

# "KNOW BEFORE YOU GO"

## ITALY

**Passports:** A U.S. Passport valid for 6 months beyond your intended return date is required for travel. Your passport should have at least 2 empty visa pages. If you have not sent a copy of your passport to Carol's Travel Service, please do so. This helps us in case of any emergencies. Without your passport, you will be denied boarding of your flight.

**Health:** You must follow all health travel protocols in place for COVID-19 to enter Italy. Currently (8/25/22), vaccinated travelers do not need to have a COVID-19 test to enter Italy nor to return to the USA. You must have your White CDC Vaccination Card with you. You are required to be vaccinated for COVID-19 to participate in the "Discover Italy's Amalfi Coast" tour. Upon return to the USA, you will need to present your White CDC Vaccination Card and fill out a Travel Attestation Form. The airline will provide this to you, or you can print out a hard copy from Sherpa.

Always check with your own physician for any health travel advice. They often want you to be up to date with your tetanus shot. Bring your own medications and pain reliever of choice (Tylenol, Aleve, etc.). Many doctors will recommend you bring Pepto-Bismol along for an upset stomach. Tap water in Italy may be safe to drink, however, we recommend drinking bottled water which may be offered as fizzy (gas) water or still water.

**Currency:** The monetary currency in Italy is the Euro. The Euro is divided as follows: currency bills of 5, 10, 15, 100, 200, 500 and coins of 1, 2, 5, 10 Euros, 20 and 50 cents. If you would like to have Euro's on you before departing the USA, you can order them through your bank (most likely for a fee). For initial convenience, we recommend you bring approximately EUR100 cash with you from home. Tourists reaching Italy without foreign currency can obtain Euros through any bank or ATM machine. One of the best ways to get local currency is to use a debit card in an ATM. Usually, the bank rate will be given for exchange rather than the local tourist rate. The ATM will give the option to charge your account in Euros or your home currency; select Euros to obtain the most preferential rate. It is advisable to keep receipts of currency exchanged in case it is necessary to reconvert Euros back into dollars before leaving the country. Always check with your bank before your departure to find out their fees and in case they have special instructions for your usage of an ATM in another country. Let them know the country you will be in, and the dates you will be there. Don't forget to include any connecting airports. There are currency exchanges in the airport and towns of Ireland. Fees will vary, but these are usually not the most economical.

It's handy to have a currency converter app on your mobile device and there are several to choose from in the App Store. If you wanted a printed copy of current currency conversions from USD to EUR or vice versa, you could find a good chart on the Oanda website. [www.oanda.com/currency/converter/](http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/).

**Budgeting:** To help you budget, food and drink can often cost more than at home. As in the US, prices are changing frequently, so what is shown here is just a guide. The approximate cost of soft drinks, mineral water or coffee is EUR3-5; salad or sandwich with soda or water, EUR15 and upward; dinner at a mid-range restaurant with dessert and on-alcoholic beverage, EUR30 and upward. Note that soft drinks and mineral water are often expensive, at times more expensive than beer or wine. You will need money for meals that are not included as well as beverages, local guide gratuities, shopping, and incidental expenses. You might want to budget approximately EUR60 per day per person. It's a good idea to have plenty of EUR1, EUR2, and EUR5 with you. A good back up can be USD singles and fives. In a pinch, you can use these for tips although they are not preferred, and you will not be able to use them in shops and restaurants.

**Credit Cards & Travelers Checks:** Mastercard, Visa, and American Express are widely accepted. If bringing an American Express, you may want to bring a second type of card in case an establishment does not accept American Express. Before you travel, be sure to let your bank know the country(s) that you may use your card in to avoid a fraud alert. You

will need a PIN number for any ATM cards or to use a credit card for a cash withdrawal. Do not bring travelers checks, they are increasingly difficult to use.

**Electricity:** The electrical current in Italy is AC – the cycle is 220 volts 50 cycles. If you are carrying electrical appliances with you to Italy, you will need to bring a converter (if your appliance is not dual voltage) and plug adapter with you. These may be purchased at most hardware stores, luggage sections of retail stores and Amazon, and other online stores. Your hotels do have hair dryers in their guest rooms. Here's picture of a grounded adapter.



**Calling Home:** Check in advance with your cell phone service provider to make sure you can use it throughout Italy. Most service providers will let you convert your phone to an international plan for short amounts of time or sell you a SIM card.

