

How to order coffee in Italy (and make Italians smile!)

By the end of this lesson you'll know:

- 👉 How to order coffee and croissants (this guide also includes a list of other drinks and sweet treats to choose from!)
- 👉 How to ask where the toilet is
- 👉 How to ask how to pay
- 👉 How to mention dietary restrictions
- 👉 How to compliment food (and make Italians smile!)
- 👉 How to say goodbye the way Italians say it (not just arrivederci!)

First, you'll see the roleplay in Italian with English translations and a few explanations. Please notice that the waiter is addressing you in the formal register. There are two clients in the role play so you can practise it with someone else! Read this carefully and out loud so you get used to how your own voice sounds in Italian.

Then, you'll see the role play with the waiter's part in Italian and your part in English so you can try it out. Feel free to change your order to what you'd actually have!

For a more in depth explanation, to practise your pronunciation and do the role play with me, you can watch the accompanying interactive video by clicking [here](#). *Buon divertimento!* (Have fun!)

Cameriere/a (waiter/waitress): **Buongiorno, mi dica.** (Good morning, how can I help you? Literally: “Good day, tell me”)

Cliente 1 (client): **Buongiorno, prendo un caffè e un cornetto al cioccolato, grazie.** (Good morning, I’ll have an espresso and a chocolate croissant, thanks - In Italian you use “prendere”, “take”, instead of translating directly “have” with “avere”.)

Cameriere/a (waiter/waitress): **Certo, e per Lei?** (“Lei” is the formal address for male and female, the waiter is addressing your breakfast companion. It’s usually written with a capital L as not to confuse it with “she”.)

Cliente 2 (client): **Per me, un cappuccino e un cornetto alla crema, per favore.** (For me, a cappuccino and a custard croissant, please)

Cameriere/a (waiter/waitress): **Al banco o al tavolo?** (At the counter or at the table? - If they ask this it’s because there might be a service charge for sitting at a table.)

Cliente 1 (client): **Al tavolo, per favore.** (At the table, please.)

Cameriere/a (waiter/waitress): **Va bene, accomodatevi e vi porto tutto subito.** (That’s fine, have a seat and I’ll bring everything right away. The verb “accomodarsi” has many meanings, in this case it means “have a seat”. If, like me, you like going down translation rabbit holes, you can start by clicking on [this Word Reference entry](#)¹.)

¹Please notice that due to the dynamic nature of the Internet, certain links and website information contained in this free PDF may have changed. The author makes no representation to the current accuracy of the information shared.

Cliente 1 (client): Perfetto. Mi scusi, dov'è il bagno, per favore?
(Perfect. Excuse me, where is the toilet please?)

Cameriere/a (waiter/waitress): Ah sì, è la seconda porta a destra. (Ah yes, it's the second door on your right.)

Cliente 1 (client): Molto gentile, grazie. (That's very kind, thank you.)

Cameriere/a (waiter/waitress): Ecco i cornetti e le bevande. (Here are the croissants and the drinks.)

Cliente 2 (client): Che buon profumo! Grazie. (What a lovely aroma! Thank you.)


Later, at the till:

Cassiere/a (cashier): Allora...due cornetti, un cappuccino e un caffè...sono cinque e settanta, grazie. (So...two croissants, a cappuccino and an espresso...it's five seventy, thanks. Click on [this link](#) if you need help with numbers in Italian!)

Cliente 2 (client): Ecco a Lei. Ottima colazione, grazie mille! (Here you go. Great breakfast, thank you so much! Literally: "Here it is to you. Great breakfast, thanks a thousand! If you want to know more about how to use ECCO and sound more Italian, there's a video lesson with accompanying PDF you can watch [here](#).)

Cassiere/a (cashier): Grazie a voi e buona giornata! (*Thank you guys, have a good day! “Buona giornata” is different than “buongiorno”, it’s what you use to wish someone a good day.*)

Client 1 (Client): Altrettanto! E buon lavoro! (*Likewise! Have a good work day! Altrettanto literally means something like “more of the same” and is often used by Italians. Make sure you add “buon lavoro” when you say goodbye to anyone providing you a service as it’ll be an unexpected surprise to hear that from a tourist!*)

 Have you read the text above a few times out loud? Ready to see if you can remember ordering in Italian? Before we move on to your practice time, here’s other things you can order for breakfast at a bar, in case you want to change your order!

Caffè espresso - Little, very strong coffee.

Caffè decaffeinato - Same but decaf.

Caffè americano - A shot of espresso with hot water, normally on the side.

Caffè corretto - Espresso with a splash of liqueur.

Caffè marocchino - Basically, something between a macchiato and a cappuccino with a bit of cacao powder.

Caffè d’orzo - Barley espresso.

Caffè al ginseng - This is quite an interesting one to try, the ginseng root extract gives it a nice flavour. It normally comes already sweetened.

