

FLORENCE: STONEHILL AT LDM

SITE-
SPECIFIC
GUIDE



ACADEMIC
STUDIES
ABROAD

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Pre-Departure

Please see our [Pre-Departure Guide for All Programs](#) for additional important pre-departure information!

Please add the important numbers to your phone

<p>ASA Office in Boston, MA Academic Studies Abroad 1329 Highland Avenue, Suite 1 Needham, MA 02492 Tel: 617-327-9388 24-hour Emergency Cell: 857-366-6821 Email: hello@academicstudies.com Web: www.academicstudies.com</p>	<p>ASA Site Director in Florence: Chiara D'Alessandro</p> <p>Cell Phone: +39 335 741 0590</p> <p>If direct dialing from USA: 011 39 335 741 0590 If direct dialing from Italy: 335 741 0590</p> <p>Email: chiaradalessandro36@gmail.com</p>
<p><u>U.S. Consulate in Florence</u> Lungarno Vespucci, 38 50123 Florence Tel: +39 055 266 951</p>	<p><u>Emergency</u> Ambulance: 112 Fire: 112 Hospital (Piazza Santa Maria Nuova): 055 69381 Police/Carabinieri: 113/112 (Police Station/Questura is located at Via Zara 2 - 055 49771 Carabinieri is at Borgo Ognissanti 48 - 055 27661)</p>

In an emergency, please contact your ASA Site Director immediately and first!

It is of utmost importance that you notify your Site Director of any problems, issues, or concerns that you encounter while you're abroad BEFORE notifying your home campus staff.

Pre-Departure

Please add the important numbers to your phone

Lorenzo de' Medici
Via Faenza
43 50123 Firenze, Italia
+39 0552 87203

Medical Service 24/7

www.medicalservice.firenze.it +39 055 475 411

English speaking general practitioners and some specialists.

Via Roma 4 50123 Firenze. (2-minute walking distance from the Duomo).

Doctor's Office visit: 50 euro. Cash and credit card accepted. Home visits: 100-130 euro, cash only.

NOTE: Make sure to bring your insurance policy/card including your full name, coverage dates and policy numbers. *Doctors' visits must be arranged via phone.*

Guardia Medica Turistica

www.misericordia.firenze.it/ambulatori +39 055 212 222

English speaking general practitioners. Vicolo degli Aldimari 1 (from Piazza del Duomo, take Via Calzaiuoli and turn the first right). Monday to Friday from 2:00pm to 4:00pm (without appointment).

Approximately 30 euro.

Farmacia Comunale, Santa Maria Novella

www.farmaciecomunalfirenze.it/it/farmacie +39 055 216 761

Pharmacy open 24 hours. Can be found inside Santa Maria Novella Station.

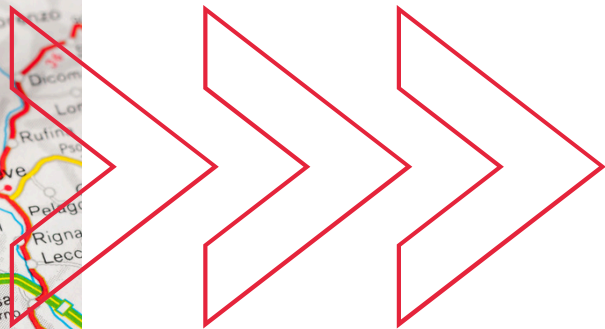
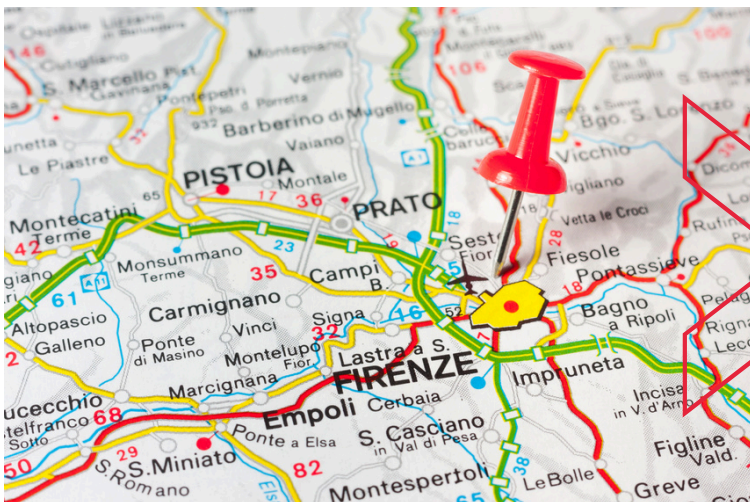
011 = International Dialing Code

39 = Italy Country Code

International Dialing Instructions



- To call from the U.S. to Italy, dial 011-39 + the local telephone number. For example, if the phone number is listed as (+39) 335 714 6082, you would dial 011 39 335 714 6082.
- To call the U.S. from Italy, dial 001 + area code and number.
- To call an Italian number within Italy, leave off the int'l code and country code (e.g. 335 714 6082).