**Weather:** The September and October months are an excellent time to visit the Amalfi Coast. The weather is a bit cooler than in the height of summer making it much more pleasant and relaxing. Average high temperatures range from low to upper 70's and average low temperatures range from upper to mid 60's. Take along a portable umbrella in case rain showers develop.

**Packing/Baggage:** Be sure to label your luggage both inside and outside with your name and phone number. Your tour allows one check-in piece of luggage per person due to the capacity on the motorcoach. You are also allowed one soft sided carry on; a carry on with wheels will not be allowed on board the motorcoach as it will not fit in the overhead bin or under your seat. We suggest that you pack lightly and save some room or bring a collapsible carry on that you can put souvenirs in.

To save room in your suitcase, wear a light jacket during your flight in case you find the plane cool. A pair of comfortable, worn in walking shoes are a must for days out and a comfortable pair of evening shoes are recommended. To minimize the amount of clothing needed, consider packing dark colored bottoms that can be worn more than once. You can pack up to two tops for each day, one for your daytime touring and one for your evening out. Evening out tops can be worn more than once and often daytime tops can be as well. Bring clothing that can be layered to help with temperature variances. Today's savvy traveler packs light and easy!

**Airline Baggage Information:** Most airlines allow you to check one bag free on international flights with the following restrictions. Calculate the size limits of your checked bag by adding the total outside dimensions of each bag, length + width + height.

Your checked baggage allowance usually is, Dimension: 62in/158cm; Weight: 50lbs/23kgs

You can bring 1 carry-on bag and 1 personal item as follows:

Your carry-on bag usually is: Up to 45 inches (22x14x9 in) or 115 centimeters (23x36x56 cm) including handles and wheels; able to fit comfortably into the sizer box provided at the airport so it fits in the overhead bin onboard. Your personal item must be smaller than your carry-on, able to fit under the seat in front of you and can include a purse, a briefcase, a laptop bag, or similar items such as a tote. Please check on [your air carrier's website](#) for exact details, rates, and restrictions for checked baggage.

**Time Zone:** In terms of standard time zones, Italy is 7 hours ahead of our Central Time in the United States and 6 hours ahead of our Eastern Time.

**Safety:** The violent crime rate in Italy is generally low. Make use of the hotel safe and leave non-essential valuables and money locked up. It is recommended to keep your passport, credit cards, travel documents, and money separately from

each other. To protect against pick pocketing, keep your money hidden preferably in an inside pocket or money belt. Keep a copy of your passport in a separate area or on your phone as a picture.

**Tax Refund/Tax Free Shopping:** After visiting Italy, non-European tourists can apply for a tax refund on the goods bought within the country. A sales tax (VAT) of 22% is added on to most goods and services in Italy. Most countries offering a tax refund specify a minimum amount that must be spent in a particular shop to claim a refund. In Italy, the minimum purchase to qualify for a refund is EUR155, in one shop. To learn how to reclaim tax, visit one of the many websites that will give you this information such as <https://upon.io/vat/countries/italy>.

**Tipping Guidelines:** Tips in Italy are at will but are expected. If the service you have experienced has not been up to your expectations, there is no need for you to leave a tip. On the other hand, if you have been fully satisfied with the service provided, the following is a tipping guideline.

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|--------------|--|
| Taxis:       | Round up to the next 1-2EUR figure   |
| Restaurants: | 10%  |
| Luggage:     | 1-2EUR per piece – yours are included during your Cooper's Hawk tour at hotels but not airports  |
| Tour Guide:  | 5-8EUR per full day – yours are included during your Cooper's Hawk tour for the official tour guide and driver. Local guide gratuities cannot be collected in advance. 1-3EUR is a customary tip for a local guide who does a couple of hours to half day tour with you. |
| Driver:      | 2-4EUR per day – yours are included during your Cooper's Hawk tour   |

**Language:** In the larger cities of Italy and even smaller towns that cater to tourists, it should be fairly easy to get by speaking English. However, it is always useful to know some basic phrases in Italian. Here are a few! There are a variety of language translator apps you can download for use on your phone if you choose to do so as well.

Thank you = Grazie

Thank you very much = Grazie tante

You're welcome = Prego

Please = Per favore

Yes = Si

No = No

Excuse me = Mi scusi

I'm sorry = Mi dispiace

I don't understand = Non capisco

I don't speak Italian = Non parlo italiano

Do you speak English = Parla inglese

Where is the bathroom = Dov'è la toilette