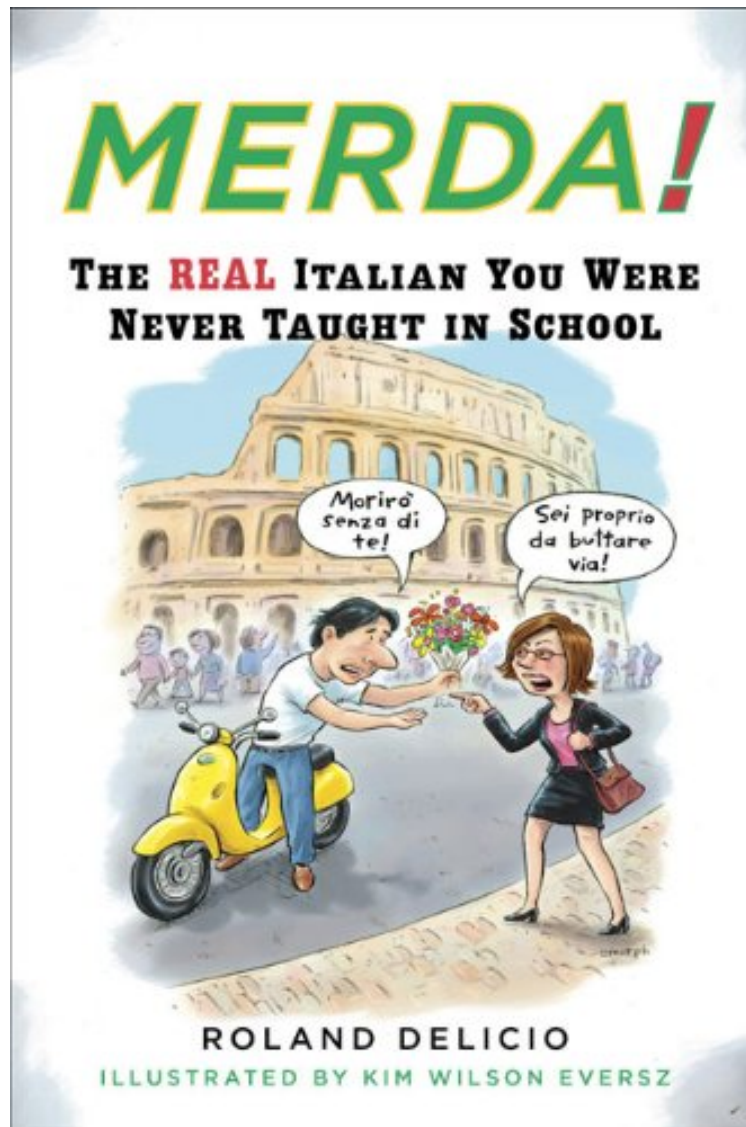


[Download] Merda!: The Real Italian You Were Never Taught in School

Merda!: The Real Italian You Were Never Taught in School

Roland Delicio

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Somewhat dated, though amusing, Italian slang By Walter Peterson My son, to whom I gave a copy, recently returned from a visit to Rome: says Italian millennials place content as 80's slang. I still find it entertaining, even if not aggiornato. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Laughed Alot while Learning By Maria L. Laprocina Very Fun. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I AM

NOT A PRUDE BUT THE BOOK WAS TOO ...By CustomerI AM NOT A PRUDE BUT THE BOOK WAS TOO OFF COLOR FOR ME. I DISCARDED THE BOOK (IN THE TRASH) BEFORE ANYONEELSE INCLUDING MY ADULT CHILDREN PICKED IT UP TO READ.

At last, a humorous, uncensored language guide to the colorful slang and rude colloquialisms that are so essential to a true understanding of everyday Italian. For the first time, all those words and phrases that were deemed off-color for the classroom are included in one volume.

Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. How can you forget your Italian teachers flustered face when you asked her all those words and phrases that she would never translate for you? How about when you and your fellow classmates searched in vain for the mildest expletives in your Italian-English dictionary? Did you ever wonder what the young men lining the streets of Rome were saying to the American women? Or about those outrageous hand gestures that speak more than a thousand words? Here at last is a humorous, uncensored guide to the off-color colloquialisms that are so essential to a true understanding of everyday Italian. Merda! goes far beyond those prim and starchy lesson manuals to bring you the real Italian theyd never dare teach you in school: shocking idioms...hard-core curses...scatological words for body functions and body parts...pithy epithets for every nasty occasion...detailed descriptions of insulting hand gestures...and much more. Now you too can take on the Italian language in its most passionate form. Roland Delicio Illustrated by KIM WILSON EVERSZ Preface Italians are friendly, right? Smiling Latins who will give you everything they have, including their mellifluous language. You couldnt possibly imagine the Italian languagewhose very grocery lists sound like an aria by Puccinibeing capable of producing the vilest obscenities, right? Or could you? You are in Italy and an old man smiles and says to you, Americani, pezzi di merda! Of course, you smile graciously. The old paisano is praising Americans and apple pie. Wrong. He has just told youin the most unrestrained slangthat Americans are pieces of shit. You are an attractive young lady traveling alone in Florence and an abnormally handsome hunk you met in the Uffizi is sitting across from you at a cozy table in the Piazza della Signoria, and he says to you soulfully, Come vorrei chiavare con te stasera. You are delighted. He looks like the beautiful Italian in Hawthornes novel whose title you cant remember. You have two degrees in literature and a bad memory, but you just love all things Italian. Obviously, he wants to discuss the iconography in Botticellis paintings with you. Wrong. He has just bluntly said, albeit in a poetic tone of voice reminiscent of Marcello Mastroianni, that he wants to fuck you tonight. You are walking down a street in Venice (yes, there are streets in Venice) with your wife, Myrtle, who has gone recklessly to fat, when you are stopped by a delicate old lady Myrtle has just bumped into. Quella donna ha un culo pericoloso, says the frail lady benignly as she looks at Myrtles body like an appraiser. You have heard that Italians appreciate buxom women, so you accept what must be a compliment. Wrong. The old lady has just said, as bluntly and explicitly as the aforementioned young satyr in the piazza, That womans ass is dangerous. You are back in the United States visiting Greenwich Village in New York City, with its still-vibrant Italian-American population. You are with your girlfriend and happen to look at a guy in a perfectly casual way. Finocchio, stronzo! snaps the young man in smiling contempt. You nod pleasantly and answer grazie, the only word you remember from that two-week Perillo tour of Italy you and Sheila took. The guy said something gracious, did he not? Wrong. He called you a faggot and a turd. You continue walking. Somewhere in Little Italy, two very old Italian ladies seem to be having a disagreement. Figlia di puttana! shouts the first. Vaffanculo! answers her snarling antagonist vehemently. Cafona! howls the first. Avanzo di galera! rages the second. Tuo padre era un rotto in culo! shrieks the first triumphantly. Fortunately, their respective family members break up the slight disagreement. The women are in their eighties and fragile. If their exchange had had subtitles, you would have read: Daughter of a bitch! Go fuck yourself! Peasant! Jailbird! Your father took it up the ass! Mellifluous Italian? Puccini? Wrong. Now you are blushing slightly and quickly take off with Sheila in tow. You seem to remember some of the words exchanged by the two old crones. Dave Manfredi and Joe Anzalone, buddies on the team back at old Syracuse High, used to shout words (maybe in mutilated form) that sounded very much like these at each other in the locker room after those chilly autumn games. Even the guys who werent Italian had learned them and kicked them around in these mutilated versions. But you were never quite sure exactly what they really did mean. Now you wish you hadnt been frightened by foreign languages in high school and college. But even if you had studied Italian, you would not have learned what you will from this compact introduction to Italian slang. Dont despair. Its not too late. This little book, whether you read it for pleasure and enlightenment, or whether you take it with you as a traveling companion, can help you immeasurably. Remember, what follows is the real Italian that no one is ever taught in school. In the examples above, some of the operative words were: merda, chiavare, culo, finocchio, stronzo, puttana, cafona. In English: shit, to fuck, ass, faggot, turd, whore, peasant. Wouldnt it have been convenient to know this? Ma naturalmente! Would your teacher have included them in his daily vocabulary drill? Ma assolutamente no! As one can see, slang in any language doesnt pull any punches. But isnt self-defense about knowing how to punch back? And really thats all we want to dohelp you to give back what you get, or at least to know whether you are being complimented or insulted in Italian. Senza dubbio, we are all persons of great breeding and try to avoid the scatological at all costs. We assiduously

