



# Coffee and Conversation for ESL Listening



with Donielle and Khrystyna

## Episode 40: Summer Travels Part 2 – Mediterranean Cruise

Hi! If this is your first time listening to our podcast, this is an opportunity for upper-level English learners to practice listening skills and learn new vocabulary by listening to authentic conversations.

In today's episode Donielle and Khrystyna discuss a summer trip to Italy, Greece, & Turkiye. **Here are a few images of things and places mentioned in the conversation:**



- 1. Pompeii ruins    4. gelato    7. Amalfi Coast    10. one of the beach cats
- 2. Turkish rug    5. black sand beach    8. Turkish rug factory    11. Pompeii mosaic
- 3. Il Duomo    6. Amphitheatre of Pompeii    9. Dubai chocolate    12. pesto
- 13. Sistine Chapel Ceiling

You can also read the [transcript](#) for this episode.\*

See the following pages for vocabulary and language focus from this episode.



## Vocabulary: Words and Phrases Used in the Conversation

<b>brain fog</b>	when your mind feels unclear or hard to think <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After the long flight, I had such <u>brain fog</u> that I couldn't focus on anything.</li> </ul>
<b>brain fart</b>	(informal) a silly or sudden mistake in thinking or forgetting something that you should easily remember. (fart = passing gas) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I had a <u>brain fart</u> and forgot my own phone number.</li> </ul>
<b>fitting</b>	appropriate or suitable for the situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's kind of <u>fitting</u> because we both went on vacation at about the same time.</li> </ul>
<b>check out</b>	to disconnect or stop paying attention; here it means to not think about work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You need to just <u>check out</u> when you're on vacation and forget about work.</li> </ul>
<b>refresher</b>	a short review or reminder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher gave the class a <u>refresher</u> on last week's grammar rules.</li> </ul>
<b>doesn't scratch the itch</b>	(informal) doesn't fully satisfy a strong desire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We only had a few days in Italy, so it didn't really <u>scratch my itch</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>in the first place</b>	to emphasize the original reason for doing something <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We reason went to Italy <u>in the first place</u> was because that's where the cruise started.</li> </ul>
<b>long story short</b>	a way to summarize without giving all the details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Long story short</u>, we almost missed the train.</li> </ul>
<b>easy peasy</b>	(informal) very easy and simple <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The high-speed train made travel between cities <u>easy peasy</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>cobblestone</b>	small, round stones used for old-style streets
<b>meltdown</b>	an emotional outburst from stress or frustration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The heat and heavy bags caused a few <u>meltdowns</u> on the walk.</li> </ul>
<b>in the heart of everything</b>	in the central, most active part of a city <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Airbnb was <u>in the heart of everything</u>, close to all the sights.</li> </ul>
<b>go up in flames</b>	be suddenly destroyed by fire - here it's not literal, but humorous. The joke is that someone who is a little "bad" (not evil, but maybe because of misbehavior or in a mischievous sense) if they go inside a church, it will catch fire.
<b>make it</b>	succeed in reaching a goal or a place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We finally <u>made it</u> to the top after about half an hour.</li> </ul>
<b>throw up</b>	much more common way to say "vomit"
<b>patch</b>	a small medicated sticker worn on the skin – in this case for <u>seasickness</u> or any general kind of <u>motion sickness</u>
<b>take [something] in</b>	to absorb or notice something fully <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We had already <u>taken in</u> so much art before even reaching the Sistine Chapel.</li> </ul>
<b>underwhelmed</b>	not as impressed as expected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After all the buildup, the famous chapel left them a bit <u>underwhelmed</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>pesto</b>	Italian sauce made from basil, oil, nuts, and cheese

