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## The Italian Living Experience

Vesta Italian Villas helped you select the right villa for your trip, and we want your stay at our property to be enjoyable. Renting a villa is a great way to experience living like a local, so you should expect some differences between your Italian vacation and your everyday routine or other travel experiences. Being prepared will enhance your villa experience. Below we explain some important facts about your trip and villa rental. If you have questions about this information or other aspects of Italian living and culture, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### Arriving at your Vacation Home:

Check-in time at most of our villas is between 4 PM and 6 PM, unless special arrangements have been made with the owner/keyholder. Please consult your Booking Confirmation for the check-in time for your villa. To avoid difficulties, you should plan to arrive at the villa during daylight hours. After a long flight, it will be much easier to find the villa when it is still light out. Keep in mind that many villas are located outside a small town or village.

The owner or the keyholder will meet you at your villa and welcome you. The owner/keyholder will give you a tour of the villa and show you how to use the various appliances. Please feel free to ask them any questions about the villa or the local area. They will do their best to assist you.

Many of our properties are in the country, and the access roads and driveways to these villas may be steep, hilly, winding and/or unpaved. We specify what the access roads and driveways are like for most villas on our website. Read the Vicinity Page of the villa under the heading "Villa Location".

### Household Items:

All properties are equipped with one set of bed linens per bed and one set of towels per person for the week. Each property also has utensils, pots, pans, glassware and dishes.

Please note that washcloths are not provided, as they are not used in Italy. Italians use sponges so you won't find washcloths in stores. Remember to bring your own. Also note that towels in Italy tend to be slightly smaller than American towels. Pool and beach towels are also not supplied unless specifically stated in your booking confirmation. You can bring your own or buy them locally (the word for it is "telo mare").

Guests are responsible for purchasing their groceries, cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, and toiletries (soap, shampoo, toilet paper). You can stop on your way to the villa if you see a supermarket or you can shop for these items once you've checked in. The owner/keyholder can tell you where the closest supermarket/grocery store is located.

### Screens:

Screens are rare in Europe. Some owners use mosquito netting over the beds instead of screens, while others have louvered shutters so that you are able to keep the windows open at night. You can also purchase a small device (similar to a nightlight) that plugs into an outlet and emits insect repellent. These are sold at most pharmacies and supermarkets throughout Italy.

#### Plants/Animals/Pets:

There are many plants and insects in the countryside. You should come prepared with allergy medicines and insect repellent. Some owners live with pets at their properties. Please inquire if you have any concerns regarding this. Even though there may be other animals on the property, Vesta Italian Villas, LLC has a no-pet policy, as many owners do not allow guests to bring their own pets.

#### Stairs/Hand Rails/Elevators:

Some properties have old stone steps that may be worn and uneven and some may not have railings. In older buildings elevators are not common, so be sure to note on which floor your apartment is located in case there is no elevator. You may have to carry your luggage and groceries upstairs. This information is on our website, on the Vicinity Page of the villa under the heading "Villa Location". We have visited all the properties and can tell you about each one, so please inquire if you have any concerns.

#### Electricity:

In Italy, electricity is used efficiently because it is expensive. Although it happens seldom, using too many appliances at the same time can trip a circuit breaker. This does not mean that there has been a power failure, only that the breaker has been tripped and needs to be switched back on. Be sure to have the owner or keyholder show you where the panel is located so you can turn the breaker back on, or know whether you need to call him/her directly should you trip a circuit.

For cost efficiency and to avoid tripping circuit breakers, you should try to shut off lights in rooms when you leave and turn off appliances, TVs, radios, etc. when not in use and, of course, when you are leaving the house for your daily excursions.

The voltage in Italy is 220V. American small appliances will not work or will not work properly. Don't bring your own hair dryer, as it would be useless. Most properties have hairdryers (check your Booking Confirmation or ask us). Most laptop computers and digital cameras have built in transformers and can be plugged into Italian outlets. The only thing you need is a plug adaptor. Italian plugs have prongs with two or three aligned round pins. You should bring your own plug adaptors, there are no adaptors at the villas.

#### Air-Conditioning:

Air-conditioning is uncommon in Italy. It is also very expensive and in many historical buildings it is not possible to get the permits to install it. We do have some apartments and villas with air-conditioning; the majority of these properties will charge extra for the usage of the air-conditioning. Many of the older buildings have very thick walls and remain cool even without air-conditioning. Charges for the cost of air-conditioning should be settled with the owner/keyholder upon checkout.

