



we ♥ Italy

LANGUAGE

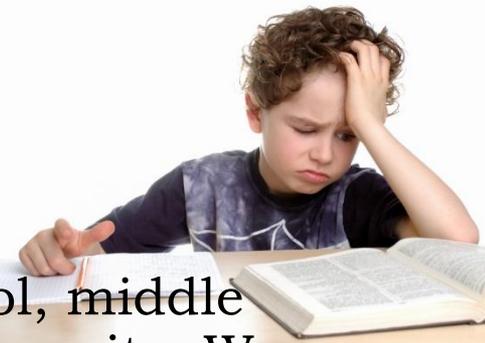
Italy is a fairly young country, with many spoken dialects, because Italy for many centuries was divided into lots of small countries and the political and linguistic unification is recent (1861). Sicilian is a particular dialect, composed by a mix of languages, due to the many invasions and contacts in history.

Friulian and Ladin are considerate as languages.

Each region has its own dialect.



ITALIAN SCHOOL LIFE

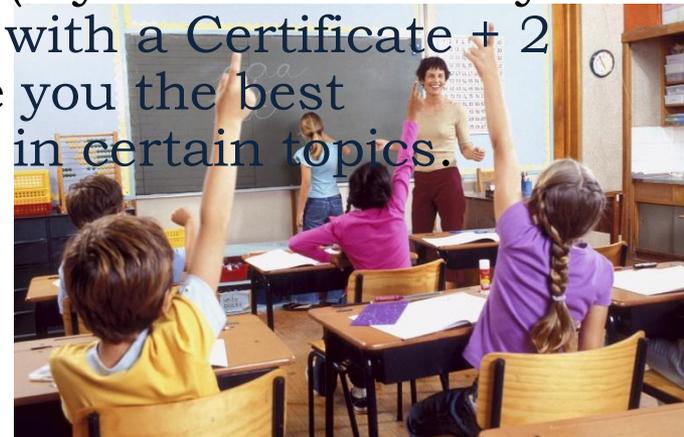


The school in Italy is divided in: elementary school, middle school or junior high school, high school and university. We don't have to wear any uniform.

Elementary include children from 6 to 10; there they learn literacy and numeracy and a first contact with English and science. It lasts 5 years

In middle school (11-13) they start to study literature, improve English and another foreign language (chosen between French, Spanish or German). At the end of these 3 years they do an exam.

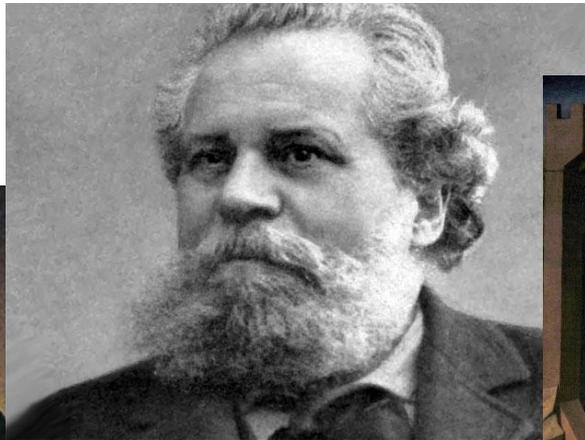
The high school (14-19) is divided in: "Liceo" (5 years + University compulsory), polytechnic school (5 years + University elective) and professional institute (3 years with a Certificate + 2 years for the Diploma, elective). "Liceo" give you the best preparation in all the subjects, specializing in certain topics.





ANCIENT POETS

Many are the well-known writers born in Italy, such as Boccaccio, Petrarca and Alighieri who gave rise at one of the earlier kind of classical literature with the “Divina Commedia”. Other more recent writers are Alessandro Manzoni, who wrote the famous novel “I Promessi Sposi”, Giacomo Leopardi, a poet who followed the pessimistic current and Giosué Carducci.



