

# GUIDE TO THE BEST GELATO & CAFFÈ SHOPS



**R O M E**

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# OVERVIEW

Gelato is similar to ice cream, although different. Gelato is made with less fat, churned at a slower rate, and served at a slightly higher temperature, giving it a firmer texture than standard ice cream.

Gelato in Italy is “worshiped” as much as pasta. To Italians, “going out to get gelato” is a daily ritual – especially on warm summer days and evenings. It is also a moment of pleasure to share with family and friends. From exclusive dessert savored by members of the Italian aristocracy in the 16th century to worldwide phenomenon loved and enjoyed across the whole of Europe and the United States, gelato has always played a role in the Italian and then the world’s daily eating routine. Its simple, natural, clean and universal taste makes it an everyday, one of a kind treat.

Don't worry about the calories, your not in Italy everyday and you should have at least one a day. You can try 2 or 3 different flavors in one cup or cone. Besides most people walk over 15,000 steps a day so you've earned it!

**DON'T WASTE YOUR CALORIES ON BAD/TOURISTY GELATO** Here is how to tell the difference.

1. Look at the display. This is something I always do before deciding on what to choose. If the gelato is piled high and looks sculpted then it has been whipped to add air to it. I usually walk away at that point.
2. Color - While various gelato shops might lure you in with neon lights and brightly-colored shops, it’s the color of the gelato itself that you’ve got to study. Colors should roughly match their real-life counterparts, and any fluorescent deviation should be considered abnormal. Banana, for instance, should not be bright yellow. It should be a vaguely grayish creamy color – like real bananas. Pistachio should not be bright green, but more of a pale gray-green color.
3. Mountains of Gelato - Stay away from the mounds of piled high gelato. This stuff is mass produced and doesn't hold its flavor. After the third taste the flavor is gone. You want to look for the gelato that is made fresh daily and it is usually stored in stainless bins and covered or at least not piled high. The gelato shops I've listed are some of the best you will taste.

# ORDERING YOUR GELATO ITALIAN STYLE

There shouldn't be a problem ordering gelato in the major cities but just in case here's the scoop on ordering your gelato.

First you pay - In most gelato shops, you'll need to pay for your order before you've actually ordered it. This is because the person who takes your money and the person who actually scoops your gelato can be two different people, and sometimes they're even in two different parts of the store. It may seem like an extra step, and it may seem like a hassle, but think of it this way - money is dirty, and by not handling money the people who are in close proximity with gelato that's destined to be in your mouth are keeping their hands clean. This, in my estimation, is a good thing.

It's important to note that while you'll line up to pay for your gelato and get your receipt, you won't be waited on in a particular order at the actual gelato counter. This does give you time to look over all the flavors, so you don't have to feel pressured to come up with your order immediately, but it also means that you can't get upset if someone who paid after you knows what they want and walks out with their gelato before you do.

Cup or cone? - The word for cup is "coppa" (KOH-pah) and cone is "cono" (KOH-noh). For "one cup" ask for either "una coppa" or "un cono," . Sometimes, you'll see several different kinds of cones on display, so be prepared to point to the one you want.

How many scoops? - Unlike in some ice cream shops outside Italy, the size of the cup or cone you're getting doesn't pre-determine how many scoops of gelato you'll get. I've seen people cram three flavors into even the smallest cups. So after you've chosen the vessel for your gelato, you'll need to say how many scoops you'd like. In Italian, the word you'll use is "gusti" (GOO-stee), which literally means "flavors." So technically you're telling them how many flavors you'd like, and they're going to give you one scoop per flavor.

# GELATO FLAVOR TRANSLATIONS

Most stores will show the translations but at times the smaller family owned shops do not. The shops will also offer a taste before you decide on a particular flavor so don't be afraid to ask for a sample taste.

## **The Chocolates**

“Cioccolato” (cho-koh-LAH-toh) is basic chocolate, but the variations on this theme are nearly endless. It's all the rage to pair chocolate with other complementary flavors, like hot pepper or orange, and there are also different kinds of chocolate even when it's all by itself.

Cioccolato fondente (cho-koh-LAH-toh fawn-DEN-teh) – Dark chocolate lovers, this is the label to look for. And if you see cioccolato fondente extra noir, I think you'll understand that we're talking about the darkest of the dark chocolates here.

