

ESSENTIAL ITALIAN VOCABULARY SERIES
PART ONE

The Italian Menu Made Easy

The Essential Food Vocabulary

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Introduction

Understanding the menu in an Italian restaurant often is a complicated affair, even if you know a little Italian. The names of the over thousand pasta types, cheeses, fish varieties are bewildering. If the *gestore* of the establishment has been so nice to add an English translation it doesn't always clarify everything. And in many restaurants out of the main tourist centers there still is no translation at hand.

This little booklet is meant to help if you run into problems when eating out in Italy. Hopefully it succeeds in avoiding embarrassing situations or disappointing experiences, destroying your night out. For the real beginner we first explain the structure of the Italian meal, quite different from the usual American or European one. Then explain some general non-food terms, helpful to navigate through the entire eating out experience. Finally, the alphabetical list of over 1000 food terms is presented, covering enough items to understand over 90% of the average Italian menu.

Buon appetito!

The menu

An Italian meal consists of several courses that progress in a structured manner. The meal often starts with an *antipasto*, which translates to "before the meal." It could include a variety of dishes such as bruschetta, olives, cured meats like prosciutto or salami, marinated vegetables, cheeses, or seafood. The first course, or *primo* is usually a *pasta*, *risotto* (rice), soup, or *gnocchi* (potato balls) dish. This course is often quite filling, despite being a "first" course. The *secondo* is the main course, featuring meat, fish, or poultry. This course is usually served with a contorno of vegetables or salads, or roasted potatoes. On special occasions, a course of *formaggio*, cheese and *frutta*, fresh fruit might follow the *secondo*. The dessert, known as *dolce*, is a simple fruit dish, pastries like tiramisu, panna cotta, or cannoli, or gelato, ice cream. The meal concludes with a *espresso* or other coffee. To aid digestion, there's a *digestivo* after the meal: *limoncello*, *amaro* (bitter herbal liqueur), *grappa*, or other spirits. Throughout the meal, bread is often served to accompany dishes, used for sopping up (*fare scarpetta*) sauces or oils. Wine is also an integral part of Italian dining, with different wines often paired with each course to enhance the flavors of the food.

General

A posto - okay
A proposito - by the way
Abbastanza - enough
Abbinare - match
Apparecchiare - set the table
Aspettare - wait
Asporto - take away
Bevande - drinks
Bibite - non-alcoholic drinks
Bicchiere - glasses
Bicchierone - ice cream cup
Calice - chalice
Cambiare - change
Cameriere/a
waiter/waitress
Cena - dinner
Cibo - food
Colazione - breakfast
Coltello - knife
Complimenti - compliments
Coperto - couvert
Cucchiaino - teaspoon
Cucchiaino - spoon
Da bere - to drink
Fame - hunger
Forchetta - fork
Frigo(rifero) - refrigerator
Fuori stagione - out of season
Grazie - thanks

Grazie mille - many thanks
Mancia - tip
Mangiare - eat
Mi raccomando - please
Orario - time table
Ordinare - order
Per favore - please
Posate - cutlery
Pranzo - lunch
Prenotazione - reservation
Pulire - to clean
Scotta - it's very hot
Seggiolone - children's seat
Servizio - service
Tavolo - table
Tovaglio table cloth
Tovagliolo - napkin
- *Va bene* - okay