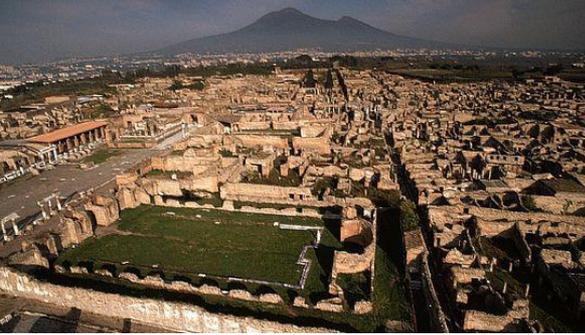


FAMOUS PEOPLE



Many are the Italian famous people: many classical music composers such as Giuseppe Verdi, Giacomo Puccini, who composed unforgettable and world-wide known music, or contemporary singers, popular everywhere like Pavarotti, Mina, Adriano Celentano and Tiziano Ferro. Other well-known people are Cristoforo Colombo (who discovered America), Giuseppe Garibaldi (who unified Italy) and the stylist Gianni Armani.

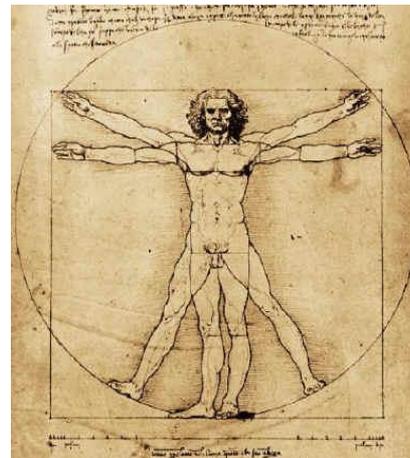




HISTORICAL PART



Italian art is known all over the world. Italy has got many museums and archaeological sites such as Pompeii and Ercolano. There are incomparable museums and art galleries such as Uffizi in Florence, Musei Capitolini in Rome, Sistine chapel and many others. In Italy the most famous painters and sculptors are Michelangelo, Raffaello, Donatello, Leonardo, Giotto and Botticelli. The list could be much longer. Now Renzo Piano is the most well known modern architect in the world



RELIGION

The Italian constitution is laic but the religion is for the majority of the population Christian Catholic. The bishop of Rome is the Pope (Pope Francesco). Because of immigration other religions are represented, and there is a conspicuous ethnic variety all over the territory. The Patron Saint of Italy is St. Francesco D'Assisi.

This year since the 8th December we have the Jubilee, which lasts about one year.



ITALIAN FAMILY



In the past the usual way of life was to start a family marrying a person of the opposite sex and live life together until death. The number of children was higher, at least two or three children.

Today, with divorce and changes of life, many couples divorce and the so-called extended families are growing in number.

Anyway, there are many couples who live together, without being married, having children the same.



FESTIVITIES IN OUR COUNTRY

Festivities in Italy are both laic and religious and each region may have its own special celebration. Religious festivities are often in common with other Christian Countries, I mean festivities as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.

Carnival is rather peculiar and has very many venues in Italy. One of the best known is the carnival in Venice with its fantastic costumes and parades in the canals as well. I mustn't forget to mention the carnival in Viareggio (Toscany) and Cento in (Emilia Romagna)



SOCIAL ETIQUETTE



- First impressions are lasting impressions in Italy.
- Greetings are enthusiastic yet they can be rather formal.
- The usual handshake with direct eye contact and a smile suffice between strangers. If you already know the person, you'd kiss him/her on both cheeks
- Do not give chrysanthemums as they are used at funerals or for the 2nd November when we celebrate the dead.
- If you bring wine, make sure its quality is good.
- Gifts are usually opened when received.
- Punctuality should be important, but not always kept. You must be no later than 15 minutes.
- If you are invited for dinner, or a party, bring gift such as wine, chocolates or flowers.
- Remain standing until invited to sit down.
- If at a party where you have to help yourself, always take a small amount of food in your dish at first then you can take a second round .



THE BEST FOOD



Italy is also famous for its delicious food; some Italian dishes have become well known all over the world: just think of pizza, pasta, lasagne, parmesan ham, espresso, olive oil, mozzarella, Nutella, gianduiotti, cassata, torrone and many kind of fish.

