

# Destination Guide for Italy



## Overview

### Destination Guide Content

## Destination Risk Levels

 Low Medical Risk for Italy

 Low Travel Risk for Italy

## Standing Travel Advice

- Travel to Italy can continue with standard security precautions.
- Take sensible precautions against petty and street crime, particularly in crowded and tourist-friendly areas, as well as on public transport, in major cities.
- Strikes in the transport sector are common and can disrupt travel. Keep abreast of planned industrial action and plan your itineraries accordingly.
- There is a credible threat of terrorism in Italy from a wide variety of actors. Exercise vigilance at notable targets, including migrant centres, religious sites, transport hubs and tourist attractions. Carry out a profile- and industry-specific risk assessment as required.
- Security alerts or hoaxes can trigger the short-notice evacuation of transport hubs or public locations, which can cause disruption. Follow all directives issued by the authorities during any security operation and do not act on the basis of unverified information.
- Central regions of Italy lie in a seismic zone, and the south is regularly affected by wildfires. Familiarise yourself with natural disaster-response procedures, particularly for wildfires and earthquakes, and follow all directives issued by the authorities. See our Mitigating natural hazards section for additional advice.

## Active Alerts (1)

 Notice

28 October 2024 at 02:59

Rome: Expect travel disruption on 28 October during 24-hour public transport strike

**Location:** Italy

**Category:** Strike, Transport disruption

**Situation:**

Expect travel disruption on **28 October** during a 24-hour strike in the capital Rome by public transport workers and plan journeys accordingly. Transport unions have organised the action to demand better working conditions. Services will experience disruption from **08.30** to **17.00** (all times local) and from **20.00** until the end of the day. Expect an increase in demand for alternative forms of transport during the strike period, reconfirm itineraries and allow additional travel time.

**Advice:**

- Expect heightened demand for alternative forms of transport, such as taxi services and hire cars, during the strike. Book these services in advance to minimise inconvenience.
- **We do not hold specific information on transport schedules.** Contact the relevant service provider to reconfirm schedules. In the event of cancellations, your travel agent will be able to assist with alternative arrangements.
- Avoid all related gatherings to minimise travel delays.
- Monitor our Italy alerts for updates.

# Destination Guide for Italy



## Before You Travel

Destination Guide Content

### Visa Requirements

#### IMMIGRATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

##### British

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

##### Australian

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

##### Canadian

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

##### USA

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

## Visas

Citizens of the countries referred to in the chart above and those mentioned [here](#) do not require a visa for stays up to 90 days. Nationals of EU countries can stay for an unlimited period without a visa. Nationals of most other countries must apply for visas before travelling to Italy. The visa-issuing policies are generally straightforward. Check with the Italian embassy/consulate in your country for further information on visa requirements.

As per EU, starting in mid-2025, nationals of [visa-exempt](#) countries will need to obtain an ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorisation System) travel authorisation to visit any of the European countries mentioned [here](#) for up to 90 days within any 180-day period.

The exact date of its implementation is yet to be announced. For updates on the ETIAS launch date and new requirements, check the [ETIAS news corner](#). ETIAS applications can be made via the official ETIAS website or the official ETIAS mobile app, once it is operational. For information on travel documents required to apply for ETIAS and payment exemptions, visit [here](#).

ETIAS travel authorisation is valid for three years or until the travel document you used in your application expires - whichever comes first. It is for short-term stays and allows business travellers and foreign nationals to stay up to 90 days within any 180-day period. Most applications will be processed within minutes, however, in some cases it may take longer ranging from four to 30 days.

If your application is rejected, an email will provide the reasons for this decision. It will also include information about how to appeal, details of the competent authority and the relevant time limit to appeal. People whose applications are rejected can also apply for ETIAS travel authorisation with limited validity. More information about this is available [here](#).

## Procedures

Airport procedures are relatively quick and efficient.

## Entry/Exit Requirements

### Entry/Exit requirements

Italy is a signatory to the Schengen agreement, which removes border controls and allows people to travel and stay within member countries for up to 90 days (within a six-month period) without a visa. A valid return/onward ticket and proof of sufficient funds may be required along with a valid passport. Tourists arriving from a Schengen country and intending to stay for less than three months are required to fill in a declaration of presence form, which can be procured from the local police station, police headquarters or their place of stay, and submit it within eight days of their arrival.

A receipt issued in lieu of the form must be retained by foreign nationals and produced when asked for. Nationals of non-Schengen countries must make sure that their passports are stamped when entering the country, which will be considered an equivalent of the declaration of presence form. There is no restriction on the import or export of local and foreign currencies. However, foreign nationals should declare amounts exceeding 10,000 euros or its equivalent in another currency on arrival to avoid difficulties while leaving the country. The regulations stated also apply to San Marino and the Vatican City.

## Cultural Tips

### CULTURAL ISSUES AND ETIQUETTE

#### General Tips

- Dress conservatively when visiting religious buildings. Many require people to cover their shoulders and knees.
- It is unlawful to take photographs of government buildings and military installations.
- It is illegal to eat and drink on steps and courtyards of churches and public buildings in major cities such as Venice, Florence (Tuscany region) and Rome, and in several smaller cities.
- There are some legal restrictions relevant to LGBTQ+ individuals but these are not enforced or adhered to in the legal system. Societal attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ community are generally tolerant.