#### Heating:

Some of our properties include heating in the rental price, while others do not. Most properties also have one or more fireplaces for guests use. Be sure to note whether wood is supplied or is extra, as this differs with each property. Heating in Europe is expensive, so be sure to use it sparingly. Costs for the heating (when not included in the rental price) are metered and based on usage. Charges for the cost of heating should be settled with the owner/keyholder upon checkout.

#### Telephones:

Some villas have a fixed landline. The phone number is provided in your Villa Directions. Calls made from this phone are metered and are paid directly to the owner/keyholder at checkout. Some properties have a cell phone for guest use: the owner will explain how you can buy pre-paid cards to charge your cell phone with credit for traffic. The cell phone number is also provided in your Villa Directions.

You can find some useful information on cell phone usage in Italy and cell phone rentals at [http://www.vestaitalianvillas.com/useful\\_info\\_o.html](http://www.vestaitalianvillas.com/useful_info_o.html)

Vesta Italian Villas also has a limited number of cell phones available that customers can rent at better rates, on a first come first served basis.

#### Entertainment:

The main amenities of your villa are listed in the Feature Chart on the villa webpage on our site. A complete list of amenities is on your Booking Confirmation.

Villas may have a pool, billiard table, piano, and ping-pong table, swing set, bicycles, etc. Some properties might have several books in English, but you should bring your own readings. Some properties have TV, which means you will be able to view Italian channels only. Properties with satellite TV have one or more English language channels. VCR and DVD players have a different standard in Italy; so don't bring your own movies, as you won't be able to view them, unless you bring your own portable DVD player or laptop computer. American DVDs are zone 1, while the Italians are zone 2. Most zone 2 DVDs have an English language soundtrack. The owners can tell you where you can rent DVDs nearby; ask the store assistant for DVDs with an English soundtrack. Similarly, if you buy a DVD in Italy, it won't work in your American zone 1 DVD player, unless you have a multiregional player.

#### Water

Italians use water sparingly. Water may occasionally be turned off for a period of time during really dry periods, especially in southern Italy. The water in Italy is safe to drink. Italians are water snobs and buy bottled water. Since there is such a great variety of water coming from several Italian springs, with different mineral contents, we suggest you try this bottled water as part of your experience.

#### Laundry - Washers/Dryers

Some rental properties come with washing machines. Please be sure to have the owner/keyholder instruct you on how to operate the washer, as Italian machines have more program options. Among the several programs there is also an option to avoid the final spinning. This option does not drain the machine at the end of the cycle. Note that washers in Italy are smaller than US washers and that it takes longer to do a load of laundry, sometimes 1½ hours.

Dryers are uncommon in Italy. You will find outside clotheslines to hang your laundry to dry or a drying rack.

#### Baths & Showers

There are many different types of bathrooms in Italy. You can find out what types of bathrooms are in your rental property on our website on the home page for that property. They include:

\* tub with hand held shower: there is a showerhead, but there is no attachment to the wall to hold it

\* tub/shower: the shower is over the tub, so it is either a hand held showerhead that can be attached to the wall or a showerhead on an adjustable bar or a shower head on the wall.

\* half tub: a small tub, literally half of a regular size tub. It generally has a hand held shower.

\* half bathroom: powder room.

The water pressure in some properties is not as strong as you may be used to in the US. You can help the situation by not taking showers at the same time, especially during the summer months.

#### Driving:

In Italy, your US driver's license is acceptable. You can also obtain an International Driver's Permit from AAA. Italian driving rules are almost identical to US driving rules. One important exception is that you are never allowed to make a right turn at a red light. Also you must have your headlights on at all times when driving on highways. We also recommend that you

purchase a good up-to-date map. You can purchase Michelin Maps at [http://www.vestaitalianvillas.com/interact\\_italy.html#maps](http://www.vestaitalianvillas.com/interact_italy.html#maps)

**Car Rentals:**

Renting a car is important for exploring the countryside. Most cars in Italy have manual transmissions. It is less expensive to rent a car with a manual transmission than an automatic transmission. When traveling in large groups, you may want to consider renting two smaller cars instead of a mini van. It is easier to get around the narrow Italian streets and to park. It is also convenient if people want to explore different areas. We are happy to help you with car reservations or you can reserve directly at

<http://www.autoeurope.com/booking/index.cfm?aff=vesta&pucountry=italy>

**Parking:**

Parking in major cities and in the historic center of towns is difficult. If you are staying in a city, a car is not needed and you can easily take public transportation. Certain historic areas are pedestrian-friendly zones, so the areas are not accessible by car.

You will find more information about parking and parking meters in our Transportation section in the Useful Links on our website: [http://www.vestaitalianvillas.com/useful\\_info\\_e.html](http://www.vestaitalianvillas.com/useful_info_e.html)