A

Abaloni - shellfish

Abbacchio - suckling lamb

Acceglio - cow's milk cheese

Acerbo - sour

Aceto - vinegar

Aceto Balsamico - balsamic vinegar

Acetosa - sorrel

Acetosella - wood sorrel

Acquacotta - bread soup

Acquadella - big-scale sand smelt

Acqua minerale - sparkling water

Acqua naturale - still water

Acqua pazza - fish broth

Acqua tonica - tonic water

Acquavite - brandy

Affettati - cold cuts

Affogato - espresso poured over vanilla ice cream

Agghiotta di lumache - snail soup

Agliata - garlic sauce

Aglione - garlic

Agnello - lamb

Agnolini - stuffed pasta

Agnolotti - stuffed pasta pockets

Agona - ray-finned fish

Agretti - glasswort

Agro - with olive oil and lemon

Agrodolce - sweet and sour

Agrumi - citrus fruits

Aguglia - needlefish

Ai ferri - grilled

Aioli - garlic mayonnaise

Albicocca - apricot

Alborelle - bleak fish

Albume - egg white

Alchermes - alchermes liqueur

Alette di pollo - chicken wings

Alici - anchovies

Alici arrenagate - anchovies seasoned with oregano

All' amatricana - with tomatoes, pecorino and guanciale

Alla brace - grilled

Alla Bolognese - meat sauce

Alla boscaiola - autumn based

Alla busara - with shrimp sauce

Alla marinara -

Alla mugellana - with mashed potato

Alla piastre - grilled

<i>Alla scapece</i> - prepared with vinegar, herbs, garlic	<i>Aringhe</i> - herring
<i>Alloro</i> - laurel	<i>Arista di maiale</i> - pork loin
<i>Amaretti</i> - almond cookies	<i>Armelin</i> - apricot
<i>Amaretto</i> - almond-flavored liqueur	<i>Arricciatella</i> - chocolate chip gelato
<i>Ambiente</i> - ambient	<i>Arrosticini</i> - kebabs
<i>Amarene</i> - sour cherries	<i>Arselle</i> - wedge clams
<i>Amaro</i> - bitter	<i>Arzilla</i> - ray fish
<i>Amaretto</i> - bitter-sweet macaroon	<i>Asiago</i> - cow's milk cheese
<i>Anacardi</i> - cashew nuts	<i>Asino</i> - donkey
<i>Ananas</i> - pineapple	<i>Asparago</i> - asparagus
<i>Anatra</i> - duck	<i>Assaggio</i> - a taste
<i>Anelletti</i> - ring shaped pasta	<i>Assenzio</i> - absinthe
<i>Anelli di calamari</i> - squid rings	<i>Astice</i> - lobster
<i>Aneto</i> - dill	<i>Avena</i> - oat
<i>Angostura</i> - angostura bitter	<i>Avocado</i> - avocado
<i>Anguilla</i> - eel	
<i>Anguria</i> - watermelon	
<i>Anice</i> - aniseed	
<i>Animelle</i> - sweetbreads	
<i>Anolini</i> - stuffed egg pasta	
<i>Antipasto</i> - appetizer	
<i>Aperol</i> - aperitivo drink	
<i>Arachidi</i> - peanuts	
<i>Aragosta</i> - lobster	
<i>Aragostine</i> - small lobsters	
<i>Arancia</i> - orange	
<i>Arancia amara</i> - bitter orange	
<i>Arancia rossa</i> - blood orange	
<i>Arancini</i> - fried rice balls	

Zucchine tonda - Round

Zucchini

Zucchine trombetta -

trumpet shaped courgette

Zuccotto - dome-shaped

dessert

Zuccotto di ricotta - ricotta

cake

Zuppa - soup

Zuppa inglese - Italian trifle

Zuppa pavese - egg bread

soup

Zuppa Toscana - bread soup

Zuppetta – soup

Moving to Italy – A Relocation Rollercoaster



Emigrating to Italy, who hasn't secretly dreamed about it? Judging by the popularity of shows like "Living under the Sun", there are many. But doing it, that's a different matter. Letting go of all certainties, leaving behind family and friends, and immersing yourself in a completely different environment with different rules, customs, and language: it's no small feat. In this book, the adventures of two Dutch people who took the leap into the unknown are humorously recounted: experiences in buying and renovating a house, obtaining a citizen service number and a bank account, registering with the municipality and health insurance, importing a car, and numerous other matters that posed various (bureaucratic) difficulties.

Dozens of stories in which an equal number of problems are solved in a completely Italian way, often leading to puzzled Dutch eyebrows and hilarious scenes. In this book, the reader encounters countless characteristic Italians, from sympathetic to villainous, from touching to shameless. Real Italians made of flesh and blood, sometimes cliché, sometimes unexpectedly original. But always worth getting to know.

Beyond Ciao - The True Meaning of 77 Italian Words



Since I've been living in Italy, 15 years now, I **sometimes discover words and phrases that I never heard during my Italian courses**, probably because they were too unimportant. Hard grammar was always the focus when learning the language! But often such little things are just very interesting to know and important in everyday life to avoid ridiculous or embarrassing misunderstandings.

In alphabetical order, this book offers a multitude (77) of possible stumbling blocks in learning and using the Italian language, with one or more short anecdotes for each letter. Officially, the Italian alphabet has only 21 letters: except for loan words, the letters J, K, W, X and Y are not used at all. For this reason, I could reasonably have limited myself to just 21 letters. However, not wanting to be lazy, I have added some anecdotes about the letters K, W and X.

At the end of the book, you'll find **a glossary of the over 250 Italian words** that occur in the stories.