## Getting There

### METHOD OF ARRIVAL

#### By air

Rome's Leonardo Da Vinci Airport (Fiumicino) ([FCO](#)), Milan's Malpensa Airport ([MXP](#)) and Venice's Marco Polo Airport ([VCE](#)) are the major international airports. Florence, Genoa, Pisa, Naples, Palermo, Turin, Bologna and several smaller cities also have their own international airports. Petty crime can be a problem at all airports; departing travellers are advised to go through customs as quickly as possible. Security levels are acceptable at all airports. Airlines have variable security standards. You may wish to consult the European Commission's [website](#) for a list of airlines banned within the EU and the US Federal Aviation Administration's [website](#) for a database of aviation accidents and statistics.

### **By land**

People can reach Italy by road from Austria, France, Slovenia and Switzerland. The major international passes are the [Mount Blanc Tunnel](#) that links Chamonix (France) via the A5 motorway to the cities of Turin and Milan, the Great St Bernard Tunnel via the A5 provides access to Switzerland and the Brenner Pass connects Modena and the Austrian border via the A22 motorway. Heavy snowfall during winter can disrupt travel across the Alps.

### **By train**

Both daytime and overnight international services connect Italy with the main cities and towns in Austria, France and Germany, as well as Eastern Europe. It is advisable to book tickets in advance. For more information on train travel, visit the Eurail website [here](#).

### **By sea**

Several domestic and international passenger ferry services link major Italian ports to Europe. Tickets prices tend to be higher in the summer tourist season (April to October).

## **Procedures**

Airport procedures are relatively quick and efficient.

## **Getting Around**

### **BY AIR**

Internal flights are available between all major cities barring in the regions of Molise and Basilicata. National carrier [Alitalia](#) provides regular domestic flights. However, the airline is frequently hit by strikes, which can significantly affect schedules.

### **BY ROAD**

All regions in Italy are well connected by an excellent network of motorways, which are identified by green-coloured signage. The two major motorways that connect the north and south are the Autostrada del Sole (the A1 motorway, which connects Milan, Bologna, Florence, Rome and Naples) and the Adriatica (the A14 motorway, which links Bologna, Ancona, Pescara, Bari and Taranto). Tolls on the motorway can be paid via credit card; however, payment via 'Viacard' or 'Telepass' speeds up the process. Additionally, an extensive network of arterial roads, indicated by blue-coloured signage, links towns and villages within and between regions. Relatively lower standards in motorways' conditions should be expected in southern regions, some of which are badly maintained and lack some safety measures, which result in higher number of accidents. The Autostrada A3 is particularly known to be unsafe, notably the segment between Salerno and Reggio Calabria. Traffic drives on the right. Driving in the major cities, particularly in Rome, can be intimidating. Roads are congested, narrow and winding, and accidents are common. The standard speed limit is 31 miles per hour (50kph) in urban areas and 81 miles per hour (130kph) on intercity motorways. Police can fine motorists on the spot for driving offences such as speeding, and random breathalyser tests are used to detect alcohol levels. It is compulsory to carry an emergency warning triangle and a high-visibility vest for use in a breakdown or accident. It is mandatory to use dipped headlights on two-lane motorways, highways and all major roads even during daylight. Fog and poor visibility in northern regions during the winter season (November- March) can make driving conditions hazardous. Between December and March, winter tires are mandatory on most roads (verify the exact dates with local contacts). Mobile phones not equipped with hands-free devices are prohibited. Roadside assistance (telephone number: 803116) on primary roads is excellent, but is more limited on secondary routes.

International car hire companies such as [Avis](#), [Europcar](#) and [Hertz](#) are well represented in the country. The legal age for driving is 18 years. Driving licences issued by EU countries are valid in Italy. Other foreign nationals should carry an international driver's permit. Passengers sitting in the front and rear seats need to keep their seatbelts fastened at all times; being caught without seatbelts may result in an on-the-spot fine. Fines involving minor traffic violations are discounted if paid immediately. On motorbikes, it is mandatory to wear a helmet. A special permit (ZTL pass) is required to enter certain traffic-restricted zones of towns and cities throughout Italy. Driving in restricted zones without a ZTL pass is punishable by a fine and drivers in city centres should pay close attention to ZTL signage. Foreign nationals must procure a Civil Liability/Green Card insurance policy in advance in order to drive in Italy.

## **BY TAXI**

Taxis are the best way of travelling around most city centres – they are relatively cheap and quick, though they are susceptible to congestion, especially in Rome. Licensed or authorised taxis (white, with 'taxi' on the roof) are normally ordered through local switchboards (e.g. at a hotel reception) or by calling their toll free numbers. They can also be found at taxi ranks, which are available near major tourist attractions and transport hubs. They are not supposed to stop if hailed in the street. Taxis can be hard to find outside city centres. If travelling to a city's outskirts, ask your host to order a return taxi and do not set off walking in the hope of finding one. Receipts will always be given by licensed taxis. Avoid taxi touts, as they often charge several times the official rate and many are uninsured.

