

# Arts & Entertainment

*Indulge in your particular passion*

Italy is like a vast living museum. Very few countries have to offer such a rich heritage of artistic creativity and craft. Whether visiting an archeological site, a museum of modern art, or a local craft shop, you will discover the expression of artists and skilled craftsmen throughout the ages. Nowhere on earth are the arts celebrated so joyously – from drama, to film and music, and anything that requires man's participation.

There is something for everyone, no matter what your taste.

## For the Opera Lover

Italy is rich in beautiful, historic opera houses, many still serving as theaters. Opera fans should try to visit at least one opera house and enjoy a live performance while in Italy. The opera season is generally October through March or April but outdoor performances are held in the summer. Opera houses hold theater and dance performances at other times of the year, as well.

- **Arena di Verona.** The fantastic historic setting for opera par excellence is the Verona Arena. The elliptical Arena was built in light pink marble around the year 100 A.D. and stands in the very middle of town, next to Piazza Brà. Built to accommodate more than 20,000 people, it is in remarkable shape today. The opera season starts in June but there are other performances during the year. Before the show starts, patrons pick up a candle from a box, unmarked, on the stairs. The tradition is to light the candles as the opera begins. [www.arena.it](http://www.arena.it)

- **Teatro Alla Scala.** Milan's famous opera house, Teatro Alla Scala, reopened in December, 2004, after an extensive renovation. The original opera house, designed by neoclassical architect Giuseppe Piermarini, opened in 1778, and many famous operas were first performed here. La Scala was badly bombed during World War II but reopened in 1946 and quickly regained its reputation as a top Italian opera house. [www.lascala.milano.it](http://www.lascala.milano.it)

- **Teatro La Fenice.** La Fenice (the Phoenix) in Venice is one of the most famous theaters in Europe. La Fenice first opened in 1792 but was twice badly damaged by fire. It has recently been renovated and reopened. [www.teatrolafenice.it](http://www.teatrolafenice.it)

- **Teatro San Carlo.** The Teatro San Carlo in

Naples is the oldest opera house in Italy, founded in 1737. Some of the first ballet productions were also performed here during the opera intermissions. Opera, ballet, and short comic opera are still performed at Teatro San Carlo. A museum is in the planning stage.

[www.teatrosancarlo.it](http://www.teatrosancarlo.it)

- **Teatro Massimo.** Teatro Massimo in Palermo is the foremost opera house in Sicily as well as one of the finest in Europe. Its opening in 1897 signaled the beginning of Palermo's belle époque. Year-round performances include opera, ballet, and music.

[www.teatromassimo.it](http://www.teatromassimo.it)

- **Teatro Comunale di Bologna.** Bologna's opera house is one of the top theaters in Italy. It is a stunning example of 18th century baroque architecture. Located in the heart of Bologna's historic district, the Teatro Comunale di Bologna holds opera, musical, and symphony performances.

[www.comunalebologna.it](http://www.comunalebologna.it)

- **Teatro Regio di Parma - Teatro Verdi.** Built in 1829, Parma's neo-classical theater holds opera, dance and drama performances as well as concerts and special events. The audience is known to be quite astute; they even whistled to Pavarotti!

[www.teatroregioparma.org](http://www.teatroregioparma.org)

## For the Film Buff

Italy's cities and villages are the most beautiful movie sets on earth — from the cobblestones of Rome where Audrey Hepburn played a run-away princess to the Tuscan countryside where Diane Lane found solace in a charming villa.

Italy is not just a backdrop, but also a country that loves cinema and shows films from all over.

Some movie theaters in Italy's biggest cities offer screening of films in their original language; most films in Italy are still being dubbed. The best way to find out which theaters run movies in English is to check the local newspaper, as listings are updated daily.

TURIN – Cinema Nazionale, via Pomba 7 zona Centro Tel. +39. 011 534614

MILAN – Cinema Mexico, Via Savona, 57 Tel. +39. 02.48951802

DVDs and video tapes of films in their original language can be rented at local video stores and are available at public libraries. Newsstands also sell videos: The English Movie Collection is comprised of video and original screenplay.

- The Museum of Cinema of Turin, The Mole Antonelliana, houses Italy's National Cinema





Museum, founded by Adriana Prolo. It was designed in 1863 by Alessandro Antonelli. Inside there are five floors of movie memorabilia. Films are continuously being played and you can view them from specially designed lounge chairs with sound built into the headrests.