unfurl the banners of good taste. The decision is entirely one's own. We can opt to walk away with dignity and fare da sordo (pretend to be deaf), or we can rebut in kind. What follows, then, in the simplest format, is a guide to those Italian words both proper and improper, singly and in convenient phrases and sentences, with a guide to their pronunciation, some basic grammar, and a few other practical aids that should admit you if only tentatively into that august fraternity whose legendary members include Boccaccio, Petrarca, and Signor Dante Alighieri himself. Buona fortuna!

A Note on Dialects When I mentioned to an Italian friend of mine that I had been asked to write a short introduction to Italian slang for English readers, he answered without hesitation: Impossible! You would have to include all the dialects. Of course, he was right. I, however, was equally adamant in my belief that the book would have to be confined to standard Italian. A dictionary of Italian slang that included all the dialects would be of necessity a monumental work of scholarship, and scholarship is certainly not what the casual English reader wants at this point. It is best, therefore, to placate those Italians and Italian-Americans who may peruse these pages and come away angry. Where are those funny, dirty words my grandfather used to shout at me when I misbehaved? Why do the words in this book look and sound only a little like them, and why are they spelled the way they are? Because they are written and to be pronounced in standard Italian, I am obliged to respond. I don't wish to ignore the racy expletives (many exclusive to a particular dialect and having nothing at all to do with standard Italian) of Nonno Francesco from Calabria, or Nonno Innocente from Piemonte, or Nonno Nicola from Puglia, or Nonno Gualtiero from the Veneto, or Nonno Turiddu from Sicilia, but standard Italian is the Italian derived from Dante and is understood by all Italians with some education from Mount Etna to the Alps. Dialects are still spoken throughout Italy, but most Italians are bilingually Italian—that is, they switch from dialect to standard Italian as suits the occasion. So, gentle reader, do not feel slighted.

A Note on Translation The glossary at the end of this book is far from complete, but it attempts to include most of the words used in the text and some others. Italian taboo words are underlined in the text and the glossary (the English ones are obvious) so that you will be aware of the degree of vulgarity or rudeness inherent in them. Wherever possible, I have tried to supply the closest English slang equivalent, but unfortunately it's hard to be completely consistent. But what is slang nowadays? The media now overwhelm us with language so explicit that it is difficult to decide exactly what can or cannot be uttered in front of Grandma and the kids. Furthermore, slang is a cultural phenomenon. What seems natural to Italians or the French may seem offensive to Anglo-Saxons. The very euphony of Italian may make a taboo word sound like poetry. The brutal sibilance of the Anglo-Saxon shit is quite another thing when placed beside the Italian merda. Do you see what I mean? The mellifluous can really be a trap. In any case, note carefully all underlined words if you are overwrought about creating bad impressions. But remember, Merda! is, after all, an introduction to The Real Italian You Were Never Taught in School, not the Italian of diplomatic protocol. E adesso, avanti!

This book is mainly an introduction to Italian slang, not a comprehensive phrase book for travelers. If you do take it with you to Italy, it probably will be one of several language guides in your possession. The book will supply you with the profane. The others should supply the marginally sacred. Not, of course, that Merda! overlooks polite ways of being scurrilous. What follows are some of the basic words both naughty and nice that most of us need in a new language, except that here most will be given with impolite examples in order to introduce you quickly to X-rated vocabulary. In traveling, polite terms are essential. We do meet people. We do need restrooms. We may need a policeman in a hurry, or the American consul, or a drink, or directions, or medical attention, or God knows what. The zesty words should be held in reserve for those particular occasions when patience wears thin. The Italian word slancio suggests throwing yourself into something, doing something with vigor. You must have slancio when confronting both life and language. The Italian language is an aggressive music. When you speak its rowdier epithets, imagine yourself one of your favorite operatic villains: an unctuous Baron Scarpia, a mordant Iago, a smiling, insidious Mephistopheles. If pronunciation is a concern, consult the appropriate chapter. Otherwise avanti! People