

# LO STILE ITALIANO

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE

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# FASHION IN THE FAST LANE



■ Slippers aren't just for old men. I started wearing mine out 15 years ago when I wasn't so old. Well, not too old. I still wear mine out all the time, even the black tie. They're so comfortable and look great with a pair of jeans in the summer. They're not so good in the winter of course.

What should an Italian man wear in bed? Nothing. You don't want anything to disturb your sleep and clothes get in the way. You can maybe wear T-shirt and boxer shorts if it gets cold - but never pyjamas. I have never worn pyjamas in my life.

Leather trousers are never acceptable on a man. That's a question of taste, of course. I do have a pair - they were a gift and I've never worn them. Leather trousers on a woman is another thing, of course, especially if they're figure-hugging...

Italians are a naturally stylish people. It comes from our history of art and means we're very conscious of the way things look - our clothes, our furniture, our cars. That kind of creativity will stand us in good stead for the future. Style is always in demand. We're not so good at heavy industry. Leave that to the Germans."



Italian men must have good shoes. They all like good shoes and are especially concerned about wearing the right colour, though it's a particularly Italian thing to wear brown shoes with a navy suit. But good shoes are also important because you need to be comfortable - you're in them for most of the day after all."

You can tell a lot about an Italian man by his watch. For most of them their watch is a status symbol, like driving a Ferrari. They want a kilo of gold on their wrist, to show off. I was the same once. It's OK for a certain time in your life but you grow out of it. These days I have a big collection of watches but still mostly wear a colourful plastic one. I like the idea that if it gets broken it's easy to replace."

Are Italian men more vain than Italian women? I don't think so! It's hard to be more vain than an Italian woman, but then the choice in dressing up is that much greater for women, so of course they are more expressive through their appearance. Italian men are vain - they just like to take care of themselves and put on a good beauty cream. But all Europe is catching up.



A man, Italian or otherwise, should never wear white socks, not even if they're doing sports. They're horrible - the single most ugly thing any man could wear. You see them worn a lot in Germany - with sandals. And that's the other thing no man should wear. And nothing too tight either. A too tight t-shirt, or too tight jeans - it's just embarrassing.

If an Italian man had to give up either his car or his wardrobe, he'd give up his wardrobe. Italian men are obsessive about cars - it's something to show off in. It's why they only like the latest models - nothing vintage. Most of them wouldn't know if the engine was in the front or the back. That interest is declining though - men of a certain age always dreamt of having a Mercedes or a Ferrari. Now young men just want an iPad."

Style and fashion are very different. Fashion is here today and then over. Style is what counts and you either have style or you don't. It's hard to explain why but you can put exactly the same outfit on two different men and one will look stylish and the other won't. It's all in the way you wear it."



An Italian man should always go to the same tailor as his father - because he's the official tailor to the family. And he had better be quick. You never see a young tailor in Italy now - sadly nobody wants to train for that job. The times are changing too. I used to love a hand-made suit. Now I wear jeans most of the time. I never wear a tie either. I'm claustrophobic."

What should an Italian man do if his mother doesn't like the way he dresses? He should change. Of course. ●

## STYLE Flamboyant former F1 boss Flavio Briatore shares his style tips



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