

Curated  
BY NATASHA



MARINA DI CARRARA | ITALY

Curated by Natasha



I moved to a very small coastal Tuscan town, Marina di Carrara, in July 2022 for work. I was based in a shipyard there that employs a large number of people around the area. Our project was incredibly delayed and so I landed up becoming very familiar with the town and the wider Tuscan region. I found myself jumping into my car on most weekends and exploring as much as possible.

Marina di Carrara is small and not necessarily a town that one would visit if coming to Italy on holiday. Carrara, the main town closer to the mountain, is famous for its marble; especially, Michelangelo's David was produced from Carrara marble. From my bedroom window, I have the most amazing views of these white mountains that are often mistaken for snow.

What I have come to love about Marina di Carrara is the incredible community. I know my butcher, I know my baker, I know all the baristas at the coffee shop, and they are all kind, they all love to chat and they all tolerate my terrible storytelling in a butchered Italian. But, they appreciate it because I try. I spend all day walking from my apartment, along the promenade, to work, to the deli, to the butcher, heading to the beach, and everything in between. It is safe and everything is accessible.

I have my daily and weekly routines, I know the area inside out and I have spent the weekends exploring as much as I can. So, while I cannot write this guide in Italian, I can write it from a place of love.

The surrounding areas, spiraling out and away from the famous marbled mountains are absolutely beautiful. 30-40 minutes in every direction there is something for the outdoor enthusiast and food lover.

And so, on these pages, I will introduce you to the places and faces I have fallen in love with both in and around Carrara. The guide will be slightly different as I take you on a radial adventure from Carrara through the surrounding areas of Tuscany.

## MARINA DI CARRARA | ITALY

# A FEW THINGS TO KNOW (IN MY HUMBLE OPINION)



## How to get there?

If flying in to Tuscany, the most sensible airport to use is Florence, however, if coming to the coast, you can also fly into Pisa, the connections are just not always great. But, do yourself a favour and rent a car. You do not want to be in Tuscany without a car. You can't find the secret off the beaten track secrets on a train or in a taxi. In fact, in my little town, we don't even have a taxi service! I use [NVM travel](#) for my flights. Travel agents are the way to go at the moment, with all the travel complexities post-Covid.



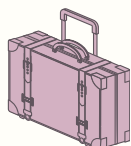
## How does the currency fare to Rands?

The local currency is Euro. And while it can be really pricey to do the very touristy things, I have found that grabbing food and wine from a market and sitting somewhere beautiful is an equally wonderful way to spend time there. Flat white around 2-3 Euro (ZAR 33-50).



## When is the best time of year to go?

The summer months are typically May-Sept. However, I love the off-season times - April and October. The prices are lower, it's not as hot and there are not as many people. I have experienced the winter months in Tuscany and it is so beautiful to see it with less people around.



## Any extras you should pack?

I would say be ready for everything - have a swimming costume, hiking shoes, a fancy outfit for a night out - be prepared for it all, as Tuscany has it all.



## The food you must try?

After many years of being a vegetarian, I started my adventure of eating meat again in Tuscany. And what a fabulous place to choose to do this, from the incredible Florentina Steaks to the ragu and charcuterie boards - everything is so simple and yet so filled with flavor. In summer, sipping on Aperol and snacking on aperitivo is the Italian way, and then seasonally moving your way through truffles, porcini mushrooms, artichoke and all the meats. The options are endless.

MARINA DI CARRARA | ITALY

# MY MARINA DI CARRARA FAVORITES....



## IL FORNO DI MUSSI | BAKERY

The first apartment I stayed in, I was tortured every morning by the most delicious smells of baking bread. As I would go out for my run, I would see the lights of the bakery on and the smell of delicious croissants wafting out the doors. It didn't take long for me to pop my head in and discover they made the best PESTO I have ever had and the most delicious mutli-cereale bread! It became a weekly purchase for me, sometimes not even making it into my front door before breaking off a chunk and dipping it in to the fresh pesto. Heaven!