Ensure that drivers switch the meter on – pointing at it will do the trick if you do not speak Italian. Having the meter running should prevent overcharging, though beware the extensive tariff system. Tariffs (which are written in several languages on the back of all taxis) are added to the price at the end of the journey. They are levied for reasons such as carrying luggage and travelling at night, on weekends or to airports. Be careful only to pay the relevant tariffs – taxi drivers may abuse the system to overcharge unsuspecting foreign nationals. Visitors can also overcome the problem by asking their hotel to order a radio taxi and agree a price in advance.



App-based ride-share services such as Uber are also a suitable means of transport for business travellers. The cashless transaction and the ability to see driver and car details prior to departure add layers of security to the ride. People should, however, note that taxi drivers have held demonstrations against these services.

## **BY TRAIN**

Italy's cheap and extensive rail system is an excellent way of travelling between cities. The country boasts a wide range of regional, intercity and high-speed rail services. The state operator [Trenitalia](#) and [Italo](#) are the major service providers. Trains run from Rome's Termini station to most parts of the country, including major urban centres such as Bologna, Florence, Milan and Naples. A relatively poorer and less reliable service should be expected in southern regions of the country.

Most intercity routes require a fast-train supplement and sometimes a booking fee is mandatory for a reserved seat. The main routes are served by fast Eurostar trains, requiring specific tickets and often reservations, which can be bought at designated counters in main stations. Travel from Rome to Milan should be undertaken by Eurostar or by TrenBusiness, a service aimed at business travellers.

Passengers must ensure to lock the door if travelling overnight and should use sleeper train for such journeys. Do not linger at railway stations late at night, when thieves, drug addicts and homeless people tend to congregate nearby. At Termini station, petty crime and taxi touts (who should be avoided) are recurring problems for both foreign and local nationals.

There are English-speaking staff at most major stations, though business travellers might find it easier to buy tickets and reserve seats at travel agencies. Multilingual ticket and reservation machines are situated in major stations and are easy to operate. The authorities can demand a fine if tickets are not validated using machines (often found on the train platform) before boarding.

## **BY OTHER MEANS**

Fairly efficient passenger ferries connect the mainland to many destinations on the two islands of Sardinia and Sicily. Transit to Sicily is fastest between Villa San Giovanni and Messina. Cabins on overnight ferries to Sicily and Sardinia are fairly basic, thus air travel is a more comfortable option. Smaller islands such as Elba, Capri and Lipari are connected by frequent ferries and hydrofoils. There are also ferries between Naples and Palermo, which are quicker than the road link through Calabria.

Several cities, towns, villages and hamlets are well linked by efficient bus and coach services. Travellers can check schedules of these services at local information and tourist board offices. In larger cities, foreign nationals can purchase bus and coach tickets from travel agencies; in smaller towns and villages, tickets can be purchased from the local bars or directly from the driver. Passengers should book tickets in advance if travelling long distances or on overnight services.

## **Business Women**

### **BUSINESSWOMEN**

Women may encounter unwanted displays of attention by men on the streets.

## **Working Week**

### **WORKING WEEK**

- Working week: Monday to Friday
- Office hours: (north) Mon-Fri 08.30-12.45 and 15.00-19.00; (centre, south) Mon-Fri 08.30-12.45 and 16.30-20.00
- Banking hours: 08.30-13.30 and 15.00-16.00

## **Language & Money**

### **LANGUAGE**

Italian is the official language. Accents and dialects may differ from one region to another. Foreign languages are now widely spoken, particularly in tourist areas and cities, though anyone using a few phrases of Italian will be welcomed. English is frequently used as a common language at international conferences and in business meetings. The Alto Adige area of northern Italy has a bilingual Italian-German speaking population, while the Valle d'Aosta (north-western Italy) is bilingual Italian-French. Minorities in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, usually along the border with Slovenia, speak Slovenian.

## **MONEY**

Italy is a member of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and uses the euro. Credit cards are widely accepted in main hotels, shops and restaurants. Foreign nationals may be asked to produce identification when making credit card payments. However, many public venues and small establishments may accept cash only. ATMs (Bancomat) are widely available. Business travellers should exercise caution when withdrawing money from ATMs and check if any suspicious devices are attached to the machine or placed over the card slot due to the risk of skimming.

## **Tipping**

### **TIPPING**

Although service charges are generally added to the bill automatically, it is customary to leave a small tip for a meal (or a few coins for a coffee, for example). A tip of around 10-15% is adequate.

