

## Italy's GeoHeritage

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Italy was not born in one piece. It is much like a patchwork quilt, with fragments of all colors, textures and ages being brought together by the potent power of the Earth. Landmasses came together from all over, sometimes pushed or pulled or just simply emerging from beneath the earth or sea. It would take 100 million years to recast, rework, re-cut and move all the pieces around until they could finally be stitched together. The Earth, having a discriminating aesthetic sense, produced a stunning product: a mosaic of white limestone cliffs reaching down into aquamarine waters, folded mountains of marbleized colors topped with marine fossils and volcanoes bubbling and boiling away, depositing sunny colored minerals of yellow, orange and red—a one-of-a-kind masterpiece. Over eons, these disparate bits melded together, removing many of the traces of their foreign provenance. And perhaps this is why Italy refuses to reveal its origins—it doesn't care where its parts came from. Today they are all integrated into this beautiful country and have provided abundant Earthly inspiration for some of the greatest cultural, literary and artistic achievements in human history.

Imagine if you could see the River Styx, bathe in the Fountain of Youth, collect water which enhances fertility, wear a gem that heals bodily ailments, understand how our health is affected by geomagnetic fields, come close to the flames of Hell and much, much, more. Know something? These things exist—on Earth—today—in Italy and you can visit them. This is because Italy's geology has affected its history, art, religion, medicine and culture. You might say that Italy is “An Open Air Museum.”