

# RENTING A CAR IN ITALY

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FINDING, BOOKING,  
AND DRIVING A CAR RENTAL IN ITALY



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# Renting a Car in Italy

*A Driving & Travel Guide*

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*Everything you need to know about finding, booking, and driving a car rental in Italy*

Auto Europe

[www.autoeurope.com](http://www.autoeurope.com)

- PDF EDITION -

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# So, you want to visit Italy?

If you are getting serious about planning a trip to Italy, then congratulations! Italy is one of the most beautiful and culturally rich destinations in all of Europe, offering everything from dramatic, sweeping landscapes to world-renowned culinary experiences, along with one of the most interesting and remarkable histories in the world. Whether you're visiting to tour ancient ruins, shop in designer boutiques, awaken your taste buds, or everything in between, you're guaranteed to have the time of your life in this wonderful country.

But if you want to see it all, you'll need an efficient and affordable means of transportation. Comfortable and private wouldn't hurt, either! Fortunately, [car rentals are available](#) for pickup and drop-off all throughout Italy, providing a safe and reliable means of getting around, and Auto Europe is here to help you get the guaranteed lowest rate on your ideal vehicle reservation.

Not only does Auto Europe offer the best prices in the industry, we're also committed to providing our clients with the best service, too! That's why we've created this comprehensive guide to renting a car in Italy. We understand that planning and arranging your trip doesn't always seem so easy, but this guide will keep you up-to-speed on the ins and outs of renting a car in Italy. You can secure the best rate and rest easy in confidence, ready to travel Italy by car like a local and armed with all the knowledge you'll need!

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# Before You Book

Before finding and securing the lowest rate for your car rental, it's important to know what you're looking for! Consider your travel plans, driving preferences, and fellow travelers when you select the vehicle and options that are best for you.

## Vehicle Size and Type

The first thing you'll want to consider is the size and type of vehicle you want to rent. Think about how you'll be spending your time in Italy, and consider the following:

### **How many passengers will you have?**

Are you traveling solo, or will you be bringing the whole family along? The more passengers you have, the more worthwhile a larger car class will be. And don't forget that more passengers mean more luggage, too!

### **How much luggage will you have and will you have it in the car with you for most of the trip?**

Are you just taking your luggage from the airport to your hotel then touring around on day trips from the same base, or will you be traveling between multiple locations with your luggage in the car? Keep in mind that only full-size and larger vehicles have a separate closed trunk while most mid-size and smaller vehicles will be hatchbacks.

### **How much time will you spend driving?**

Will you just be using your car for shorter trips to locations within the same city, or will you be spending extended periods driving? It may make sense to squeeze into the smallest vehicle possible for the sake of efficiency on shorter trips, but you'll appreciate the added comfort of a larger vehicle on a [road trip tour](#)!

In addition, ask yourself what you're used to driving at home in the US:

### **Are you comfortable driving a manual transmission (stick shift)?**

The majority of cars in Italy are manual. Automatics are available, but are almost always more expensive and harder to come by. That being said, you can save a good deal on your rental rate by opting for a manual, but do not rent one if you don't know how to drive one! Chances are, if you can't drive manual, then you aren't familiar with Italian roads, and you'll want to keep things as simple as possible when acclimating to new road rules and navigating in a foreign place.

### **Are you comfortable maneuvering on tight roads?**

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Cars in Italy are generally smaller than they are in the US, and for good reason! Increased fuel economy is a plus, but Italian roads can also be notoriously narrow, making it difficult to maneuver larger vehicles. It is by no means impossible to drive a van or SUV in Italy, but if you are thinking about renting a larger vehicle, be wary that some roads aren't very spacious!

Once you have an idea of what you'll need from your rental vehicle on your trip to Italy, you can choose a specific class and category to look into. Unless it's specifically stated, your car rental in Italy will not be for a specific make and model, but rather a certain size, class, transmission, and with or without A/C. When you reserve a car, you will be guaranteed a vehicle of that class size (mini, compact, etc.), type (2-door, 4-door, SUV, etc.), transmission, and A/C. Check out this guide to help you choose the ideal rental car for you:



### Mini

Fuel Efficiency: Excellent  
Comparable Models: Fiat 500, Peugeot 108  
Passengers: 3-4  
Luggage Space: Very limited, no trunk (1-2 carry-on bags)  
Going solo with a carry-on bag? Reserved for the smallest cars, this

class would work for you. Unfortunately, there is not much on the road in the US that would fit into this category other than the Mini Cooper.



### Economy

Fuel Efficiency: Excellent  
Comparable Models: Ford Fiesta, Fiat Panda, Renault Clio, Audi A1 Sportback  
Passengers: 4  
Luggage Space: Very limited, small trunk (1 large suitcase and

1-2 carry-on bags)

This category is popular in Italy for travelers with little to no luggage. Cars in this category are very fuel efficient. Generally, three people with luggage don't fit comfortably in one of these cars; however, it can be done. The appeal is fuel efficiency.



