

Prada has a warehouse-size outlet store in Montevarchi. That area is also home to a very fancy mall, with Gucci and other top brands. The other major designer brands have retail locations in Milan, with outlet stores and outlet malls in the area.

A favorite is appropriately named The Lifesaver, Il Salvagente, at Via Balzaretti 28, and Salvagente Bimbi for kids. The small mall offers heavily discounted designer labels like Prada, Armani, Gucci, Valentino, Chanel, and Michael Kors.

They've been in business for 40 years, and have close relationships with all the key designers. They also offer classic fashions for older people, a delight to senior shoppers. I can always find suits, slacks, and shirts. For that really high-end latest fashion from Dolce & Gabbana, Comme de Garçons, and more, male bargain shoppers visit 10 Corso Como Outlet, Via Tazzoli 3, the outlet store for one of the city's most fashionable shops.

Northern Italy and right across the border in Switzerland also features outlet malls. They resemble American outlet malls, huge complexes featuring top designer and brand-name stores.

Fidenza Village reminds me of the Grove in Los Angeles, filled with many luxury brands, along with places to eat and relax. It's midway between Milan and Bologna, and there's a free daily shuttle from downtown Milan.

Serravalle is another outlet mall set in a historic village, featuring Prada, Bvlgari, Burberry, and Dolce & Gabbana. Serravalle is several hours south of Milan, and they also offer free shuttle bus from the city.