

The full menu usually is:

- aperitivo: a drink, alcoholic or not (prosecco, martini, etc), paired with some small finger food, such as nuts, olives, etc.
- antipasti: as many as you want, but not too much in order to not ruin the rest of the meal. Antipasti could be anything, cold or hot. The more classic one is made with cold cuts and cheese typical from the area you are eating and some pickled vegetables (giardiniera). You could have bread here but it's dangerous cause it could fill you very fast. If you plan to eat fish based courses, you usually also have fish based antipasti.
- Primo (first): singular, usually you take one, it's pasta or risotto usually. There are exceptions. Some places give you a selection of different primi, but they are smaller portions. Usually bread is served on the table early just to do a scarpetta (scoop, literally: little shoe), not to eat it separately.
- Secondo (second): again, singular. Usually it's a meat or fish dish and it comes with a side dish, usually made with vegetables. The simplest side dish it's a green salad. Again some places give you selections. In that case very often each secondo has its own side dish, well paired in taste. You always have bread here.
- dolce. The sweet things. It could be anything, usually cold but not only. Some places give you a selection or they even have a display case for them. In some places before the dolce or instead of it, you could have cheese, again a selection and very often in a display case.
- frutta. Fruits, usually cut in a way that you could eat them with a fork.
- caffè. Espresso, it goes without saying. Often you add some liquor in it, but almost never milk. That's a "rule" just for lunch/dinners.
- ammazza-caffè (killer-coffee). A shot of a strong alcoholic drink. Usually it's an "amaro", a bitter-sweet strong aromatic liquor made with herbs.

In any moment you could have wine. Usually you pair it with what you eat (red if you are going with meat, white for fish) and sometimes in very fancy restaurants you have different glasses in different moments, paired with what you eat. Usually you have at least a different one with the sweets (spumante (sparkling) or a sweet wine as a passito (past-made from dried grapes: the traditional process since ~500 BCE lets the grapes dry partially on the vine then spreading them on screens covered with reeds to finish sun-drying).

You could order everything in this list, no matter if you skip something, the only rule is to follow the order. So you could have just antipasto and primo as an example or just primo and dolce, but you will never have them in exchanged order.

Another unwritten rule is usually to go for full meat menus or for full fish menus. So if you order a fish-based primo, you will almost surely have a fish-based secondo. Usually you plan everything based on that, even the wine choice. It's not a crime to mix, many do it, it's just uncommon.

Usually we eat everything we order because we are used to it and because our breakfast is very light, so when lunch or dinner come you are very hungry, but with the sole exception of family gatherings or special occasions, it's not so common to have a full menu like this. Many Italians eat just a primo and some vegetables as side dish, or a secondo and a side. Sweets well... we have a separate stomach for that (it's a scientific fact ;), but again if you are taking care of your health you don't have them every day. One way

we avoid overeating is to start by ordering what we want to eat first and then order the rest if we have space in the belly. It's not uncommon to share, if you wish, you can ask for a second empty plate, but not as a way for making just one order, it's just to try out what others have ordered. When you sit at the table, everyone should do at least one order. And if you think that in Italy when you sit you are in essence renting the table because no one will ever ask you to leave, this is only fair.

We don't usually take leftovers home, except for pizza, but this is changing in recent years, mainly due to the foreigner influence. So today it's not strange to ask for a takeaway container, with the exception maybe of very fancy restaurants where it's considered something only the poor do. But not everyone even in normal restaurants is prepared to do it, very often because it's difficult to take away food with sauces or because culturally we don't like when people touch our food after we ordered it. Anyway there is no shame in asking.

There are of course exceptions to what I wrote, but I think it's a pretty good basis to go with.

[https://www.reddit.com/r/ItalianFood/comments/10mc7qu/how\\_do\\_you\\_properly\\_order\\_at\\_italian\\_restaurants/](https://www.reddit.com/r/ItalianFood/comments/10mc7qu/how_do_you_properly_order_at_italian_restaurants/)

## How to Read an Italian Menu

<https://www.walksofitaly.com/blog/food-and-wine/dining-in-italy-italian-menu>

<https://ouritalianjourney.com/guide-to-the-italian-restaurant-menu-how-to-read-and-understand/>

<https://languagedrops.com/word/en/english/italian/translate/menu/>

## Italian Restaurants in Denton

[https://www.google.com/gasearch?q=italian%20restaurants%20denton&source=sh/x/gs/m2/5#cp\\_i=!1sIwosmr5qJnU&lkt=LocalPoiMenu&lpg=cid:CgIgAQ==&trex=m\\_t:lcl\\_akp,rc\\_ludocids:4076915862573627112,rc\\_q:Giuseppe%25E2%2580%2599s,ru\\_gwp:0%252C7,ru\\_phdesc:Iwosmr5qJnU,ru\\_q:Giuseppe%25E2%2580%2599s,trex\\_id:RAzRA](https://www.google.com/gasearch?q=italian%20restaurants%20denton&source=sh/x/gs/m2/5#cp_i=!1sIwosmr5qJnU&lkt=LocalPoiMenu&lpg=cid:CgIgAQ==&trex=m_t:lcl_akp,rc_ludocids:4076915862573627112,rc_q:Giuseppe%25E2%2580%2599s,ru_gwp:0%252C7,ru_phdesc:Iwosmr5qJnU,ru_q:Giuseppe%25E2%2580%2599s,trex_id:RAzRA)

## Sample Menus

<https://www.osteriamuro.com/menu-1>

<https://www.dolceriviera.com/menus/#dinner>

<https://www.carbonedallas.com/menus/car-dal-DINNER-6.27.24.pdf>