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Behind The Wheel Express - Italian 1



Synopsis

Book by Behind the Wheel

Book Information

Series: Behind the Wheel

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Customer Reviews

Product Description Behind the Wheel Express â€œ Italian 1 covers beginning to intermediate level Italian, providing a flexible, solid and universal foundation in speaking, understanding, and creatively expressing yourself in Italian. The program features an English speaking instructor to guide you through the lessons and native speakers to aid with your pronunciation. Includes a companion book to reinforce and enhance the audio experience. Take a Look Inside Behind the Wheel Express â€œ

Italian 1 (Click on Images to Enlarge) Constructing Your Own Sentences â€œ p. 1

Constructing Your Own Sentences â€œ p. 2

â€œThe audio-only lessons build upon one another, using a native speaker to help you learn useful words and actually construct sentences from the get-go.â€• â€œMinneapolis Star-Tribuneâ€œUnlike other audio language programs, this series encourages students to create their own sentences, making it more fun and conversational than other more expensive programs.â€• â€œThe Cleveland Plain Dealerâ€œFocuses on real-world conversation...Great value.â€• â€œMen's Health magazine

I don't think it was clear that the "Express" Italian was taken from the Italian Level 1 cd's and books,

though admittedly, when I now look at the book pages that are shown for this on , I realize the pages are exactly the same as some of those in the more comprehensive Level 1 materials. So if you like the Behind the Wheel method, and were hoping for a casual traveler's cd/book that offer new exercises, this isn't the right purchase. I will comment on "Behind the Wheel Italian Level 1" separately.

This is an absolutely perfect introduction system to quick conversational Italian. If you want to speak fluent Italian, then don't look at this system to fill your needs, but if you are looking to speak a little Italian at your favorite restaurant or your trip to Italy, then this will be the perfect bet. I love the easy conversational way of the "Behind the Wheel" series. This series will assist you in being able to hold basic conversation in Italy or with an Italian speaking friend, but it will not assist you in becoming fluent. You can have a lot of fun learning some of the language and have fun learning and listening to proper pronunciation of the language as well. Great value for the price and the book that comes with it is indispensable! You will not regret learning with this series. I know I won't hesitate to use some of my new found language on my next NY city trip to Little Italy!

I've used several systems like this in the past, for Spanish and Italian -- this one is pretty good. It consists of 3 audio CDs and a small book with the following contents: 1. Constructing Your First Sentences, 12. Asking Questions and Providing Answers, 113. Daily Routines and Eating Out, 224. Two Forms of To Be and Conjugating Verbs, 295. Using Tenses and Basic Travel Vocabulary, 366. Describing What You Like and Showing Possession 527. Other Ways to Talk About Things in the Past and the Future, 578. Direct Objects, Indirect Objects, and Double Object Pronouns, 679. Audio Transcript (transcript of the audio CDs), 74. A serious student of Italian would surely want more, but if you are just trying to learn to get around better while visiting Italy, this is a pretty good start. You can find products out there with more material, but only if you are really disciplined about such things would you be likely to master more than this as trip preparation. By the way, my own experience of Italy is that I felt I really needed to know some Italian there, in contrast with other countries I've been to where I never had to struggle to find somebody who spoke English. In part that's because Italy is full of charming little hill towns you'll want to visit -- they aren't tourist traps, so most people don't have that much exposure to (or economic incentive to learn) other languages. But even in the cities, it seems like a lot of folks in Italy just know Italian. The CDs consist largely of an American guy running through some vocabulary and phrases with a native speaker of Italian, usually with a woman named Ana whose voice is very clear and easy to understand. (I bought a set of language

tapes once in which the audio was deliberately recorded in cafes, bus terminals, etc. -- it was horrible. For learning a language, you need clarity.) At times Ana and the American guy actually talk to each other normally, making it seem less stilted. One of the things I like about the way they organize the lessons is that they build on the vocabulary rather than always just jumping from one word or phrase to another. For example, in one session you are told how to say "to be on time" (at this point you already know how to say "to be") Then they expand that to "You have to be on time" (you already know "you have to", but they put the parts together) and then to "From now on, you have to be on time" I personally find this a very effective way to "burn" things into my brain. I only get so far trying to learn words separately; this sort of build-up of phrases makes it easier for me to remember the words and how to use them. Of course, learning a language still requires a lot of repetition and drilling, so you should expect to work at this. You should probably start with this product about a month before going, more if you have not already studied a foreign language. Say the words out loud, not just in your head. It is better to use earbuds or headphones so that you can hear the subtleties of what is being said, and try to make your voice sound like theirs. Master each CD before going on to the next. Follow along with the transcript the first time or two through; after that you will know what the words are, and can listen in the car. Finally, note that the book is no substitute for a phrase book to use while traveling, which I would highly recommend. p.s. This isn't about the product, but here are two suggestions for those planning to go to Italy: 1. Read "The Agony and the Ecstasy" before going -- it will make Florence and Rome much more interesting. You will recognize things -- names of streets, statues, paintings, qualities of marble, etc. -- and what they meant to the artist (mostly Michelangelo). 2. See Rome *last*. Rome is such a phantasmagoria of architecture/history/culture that a later trip to an interesting small town would likely bore you. Have fun learning and traveling!

Having just been to Italy and also then, attempting to learn some Italian before I went, I've been through several of the popular courses on learning Italian. Additionally, I've read one text book on Italian and of course "Italian for Dummies". All of which have a slightly different twist to their techniques. After all of the above I still only know "cento parlare" (100 words). However, I do believe that I can tell what the course work is attempting to do. Express Italian is a quick method to learning some conversational Italian. The text is short - only 82 pages and the vocabulary is limited to the most used words. Grammar is not the focus. The primary focus of this course is to concentrate on the 80% of the most used phrases and sentences while visiting Italy. I've quickly looked through the book and it does give the dominant necessities of learning to speak Italian. The pronouns, articles (

"a" and "the") and some verb conjugation is part of the study. The DVD's are excellent. They give both the English and the Italian pronunciations of each phrase with the Italian being done twice. Additionally, the English speaker breaks out of the normal mold and gets into some explanations with questions to and answers from the Italian conversationalist. Most of the other DVD's that accompany the text do not give the attention to both sides and the explanations as Express Italian does. This is quite good and will allow for learning the language in the car. This is probably not for anyone that is taking the learning of Italian seriously, but I really like what it offers from a Conversational perspective. For the niche of this product it is excellent for the price.

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