

Italy's Cappuccino-no

Italy is the land of the outdoor cafe where Italians love their "caffè" almost as much as they love their mammas. The deep, rich, and black espresso is the drink of choice especially if Italians are lingering in a cafe after 11am. "Italians won't drink a cappuccino after 11am" says Conversational Italian instructor Roberto Alvarez. "Like wearing short pants, a cappuccino after 11am is giveaway you're a tourist, especially an American tourist". Professore Roberto should know, he travels to Italy every year and while there, like all Italians he spends a lot of his time in cafes drinking espresso. "The Italian reasoning does make sense. They consider a cappuccino too heavy on your stomach, much of that has to do with the milk that is added to an espresso to make cappuccino. You have to realize that Italians eat lunch around at two in the afternoon so they believe drinking cappuccino after 11am dilutes their appetite and they want no part of that". What about a cappuccino after lunch or dinner? "Mai, never" Professore Roberto says, "Again when you have a stomach full of food the last thing Italians want to add is a heavy cappuccino. They would drink an espresso or a "digestivo" to help them digest their food".

Professore Roberto began teaching the customs and language of Italy in his Beginners Conversational Italian classes in the Tampa Bay area in March of 2003. His trips to Italy began long ago. "I first stepped onto Italian soil in 1978. Having been raised by an immigrant mother from Naples being in Italy was an extension of

my upbringing. While I was very comfortable with the country, its customs, and its people still there was much to learn, but I did know about the unwritten cappuccino rule". While learning the language is the centerpiece of his fun and stress free classes Professore Roberto does provide his students with a thorough understanding of the customs and culture of "Il bel Paese". "It's all about comfort and I want my students to be extremely comfortable with being in a foreign country. With comfort comes joy and I want them to enjoy Italy as much as I do". Professore Roberto invites everyone to enjoy the fun and learning. Whether you're planning a trip to Italy or interested in learning more about Italian culture and customs he guarantees you'll enjoy yourself. New classes in Beginners Conversational Italian or "The Five weeks of Fun" as Roberto describes his time with you begin in March and again in April. You can choose among five locations St. Petersburg, Feather Sound, Largo, Palm Harbor, and Tampa. The St. Petersburg class will meet on Thursday evenings at the Panera Bread on 4th Street North, March 4th through April 1st from 7-8pm. The Tampa class at Castellano and Pizzo Italian Deli which combines "Eating Italian and Learning Italian" includes dinner with every class. Private lessons are also available. Enrollment in the "The Five weeks of Fun" is limited and pre-registration is required. Contact Roberto at 727.492.6653 and visit his website at www.learnitalian.us