## **Geography & Weather**

### **GEOGRAPHY**

Italy shares land borders with France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia. The large islands of Sicily and Sardinia, together with a number of smaller islands located in the Mediterranean Sea, are also part of Italy. The terrain is mostly rugged and mountainous, though it has some plains and coastal lowlands. The two main mountain ranges, the Alps and the Apennines, cover a major portion of the landscape, and form the backbone of the mainland. The Po is the principal river, flowing from the Alps and crossing the Lombardy plains to finally meet the Adriatic Sea. The country is administratively divided into 15 regions: Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardia, Marche, Molise, Piemonte, Puglia, Toscana (Tuscany), Umbria, Veneto (Venetia) and the five autonomous regions of Friuli-Venezia Giulia; Sardegna (Sardinia); Sicilia (Sicily); Trentino-Alto Adige (Trentino-South Tyrol) or Trentino-Südtirol (German); Valle d'Aosta (Aosta Valley) or Vallée d'Aoste (French).

## CLIMATE

### Climate overview

- Summers (June-August) are usually very warm (temperatures can top 38°C (100°F)), particularly in the south.
- In winter (November-February), temperatures can go below zero in the Riviera, Sicily and parts of the southern mainland.
- Rain occurs mainly in the autumn and winter months.
- Monitor the website of the [Italian Air Force Meteorological Service](#) for weather updates.

### Volcanoes and earthquakes

- Active volcanoes in Italy are Mount Etna, Stromboli and Vulcano (all Sicily region).
- The Campi Flegrei super volcano, located west of Naples, also poses a growing concern about eruptions amid recent low-scale seismic activity in the area.
- Ash clouds from eruptions at Mount Etna occasionally disrupt air travel, including the temporary closure of nearby Catania Fontanarossa International Airport ([CTA](#)).
- Italy is located in an active seismic zone.
- Earthquakes mostly take place in the central and southern regions.
- Monitor the website of the [National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology](#) for updates on earthquakes and volcanic activity.

## Wildfires

- Wildfires pose a risk during the summer months, particularly on Sardinia and Sicily islands.

## Flooding and landslides

- Heavy rain, flooding and landslides are common in autumn (September to November) and may disrupt travel and essential services.
- Flooding is a major risk in the northern Emilia-Romagna region and has resulted in fatalities in previous instances.
- Refer to the website of the [civil protection ministry](#) for the latest weather alerts.

## Heavy snowfall

- Snowstorms may occur between December and March.
- Heavy snowfall can disrupt travel, especially in the plains around Parma and on the motorway between Bologna and Florence.

## Droughts

- Droughts have become a concern in several regions, including Lombardy, Piedmont and Sicily.
- The authorities in Sicily have since February 2024 imposed water rationing measures amid ongoing shortages because of a severe drought.

## International Dialing & Power

### DIALLING CODES

Country Code 39

IDD Prefix (International Direct Dialling) 00

### COMMUNICATIONS

The country boasts an efficient and modern communication system. Both internal and international telephone services are adequate. GSM services are provided by Telecom Italia (TIM), 3 Italy, Wind Telecommunications and Vodafone Italy. Most good hotels provide fax as well as internet facilities. International courier agencies, such as FedEx and DHL, have offices in the country.

### **Information Security**

Italy is one of the largest and most advanced mobile communication markets in Europe and has seen a rise in the number and severity of cyberattacks in recent years. As a result, companies are steadily increasing the resources they allocate to security tools to respond to cyberthreats. However, these threats generally target government and public institutions and do not pose a direct risk to foreign nationals and business travellers.

The majority of malicious cyberactivity in Italy targets healthcare, banking, finance, telecommunications and critical infrastructures. Social engineering techniques are often employed by criminals seeking financial gain. For instance, scammers often try to force the employees of organisations to make money remittances by assuming fake identities as managers of organisations. Social engineering methods are also used to deploy malware on organisations and users' computers.

The cybersecurity authorities are competent. Surveillance and tracking by the security services is a minor concern to business travellers. The Italian legal system is aligned with the most recent legislative developments on cyber-resilience at the EU level.

### **Advice**

- Minimise the number of devices you bring in-country and avoid carrying sensitive data with you.
- Log out of any social media accounts or potentially sensitive apps prior to your arrival in country. Avoid posting on social media when in-country or sharing details of your location with those who do not have a need to know.
- Keep devices on your person as much as possible. If unattended, ensure devices are powered down. If using hotel safes, secure them with a secondary personally-lockable device.
- Ensure anti-virus software is up-to-date prior to travel and conduct a thorough check of all devices post-trip.
- Use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to protect communications and secure data. Always familiarise yourself with the legal status of any VPN or application in your destination country prior to travel.

- Use the 'forget network' setting upon your return if you connected to any public Wi-Fi networks while travelling.
- Obtain profile-specific advice considering your industry and position in the company.

## **ELECTRICITY**

This is the most common plug type used:

## **Calendar**

### **Holidays & Security Dates**

#### **2024**

**01 Nov** All Saints Day

**07 Dec** St Ambrose's Day

Milan only.

**08 Dec** Immaculate Conception Day

**25 Dec** Christmas Day

In some countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is declared for the following Monday.

**26 Dec** St Stephens Day

In many countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is observed on the following Monday or Tuesday respectively.

#### **2025**

**01 Jan** New Year's Day

In many countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is declared for the following Monday.

**06 Jan** Epiphany

**25 Apr** Liberation Day

The national holiday commemorates Italy's liberation at the end of the Second World War.