Bacio (BAH-cho) – Named for the famous chocolate candies that come from Perugia, this is a chocolate hazelnut combination not unlike Nutella (which is another common gelato flavor), often with bits of hazelnuts in the mix.

Gianduja or gianduia (jahn-DOO-yah) – Either way it's spelled, it means the same thing – a creamy combination of milk chocolate and hazelnut.

Cioccolato all'arancia (cho-koh-LAH-toh ahl-ah-RAHN-cha) – This is chocolate orange, and is a personal favorite. It's most often a dark chocolate, not a milk chocolate, and may have either just an orange flavor or may also include candied bits of orange peel.

Cioccolato con peperoncini (cho-koh-LAH-toh kohn pep-pehr-ohn-CHEE-nee) – Another trendy chocolate addition, besides orange, is pepper – and this is often how you'll see it on the flavor placards. It's basically a hot pepper infused chocolate (usually dark chocolate) and can vary in terms of heat.

# GELATO FLAVOR TRANSLATIONS

## The Nuts

Pistacchio (pee-STAHK-yoh) – I’m not going to define this one, because if you read English you’ll know what it is. The important thing here it to learn that the “ch” in the middle of this word has a “k” sound (not an “sh” sound). Also good to know – it’s a very popular flavor.

Mandorla (mahn-DOOR-lah) – Almond

Nocciola (noh-CHO-lah) – This is hazelnut all by itself (not combined with chocolate, as listed above).

Castagna (kahs-TAHN-yah) – This is chestnut, and isn’t nearly as common as some of the other nut flavors.

## The Creams

Fior di latte (FYOR dee LAH-tay) – Perhaps the base flavor for all cream (or even chocolate) flavors, this is literally “flower of milk” and it’s a wonderfully subtle sweet cream flavor.

Crema (KREH-mah) – This is a kind of egg custard flavor, and shouldn’t be confused with vanilla.

Zabaione (zah-bah-YOH-nay) – This is based on a dessert of the same name, made from egg yolks and sweet Marsala wine. So it’s a custard type flavor, with an overtone of Marsala.

Cocco (KOH-koh) – Coconut

Caffè (kah-FAY) – Just in case you aren’t getting enough coffee flavor in your daily morning espresso, here’s the gelato version.

Amarena (ah-mah-RAY-nah) – Though it has fruit in it, it’s a cream base – it’s basically fior di latte with a sauce of sour cherries kind of mixed in. The cherries have been stewed in something, but they’re chewy and delicious, and you’re likely to get at least one whole cherry in your scoop.

# GELATO FLAVOR TRANSLATIONS

## The Fruits

Technically, these aren't really considered gelati – instead, they're sorbetti (sorbetto in the singular) because they're made without milk. The fruit flavors are so intense, you'll be amazed at how much they taste like the real thing.

Fragola (FRAH-go-lah) – Strawberry

Lampone (lahm-POH-nay) – Raspberry (oh-so good with a dark chocolate flavor)

Limone (lee-MOH-nay) – Lemon

Mandarino (mahn-dah-REE-noh) – Mandarin orange

Melone (meh-LOH-nay) – Melon (usually cantaloupe)

Albicocca (al-bee-KOH-kah) – Apricot

Fico (FEE-koh) – Fig

Tarocco (tah-ROH-koh) – Blood orange (not very common)

Frutti di bosco (FROO-tee dee BOHS-koh) – These aren't fruits belonging to some guy named Bosco, this means “fruits of the forest,” generally things like blueberries and blackberries.

Mela (MEH-lah) – Apple (also look for mela verde (MEH-lah VEHR-day), or green apple)

Pera (PEH-rah) – This is pear, and one of my favorite fruit flavors. It's a really subtle flavor, but one of the best features of well-made pear gelato is the texture. You really feel like you're eating a pear.

Pesca (PEHS-kah) – Peach



# ROME - GELATO RECOMMENDATIONS

Although it looks pretty with its bright colors and beautifully displayed, this is NOT the gelato you want to eat. Unfortunately, it is mass-produced factory made and is subpar compared to the artisan made gelato that is made daily from scratch



# ROME - GELATO RECOMMENDATIONS

**Ciampini Gelato** - HIGHLY RECOMMENDED - Located just off of San Lorenzo Piazza is a great find. Since 1941, their gelato is handmade and it respects the ancient traditions. For the creams they use organic milk, organic eggs and high quality fresh cream, our fruit flavor contain up to 70% of fresh fruits.

