



Know
Before
You
Go

ITALY

A Guide to Keep You Safe Abroad

Provided by Sexual Assault Support and
Help for Americans Abroad (SASHAA)

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SASHAA
Sexual Assault Support &
Help for Americans Abroad

Let's be perfectly clear, the number one way to prevent sexual assault is to **not rape**. While the responsibility of ending sexual gender-based violence is on the perpetrators, this guide will offer general safety tips, country-specific information, and resources to help prevent and prepare travelers for the possibility of sexual assault abroad.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS:

1. Use the **buddy system** and travel with friends!
2. Be aware of **social and cultural norms**. For example, looking at someone in the eyes when you speak to them is perfectly normal in the U.S., but in another country that could signify you're interested in the person.
3. **Recognize controlling behavior** when entering a relationship. Most rape survivors recall feeling "uncomfortable" about some of their partner's behaviors such as degrading jokes/language or refusal to accept "no" as an answer, whether in a sexual context or otherwise.²
4. **Avoid secluded places** where you could be more vulnerable. Meet new people in public spaces and let a trusted friend know where you'll be beforehand.
5. **Trust your gut**. Many victims have a "bad feeling" right before an assault takes place.



ALCOHOL AND DRUG AWARENESS:

- Always be sure to watch your drink being poured and carry it yourself, even to the bathroom.
- Be aware of "drug-facilitated sexual assault drugs," also referred to as 'roofies' or 'club drugs,' which may turn your drink bright blue, cloudy, or slightly salty. Effects such as impaired judgment, lost sense of sight, sound, or consciousness can be felt within 15 minutes and up to 4 hours.³
- Italy allows ages 16+ to consume beer and wine and ages 18+ access to liquor. Italians consume alcohol socially, and not with aim to drink excessively, e.g. meeting friends for a light drink before dinner.⁴

CULTURAL INFORMATION:

Major Religions: Roman Catholic 71.1%, Protestant Christians 0.78%, Jehovah's Witness 0.74%, Muslim 0.43%, Orthodox Christian 0.27%, Buddhist 0.26%, Jewish 0.06%, and Hindu .05%.⁵

Legal System: Italy's judicial system is based on Roman Law; criminal courts have judges and juries, whereas civil courts have only judges and tribunals.⁶

Social/Cultural Norms: Italians are often more effusive with affection than Americans. Embracing and kissing people upon greeting is normal. This is not necessarily a sign of sexual preference.⁷

Gender Equality: A 2015 survey by the World Economic Forum ranked Italy 41st out of 142 countries in terms of gender equality.⁸ Men dominate Italian politics, but women have equal access to health-care and education. Women have been more and more active in the workplace with less discrimination since WWII.



Sexual Assault and the Law: Italian Context

Article 609b of Italy's Criminal Code uses the term "sexual violence", which is: whoever, by force or by threat or abuse of authority, forces another person to commit or suffer sexual acts. Punishment "will be given to whoever induces another person to commit or suffer sexual acts by: 1) abusing the conditions of physical or mental inferiority of the victim at the time of the event, 2) misleading the victim hiding own identity."⁹

If You Experience Sexual Assault...

Don't blame yourself! **Sexual assault is never the fault of the victim.** You may be unsure of how to proceed, and that's okay. First, consider taking the following actions:

1. If you are in a safe place, **call someone you trust** to be with you. If you are not safe, call someone you trust to come and get you.
2. Do **self-collection of evidence**. Put all of the clothes you were wearing, bed sheets, and so on in a paper bag. If you have any injuries, **take pictures**. If there is semen present, collect what you can in a hotel glass or cup and put it in the paper bag.
3. **Call a SASHAA advocate** internationally toll free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They can help you through the ordeal, honoring your decisions. (See Resources)

Medical Care and Reporting Sexual Assault in Italy

Text If you choose to report a sexual assault, it is important to know that the legal process is very slow. The public prosecutor's office has a maximum of six months to a year to carry out an investigation of a suspect. If an investigation develops into a very complex, the term for completing the investigation may be extended to between 18 months and 2 years. You can receive a medical examination without filing a report to the police, if you wish. Forensic evidence is collected by medical staff. Forensic collection for sexual assault normally involves a pelvic exam, vaginal/penile/anal swabs, head and pubic hair samples, fingernail scrapings, blood samples, and saliva samples. It is important to receive medical attention within 72 hours to receive the best care and collect the most evidence.¹⁰

LGBTQ VICTIM CONCERNS



Homosexuality, cross-dressing, and trans-gender activities are all considered legal, but Italy remains a fairly socially conservative country because of its Roman Catholic roots. While Italy recognizes civil unions to same-gender couples, some rights—such as adoption—are still contested. However, it is safe for LGBTQ community members to report assault.¹¹

POST EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS, EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION, AND ABORTION

Q: Are post exposure prophylaxis and emergency contraception available?

