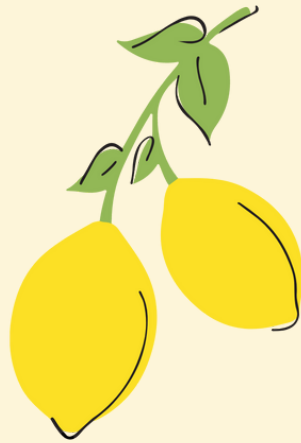


# CURATA TRAVEL

Curated Culinary Tours



TRAVELER'S  
GUIDEBOOK





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# HELLO!



While Curata Travel was established in 2021, we've actually been running tours since 2012 through our parent company Caputo Brothers Creamery. David & Rynn Caputo founded Caputo Brothers Creamery in 2011 after attending culinary school in Calabria, Italy. Over the years they have developed award-winning cheeses reminiscent of those they fell in love with while traveling and studying in Italy, and the culinary tours came out of this love!

Your tour directors are always there to help and answer any questions you might have, but this guidebook is also here as another resource to help your travels with us go smoothly!

*The Curata Travel Team*

CurataTravel.com

@CurataTravel

# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Documents you **must** travel abroad with include: **your passport**. Your passport must be valid for for at least 3 month past your travel dates.

Starting in 2025, when traveling to Italy, you are required to complete the **ETIAS waiver** before traveling. If not completed, you will not be able to enter the country. If traveling before 2025, no need to complete any ETIAS waver. For more info about how this works, check out our blog: [How does this new “visa” requirement work?](#)

Although no longer a requirement to travel to and throughout Italy, we recommend you bring your **COVID Vaccination Card** (or at least a copy or photo). This information could be useful in an emergency situation.

We recommend bringing a **copy of your birth certificate**. In the event that your passport gets lost or stolen, having this document will make the process of getting a new passport much easier.





## LUGGAGE

Your luggage should be limited to **one suitcase** and one personal item (purse, backpack, etc.). Please check with your airline on size and weight restrictions! There will be plenty of room in the under-bus storage for suitcases, but purses and backpacks will need to be kept with you in the seat or overhead space.

You are responsible for moving your luggage on your own or traveling with someone who can help you. Porters may not always be available at all hotels, so you may be required to bring your own bag to your room, sometimes without the availability of an elevator.

## EUROS

Once you have arrived, we will get you to an **ATM** to acquire some euros for incidental expenses during your trip. We find this is the **most economical** way to get euros and it also happens to be the easiest! Don't forget to notify your bank and credit card companies of your travel plans prior to departing (this can usually be done online or in an app.)

When choosing an ATM, make sure you use one that is **affiliated with a bank**. One of the screens will ask you if you want your money with or without conversion. Choose **WITHOUT conversion** - this will send the withdrawal back to your bank so they can do it for you rather than the ATM. This will give you a better deal. Try to avoid ATMs and exchange counters located in the airport, as their fees will be higher!

It's always a good idea to have at least some euros on you. If you spend less than €60 somewhere, they have the right to refuse to accept your credit card.





# TIPPING

While traveling with Curata Travel, most meals and excursions happen as a whole group. All tipping to the wait staff and tour guides during these activities are done by Curata Travel, so unless you feel that a particular server or tour guide has gone **above and beyond** for you, there is **no need** to tip in these instances.

