

# See Late Summer Italy Affordably After Locals Pack Up

By **Mary Ann Sorrentino**

Since I discovered in recent years that Italy's cities are easier to navigate when natives have fled for vacations in the outskirts or outside the country, I have traveled to Italy in August and September. Elegant lodging and dining can be had at bargain prices in those months because businesses are eager for customers. These realities contrast sharply with the old myth that late summer in Italy meant a general shutdown, making an enjoyable visit to this wonderful country more difficult.

While most Italians take a vacation in that period, usually between the August 15 Ferragosto holiday and early September, cities and towns no longer close down entirely. Italian businesses understand that to survive financially they cannot close for a month.

As Europe's second most popular travel destination after France, Italy has tourists year round. Travelers arriving in late summer when many locals are at the shore, in the mountains, or elsewhere become part of an international crowd. The wonders of Rome, the tranquility of Umbria and Tuscany and the elegance of the Veneto hill country are globally popular with good reason.

Airfares drop in August and hotel rates plummet. The Hotel Villa San Pio in Rome's tranquil Aventino district, my home in Rome since 2001, is a perfect August bargain. The same double room I have used in past Octobers costs nearly half in August and early September. Yet the overwhelming majority of shops and restaurants on nearby Via Marmorata stand open and ready to serve, even during Italy's national vacation period; and natives seem especially welcoming when the cities are less frantic.

Last year we explored the Veneto region in August with no disappointments over vacation closures and with all the advantages of discounted lodging and meals in that area's elegant cities. Padua, for example, was open for business, its chic shops, trendy bars and gourmet restaurants warmly welcoming all comers. Vicenza and the breathtaking Palladian villas surrounding it and dotting the banks of the Brenta River were all open to visitors. The region's comfortable days and cool evenings so perfect for vacationing were a wonderful bonus.

The only other time Italy offers similar bargains is during the colder, rainier days of late fall and winter. So if you are able to plan an Italy escapes later this summer- do it! Otherwise mark your calendar so you're ready for Italy next August or September.

Either way, buon viaggio!

## Takeaways

- Since I discovered in recent years that Italy's cities are easier to navigate when natives have fled for vacations in the outskirts or outside the country, I have traveled to Italy in August and September. Elegant lodging and dining can be had at bargain prices in those months because businesses are eager for customers. These realities contrast sharply with the old myth that late summer in Italy meant a general shutdown, making an enjoyable visit to this wonderful country more difficult. While most Italians take a vacation in that period, usually between the August 15 Ferragosto holiday and early September, cities and towns no longer close down entirely. Italian businesses understand that to survive financially they cannot close for a month. As Europe's second most popular travel destination after France, Italy has tourists year round. Travelers arriving in late summer when many locals are at the shore, in the mountains, or elsewhere become part of an international crowd. The wonders of Rome, the tranquility of Umbria and Tuscany and the elegance of the Veneto hill country are globally popular with good reason.

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### More resources

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