

ITALY IS SO IN RIGHT NOW



If you're looking to break out of a winter rut, why not do it in style and book a flight to Italy's most fashionable cities – Milan or Rome?

Fashion 101

Milan's status as a fashion capital is largely indebted to its convenient location. At the centre of a canal network, the blossoming city had easy access to early trade routes, and thus, to all the good materials. By the 16th century, the Milanese luxury goods industry had developed such an importance that it led to the formation of the English word "milaner" or "millaner" – originally a seller of fine wares and luxury apparel. Milan developed its role as a centre for fashion throughout the 20th century, and was declared the "fashion capital of the world" in 2009. No surprise, with elite design houses Valentino, Versace, Prada, Armani and Dolce & Gabbana all with headquarters in the city.

Fashion Central

The Quadrilatero Della Moda (literally "fashion quadrilateral") is where you'll find the city's most prestigious shopping streets Via Montenapoleone, Via della Spiga, Via Sant'Andrea, Via Manzoni and Corso Venezia. It can take hours to explore all the shops that these stylish avenues have on offer, but don't worry – there are plenty of cafes where you can pause for a glass of prosecco and a spot of people watching.

Stay in Season

The National Chamber of Fashion is an association that aims to promote Italian fashion by organising events throughout the year. The most important events are those dedicated to women's fashion – or Moda Donna – in the months of February and March, and September and October, when forthcoming Autumn/Winter and Spring/Summer collections are presented to the fashion elite. With countless parties, concerts and cultural events throughout, brimming with models, designers and celebrities, now is the perfect time to book flights to Milan and start rubbing leather-clad elbows with the fashion glitterati.

Top Trends: Leather and Vintage

But Milan isn't Italy's only fashionable city. Take flights to Rome for a city with a rich history of leather craftsmanship. With leather more fashionable than ever in 2012, there's no better place to find that perfect leather jacket, bag or shoes. Head to Via Bologna to satisfy your leather fix.

Rome is also great for lovers of vintage, with a selection of flea markets for endless browsing. Look to a directory like In Rome Now for locations and opening times of the various flea markets.

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