### Compact

Fuel Efficiency: Very Good  
Comparable Models: Ford Focus, VW Golf, Renault Captur  
Passengers: 4  
Luggage Space: Moderate, small trunk (2 large suitcases and 1-2 carry-on bags)

Young families of three typically enjoy cars in this class. Compact cars in Italy are usually what we would consider economy class in the US. This category is generally good for groups that can

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pack light. Most adults, however, will find the back seat a little cramped. This class is also available in a “wagon” category, which offers additional luggage space.



### **Midsized/Intermediate**

Fuel Efficiency: Good  
Comparable Models: VW Passat, Audi A4, Alfa Romeo Giulietta  
Passengers: 5  
Luggage Space: Moderate-Good, average trunk (3 large suitcases and 1-2 carry-on bags)

This category is popular for light packing groups of four or heavy packing groups of two or three. The cars are a little larger, and they offer speed and power you won't get in smaller models. This is a very popular category for people who will be doing a decent amount of driving while on vacation in Italy. This class is also available in a “wagon” category, which offers additional luggage space.



### **Midsized Vans**

Vans and wagons in this category are popular for groups of 4 adults who pack a normal amount. These vans, known as MPV's (multi-purpose vehicles), may have emergency seats in the back; however, because the make or model can't be guaranteed, it's best not to book this category if you have more than five people.



### **Full Size/Standard**

Fuel Efficiency: Moderate  
Comparable Models: Opel Insignia, Volvo S60, BMW 5-Series  
Passengers: 5  
Luggage Space: Good, large separate trunk (3-4 large suitcases and 1-2 carry-on bags)

Cars rented in this category generally offer slightly more leg room for both passengers and the driver. Typically, luggage room is increased in this category, while the overall driving experience is more positive because the cars are better suited for driving long distances comfortably. This class is also available in a “wagon” category, which offers additional luggage space.



### **Full Size Vans**

There are two classes of vans in this category. The smaller of the two is capable of seating seven without luggage or generally five with luggage, and this group is good for families or close groups. These larger of the two groups can seat nine without luggage or six

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to seven with luggage. True people carriers, full size van rentals are not very fuel efficient; however, they easily get your group where it needs to be together. Groups of adults may opt for two smaller cars in order to save money, but keep in mind you'll need two drivers!



### **Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs)**

There are two classes of SUVs typically offered in Italy; intermediate and full size. Both classes comfortably seat 5 passengers and offer more ground clearance than a van, car, or wagon would.

Intermediate SUVs (like a Ford Escape or similar) have trunk space for 2 large suitcases and 1-2 carry-on bags while full size SUVs (like a Volvo XC60 or similar) have trunk space for 3 large suitcases and 1-2 carry-on bags. SUVs tend to be more expensive than other vehicles with equivalent luggage and passenger capacity, so this option is only advisable if you plan to drive on dirt or uneven roads.

## **Equipment and Extras**

After figuring out what type of car you'll need, consider any additional equipment you might want to meet your unique needs and preferences. The most commonly available accessories offered at car rental locations in Italy include GPS units, child seats, snow chains, ski racks, and [portable Mi-Fi devices](#), but other options may be offered in different locales. Additional equipment is usually charged on a per-day basis, and prices will range depending on the supplier you are renting from; add-ons will always cost extra, paid for at the counter and subject to VAT (value added tax), unless they are explicitly stated as *included*. Be sure to take care of the accessories you add on, too, because you will have to pay a replacement fee for any damage, loss, or theft of the items!

It is important to note that, while extra equipment is optional and you generally decide whether to include it or not, there are laws in Italy that require children under 97 pounds or 4' 9" to use a booster seat. Young children less than 48 pounds are required to have a child seat. Locals report that these laws are rarely enforced, but abiding by them will, most importantly, help keep your little ones safe on your journey abroad!

You will almost always have to pay extra for additional equipment, but keep an eye out for special promotions and travel deals that can help you save money on accessories. Look into signing up for an international data plan so you can access maps and resources on your smartphone or tablet, consider bringing your own GPS unit from home, or ask about [Auto Europe's free GPS promotion](#) program. You can also bring your own child seats along with you, but the hassle of carrying this bulky item in your luggage usually outweighs the cost of renting locally.

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## Insurance Options

A source of much unnecessary confusion, car rental insurance in Italy is not nearly as complicated as some may think! This is a crucial part of your rental, so you'll do well to understand the options you have and choose a plan that's right for you. Car rental insurance will protect you from any liability that results in death, injury to others, or any property damage that is caused while you are driving your rental car in Italy.

Italian law requires that you must carry certain types of insurance: Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) and Theft Protection (TP). For your convenience, Auto Europe's rates in Italy include this insurance, as well as fire and third-party liability insurance in order to limit your financial risk in case of an accident or theft.

