



ITALY

FOR ALL SEASONS

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LUCCA



UMBRIA



PIEDMONT



VAL D'ORCIA

FALL IN LOVE WITH AUTUMN



Beach days have turned to crisp afternoons.

In Italy's countryside, green hills are now a sea of red and orange. Fall in Italy is a glorious time. After ripening all summer, olives are ready for harvest.

Farms across Italy pluck grapes plump from their vines. And, morning mists kiss golden fields. When travelers want to see Italy in the fall months, it's key to visit the right spots.

Fall paints Piedmont's hills in gold.

Seaside areas, like Cinque Terre or the Amalfi Coast, shut for the season by mid October. But, Autumn in Italy's inland offers a full feast of flavors and color.

Visitors can trek Tuscan hill towns or wander wineries. Travelers might bike atop medieval walls or hunt for truffles near Orvieto. Our top fall destinations in Italy are:

Val d'Orcia (Tuscany), **Umbria**, **Lucca** (Tuscany), and **Piedmont**.

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Where in Italy to go in the fall?



PIEDMONT

Piedmont brims with world-class vineyards and elegant charm. Sip *spumante* in Asti or nibble cheese by Lake Orta.



UMBRIA

Hilltop gems like Orvieto and Spoleto offer sweeping views. Medieval towers and winding streets beckon travelers to Umbria's rustic, rolling valleys.

4 Reasons Fall Is Fabulous

1. *La Vendemmia*

When Italy's fields turn yellow, it's time for the *vendemmia*. Vineyards harvest sun-ripened grapes to make wine.

2. *Food Festivals*

In cool months, Italy fawns over local eats. Perugia cheers all things chocolate. Montalcino in Tuscany honors honey.

3. *Fall Foliage*

The hills are alive with... foliage. From lakes to scenic valleys, Italy's interior is ablaze in gold, peach and crimson hues.

4. *Smaller Crowds*

As days get shorter so too do the lines. Restaurants and shops, which often close in August, re-open at the start of autumn.

Hungry for Harvest

- * **WILD MUSHROOMS:** Autumn in Italy is incomplete without foraged *funghi*. The most delectable are porcini, which enrich *tagliatelle*, polenta and crisp crostini.
- * **HONEY:** After storing pollen during the spring and summer bloom, Italy's beehives brim with amber honey. Try a drizzle on your favorite cheese or atop biscotti.
- * **PUMPKIN:** Pumpkin isn't for pie in Italy — here, it's a supper staple. Roast squash brightens plates of yolk-yellow *tortelli*. Imagine pumpkin plus pasta on the same plate.
- * **CHESTNUTS:** Roasted or ground into flour, chestnuts are used in dishes like gnocchi and sweets like *budino* (pudding). Squirrels and Italians both adore chestnut season.
- * **WHITE TRUFFLES:** Alba in Piedmont honors the truffle with a 2-month fair. Prized for its nutty aroma, truffles are shaved on pasta, eggs or beef tartare in this region.
- * **WILD GAME:** October and November are the start of hunting season for wild game. Boar, hare and pheasant now grace the Italian table, starring in sauces or as entrees.



LOCAL WINE: PIEDMONT

Piedmont produces some of Italy's best wine. Are you fluent in its varietals?

- **Barolo:** a revered red aged in wooden casks
- **Asti Spumante:** light, sweet sparkling white
- **Dolcetto d'Alba:** a dry, fruity, low-acid red
- **Arneis:** a crisp white from the hills of Roero
- **Barbera:** aromatic red tasting of fruit & oak
- **Barbaresco:** earthy red aged for 2-4 years
- **Gavi:** a dry white made near the town of Gavi
- **Moscato:** sweet white served with dessert

TASTE FOR TUSCANY



These Tuscan trattorias are no tourists traps — here slow food meets rustic charm.

La Chiacchiera, Siena.

Textbook Tuscan trattoria, boasting hand-written menus, liters of local wine, and fresh pasta each day.

La Cantinetta di Rignana, Greve

From the terrace, diners glimpse the vine-dotted hills of Chianti. Taste ancient flavors in a timeless setting.

Fuori Porta, Florence.

A Florentine favorite, Fuori Porta is in a non-touristy piazza. Sip a glass of red while savoring the salumi plate.

FEAST ON FALL FLAVORS

In Italy, pumpkin is a savory treat. Residents of Ferrara pride themselves on *cappellacci* pasta stuffed with squash and cheese. Inhabitants of Mantova make ravioli filled with pumpkin and cookie crumbs. In the fall, cooks also treat diners to gourd-laced risotto.

Roasting the squash brings out its sweet notes. The addition of an aged cheese, like *parmigiano*, balances the sugary notes. Once you try our penne with pumpkin recipe, you'll never look at your Jack-o-Lantern quite the same.

PASTA WITH PUMPKIN

- 8 oz. *penne* or *rigatoni*, cooked “al dente”
- 1 - 1.5 cups of *parmigiano*, grated
- 4 oz *pancetta*, cubed (optional)
- 1 tablespoon butter (optional)
- 1 - 1.5 lb butternut squash

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut the squash in half, splitting it down the middle. There is no need to peel the skin off. Scoop out the seeds from the inside, rinsing the squash halves. Rub the squash all over with olive oil. Wrap the squash tightly in aluminum foil. Then, roast for 30-40 minutes -- until the flesh can be spooned out.

About 20 minutes into cooking the squash, render the *pancetta* over medium heat in a large, flat skillet. Cook until the *pancetta* starts to brown along its edges. Turn off the heat. Keep the *pancetta* and its rendered fat in the pan. Meanwhile, cook the pasta *al dente*. Drain the boiled pasta, reserving at least 1 cup of the hot, starchy pasta water.

Take the squash halves out of the oven. Let them cool, unwrapped, for 2-3 min. Spoon out the squash pulp into the pan with the *pancetta*. At this point, return the skillet to medium-low heat. Stir your squash, *pancetta* and cheese until a creamy mix forms. Use a wooden spoon to mash larger squash pieces. Season to taste with ground black pepper.

As a final step, toss the cooked pasta in the pan with your cheese-and-squash mixture. For an even coating, add a little of the hot pasta water to the pan while stirring. Dribble the water in 1 tablespoon at a time to avoid a runny sauce. Mix butter in now, if desired. Toss pasta once or twice to coat with the sauce. Serve hot, dusted with grated cheese.

Seasonal Festivities

EUROCHOCOLATE (PERUGIA)

Perugia is Italy's chocolate capital. For 9 days each October, Perugia also hosts the annual *EuroChocolate Festival*. Cocoa-themed stalls populate Perugia's winding stone streets. You can nibble chocolate panini or marvel at sculptures carved from blocks of chocolate.



VERDI FESTIVAL (PARMA)

Every October 10th the city of Parma — typically famous for prosciutto and *parmigiano* — fêtes the composer Giuseppe Verdi, who was born in nearby Busseto. Classical music buffs gather on Verdi's birthday for a performance honoring the *maestro*'s operatic opus.



WHITE TRUFFLE FESTIVAL (ALBA)

White truffles are one of Italy's most prized foods. They are especially treasured in the region of Piedmont. Residents of Alba put on a truffle fair every October and November here. Visitors might try truffle-flecked treats or hunt this precious ingredient on Piedmont's wooded hills.



HUMAN CHESS GAME (MAROSTICA)

Picturesque Marostica, topped in a crumbling castle, stages a unique game of chess every two years (next up in 2018) — played by dueling human figurines. Garbed in medieval outfits, living chess-pieces enact the game in the town's square — designed to resemble a big chess board.