**02 Jun** Republic Day

The holiday commemorates the country becoming a republic in 1946.

**29 Jun** Feast day of St Peter, St Paul

Shops and offices may close early this eve. The day honours the local patron saints.

**15 Aug** Assumption Day

# Destination Guide for Italy



## Medical

### Destination Guide Content

## Medical Care

### Excellent

#### Standard of Health Care

Medical facilities in the major Italian cities offer good quality medical care and are capable of handling most medical cases and medical emergencies. In general, private hospitals are recommended for routine and elective medical care. All emergency care is provided exclusively in public hospitals which are better equipped to handle emergencies. Public hospitals generally have very few, if any, English speaking staff, and even in private facilities, English speakers are very limited in number.

#### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance 118/112

Fire service 115/112

Police 113/112

Contact International SOS for help with your medical situation. [Contact us](#)

#### Hospitals & Clinics

### Humanitas Research Hospital IRCCS

Category: Hospital

Address: Via Manzoni 56, Milan, Lombardy

Phones: [39 0282241](#),  
[39 0282247042](#),



39 0282248224

Emails: [patients@humanitas.it](mailto:patients@humanitas.it),  
[info@humanitas.it](mailto:info@humanitas.it)

### **Ospedale San Raffaele**

Category: Hospital

Address: Via Olgettina 60, Milan, Lombardy

Phone: 39 0226431

Email: [convenzioni.autorizzazioni@hsr.it](mailto:convenzioni.autorizzazioni@hsr.it)

### **Policlinico Universitario 'A.Gemelli '**

Category: Hospital

Address: Largo Agostino Gemelli 8, Rome, Lazio

Phone: 39 0630151

Email: [urp@policlinicogemelli.it](mailto:urp@policlinicogemelli.it)

## **Vaccinations**

### **COVID-19**

Vaccination is recommended for all travellers.

### **Hepatitis A**

Many travel health professionals recommend hepatitis A vaccination for all travellers regardless of destination, especially those who are at higher risk (see [US CDC](#)), such as gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, people who use illicit drugs or those with liver disease.

### **Hepatitis B**

Recommended for health care workers and anyone who may have a new sexual partner, share needles or get a tattoo or body piercing.

Many travel health professionals recommend hepatitis B vaccination for all travellers and international assignees, regardless of destination.

### **Tickborne encephalitis**

Recommended for:

- people who will spend time in forested or grassy areas during tick season (particularly those who will hike, camp, perform fieldwork, etc.);
- people residing in this country for longer periods (i.e., six months or more).

## Routine Vaccinations

### Influenza

**Influenza occurs in:**

- Temperate southern hemisphere: April to September.
- Temperate northern hemisphere: November to March.
- Tropics: year-round.

**Annual vaccination is recommended. Vaccination is especially important for people at higher risk of severe disease.** People who are at higher risk for severe disease include:

- People over the age of 65.
- People with underlying health conditions.
- Pregnant women.

### Measles-Mumps-Rubella

Vaccinations against measles, mumps and rubella are routine in childhood, and are usually available as a combined vaccine "MMR". See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)  
All adults should ensure they are immune to these diseases before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need to be vaccinated.

### Polio

Vaccination against polio is routine in childhood in many countries. See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

All adults should ensure they are immune to the disease before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need a *primary vaccination* or a *booster*. Booster recommendations vary by country.

### **Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis**

Vaccinations against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis are routine in childhood.

See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

All adults should ensure they are immune to these diseases before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need a *primary vaccination* or *booster*. Booster recommendations vary by country.

### **Varicella**

Varicella (chickenpox) vaccinations are included in the routine childhood immunization schedule of some countries. See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

All adults should ensure they are immune to varicella before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional.

## **Malaria**

**None**

## **Yellow Fever**

**Routine only**

## **Health Threats**

**Chikungunya**

People can get chikungunya if they are bitten by a mosquito carrying the virus. About four to seven days later, the infected person develops a sudden fever and severe joint pain. Pain is especially common in the knees, ankles, small joints (especially in hands and feet) and any previously injured area. Other common symptoms are a rash and headache.

There is no specific cure for the disease. Recovery takes several weeks.

The best way to prevent chikungunya is to prevent mosquito bites. Wear long sleeves and long pants and use insect repellents to prevent mosquito bites. A vaccine named IXCHIQ is approved in the United States and Canada for people 18 years and older at increased risk of infection.

Mosquitoes carrying the chikungunya virus are present throughout the country. Large outbreaks have occurred in coastal regions in north and central Italy.

## **Dengue fever**

Dengue, or "break-bone" fever, is a viral disease of the tropics and sub-tropics. It is transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes that bite during the daytime and are found in and around human habitation. Transmission from mother to child is possible during pregnancy or birth. Symptoms include high fever, severe headaches, joint and muscle pain, nausea and vomiting. A rash often follows. The acute illness can last up to ten days, but complete recovery can take two to four weeks.

