



ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN LONDON

Global companies and international communities are an essential part of London's social and business fabric. Locating in London is about more than realising business opportunities. It's about discovering a whole new way of life. Through our knowledge of London's communities, we make you feel at home the moment you arrive.

London's Italian Population

Italians have been settling in London for centuries, but a significant Italian community has existed from the 19th Century onwards. The last *Census* in 2001 recorded 39,000 Italians living in London, nearly 40 per cent of the UK total. Kensington & Chelsea is by far the most popular borough, with over 3,200 Italian residents. Several other boroughs have over 2,000 residents, including Westminster and Lambeth in central London and Camden, Enfield and Barnet in north London.

London's Business Opportunity

2004 was a record year for Italian investment into Europe, with nearly 90 companies establishing new operations according to Ernst & Young's *European Investment Monitor*. The UK attracts one in eight of all Italian companies into Europe, and London in turn attracts just under one quarter of these. The opportunities

for Italian companies in the London marketplace remain strong and a continued healthy flow of inward investment is anticipated.

Istituto Marangoni
The leading fashion school in Milan

"London is an extremely important creative centre for the fashion industry and represents an excellent cultural base where students can develop their skills."

Paolo Parente, Director

London's extensive Italian business community is comprised of 350 overseas companies, with clusters based in west, south-west and central London. Italian companies operate in diverse markets, with a particular emphasis on clothing, footwear & accessories, financial & business services and consumer goods/retail.

Well-known market players include ENI, Pirelli, De Agostini and Merloni Domestic Appliances. The majority of Italian businesses operate sales and marketing hubs in the capital, using London as an ideal stepping-stone to the rest of the UK market.

Business Support

Behind London's flourishing Italian commercial sector sits a sophisticated business support network. The principal means of official support are *The Embassy of Italy in London*, based in Mayfair and the *Consulate General*, located in Belgravia. The former provides news and general information on the relations between Italy and the United Kingdom, while the latter offers Consular services to Italian nationals residing in London and information regarding entry visas to Italy.

An extensive network of additional business support also exists. This ranges from *The Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the UK*, established in 1886 with the sole purpose of promoting and extending business relations between the UK and Italy, to the *Italian Institute for Foreign Trade*, which promotes business opportunities for Italian companies and supports them in their entrance into different markets.

Established in London a decade ago, *Business Club Italia* creates a forum for discussion for Italian and Italian-speaking business men and women involved in various professions, businesses, industries and organisations. The Italian community is well-served by a host of other professional organizations, such as translation agencies, PR & marketing services, banking, accountancy and legal practices.

Daniela Besso Fashion Designer

"The market for fashion in London is immense, as the city has young dynamic talent and offers every opportunity for fresh new brands to be introduced."

Daniela Besso, Fashion Designer

Travel between Italy and London

London is the most internationally-accessible city in the world, attracting 600,000 Italian visitors in 2003. Flights between Italy and London are fast and frequent, with over 520 direct scheduled flights each way, every week, taking just two hours. Italy is served by the main carriers *Alitalia*, *British Airways*, *Easyjet*, *BMI British Midland* and *Ryanair*, with regular connections to the principal cities of Milan, Rome, Venice and Florence.

Living in London

Establishing a business in London is about becoming part of one of the world's most multi-cultural societies. The historical significance of the Italian community is evident everywhere, influencing the capital's cuisine, enriching its cultural experiences and adding a distinct sense of design and art.

The traditions of Italian culture and language have been continued through successive generations in London, reinforced by regional

Italian community centres strategically established across the whole of London. They offer advice and support to all Italian residents, and run women-only clubs, scholarship schemes and language training. Alongside these sit specialist associations such as the *ACLI (Associazione Cristiana Lavoratori Italiani)*, which offers information and advice on social services to Italian people living in Britain, and *INAS Italian Welfare*, which provides a free service with regard to state insurance, welfare assistance and healthcare. Italians have their own private clinic, the *Italian Clinic* on Harley Street, and *The Italian Medical Society of Great Britain* is also based in London.