Passport & Visa

All students must have a passport that is valid for at least 6 months beyond the day you plan to return to the U.S.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A U.S. PASSPORT, PLEASE NOTIFY ASA IMMEDIATELY!

Non-U.S. citizens may have a different visa process than described below, that requires steps to be taken in the U.S. or your home country before you arrive in Italy.

What should I do if I lose my passport?

Contact the local police, the U.S. Embassy, and your Site Director immediately. Having a photocopy of your passport on hand will make it MUCH easier to have it replaced.

Permit to Stay

SEMESTER students! To legalize your stay in Italy, you need to apply for a Permit of Stay by registering at the local police station in Florence **within 10 days of arrival** (cost: €120).

Per Italian law, obtaining the Permit of Stay is **MANDATORY** for all semester students.

ASA's Site Director will assist everyone with this process.

The list of documents you must bring with you in order to get your Permit of Stay can be found on your **LAST-MINUTE CHECKLIST**.

- **Always carry a copy of your passport with you. Carrying a personal document is mandatory by law but, if you are walking to class or in the city, it is safer to carry a copy rather than the original. Note that if you will be travelling or going to the bank, you will need the original.**



STEP & ETA

STEP: Safe Traveler Enrollment Program

STEP registration is MANDATORY to complete before departure. This free service, offered by the US Department of State, enables the DOS to quickly contact US citizens abroad during emergencies, such as natural disaster, civil unrest, or a family emergency. By registering, you also get real time updates about safety, security, health, and weather in country. Click this link to complete your STEP registration before departure: <https://mytravel.state.gov/s/step>

MANDATORY:

IF A US CITIZEN, YOU
MUST ENROLL IN STEP

ETA: For visiting & transiting through England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland

WHO:

For United States (US) passport holders, the ETA is required for anyone traveling through the UK for study, visit, or transit through (layover), via any method of transportation (e.g. plane, train, boat). If you are traveling on a non-US passport, first check to see if you can apply for an ETA [here](#). If your country is not yet approved for the ETA, notify your ASA Program Manager immediately (617-327-9388) for next steps.

WHAT:

The Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) is a permission to travel for those who do not currently need to obtain a visa or do not have a United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) immigration status. **The ETA is valid for two (2) years from date of issue, or until passport expires, whichever is sooner.** It is valid for multiple journeys and must be valid for the entirety of your stay. It cannot be extended.

The ETA is digitally linked to your passport. There is no physical component. While you are not required to show a paper copy, we highly recommend saving a screenshot and/or printing your ETA approval email and adding it to your acceptance documents for your records. You are required to send a copy of your ETA approval email to your ASA Program Manager. To see how to apply, read on.

HOW:

Students apply for the ETA electronically via the [UK ETA app](#).

Application Steps:

1. Watch the short "Getting Started: Applying for the UK ETA" video.
2. Gather information for the ETA application (contact information, physical valid U.S. passport in hand, recent photo or headshot, method of payment). Your flight itinerary is not required to apply.
3. Follow the instructions on the app or the UK GOV website. We recommend applying and getting approval at least 1 week prior to arrival in the UK.
4. Once received, SAVE your UK ETA approval email as a pdf or jpeg. Be sure that it is legible and email a copy to your ASA Program Manager. This is a critical step, as we must ensure you are complying with immigration requirements.

EES: Europe's Biometric Entry/Exit System

Overview of EES:

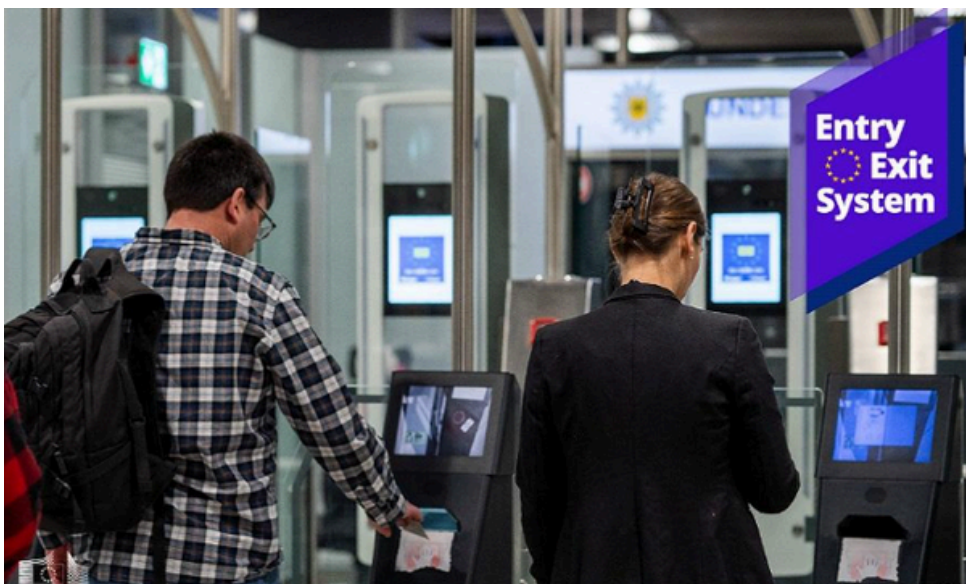
- **Purpose:** EES is a digital system that tracks border crossings for non-EU nationals by collecting passport scans, facial photos, and fingerprints, replacing traditional passport stamps. This system replaces passport stamps with biometrics (fingerprints).
- **Cost:** The system is free; travelers should avoid any services or apps that charge fees.
- **Registration:** Initial registration occurs upon the first entry, after which the registration remains valid for up to 3 years. Subsequent entries utilize "EES READY" lanes for faster processing.