This is my favorite place in Rome for gelato, sit in the piazza and enjoy!  
Piazza S. Lorenzo in Lucina, 29





# ROME - GELATO RECOMMENDATIONS

**Venchi Cioccolato and Gelato** - Venchi gelato is the ultimate expression of this centuries-old, renowned artisan tradition based on few, selected ingredients of controlled origin and simple recipes adjusted to offer traditional as well as new, delicious flavors. Made fresh every day using the best raw materials nature has to offer. They have a shop near the Pantheon at Via degli Orfani, 87 and Via della Croce, 25/26 and also at Via del Corso, 335 near the Trevi Fountain



# ROME - GELATO RECOMMENDATIONS

**Giolitti** - This is the oldest gelato shop in all of Rome and shouldn't be missed. The lines are long and the staff can be rude at times. I'm sure it is because they are so busy and many of the customers don't understand the process. In most of the busy shops, you must first get a ticket before you order. If you want to sit down you must pay extra for the additional service. Flavors to try: Pompelmo Rosa (Pink Grapefruit), Mozart (chocolate-almond), Grand Marnier, Bacio (chocolate with hazelnut), Visciole (strawberry) and zabaglione. All are excellent, you can't go wrong.

If you don't want to wait in line you can purchase a FASTPASS online. You pay in advance and you get to move to the front of the line.

<http://fastpass.giolittistore.it/en/>





# ROME - GELATO RECOMMENDATIONS

**Il Gelato di Claudio Torcè** - Rome foodies call Claudio Torcè the master for his crazy-creative flavors and high-quality, all-organic ingredients. Try his creations out for yourself, and prepare to be daring: would you prefer the gorgonzola with vinegar, ricotta with coconut and chocolate chips, or chili-flavored chocolate? (Don't worry — there are more than 100 flavors, so you've got choices). The newest outpost just opened right in the historic center, just off Via del Corso — so now there's no reason not to miss it. Locations include Viale dell'Aeronautica 105, near EUR; Viale Aventino 59, near Circus Maximus; and Piazza Monte d'Oro 91/92, near Piazza Navona and Via del Corso.



# ROME - GELATO RECOMMENDATIONS

**Gelateria Fatamorgana** - There are three shops in Rome currently. Maria Agnese Spagnuolo the creator of Fatamorgana churns out a variety of all natural, homemade gelatos. This all natural gelato shop makes an assortment of styles including gluten-free, sugar free, dairy free and others. She selects organic fruits and fresh dairy for premium ingredients.

In 2017, she was awarded #19 out of 37,000 entries to be best gelato





# ROME - GELATO RECOMMENDATIONS

**Gelato San Lorenzo**- Although it opened in 2017, it has already established itself as one of Rome's best gelaterie, and it's no wonder: Chef Stefano Ferrara uses only the highest quality milk, organic eggs, and strictly seasonal ingredients (lemons from Amalfi, hazelnuts from Piedmont) for intense and authentic flavors. Try the sinfully rich zabaione, a creamy, almost eggnog-like flavor that's sweetened with marsala wine. (Via Tiburtina, 6, Rome; )



# ROME - GELATO RECOMMENDATIONS

**Come il Latte** - Located about 10 minutes' walk from Termini station, the gelato here is no joke: sinfully rich and almost buttery, with transcendent flavors like mascarpone with biscotti, salted caramel, and whiskey cream. They'll also fill your cone with chocolate before your scoop—and will top the finished product with chocolate as well, if you like. (Via Silvio Spaventa, 24/26)



# ROME - CAFFÈ RECOMMENDATIONS

**Sant' Eustachio il Caffè'** - A caffè which roasts its beans on the premises since it opened in 1938. It's located in Piazza Sant'Eustachio – between Piazza Navona and the Pantheon. It's the most famous coffee house in Rome. I've heard most of the credit goes to the water from an ancient aqueduct along with the perfectly roasted beans and skilled baristas that makes the coffee so good. Politicians, locals and tourists mingle together in this tiny place, which is named for the 1000-year old church in the piazza of the same name. The staple specialty is the Gran Caffè'. Other flavors include the granita di caffè', a frozen coffee slushy that is topped with whipped cream; rich, dense hot chocolate; or a homemade coffee liqueur, using Sant'Eustachio's own coffee. After coffee go next door to the chocolate shop.

<https://www.santeustachioilcaffe.com>

