "cash" includes currency notes, coins, bankers' drafts, checks and travelers' checks. Travelers who fail to declare any amount over €10,000 will face stiff sanctions and could face penalties of as much as €8,000.

Electricity An adaptor (which changes the physical plug) and/or converter (which changes the electric current) are necessary if you plan to use an appliance with voltage different from the standard within the country you are visiting. Please note, if your appliance has dual voltage you may still need an adaptor for the plug. When packing your electronic items for travel, please review the converter electric current level to make sure it is the same or greater than the items you are planning on using. If you plan on utilizing or transporting a sleep apnea machine, please remember to pack an extension cord and adapter plug to ensure proper function. Electricity Voltage in Italy is 220V.

Elevation The highest elevation encountered on this tour is 2,400 feet.

Gratuities Gratuities should be extended on a voluntary basis. Customary gratuities have not been included for hotel housekeeping staff, local sightseeing guides, transfer drivers, motor coach drivers and Tour Managers. Gratuities should be given in direct proportion to the level of professionalism and personal service extended to you. With this in mind, we have created a guide for you: Tour Manager: 5-8 US Dollars (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each travel day; Local Guide: 2-3 US Dollars (or equivalent in local currency) per person; Motor Coach Driver: 3-5 US Dollars (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each travel day; Hotel Housekeeping Staff: 2-3 US Dollars (or equivalent in local currency) per room per day; Applicable gratuities for bellmen, doormen and dining room staff for group meals have been included.

Helpful Hints Here is a list of entities we recommend you contact before you depart on your tour: 1.) Your cell phone/mobile carrier if you are planning on using your device. You will want to confirm you will have access in the area(s) you will visit and inquire about any charges you may incur. 2.) Your credit card company for any card(s) you plan to use. Make sure the card company knows when and where you will be traveling to avoid any charges being declined. 3.) Your bank, so you can use your ATM/Debit card worry-free. If you are travelling to another country, your bank will be able to tell you if your card will work at the ATM machines to dispense local currency, including if your PIN will be accepted. Also indicate if you plan to use your Debit card as a Credit card if your card has that option. Your bank will advise you of any charges for each transaction as well. Leave a copy of your itinerary, hotel list (included in your tour documents bundle) and a contact number with a designated person in case an emergency comes up while you're away and someone needs to reach you. During your flight, make sure to stand up and walk around as much as possible, and drink plenty of water. These simple suggestions will help you stay comfortable, particularly during long flights.

Helpful Hints As an added measure of confidence while traveling internationally, visit www.travel.state.gov. The U.S. State Department offers a "Smart Travelers Enrollment Program" (STEP), which you may individually choose to enroll in. This allows the U.S. to better assist with lost passports or in the event of any emergency abroad. Included Features Included in your tour is the use of personal audio headsets, designed for better communication between you and your guides throughout your tour. A personal radio and earpiece will be distributed at the beginning of your tour, and you should bring these with you every day. They will be collected once again at the very end of the tour, typically on your last evening. You will be responsible for returning these devices and assessed a replacement fee should you fail to return them upon completion of the tour. Included Features Your tour package features: motor coach transportation, accommodations, and hotel luggage handling, along with the meals, sightseeing and admission charges outlined in your itinerary. Applicable gratuities for bellmen, doormen and dining room wait staff are also included.

Local Cuisine You're in for a treat as you explore the country that is so famous for its delicious food. Italians eat their meals in courses, especially lunch and dinner. Courses include an antipasto (appetizer); primo piatto (first course) – which is often the pasta or risotto dish; secondo piatto (second or main course), which is the meat or protein; contorno (the side item); and dolce (dessert). While you may not have all courses at each meal, you often will have at least three. Italy is known for pasta, and it comes in many different shapes and sizes. There is an enormous variety of sauces as well, which vary widely from region to region. Panna is not traditional as well as heavy cream sauces such as alfredo (however you may find these items in more tourist-oriented restaurants). Traditional pasta dishes consist of fresh pasta with fresh ingredients. In Italian cuisine there is no such dish as "spaghetti and meatballs" or "chicken parmigiana." Both dishes are American creations invented in the 1900s by Italian immigrants to create a full dinner. Eggplant parmigiana in Italy does not represent the American version in any way. Thin pizza with an array of toppings is a local favorite. Pizza is always cooked to order, usually in a wood oven. Although the look may be similar to American pizza, the taste is very different. Also, grilled meats or seafood and fresh seasonal vegetables are available throughout Italy. On this tour through Italy, local specialties include a buccatini all'Amatriciana in Rome, hearty Tuscan vegetable soup known as ribollita, pappardelle pasta with a wild boar sauce and local sausages and sheep's milk cheeses, along with famous regional wines. In Venice, try some of the tasty "cichetti," or small appetizers served at local bars, accompanied by a wine based drink known as a spritz. Breakfasts are generally an expanded continental buffet with yogurts, fruit, meats, cheeses, hard boiled eggs, breads and cereals, but do not typically include hot items, as Italians typically enjoy their heavier meal at lunch time. Coffee in Italy is also very different and commonly known as "café" (espresso). Italian caffè is much stronger than American coffee and can be ordered in a variety of ways. Caffé Americano is a very diluted espresso which may be more to your liking if you do not like strong coffee. Traditionally coffee is not enjoyed during dinner but may be enjoyed socially throughout the day. Traditionally cappuccino (espresso and steamed milk) is enjoyed at breakfast only and is never flavored with anything except for the possible sprinkle of cocoa. Coffee is rarely enjoyed after a meal in Italy. If you choose to visit a restaurant outside of the tourist-centric areas of Italy, please be aware that many of them will not have an English menu and will have staff that speaks limited English, so brush up on your Italian!