### **About Inclusive Rates for Car Rentals in Italy**

**Fire and third-party liability insurance** is included in all Auto Europe car rental rates in Italy. Third-party liability provides between \$3.1 million USD and \$32 million USD worth of coverage to any damage to property or injury to people outside of the rental car, while fire insurance provides unlimited coverage to the vehicle in the event of a fire.

CDW reduces the amount of the deductible (the amount drivers in Italy would be expected to pay if there were an accident) to approximately \$125 USD-\$1180 USD, and Theft Protection reduces the deductible to \$305 USD-\$1180 USD. "Super CDW" may be offered locally to reduce your deductible to as low as zero, but this option is often more expensive than zero deductible options offered as part of your rental rate through Auto Europe. You'll find more on Auto Europe's zero deductible rates below.

### **Zero Excess/Deductible Insurance**

Most insurance will include an excess, or deductible, in the policy. In the event of an accident, the driver is charged an amount of money to cover part of the damage estimates; this is your excess or deductible amount. Excess/deductibles can range from several hundred to several thousand Euros. Auto Europe is happy to help you avoid having any excess or deductible to pay where these rates are available. Simply look for our **zero excess** rates and enjoy renting a car with full CDW and TP insurance, with no deductibles to pay in the event of a collision!

### **Refundable Excess/Deductible Insurance**

Renting a car in Italy with Auto Europe will always include the minimum required insurance. While usually a lower amount than the full cost of damage, having to pay an excess can certainly hurt your bank account, so Auto Europe's Excess Refund rates are here to help! With some basic paperwork, such as your rental agreement, police report, damage estimates, and bills due, Auto Europe will refund up to the deductible you pay. Simply look for our car rentals that include collision and theft insurance with **excess refund/refundable deductible**, and rest assured you'll be refunded any deductible amount that you have to pay.

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## Optional Insurance Coverage for Driving in Italy

In order to protect your belongings while traveling in Italy, you should never leave expensive or irreplaceable items inside your car when you're not in it. To gain further peace of mind, **personal effects coverage** (PEC) can be purchased locally and insures select items if stolen from your rental car. Typically this coverage costs around USD\$7 per day and is purchased at the pick-up desk.

**Personal accident insurance** (PAI) is also recommended if you do not have your own personal injury insurance and will cost around USD\$8 per day. This optional insurance is also purchased at the local rental counter and covers any injuries to yourself or passengers in your rental vehicle in the event of a collision.

## International Travel and One Ways

After you've figured out what type of vehicle you'll need, any additional equipment you'd like to rent, and the best insurance policy for you, there's only one more important question to consider before beginning your hunt for the best rate:

Are you planning on traveling outside of Italy with your rental car?

If you're planning on dropping off your rental car in another country, then the answer here is obvious (and you can find more on one-way rentals below), but it is still important to notify your rental supplier of any international travel you plan on taking, even if you will be returning to Italy, and to consider the possibility of associated costs.

The good news is that traveling to any Western European country from Italy will rarely incur any additional cost, but countries in Eastern Europe will, and in some cases, the travel may not be allowed at all.

### Traveling to Eastern Europe

Traveling through Eastern Europe with your Italy car rental will have a different set of rules compared to Western Europe. Many car rental suppliers are more leery of allowing their rental vehicles to travel into the Eastern realm, which is divided into two comprehensive zones:

**Zone 1:** Croatia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

**Zone 2:** Belarus, Bosnia, Estonia, Greece, Herzegovina, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Turkey.

To travel to either zone, there is a minimum car rental time requirement. This varies between origins of departures, drop-off, specific countries you plan on traveling through, and chosen suppliers. Zone 2 also often requires you to complete a Travel East Agreement (provided when you book your car rental) and purchase Eastern Travel Insurance. The Travel East Agreement

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acknowledges that you understand the risks and responsibility of taking a vehicle to Eastern Europe while Eastern Travel Insurance covers the costs of required documentation for crossing borders and added risks assumed by the rental car driver.

The most expedient way to answer all of your questions and make sure all the minute details of your travel are taken care of is to contact one of Auto Europe's experienced reservation agents at 1-800-223-5555. At this point in the planning process, you'll know exactly what type of vehicle and standard insurance options you'll need, and Auto Europe's agents are specially trained to assist with arranging special car rental requests like travel through Eastern Europe.

### **One-Way Car Rentals**

One-way fees should be considered when planning where you'll pick up and drop off your rental car. If you will be dropping it off at a different Italian city than the pickup, there is a possibility of extra fees; if you will be dropping it off in a different country, extra fees are unavoidable.