Who Must Use EES:

- US and other non-EU nationals who do not possess a long-stay visa, including those on programs lasting under 90 days.
- Travelers entering or moving through these countries before their long-stay visa or residence permit begins, or after it expires.
- Students arriving in The Netherlands who have not yet been issued their residence permit.
- Note: Travelers must monitor their travel dates to avoid exceeding the 90-day limit, as overstaying may lead to fines, deportation, or future travel bans.

EES Guidance:

- Please review the [EES Guidance document](#) that ASA has put together.
- If you have any questions, contact your Program Manager before departure.



Budgeting for Study Abroad

The EURO (€) became the official currency of Italy on January 1, 1999. Bills come in denominations of €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200 and €500. Coins come in denominations of €2, €1, 50 cents, 20 cents, 10 cents, 5 cents, 2 cents and 1 cent.

Exchange rates fluctuate, so check <http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi> for today's exchange rate.

How much money should I bring?

US\$250-300 per week of your stay

Please note that these are general guidelines based on what past students have reported spending. Some students spend less and others more. The above figures do not allow for traveling every weekend, eating out a lot, or shopping every day.

** = Accounted for in weekly money recommendations above.*

What expenses should I budget for?

Please note: *Housing, medical insurance, and all other ASA services are not included during the break between semesters or terms.*

1. **Permit to Stay** €120 (Semester students ONLY) You will need €16 Euros CASH + €104 Euros debit/credit card. For the cash portion, you must have the EXACT amount--you can draw this out of an ATM when you arrive.
2. **Meals** * Each apartment has a fully equipped kitchen.
3. **Books and materials for your classes** Budget US\$500 per semester; US\$250 per summer session. Do NOT purchase any books or materials until you get to Florence.
4. **Course Fees** Course Fees are not included in tuition and must be paid by the student to LdM as necessary.
5. **Local transportation** Budget \$250 per semester; US\$100 per summer session. Local transportation includes getting around town during your free time, getting to and from where your group is meeting to depart for an excursion or academic field trip, and getting home afterwards. This may include paying for bus and taxi fares. Most students are able to walk to/from class and some take the bus.
6. **Cell phone** Budget US\$400 per semester; US\$75 per summer session.
7. **Spending money / Personal expenses** Entertainment, shopping, souvenirs, dining out, travel, haircuts, toothpaste, etc. This is accounted for in our weekly money recommendation.
8. **Meals on excursions** (Accounted for in weekly recommendation above)
9. **Transportation back to the airport at the end of the program** Budget US\$40
10. **Have at least \$1,000 in savings for emergencies**

Resources for Saving Money

- **International Student Identity Card (ISIC)**
 - The ISIC card is the only internationally accepted student identity card which provides student status verification, thousands of discounts worldwide and access to the global student community.
- **Lonely Planet Travel Books**
 - Discover the world through the eyes of Lonely Planet's network of global travel writers with their curated selection of guidebooks designed to help you plan unforgettable experiences. Go with a plan. Come back with a story.

What should I do when I get off the plane at Florence airport?

01 Passport Control/Immigration

After you de-plane, you will go through Passport Control (also called Immigration) and Customs.

02 Baggage Claim

After Passport Control and Customs, follow signs to baggage claim. Delayed baggage must be reported to your airline's lost luggage counter before exiting the baggage claim area. After claiming your bags, exit into the airport lobby and look for an ASA sign or a sign with your name on it. Staff cannot meet you at Baggage Claim.

03 Meet ASA Staff

Once you've found an ASA staff member or driver, we'll take you to your program housing.

If my flight is delayed, will you still pick me up at the airport?

If you will not be arriving as scheduled, it is YOUR responsibility to notify the emergency contact person indicated on your Last-Minute Checklist.

Academics

Via Faenza, 43
50123 Florence, Italy
Phone: (+39) 055287203

HELPFUL TIPS

[LdM Florence Website](#)



Practical Information

The following practical information is useful to prospective LdM students and their families. Upon arrival in Italy, students will be provided with an orientation booklet specific to each LdM campus and a complete list of local resources and relevant advice.



Receiving Packages at LdM

Students expecting a package should check regularly if it has arrived. From the U.S., regular mail takes approximately 8-10 days to arrive, packages take around 15-20 days, and express mail (Fedex, DHL, TNT) takes around 3-4 days. Please have your friends and family address the letters/packages to:

STUDENT'S NAME C/O ISTITUTO LORENZO DE' MEDICI VIA
DEL MELARANCIO 6/R 50123 FIRENZE, ITALIA



Mandatory Orientation

The Orientation meetings and activities are mandatory for all students. You will receive information about the date and time, so you can plan your travel itinerary and arrival to LdM accordingly. The orientation activities will help you to familiarize yourself with your new environment.