Local Guides In order to further enhance your experience of this destination, six local guides have been arranged throughout this tour. Refer to the gratuities section for tipping recommendations.

Luggage Remember the 3-1-1 rule: Each airline passenger is allowed to bring 1 quart-sized bag containing no more than 3 ounces of any liquids, gels, and aerosols in their carry-on bag. Any liquids, including water bottles, that don't fit in the one quart-sized bag or are larger than 3 ounces will be discarded by security. Common items that must comply with this rule include toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, and lotion. For a complete list of what is allowed and not allowed to bring on a plane, visit www.tsa.gov.

Luggage Your day of departure is almost here, and it's time to think about what to pack. We have a few guidelines to help you. But before you pack anything, you must check with your airline for any luggage fees or restrictions. These can vary widely depending on your carrier and destination. Let's begin. The first thing to consider is how many bags to bring. We recommend one large bag that will be checked on the plane and onto the touring bus and one carry-on bag. It's very important you keep this in mind. We have limited space on our buses, so limiting the bags ensures there's room for everyone's luggage. Your larger bag can't be more than 62" in length, height and width and cannot weigh more than 23kgs/50lbs. Your carry-on cannot be bigger than 17" x 12" x 10" so it will fit under the seat or in the overhead racks on the buses. Your carry-on should be a size that you can carry comfortably. You will use this bag to hold your personal items during sightseeing trips. Please note that if you bring more than one checked bag and one carry-on, we cannot guarantee there will be room for them on the bus. You'll need to store or ship any additional luggage at your own expense. If there is room for your additional luggage, we will charge a fee of 4 USD per bag per hotel. It's also very important that all your bags be labeled clearly. In your packet you will find a plastic luggage tag. Please attach it to the bag you plan to check. There is also a paper luggage tag. This tag must be attached to your checked bag once you arrive at the first hotel. The name on this tag should match the information on your reservation exactly, so the Tour Manager and all baggage handlers can properly identify the bag as yours. This will ensure the bag gets delivered to you quickly and efficiently. Finally, we recommend you purchase travel insurance to ensure peace of mind while you're on tour. We cannot assume liability or accept claims for loss or damage to luggage and personal effects due to breakage, theft or normal wear and tear that results from hotel, airline and group carrier handling. But we offer comprehensive "No Worries Travel Protection" for your convenience. With insurance, you'll be able to focus on creating wonderful memories, not worrying about your luggage.

Luggage Guests flying to the United States from all international destinations will require extra screening when carrying powdered products weighing 12 oz./ 350 ml or more in carry-on luggage for security reasons. This added security measure will apply to all powders, with the exception of baby formula and medications. For your convenience, please consider packing any non-essential powders in your checked bag. Items that cannot be verified by a TSA officer risk being confiscated. Please visit www.tsa.gov for more information.

Meals Your itinerary indicates which meals are included on your tour. Please take a moment to review. Guests with special dietary requirements must advise their Client Care Agent as early as possible to ensure that the restaurants are given ample notice. Also, please advise your Tour Manager at the beginning of your tour. Your requests are important to us, and we make every effort to accommodate these requests. Please be advised that the average price for meals (not inclusive of tax and gratuity) where you are traveling is as follows: lunch 15 to 25 US dollars and dinner 30 to 45 US dollars. Breakfasts are generally continental buffets (no hot items). In general, the water is safe in Italy; however, bottled water is the norm when dining and for sightseeing days. Dinner in Italy usually begins around 7:00 p.m. at the earliest. European coffee tends to be stronger in Italy, so you may ask for water or milk to dilute it.

Name Badges Included in your tour documents bundle is your personalized name tag. We ask that you put this on before your first gathered event and wear it throughout your tour. This helps your fellow travelers to get to know you and for your Tour Manager to better identify you in large groups.

Seat Belts The European Union (EU) has adopted a directive (2003/20EU) regarding the compulsory wearing of seatbelts while traveling on your vehicle when equipped. Failure to comply could result in a PERSONAL fine of up to Euro 750. Collette will NOT issue refunds to passengers who may be fined for non-compliance. Our Tour Managers will remind you again while on tour, but we feel that advising you in advance is beneficial.

