

# Coffee Break **Travel Diaries**

## Season 1, Lesson 1

Transcript and Notes



### Study text

Io mi chiamo Giulia, e con il mio amico Paolo siamo arrivati questa mattina a Pisa, in Toscana. Tra cinque giorni ci sarà il Palio di Siena, quindi ne stiamo approfittando per visitare tutta la regione. Ovviamente Pisa non poteva mancare! Abbiamo subito lasciato i bagagli al nostro albergo e siamo corsi ad ammirare la Torre di Pisa. A dire la verità, non ce l'aspettavamo così pendente!

**siamo arrivati questa mattina**

*we arrived this morning*

**tra cinque giorni**

*in five days' time*

Note that the preposition **tra** (also: **fra**) does not only mean "between" and in this case it is used to indicate the time that separates a future event from the moment of the utterance.

**ci sarà < essere**

*there will be*

**Il Palio (m) di Siena**

*Horse race of Medieval flavour that takes place twice a year in Siena's main square (Piazza del Campo).*

**quindi**

*therefore*

**ne stiamo approfittando < approfittare**

*we are taking advantage of this (of the fact that we want to go Siena / we are profiting from the situation)*

The verb **approfittare** can have a negative and a positive meaning. In this context, it is certainly used in its positive sense with the idea of using the visit to Siena as an excuse to tour the whole region of Tuscany. Note the use of **ne** whose function is to avoid the repetition of phrases introduced by the preposition **di** (as in **approfittare di**). If you wish to review this grammar point, please refer back to: Coffee Break Italian Season 2, Episode 15.

**ovviamente**

*obviously*

**Pisa non poteva mancare**

*Pisa could not be missing (from the list of places to visit)*

**abbiamo subito lasciato i bagagli < lasciare**

*we left immediately our luggage / our suitcases*

Unlike English, the word **bagaglio** in Italian can be pluralised.

**siamo corsi < correre**

*we ran*

The verb **correre** in compound tenses can be constructed both with **essere** and **avere**. However, the choice of the auxiliary depends on the type of action performed. If it implies going from one place to another, then **essere** must be used. In this case more emphasis is placed on the destination and the verb itself also carries the nuance of wanting to reach a final point with great desire, not necessarily with a physical run but with a rapid movement. Otherwise, the simple action of running in an enclosed space without the idea of going from one place to another is expressed by using **avere**. Compare the following examples:

**Ero in ritardo e sono corso in ufficio** (I was late so I dashed to the office).

**Ieri non sono andato in palestra così ho corso un po' in ufficio**

(Yesterday I didn't go to the gym so I had a little run in the office).

### Torre (pendente) di Pisa

*The Leaning Tower of Pisa*

### a dire la verità

*to tell the truth, to be honest*

### non ce l'aspettavamo < aspettarsi

*we weren't expecting it*

Note that the pronoun **ci** changes into **ce** for phonetic reasons when combined with another pronoun (in this case: **l'**).

Paolo ha insistito per avere una foto mentre sorreggeva la Torre, poi abbiamo preso un bel gelato artigianale per combattere l'afa. A fine giugno fa davvero caldo! Per questo a cena abbiamo deciso di mangiare in un ristorante tipico all'aperto: pasta, salumi, formaggi, buon vino... la cucina toscana è davvero meravigliosa.

### ha insistito per avere una foto < insistere

*he insisted to have (to take) a photo*

Note that the verb **insistere**, despite being a verb of the second conjugation, forms its past participle using the ending **-ito** instead of **-uto**.

### mentre sorreggeva la torre < sorreggere

*while he was upholding the tower*

### abbiamo preso un bel gelato < prendere

*we had a nice ice-cream*

The adjective **bello** when used in front of a noun (which is its most natural position in terms of word order) undergoes changes to make it sound similar to the corresponding definite article. In this case:

**il gelato > bel gelato**

If you wish to review this grammar point, please refer back to Coffee Break Italian Season 2, Episode 12.

### per combattere l'afa

*in order to fight back the mugginess*

### a fine giugno

*at the end of June*

### fa davvero caldo < fare

*it's really hot*

### per questo

*for this reason*

### all'aperto

*outside, open-air, outdoors, al fresco*

### salumi (pl)

*cold cuts, cured meats*

## buon vino (m)

*good wine*

The adjective **buono**, often used before nouns, undergoes some changes to sound more similar to the corresponding indefinite article.

### **un vino > buon vino**

This grammar point is also dealt with in Coffee Break Italian Season 2, Episode 12.

## la cucina toscana (m)

*Tuscan cuisine, Tuscan food, Tuscan gastronomy*

The word **cucina** literally means “kitchen” but it is also used to describe food or the way of cooking. Here are some examples:

**Adoro la cucina di tua madre** (I love your mother’s kitchen or I love your mother’s food).

**Mi piace molto la cucina giapponese** (I really like Japanese food).

## meraviglioso/a

*wonderful*

Dopo cena abbiamo fatto una passeggiata in centro: le città italiane d’estate vivono di notte! I bar e i negozi erano aperti, e in giro c’erano molte persone. Alle 22 però siamo tornati in albergo: domani ci aspetta una lunga giornata a Lucca!

## dopo cena

*after dinner*

## abbiamo fatto una passeggiata in centro

*we went for a walk in the city centre*

**d'estate**

*in summer*

The preposition **in** can also be used.

**vivono di notte < vivere**

*they live at night*

**in giro c'erano molte persone**

*there were a lot of people around*

**siamo tornati in albergo < tornare**

*we returned to the hotel*

**ci aspetta una lunga giornata**

*a long day awaits us*

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