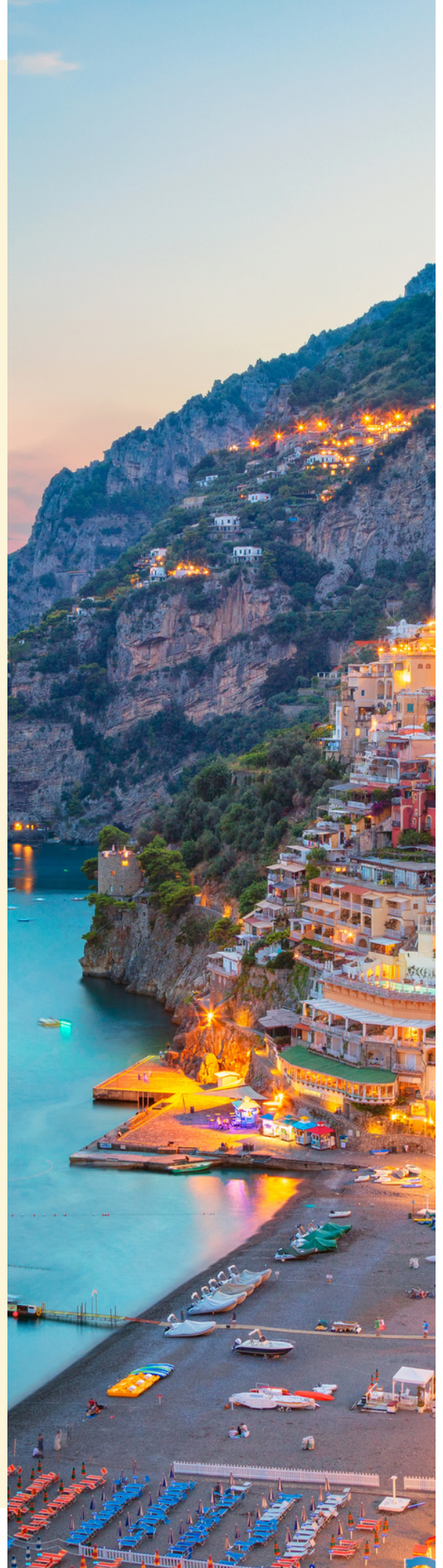
Like everywhere else where you receive a service, tips are never expected, but always appreciated. Tips for your Travel Directors and bus driver are **not included** in the price of your tour. Here are the suggested tipping rates:

- **Tour Directors** = \$4-5 per day, to split between them
- **Driver** = \$2-3 per day (or the equivalent in the local currency (if you need to exchange money, please ask your tour directors).

While traveling on your own, or during your free time, here are some **guidelines for tipping**:

- **Restaurants:** Recently it is customary to leave a few euros (never more than 10% of the bill) for your server. This must be done in cash, since there will not be an option to add a tip to your card.
- **Taxi drivers:** Round up the charge by a couple of euros and then you can tell the driver to keep the change.
- **Housekeeping:** In most Italian hotels, housekeeping comes in each day to make the bed and exchange your towels. A euro a day left at the end of your stay is customary.

“Like everywhere else where you receive a service, tips are never expected, but always appreciated.”





A vertical photograph of a narrow canal in a historic Italian town. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, reflecting the surrounding buildings and a small stone bridge. The buildings are multi-story, with warm-toned facades in shades of orange, yellow, and red. Some windows have dark shutters. A small bridge with a single arch spans the canal in the middle ground. The sky is bright and clear, suggesting a sunny day.

## ELECTRICITY

Italy/Europe uses different plugs for their wall sockets compared to the US. The most common plug and adapter you will need is **Type C**. Most laptops/smartphones/tablets will work with this simple plug **adapter**. **Converters**/transformers are needed for 'electric' products - simple heating devices or anything with a mechanical motor (hair dryers, hair flat iron, steam irons, shavers, toothbrushes), as they convert the voltage.

In general, **Italy is very energy conscious**. Maybe the biggest difference you will encounter is the air conditioning (or the lack of it). AC in hotels and restaurants may not be as strong as you are used to, or may not exist at all.

Many hotels have a system set up in each hotel room in order to **save energy**. Depending on the hotel, you may have to insert your key card into a slot by the door. This will turn on the electricity in the room so you can turn on the lights and the AC. Some hotels have limits to how low you can set the AC and it will probably be displayed in celsius.

For reference:

- 18°C = about 64°F
- 22°C = about 71°F
- 25°C = 77°F



# ADJUSTING TO A NEW CULTURE

Many of the places we visit are **off-the-beaten-path**. This means we will be highly immersed in the Italian culture which can sometimes cause some **culture shock** to new travelers. Adjusting to a new culture and keeping an **open mind** to new customs is an essential aspect of successful and enjoyable travel. Remember to:

- Research & prepare before a trip (which we help with!)
- Keep an open mind (meal times are different, food can be unusual, etc)
- Respect local traditions
- Observe and learn!
- Be flexible and adapt to your surroundings
- Participate in cultural activities!