A detailed Calendar of Events, including orientation and excursion dates & locations, will be emailed to you about 2 weeks before your program starts. Calendar is subject to change.

Click [here](#) to view the general Academic Calendar for your upcoming program which includes dates of any breaks.

You are advised to book personal travel after receiving the ASA Calendar.

LdM Academic Policies

LdM's most up-to-date academic policies can be found at this link: <https://ldminstitute.com/academics/academic-policies/>

Course Load & Fees

- Students must retain full-time status, with a minimum of 12 credits during the semester and 3 credits during short terms. However, it is each student's responsibility to know if his/her home institution requires enrollment for more than 12 or 3 credits respectively.
- Students may not drop or withdraw from a course if it would bring them below the minimum number of credits. We recommend that students take the standard course load to help ensure a successful experience. Students are encouraged to consider course load and exam scheduling when making registration decisions.
- Some LdM classes have course/lab fees that cover required equipment, materials, books, etc. which are not included in the ASA program fee. Many studio arts, cuisine and wine appreciation courses require a lab fee that is paid by students upon arrival. In addition, courses may require that students pay for visits and field trips as noted in the course descriptions. Students will pay applicable course fees directly to Lorenzo de' Medici after arrival. [Click here for Fall 2023 & Spring 2024 course fees](#). Course fees are subject to change.

Course Changes

All course change requests, before and after arrival, must be supported and accompanied by a strong academic reason. Please clearly inform the students to help them make responsible decisions about their courses (both first choices and alternatives). Until the course change request has been processed by the Registrar, students are not permitted to attend a class that is not listed on the official registration.

Attendance Policy

- Course attendance is a primary requirement for a responsible learning experience at LdM.
- Punctuality is mandatory. Students must arrive in class on time: any lateness or leaving class early will impact the participation grade and the Final Grade.
- Students are responsible for keeping track of their absences and for catching up on any missed work.
- For no reason (i.e., religious holidays, travel plans, family matters, etc.) will absences be excused.
- Make-up classes are always mandatory as part of the course program.
- Students will receive an "F" on each exam they miss.
- Students who leave LdM before the end of the term must fill out an Official Withdrawal Request form and return it to their advisor. Students who submit the form by the "W" Withdrawal deadline will receive a "W" for each non-completed course. Students who submit the form by the "W/F" Withdrawal deadline will receive a "W/F" for each non-completed course. Students who leave LdM without submitting the form will receive an "F" in each non-completed course. In all cases, students will not be eligible for credits or receive a refund.
- Students who absent themselves from courses will have their final grade penalized.

Grading System

You must check with your home institution to ensure you understand:

- The minimum grade you need to earn to receive transfer credit. Typically you need to earn a C or C+, but this can vary by institution. Check with your home institution to ensure you understand their requirements!
- Will your grades impact your GPA? Every institution handles this differently! Some institutions transfer in study abroad grades and it impacts your gpa. Some transfer in the grades and it doesn't impact your gpa. Others transfer in study abroad grades as pass/fail. Be sure you understand how your institution handles this.

You must check with your host institution or ASA Site Director upon arrival to ensure you understand:

- The deadline to change or drop classes. Classes dropped after your host institution's add/drop deadline will appear on your final transcript with a failing grade.
- What is your host institution's attendance policy? Absences from class will affect your grade and can result in a failing grade. Many institutions only allow a couple of absences a semester and only for valid reasons such as medical. Travel or family/friend visit is NOT ever an excused absence.

Academics

Grading System and Guide

A 93-100%	A- 90-92%	B+ 87-89%	B 83-86%	B- 80-82%
C+ 77-79%	C 73-76%	C- 70-72%	D 60-69%	F 0-59%

W: Withdrawal

Students who officially drop a class after Final Registration and before the "W" deadline will receive a "W" on their transcript. No credit will be awarded for the course.

W/F: Late Withdrawal

Students who officially drop a class after the "W" deadline and before the "W/F" deadline will receive a "W/F" on their transcript. No credit will be awarded for the course.

F

- All the course requirements are complete but unsatisfactory by the end of the term.
- The student has dropped the course without submitting the official withdrawal form by the deadline.
- No credit will be awarded for the course.

Pass/Fail and Incomplete

LdM does not offer Pass/Fail grades or Incompletes, only letter grades.

Note

Courses that are officially dropped before Final Registration day will not appear on the student's transcript. Details regarding add/drop/withdrawal dates and procedures will be provided during the Orientation session of each term.

Auditing

Auditing is not allowed at LdM. Students may attend only the courses listed on their Official Registration form.

Mid-Term & Final Exams

Mid-terms and final exams will be given only on the scheduled days that appear on each course syllabus and will not be moved under any circumstances, including illness, religious holidays, travel plans, family matters, etc. Exams are scheduled during normal class times, so more than one exam may be administered on the same day. Students are not allowed to make up any assessed in-class activities they have missed (including but not limited to quizzes, tests, etc.) under any circumstances, including illness, religious holidays, travel plans, family matters, etc.

