



Pre-Departure Information

GREAT HIKES AND CUISINE OF NORTHERN ITALY



Table of Contents

TRAVEL INFORMATION	Passport Visas Money Tipping Special Diets Communications Electricity
MEDICAL INFORMATION	Inoculations Staying Healthy Getting In Shape
HELPFUL INFORMATION	Photography Being a Considerate Traveler
PACKING LIST	The Essentials WT Gear Store Luggage Notes on Clothing Clothing Equipment Personal First Aid Supplies Optional Items
READING LIST	Essential Reading Also Recommended

Reminders Before You Go

WELCOME!

We're delighted to welcome you on this adventure! This booklet is designed to guide you in the practical details for preparing for your trip. As you read, if any questions come to mind, feel free to give us a call or send us an email—we're here to help.

PLEASE SEND US

- Trip Application:** Complete, sign, and return your Trip Application form as soon as possible if you have not already done so.
- Medical Form:** Complete, sign, and return your Medical Form as soon as possible if you have not already done so.
- Air Schedule:** Please forward a copy of your email confirmation, which shows your exact flight arrival and departure times. Refer to the Arrival & Departure section of the Detailed Itinerary for instructions. Please feel free to review your proposed schedule with Wilderness Travel before purchasing your tickets if you have any questions about the timing of your arrival and departure flights or would like to confirm we have the required minimum number of participants to operate the trip.
- Vaccination Card:** Please send us a photo or scanned copy of your completed Covid-19 Vaccination Card if you have not already done so. Just the front side of the card is sufficient.

PLEASE CAREFULLY REVIEW

- Travel Documents & Medical Information:** Carefully review the Travel Documents and Medical Information sections of this booklet to familiarize yourself with Passport and Visa entry requirements for your destination, as well as any recommended inoculations.
- Optional Travel Insurance:** Review the Trip Cancellation & Transfer Fee Schedule included in the Detailed Itinerary. We recommend that all trip members purchase Travel Insurance.
- Final Documents:** Approximately three weeks before your trip, we will send you final departure documents, including hotel and local contact information and rendezvous instructions.

QUESTIONS?

Call: 1-800-368-2794, go to our [website](#) or e-mail us at: info@wildernesstravel.com.

Travel Information

PASSPORT

A valid passport is required for your trip. Be sure to check the expiration date. Your passport must be valid for three months after your date of exit from Italy. In addition, we recommend your passport have at least two completely blank visa pages for every country you will be visiting. It is very important that the blank pages say “Visas” at the top. The last few pages of your passport, which say “Amendments and Endorsements,” and the final page of your passport, which may not have a page number, are not considered to be legitimate visa pages. The service of adding pages for visas was discontinued as of January 1, 2016. You can request a new passport through **US Passport Services Office** or use a visa service agency, which can take care of your passport renewal and expedite the process, if needed. We recommend **Passport Visas Express**. Be sure to allow sufficient time to acquire this before your trip.

It is a good idea to carry photocopies of your passport’s photo page and any acquired visa pages for your trip (if applicable) in case your passport is lost or as an additional piece of identification, as well as two extra passport photos.

VISAS

US citizens do not need a visa for countries visited on this trip. If you are a citizen of any country other than the US, check with a local consulate for entry requirements.

MONEY

The Euro is the official currency of Italy. The most convenient way to obtain Euros is to use your debit card at ATMs. To use an ATM internationally, you must have a four-digit PIN. Major credit cards are accepted in most shops in cities and larger towns. If you plan to use your credit cards, inform your credit card company before your departure that you will be using the card abroad.

TIPPING

Tipping is completely discretionary, but over the years, clients have asked us for tipping guidelines to reward guides for outstanding service. We suggest a tip of \$155 or more per trip member for each of the Trip Leaders, preferably in local currency. The Trip Leaders take care of gratuities for hotel and restaurant staff, and for local guides and drivers.

SPECIAL DIETS

Please reach out to us directly to discuss any dietary restrictions or concerns you may have. We can easily make arrangements for most diets, but please keep in mind that certain cultural differences or logistical limitations can make it difficult or at times impossible to accommodate all requests. With this in mind, please inform us at least eight weeks before your trip if you have a special diet, and any food allergies in particular, so we can do our best to meet your needs.

COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone

The international dialing code for Italy is 39. Please contact your cell phone company for specific instructions for international use.

Email & Internet Access

Internet access is available at most of our hotels.

ELECTRICITY

Europe has 220-volt current. Plugs usually have two or three prongs.

Medical Information

The following recommendations should be used as a guideline only; consult your physician for medical advice. It is vital that you let Wilderness Travel know of any medical problems, allergies, or physical limitations you may have. Please fill out and return the personal medical questionnaire, and feel free to consult us if you have any questions about your ability to undertake this particular trip.

