

**Getting ahead in a difficult professional requires avid faith in yourself. That is why some people with mediocre talent, but with great inner drive, go much further than people with vastly superior talent. –Sophia Loren**

Italy is bordered by Austria, France, Slovenia and Switzerland. The capitol is Rome. The currency is the Euro. Italy is +1 hour GMT.

Appearances matter in Italy. First impressions are lasting impressions. They are extremely fashion conscious and judge people on their appearance. You will be judged on your clothes, shoes, accessories and the way you carry yourself. *Bella figura* is more than dressing well. It extends to the aura your project too; i.e. confidence, style, demeanor, etc.

Upon meeting, the usual handshake with direct eye contact and a smile suffices between strangers. Once a relationship develops, air-kissing on both cheeks, starting with the left is often added as well as a pat on the back between men.

If you are invited to a meal, bring gift-wrapped such as wine or chocolates. Do not wrap gifts in black, as is traditionally a mourning color. Do not wrap gifts in purple, as it is a symbol of bad luck. Remain standing until invited to sit down. You may be shown to a particular seat. Follow the lead of the hostess - she sits at the table first, starts eating first, and is the first to get up at the end of the meal. The host gives the first toast. An honored guest should return the toast later in the meal.

**Greetings**

Hello: Buongiorno

Goodbye: Arrivederci. Ciao.

Yes: Si

No: No

Please: Per favour

Thank you: Grazie

That's fine/you're welcome: Prego

Excuse me: Mi scusi

Sorry (forgive me): Mi perdoni

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