



## Travel Apps

When you travel to Italy, it's nice to stay connected to your travel partners and also let Katie know when you've arrived in ***Bella Italia***.

We've made a list of our favorite and useful Apps to download before we leave, as well as some tips and tricks for using your phone while in Italy.

**Using Data Abroad-** Before you leave, go to your phone carrier's website or storefront and ask how it works when you use your phone abroad. Are there international packages? Do I have to pay if I go over data? Katie uses Verizon and they offer the Travel Pass plan. It costs \$10 a day with unlimited minutes and texts and .5 GB of data per day.

**WIFI abroad-** WIFI access has changed so much since I lived in Florence almost 10 years ago.. Back then there were still internet cafes. Crazy to think of that today! We'll be staying where there's internet access. Not always the fastest but you will be able to connect with loved ones at home. When you use WIFI you can easily turn off your data usage, another perk on saving money. If you don't want to waste data, be sure to turn off notifications while in Italy. Another thing to do is keep your phone on airplane mode while we wander the streets of San Gimignano, you won't get one "ding" from any work email or text. That's my kind of travel.

**WhatsApp:** This free app has helped me stay in contact with all my friends and family in Italy. It is a common mode of connection especially for tourists. Have your family and friends download this app so you can speak to them easily over WiFi. Please download this app before you leave for Italy, it is a great way to connect with Katie when you arrive.

**Signal:** This free app is a newer app that has a bit more security. A pin you create is used to access it each time. It's not as popular with all Italians yet, but a few of my friends are on it. This app uses Wifi and data just like WhatsApp.

**Google Maps:** Knowing where you're going in Italy can be stressful for new travelers. Unfamiliar streets with poorly labeled street names in a different language can make for a headache. We highly recommend downloading Google Maps! Before traveling to a new city or a new hotel, I love to look up the route from the Train Station to my hotel using wifi. Another great idea is to screenshot the route without using data. You can download walking and driving directions. Google Maps also has the option to download WHOLE CITY MAPS to use offline! This is an awesome feature in bigger cities. You can even set an expiration date so this big space taker leaves your phone before you run out of photo space.

**Google Translate:** On top of the Map feature being incredibly useful, we LOVE the Google Translate App too. When you have the App downloaded, you can also choose to download specific language dictionaries to use OFFLINE! At a restaurant with no signal or wifi and not sure what a specific ingredient is? Type it into the App and know within seconds. When you have the language loaded in your phone you can hit the camera feature, scan over the menu and watch the words translate on your screen.

**Google Photo app:** I'm going to try this app out on my next trip. It saves all your photos to the Google cloud so you can look at them on your computer or delete off your phone and not worry about losing all your favorites. Should your phone get damaged or stolen, you'll still have access to all the photos in the cloud when you get home too. Just open the app every few days to refresh the saved content and you're good to go.

**Amazon Photo app:** Another app I'll try is Amazon photo. I have way too many photos on my phone and hate deleting them. But in order to have space for our next trip, I think this is the app I need to do that. Amazon also has a free photo app for Prime users! They have unlimited photo storage and will also save some videos. It can run in the background whenever you're hooked up to Wifi so you don't miss backing up your photos while you're catching up on a well needed nap.

**Banking Apps:** Before we travel abroad, on top of calling our banks(or sending an email to your bank) to notify them of our travels we like to download our banking apps. This is an easy way to keep track of your spending, the banking fees, and also communicate with your bank if they place any holds on your account or you lose track of your card.

**Airplane and Train Apps:** We recommend downloading apps for your travels such as your airline's app and the Trenitalia app. Having these on your phone makes it easier to get your boarding pass and check train times. Depending on your airline, they should all have apps so you can check in, check your luggage requirements, see if any times have changed and

even load your boarding pass. Trenitalia, the main train service in Italy, also has an app so you can check train schedules, routes, prices and even buy tickets ahead of time! This is especially useful when traveling on the bullet trains that have seat reservations and can sell out quickly during the summer months.

**Digital Passport:** Airside is an app I came in contact with recently. It allows you to upload your vaccine card and your ID for TSA precheck and American Airlines only. It is a free app, so it would be helpful in case you do need to show your Covid-19 Vaccine card while you are in Europe. If you don't want to risk losing your vaccine card, download this app to have it with you at all times.

**Exchange Rate App:** There are two that I like to use. XE and WISE. They both have a great format and it's easy to use. If you are thinking about shipping wine home or just curious how much that t-shirt will cost you in dollars, download these apps to keep track of your spending.

\*\*\*\*I recommend having Euros with you at all times. A lot of small shops and cafes DON'T always accept credit cards for a small purchase. Italians always prefer cash over credit in general. At the grocery store or a winery, it's worth having some Euros handy for a small souvenir. \*\*\*\*