# ROLE OF YOUR TRAVEL DIRECTOR

Your tour director(s) is there to help everything go smoothly and ensure that you have a positive and **memorable experience** on your tour! They organize logistics, provide information about destinations, coordinate activities, ensure the safety and comfort of participants, and create an engaging and enjoyable experience for the travelers. Use them as a **resource** as well as all the material you've received in preparation for the tour.

“Adjusting to a new culture and keeping an open mind to new customs is an essential aspect of successful and enjoyable travel.”

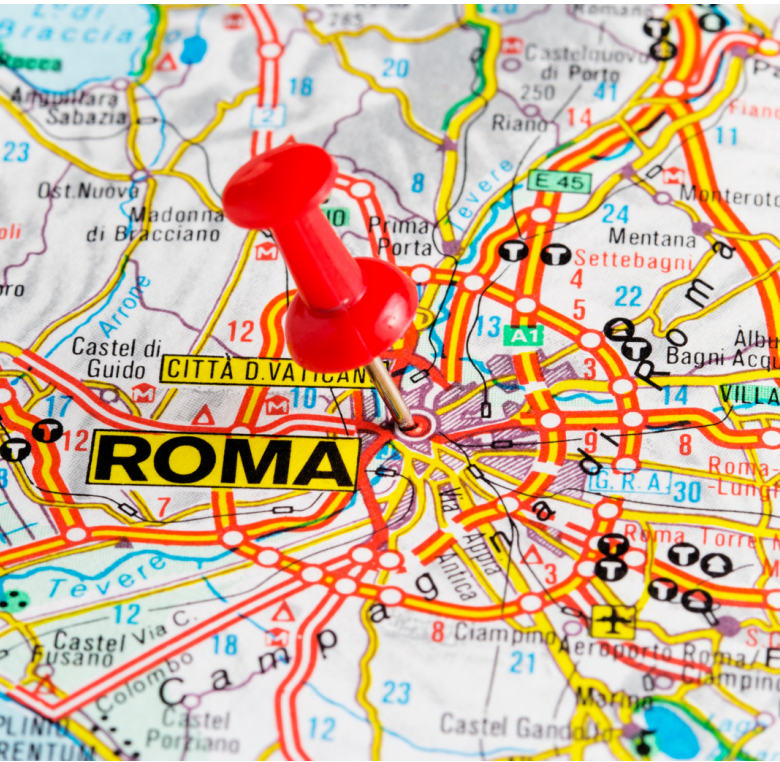




# Private Motor Coach

We will be traveling by **private motor coach** throughout the tour. We work with a fantastic company which provides **comfortable and safe transport**. Keep in mind:

- The front of the bus is reserved for those who get carsick
- There are no reserved seats on the bus
- Please help to keep the bus clean
- We may play music during longer rides - help make a playlist!
- If you ever need a stop, please just speak up!



# Personal Expenses

Some items not included in the price of the tour include:

- Spending during free time, personal purchases, extraneous hotel charges (minibar, laundry service, etc.) and any alcoholic beverages not included with meals
- And any transportation required outside of the itinerary - taxi fare, airport transfers outside of the planned group transfers, etc



# HOTELS

There are many differences in an Italian hotel that you might not expect. For example:

- Expect the building to be quite old
- Have your passport on-hand for check-in (we have this covered on tours)
- Prepare to pay a small city tax (again, we have this covered on tours)
- The bathrooms will have **different amenities** (Yes, that's a bidet. And no, there's no washcloth)
- Leaving your key at the front desk is common practice (especially if it's cumbersome)
- Use your **key card to turn on the electricity**
- The AC may not be as powerful as you are used to
- You may have to **"check in" at breakfast** (they may ask you for your room number)



You may be staying in a variety of styles of hotels during our tour. We do this on purpose so you can get many different experiences. We aim to stay in places that have a combination of the following characteristics (all while ensuring they are clean and comfortable): **3- or 4-star hotels, family-run hotels, Agriturismo hotels, and hotels located in city centers.** Everyone, or each couple, has their own private room with their own bathroom.





## MEALS

While this is, first and foremost, **a culinary tour**, we try our best to achieve a balance each day by incorporating a light picnic or pizza party in amongst the various feasts! While we understand that many people have dietary restrictions or food aversions, **we would encourage you to eat what you can and try new things!** After all, you may never again have the opportunity to eat some of these dishes, which are prepared with such **pride and passion!**

Meal times are typically much later in European countries than what Americans are used to. Lunch will typically start between 12pm and 1pm and dinner will usually start between 7pm-8pm, and sometimes later. Meals and food are also a very social activity and you may notice there is not the same sense of urgency among servers in Italy. This means that the meals can last a couple of hours or more. Just try to be flexible and soak in the culture!

