



## 5 Steps to plan a memorable multi-city tour of Italy



As much as I believe in spontaneous travel and in getting lost to find the best gems along the way, I am also an enthusiastic **Tour Manager** who believes in the power of planning ahead while still making room for the '**unexpectedly memorable**'!

If your aim is to visit as many places of interest as possible during your stay in Italy, then it's even more important than ever to have a **plan** in place to **make the most of your stay, the time you have available and stay within your budget.**

The **5 Step Plan** I'm about to introduce you to has served me well in the past and it has turned any multi-city tour of Italy into an unforgettable experience.



*'Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail'*

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

## **5 STEP TRAVEL PLAN**

**Step 1 - Choose your destinations and itinerary carefully - consider passions and interests of travellers. Have a budget in mind. Time your tour.**

**This first step** seems an obvious one and yet you'd be surprised of how many people leave it to chance and end up not making the most of their travels.

Whether you are single, a student, part of a couple or travelling with friends and kids, give serious thought to the kind of experience you

are looking for, pay attention to **what interests** give you and others pleasure and would make your visit extra special.

Is it total relaxation and wonderful fresh food you are looking for or you want to trace back the steps of the ancient Romans and enjoy beautiful scenery along the way? Whether you are an art and nature lover, an adrenalin junkie or a gelato enthusiast, **Italy** can cater for all your needs and passions, but make it a priority **to pin point exactly what it is that you want** and you are off to a very good start!

**It's also very important** to consider **what budget** you have available, so that you can make the most of any local activities that might be free but are still hugely enjoyable ie late visits to certain museums, open air performances and film viewings. **To save money**, base yourself in historic and off-track interesting places, from where you can have easy access to major cities that are on your must-do list and you'll get the best of both worlds.

Also **time your stay** as much as it's possible, so that you don't rush. It's best to see less but enjoy more of what you are seeing and always allow extra time for rest, getting lost and the unexpected!

## **Step 2 - Stay at 'Alberghi Diffusi'/Agriturismo/rent out local apartments**

If you are looking to stay in accommodation that's more like a home from home and want to immerse yourself in local life without blowing your budget, then I highly recommend you try one of these **3** types of hospitality:

a. **Albergo Diffuso** - literally meaning 'scattered hotel' is a wonderful way of experiencing Italian culture and daily living. Rooms are decorated in authentic style and scattered throughout different buildings in historic towns or villages. A traditional breakfast might be served at a local café or in the kitchen of one of the local houses or even delivered to your room. There are currently more than **40 Alberghi Diffusi** in Italy and if you are interested in staying in one, I can help you find the perfect one for you!

b. **Agriturismo** - This is a combination of 2 words in Italian, agriculture and tourism and is a way of enjoying holidays in beautifully restored farm houses, which can vary from the rustic to the luxurious. An **Italian Agriturismo** will usually serve food to guests prepared from raw materials produced on the farm or locally and some will even allow guests to get involved in the activities surrounding the farm. If you are a nature lover, long to escape from the city and try a more 'authentic' kind of lifestyle, then surely this is the perfect experience for you!

c. **rent out local apartments** - This type of accommodation is very often overlooked and yet it can offer so much on a very small budget, especially if you share with friends or family. There are a number of rental agencies that can help you find the right apartment in the right location, but please use caution and try and use reputable companies. It's certainly worth noting which ones are recommended and get the best testimonials.



### **Selection of Alberghi Diffusi**

'Italy is a dream that keeps returning for the rest of your life'

**Anna Akhamatova**

### Step 3 - Eat with the locals for authentic food/shop at local markets/search out local food festivals



**Italian food** can undoubtedly be the highlight of any trip there and although it's difficult to have a bad experience, I still urge you to follow these very simple tips:

- a. **go off the tourist trail and eat where the locals do** - it's almost always in these places, where you might find yourself in unpretentious surroundings and very simple settings, that you will sample the most authentic and best tasting food and quite reasonably too!

Whether it's for lunch or dinner, try and stay away from places that will offer '**tourist menus**' and venture off where the local workers might gather for a quick snack or plate of local pasta and you are assured to come away satisfied. In the evenings, if you are willing to eat later than you might be used to and wait till 8pm or later, then search out for those '**trattorias**', '**pizzerias**' or restaurants packed with locals. Without fail the food will be good, reasonable and the atmosphere very enjoyable!