Caffè con panna - Coffee with whipped cream.

Caffè shakerato - This one is good for summer, it’s shaken iced coffee.

Cappuccino - One shot of espresso with hot, foamy milk.

Cappuccino d'orzo/deca - Barley or decaf cappuccino.

Cappuccino di soia - Soya milk is the default non-dairy option you'll find in Italy but it's worth asking if they have "avena", oat or "mandorle", almond.

Latte - Careful! This is just a glass of milk!

Latte macchiato/Caffe latte - Depending on where you are, a milky coffee that is more milk than coffee might be called either one of these two ways.

Ciocolata calda - This is quite an experience, if you've never had it in Italy. Hot chocolate is normally made with potato or corn starch so it's more of a hot pudding you need a spoon to eat. Very rich and delicious!

Ciocolata con panna - Same but with whipped cream on top.

Tisana - Herbal tea

Tè caldo - You need to specify that you'd like hot tea as Italians normally drink iced tea. You'll be offered "limone", lemon but you can ask for "un po' di latte".

Italian breakfast is sweet and, although you might find things like sandwiches available, these are the main types of sweet treats Italians would order:

Cornetto/Croissant/Brioche - Depending on where you are, this flaky, buttery pastry will change name but you'll be understood however you say it.

Cornetto/Croissant/Brioche vegano - Vegan option.

Cornetto/Croissant/Brioche alla crema - With custard.

Cornetto/Croissant/Brioche alla marmellata di albicocca, frutti di bosco, cioccolato - With apricot or mixed berry jam or chocolate.

Cornetto/Croissant/Brioche vuoto - No filling, "vuoto" means empty.

Bombolone alla crema - Deep fried donut filled with custard.

Saccottino al cioccolato - Chocolate filled pastry, like *pain au chocolat*.

Other useful phrases:

Posso avere lo zucchero, per favore? - Can I have sugar, please?

Lo zucchero bianco - White sugar

Lo zucchero di canna - Brown sugar

Il dolcificante - artificial sweetener

Posso avere un bicchiere d'acqua naturale/frizzante per favore? -

Can I have a glass of still/fizzy water please? Most bars will give you a tiny glass of water for free (like a shot glass) but if you want a full glass, it will be charged.


Useful sentences if you have any dietary restrictions:

Sono celiaco/a. Può controllare in cucina se c'è rischio di contaminazione incrociata con il glutine per favore? - I'm celiac. Can you check in the kitchen if there is risk of cross-contamination with gluten, please?

Sono allergico/a a... - I'm allergic to...

Sono intollerante al lattosio - I'm lactose intolerant

C'è qualche opzione vegana, per favore? - Are there any vegan options, please?

 I've left a few lines for you to write your answers in Italian. **Sei pronto?**
Sei pronta? Iniziamo! (Are you ready? Let's start!) ☕

Cameriere/a (waiter/waitress): Buongiorno, mi dica.

Cliente 1 (*client*): *Good morning, I'll have an espresso and a chocolate croissant, thanks.*

Cameriere/a (*waiter/waitress*): **Certo, e per Lei?**

Cliente 2 (*client*): *For me, a cappuccino and a custard croissant, please.*

Cameriere/a (*waiter/waitress*): **Al banco o al tavolo?**

Cliente 1 (*client*): *At the table, please.*

Cameriere/a (*waiter/waitress*): **Va bene, accomodatevi e vi porto tutto subito.**

Cliente 1 (*client*): *Perfect. Excuse me, where is the toilet please?*

Cameriere/a (*waiter/waitress*): **Ah sì, è la seconda porta a destra.**

Cliente 1 (*client*): *That's very kind, thank you.*

Cameriere/a (*waiter/waitress*): **Ecco i cornetti e le bevande.**

Cliente 2 (*client*): *What a lovely aroma! Thank you.*

Later, at the till:

Cassiere/a (*cashier*): **Allora...due cornetti, un cappuccino e un caffè...sono cinque e settanta, grazie.**

Cliente 2 (*client*): *Here you go. Great breakfast, thank you so much!*

Cassiere/a (*cashier*): **Grazie a voi e buona giornata!**

Client 1 (*Client*): *Likewise! Have a good work day!*

I hope you've enjoyed this free guide to order your coffee and croissants and make Italians smile! Alla prossima!

ABOUT YOUR TEACHER



Ciao! I'm Claudia and I'm here to help you learn and improve your Italian in an easy and lighthearted way. My teaching philosophy: I firmly believe in the power of taking tiny steps to achieve big dreams. Giving yourself even five minutes a day to connect with your “Italian you” is a big win! This means that even the busiest of bees can start their journey to fluency, *con piccoli passi* (with tiny steps.) Visit www.spanglitalianlanguages.com or email me at info@spanglitalianlanguages.com to learn other ways I can help with your Italian!