

A VISIT TO THE CITY CENTRE OF RIMINI

The centre of the city of Rimini is about 25 minutes from the Adriatic shoreline.

It is a lovely stroll to the City Centre, but, in the heat of the day, it can be a treacherous walk and, by the time that one reaches Piazza Cavour, which is the heart of the City Centre, one is likely to be very hot and one's clothes are quite likely to be very wet due to the high humidity.

The population of Rimini is intelligent enough to stay indoors, during the heat of the day, that is between about 1 p.m. and 4 p.m., then, they come out to play and to eat dinner in the coolness of the evening and, often, until the early hours of the morning.

Eating huge dinners is par for the course in this part of Italy as families gather to exchange the chit-chat of the day and to devour large quantities of pizza, pasta and, especially fish dishes.

Drinking large quantities of Sangiovese wine, usually Vino de Casa, is normal with (or without) with the evening meal.

Interestingly enough, waiters are not at all friendly with most people, locals and/or tourists, but they are efficient enough, in their Italian way.

Tipping is not required in most restaurants because each establishment imposes a cover charge, ranging from between €1.50 and €2.50 per person.

In the City Centre, unless one enjoys anthropology and/or history, there is little to do; and, shopping is a non-starter, as already explained.

There is a very small Chinese community in Rimini, most of members of which appear to be from the coastal towns of Guangdong, in the southern part of the People's Republic of China.

They do not admit to speaking Chinese – and that goes doubly for non-Chinese strangers for some strange reason – which is very odd because, among themselves, one hears loud exchanges of Putonghua.

This could be due to their legal status in Italy, which may not be completely kosher.

All restaurants charge, just about, the same amount for a bottle of cold water and a cup of cappuccino: €4.00.

The food at nearly all restaurants is mainly seafood and pasta – spaghetti, pizza, clams, sea bass, etc – and there is little in the way of chicken, duck and other poultry, served in the summer months in most restaurants.

Beggars are not plentiful, but there is a number of them, mostly being of African descent.

They appear to be harmless enough and, after that they will not receive any money from their target of the moment, they wander away, smoking cigarettes as they go.

They appear to be very well fed for beggars.

In the late evenings, the City of Rimini has installed a '*Blue Line*', which is a sort of public transportation system, the main reason for its being is to collect young inebriants and take them home so that they do not use their own transportation and, by so doing, cause injury to themselves or to others.

The City Police (Polizie) seems to comprise a rough bunch of 9-millimetre, pistol-toting, uniformed thugs, posing as peacemakers, and one is advised not to stop to study them too closely otherwise one may well be told: '*Piss Off!*'

The military police (Carabinieri), on the other hand, appear to be a more friendly bunch, with some of their members, speaking English.

Members of this police force appear to be as curious about tourists as tourists are of them as they drive around in their small, blue vehicles.

In respect of language, English is not common in Rimini, but one is able to communicate, using very explicit gestures and speaking very slowly.

The most-frequent word, spoken in Italian, is '*allora*', which, roughly, is translated as '*So!*' or the conjunction, '*so*'.

The second, most-frequent word spoken in Italian, is '*prego*', which may mean '*Please*' or, '*You are welcome*'.

The following is what one is quite likely to hear in restaurants as 2 ladies enjoy a conversation: '*Blah, blah, blah ... Allora ... blah, blah ... Allora ... blah, blah ... Allora ... blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah ... ALLORA! blah, blah, blah ... Allora ... etc, etc, etc*'.

As with most places in the People's Republic of China, one has to deal with incessant smokers who are completely insensitive to non-smokers.

In Rimini, and in most parts of Italy, it is the same story, but some of the tobacco, inhaled in this part of the world, is foul-smelling stuff.

There is no escaping second-hand smoke in Italy if one wants to eat in a piazza.

This is, indeed, strange, considering that Italy has a history of having spawned many super-intelligent people.

Times change, it seems.

While there is little to do in Rimini, other than visit churches, museums and view incomplete Roman digs, during the sunny September days, when the rains come, as they did on Saturday, September 13, 2008, there is even less to do.

But on sunny days, a visit to an Italian '*animal farm*', at the seashore, is very interesting as well as being very instructive.

At the '*animal farm*', as **TARGET** has dubbed it, one may view middle-aged, Italian ladies, wearing skimpy bikinis, all of them, suffering from gross obesity which is, simply put, revolting.

The thighs, bellies, and bottoms of these ladies demonstrate, only too clearly, the reasons that people should take care of their health when they are blessed with it.

At an advanced age, say 40 years or older, the fat build-up in the body is such that the entire health of these

Italian '*animals*' is imperiled, chronically.

They are prime candidates for diabetes.

Eating, at least one, 12-inch pizza, laden with copious quantities of high-fat cheeses and salami, or ravioli di ricotta e spinaci con pomodoro e basilico, or some other pasta dish, nightly, along with 3 glasses of wine (or more), and, then, going to bed after eating such a heavy meal results in one, fast becoming a fat pig of a human being, one who only waddles to and from the front door of one's home.

At the beach of Rimini, declared for the exclusive use of The Grand Hotel, one noted the inability of these obese ladies and their equally obese husbands to launch themselves into the Adriatic Sea – because they did not have the strength even to walk back to the beach restaurant in order to eat their lunch.

It was not a funny sight, but one of pathetic sadness.

And, not far from The Grand Hotel's beach, young, lithe Italian girls and boys, many of whom had lovely figures, were lying on the sand or playing games.

If it is mother/father like daughter/son, then, one can forecast with some accuracy these youngsters' future with regard to their physiques, come their 40th birthday.

Have another pizza, my dear!

TARGET left The Grand Hotel on Sunday, September 14, 2008, at about 9 a.m., having become very tired and exasperated at the level of service of this once, grand old lady of Rimini.

This medium only ate one meal at The Grand Hotel, a luncheon, which was expensive and, in a word, lousy.

The cost of the Junior Suite was €490 per night and, at that rate, it was expensive, considering such inconveniences as trying to have a shower, the temperature of the water, being uncontrollable – either too hot or too cold – the room service, being almost non-existent, the single lift, being able to accommodate only 4 people, meaning that, in the morning or late evening, it is quicker to walk up the stairs rather than wait for the lift which, on many occasions, took as long as 10 minutes to arrive at the ground floor.

It was disappointing to view the dilapidated furnishings of The Grand Hotel, too, especially the thread-bare carpets and antique furniture, which was broken or falling apart in many areas.

When driving away from this hotel, this medium did not give it a second look because there is no possibility of a second stay at the only hotel in Rimini, which claims to be a 5-star establishment.

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