There are two types of one-way travel with a rental car: **domestic** and **international**. One of the conditions of returning a rental vehicle to a different location is a compulsory charge known as a one-way fee, which varies in price depending on the rental car company's rate for a prearranged drop-off at a domestic or international location. Thanks to Auto Europe's continuing partnerships with suppliers, **domestic one-way fees** are generally free of charge for a trip from one city to another within Italy as long as a minimum rental period is met (usually 3 days).

An **international one way fee** is almost always required for a pickup in Italy and drop-off in another country, even neighboring nations. Unless stated otherwise, it is important to note that rental companies around the world charge an international one-way fee to cover the costs of getting the rental car back to the country it is registered and insured in.

Get all of your travel plans finalized and be sure to mention any international travel you plan on taking with your rental car. That way, you will avoid getting hit with unexpected fees at the rental desk and you'll be able to factor a full and accurate cost of travel arrangements into your budget.

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# Booking Your Rental Car

Now that you're confident you know what you want regarding your vehicle reservation, you can begin searching for a specific rate to book! As always, Auto Europe's agents are on call, 24/7 and toll-free, at **1-888-223-5555** to help with whatever you may need as you browse our rates on the web for the best deal. The first step in utilizing our online search form will be providing your desired pick-up and drop-off locations.

## Choosing Locations and Times

You've got your travel itinerary planned out and you know exactly what type of car you're looking for; now it's time to consider where and when you want to pick up your vehicle.

### **What cities and at which offices do you want to pick up and drop off?**

Airports are the most common locations for picking up a rental car, and every major airport in Italy hosts car rental offices, but downtown, rail station, and cruise port locations are often available, too.

Think about what you'll be doing immediately following your arrival at your destination and if you will need a rental car right away. If you are planning on touring a big city for a few days following your arrival, you may not need your own vehicle right off the bat. Public transportation makes it easy to get around center-city attractions, and parking in major hubs can be expensive in Italy. Consider picking up from a downtown location later in your trip if you won't need a car right away, and remember an affordable [airport transfer service](#) from Auto Europe is always an option for getting to your hotel from the airport or rail station.

### **What dates and time of day do you want to pick up your car?**

If you need to pick up very early in the morning, late at night, or on a weekend, you may need to pick up at an airport or rail station where car rental office hours of operations will be longer. Most major airport and rail station offices will be open 24/7, but smaller city offices will have more limited hours. If you absolutely need to pick up from a location at a time that it's normally closed, Auto Europe can help you arrange for out-of-hours pickups at an additional cost (determined by rental supplier), but you can save money by picking up during normal office hours for your chosen location.

### **Do you need an out-of-hours pickup or drop-off?**

If you need to pick up or drop off your car when a rental office will be closed and alternative plans cannot be arranged to accommodate for open office hours, an out-of-hours pickup can often be arranged for pickup, or you can utilize a drop box (where available) for drop off. Out-of-

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hours pickups will incur an additional fee and must be requested on an individual basis, while drop boxes are free to use and common at most rental car locations. If you will need either one of these services, please contact Auto Europe and one of our helpful agents can assist you in arranging and confirming your reservation details.

### **Do you plan to pick up on a holiday?**

Holidays in Italy are, of course, different than they are in the US, and car rental offices will close for any nationally recognized celebrations. Check to be sure you aren't planning on picking up during a holiday when offices might be closed and, if you are, consider modifying your travel plans to accommodate. If you try to book a vehicle or create a quote with a pickup when your rental office will be closed for an observed holiday, Auto Europe will contact you within 48 hours and give you some possible alternatives.

### **Is your drop-off time later in the day that your pick-up time?**

Car rental rates run on a 24-hour time clock, meaning you will be charged a daily rate beginning as soon as you pick up your vehicle. For example, if you collect your car at 12 noon and return it three days later at 1 PM, you will be charged for a four day rental, even though your drop-off is technically only 1 hour later than pickup. Plan accordingly so you will be able to drop off your vehicle at the same time or earlier in the day than you picked it up, and you'll be able to save yourself the cost of an extra day!

## **Securing the Lowest Rate**

Once your pick up and drop off details are entered in Auto Europe's online search form, you will be presented with a matrix showing all the lowest rates available. Use the filters to hide any rates you won't be interested in based on transmission, insurance inclusions, and fuel policy, and narrow your selections based on the class of vehicle you are looking for.

Auto Europe is committed to finding you the absolute best rates available, so securing the lowest prices couldn't be easier from here. Choose the most affordable rate, which is highlighted in green, and that's it!

### **Did you find a lower price for a similar vehicle with the same inclusions somewhere else?**

Not a problem. [Auto Europe's best rate guarantee](#) offers you the chance to quickly and easily bring us any rate you find elsewhere using our "Beat Rate" form available online. If the rate is lower than ours based on an "apples to apples" comparison, we will beat it for you!