[www.museonazionaledelcinema.org](http://www.museonazionaledelcinema.org)

- **Cinecittà** – The Cinecittà film studios, on the south-eastern outskirts of Rome, are the largest in Europe. They were founded in 1937, when the Fascists' power was at its height. Cinema was seen as an important medium for propaganda, and the studios were closely connected with the Istituto Luce, which produced newsreels and documentaries. Almost all Fellini's films were made at Cinecittà, from *Luci del varietà* (1950) to *La voce della Luna* (1990). In recent years, some important international productions have used the studios: *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, *Gangs of New York*, *The Passion of Christ*, and many others.

Nowadays it is the television industry as much as the film industry that operates at Cinecittà. Italian talk shows and Real TV productions are broadcast live, advertising spots are filmed and fiction series are shot for distribution in Italy and abroad. If you come to Rome in the summer, you may be able to see inside Cinecittà, which is some-

times open to the public between July and September. [www.cinecittà.studios.it](http://www.cinecittà.studios.it)

### For the Museum Aficionado

There are over 4000 museums, archeological sites, and art galleries in Italy, so if art is your weakness you are in for a treat, although choosing which ones to visit is not an easy task.

Buy tickets ahead of time. Many major museums and sites in Italy have long lines for ticket sales, especially during the high season. You can avoid the lines and be sure of getting admission on the day you want by buying tickets ahead of time or buying combination tickets. For example, in Rome, you can buy a combination ticket at the Palatine Hill that also includes admission to the Colosseum, allowing you to avoid all long lines. If you want to see Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* in Milan or the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, you will need to reserve a month ahead. You can also avoid reservations by signing up for a guided tour of the museum or cathedral you want to visit.

### Museums of Ancient and Fine Arts

#### FLORENCE

- **Uffizi Gallery.** This is one of the most famous museums of paintings and sculpture in the world. Its collection of Primitive and Renaissance paint-

ings comprises several universally acclaimed masterpieces of all time, including works by Giotto, Simone Martini, Piero della Francesca, Fra Angelico, Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, Mantegna, Correggio, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Caravaggio. German, Dutch, and Flemish masters are also well represented with important works by Dürer, Rembrandt and Rubens. Open Tuesday to Sunday 8:15 a.m. to 6:50 p.m. Closed Monday, New Year's Day, May 1st and Christmas Day.

[www.uffizi.firenze.it](http://www.uffizi.firenze.it)

- **Galleria dell'Accademia** – The Gallery is particularly famous for its sculptures by Michelangelo: *Prisoners*, *St. Matthew* and, especially, the statue of *David*, which was transferred here to the specially designed court from Piazza della Signoria in 1873. In the adjacent rooms, which were part of two former convents, important works of art were collected in the 19th century from the Academy of Design, the Academy of Fine Arts and from convents. Open Tuesday to Sunday, 8:15 a.m. to 6:50 p.m. Closed Monday, New Year's Day, May 1st, Christmas Day.

[www.polomeseseale.firenze.it](http://www.polomeseseale.firenze.it)

- **The Pitti Palace**, which was formerly the residence of the grand-dukes of Tuscany and later of the King of Italy, now houses several important



collections of paintings and sculpture, works of art, porcelain and a costume gallery. It is also known for the Boboli Gardens, one of the earliest Italian gardens famous also for its fountains and grottoes.