Academic Disputes

A student who thinks that a grade has been assigned unfairly should bring this to the attention of the instructor during the term. Once the term is over, the Registrar's Office handles those issues. If complaints cannot be resolved at this level they may be referred to one of the following, depending on the nature of the complaint: Dean of Students, Academic Committee, General Director. In the case of a dispute, their decision shall be final.

Student Advising Team

A team of dedicated and skilled student advisors are ready to assist students throughout their stay, and help them to adjust to LdM and Italy. The Advising Team is there to help students, from dealing with emergencies, managing academic issues, to taking part in student activities. LdM advisors are centrally located with posted office hours. At orientation, LdM students will be introduced to their advisors so that they can form a connection with them from day one! The Advising Office location is Via Faenza 71red.

Rules of Conduct

Lorenzo de' Medici takes seriously its academic mission of fostering the creative and intellectual potential of each of its students in an international environment that values tolerance and respect. We believe in the concept of informed decision-making and wish to promote healthy behaviour.

In order to maintain an atmosphere that nurtures this potential, Lorenzo de' Medici has established Rules of Conduct consistent with its mission and values.

By accepting admission to Lorenzo de' Medici, students are accepting the conditions as described in these Rules of Conduct.

These conditions apply to behaviour both on and off campus (e.g., in the city, bars, clubs and other meeting places), during online Distance Learning, and also include behaviour in all LdM activities (e.g., LdM clubs, volunteer activities, etc.). These Rules apply also to students' behaviour in the apartment (or family) where they reside while attending Lorenzo de' Medici.

In addition, the Rules contained herein supersede other LdM publications or documents (e.g., housing flyers, residence life brochures or handbooks, etc.). Any changes to the terms and conditions of these Rules of Conduct will be communicated to students in writing and will replace the relevant portions of this text.

General Conduct

Each student is expected to:

- Act as a responsible member of the academic community, in language, personal interactions, and the treatment of property.
- Act honestly. Providing false information to an LdM faculty or staff member is not allowed.
- Treat others as they would like to be treated, and to recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every person in the community.
- Behave in classes according to the standards of a serious learning environment and be respectful of cultural norms and local etiquette. Disruption of teaching, study, administration or other Institute activities is not allowed.

Continued on next page...

General Conduct

- Adhere to safety, attire, and hygiene standards of the academic environment during in-class and out-of-class activities. This includes appropriate dress and footwear requirements during all practical courses (e.g., cooking courses, studio art, etc.) and the respect of local etiquette and public morals during class visits and academic field trips (e.g., visits to churches, museums, etc.).
- Refrain from using computers, tablets, and mobile devices during lectures, unless instructed to do so by your professor.
- Avoid eating and drinking during all lectures and/or academic activities.
- Respect the personal and property rights of all other persons, of Lorenzo de' Medici itself, and of the community at-large. Students are not allowed unauthorized entry to, or use of, an LdM building, structure or facility. Attempted or actual theft of, or the unauthorized possession of, LdM property or property belonging to any member of the LdM community is strictly forbidden. Students also should not access any LdM Institutional or LdM Course files without permission. Students should not enter into a file to use, read, change, transfer or download its contents without authorization. Under no circumstances should a student access LdM Course records.
- Be responsible in helping keep yourself and the community safe.
- Work with the community to prevent vandalism, hate speech, physical violence and harassment.
- Acknowledge that we are all different – in social class, sexual orientation, religion, philosophies, ethnic groups, cultural background, physical abilities, and so on – and strive to understand one another and protect and affirm the right of all persons to be themselves.
- Students living in LdM Housing are responsible for their own actions and assume a shared responsibility for the housing environment. Therefore, any student or guest of a student living in LdM Housing who breaks an LdM Housing Rule is also in breach of the Rules of Conduct.

Communication with Instructors, Administrators and Peers

- Students must use the Gmail email address created for you by LdM in order to communicate with Instructors, Administrators, and their peers.
- Students are expected to regularly check their email and respond, if necessary, to emails from LdM Instructors and Administrators in a timely manner.
- The program is a serious learning environment. As such, students should be courteous and respectful, refrain from using excessive slang, and should not use obscene language in any program-related communications.
- Students should only contact their LdM peers regarding course-related topics, unless otherwise appropriate. Therefore, the sending of unsolicited communication is prohibited.

Academic Dishonesty

- The Institute makes every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct. Within a wider framework of mutual respect, students should act with integrity and honesty in their academics. Instances of suspected academic dishonesty are reported by faculty to the Dean of Students or designated LdM staff who investigates in consultation with the faculty member and the Academic Committee.

Continued on next page...

Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty violations include:

- Plagiarism
- Inadequate citation
- Recycled work
- Unauthorized assistance, including collaborating and/or studying with other students on a course assignment
- Copying the work of others or allowing others to copy your individual work
- Having another person complete online coursework on your behalf
- Misusing content from the internet
- Misusing content from an LdM course
- Any form of cheating not explicitly mentioned above

The Dean of Students may determine the sanction of a grade of "F" for any coursework, exam, or project determined to be academically dishonest. Sanctions may also include, but are not limited to, academic probation, receiving a grade of "F" in a course, and/or expulsion from the Institute.

