

A Life-~~C~~ody Abroad ~~>~~Exchange

~~P~~ogram:~~S~~udy Abroad ~~>~~Exchange

~~U~~niversity:~~S~~iena ~~U~~niversit di Roma

~~L~~ocation:~~R~~ome,Italy

~~E~~xperience ~~F~~aculty:Education

share

~~M~~ain ~~t~~akeaway from studying abroad and ~~l~~iving alone is independence. ~~I~~t learned to do things on my ~~o~~wn that I ~~n~~ever ~~k~~new I needed to be done.

~~E~~xperience ~~D~~etails

~~S~~emester :~~F~~all

~~Y~~ear :~~2~~

~~I~~ntroduction ~~-P~~reparation

~~L~~ocation Research

~~W~~hen ~~p~~reparing to study in Rome, my main concern ~~w~~as figuring out the situation ~~w~~ith residency. Luckily, the ~~u~~niversity ~~w~~ill ~~p~~rovide all of that information to you after ~~a~~cceptance. ~~I~~f ~~w~~e ~~a~~dmit, the bureaucracy in Italy is not the best.

~~F~~inancial ~~P~~reparation

~~T~~he cost of ~~l~~iving in Rome ~~c~~ompared to ~~V~~ancouver is both similar and different. ~~F~~or ~~e~~xample, the cost of accommodation is ~~p~~robably a little bit ~~c~~heaper, but it really ~~d~~epends on the neighbourhood you ~~l~~ive in. Closer to the ~~u~~niversity is ~~p~~robably ~~c~~heaper, and ~~a~~partments near the city center are definitely more ~~e~~xpensive. In regards to ~~e~~veryday ~~l~~iving, food is much ~~c~~heaper ~~c~~ompared to ~~V~~ancouver. ~~G~~roceries are ~~v~~ery ~~i~~nc~~e~~nsive, and eating at a restaurant ~~d~~oesn't ~~h~~ave to ~~b~~reak the bank. Italy uses the Euro currency, and the most common ~~w~~ay of ~~p~~aying for ~~e~~veryday items is by cash. ~~R~~aces ~~w~~ill ~~a~~ccept credit cards, but it is much easier to ~~p~~ay ~~w~~ith cash.

Packing

When packing for a trip to Italy (or anywhere in Europe), I would definitely NOT overpack clothes! I found myself wanting to buy clothes in Rome, since the style is a little bit different than what university students wear in Canada... I noticed that students get dressed up for attending classes, while Canadians prefer wearing clothes that are more comfortable, like hoodies. Nice jeans, shirts/blouses, and light jackets are a perfect option. Italy has great stores for buying good quality clothes for a low price, like Zara, Bershka, and Mango.

For other packing essentials, I would not bring any school supplies on the plane, as there are many shops that sell books and pens for cheap. If you have any favourite (packaged) foods from Canada that won't be available in Italy, it might be best to take some with you, as it helped me

a place to live. The university will provide partner associations that rent out apartments, like Sturent, DoveVivo, and Immobiliare. Overall, I would find an apartment ASAP to avoid the costly issue of living in a hotel for 6 months.

- Water is not free, you will have to pay for it at a restaurant!

Social and Extracurricular Activities

Rome is a place where you will never be bored. There is tons of places to go! The municipal city of Rome itself is massive, but most of the tourist attractions are in the centre of the city. Some popular places to see are the Colosseum, Trevi Fountain, Pantheon, Piazza Venezia, Piazza Navona, Piazza del Popolo, and Villa Borghese. The best part is, they are all in walking distance from each other! There is also the Vatican City, which is architecturally magnificent. Other places just outside of Rome to visit are Villa D'Este (in Tivoli), Castelgandolfo, and Frascati. More pictures at the end of the presentation!

Italy is country that can fit into British Columbia three times, and travelling by train around Italy is very fast and inexpensive! The main train line is Trenitalia, and there is also Italo. During my time in Italy, I went to Florence, Milan, Turin, Venice, Positano, Naples, Pompeii, and Verona (just to name a few). There are also smaller towns, like Orvieto, San Gimignano, Supino, and Treviso which are quite beautiful. I absolutely suggest to make time for travelling around Italy, as you will have plenty of time for it!

Wrap Up

There are many great opportunities to meet other students, both Italian and international. There are two main associations, ESN (Erasmus Student Network) and ERA (Erasmus Roma Association). In these groups, you will be able to attend parties, dinners, tours, play sports, and attend other social events! I met many friends from these groups.

Note: "Erasmus" is a program where European university students can study in another EU country for very low cost, and most international students in Italy are either from Spain, France, Belgium, Germany, or other EU countries.

Reflection & Tips

Reflection

I've learned how to manage my money better, and how to budget effectively for living in another country. As well, I have become more extroverted and confident, and I am able to vouch for myself in situations where I would usually be scared or afraid. I have also learned so much about other cultures, not just Italian culture. It is so incredible learning how other people around the world do everyday things, and it has challenged me to change my life in so many different ways.

Most Valuable Aspects of This Experience

Living abroad definitely has its fair share of challenges, and I think the main one is language and culture. I did know some Italian before going to Rome, but Romans speak differently to what I learned. Italy has many different dialects, so the different regions have different accents/ words. Also, Italy is a very laid-back country, and I found myself being too worried about timelines and deadlines often. One piece of advice when living in Italy: take it easy!

Advice for Future Students

Some advice...

- Don't be afraid to advocate for yourself!
- Be open minded and accept change. It will be hard to learn from this experience if you don't.
- Take time to travel and explore new places
- The best places to eat food are where the menus are not in English, otherwise you will be paying for a tourist trap
- Bring a water bottle everywhere with you, Rome has clean, free water fountains all over the place!





