

# Andrea Bocelli: from law to opera



**Andrea Bocelli** grew up on a farm in a village in Tuscany, Italy. Unfortunately, he suffered from poor eyesight from birth, and an accident playing football left him **completely blind** at the age of 12. This didn't stop him living life **very actively**, or singing and playing music passionately.

Andrea's parents supported his musical ambitions, but, he says, 'they wanted me to have a serious education, with real professional opportunities.' He agreed to study law at the University of Pisa. 'Many of my relatives were lawyers, so I went to university and **studied diligently**.' He continued with his music, which wasn't just a passion – it also paid the bills. Andrea played piano in bars in order to pay for his law studies and singing lessons (and it really helped him to meet girls!). After graduating as a Doctor of Law, he practised as a state lawyer. 'It's an interesting job, but when you have a vocation for something, you end up following that.' He decided to focus on becoming a professional singer.



When the Italian rock singer Zucchero was looking for tenors to record his song Miserere, he first asked Pavarotti to do it, and sent him a recording of Bocelli singing it. Pavarotti replied, 'Why do you need me? You already have the right singer.' Bocelli has since performed the song as a duet with Pavarotti.

Bocelli has become an international superstar tenor. He's had great success as a 'crossover' artist, bringing classical music to the top of international pop charts. He's recorded over 30 albums of pop, classical music, and operas. His album Sogno, which featured a duet with Celine Dion, was **hugely popular** and has sold **extremely well** – more than ten million copies worldwide.

Despite his blindness, Andrea has always liked to **live dangerously**. He rides horses, cycles, skis, surfs, and goes parachute jumping. 'In the middle of the night he rides horses,' his wife Veronica says. 'He's crazy. He's an artist.'