Enforcement of the Rules of Conduct

- LdM students are subject to the laws of the location in which the student is physically present and completing their courses.
- Determination of Violation. In the case of a possible violation of the Rules the following process will be followed. After a report is filed, the student will be required to meet with the Dean of Students or a designated LdM staff. This meeting will provide an opportunity for the student and the Dean or designated staff to discuss the possible violation. If the student does not admit to a violation, the Dean of Students or designated staff will decide whether the preponderance of the evidence shows that the student has violated Lorenzo de' Medici's Rules of Conduct.
- Sanctions. In all cases involving a violation of any of these Rules, the Dean of Students or designated LdM staff may impose any combination of the following sanctions: oral or written admonition, written warning, probation, mandated counselling assessment, fines, withholding of academic transcripts, expulsion from Lorenzo de' Medici, or any other discretionary sanctions. Sanctions may be notified to the program or university to which the students belong and/or to the parent/s or guardian/s, at the Institute's discretion. Any sanctions by Lorenzo de' Medici do not necessarily signify that further sanctions cannot be forthcoming from the home institution. In case of expulsion for conduct or academic reasons, the Dean of Students or designated representative will decide the timing and the modality of execution. From the moment that notice is delivered, the student will no longer be a student of LdM, and will be obliged to leave LdM without any form of refunding. The student will no longer have access to LdM services, premises or activities. The student will be obliged to vacate LdM Housing (if applicable). Students will receive an "F" in each non-completed course.
- Reprieve for Reporting Detrimental Behavior / Actions / Safety Risks Stemming from Alcohol and/or Drug Use: LdM encourages students to utilize the appropriate Emergency Phone numbers when s/he may need medical attention or when a peer may need medical attention due to the usage of drugs and/or alcohol. Though there is no specific amnesty policy, a student's mature decision making will factor into any sanctioning decision.
- Appeals: In all cases involving sanctions, the student may appeal to the Board of Directors of the Institute on the grounds of insufficient evidence, violation of rights, or severity of the sanction. The appeal will be based on the record of the original meeting, unless new material evidence has been discovered since that time.
- Disciplinary Files: Files involving violations of the Rules by students will be maintained for five years from the date of sanction. Personally identifiable information about individual students in these files will be protected.

COVID-19 In Country

You are responsible for complying with all COVID-19 protocols and recommendations throughout your journey. COVID-19 protocols will vary based on the city where you are studying. Once you arrive, our Site Director(s) will educate you on the COVID-19 protocols you need to follow on site. PROTOCOLS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE! Local officials make changes to protocols based on case data, which may become stricter or more relaxed at any time.

Your housing and host institution may have their own COVID-19 protocols you must follow as well. Once again, these are subject to change without notice.

Housing

ASA will email you your housing assignment approximately 2 weeks before your program start date.

You will live in a fully furnished shared apartment with anywhere from 2 to 6 occupants.

The following items are included with the apartment:

- Linens, towels and kitchen utensils
- Refrigerator
- Fans
- Internet access in the common area of the apartment
- Washing Machines

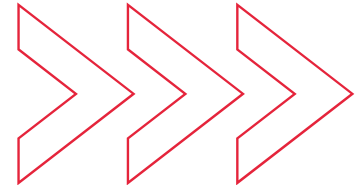
The apartments are not equipped with:

- Dryers
- Phone landline

Please consider the following:

- Meals are NOT included, but each apartment has a fully equipped kitchen, and grocery stores are within walking distance.
- Average utilities (water, gas, electricity) are included. Any costs above the average consumption will be charged to the students sharing the apartment and deducted from their deposit.
- Due to an environmental law, the heating can only be turned on between November 8 and April 7, for no more than 11 hours a day, and the temperature must not exceed 19°C (around 70°F).
- Electric plugs are different in Italy and the voltage is 220 volts. Check if your appliances are fit to use, and purchase the adapters you might need.
- Bringing house slippers and ear plugs might be helpful.

Everyday Life



Keys

You will receive ONE set of keys. It is forbidden to make copies of these keys or lend them to anyone. Be careful not to lose them! If you lose your keys, you will be responsible for the cost of changing the locks for your apartment AND the building front door, and issuing brand new keys for everyone.

Move-Out

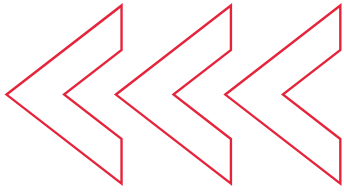
When you vacate your apartment at the end of the semester, all personal items, including trash, toiletries, food, etc. must be removed from the apartment. Everything that was present in the apartment at check-in must be present and in good condition. You must leave the apartment clean, remove all food and personal items, return all furniture to its original position, wash your dishes, take out the garbage, turn off the gas and all appliances and lights, close all windows and wash all linens.