The quoted rate represents the total amount you will owe to Auto Europe for your rental, including VAT, in USD. Once you apply payment to your voucher, your reservation will be confirmed, usually within 24 to 48 hours if not immediately, meaning your vehicle is guaranteed to be ready for pickup when you arrive or else the rental is on us!

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The only costs not included will be detailed in the terms and conditions of your Auto Europe voucher. Our unique relationships with only the most trustworthy suppliers enable us to offer superior prices we bet no one else can beat! If you do think you've found a better rate, feel free to bring it to us, but be sure to check what is and isn't included, as other quotes will often hide rental fees and taxes that will make your rental with other companies more expensive after all is said and done.

## Additional Fees and Taxes

When hunting for the best deal, it's important to consider what may not be included in your rental car's initial up-front quote. Use the information below to uncover hidden car rental fees so you can rest assured you won't run into any unwelcomed surprises on your trip. Remember that Auto Europe always discloses everything you'll have to pay at the pick-up desk!

### VAT Car Rental Tax

**Appears on car rental contracts as:**

*VAT Tax, Value Added Tax*

**Typically Costs:**

*22% (in Italy as of 5/15)*

What you need to know: VAT (or Value Added Tax) is a standard European sales tax that varies among different nations in Europe. The minimum allowed VAT rate is 15%, but individual countries can set their rates higher, and some will charge up to 27%. VAT will always be included on your rental rate in all Auto Europe quotes, but you will have to pay the tax separately for any extra equipment or local fees you are charged for at the rental desk. Unlike VAT tax paid on goods, clothing, and souvenirs, which can be reclaimed at the airport upon your departure, you cannot reclaim any VAT taxes you pay on a car rental.

### Local Rental Car Taxes

**Appears on car rental contracts as:**

*Road Tax, Vehicle License Fee*

**Typically Costs:**

*€2.50 to €3.50 per day*

What you need to know: Local rental car taxes may apply to your rental depending on the type of vehicle you rent, the location you rent it in, and which supplier you choose to rent from. While typically not very expensive, local taxes are often overlooked and have become prime suspects

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in the realm of dastardly "hidden" fees. They are not always included and rarely mentioned in your average rental quote, but you can almost count on having to pay a few extra Euros at the pick-up desk on any car rental for various location-specific taxes. Just be wary that these legitimate fees do exist and will always be clearly listed on your Auto Europe quote!

## Rental Car Location Surcharges

### **Appears on car rental contracts as:**

*Airport Surcharge, Rail Station Surcharge, Premium Location Surcharge, Parking Fees, Out of Hours Fees, Late Return Fees*

### **Typically Costs:**

€40

What you need to know: Location surcharges are typically applied when picking up your rental car at major transportation hubs throughout Italy, such as airports, rail stations, and cruise ports. The standard additional charge for picking a car up at one of these locations is €40, but the fee can vary from €20 to €80 in some cases. Depending on the locale, additional location-related charges may be applied, such as "parking fees," which are incurred in areas like Venice where parking space is very limited.

Be sure to pay attention to the hours of operation for the offices where you plan on picking up and dropping off the vehicle, as well as the specific times you've arranged your rental for. Dropping off your car later than the agreed-upon time on your reservation can cost you a "late return fee" and, depending on the time of day you originally picked up the car, can also add an additional day onto your total rental rate.

Picking up your rental downtown as opposed to at an airport or rail station will often be cheaper because you can avoid any location surcharges. Be wary, however, that you will have to pay for a cab or navigate public transportation to get to a downtown office from your arrival point. For those landing at an airport or coming in by train, the additional location surcharges are often worth the convenience of picking up your car right after you get off your plane or train rather than hauling your luggage to a downtown office. Airport and rail station car rental locations also have longer operating hours, so you won't have to pay an "out of hours fee" if you plan on picking up very late at night or very early in the morning. As always, review your car rental contract or quote thoroughly to see what additional fees apply to your rental so you can make a proper plan of action to avoid them where possible.

## Car Rental Fuel Policy

### **Appears on car rental contracts as:**

*Full to Full, Full to Empty*

### **Typically Costs:**

*Local price of fuel*

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What you need to know: Your car rental fuel policy will determine how you will pay for any existing fuel your rental car comes with when you pick it up. With a *full to full* policy, you will pay nothing up front but will be expected to return the vehicle with the same amount of fuel your car had when you picked it up (usually a full tank); you will be charged for any fuel missing when the vehicle is returned. If your rental includes a *full to empty* fuel policy, you will pre-pay a given amount for a full tank of fuel and can return the vehicle as close to empty as possible without incurring any additional fuel costs.

Optional fuel policies are generally a matter of preference, but be aware that all rental companies will charge a premium for any type of fuel, usually based on the highest price per liter available in the area. To save on fuel charges, opt for a *full to full* policy when available, fill up the rental car right before you return it, and retain a copy of the receipt for your records. It may be a bit less convenient to have to make a fuel stop just before dropping off, but that little bit of extra work can save you some money on the premium rates you will have to pay for a tank of gas through a *full to empty* policy.