Occasionally, a potentially fatal form of dengue called severe dengue (previously known as dengue hemorrhagic fever or DHF) occurs. Severe dengue is more likely in infants and pregnant people, as well as for people who have been infected in the past and are infected again with a different strain of dengue. When a pregnant person is infected there is a risk of pre-term birth, low birth weight and foetal distress. About 2 to 3 out of 100 severe dengue cases are likely to be fatal.

Prevention is through avoiding mosquito bites. There are two commercially available dengue vaccines approved in a few countries. Dengvaxia is generally only used in people with previous dengue infection while Qdenga can be considered for people without a history of dengue infection.

Imported cases of dengue are reported annually. The first locally acquired infections were detected in 2020 in the Veneto region. Since then, local infections have been reported in the northern and central parts of the country. The mosquito responsible for transmitting dengue is established throughout Italy, with infections most likely to occur between July and October.

## Leishmaniasis

Leishmaniasis is a disease caused by a parasite that can infect humans, dogs, rodents and other small animals. It is transmitted by sandflies that bite mainly between dusk and dawn and can occur in both rural and urban environments. Sandflies breed quickly in unsanitary conditions, and the spread of the disease is exacerbated by war, chronic food shortages and urbanisation activities like deforestation and building of dams and irrigation systems, changes in temperature, heavy rainfall and population movement. The disease can manifest in one of the three forms, cutaneous (is the most common form and causes skin ulcers), mucocutaneous (is a rare form which affects the inner parts of the nose and mouth) or visceral (which is the more severe form and can lead to death). There is no vaccine or drug to prevent leishmaniasis.

### Prevention

The only way to avoid leishmaniasis is to prevent sandfly bites.

- Minimise outdoor activities from dusk to dawn- this is when sand flies are most active.
- Use protective clothing and insect repellent.
- Consider using an insecticide-treated bed net with *fine mesh* if there are sandflies in your living quarters. The standard bed nets used to prevent malaria are not effective, as sandflies are about one-third the size of mosquitoes and can fly through the malaria nets.
- Note that sandflies are small and do not make noise while flying. This makes it difficult to determine whether they are in your environment. Their bites cause mild symptoms and might not be noticed.

Cases of cutaneous (skin) and visceral (organs) leishmaniasis are reported most years. The risk is highest in coastal regions, especially in Sicily, Sardinia, Tuscany and along the Adriatic Coast. Flies which spread leishmaniasis are found in coastal areas throughout Italy.

## Lyme disease

Lyme disease occurs in North America, Europe and Asia. It is transmitted to humans by the bite of a particular species of tick. Lyme disease can cause an expanding rash at the site of the bite, fever, arthritis and nerve problems such as facial palsy.

To prevent tick bites:

- Avoid tick habitats

- Use insect repellents
- Check daily for ticks

Lyme disease vaccination is no longer available.

If you develop a rash at the site of a tick bite or other symptoms of Lyme disease, seek medical attention. A course of antibiotics can cure Lyme disease.

There is a risk of Lyme disease in Italy. Transmission is highest in Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, Trentino, and Liguria, but cases are reported from all regions except Valle d'Aosta and Basilicata.

### **Tickborne encephalitis**

Tickborne encephalitis (TBE) is a viral infection which is mostly transmitted to people through tick bites. Ticks live in or near forests and are usually active during warmer months. TBE infection can also be acquired by consuming unpasteurized dairy products from infected cows, goats or sheep.

Most people will not have any symptoms. For those who do, initial symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, nausea, and fatigue. These may resolve in a week or so, but if the infection spreads to the brain, the symptoms may become more severe (decreased mental state, severe headaches, convulsions, weakness and/or coma). TBE can be fatal.

Prevention is through avoiding tick bites and vaccination.

There is a risk of TBE in some areas of this country including Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Trentino Alto-Adige and Lombardy. Although the transmission season varies, ticks are generally active from early spring to late autumn.

### **West Nile Virus**

Primarily a disease of birds, West Nile virus (WNV) can infect humans. The most common route for a human infection is via mosquitoes. The mosquito feeds on an infected bird or other animal, then bites a human and introduces the virus into their body.

Most people who get WNV develop no symptoms. Of the 20 percent who do get ill, most develop mild symptoms 3-14 days after being bitten: fever, head and body ache, nausea and vomiting. Sometimes the lymph nodes swell or a rash appears on the trunk.

In fewer than one percent of all human cases, the person develops a serious, possibly fatal, infection. Symptoms may include high fever, headache, stiff neck, disorientation, muscle weakness, tremors and paralysis. The brain and membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord may get inflamed, which can cause coma and death. Patients who recover from a serious WNV infection may suffer permanent brain damage.

There is no specific treatment for the disease, or vaccine to protect against it. To avoid infection, prevent mosquito bites in areas where the virus circulates. Wear long sleeves and long pants, and use insect repellents.

Human cases of WNV have been reported every year since 2008 in Italy. The transmission season typically runs from mid-June to end-October.

## **COVID-19**

COVID-19 is predominantly a respiratory illness, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Transmission is from person to person via contaminated respiratory droplets. People are infected when these droplets are inhaled or land directly on the mouth/nose/eyes, or indirectly when transferred by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the mouth/nose/eyes.