## Vocabulary: Words and Phrases Used in the Conversation - Cont'd

<b>how big [something] is</b>	in this context, how popular or important something has become <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I was surprised to see <u>how big pistachio was</u> in Italy.</i></li> </ul>
<b>divert</b>	change course or direction; in this case to shift to another topic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>They <u>diverted</u> the conversation to chocolate.</i></li> </ul>
<b>It didn't really do it for me.</b>	It wasn't particularly enjoyable or satisfying. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I was surprised that the Dubai chocolate I tried <u>didn't really do it for me</u>.</i></li> </ul>
<b>zone in on</b>	focus attention on a specific thing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I <u>zoned in on</u> the pizzas that I would be able to eat.</i></li> </ul>
<b>arugula</b>	a leafy green vegetable with a peppery taste
<b>Oh, did !!</b>	an emphatic way of saying I certainly did <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Did you try the gelato? <u>Oh, did !!</u></i></li> </ul>
<b>blistering hot</b>	extremely hot – from the idea that a blister develops on the skin after it comes in contact with something so hot that it burns you
<b>excavate</b>	dig up an area to uncover something buried <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Archaeologists continue to <u>excavate</u> new parts of Pompeii.</i></li> </ul>
<b>hit [a place]</b>	informal way of saying to go to or visit a place
<b>off the beaten path</b>	a place that is not well known or very popular <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>During the cruise, did you feel like you were just <u>hitting</u> mostly touristy places, or did you go anywhere <u>off the beaten path</u>?</i></li> </ul>
<b>rate</b>	give a review or score <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I still need to <u>rate</u> the tour guide because he was excellent.</i></li> </ul>
<b>every single [something]</b>	emphasizes that it is all items, without exceptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i><u>Every single</u> tour in Turkiye included a rug factory stop.</i></li> </ul>
<b>suckers</b>	people easily convinced or tricked <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>They laughed that they were <u>suckers</u> for buying rugs.</i></li> </ul>
<b>junky</b>	low quality or cheap <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Why go through numerous <u>junky</u> rugs when you can just buy one good one?</i></li> </ul>
<b>pass [something] down</b>	give something to future generations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The rug was meant to be <u>passed down</u> in the family.</i></li> </ul>
<b>(Do) you want in?</b>	(informal; often said without “do”) Do you want to join or be part of something? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We're planning a girls' trip to Italy—(do) you want in?</i></li> </ul>
<b>outings</b>	short trips or social activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>She often posts photos of <u>outings</u> with her friends.</i></li> </ul>

## Cultural Note



In the episode, there was a discussion about how pizza in Italy is very different from what we often find in the United States. One comment was that you would never see pineapple on pizza in Italy, and that Italians might be horrified by the idea. In the U.S., however, some people do add pineapple, especially on the popular “Hawaiian pizza,” which combines ham and pineapple. Opinions on this topping are very divided: some people love it, while others insist that pineapple has no place on pizza.

## Join the Conversation

- Have you ever had pizza with pineapple on it? If so, what is your opinion about it, and if not, does it sound like something you would like to try?
- Have you ever traveled with a large group? What problems do you think might arise when traveling with many people?
- When you travel, do you like to plan everything in advance or do prefer to **wing it**? What are the pros and cons of each?
- When visiting famous landmarks or museums, do you prefer to see everything quickly or spend a lot of time in one place?
- Have you ever learned something surprising about a culture during your travels?
- What’s one city or country that’s on your **bucket list**?
- Discuss some landmarks or museums that you have visited. Which ones were most impressive to you? Have you ever visited a popular tourist attraction and thought it was underwhelming?
- Do you typically buy souvenirs when you travel? What types of things do you like to buy (for yourself and for others)?

*wing it:* idiom meaning to do something without planning, and make decisions in the moment  
*bucket list:* list of experiences/accomplishments a person hopes to achieve in their lifetime

# Thanks for checking out our podcast!

We are enjoying these discussions, and we hope that you are finding them helpful!



Get tips for ways to use this podcast as a [learner](#) or [teacher](#) of English.



We would love to hear from you with any [comments or suggestions](#) for future episodes.



If you are listening on a podcast platform, we would be super grateful for your review.



And if you're enjoying these conversations and want to [support the podcast](#), you know we'd never turn down a cup of coffee!



Buy me a coffee

## Are you a teacher using this podcast with your students?

Here are more resources that we think you and your students will love!

Conversation cards based on the discussions in this podcast

Subscribe for a FREE sample!

Get ALL the writing prompts, conversation cards and MUCH more!

**CONVERSATION CARDS**  
For Adult ESL **BUNDLE!**

Upper Intermediate & Above

**PICTURE PROMPTS**  
for Discussion & Writing

FREE Sample!

15 Prompts

Includes Paperless Option!

2 Printable Options: Task Cards OR Writing Sheets

**ADULT ESL**  
Lessons & Activities Mega Bundle

CONVERSATION CARDS  
FIND SOMEONE WHO...  
ICEBREAKERS  
WH QUESTIONS  
LANGUAGE JOURNAL  
GERUND GAME  
PRONUNCIATION  
Odd On/Out

Get all these and more!

FOR UPPER INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED ESL STUDENTS

CLICK HERE  
to buy now or  
add to wish list

CLICK HERE  
to get your  
FREE Sample!

CLICK HERE  
to buy now or  
add to wish list