Wilderness Travel is not a medical facility and has no expertise or responsibility regarding what medications or inoculations you and your physician decide are necessary for your safe participation in the trip.

Traveler's health information is available from the **Centers for Disease Control**. Medical travel products are available from **Travel Health Medicine** and from **Magellan's Travel Supplies**.

INOCULATIONS

No inoculations are required. However, it is easy to get a small cut, so a tetanus booster is strongly recommended (good for 10 years). If you take prescription medicines, be sure to bring enough for the duration of your trip.

STAYING HEALTHY

You can reduce your risk of getting sick on the trip by washing your hands often and not touching your face with unwashed hands. If you arrive on the trip with a cold or feel the symptoms of a cold, avoid close contact with others and move away from people before coughing or sneezing. The CDC recommends coughing or sneezing into a tissue or into the crook of your elbow or upper sleeve, not your hands.

GETTING IN SHAPE

We strongly urge you to train for your trip, as your enjoyment will be highly dependent on your level of fitness. The best training for a hike is to hike, especially over hills or rough terrain. Next best are running, swimming, bicycling, or other cardiovascular exercises. Stair-climbing machines are excellent preparation for hiking uphill. Your feet should also be well prepared—make sure your hiking boots are sturdy, comfortable, and thoroughly broken-in.

Helpful Information

PHOTOGRAPHY

Camera Recommendations

With the many advances in digital technology, a simple compact digital camera or even your smartphone is capable of taking pictures suitable for the needs of most people. For higher quality images and the ability to use long lenses for closer wildlife pictures, a DSLR camera is well worthwhile, though heavier. Most digital cameras and phones have good video options, but you may want to consider a GoPro for a lightweight, waterproof option. Always practice ahead of time with new equipment and bring your manual with you. Camera equipment is available for rent from **Borrow Lenses**, with a 10% discount offered to Wilderness Travel clients. This is an especially good idea for renting large zoom lenses that you may need for just one trip.

Camera Accessories

We recommend bringing at least two large capacity memory cards or a small digital storage unit (or tablet) to back up your photos, freeing space on your memory cards. Don't forget to bring a battery charger and a backup battery so one is always charged and ready to use. For trips where you may be away from power sources for multiple days, consider looking into a solar-powered battery charger or buying additional backup batteries, and check that you have the appropriate adapter for the electrical outlets in your destination.

Sharing Your Images

We would love for you to share photos from your trip, and with your permission, may even use your photos in our marketing materials or on our photo blog. We request that you send us a small sample of your best images. Please email your photos to wphotoblog@gmail.com or tag us [@WildernessTravel](#) on social media.

Photography Etiquette

When taking pictures of local people, be aware of cultural considerations. Approaching people with a warm smile and using polite gestures or simple phrases to ask permission to photograph them usually works well. It is always recommended to engage people in conversation before asking to photograph them, but if people do not wish to have their photo taken, please honor their requests. We urge travelers to avoid giving money in exchange for photo opportunities, which makes it harder for future travelers to have a meaningful personal interaction with local people. Please always heed your Trip Leader's guidelines for what is appropriate.

BEING A CONSIDERATE TRAVELER

Please show respect for the cultures we are visiting by observing local customs concerning appropriate dress, particularly in sacred places. Your Trip Leader is always available to answer any questions that you may have regarding this. If it is necessary to use a cell phone during the trip, please do so privately. Smoking is rarely an issue these days, but if you do smoke, please do so only away from the group.

Packing List

THE ESSENTIALS

- Air tickets (or E-tickets)
- Passport
- One other picture ID, such as a driver's license
- Expense money

WT GEAR STORE

To help you prepare for your next WT adventure, we've put together a great collection of top brands including Patagonia, Outdoor Research, Eagle Creek, and more at our **WT Gear Store**.

LUGGAGE

Please check with your airline for specific baggage allowances.

- Soft-sided suitcase, with small padlock (must be unlocked for air travel).
- Daypack, large enough for a jacket or rain gear, water bottle, camera, and other items you want on the trail.
- (Optional) Small roll-up bag to carry home purchases.

NOTES ON CLOTHING

Bring clothes you find most comfortable for walking; dressing in layers is the best way to stay comfortable. You'll want a change of clothes for the evening. Casual wear is fine, but we strongly suggest a few dressier items for our evening meals. Coats and ties are not required. However, you will be dining at some of the finest restaurants in Italy, where most guests, as well as the staff, are wearing formal attire.

Note: In Europe, there are dress requirements to enter churches. Shorts (or skirts) should come to the knees, and shoulders should not be bare. Women can use a shawl or large scarf to cover bare shoulders; short-sleeved t-shirts are acceptable. The dress code applies to both men and women.

