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New high-speed trains coming to Italy



A heads-up for train travelers: In summer 2011, a private high-speed railway in Italy is scheduled to make its debut, traveling between Salerno and Turin via Naples, Rome, Florence, Bologna, Milan and Venice.

Nuovo Trasporto Viaggiatori, or NTV, the brainchild of Ferrari Chairman Luca Cordero di Montezemolo, will use the same recently upgraded tracks as the fast trains operated by state-owned Trenitalia. But NTV's trains will be sleek, new Alstom AGVs, made by the same company that gave France the TGV (Train à Grande Vitesse), capable of traveling 357 miles per hour.

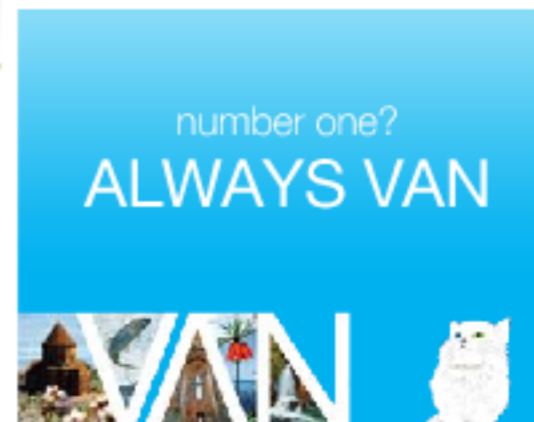
Even so, the new train service, dubbed Italo, will have to abide by the Italian railway speed limit of 186 miles per hours, meaning that travel times won't be vastly different from those of Trenitalia: Rome-Milan in under three hours, Milan-Turin in 50 minutes, Bologna-Florence in 37 minutes and Rome-Naples in an hour.

What will set NTV apart from Trenitalia are style and service. Plush coach interiors are being designed by Italian automobile designer Giorgetto Giugiaro. There will also be satellite access, Wi-Fi, a cinema car, chef-made cuisine, internet ticketing and a broader range of prices and classes than Trenitalia offers.

The project, initiated prior to Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's administration, is one of Italy's first privately owned and operated mass-transportation ventures.

All aboard!

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