#### ROME

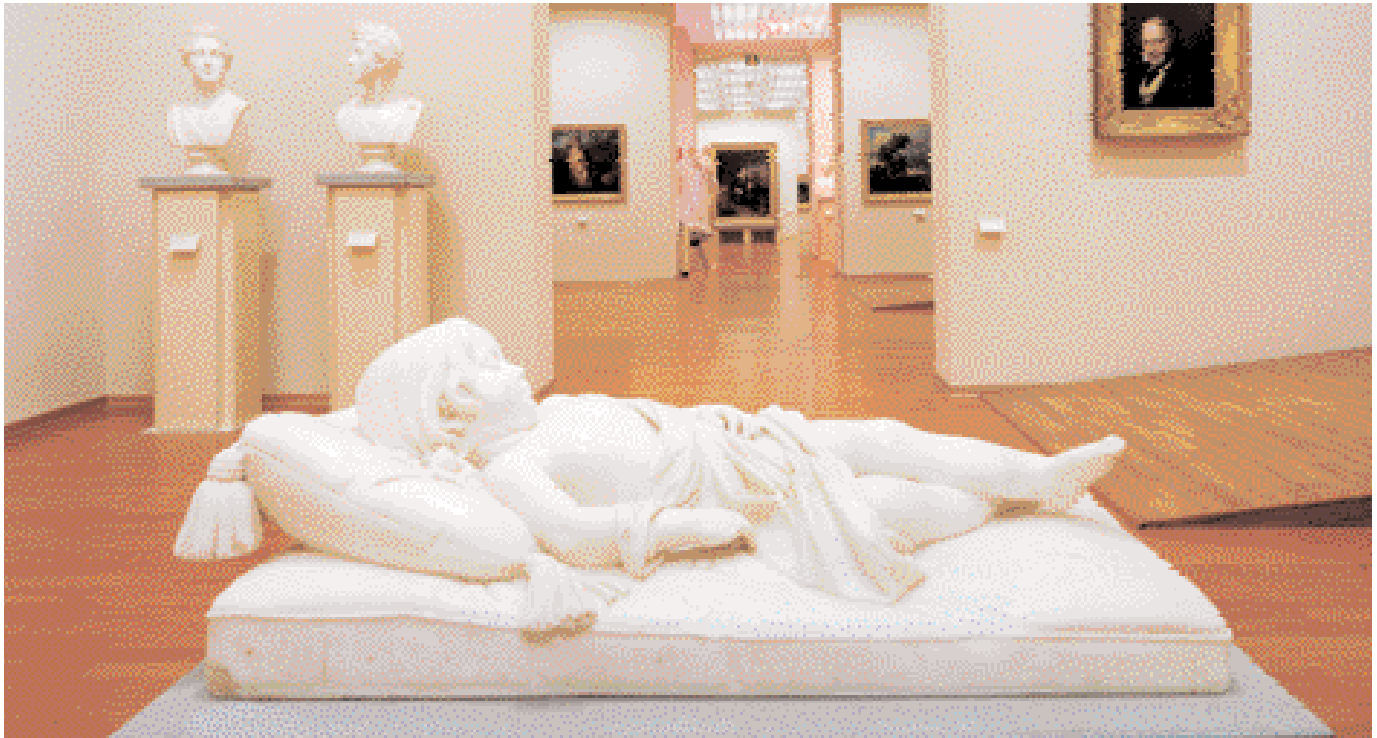
- The Capitoline Museums are a group of art and archeological museums in Piazza del Campidoglio, on top of the famous Capitoline Hill. The museums are contained in three palazzos surrounding a central trapezoidal piazza in a plan conceived by Michelangelo Buonarroti in 1536 and built over a period of over 400 years. Some of the works kept here are Boy with a Thorn in his Foot, Dying Gaul, Capitoline She-Wolf, an Etruscan bronze suckling Romulus and Remus (later additions), the original bronze equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius (the one outside is a replica), fragments of a truly gigantic statue of the Emperor Constantine. Open Tuesday to Sunday 9 a.m. – 8 p.m. December 24 and 31, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Closed Mondays, January 1, May 1, December 25. [www.museicapitolini.org](http://www.museicapitolini.org)

- The Vatican Museums comprise the papal apartments of the medieval Apostolic Palace decorated with frescoes during the Renaissance, the Sistine Chapel, the exhibition rooms of the Vatican Apostolic Library, and the museums themselves. Each museum has different hours. Closed on Sundays, except for the last Sunday of each month, unless it falls on Easter, on June 29 (St. Peter and Paul), or on December 25 and 26 (Christmas Holiday). The closed sections in the Museums are indicated at the entrance. Access to the Museums is permitted only to visitors with proper attire. [www.mv.vatican.va](http://www.mv.vatican.va)

- The Roman Forum is located in a valley that is between the Palatine and the Capitoline Hills. It originally was a marsh, but the Romans drained the area and turned it into a center of political and social activity. The Forum was the marketplace of Rome and also the business district and civic center. It was expanded to include temples, a senate house and law courts. Much of the forum has been destroyed, but columns and stone blocks that formed some of the temples remain. The arch of Titus and the arch of Septimius Severus still stand and are in good shape. [www.forumromanum.org](http://www.forumromanum.org)

#### NAPLES

- The Palazzo Reale di Capodimonte was built by Charles III of Bourbon as a hunting retreat, then



expanded to house the art collection he inherited from his mother, Elizabeth Farnese. Today, the palace is home to the Museo e Gallerie di Capodimonte, which houses an outstanding collection of Renaissance paintings. Bellini, Caravaggio, Botticelli and El Greco are all represented, along with a couple of Bruegels, an elegant Madonna and Child with Angels by Botticelli, and Lippi's soft, sensitive Annunciation. Open daily (except Monday) 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. [www.musis.it](http://www.musis.it)