## Limited/Unlimited Mileage Car Rentals

**Appears on car rental contracts as:**

*Limited Kilometers*

**Typically Costs:**

€0.50 to €2 per additional kilometer

What you need to know: If your car rental includes *unlimited mileage/kilometers*, then you have no worries; you can cover as much ground as you'd like in your rental car without incurring any extra fees!

Some rental rates, however, may be specified as *limited kilometers*, in which case you will be charged extra if you drive the car farther than an allotted distance. Limited kilometer rentals usually come with 100 to 300 kilometers per day, after which you will have to pay an extra fee per additional kilometer driven.

Most Auto Europe rates offered in Italy include unlimited kilometers, and it will be clearly stated if they do not. Limited kilometer rentals are, for the most part, cheaper than unlimited kilometer rentals, so there is an opportunity to save some cash if you don't plan on driving long distances. But be careful if you choose a limited kilometer rental because additional kilometers can accumulate quickly and result in considerable extra fees if you aren't careful!

## Driver Fees

**Appears on car rental contracts as:**

*Additional Driver Fee, Young Driver Surcharge, Senior Driver Fee*

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### **Typically Costs:**

€5 to €20 per day

What you need to know: Driver fees may be added on to your rental depending on the age and number of drivers you wish to have registered to drive the rental car. Typically, if you want to register extra people to drive your rental car, an *additional driver fee* will be assessed on a per-day basis. In some cases, a free additional driver will be included in a given quote; if this is the case, it is always clearly stated along with the rest of your rental details.

The age of a prospective driver can also potentially incur extra fees on your rental in Italy. If you're a driver under 25 years old, there's a good chance you will be charged an extra €15 to €25 per day as a *young driver surcharge* to recoup the additional insurance risks posed by younger drivers. On the opposite end of the spectrum and far less common, some rental companies will charge extra for drivers over the age of 75.

## **Understanding Your Quote/Voucher**

### **Getting Familiar with Your Auto Europe Car Rental Voucher**

After you have reserved your rental car with Auto Europe, either over the phone or online, you are e-mailed a voucher that contains relevant information about your rental including: pick-up dates and times, the supplier you are renting from, car category, and your scheduled pickup location. Clients are asked to print out the voucher before leaving and to double check all of the information on the voucher to ensure that it is accurate. If you have any questions regarding your voucher, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time of the day or night. Auto Europe will be there for you before, during, and after your trip!

### **What Else Is on Your Car Rental Voucher?**

Upon further inspection of your voucher, you will find the terms and conditions of your rental. It is in your best interest to go over these thoroughly because there is information listed regarding your rental insurance that you will need to know. Pricing information regarding any mandatory location surcharges and/or taxes is also listed in this section. Each fee that is paid locally is listed in the terms and conditions when the booking process is completed. It also states if there is a charge for additional drivers, young drivers, or other equipment. In most cases, mileage restrictions will not be a problem, but if that is an issue, it will be stated on your voucher as well.

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## Making Changes to or Cancelling Your Reservation

### **Changes**

When you book with Auto Europe, you're always free to make any changes you need to your reservation without additional charges or penalty fees as long as the changes are made before the commencement of the rental. It is important to note, however, that changing the dates, vehicle, or locations may subject you to current rates as they are at the time the changes are made.

### **Extensions**

Reservations may always be extended during your rental without penalty by contacting Auto Europe (see *Contacting Auto Europe from Italy* section), but please be aware that you must do so *before* the expiration of the rental period. Failing to return your vehicle at the contracted drop off time without notice will result in penalty fees incurred by the car rental supplier you are contracted with!

### **Cancellations**

You may cancel your booking with Auto Europe for a full refund anytime up to 48 hours before the start of the reservation; cancellations made within 48 hours of your pick up date and time will incur a \$75.00 cancellation fee. If you need to cancel your booking for any reason, please contact us (24/7 and toll-free at 1-888-223-5555, or see *Contacting Auto Europe from Italy* section below) before your designated pick-up date and time! No refund will be possible if you do not notify Auto Europe of a cancellation until after your rental commences.

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# During Your Trip

## Picking Up Your Vehicle

The address and location of the pick-up desk for your vehicle will be listed on your Auto Europe voucher. Follow these guidelines for picking up at major transportation hubs:

### **Airports**

Most major car rental companies will have an office in the arrival terminal of any given airport. All major airports in Italy will have clear signage directing you to the car rental desks, all of which will usually be in the same area. In some cases, you may need to take a shuttle bus to a location near the airport to pick up your vehicle; further instructions on where the shuttle bus can be accessed will be listed on your Auto Europe voucher.

