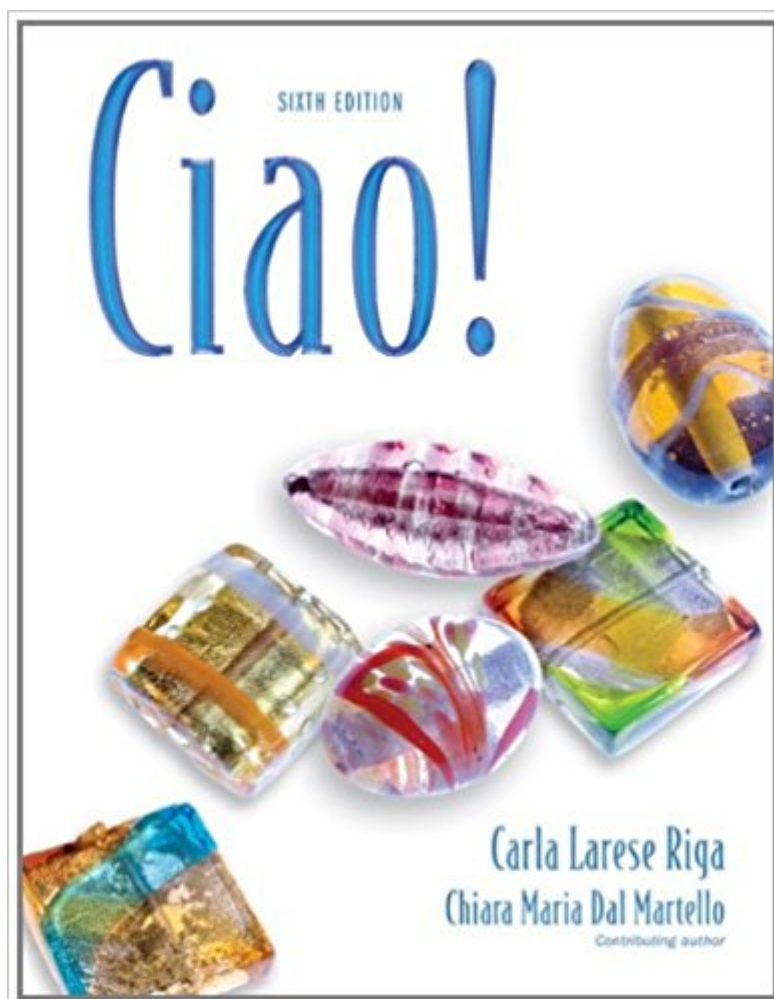


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Ciao! (with Audio CD)



Synopsis

CIAO!, Sixth Edition continues to emphasize practical, communicative use of Italian, while teaching the four language skills and providing an enhanced introduction to Italian life and culture. The new edition is distinguished by greater coherence in the grammatical presentation, a more pervasive emphasis upon cultural realities, lexical streamlining, thorough updating, and more consistent support for the instructor through marginal annotations. With thematically based chapters that focus on the vibrant life of modern Italy and the country's rich cultural heritage, CIAO! provides the proven approach-known for its outstanding, easy-to-follow grammar presentation-and superior resources that students need to communicate in Italian with confidence and understanding. The book features a strong focus on spoken proficiency and cultural awareness, all woven into a dynamic presentation that makes it easy and fun to learn Italian.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"I think the 6/e is an improvement on an already strong text. My students, with no prior knowledge of Italian, have been able to move quickly into spontaneous communication on the topics they become familiar with." "Ciao! provides a balanced amount of cultural info, vocabulary and grammar exercises to help any teaching style." "I enjoy this text. The improvements are good and it is modern and interactive, which is in my opinion the only way to effectively teach languages. My favorite part of Ciao! are the cultural pages and the dialogues, especially the funny ones that students can have fun with, which in turn motivates them." "What I like best about Ciao! is the structure of the chapters, the fairly modern cut of the cultural sections. The exercises push the students to interactive dialogues."

Carla Larese Riga received her Master of Arts from Stanford University and has worked toward a PhD at the University of California, Berkley. She has over 30 years of experience as a dedicated professor of Italian at various institutions, including Santa Clara University, Stanford University, Foothill College, and De Anza College. She is a scholar of romance languages and is fluent in Italian, French, and Spanish. Chiara Maria Dal Martello, a native of Vicenza, received her Laurea from the University of Urbino in English / Spanish and Italian Languages and Literatures, and she is currently a Ph.D. candidate in English Linguistics at Arizona State University. She has taught Italian Language and Culture at Big Bend Community College in Vicenza, Italy, and has been teaching at Arizona State University (ASU) since 1996 where she is now a Lecturer in Italian in the Department of Languages and Literature. While at ASU she has developed a new curriculum for the first- and second-year program, including online Italian courses, as well as two new upper-level courses, Italian for the Professions and History of the Italian Language. With her colleagues she is currently developing a new multimedia curriculum for the second-year Italian courses. She specializes in second-language acquisition, bilingualism and gender studies.

