

Tips for Travellers – Photography

There is so much to take photos of when you go to Italy so a digital camera is indispensable. Whilst you are away, ensure that you either take a laptop with you or to take enough memory cards with you so that you always have some spare capacity. If you are travelling with others and you don't have a laptop with you, they may allow you to download your pictures and burn them onto a CD for you. Failing this, there are multiple Internet stores in Italy that for a small fee they will copy photos from your memory card and burn them on to a CD for you. Remember that if you are using your mobile phone or tablet to take photos with, it is important to back them up on to a cloud or in some other way.

If you have a laptop with you, can I suggest that you develop a system as to how you are going to store your photos? If you return home with hundreds (or thousands) of photos that have not been indexed in some way, then finding that "special photo" will be really difficult. There is no right or wrong way to do this. I find renaming each photo tedious and too time-consuming. I make a series of folders, each one with a meaningful name and put all of the relevant photos in to that folder. For example, make a folder called "Italy" and within that folder make another folder called "Rome" and within that folder make another folder called "Colosseum". All of the photos of the Colosseum would then be put in to that folder. If you do this each day, the task is not too overwhelming.

If you have a small portable external disk drive then a backup of all of your photos is an extra level of security. Resist the temptation to delete photos whilst you are away. Programs such as Photoshop and other photo-editing programs can turn many a "ruined" photo in to one that is quite good or at least acceptable.

Remember that a photo speaks a thousand words and your loved ones back home would love to receive the occasional photo. If you are comfortable in saving copies of photos in different formats, then remember that it is much easier to send home a series of small photos rather than large ones. Programs such as Dropbox or Google docs allow you to upload your photos whilst you are away and allowing those at home to see that you have given permission to do so.

Digital cameras are fairly straight forward these days; however, it is wise to play with them at home before you go away, particularly if you have someone at home who can teach you how to operate it. Do you know about the Tourist Refund Scheme? If you spend \$300 (GST inclusive) or more in the one store and get a single tax invoice, and buy goods no more than 30 days before departure and you wear or carry the goods on board the aircraft and present them along with your original tax invoice, passport and international boarding pass to a Customs Officer at a TRS facility then you get your GST refunded? Sounds complex, well it's not. There is a desk at the Brisbane International Airport where you claim this money back, just before you get on your flight. Details can be found at: <http://www.customs.gov.au/site/page4646.asp> The reason I mention this, is that these days, Duty Free is not nearly as good as it used to be. If you are thinking of getting a new digital camera, then buy it before you go, and as long as you fulfil the above criteria, you will get the GST back. That way you can have a good play with your new camera before you go away.

If you do not have a digital camera, most mobile phones have high resolution cameras built in to them. These phones usually do not have as many fancy features as digital cameras do, however,

providing you are careful, they take excellent photos. Remember that you should back these up, just as you would with a digital camera. Remember to check your mobile phone plan to see how much it costs to send a photo back via an MMS message. This can be very expensive. It is usually cheaper to download your photos from your phone to your laptop and email them home, rather than sending them back as MMS messages.

When you get home, photobooks and canvas mounting of photos are an inexpensive way of remembering your holiday. Happy snapping.