Shopping One of the best parts of traveling is coming back home with souvenirs that really reflect the place you've just been. Make sure you leave enough room in your baggage for items you take home with you. Italy is a great place for shopping, and each region has its own distinct crafts and local souvenirs. Popular choices of items while shopping in Italy are products made of glass, ceramics, leather goods, jewelry, fashion apparel, wines, gold, pottery, and cameos. Also look for specialty food products, such as packaged herbs, olive oils, and delicious jarred spreads for bread toppings. Your tour manager will be happy to make recommendations when you arrive. While in Rome, you can also purchase religious articles. Florence is well known for its straw market, offering local crafts and hand made goods, such as ceramics, leather goods, and paintings. Venice is famous for Murano glass, Carnival masks and beautiful lace and linens. DVDs or other electronic equipment purchased abroad may not be compatible with your PC or home equipment. Music CDs are usually compatible worldwide. Be advised that some food items, such as meats and produce, cannot be brought into the US. Check customs regulations before leaving home. It is advisable to bring cash for smaller purchases as not all vendors will accept credit cards. Discounts are sometimes offered for cash purchases. Please note there are many conflicting and complicated regulations regarding the shipping of alcohol to the USA from overseas. Various state laws prohibit it, and you are advised to research your state regulations before purchasing alcohol for shipping. Shipping alcohol is done at your own risk, and Collette Vacations cannot assume responsibility for any such purchases.

Shopping Please note: The Vatican does not accept all credit cards for entry. Should you visit the Vatican, please be prepared to pay by cash for your purchases. Some gift shops will still accept credit cards, but not all.

Shopping In order to avoid tax evasion by shopkeepers in Italy, the Guardia di Finanza (fiscal police) may stop customer on the streets to check that a receipt was given for the proper merchandise. It is the law in Italy for the shop owner or company to give a receipt or invoice to the customer. If a receipt is not given, and if the customer does not ask for one, both the shopkeeper and the customer may be fined. Please do not be alarmed if stopped, as this is just a simple check. Also keep in mind that new laws in Italy do not allow transactions in cash for more than 2,999.99 EURO. Anything over 3,000 EURO must be paid for by credit card.

Smoking Restrictions Our tours are non-smoking throughout. If you require a smoking room, please let your Client Care agent know when you book your tour. Please note we cannot guarantee your request as many hotels prohibit smoking in rooms and on property. Please be mindful of other locations where smoking is not allowed. These include the motor coach, at dining venues, and any other restricted areas on tour. Guests are responsible for any fines they incur for failing to comply with smoking regulations.

Time Zone Italy is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time and Eastern Daylight Time, 7 Hours ahead of Tennessee time.

Tour Manager We pride ourselves on having the best trained and most experienced Tour Managers in the industry

Tour Package - Air & Land Inclusive If you have chosen our air-inclusive tour package, you have opted that we take care of all your air travels from your home to the destination and back. This also includes any inter-flights from city to city within the tour package if applicable. We ask that you keep the following in mind: 1) In order to comply with Homeland Security's "Secure Flight" mandate, you must provide full name (including middle name or middle initial, if applicable), as it appears on your valid, non-expired, government issued photo ID that you will show at the airport. The name on your airline ticket must be an exact match to this ID, or you may prevent you from boarding the aircraft. 2) If you are a member of a participating frequent flyer program, make sure to provide the number when you book your trip and retain the copy of your ticket and boarding pass so you will receive proper credit for your mileage. Please note that some air tickets are not eligible for mileage accrual. 3) Whenever possible, we will add charges for air departure taxes to your invoice. Some international arrival and departure fees are not included in your air ticket and must be paid by you during the tour in the local currency.

Tour Package - Land Only If you chose to purchase a land-only tour package, you have opted to purchase your own airline tickets to and from home and, if applicable to your tour package, flights from city to city (inter-flights). In this case, we ask that you keep a few important factors in mind when booking your round-trip flights: 1) Please make sure your round-trip flights work with your tour itinerary. There may be scheduled activities on these days. 2) You must provide us with your flight schedules for the entire tour upon final payment. This ensures that we can arrange any other services you may have purchased from us, including hotel transfers, and that your Tour Manager will know when to expect your arrival. This also allows us to maintain contact with you in case of an emergency.

Transfers We offer full-service transfers from start to finish. So when you arrive at the airport of your destination, arrangements will have been made to transfer you to your first hotel on the tour. If you purchased our air-inclusive tour package, you will enjoy this service free of charge. If you purchased your air ticket on your own (our land-only tour package), you may purchase a round-trip transfer for a fee. Meeting locations and times will be set up to accommodate your transfer arrival and departure schedules, which will be provided to you in your documents packet. If you decide to arrange your own transportation to the hotel, please make sure to check in with your Tour Manager once you arrive.

Transportation Your comfort is important to us. With that in mind, we charter coaches that are temperature controlled and have toilet facilities onboard. However, in certain countries, coaches with toilet facilities may not be available or they are for emergency use only. If this is the case, please be assured that frequent stops will be made along the touring route for your comfort and convenience. Change your seat, change your view! At least once a day, the Tour Manager will ask all guests to change seats. This ensures that every guest has an opportunity to enjoy a variety of views as they travel and a chance to get to know each other better. In fairness to all, there will be no exceptions to this policy