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Editor's Note: Subscribe to Travel's [Unlocking Italy newsletter](#) for expert insights on Italy's most popular destinations and lesser-known regions, as well as pre-trip inspiration in the form of movie recommendations, reading lists, and recipes from Stanley Tucci.

People around the world dream of moving to Italy to experience the "Dolce Vita." However, for many, this dream remains unfulfilled due to strict immigration rules.

Italy, like other countries, has specific regulations regarding who can and cannot relocate. Some foreigners can obtain Italian passports through their ancestors, while others take advantage of the "elective residency" visa, which permits immigration as long as a certain amount of passive income (around R\$40,000 per year from investments or property) is available. It's important to note that holders of this visa are prohibited from working.

For those wishing to move and work, the options are extremely limited, as work visas in Italy are highly sought after and scarce.

However, those fortunate enough to secure such a visa can look forward to a life-changing experience.

In November 2024, musicians Zeneba Bowers and Matt Walker left their jobs at the Nashville Symphony, sold their Tennessee home, and moved to the village of Soriano nel Cimino, located 50 miles north of Rome, with only their four cats and their instruments – a violin for Bowers and Walker's cello.

"We wanted a fresh start, a place where we could enjoy more pleasure in life and quality time," says Walker. "Back home, we had a hectic work schedule and wanted to quit our symphony jobs while we still enjoyed it."

The American lifestyle no longer suited them.

Abandoning the American Dream

In the United States, constant busyness is often seen as a virtue, but having a packed schedule can be stressful. "Even though in the BR people say that family is important, nobody can afford to take time off to be together," says Bowers.

The couple sought a new challenge and wanted to start immediately.

"When we looked ahead at our future, it seemed possible that we might continue to repeat the same thing year after year. We loved playing orchestral music, but we wanted to leave when we were at the top of our game, not after we entered retirement," says Bowers.

They had already established a second career, self-publishing guidebooks about Italy and Ireland. Now, it was time to take the leap.

The couple quickly bid farewell to the American dream.

They had little time to plan their move across the Atlantic. They had to act fast and secure an Italian work visa as self-employed artists, which they say is rarely granted.

In September 2024, they hired an immigration lawyer and applied for the visa at the Italian consulate in Detroit on September 17.

Two weeks later, they received their "lavoro autonomo" (self-employed) visas – traditionally considered difficult to obtain. That year, Italy awarded around 3,000 such visas worldwide. Today, that number has dropped to approximately 500.

"We believe the reason we were successful was because we both had strong credentials in addition to our positions in the orchestra, including running our own chamber ensemble and being

Grammy-nominated performers and producers," says Walker.

"We had a long list of big-name musicians that we had performed and recorded with over the years, extensive experience performing and producing concerts, and significant public and press acknowledgement of the same. We feel very lucky."

Having a specialist lawyer handle the application also helped, they believe.

Those fortunate enough to obtain a self-employed visa must relocate within three months or lose it.

"We had to quit our jobs, sell everything we owned, sell our house, and prepare four cats for international transfer to leave on November 19," says Bowers.

The couple chose Soriano nel Cimino, surrounded by forests of chestnut trees and porcini mushrooms, after visiting the area in February 2024, during one of their many Italy trips.

Located in the Tuscia area once inhabited by the ancient Etruscans and filled with catacombs, the village is situated halfway between Rome and Viterbo. On weekends, it attracts Roman day-trippers, hikers, wild boar and mushroom hunters. The couple immediately fell in love with the tranquility and simple life.

In April 2024, they had already purchased a small, 500 square foot apartment for 26,000 euros (R\$28,000). A short distance from the town's piazza, it has a terrace – where the couple would play music for fellow residents during the pandemic lockdowns. The view of the town's medieval Orsini castle from this terrace initially caught their attention.

Minor upgrades, such as knocking down a wall to create an open plan space, installing a gas line, and adding a pellet stove for winter heating, cost an additional 17,000 euros (R\$18,000). They also had to furnish the apartment.

Although the couple were completely out of their comfort zone when they arrived in Soriano nel Cimino, Bowers and Walker say they now feel more comfortable than ever before.

"Here in Italy, we lead a better lifestyle with a higher quality of life, better mental and physical health, a new outlet for our artistry and creativity. We're happier and feel better. And it's also much, much cheaper compared to the States," says Walker.

Moving from Nashville (population 1.3 million) to a quiet village of barely 7,000 locals presented numerous challenges.

Establishing a new life involved managing two businesses (music and travel planning) during and after a pandemic, as well as dealing with the uncertainty and stress of meeting their obligations as immigrant workers, who must regularly provide proof of income to Italian authorities to maintain their work permits, which must be renewed every two years.

Three months after their arrival, the pandemic hit Italy, and their income came to a halt. To pass the time during lockdown, they played their instruments for the villagers from their balcony.

The couple has since fully embraced their new life. They have formed a musical quartet with a local soprano, performing at village festivals, chestnut food fairs, and weddings throughout Italy. The couple has also started a new business, organizing itineraries for visitors eager to discover Italy's rural beauty. They have written a memoir about their Italian adventure called "I Can't Believe We Live Here."

"There are no other BR expats here, which is another reason why we love Soriano nel Cimino. We have great neighbors, and the villagers are very friendly," says Bowers. "During the lockdown, the elders would bring us fresh veggies from their plots, eggs, and homemade wine."

The couple plans to eventually apply for Italian citizenship when they retire, believing they will have lived in Italy long enough to be eligible. Non-EU citizens must reside in the country for a decade before they can apply.

For now, the future looks promising.

"Everything we own is in this country, we spend our money and earn our income here. It's our home now," says Bowers.

Majors foi imediatamente abandonado pela Marvel Studios, que o havia escalado como Kang the

Conqueror. um papel previsto para ser a principal vilão nos filmes e programas de televisão do império entretenimento por muitos anos vindouro... [

Merece uma segunda oportunidade.

Um processo civil foi aberto **aviator b2xbet** um tribunal federal de Manhattan, acusando o ator por agressão. bateria e difamação causando sofrimento emocional;

Informações do documento:

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