Alcohol & Drug Policy

- Alcohol may be consumed, but not abused, by students who are of legal drinking age in their host country. All students are responsible for discouraging alcohol-related behaviour that is abusive to themselves or to others. Moreover, Lorenzo de' Medici considers drunkenness and intoxication in public, whether inside or outside the Institute's premises, unacceptable regardless of age.
- LdM will not be held responsible for students' alcohol abuse and/or for any consequences arising from alcohol abuse.
- Penalties for violating the alcohol policy of LdM include but are not limited to: warnings, probations, fines, parental notification, service projects, and educational sanctioning. It is hoped that education will help students understand more about the residual effects of alcohol both physically and socially. Alcohol violations may also result in suspension or expulsions from LdM. Penalties are levied on a per person basis.
- The consumption, sale, distribution, manufacture, purchase, or passing of controlled substances, drugs (including marijuana), intoxicants, and/or stimulants that are unlawful in Italy is expressly prohibited. The presence of the odor of marijuana and the possession of drug paraphernalia may be considered evidence that a drug violation has occurred. Students present in the vicinity of drugs or drug paraphernalia may be considered complicit in the activity, depending on the circumstances surrounding the student's involvement.
- Drug offenses carry severe sanctions since a student is not only breaking the Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici Rules of Conduct but also Italian law. Separate from or in addition to prosecution by Italian authorities, a student found in violation of the drug rule may be placed on probation or expelled from the study abroad program. If Italian authorities do become involved in a drug-related offense and choose not to proceed with prosecution, Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici may still impose serious sanctions, up to and including expulsion.

Assault & Fighting

- Assault, fighting, and similar behavior are serious offenses that are considered detrimental to students and to the name of the Institute. Students engaging in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action by Lorenzo de' Medici and potential prosecution by Italian authorities.



Everyday Life

Maintenance

Florence's sewage system has been around since the Renaissance, so be gentle with the plumbing! The toilet and drains are not a garbage disposal – do NOT flush things like food, hair, sanitary items, cotton balls, dental floss, or the like. Only liquids should go down drains. You will be charged for plumbing fees due to misuse.

Students are responsible for daily maintenance, including cleaning the apartment, taking out the garbage DAILY (this is standard practice in Europe), washing your sheets and towels, reporting maintenance issues (e.g. clogged drain) to your ASA Site Director, changing light bulbs, and other such tasks.

You must keep your living area clean and organized at all times. Do not leave trash lying around the apartment or in the stairwells, as this could interfere with maintenance.

You will be charged for any damages, as well as utility overages, when you leave your apartment.

During your orientation in Florence, your ASA Site Director will talk about how to conserve utility usage so you don't have overages. In addition, a section on Conserving Utility Usage can be found below.

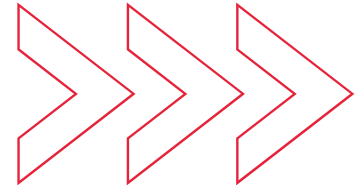
National Quiet Hour Laws & Noise Advisories

In Italy, there are national "quiet hour" laws that must be observed after 11 pm every night until 9 am. Excessive noise made between 11pm and 9am could result in arrest and a misdemeanor charge. Italian laws concerning cases of disturbing the peace are very strict. If you make excess noise and the police are summoned, heavy fines will be levied. Repeated problems of this nature can lead to removal from ASA housing and/or the ASA program.

Loud music, loud talking and shouting are not permitted in ASA housing. You will not have a curfew, but please be considerate of your roommates and especially of other people in your building by being EXTRA quiet when returning home late at night. Be sure to take off your shoes as soon as you enter your apartment (even during the day), because shoes, and especially shoes with heels, will produce loud noise in your downstairs neighbor's apartment.

Parties are NOT permitted. Your neighbors will not hesitate to call the police at the slightest disturbance after hours!

Everyday Life



Conserving Utility Usage

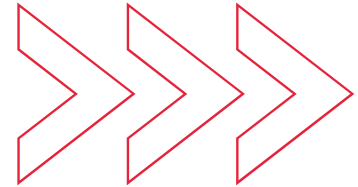
Utilities such as water, electricity, and gas (heat) are much more expensive in Europe than they are in the U.S. In Italy, the heat may only turn on at certain times of the day, by Italian law.

Here are some tips to conserve energy:

