

New guide raises a glass to Italy’s historic venues

Posted on July 7, 2026 by Leopoldo Targiani

ROME — More than 200 of Italy’s oldest hotels, restaurants, pastry shops, and literary cafés feature in the new *Guida ai Locali Storici d’Italia* (Guide to the Historic Venues of Italy), presented in late June 2026 at Rome’s Vero Alfredo restaurant and now in its 46th edition.

The pocket format guide, published by the *Associazione Nazionale Locali Storici d’Italia* (the national association of Italy’s historic venues) under the patronage of the Ministry of Culture, maps venues from Turin’s Caffè Abrate, founded in 1866, to the Erasmo restaurant in Lucca, dating to 1760, and Pesaro’s Grand Hotel Vittoria, opened in 1908. Each entry is illustrated by hand, a nod to the guidebooks of the Grand Tour.

“This year’s edition is centred on the theme *Tra battaglie e bottiglie*, between battles and bottles,” said Enrico Magenes, president of the association. “It is in practice a focus on the wines and liqueurs that have made the history of Italy and of its venues, rich in anecdotes and legends.”

The *aperitivo’s* birthplace

The stories run deep. According to the association, the *aperitivo* (pre-dinner drink) ritual was born at Milan’s Caffè Camparino in the early 1900s, while the Antica Trattoria Bagutto, serving diners since 1284, is the oldest restaurant in Italy. Turin’s Caffè Fiorio introduced the *gelato* (ice cream) cone for eating on the move in the 1930s, at first judged unseemly for ladies, and Rome’s Antico Caffè Greco displays more than 300 artworks, which the association calls the world’s largest private gallery open to the public.

The edition also honours family dynasties, some running the same venue for five to seven

Source: https://italynow.co.uk/new-guide-raises-a-glass-to-italys-historic-venues/

generations. “For me it is much more than a list of addresses,” said Francesca Rinaldi, a food and wine expert and journalist. “It is a guide to the memory of our country. It tells of places that safeguard history, culture, gastronomy, and family traditions.”

National historic venues day

The Rome launch also confirmed the sixth National Day of Historic Venues, set for October 3, 2026, when member venues will open their doors with guided tours, dedicated tastings, and cultural talks. The guide is free on request from the association.

For Rinaldi, one venue captures that spirit. “My favourite place is the Caffè Meletti in Ascoli Piceno, a symbol of timeless elegance overlooking Piazza del Popolo,” she said. “It is one of those rare places where time has not passed. It has stayed to wait for those who still know how to stop and listen.”

Source: https://italynow.co.uk/new-guide-raises-a-glass-to-italys-historic-venues/

Source: https://italynow.co.uk/new-guide-raises-a-glass-to-italys-historic-venues/