



June is coming up. We've all heard the expression, "June bride;" it's the month when most weddings occur. What's different about weddings in Italy?

## **A Wedding is a Wedding, right? Wrong.**

There are some age-old traditions in Italy that are still followed and many of them have an ancient (think Romans) basis hidden beneath them. If you're to renew your vows or to re-marry in Italy (next year), you may want to include some of these traditions (though a few are a little weird).

### **Choosing the Date**

Sunday is still considered the best day to marry for luck, fertility and prosperity. It was bad luck to marry on a Friday as it was thought that this is the day evil spirits were created. Tuesday (Martedì) was a bad day because the word *Marte* comes from the God of War, and if you married on this day, you'd spend your life together fighting. For a widow remarrying, Saturday was considered the best day.

### **The Night Before the Wedding**

A brides once wore green on the eve of her wedding to bring good luck. If she wore any gold on her wedding day, apart from her wedding ring, it was very bad luck.

### **The Bridal Veil**

The bridal veil dates back to ancient Rome when marriages were arranged by the family. To prevent the couple from seeing each other before the ceremony and running the risk of one of them not going through with it, the bride's face was covered. The veil also symbolized purity.

### **The Wedding Day**

“Something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue” is also a custom in Italian weddings. But what is the meaning of this phrase?

The *something old* is usually a sacred family item that holds a lot of sentimental importance. Many brides wear a hair clip or jewel that has been passed down through the family. The item represents her past and what she is leaving behind. The *something new* symbolizes new challenges and the new life; typically, her dress is her something new.

The *something borrowed* usually comes from a family member or close friend and signifies the affection of the loved ones who will remain close during her transition from old to new. The *something blue* symbolizes purity and sincerity. In olden times, a bride's dress used to be colored blue.

The tradition of 'the groom can't see the bride' on the wedding day is practiced in Italy, but in certain Italian regions even the bride can't look at herself! It's bad luck if she sees herself in the mirror before she is dressed in her bridal finery and then only after she's removed a glove or a shoe.

Superstitious Italian grooms carry a small piece of iron in their pockets to ward off evil spirits (the evil eye), and brides make small rips in their veils for good luck.

Wearing a garter is a tradition that dates back to the 14th century, when it was thought that owning a piece of the bridal trousseau would bring luck. After the ceremony, the bride would remove the garter and it would be torn into pieces for the guests to keep. In some regions, it is the groom's job to remove and throw it to his guests; if the bride is found not to be wearing a

garter, her right shoe is then removed and thrown.



### **Getting to the Church**

In some parts of Italy the groom is expected to walk his bride from her family's home to the church, followed by the entire wedding party. This is what Michael Corleone did in "The Godfather."

The groom must supply the bridal bouquet. It's his final gift to his girlfriend before she becomes his wife. She can choose the bouquet she wants, but he must pay and make sure it is delivered. In some Northern provinces, he must wait with the bouquet outside the church for her to arrive and hand it to her.

### **After the Ceremony**

As the couple exits the church, locals shout "Auguri!" ("Best wishes!") and clap, whether they've met you or not! Just the sight of a wedding will attract a crowd! How do they know a wedding had taken place? Before the ceremony, a white ribbon is tied on the church's outside door symbolizing that a couple is "tying the knot."



Traditionally, candy almonds were tossed at the couple. Nowadays, rice or paper confetti is thrown instead—lots of it! A lot thrown represents good fortune and money and that is why the more they're showered with it, the better it is for the couple! In some regions, the couple would break a glass vase; the fragments would be counted and that number would indicate the amount of happy years ahead.

Take a look at a real wedding and what happened when they attempted this ritual by clicking here: [\*\*Breaking of the Glass\*\*](#)

### **The Wedding Reception**

Wine, of course, is the chosen drink for the reception. But what about the famous Italian Wedding Soup? The legend is this dish was served at receptions so that the nuptial couple would have enough....energy for the wedding night.

This is just folklore; it has nothing to do with weddings. Its original name in Italian is minestra maritata, (translated: "wedding soup," or "married soup.") Green vegetables (minestra) blend very well with (maritata), meat. The "marriage" in this case isn't a marriage between two people, but between vegetables and meat. How romantic!



### **Cake**

Cake isn't served in many regions of Italy but when it is, it might be a mille-foglia--a cake made from layers of light filo pastry, chocolate and vanilla creams, and strawberries, or a zuppa inglese--pound cake filled with chocolate and vanilla custard, rum cream, and fruit, topped with sugar flowers or a candy dove, a symbol of lasting love.



### **The Bomboniere**

Bomboniere are party favors consisting of Jordan almonds ("confetti"). They represent family life, a wedding tradition which dates back to the Romans who used confetti to celebrate unions and births. The Jordan Almonds symbolize the bitter (almond) and sweet (sugar coating) to come in the marriage in the years ahead. For a wedding, the almonds traditionally must be coated in white sugar and the amount given must always be an odd number. The union of marriage is of two people so the amount of almonds must never be divisible by two. They can range from the very simple--almonds simply encased in net and tied with a ribbon bow--to the very ornate, such as a ceramic box or figurine with the almonds tucked inside, a permanent keepsake of the wedding.

### **The Honeymoon**

With the wedding over, the couple enjoy their 'luna di miele', honeymoon. This dates back to ancient Rome when newlyweds would spend an entire phase of the moon eating a portion of honey at every mealtime.

These are the traditions of Italian weddings. Not all are still followed.

What is a popular wedding destination with a beautiful background? Ravello is a scenic seaside town on a hill that slopes down to the Bay of Salerno. It's off the beaten path for tourists, but it's been favored by high-flying travelers like film stars and politicians for decades. On the Amalfi coast, it is the perfect backdrop for a beautiful and romantic wedding.

Aside from the serene waters, it has stunning whitewashed neighborhoods, fresh vineyards, lush lemon and orange groves, and relatively quiet beaches that feel like paradise. Here's a video to give you an example of what it's like: [Ravello](#)

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