- National Archeological Museum – This museum has one of the world's best collections of Greek and Roman antiquities, including mosaics, sculptures, gems, glass and silver, as well as many of the objects from excavations at Pompeii, Herculaneum and other nearby archaeological sites. [www.napoli.com](http://www.napoli.com)

#### VENICE

- Academy Gallery. The galleries are in the Dorsoduro district and they are an important collection of Venetian paintings from the 14th to 18th century, including masterpieces of the most famous masters such as Bellini, Giorgione, Carpaccio, Tiziano, Tintoretto, Veronese and Tiepolo.

#### TURIN

- Galleria Sabauda. The collection includes paintings by the Piedmontese artists Macrino d'Alba and Defendente Ferrari, the Venetians Mantegna, Paolo Veronese, Tintoretto, Tiepolo and Canaletto, the Emilians Guido Reni and Guercino, and the Tuscans Beato Angelico, Lorenzo di Credi and Piero Pollaiuolo. [www.museitorino.it/galleriasabauda](http://www.museitorino.it/galleriasabauda)

- The Egyptian Museum of Turin is the most important Egyptian museum in the world after the one in Cairo. Carlo Felice founded the museum in 1824 after he acquired the collection of Bernardino Drovetti, the French consul in Egypt. Today the museum houses a total of 30,000 ancient objects. [www.museoegizio.org](http://www.museoegizio.org)

#### MILAN

- Pinacoteca di Brera. The gallery opened its doors in 1809 to exhibit the works gathered from secularized religious institutions; since then the museum has acquired many additional works. This gallery has some masterpieces by Caravaggio, Bellini, Raphael, Mantegna, della Francesca, Tiziano, Tintoretto and the Veronese, among others. Open from Tuesday to Sunday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:15 p.m. Closed Mondays, January 1, May 1, December 25. [www.brera.beniculturali.it](http://www.brera.beniculturali.it)

- Santa Maria delle Grazie – Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper, commissioned to him by Ludovico il Moro in 1496 and completed in 1498, can be found in the refectory of the Dominican convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie. Open Daily, 8:15 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Closed Mondays.

#### Museums of Modern and Contemporary Art

##### VENICE

- Ca' Pesaro International Gallery of Modern Art houses important 19th and 20th century collections of paintings and sculptures, among which are masterpieces by Klimt, Chagall, and notable works by Kandinsky and Klee, Matisse and Moore, as well as a rich selection of works by

Italian artists and an important graphic design laboratory. Hours: Tuesday-Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. [www.museociviviceneziani.it](http://www.museociviviceneziani.it)

#### PRATO

- Centro Arte Pecci offers an ample program of temporary exhibits, artistic projects, educational activities, and in-depth cultural analysis. It serves as an important center of information and documentation, exhibitions of shows and multimedia events. The permanent collection groups important works produced in the '80s and '90s by Italian and international artists, and today has more than 900 pieces. Hours, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 12 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday, and holidays 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. [www.centroartepecci.prato.it](http://www.centroartepecci.prato.it)

#### Other listings:

- Villa Panza di Biomo in Varese; [www.fondoambiente.it](http://www.fondoambiente.it)
- GAM, Gallery of Modern Art of Bologna; [www.galleriadartemoderna.bo.it](http://www.galleriadartemoderna.bo.it)
- GAMUD, Gallery of Modern Art of Udine; [www.comune.udine.it](http://www.comune.udine.it)
- MART, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Trento and Rovereto; [www.mart.trento.it](http://www.mart.trento.it)
- MACRO, Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome; [www.macro.roma.museum](http://www.macro.roma.museum)
- GAM, Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art of Turin; [www.gamtorino.it](http://www.gamtorino.it)
- Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro in Milan;



[www.fondazinearnaldopomodoro.it](http://www.fondazinearnaldopomodoro.it)

### Special Interest

#### PISA

- The Domus Galilæana was founded in 1942 by the philosopher Giovanni Gentile on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of Galileo's death. The Institute holds a specialized library for the history of science, concerned almost exclusively with Galileo and his school. [www.domusgalilaeana.it](http://www.domusgalilaeana.it)
- #### VENICE

- Mocenigo's Palace is the center of the history of fabric and costume. It showcases dresses and accessories of marvelous tailoring. [www.museiciviviceneziani.it](http://www.museiciviviceneziani.it)
- #### MURANO

- The Glass Museum follows the history of Murano glass from the 15th century to the current day.