I used this text in an Intro Italian course, and I was extremely happy with the book. The chapters are broken down logically to teach students the fundamentals to various Italian tenses and grammatical structures. The examples of language usage and the grammar exercises proved to be particularly useful for helping cement the language into my long term memory. The book also covers quite a bit of Italian culture (complete with colorful photos on food, holidays, and landmarks) which added to my appreciation of the language and culture. For extra practice, there's a companion workbook, *Student Activities Manual for Riga/Lage's Ciao!*, which provides additional exercises. Lastly, I found the conversations at the beginning of each chapter to be very useful, giving students a glimpse into how the topics may appear in a real life situation (and an opportunity to practice what is taught). I brought this book with me when I was studying in Italy for a semester, and I referred to it frequently as a supplement to my Italian coursework (my teachers overseas didn't speak English in their classes and this book filled in the gaps in comprehension). Bottom line: *Ciao!* is a terrific elementary-level Italian book, and it comes with my highest recommendation.

While I have not had a chance to thoroughly review this book I can make some comments. It arrived in excellent condition ahead of time and even had the CD with it. Although it is the fifth edition and not the sixth that was fine with me since I already had the workbook for the fifth. The book seems to

be well organized providing a good range of information on language, culture, customs, history and grammar. I have finished Pimsleur's Italian Level 5 and this book looks like it will be an excellent next step.

Ciao! is being used at my university for the first three semesters of Italian courses, so I have had an opportunity to thoroughly use the text. While I am a new student of the Italian language, I have studied the French language since for several years using some outstanding texts. It seems there are few major Italian textbooks on the market, and unfortunately none of them seem particularly good pedagogically speaking. This book is "good" however, I would not recommend it for self-study for several reasons:

1. The organization of the text is not particularly logical. Grammar rules are scattered throughout the chapters. It is not until halfway through the text that the student learns the possessive pronouns (his, her, their, our, your, theirs, etc...) yet, they are used frequently in the dialogues and exercises leading up to their actual discussion in the text. My problem with this is that the student goes too long without learning how to use the possessives and has too much of an opportunity to develop incorrect usage and sentence structure during the first half of the book.
2. The corresponding CD contains only the dialogues which are found at the opening of each chapter. While it's nice to have these to listen to, the student would benefit much more from hearing the vocabulary words pronounced! This was probably one of the most frustrating challenges I faced when learning Italian-- lack of access to a quality audio lexicon.
3. The exercises are good- but there is no answer key. Again, for students, having a resource like an answer key is essential for developing proper sentence structure and avoiding the development of poor habits. The corresponding workbook (Ciao! Quaderno degli esercizi Workbook and Lab Manual) will cost you another \$70.00 and does have an answer key available (Audioscript (with Answer Key) for Ciao!, 6th) for which you'll need to shell out an additional \$10.00. However, the workbook with answers is by no means deserving of your \$80.00, so hold off on purchasing those.
4. The cultural interludes which are found at the conclusion of each chapter are extremely complicated and completely written in Italian starting from the first chapter. Needless to say, the student doesn't learn much about the culture since it's too difficult for a novice student to read! There are some positives to the text however. There are a number of up-to-date idiomatic expressions and new technology (such as cell phones) are included in the vocabulary lists. It is a nicely illustrated book and the chapters are limited small, manageable selections so that the student doesn't feel overwhelmed. With the right instructor, one can learn quite nicely out of this book in a classroom setting. For the self-learner, who does not have daily access to an Italian-speaking friend, I recommend the

following alternative texts which may prove more effective for home-study:1. Rosetta Stone Version 3: Italian Level 1 with Audio Companion2. Italian Now!: A Level One Worktext3. Ultimate Italian Beginner-Intermediate (Book) (LL(R) Ultimate Basic-Intermed)4. Soluzioni! : A Practical Guide to Italian Grammar5. Berlitz Self-Teacher: Italian (Berlitz Self-Teachers)6. Italian for Dummies (With Audio CD)7. Routledge Intensive Italian Workbook (Routledge Intensive Language Courses)

This is an expensive college textbook for learning Italian. It's outstanding with some caveats. The book is well-organized for learning how to read, speak, write, and understand aurally. It is helpful for learning about Italian culture and history. The challenge is to complete the learning system. The textbook alone is insufficient for that. For example, there is no way to tell whether the exercises you complete are correct unless there is a reliable source for correcting them. Ciao! was designed to be used by students who are enrolled in college-level Italian classes. (I am not, but I've supplemented my personal system for learning Italian in other ways. This textbook is at the core of my personal system for self-teaching.) If you buy this book, be sure to register for the complimentary audio portion that comes with the book. Directions are on the back cover. There will be additional options to buy more stuff there--strictly up to you. The workbook for Ciao a/k/a the "Student Activities Manual" has been very helpful, especially because I also bought the answer key for SAM and do not have access to the CDs that the manual follows. (Students who are enrolled in a class may have access to these CDs via their language lab.) Great fun to discover that I understood--and could spell--the words in Italian songs sung at this year's Columbus Day Parade!

Not only does this book teach you the Italian language, both grammar and vocabulary, but it also includes lessons on Italian culture. There are plenty of exercises too as well as pronunciation tips. I especially liked the fact that it tells you when the accent/emphasis doesn't fall as it usually does on the second to the last syllable. It also includes Italian colloquial expressions. This book was selected by my Italian professor for both Italian 101 and Italian 102 classes. I bought the book second-hand and it didn't have the audio CD so I can't rate it. I think it would have been helpful. Also there are links to a website for more help and exercises but I haven't tried them.

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