A typical, full Italian meal consists of 5 parts:

- Antipasto (Appetizer)
- Primo (First course) - a pasta, risotto, or soup
- Secondo (Second course) - meat or fish
- Contorno (Side dish) - a vegetable
- Dolce (Dessert)

## WATER

At restaurants, servers will start by asking you if you prefer **still or sparkling water**. Both will be available at all meals.

If you are out exploring on your own and are looking to buy a bottle of water, you can purchase one in a grocery store or stop at a bar.

For free, you can also drink from the tap or public water fountains found around cities.





## BATHROOMS

If you are out and about, exploring a city, you may find a public restroom you can use for a euro or two. Or you can **find a bar**, purchase something small like a coffee or water and then feel free to use their restroom (I find this to be the easiest option).

FYI: Bathrooms in Italy often include **bidets**; sometimes to flush you have to push a **button**; and sometimes to turn the water on for the sink, you have to push a **pedal on the floor!**

## AIR CONDITIONING

As mentioned, **Italy is very energy conscious**. Maybe the biggest difference you will encounter is the air conditioning (or the lack of it). AC in hotels and restaurants may not be as strong as you are used to, or may not exist at all. It may not get as cold as you are used to and it may be programmed to turn off during the day.

Keep in mind that if you have a window or door open on your hotel room, your AC is probably off!



# GETTING AROUND ON YOUR OWN

If you need a taxi while you're out exploring on your own, you need to **find a taxi stand!** You will not be able to hail a taxi like you would in NYC. Look for signs like the one to the right and wait for a taxi to pull up.

If you care in a major city like Rome or Milan, you may be able to use an app called **FREENOW** (like Uber) to reserve a taxi.

The **train system** is fantastic, easy, and cheap in Italy! Don't forget to validate your ticket before boarding the train.

And **walking** is always a good way to learn a lot about a new city!



## BE SMART

Whenever you travel and visit a new place, it's always a good idea to **be smart and stay alert!** Petty crimes/pickpocketing can happen, especially in major tourist cities. Here are some tips to avoid being pickpocketed:

- **Wear a cross body bag** instead of a purse (keep things close to you! Men can use these too!)
- Keep any money/cards/wallet in your **FRONT pocket** - not your back pocket!
- Use bags with **zippers** instead of buttons/snaps/magnets.



## TOUR PRICING

- **Includes:**

- All hotel accommodations covered in the itinerary
- All planned excursions and classes
- Experienced tour directors and local guides
- Daily breakfasts, all meals (may vary depending on your tour) accompanied by local wines
- Private transportation throughout the tour
- And airport transfers on the specified arrival and departure dates/times.

- **Does not include:**

- Airfare
- Trip insurance
- Gratuity for driver and tour directors, at your discretion
- Any spending during free time, personal purchases, extraneous hotel charges (minibar, laundry service, etc.) and any alcoholic beverages not included with meals
- And any transportation required outside of the itinerary - taxi fare, airport transfers outside of the planned group transfers, etc.





## YOUR PHONE

Most cell phones nowadays come with an **international plan**. Your phone will recognize when you leave the country and whenever you turn on your data, it will start your international plan (usually around \$10/day, depending on your carrier).

It is possible to only use **wifi** during a trip and never turn on your data so you don't have to pay for the international plan. However this would not allow you to use maps, social media, or send messages while away from wifi.

During a tour we will use an app called **WhatsApp** to create a group chat and communicate throughout the tour! It's also a great way to share pictures!

## YOUR FREE TIME

Each day, we build in free time for you to be able to rest or explore! To plan this time, use the following resources:

- **City Highlights** - gives you background on the city we are visiting and points out top sights to see
- **Google My Map** - a visual way to see what is around. Also points out sight-seeing and may also have restaurant recommendations
- **Your Tour Director!**







# SOCIAL MEDIA

We share photos and videos from our tours on social media. Follow us on Instagram & Facebook and tag us (**@CurataTravel**) in your own photos!

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