



The Great
Canadian
Travel Group
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

Italy General Information

Italy is a country in south-central Europe. Its proper name is Repubblica Italiana (Italian Republic). It is home of the Roman Empire and a major center of the Renaissance. Its capital city is Rome. It is well known for its cuisine and picturesque mountains. Italy boasts a rich history dating back centuries.



Documentation

Canadian passports are required for visitors travelling to Italy. Your passport must be valid for at least 3 months beyond the date you expect to leave Italy. Italy is a Schengen area country. Canadian citizens do not need a visa for travel to countries within the Schengen area. However, visa-free travel only applies to stays of up to 90 days.



Airports

Rome Airport Fiumicino or Leonardo da Vinci Airport of Rome is Italy's largest and busiest airport. It is located approximately 30km from Rome but is easily accessible by train and car. It is Europe's sixth largest airport by passenger volume.

Italy has many other airports located throughout the country.

Location and Geography

Italy occupies a peninsula that juts deep into the Mediterranean Sea. It is bordered by the sea on the east, south and west sides. To the north-east is Slovenia and Austria, to the north is Switzerland and to the north-west is France. Italy is often described as being shaped like a boot. To the west of the mainland is an island called Sardinia which is part of Italian territory. Mountain ranges cover more than one-third of Italy. There are two mountain ranges: The Alps which are shared with France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia; and The Apennines which form the spine of the peninsula and the island of Sicily. The Alps are the highest and most extensive mountain range system that lies entirely in Europe, stretching approximately 1,200 kilometers. The Alps maintain a permanent snow blanket over 2750 meters above sea level and have many glaciers. The Apennines are the long system of mountains and hills that run down the Italian peninsula from the Cadibona Pass to the tip of Calabria and continue onto the island of Sicily. This mountain range is about 2,000 km long.





The Great
Canadian
Travel Group
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

Population

The estimated population of Italy in 2019 is 59.2 million with approximately 42 million people living in urban areas. The Rome metropolitan area has approximately 4.2 million people.



People and Culture

The largest ethnic group in Italy is the Native Italian with 96% of the population considering themselves Native Italians. Immigration into Italy is creating ethnic diversity with smaller ethnic groups growing in population.

Language

The official language of Italy is Italian. German, French and Slovene are common throughout small sections of Italy.

Economy

The strengths of the Italian economy include engineering, chemical and textile manufacturing, tourism and exportation of Italian products. Italy is the world leader in olive oil production and one of the top producers of pumice, pozzolana and feldspar. Major exports of Italy include rice, tomatoes, wine and marble. The tourism sector employs most of the workforce in Italy with approximately 58 million tourists visiting the country in 2017. Notable places to visit include the Roman Colosseum, Venice Canals, Pompeii, Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Duomo Santa Maria del Fiore, Vatican City, St. Mark's Basilica and the Pantheon.





The Great
Canadian
Travel Group
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

Climate and Weather

The climate in Italy varies between the north and the south. In the north the climate can be harsh with cold winters and hot, humid summers. In central Italy the climate is milder with a smaller temperature difference between winter and summer including a shorter, less intense winter. In the south the winters are mild with spring and autumn temperatures being similar to the warm temperatures of the summer.

Electricity

Voltage is 220V 50Hz. Associated plug types include types C, F and L.



Currency

Italian currency is the Euro. Euros are available in 7 denomination bank notes and 8 denomination coins. One Euro is equal to 100 eurocents.

Credit Cards

Visa and Mastercard are commonly accepted in Italy. American Express is only accepted in some places.

Business and Banking Hours

Banks and public offices are typically open Monday to Friday from 9:00am – 1:00pm and 3:00pm – 5:00pm. Some banks and public offices are open on Saturdays. Shops are generally open Monday to Saturday from 9:00am – 1:00pm and 3:00pm – 7:30pm.

Telephone and Emergency

The international dialing code if Italy is +39. To dial Canada or the United States dial 01-(area code)-(phone number).

Emergency 112

Police 113

Fire Department 115

Ambulance 118

Health Information

Italy has a universal health care system that offers a wide range of services. Standards are like Canadian Health Care standards. Travel insurance is recommended to all travel to Italy. It is also recommended to bring all prescription medications and any over-the-counter medications you may need while travelling.



The Great
Canadian
Travel Group
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

National Holidays

January 1st – New Year’s Day

New Year’s Day marks the beginning of the New Year in Italy. Celebrations involving fireworks are common throughout Italy. A traditional New Year’s dinner is also common with dishes that include white risotto, lentils symbolizing wealth and good fortune, cotechino (pork sausage), zampone (another type of sausage) and raisins for good luck. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

January 6th – Epiphany

This holiday is based on the story of the Three Wise Men offering Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Many cities and towns organize festivities and parades in celebration. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

April 19th – Good Friday

Good Friday is a religious observance that commemorates Jesus Christ’s crucifixion and death. Businesses and schools are open regular operating hours.

April 21st + 22nd – Easter Sunday & Easter Monday

Easter Sunday and Monday are religious observances that commemorate Jesus Christ’s resurrection from death. Easter Monday is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

April 25th – Liberation Day & Feast of St Mark

Celebrating the fall of Mussolini’s Italian Social Republic and the end of Nazi Occupation in 1945. Venice holds the Feast of St Mark with activities that include gondolier racing, concerts, carnivals and markets. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

May 1st – Labor Day

Commemorating the Labor Union’s social and economic achievements. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

June 2nd – Republic Day

Festival of the Republic is a national holiday celebrating the day Italians voted to abolish the monarchy in 1946. Activities include ceremonies and military parades. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.



The Great
Canadian
Travel Group
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

June 24th – Feast of St. John in Florence, Genoa and Turin

Honoring St. John of Baptist in the cities of Florence, Genoa and Turin. Activities include parades, fireworks, music and bonfires. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

June 29th – Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome

Honoring the Catholic Saints Peter and Paul. Various religious rituals are led by the Pope of the Catholic Church. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

August 15th – Assumption of Mary/ Ferragosto

Celebrates the Catholic belief that God took the body of Jesus' Mother Mary into Heaven. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

September 19th – Feast of St. Januarius in Naples

Honoring the Catholic Saint Januarius in Naples. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

November 1st – All Saints' Day

Known as Festa di Tutti i Santi in Italy. It is a religious and public holiday celebrating all the Catholic saints. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

December 7th – The Feast of St. Ambrose in Milan

Honoring Saint Ambrose in Milan. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

December 8th – Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Commemorates when Mary was graced by God to lead a life free of sin according to the Catholic Belief. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

December 25th – Christmas Day

Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. Activities include writing letters to Father Christmas, enjoy a traditional meal and exchanging gifts. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.

December 26th – St. Stephen's Day

Honoring Saint Stephen across Italy. Traditionally many Italians visit Nativity scenes at churches and attend markets, carnivals and festivals. It is a day off for the general population and most businesses and schools are closed.