#### TURIN

- Museo dell'Automobile. Given that Turin is the headquarters of Fiat, it is not surprising to find the

Automobile Museum in town. The collection begins with the earliest self-propelled vehicles and carries through to the present. [www.museoauto.it](http://www.museoauto.it)

#### MARANELLO

- Galleria Ferrari. The Galleria Ferrari was officially opened in 1990 at the Maranello Municipal Civic Centre and it is run by the Ferrari team. It holds exhibitions of some of Ferrari's rarest cars along with displays of historically important artifacts.

[www.ferrari-enthusiastic.com](http://www.ferrari-enthusiastic.com)

### For the Socialite

Italians are warm, welcoming people who love to relax, celebrate and socialize with family and friends. And celebration and relaxation usually take place around the table either at home or in a restaurant, where they enjoy the traditions of the Italian cuisine.

Between the hours of 6 and 8 p.m., in some places even until 10, an outing with friends or colleagues is treated with almost a religious fervor; it's aperitivo time! The idea behind the aperitivo, besides being used as an excuse for a pleasurable social interaction, is that it's believed to stimulate the appetite and promote digestion. In fact, aperitivos are enjoyed immediately before dinner.

An aperitivo doesn't necessarily have to be alcoholic; there are nonalcoholic drinks, such as the famous Sanbitter by Sanpellegrino, with its unmistakable red color and fresh citrus flavor. For those who want to try something different and not go to a bar, they can enjoy special aperitivos held at the theater before an evening show or at outings organized by singles in search of love. There's no doubt about it; Milan is considered the Italian capital of the aperitivo; following on its heels, Rome and Turin also are rich in interesting places that offer aperitivos, but we will list some properties in Milan and Turin.

#### MILAN

- Sheraton Diana Majestic, Viale Piave 42. A historic landmark in the heart of the city center, this hotel is located a few steps from Via Montenapoleone and the Brera district. Intimate, sophisticated, and charming, it is the only hotel in Milan that is immersed in a lovely garden, where the three bars of the Diana Hotel Garden come together. Here, aperitivo time has become the meeting place for Milan's upscale fashion crowd. It

absolutely represents the place to be, a place that you cannot miss while in Milan. The Brera district and the Navigli area are filled with small bars where to meet for aperitivo.

[www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com)

#### TURIN

- Al Bicerin, Piazza della Consolate 5 and Caffè Roberto, Via Po 5. The former is an ancient bar, founded in 1763, very decadent, with delicious drinks, while the latter offers a large buffet of hot and cold snacks for aperitivo.

#### For the Sweet Tooth

After dinner, the streets of Italy come to life as Italians stroll around the piazza to work off their meal or head off for their evening engagements. A good place to meet is the gelateria for a delicious gelato, which can be the sweet ending to a nice evening with friends or the beginning of a wild night out.

It is common practice to pay the cashier first, then present your receipt to the server before placing the order. In smaller places where the cashier is also the server this rule is not really enforced and whatever works for them also works for you.

Don't be daunted by long lines; they usually mean that the gelato is good and worth waiting for. It is common to order two, maximum three flavors, without adding any toppings. The menu often changes, as places like to use seasonal ingredients for certain flavors, especially the fruit-based ones.

- ROME is a gelato paradise; make sure to stop at Gelateria Giolitti, Via degli Uffici del Vicario 40, and try the panna montata (whipped cream).
- MILAN'S hot spot is Gelateria Marghera, Via Marghera 33, with its fior di latte.
- BOLOGNA'S Gianni Gelateria, Via Montegrappa 11/a, offers a hell flavored ice cream made with mysterious ingredients and a forgotten fruit flavored ice cream made with cornel berry.
- The Gelateria di Piazza in SAN GIMIGNANO is known for its saffron and pine nut blend that is truly special, while Pepino, in Turin, offers a delicious "Penguin" – pure vanilla gelato placed on a stick and dipped in rich milk chocolate.

The places are so many we just can't list them all, but we do have a suggestion; a city's best gelaterias are often in the midst of tourist-friendly



areas.

#### SOME USEFUL WORDS

Cono	Cone
Gusto	Flavor
Coppa	Cup
Granita	Crushed ice drink flavored with syrup
Sorbetto	Italian Ice
Torta Gelata	Ice Cream Cake
Semifreddo	A mixture of gelato and whipped cream, similar to a mousse
Tartufo	Ball of chocolate gelato covered in chocolate bits