Please pack everything in one piece of luggage, as this simplifies the transportation of luggage en route. Although airline service to Europe is generally reliable, it is best to wear or carry your hiking boots with you on your flights in the event your luggage is lost or delayed. Likewise, don't pack valuables, such as travel documents, camera gear, or prescription medicines in your checked luggage.

CLOTHING

The clothing list below is provided as a guideline only.

- Lightweight hiking boots
- Lightweight rain gear, such as a Gore-Tex rain/wind shell jacket with hood
- Fleece jacket or nylon windbreaker
- Light fleece sweater or sweatshirt
- Long-sleeved shirt. Quick-drying "travel" fabrics like nylon are recommended.
- T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts
- Hiking pants. Lightweight cotton or synthetic hiking pants are a practical choice. Jeans are not recommended because they can be hot and they take a long time to dry if they get wet.
- Hiking shorts. Quick-drying nylon shorts are recommended.
- Shade hat with wide brim—preferably a waterproof one you can use as a rain hat as well
- Tevas or running shoes for sightseeing in towns
- Hiking socks. Some people like thick Thorlo-type socks with padded toes and heels, or an outer sock and synthetic liner sock.
- Underwear/sleepwear. Synthetics dry faster.
- Swimsuit
- Casual city/hotel attire

EQUIPMENT

- One or two reusable water bottles, 1 qt. capacity.
- Good quality sunglasses with case. A spare pair of sunglasses is a good idea.
- Toiletry kit
- Stuff sacks or plastic bags to compartmentalize items in luggage, Ziploc-style bags to carry small items during the day

PERSONAL FIRST AID SUPPLIES

Every trip member must bring a small kit for personal use. Your own experience will influence your choices.

- Sunscreen SPF 30 or higher and lip balm with sunscreen. We recommend mineral-based sunscreens with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide because they do not contain harsh chemicals that are harmful to the environment. Brands such as Honest Company, Badger, and Alba Botanica are found in most sporting goods stores and drugstores.
- Aspirin, ibuprofen, or Tylenol for muscle pain or headache, Tylenol PM for sleep
- Blister kit. Look for long-lasting gel-type bandages that you can apply directly on blisters, such as Band-Aid Advanced Healing Bandages or Curad Gel Multi-Day Bandages. "Liquid band-aids," such as New-Skin, are useful because they dry rapidly to form a tough protective cover over a blister.
- Prescription medications properly labeled
- Anti-seasickness medications such as Bonine or Dramamine are optional. We travel by ferry boat across one of the lakes in the region, so if you have a tendency to motion sickness, bring some medication. Acupressure-based wrist bands are also effective for some people.
- Spare contact lenses or spare prescription glasses

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Voltage converter and plug adapter for appliance use in hotels.
- Collapsible walking stick or trekking poles
- Camera, spare batteries, memory cards
- Lightweight binoculars
- Reading/writing material
- Bandannas
- Travel clock
- Small umbrella
- Laundry soap for hand-washing clothes
- Money belt or neck pouch. Always carry your passport, credit cards, and cash with you in a money belt or neck pouch tucked down inside your shirt or blouse.
- Washcloth, if you like to use one (most European hotels do not provide them)

Reading List

ESSENTIAL READING

La Bella Figura, A Field Guide to the Italian Mind

Beppe Severgnini

2007, 288 PAGES

Italians themselves love this guide to the Italian character, which addresses their never-ending passion for beauty, disorder and high emotion. The book opens with a snapshot of Malpensa Airport, then moves on to Tuscany, Rome, Naples and Sardinia.

National Geographic Piedmont & Northwest Italy, With Turin, the Mountains, and Lakes

Tim Jepson

2005, 240 PAGES

A practical guide to Piedmont, Northwestern Italy and Turin in the visually attractive National Geographic style, complete with photographs, illustrations, maps, and good cultural and historical information.

Italy, A Traveler's Literary Companion

Lawrence Venuti

2003, 256 PAGES

Not just a literary companion, this anthology is also a who's who of contemporary Italian writers who capture the spirit, history and allure of the country.

Italy North Map

Reise Know How

2014

Scaled at 1:400,000, this German-produced map of Italy focuses on the country's northern borders and stops in northern Tuscany. Double-sided. Printed on tear- and water-resistant paper.

ALSO RECOMMENDED

Italy, A Short History

Harry Hearder

2001, 294 PAGES

Elegantly written, generous and informative, this compact book takes in the sweep of Italian history from the Roman Republic through the Renaissance, World War II and up to the present.

Italian Lakes Map

Litographia Artistica Cartographica

A detailed map of the Italian lakes region, including Orta, Lugano, Como and Maggiore, at the excellent scale of 1:100,000, produced in Italy.

Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta Map

Touring Club Italiano

2015

A regional map of the Piemonte region of Italy at a good scale of 1:200,000.

Cadogan Guide Lombardy & the Italian Lakes

Dana Facaros

2008, 345 PAGES

Cadogan brings travelers Lombardy and the Italian Lakes in all their glory, from the powerhouse of Milan to the idyllic beauty and tranquility of Lake Garda and the Renaissance cities of the Lombard Plain.

Civilized Traveller's Guide to Turin

Eugenia F. Bell

2006, 201 PAGES

An insider's guide to the art, culture, history and attractions of Turin, including recommended hotels, restaurants and shops. With three walking tours and suggested excursions outside the city.

The Food of Italy

Waverly Root

1992, 750 PAGES

Evocative of Italy and its diverse cuisine, this classic book, organized geographically, offers a cook's tour of the country. It's a well-informed and wonderful culinary guide.

Lombardia Regional Map

Touring Club Italiano

A colorful regional map of Lombardy.

Blue Guide Northern Italy, from the Alps to the Adriatic

Paul Blanchard

2015, 738 PAGES

This guide by a popular tour leader provides a thorough overview of the history, art and architecture of northern Italy from Trieste across to the Valle d'Aosta, Venice, Verona, Milan, Genoa and Bologna.

Cadogan Italian Riviera & Piemonte

Dana Facaros

2008, 332 PAGES

An authoritative guide to Liguria, including Cinque Terre, Portofino, Genoa and lesser-known destinations. Strong on practical information, it's also a good overview of the history, culture and cuisine of the region.

Lonely Planet Italian Phrasebook

Lonely Planet

2015, 272 PAGES

A handy, palm-size guide to pronunciation, basic grammar and essential vocabulary for the traveler.

Made in Italy, A Shopper's Guide

Laura Morelli

2008, 208 PAGES

The second edition of Morelli's expert survey of Italian handcraft shops and products from Murano glass to ceramics, jewelry and leather.

Biba's Italy

Biba Caggiano

2006, 320 PAGES

Caggiano focuses on regional, seasonal food in this omnibus cookbook (featuring 100 recipes), menu planner and travel guide to Rome, Florence, Bologna, Milan and Venice. Nicely produced, this handsome sepia-toned book includes recommended restaurants, cafes and markets in each city.

A Traveller's History of Italy

Valerio Lintner

2008, 287 PAGES

A brief history of Italy through the 1990s -- wide-ranging, accessible and necessarily condensed. With a useful chronology and historical gazetteer, this book marches confidently through the centuries.

A Long Finish, An Aurelio Zen Mystery

Michael Dibdin

2000, 272 PAGES

Another enjoyable "Aurelio Zen Mystery" from Michael Dibdin, this time private investigator Zen is in Rome and Alba, enjoying wonderful wine and food while uncovering a murderous plot that may jeopardize the Piedmontese wine industry.

The Devil in the Hills

Cesare Pavese

2002, 220 PAGES

This book, the most personal of the many stories, poems and novels of Pavese, follows the summer adventures of three young men in the hills, vineyards and villages of the author's native Piedmont.

Frances Mayes Always Italy

Frances Mayes and Ondine Cohane

2020, 416 PAGES

A guide through Italy's iconic regions, including 350 photographs from National Geographic.

Revised: December 05, 2022

Autumn in Piemonte

Manuela Darling-Gansser

2009, 208 PAGES

A lavishly illustrated culinary portrait of Italy's most productive agricultural region, from countryside trattorias to opulent Turin cafes.

Why Italians Love to Talk About Food

Elena Kostioukovitch

2010, 480 PAGES

This charming, informative journey through Italy's great regional cuisine, from the Alps to Sicily, includes color photos, menus and glossaries. Umberto Eco's Russian translator, Kostioukovitch explores the food of her adopted homeland as a way to understand the different tastes, dialects and attitudes of each region.

The Art of the Renaissance

Peter Murray

1992, 286 PAGES

A classic, illustrated survey of the world of the Renaissance and its art. With chapters on Florence and its artists, the Netherlands, early illustrated books and many individual artists.

The Betrothed

Alessandro Manzoni

1984, 720 PAGES

By many accounts the first modern Italian novel, Manzoni's 1827 classic concerns star-crossed lovers in 17th-century Lombardy. Promoted during unification, Italy's best-known novel has been made into films and a musical.

The Moon and the Bonfires

Mark Rudman

2002, 176 PAGES

Pavese's last novel, published shortly before the writer's suicide in 1950, is his evocation of post-Mussolini Italy. The protagonist, an emigrant, returns to Northern Italy from America in the wake of World War II.