Most people will develop a mild to moderate illness only which lasts up to two weeks, or have no symptoms. Symptoms vary greatly. Common symptoms include fever, cough and sore throat. Sometimes there is a loss of or change in the sense of smell or taste. The illness can progress to being severe and can be fatal. Older people and people with underlying health conditions are at higher risk of severe disease and death. Antiviral treatment is available and is particularly important for people at higher risk of severe illness.

Some people may continue to have symptoms that last for weeks or months after the initial infection has gone.

Prevention is through vaccination, hand hygiene, and physical distancing. Wearing a mask, and ensuring adequate ventilation in enclosed spaces can reduce the risk of infection.

The first imported case was reported in late January 2020.

For more information about the current COVID-19 situation, see:

[Italian Ministry of Health's Coronavirus Website](#)

[COVID-19 Situation in Italy](#)

[Department of Civil Protection \(Dipartimento della Protezione Civile\) dashboard of cases](#)

## **Altitude**

Altitude illness is a potentially fatal condition that can affect people who normally live at a low altitude and travel to higher altitudes. It can occur from elevations of 1,500 meters onwards but is more common at elevations above 2,500 meters (8,000 feet).

People most at risk are those who have experienced altitude illness before, people who have heart or lung problems and people under the age of 50. There are three different types of altitude illness: Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE) and High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE). AMS is the most common and mild form of altitude illness. HACE and HAPE are more severe. HACE is a medical emergency and if not treated and managed quickly, can result in coma and death. Management of altitude illnesses involves immediate descent and oxygen treatment. Most people who are affected, even those who develop HACE or HAPE, recover completely if moved to a lower elevation. There are medicines that can be administered by trained medical professionals.

Anyone travelling to high altitudes, especially higher than 2,500 meters, should be aware of and recognise the symptoms of altitude illness. See your travel health professional before departure, for individual advice on preventive measures, especially if you have ever suffered altitude sickness in the past, or if you have an underlying medical condition.

Italy's areas of extreme elevation (>2,500m / 8,202ft) is largely confined to the Alps in the northern border regions with France, Switzerland and Austria. The Alps are popular destinations for winter sports and summer hiking. The range has hundreds of peaks above 2,500m, the highest is Monte Bianco also known as Mont Blanc at 4,808m (15,774ft). The Appenine Mountains are lower than the Alps and extend along the length of Italy with a few regions above 1,500m (4,921ft). Corno Grande (2,912m / 9,553ft) is the highest of the two peaks above 2,500m. Elsewhere, Mount Etna (3,329m / 10,921ft) is the highest point on Sicily.

## **Volcano**



There are several types of volcanic eruptions and some pose a major threat to health. One such eruption is volcanic ash fall. Ash is made of fine particles of rock and minerals and is gritty and abrasive. It can carry for many kilometres through the air. Approaching ash clouds resemble ordinary weather clouds, and are sometimes accompanied by lightning or thunder. They bring a sulfur smell into the air.

When the ash finally falls, it settles in a dust-like covering. The "dust", however, is hard and abrasive. It does not dissolve in water, and it conducts electricity. It becomes more conductive when wet. Heavy ash falls can cause roofs to collapse and can lead to high levels of respirable ash in the air people breathe.

Most commonly, people get a runny nose and sore throat, sometimes with a dry cough. Because the ash is gritty, it can cause skin and eye irritation. People should minimize exposure to ash, those with chronic bronchitis, emphysema, asthma and other respiratory conditions should be especially vigilant since their symptoms can worsen.

Italy has two volcanoes with frequent eruptive activity: Mount Etna in Sicily and Mount Stromboli in the Aeolian Islands. The [National Geophysical Institute](#) monitors volcanic activity and issues alerts (in Italian).

### **HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and STIs**

HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C are spread by contact with bodily fluids (especially blood and semen).

- unprotected sex,
- needle sharing during IV drug use, or
- unsafe blood or medical/dental instruments.

Genital herpes (HSV), genital warts (HPV), gonorrhoea, chlamydia, syphilis and most other sexually transmitted diseases are spread by genital contact.

Prevention:

- In many countries, hepatitis B is now a routine childhood immunisation and need not be repeated. All non-immune travellers should consider vaccination.
- Always use new condoms (preferably brought from your home country).
- IV drug users should not share needles.
- Avoid having tattoos or piercings done.

- In healthcare settings, make sure that needles and syringes are sterile and not shared between patients.
- Call International SOS or your corporate medical department if you are hospitalised.
- Be aware of your risk when assisting anyone with an injury. Protect yourself from contact with bodily fluids.
- Seek medical attention within 24 hours if you accidentally come into contact with someone else's bodily fluids.

## **Food & Water**

### **Generally safe**

Food Risk

Food is safe.

Water and Beverages

Tap water is safe to drink.