**b. shop at local food markets-** Every town and city in Italy will invariably hold market days every week and it's in the local food ones that you can find and buy the best and freshest produce available and even pick up tips on how to make the most of it!





c. why not make your itinerary coincide with some of the wonderful 'sagre' or **food festivals** that take place throughout the year and celebrate local produce. The convivial atmosphere is amazing and you might even sample some of the local specialities for free!

For a list of authentic and affordable eats, local markets and food festivals, watch out for **my future food guides** to help you enjoy the best Italian food out there.

#### **Step 4 - Go off the beaten track/attend local events**

- a. **Step off the madding crowds** - There are so many reasons to travel off the major tourist trail, and Italy is a great country to do it in, since it's so full of picturesque villages, art-filled provincial galleries, excellent local restaurants and glorious natural scenery.



**Corinaldo, Marche**

During my visits in Italy, it's been quite often when I got lost that I stumbled upon a breathtaking view, an outstandingly good restaurant and received a very warm welcome. And I have come to realize that the best experiences don't have to be expensive and that **special travel moments don't cost a euro!** So how do you find these off-the-beaten track treasures and most of all make them part of your itinerary once you are there?

Italians are invariably proud of their local town and surroundings and they will be delighted and flattered that you have taken an interest, so get talking to your local market stall holder, your bar waiter, your baker or **agriturismo** and '**albergo diffuso**' owner and you will certainly uncover some of these **secret gems**.

If you are keen to uncover off-the-beaten path destinations, even before you set off on your tour, please get in touch for insiders advice and detailed tips on how to make your stay even more memorable! [www.therunawayitalian.com](http://www.therunawayitalian.com)

**b. Attend local events and festivals** - A holiday in Italy can offer so much more than sightseeing. The country has an unrivalled artistic and musical heritage, today displayed in opera houses, theatres and outdoor festivals. Most regions will also host historic pageants, medieval-style tournaments, colourful religious rituals, contemporary arts events, cinema festivals and much more. There is indeed **something for everyone**, whether you want to add variety to your holiday or plan a trip around attendance of a special event.



**Infiorata at Genzano, near Rome**

For a list of the best and most interesting regional events in Italy and itineraries that include off the beaten track destinations, don't miss **reading my travel blog articles** that will give you all the insights you need to make your tour a very special one! [Travel Blog](#)

## **Step 5 - Use public transport/buses/trains/boats/bike**

If like me you believe in sustainable tourism and are keen not to experience the stress of driving while abroad, then I highly recommend **using local public transport** for an even more enjoyable and laidback experience.

Italy has a fairly comprehensive public transport network and it's possible to explore the country affordably without a car. Using public transport isn't always straightforward - you'll need to do some advance research and plan around timetables - but it can be a rewarding way to see Italy and meet Italians.

**Train travel** is generally the best way to get around Italy, but in remote or hilly areas **buses** may be the easier, quicker or only option. **Boats and ferries** also provide vital transport links around Italy's lakes and islands.

In many regions, **cycling** is a popular option as the landscape presents so many routes and can be suitable for beginners and experts alike. And if you go off the tourist trail, it can be the best way to avoid traffic, pollution and crowds and you can make the most of the peace and beauty of being alone with your thoughts.



I hope that **this travel guide** gives you a head start on making the most of your multi-city tour of Italy and it's especially dedicated to travellers who prefer to plan independently, but would welcome tips and suggestions from an experienced travel planner and explorer!

There are many ways of linking attractive destinations together to create a fascinating and enjoyable holiday, from a highlights tour for Italy first-timers (**Rome - Venice - Florence**, easily manageable by train) to less obvious explorations that illustrate Italy's different faces or allow travellers to get to know a region in more depth.

Planning your own tour can be very exciting and stimulating and indeed help you make the most out of your holiday. Researching in advance, considering your options and selecting your own destinations means that you arrive with a greater understanding and knowledge of the places you visit.

If you have enjoyed reading this guide and need help planning your special tour of Italy, I can prepare for you **uniquely tailored multi-city travel planning and guides**, packed full of all the insider information you need and won't find in your average guidebooks.

For any further **travel inspiration** and information on my **travel services**, click here: [Magica Italia Package](#)



**Giuseppe Verdi**

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