A: Emergency contraceptive in the form of the "morning-after pill" is available at all public hospitals, and PEP is also available. A victim might need to ask and/or discuss both of these options with the medical examiner.¹²

Q: Is abortion legal in Italy?

A: Abortion is legal and available in public hospitals. While this procedure is free for Italian women, non-citizens will have to pay a fee. After 90 days past conception, abortions are only legal if the mother's life is in danger up to 20 weeks.¹³

Resources

SASHAA

SASHAA International Crisis Line:

To call our confidential, toll-free, International Crisis Line first dial the country specific AT&T access code for **Italy (800-172-444)**. Then, at the prompt, enter our phone number: **866-USWOMEN (866-879-6636)**.

Crisis Email:

To reach a SASHAA advocate, you can email us at crisis@866uswomen.org. All crisis emails will be responded to within 24 hours. However, if you need to get in touch with us immediately, please call the international toll-free crisis line.

Live Chat:

SASHAA online chat services are available 24/7 at our website <https://sashaa.org>.

U.S. EMBASSY

U.S. Embassy Roma

Via Vittorio Veneto, 121, 00187 Roma, Italy
Tel: +39 06 46741
Email: uscitizensrome@state.gov

Consulate General Milan

Via Principe Amedeo, 2/10 – 20121 Milano
Tel: (+39) 02-29035
Email: uscitizensmilan@state.gov

Consulate General Florence

Lungarno Vespucci, 38 – 50123 Firenze
Tel: (+39) 055-266-951
Email: uscitizensflorence@state.gov

Consular Agency Venice

Venice Marco Polo Airport General Aviation Terminal
viale Galileo Galilei, 30 – 30030 TESSERA (VE)
Tel: (+39) 041-541-5944
Email: USCitizensVenice@state.gov

HOSPITALS

Florence: Studio Medico Associato

Via Roma 4, 50123, Florence
Tel: 055/475411

Milan: Mangiagalli Hospital, Sexual Assault First Aid,
c/o Clinica Mangiagalli, Via della Commenda, 12
Tel (first aid): 02 55032489
Email: svs@policlinico.mi.it

Genoa: Ospedale San Giovanni Battista - Molinette

Corso Bramante 88/90, Genoa
Tel: 0116331633

Rome: Ospedale Fatebenefratelli

Via di Ponte Quattro Capi 39, 00186, Rome
Tel: 06 68371

Naples: Ospedale Santa Maria Di Loreto

Via A. Vespucci, Naples
Tel: (081) 2542701
Emergency Room: (081) 254.27.43

NON-VIOLENCE ORGANIZATIONS

Bologna: Centre for Women Against Violence

Via dell'Oro 3, Bologna
Hotline: 051-333173
Email: casadonne@women.it
Website: <http://www.casadonne.it/wordpress/>

Florence: Centro Donne Contro La Violenza

Via del Mezzetta, 1 - 50135, Florence, Italy
Tel: 055/602311, (Abused Minors- 055/603234)
Email: cfranci@fol.it
Website: <http://www.artemisiacentroantiviolenza.it>

Milan: Casa Di Accoglienza Della Donne Maltrattate

Via Piacenza, 14 - 20135 MILANO, Italy
Tel: 02/55015519

Naples: Telefono Rosa Napoli

Via Adriano n. 80, 80126, Napoli, Italia
Tel: 081/668691

Rome: Centro Antiviolenza

Viale di Villa Pamphili, 86 / B - 00100, Rome, Italy
Tel: 06/5810926 – 5811473

Rome: Associazione Nazionale Telefono Rosa

Viale Giuseppe Mazzini, 73, 00195 - Rome
Tel: 06.37.51.82.82
Email: telefonorosa@alice.it

Venice: Associazione Donne Con Le Donne

Viale Garibaldi 155 / A - 30174, Venice, Italy
Tel: 041/5342991

POLICE

The local equivalent to "911" in Italy is **113**
Police emergency number: **112**

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- ⁷ "Italy." Countries and their Cultures, World Culture Encyclopedia. 2007. Accessed June 29, 2016. <http://www.everyculture.com/Ge-It/Italy.html>.
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- ⁹ "Italy - Sexual Assault." EIGE. N.p., n.d. Web. 29 June 2016. <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/regulatory-and-legalframe-work/legal-definitions-in-the-eu/italy-sexual-assault-excl-rape>.
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- ¹¹ Winefield, Nicole. "Italy Recognizes Civil Unions in Controversial Compromise over Gay Marriage | Toronto Star." Thestar.com. Toronto Star Touch, 26 Feb. 2016. Web. Accessed 29 June 2016. <https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2016/02/25/italy-recognizes-civil-unions-in-controversial-compromise-over-gay-marriage.html>.
- ¹² "Victims of Crime." Italy - United States Diplomatic Mission. US Department of State, n.d. Web. 29 June 2016. <http://italy.usembassy.gov/acs/emergency/emergency-crime.html>.
- ¹³ Women on Waves. Italy. Accessed on June 29, 2016. <http://www.womenonwaves.org/en/page/4230/italy>