# Destination Guide for Italy



## Security

### Destination Guide Content

## Personal Security

### STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- Travel to Italy can continue with standard security precautions.
- Take sensible precautions against petty and street crime, particularly in crowded and tourist-friendly areas, as well as on public transport, in major cities.
- Strikes in the transport sector are common and can disrupt travel. Keep abreast of planned industrial action and plan your itineraries accordingly.
- There is a credible threat of terrorism in Italy from a wide variety of actors. Exercise vigilance at notable targets, including migrant centres, religious sites, transport hubs and tourist attractions. Carry out a profile- and industry-specific risk assessment as required.
- Security alerts or hoaxes can trigger the short-notice evacuation of transport hubs or public locations, which can cause disruption. Follow all directives issued by the authorities during any security operation and do not act on the basis of unverified information.
- Central regions of Italy lie in a seismic zone, and the south is regularly affected by wildfires. Familiarise yourself with natural disaster-response procedures, particularly for wildfires and earthquakes, and follow all directives issued by the authorities. See our Mitigating natural hazards section for additional advice.

## Crime

### Limited to hot spots

### CRIME

Petty crime poses a major risk to foreign nationals in Italy, especially in urban centres. Pickpocketing and bag-snatching are mostly common in major tourist spots (museums, monuments and commercial streets), transport hubs and crowded areas. Displays of

wealth are discouraged to avoid attracting the attention of thieves, especially when travelling alone. Particular attention should also be paid to scams, including tactics to distract unsuspecting people.

Italy has a high rate of vehicle theft. Criminals are known to break car windows to steal valuables inside or the vehicle itself (for resale outside Italy). People should lock their vehicles at all times and install anti-theft devices to minimise the risk of theft. Avoid leaving valuables inside your car.

Due to a lack of employment opportunities and exploitation by organised criminal groups, petty and street crime, including drug trafficking, is perceived to be common among migrants in the country. This has resulted in anti-immigrant sentiments spreading among some sections of Italian society, which can occasionally trigger racially motivated violence against people of African, Central Asian or Middle Eastern descent.

Numerous organised criminal organisations are based in Italy. The most powerful and internationally connected one, the Ndrangheta, is based in Calabria. Other powerful criminal organisations include the Camorra, based in Naples region, the Mafia (or Cosa Nostra) has its roots in Sicily (but is well connected internationally), and the Sacra Corona Unita is based in Apulia region.

## **Terrorism**

### **Minimal risk to foreigners**

#### **TERRORISM**

##### *Islamist terrorism*

There is a credible risk of Islamist militant attacks, though the likelihood is less than in other EU countries. Italy has not suffered lethal Islamist attacks. The authorities have carried out counter-terrorism operations in recent years that have succeeded in disrupting extremist cells and have resulted in arrests, primarily of foreign nationals. Italy has also expelled several suspected Islamist militants. The military and the police maintain a visible presence at key locations (outside and inside transport hubs, government buildings and tourist attractions). They also patrol the streets of central areas in main cities.

##### *Far-right terrorism*

In October 2022, the Italian police arrested a suspected member of a neo-Nazi paramilitary network, The Base. The suspect allegedly spread extremist content online and sent death threats to an Italian senator. Additionally, the Italian anti-terror police unit raided a cell of a militant neo-Nazi group, The Order of Hagal, in November 2022. High numbers of migrants from Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East have resulted in an increase in racist attacks.

## **Kidnapping**

#### **KIDNAPPING**

High-profile kidnaps are uncommon since the implementation of a controversial law designed to discourage kidnaps by freezing the assets of victims' families so that they are unable to pay ransoms.

Occasional kidnaps are short-term and largely perpetuated by criminal gangs seeking to collect debts. These tend to target small businesses and usually end in 24 hours without police intervention. Foreign nationals are rarely targeted.

## Social Unrest

### **SOCIAL UNREST**

Protests and strikes are common in the country, and they can prove to be disruptive.

Unions wield considerable influence and can mobilise large crowds of protesters, as well as launch well-attended strikes, notably in the transport sector. Industrial action by public transport and airline workers, though generally undertaken with ample forewarning, can cause significant travel delays and disrupt itineraries. Heightened demand for alternative modes of transport can be expected during such industrial actions.

Demonstrations are well policed and pass off peacefully in most instances, though some can descend into clashes between participants and the police, or vandalism. Protests by students and ultra-leftist groups are most likely to trigger such disturbances, as they tend to attract anarchist elements who are not averse to provoking the police. In particular, those organised by the COBAS student union tend to be boisterous.

Protests against austerity measures, or other socio-economic issues, are liable to take place. Flashpoint locations include government buildings or assets linked to financial institutions, such as banks or stock exchanges. Environmental issues can also prompt demonstrations.

Migration policies have been the focus of several nationwide protests. In the south of the country, immigrants have previously staged protests, some of which have descended into unrest, though these disturbances were short-lived. There have been large public demonstrations in Rome and other cities by immigrants and anti-racist groups, protesting against an apparent rise in xenophobia. In October 2022, human rights organisations held a rally in Rome against the renewal of the Italian-Libyan agreement preventing migrants from reaching Europe. Meanwhile, protests by far-right and anti-immigration groups tend to be well attended. Allegations of immigrant involvement in crimes have resulted in public demonstrations by far-right political groups.