



You are traveling to Italy, here's what to expect and how to deal with it.

As Ted Lasso says, be curious, not judgmental. You are arriving into a country that is not your own. They have different customs, traditions, ways of living and definitely not the Italian dishes you've experienced in your home country. Be open-minded, kind and more than anything else, CURIOUS. Be willing to try something you've never tasted. Be interactive and ask questions.

Things that are different from US:

Showers - The showers are notorious for being extremely small for American standards.

Bidets are found in every Italian bathroom. What do I clean with it? Bidet means Pony in French. SO, What do I clean with it? Saddle up and clean your nether regions or your feet on a summer day. There's a cool history about it [here](#).

Picking out produce - While shopping in an open air market, you wait to be served and the owner will handle the vegetables and fruit you desire. You should not touch their produce. That's a no-no! While shopping for produce in a grocery store, you must weigh your own vegetables and fruit with the machine provided and print out a tag with the price on it. If you don't, the cashier will make you go back and print out the tag.

Plastic bags cost \$ - Bring your own grocery bag with you to go shopping. Otherwise you will be paying for each plastic bag.

Converters/curling irons/blow dryers - converters are important to have if you plan on using your own blow dryers, curling irons or chargers.

Taxi Stands - Only way to hail a taxi is to wait in line by the Taxi stand at the airport, train station or a main piazza. Taxi's will not stop if you put your hand up in the air.

Keep cash and coins on you - While shopping in small shops, city grocery stores, make sure you have cash. This is easier for small businesses to receive payment. Do not use a credit card for one item. You will get push back and rolling of eyes as using a credit machine costs a lot more money for Italians. Be kind and have coins to use on those small purchases.

Toiletries in Villas/apartments/Airbnb - Most accommodations **DO NOT** have shampoo, conditioner or body wash available. Our accommodations do not offer complimentary toiletries in their private bathrooms.

Breakfast at a hotel - Please don't expect eggs & bacon. You'll most likely have a continental breakfast Italian style. Like brioche, coffee, yogurt, toast, fruit for example. Our retreats will offer a more authentic Italian style breakfast.

Lastly, there's **no such thing** as caesar or ranch dressing, alfredo sauce, or any dish found at the Olive Garden. When eating a salad, you will be given EVOO, balsamic vinegar, salt & pepper. If you are a fan of Alfredo sauce, I suggest trying the pasta called Cacio e Pepe. It is sooo good and better than Alfredo. :)

Things to keep in mind when packing:

Luggage weight - Make sure you know what your weight and bag limits are for your airline. A test is if you can't lift the bag over your head to get in the overhead storage on a plane or a train, it's probably too heavy.

No elevators - Also keep in mind that you'll be rolling your bags along cobblestone streets (if not renting a car after the retreat). Also a lot of accommodations DO NOT have elevators. You've been warned.

Embrace the adventure of experiencing another culture.
Be curious, not judgemental.

