



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

**Rob:** Hello I'm Rob. Welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm joined today by Finn. Hi Finn.

**Finn:** Hi Rob.

**Rob:** Today we are talking about Casanovas. Finn, could you explain what one is?

**Finn:** Yes a Casanova is a man who is a smooth talker, very charming and great at **seducing** women – to be blunt, or to be honest, they are good at getting women into bed!

**Rob:** Yes, they have many sexual partners. Do you know anyone you could call a Casanova?

**Finn:** No, nobody. The name is often related to Italian men because it comes from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Italian adventurer and writer, Giacomo Girolamo Casanova, who was known for his sexual adventures.

**Rob:** Well the modern-day Casanova could be in trouble, as we'll be explaining soon. But first, a question for you Finn.

**Finn:** I hope you won't be asking how many sexual partners he had?

**Rob:** Nothing like that. Do you know which Italian city he was born in?

- a) Florence
- b) Rome
- c) Venice

**Finn:** I consider Venice the city of love so let's say c) Venice.

**Rob:** I'll let you know the answer at the end of programme. So let's talk more about Italian Casanovas. These **promiscuous** men are suffering because of today's economic problems.

**Finn:** Yes – unlike me and you Rob – they're struggling **to woo** women – that means to attract them and give them attention. They often do this financially – by spending money on them.

**Rob:** So these Italian Casanovas used to buy their ladies gifts and treats, like meals or a night in a **swanky** hotel, but now they can't afford it.

**Finn:** Well, no sympathy from me. But like all of us, they have had to cut costs - but in Italy, where unemployment is more than 12%, they've had to make some bigger sacrifices.

**Rob:** Ha, you mean they have had to give up some of their women – or at least cut back – reduce – the gifts they are buying. It means the Italian women they woo will have to lower their expectations – they'll have to expect less!

**Finn:** Or go elsewhere! This is something the BBC's Emma Jane Kirby has been investigating for the programme *From Our Own Correspondent*. She discovered real life examples of men who are **downsizing** – in other words, spending less.

**Rob:** Let's hear some of her report now. What word is used to describe a Casanova's secret girlfriend? And what gifts did the Casanova traditionally give her?

**BBC Correspondent, Emma Jane Kirby:**

*The economic crisis has hit Italian men where it hurts most; with their country still in recession and the cost of living soaring, the Latin lover has had to rein in his appetite. The traditional kept mistress, secretly hidden away in her fully paid-up flat and lavished with furs and jewels, has been consigned to history.*

**Finn:** That's Emma Jane Kirby describing the economic situation in Italy. She says the country is in recession – that means the economic situation is bad. It also means, as she said, the cost of living is soaring – so going up.

**Rob:** And it's these rising costs that has hit Italians 'where it hurts most'.

**Finn:** That sounds painful! But of course she means 'in the pocket' – in other words the biggest pain men are suffering is financial. Financial pain.

**Rob:** Did you hear another name the correspondent used for a Casanova? It was a **Latin lover**. The Latin lover has had to **rein in** his appetite – so he's had to learn to control or limit his romantic habits.

**Finn:** And one of his habits was having a kept mistress – so another woman he would support financially. These women were kept secret, hidden away but **lavished** with furs and jewels.

**Rob:** Lavished – that's a good word – it means to give a lot – so these men were giving their mistresses lots of gifts. But not any more!

**Finn:** No. Now some of them can only offer simple pleasures like a cup of coffee, a walk in the park and if they're eating out they might have to '**go Dutch**' – that means split the bill 50:50.

**Rob:** It sounds tough being a Casanova these days. But I wonder what their wives think about this?

**Finn:** Well, they probably don't know, but the number of people getting divorced is going down as the Casanova can no longer afford to support two

women. So maybe the recession in Italy is having a positive effect for married women at least!

**Rob:** For now, the Casanova can only rely on his charm and good looks and possibly just stick to **window shopping** – or just **eyeing up** women without taking things further.

**Finn:** It sounds like hard work being a Casanova Rob. I'll stick with women one at a time!

**Rob:** Very wise. Now let me reveal the answer to today's question. Earlier I asked you which Italian city was Giacomo Girolamo Casanova born in?

**Finn:** I said c) Venice.

**Rob:** You were right. He was born in Venice in 1725. Well that's it for this programme. Please join us soon again for 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English.

**Both:** Bye.

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>seducing</b>	persuading someone to have sex with you
<b>promiscuous</b>	having lots of sexual partners
<b>to woo</b>	to try and start a romantic relationship
<b>swanky</b>	fashionable and expensive
<b>downsizing</b>	making smaller or cutting back
<b>mistress</b>	(here) woman who is having a sexual relationship with a married man
<b>Latin lover</b>	a stereotypical way to describe a romantic and passionate male lover from a Mediterranean or Latin-American country
<b>rein in</b>	control or limit something that has developed too much
<b>lavished</b>	gave someone a lot of something, such as money
<b>go Dutch</b>	to pay just for your own food and drink when eating with other people
<b>window shopping</b>	(here) looking at women but without planning to try to develop a relationship
<b>eyeing up</b>	looking at someone with sexual interest

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