## PASTICCERIA CAMBOLI BENITO

The most beautiful cafe in the town is by far Pasticceria Camboli. And if you have a sweet tooth, good luck fighting off the fresh pastries that come out every day. The owner, Julio, is so kind and loves to do his rounds of chatting to all the frequent visitors. The good news, they stay open for aperitivo too, where their Aperols are a hit with locals!

And then, I also love to sit at Bristol Cafe, it is at the heart of Marina di Carrara and feels like it buzzes with the morning wake up of the town. They also serve nice tea and the Nonna who runs it is so sweet! Atmosphere wins here.

In all honesty, though, the coffee at the cafe at my workplace, The Italian Sea Group, was the best roast in my opinion! Coffee was consistently strong and enjoyable.



## LA MAISON

When I first arrived in Marina di Carrara, I was pretty alone and so in order to mingle a little, I would take myself out to dinner every week at this wonderful fish restaurant on my road. The food was delicious! They did such a great Sea Bream with seasonal veg and I would leave there every week very happy.

LA GRANDE BELLEZA - Incredible Italian Cuisine

CICCIO's - Amazing local cuisine

MYPOKE - Poke bowls - nice and easy

YOXI - Asian fusion - quick and easy

# MARINA DI CARRARA | ITALY

# MY MARINA DI CARRARA FAVORITES....



## IL GOCCETTO ENOTECA | WINE SHOP AND BAR

This is my first call wine bar on the way home from work or in arrangin a drink in Carrara - they have a wonderful selection of Italian and Tuscan wines. They also do a great cheese and charcuterie board. Their opening times are unpredictable, so you might need a back up plan.

SAMBA CAFE - my next stop, when Il Gocchetto is closed, great aperitivo, just can be a little noisy.



## BEACH BARS

In the summer, Marina di Carrara is bustling and the beaches are packed. If you do stay in the town, I highly reccomend booking in advance (or if you like me, go to the mountain lakes). But, if you do choose to do a beach club, my favourite experiences have been at Doride Beach Club in Marina di cararra. If you want fancy ones, then head down the coast towards Forte de Marmi.



## MORNING & AFTERNOON WALKS

The town goes to sleep from 14h30-16h30 and then , like clock work the streets start filling up and everyone is out walking with their dogs and children. There is a very defined route that everyone takes from across the main road and along the promenade just parallel to the sea. It's quite beautiful to be apart of, even though it can get very full and chaotic.

# MARINA DI CARRARA | ITALY

# MY MARINA DI CARRARA TOP TIPS....



## BUTCHER

The first apartment I stayed in, I was tortured every morning by the most delicious smells of baking bread. As I would go out for my run, I would see the lights of the bakery on and the smell of delicious croissants wafting out the doors. It didn't take long for me to pop my head in and discover they made the best PESTO I have ever had and the most delicious mutli-cereale bread! It became a weekly purchase for me, sometimes not even making it into my front door before breaking off a chunk and dipping it in to the fresh pesto. Heaven!



## FRESH FOOD

I have become even more aware of where I get my food since moving here, favouring the small and local suppliers over the large grocery stores. And although the local Esselunga is VERY good, I do prefer buying my fresh goods from Ratatouille, the butcher (Bernardo) on via Genova and the wonderful bio store - Il Bio Mondo di Chiara.



## GELATO

Firm favorites - Gelateria Roselline at the beautiful Piazza Menconi and Gelateria Gianotti



## SERVICES I HAVE FOUND USEFUL

I use all of these wonderful people regularly - so if you're in need, please send me an email and I will happily send your their number :)

Nails & beauty - La Grande bellezza +39 349 086 359

Tailor - Roberta, a wonderful lady who helped me a few times, email me

Cleaning - Jo, what a dream, email me

Osteopath - Dott. Elea Angius - +39 338 958 5072

Gynae (Viareggio) Dr Tarantino +39 584 04 3600

HERE IS [MY GOOGLE LIST](#) FOR ALL PLACES MENTIONED IN THIS GUIDE & FURTHER INTO THE TUSCAN AND LIGURIAN OUTSKIRTS

# MARINA DI CARRARA | ITALY