### **Rail Stations**

As with airports, car rental desks at rail stations will typically be located in the same area, and there should be signs to direct you from the platforms to the rental desks. If you do find yourself confused as to where to go, stop by one of the information kiosks that are common in Italian rail stations to ask for directions; attendants will always speak English here.

**IMPORTANT:** Auto Europe is a broker that books you with trusted car rental companies throughout Italy. Your reservation through Auto Europe will be with a specific rental company, as listed in your voucher details. When arriving to pick up your car, you should look for the desk of the company you are booked with; they will be the party providing you the actual car, *not* Auto Europe!

When arriving at your designated pick-up location, be sure you have these things with you:

**Auto Europe voucher** with supplier confirmation number present

A printed copy of your valid, confirmed Auto Europe voucher is required. Our vouchers show confirmation of your reservation and contain specific information about your rental car, rental rate, and other important details needed by our overseas affiliates.

**Valid credit card** in primary driver's name

The primary driver listed on your voucher will need to be present at pick up with a valid credit card in their name. The car rental company you are booked with will put a hold on the credit card, usually equal to the amount of your deductible, to be released once the vehicle is returned in the same condition it was rented according to the terms and conditions of the rental contract.

NOTE: This does *not* need to be the same card you used to pay Auto Europe for your reservation.

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### **Valid driver's license** in primary driver's name

The primary driver listed on your voucher **MUST** be present with their valid driver's license. In Italy, a valid driver's license is defined as one written in the Roman alphabet that has been held for at least one year.

### **Before you take your car off the lot**

Be sure to thoroughly inspect your rental vehicle for any existing damages before driving away. Make sure any existing damage is documented in your rental contract, and take pictures to keep for your own records in case of any dispute. If you have a full-to-full fuel policy, check that the car's tank is indeed full before driving it.

If, for any reason, you receive a vehicle you do not feel is safe to drive due to existing damages, do not accept it and insist on getting another car. Remember that Auto Europe is always available to assist you with any issues you have in dealing with local car rental suppliers, so feel free to contact us at any time (see *Contacting Auto Europe from Italy* section below).

Being thorough with your inspection of the rental vehicle and documenting any existing damages will ensure you can enjoy the rest of your vacation without worrying about being held liable for damages you didn't cause!

## **Driving in Italy**

Thinking about driving in a new country can be stressful and even intimidating at first, but knowledge is power; the more you know about the rules of the road in Italy, the better prepared you'll be. Follow these driving tips, and your time behind the wheel in Italy will become a stress-free, enjoyable experience.

### **Driving in Italy Requires Your Full Attention**

Distracted driving in any country is ill-advised, but driving in Italy requires another level of attention, as locals are known for what Americans may consider "reckless driving." Turn signals are often neglected, and local drivers also travel at high speeds and are known to make abrupt turns. In most cases, these individuals are familiar with these roadways and are able to navigate the roadways in Italy accident-free. For your safety, seatbelts are required for both drivers and passengers, and if you're caught without one, you could be subject to a hefty fine.

### **Don't Panic If You're Tailgated**

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Tailgating in Italy is common practice, so don't become shaken when this happens. Do your best to keep up with traffic, but do not drive faster than what makes you comfortable. Tailgaters will pass you at the first opportunity, so just keep your cool and give them room.

## **ZTL Zones – Where You Can and Can't Drive in Italy**

Many larger Italian cities have instituted ZTL (*Zona Traffico Limitato*) zones in order to reduce traffic congestion in major city centers. These areas are surveyed by traffic cameras, and the instant your vehicle crosses this zone, a ticket is issued and forwarded to your home address. It's important you know where you can and cannot drive in Florence, Rome, and other cities with ZTLs in order to avoid traffic citations.

## **Watch Out for Scooters and Mopeds in Italy**

In addition to speeders and tailgaters, you'll have to watch out for scooters and mopeds while driving in Italy. Don't be surprised if they pull right out in front of you from a side street without warning. Defensive driving is important when touring Italy by car, so be on the lookout at all times and be prepared for anything.

## **Don't Use Mobile Devices While Driving**

We'll say it again: Your full attention needs to be on the road when driving in Italy. The use of cellphones and other mobile devices behind the wheel is prohibited unless you're using a hands-free system, and even then, we strongly advise against it. If you're renting a GPS unit with Auto Europe, you'll be able to take your device out of the car and pre-program your desired route for the next day. This means you won't have to spend any time fumbling with the unit while driving or worrying about where to turn next.

## **Don't Drink and Drive**

Travelers should never get behind the wheel of a car in Italy if they've been drinking. It's important to remember that even though you're on vacation, the law still applies to you, so always designate a driver. The legal limit for Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) in Italy is 0.05%; however, if a driver has held their license for three years or less, they must abide by a BAC of 0.00%. Drivers should be aware that Italian police are apt to carry out random alcohol tests on drivers at any time. Testing is more common around Christmas, New Year's, and the main holiday period of July and August.

