

## ITALIAN NEW YEAR'S EVE TRADITIONS

Almost every country and culture celebrates New Year's Eve, and Italy is no different, with many Italians continuing to hold on to traditional customs, which promise to bring wealth and banish bad luck. Want to bring yourself some luck this new year? Here's how to do it like the Italians!



<https://lets-travel-more.com/top-10-places-italy-go-new-years-eve/>

### Red Underwear

Just after Christmas, shop windows are awash with red undergarments. Both men and women wear red underwear on New Year's Eve to bring luck in the coming year. Red is also the colour of fertility and those hoping to conceive in the following year also wear red.

### Dinner

Generally the menu of the New Year's Eve dinner includes lentils with zampone or cotechino. Cotechino is a large spiced sausage and zampone is stuffed pig's trotter. It's believed that lentils, which resemble small coins, bring wealth, while the fat content of the pork is said to signify abundance and prosperity in the New Year.

The dinner is finished off with dried fruit and grapes. It takes great willpower to conserve some grapes from the harvest until New Year's Eve. This indicates that everyone at the table will be wise and frugal with their newfound wealth.

### Music and Dancing

All over Italy, you will find outdoor celebrations on New Year's Eve, with music, dancing and fireworks. Larger cities, such as Naples, Rome and Bologna hold outdoor concerts and events that are televised across the country. Some smaller towns host bonfires, where everyone gathers to celebrate the coming of the New Year. Large cities add to the noise and excitement with free concerts in piazzas and on waterfronts such as Rimini, with ships and boats sounding their horns. Dancing can go on until sun rise, and some people even brave a dip in the sea. Parties in Italy on New Year's Eve go until the wee hours of the am, so that all can see the first sunrise of the New Year, which is another way to invite good fortune.

### Fireworks

The end of one year and beginning of another is celebrated with a riot of bangs and colors. At Midnight almost every town and village has dramatic displays of fireworks. Many families set off rockets from the rooves of their own houses. In the days before New Year's Day children also set them off.

### Old Pots and Pans

An older tradition that still is practiced by some is to throw old things like old pots and pans, clothes or any unwanted items out an upstairs window. The act seems to symbolise banishing previous bad luck, letting go of unhappiness and preparing for the future. It is usually done in southern Italy, but the tradition seems to have moved across the country.

### Drinks

Everyone raises a glass of Prosecco or Spumante as corks pop across Italy. Many even believe that the loud bangs will scare off demons and bad spirits from the New Year, il Capodanno.

### Games

A traditional Italian game that can be played by the whole family after dinner is Tombola, which is very similar to Bingo. It is said to have originated in Naples in around 1734. When the church disapproved of gambling, citizens got around this by playing Tombola at home instead.

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### References

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