

The Italian wedding industry is in good shape

This year, the number of visitors and revenue generated by foreign weddings in Italy will overtake 2019 numbers

by Stefania Vicini

Italian-style or country-style wedding? Sustainable or like in the movies? Outdoors or in a theatre? There are numerous possibilities on offer in response to foreign demand for weddings in Italy, which increasingly seeks unique locations and is fuelling a growing trend. As a result the wedding industry in Italy is in excellent shape. 2023 will be the year in which, "the number of visitors and revenue generated by foreign weddings in Italy in 2019 will be overtaken, as people are increasingly attracted to the beauty of our country." This is revealed by the **Italian Observatory of Destination Wedding Tourism**, which provides an overview of the regions, locations and areas that have generated higher demand in 2023.

The most popular

The region that has generated the greatest interest this year is, "Tuscany (11.9%), followed by Puglia (10.9%) and Campania

(10.3%)." Other regions include Lazio (9.8%), Sicily (8.7%), Lombardy (6.6%) and Veneto (6%), reveals the Observatory.

As for individual destinations, this year, "the list of winners expands with iconic cities that have always been a part of the Italian wedding offering at the top of the list." On the podium are Florence (9.5%), Venice (7.6%) and Ravello (5.4%). Then with slightly lower percentages are "Rome (4.1%), Naples (3.7%), Capri (3.6%), Taormina (3.4%), Verona, Portofino and Matera (3.3%), Siena and Palermo (3.2%), then Pisa (3.1%) and Amalfi (2.7%)."

As for tourist areas, the greatest interest is in the Amalfi Coast (11.8%), followed by Val d'Orcia (9.5%) and the Cinque Terre (9.3%).

Who chooses Italy for a honeymoon? The first element that **Massimo Feruzzi**, CEO of **Jfc** highlights is, "the continuous increase in the fo-

reign countries of origin of this clientele, with the US and the UK markets confirming their leading positions." Weddings from Northern European countries are also on the rise, from Belgium to the Netherlands, Sweden to Denmark, as well as from Romania and Hungary. "Among non-European countries, there is notable growth from India,

Brazil and Australia, and a recovery in demand from China."

Italian-style or country-style?

From an analysis of the trends, Feruzzi highlights two different clusters: on one hand what could be called 'Italian-style', and on the other 'country-style'. In the first case, there is "high

demand for small, exclusive villages, for organising events within the companies of world-famous brands, racetracks, car manufacturers, dairies and vinegar factories, wineries, and the use of picturesque locations, up to organising weddings in cultural locations such as museums and theatres." In the case of country-style weddings, there is strong

growth in weddings that Feruzzi defines as "tours or walks," meaning "itinerant celebrations held at various locations, to be travelled on foot, as well as outdoors, on the beach, in the woods or in natural parks." The target audience is becoming increasingly broad and diverse, "and can only be won over with tailor-made offers."

Confirming that Italy is one of the favourite destinations for couples from all over the world, **Bmii - Borsa del Matrimonio in Italia**, reveals that bookings this year, and for 2024 "are numerous, and requests are increasing." What do foreigners who decide to get married in Italy want? "La Dolce Vita," says **Angela Böck** of **Marry me in Italy**, a buyer at **Bmii** over various editions. As for the organisation of the wedding, "good food is one of the most important elements for people wanting a Made in Italy wedding, alongside nature, culture and great company. And huge importance is also placed on sustainability." •

Most interesting and requested areas in

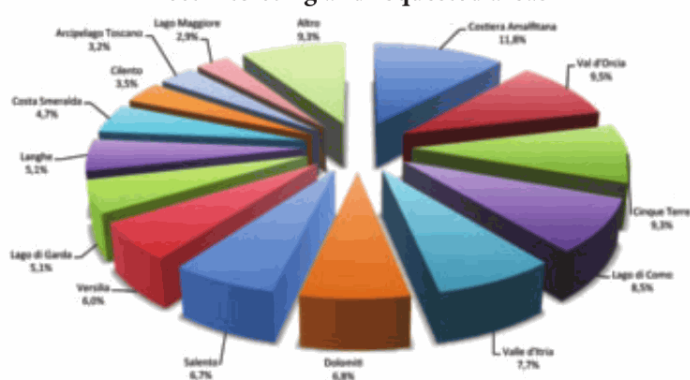


Table source: Italian Observatory of Destination Wedding Tourism - Jfc

Long-haul destinations, trips with children and buddymoons

2023 marks a significant resurgence in Italian honeymoon travel. The **Italian Observatory of Destination Wedding Tourism** focuses on the analysis of foreign weddings in Italy, but its findings have revealed that this year many locations "have had difficulties in providing availability for weddings from abroad due to strong demand from the domestic market," says **Massimo Feruzzi**, CEO of **Jfc**. He interprets this as an indirect indicator confirming, "the increase in honeymoons among our fellow citizens. This data can also be attributed to Italians travelling beyond the borders."

During the pandemic, honeymoons were postponed, "but not in significant numbers," points out **Marco Ferrini**, sales Manager at **CartOrange**. "Our consultants did well in managing these



numbers, redirecting clients to destinations that remained open, including Italy and Europe, creating tailor-made and high-quality honeymoons." In 2022 (September '21 - August '22), honeymoons represented 38% of **CartO-**

range's revenue, and the figure is similar for 2023 (September '22 - August '23).

The strong honeymoon recovery in these ten months is also confirmed by **Ezio Barroero**, president of **Lab Travel**. "Most are the result

of new bookings," he says. "So far, we have more than 300 honeymoons booked, with a significant increase compared to 2022."

Which destinations have our fellow citizens chosen? For **CartOrange**, classic long-

haul destinations have been at the forefront, "resuming their position at the top of the list of preferences: Japan, the United States, the Maldives, South Africa and Australia." For **Lab Travel** the top 5 includes: "Indonesia, South Africa, United States, the timeless Polynesia and Japan." When it comes to budgeting, **Lab Travel** notes that average spending on honeymoons has seen "a significant increase, partly justified by the strong desire to travel post-pandemic." **CartOrange** reports that in 2022, average spending on a honeymoon "was around €8,000; in 2023, it increased by 20%, reaching approximately €10,000." On the subject of budgets, **Matrimonio.com**, a leading wedding industry portal in Italy and part of **The Knot Worldwide**, has released the **Global Wedding Report 2023**, based on the results of

a survey that involved more than 25,000 couples in 15 countries worldwide. According to the report, Italy is the second-highest spending country in the world for wedding planning, on a par with the United Kingdom. The indicative figure is €21,100, which "does not include expenses for jewellery, engagement ring or honeymoon."

Meanwhile, new trends are gaining ground in Italy. The trend for honeymoons, "that include one or more of the couple's children is steadily growing," says **Ferrini**. "70% of these are children within the 2-4 years age group, and the remaining 30% are aged between 5-7 years. It's a very interesting trend." These are very structured trips, as well as more complex to organise. One of the trends is also that of group honeymoons, or 'buddymoons'. S.V.