An online web portal dedicated to Italian young professionals living and working in London has been developed with the aim of making integration into London society easy. It provides excellent links to Italian events and social and cultural activities across the capital (www.italiansoflondon.com).

Schools

The capital offers temporary and permanent Italian schooling options from nursery through to higher education level. Founded in 1969, *The Italian Nursery School*, based in Lambeth, integrates Italian children into English society while conserving their culture and heritage. *The British-Italian School of London*, based in Barking, east London, provides a primary through to secondary school education which preserves the structure of the Italian curriculum and delivers a bilingual teaching programme.

Universities

Italy is considered an important international market for London's higher education sector, and is predicted to rise one place to joint sixth position by 2007/8. The number of Italian students enrolled on university courses in the capital rose by 4.5% in the last academic year, reaching 1,950. Over 700 Italian students qualified from London universities in 2003/4, accounting for nearly 45% of all Italians graduating in the UK last year.

Restaurants and Food Shops

London's thriving Italian restaurant industry demonstrates the real influence of the Italian community in London. Traditional flavours from Tuscany to Sicily and Genoa to Sardinia transport the diner on a unique culinary journey. London can lay claim to no less than four Michelin-starred Italian restaurants, including the up-market *River Café* in Hammersmith and the more informal *Assaggi* in Notting Hill. The intimacy of small, family-based food businesses has also been retained, with cafes, delicatessens, bakeries and dedicated stores distributed liberally throughout the capital.

Bookshops, Libraries and Media

Italian books, magazines and other media can be found in a variety of shops and libraries throughout London. Popular newspapers from Italy such as *Il Corriere della Sera*, *La Repubblica*, and *La Stampa* are all readily available, as well as British-based newspapers such as *The London Italian*, *La Voce Degli Italiani* and *Londra Sera*.

The *Eugenio Montale Library*, at the *Italian Cultural Institute* in Belgravia, has an extensive collection of 25,000 books with a large reference section on Italian culture and history. Italian literature can also be purchased from *The Italian Bookshop*, *Young Europeans Bookstores* and *Grant & Cutler*, all located in the West End.

Broadcasters include Italy's public radio and television corporation, *RAI*, operating out of Mayfair and news agency *ANSA (Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata)* based in Victoria. *Radio Spectrum* offers a unique radio show for the Italian community in the South East, featuring Italian music, sport, news, commentaries and documentaries.

Arts and Culture

Italian art and culture has had a profound influence on the richness of London's cultural landscape - from the magnificent renaissance paintings in *The National Gallery* through to the vibrant performances of *La Traviata* at the *Royal Opera House*. *The Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art*, opened in London in 1998, brings together some of the finest and most important works created by Italian artists during the first half of the twentieth century. The *Italian Cultural Institute* also offers a rich programme of art, music, theatre events, lectures, readings, and film screenings, as well as a full range of Italian courses at all levels. *The British-Italian Society* often arranges joint functions with the *Italian Cultural Institute* and also enjoys a close relationship with the *Italian Embassy*.

Places of Worship

London is home to diverse faiths from around the world, with 479 places of Christian worship across the Diocese of London. Churches dedicated to the Italian community are located throughout the capital, from Enfield in the north of London to Croydon in the south. *St Peter's Italian Church* in Clerkenwell has remained an important focal point for the Italian community in London and is a popular place to celebrate important events in the Church's calendar.

Leisure and Sports

Founded in 1985, the *Juventus Club Londra* has the certificate of Official Recognition from *Juventus FC*, giving it official supporters' club status. Italian rugby is also represented by *The London Italian Rugby Supporters Club*.

How We Can Help

Think London's free advisory service has assisted over 170 companies from Europe in setting up, developing and expanding their business in London. From Italy we have worked with large fashion and retail corporations through to small and medium-sized new media and ICT companies - making sure their businesses succeed in London. Companies we have assisted include *Daniela Besso*, *Istituto Marangoni*, *Bravo Solution* and *Holbe Dialogue UK*.

Please contact us for a full listing of resources for the Italian Community in London.