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## Tolls in Italy

There are numerous toll roads in Italy, and it can be tricky to understand since there isn't one single company in charge of collecting money. Individual stretches of roadway are monitored by separate companies, with the toll amount depending on the distance traveled. It's advised to always carry cash on you when driving in Italy in order to pay tolls. Credit cards are accepted at some locations but not at others.

## Gas Stations in Italy

Gas stations that are located along the *Autostrade* are usually open 24 hours a day. Some stations along other Italian roadways are open from 7am-7pm, with a break around noon. When picking up your rental car in Italy at the local rental counter, be sure you know which type of fuel your vehicle requires and that you're up to speed on the company's fuel return policy.

## Parking in Italy

Parking on the street in Italy is typically confined to the right side of the road and designated "blue-zones." These parking areas are marked with blue lines and have a one hour limit. For drivers who choose to use these areas, they must first require a parking disc, which can be purchased from a tourist office, gas station, or ACI office.

### **International Driver's Permits**

You are not required to have an IDP to pick up your rental car, but according to Italian law, you can be fined by the police if you are pulled over and don't have one. Travelers and residents report that the law is rarely enforced, but IDPs are quite cheap and easy to acquire so it is recommended that you get one before departing from the US. You can get an IDP from your local AAA office, and they will typically cost \$10.00-20.00.

## Dropping Off Your Vehicle

Dropping off your vehicle in Italy should be a quick and easy task. A representative from your rental car supplier will look over the vehicle to verify that no damages were caused during the course of your rental, and you will be asked to sign the final rental agreement.

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If you are dropping off at an airport, signs will direct you towards corresponding car rental lots as you approach the premises. If you are dropping off downtown or at a rail station, your Auto Europe voucher will list the address of the drop off parking lot.

### **Drop Boxes**

Drop boxes are located at designated locations where you can leave your rental car and drop the keys in a locked box after normal office operating hours. If the office you plan on dropping off at will be closed, please contact Auto Europe to ensure a drop box will be available for you to use.

## **Contacting Auto Europe from Italy**

Auto Europe is always available to take your call 24/7 and toll-free from the US at **1-888-223-5555**, but we also have toll free numbers you can use from abroad, too!

If you need to reach us while in Italy, simply call **00-800-223-5555-5** (toll-free). Our agents are standing by to help you with whatever you may need on your trip. Auto Europe is dedicated to providing you with a smooth rental experience, and our experienced travel experts are always just a phone call away!

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# After Your Trip

## Contacting Customer Service

It is our sincerest hope that your car rental experience will be both cost effective and hassle-free; however, unexpected hiccups can and do occur. Should you encounter difficulties with your rental, the most effective course of action is to contact us immediately so we may remedy the situation. We understand that this is sometimes easier said than done. If you have questions when you return from your trip, please contact our customer service department at your earliest convenience. Our dedicated staff is here to assist you in sorting out any confusion and addressing any issues that you may have. We act on your behalf and contact the local supplier, if necessary, for further clarification and to clear up any misunderstandings.

### **Things You Can Do to Avoid Being Over Charged**

Mandatory rental car location pick-up and drop-off fees, one-way travel, equipment costs, or daily road taxes are often the culprit when inquiries are made into charges that have been authorized on your credit card. You may reference your car rental voucher in regards to confirming these fees as they will be noted there. When overcharges do occur, it is typically due to one of two things: refueling fees or the costs applicable to accidents that may have occurred during the rental period. To avoid these pitfalls, keep all receipts for gas or paperwork and correspondence that pertain to any vehicle damage. A digital camera can be an invaluable tool. Upon receiving the rental vehicle, take pictures of any dents or scrapes that may already be present and any damage in the event of an accident. You can also photograph the fuel gauge at the conclusion of your rental.

### **Contacting Auto Europe's Award-Winning Customer Service Team**

Be sure to save all documentation that you acquire during your time abroad including:

- Rental agreements
- Receipts
- Payment vouchers
- Bills and paperwork regarding your car rental

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If your car was paid in advance through Auto Europe and you received a bill in the mail for additional charges that you have questions about, please don't hesitate to contact a customer service representative at 1-888-223-5555 at any point before or after your car rental.

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# Helpful Additional Resources

## [Car Rental in Italy with Auto Europe](#)

- [Luxury/Sports Car Rentals](#)
- [Van Rentals](#)
- [Chauffeur Services](#)

## [Auto Europe Italy Travel Guide](#)

## [Auto Europe Italy Road Trip Planners](#)

## [Auto Europe Travel Blog](#)

## [Auto Europe Travel Tips](#)

- [Car Rental Fees Information](#)
- [Car Rental Under 25](#)
- [Long-Term Rentals/Short-Term Car Leases](#)
- [International Driver's Permits](#)
- [Universal Packing List](#)

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