- Avoid taking more than one or long showers – also, your roommates might have ice-cold showers!
- Washing machines are MUCH smaller than you are used to, and the cycle takes nearly an hour, so don't be afraid to re-wear your clothes! Re-wearing clothes will reduce the amount of laundry you do (and water and electricity you use). Use 50-60° water for whites and 30° for dark colors. If you don't have enough for a full load, consider hand washing. Always wash delicate items by hand (i.e. sweaters, undergarments), as the washing machines can be hard on delicates. **YOU WILL NOT HAVE A CLOTHES DRYER** – this is not standard in Italian homes. You will need to hang dry your clothes (try putting them near the heater). Your apartment will have a clothesline or drying rack for clothes. Or, you can take your wet clothes to a Laundromat – they have dryers there.
- Florence is an ancient city, so the buildings are very old. Having the washing machine, hair dryer, and all the lights on will blow the fuses. If you **TURN OFF / UNPLUG** all appliances and devices when not in use, you will not only save utilities but you'll also avoid blowing the fuses. If you do blow the fuses, it's easy to fix, but you need to know where the circuit breakers are. You can avoid this problem by only using what you need. Turn off the lights when leaving a room to save electricity. If you go away for the weekend, be sure not to leave any lights on!
- Stoves and ovens are generally gas operated. You may have a switch or valve to turn on the gas and then have to light the burners on the stove with a match or a sparker, which you can buy at the supermarket. You may also have a water heater in the kitchen that you must turn on in order to have hot water. This is a common misunderstanding when students first move in – if you don't have hot water, it's probably because you have to turn on the water heater. It is usually located in the kitchen. Finally, turn off the gas if everyone will be out of town.
- When it turns cold, **DO NOT** run the heat all night. Warm up the apartment before bed and then turn it down. The warmth will last through the night. As a general rule, homes in Europe are not heated as well as homes here – and since utilities are cheaper here, we are more likely to crank up the heat, whereas a European would instead put on a sweater. You may need to reverse your thinking about that. For students abroad during colder months, bring warm pajamas and socks and clothes you can layer when you're at home.
- Your apartment will **NOT** be air conditioned. The best way to keep your apartment cool in the summer is to keep it dark. Close the outside shutters during the hottest part of the day, and your apartment will feel air-conditioned.

Everyday Life

Local Transportation



Taxi

IN FLORENCE, TAXIS CANNOT BE HAILED.

To get a taxi, your options are:

- 1) Walk to one of the taxi stands in the main squares** (Duomo, San Marco, Repubblica)
- 2) Walk to the taxi stand at the train station**
- 3) Call ahead for a taxi, and they will pick you up. Phone numbers: 055-4499, 055-4390, 055-4242 or 055 4798

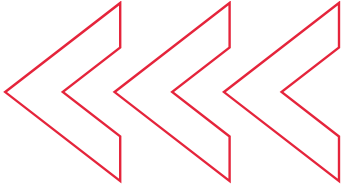
Uber is NOT in Florence.

**Very late at night or very early in the morning, do not count on there being taxis at one of the taxi stands. Call for a taxi if it's very late or very early – otherwise you could end up roaming the streets alone at night or being late for your flight, if you are going to the airport. If you need a ride to the airport, call a day ahead to schedule your taxi, and they will come to your apartment to pick you up. Taxis in Florence are generally reliable in showing up at the right day and time if you have scheduled the ride in advance by phone.

Taxis sometimes accept cash only! It is normal for them to charge a supplement (1-2 euro, usually) for each piece of luggage and for journeys at night. Taxis in Florence charge a flat rate to go to the city from the airport, or to go to the airport from the city.

Bus & Tram Tickets

Tickets must be purchased at Tabacchi shops or newsstands before getting on the bus. A single ticket costs 1,50 and lasts 90 minutes from the time it is validated. Single use tickets must be punched in the machine immediately upon entering the bus. Fines are very expensive for those caught without a valid ticket. Students who plan on using the Florence public transportation (bus and tram) frequently, may consider buying an 'abbonamento' at the Autolinee Toscane Ticket Office located on Via Santa Caterina da Siena 17.



Everyday Life

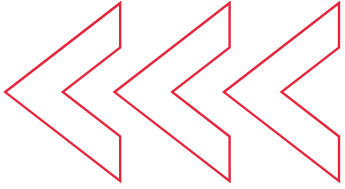
Local Transportation

Train

Trains are an excellent way of traveling in many European countries. Various discount tickets exist (i.e. Eurail pass), which are worth considering if you plan to travel extensively.

Individual train tickets and schedules can be purchased at the train station and from all major travel agents (with no extra charge). For info, visit www.ferroviedellostato.it

► YOU MUST VALIDATE YOUR TICKET WHEN YOU BOARD THE TRAIN! YELLOW BOXES ARE SET UP RIGHT BY EACH TRACK EXPRESSLY FOR THIS PURPOSE. IF YOU FORGET TO DO, SO THE CONDUCTOR WILL MAKE YOU PAY A FINE.



Everyday Life

Grocery Shopping

Hours may vary:

- Mercato San Lorenzo (market)- Via dell'Ariento (8am-2pm every day except Sundays and public holidays)
- Mercato Sant'Ambrogio (market)- Piazza Ghiberti (8am-2pm every day except Sundays and holidays)
- Mercato Santo Spirito (market)- Piazza Santo Spirito (every morning except Sundays and public holidays; all day on the second Sunday of every month)
- Mercato delle Cure (market)- Piazza delle Cure (every morning except Sundays and public holidays)
- Conad City (supermarket)- Corso Tintori 18 and Via Piatrapiana 42
- Carrefour (supermarket)- Via Carducci 8
- Coop (supermarket)- Via Cimabue 49, Via Salvi Cristiani 16, Via Gian Paolo Orsini 41r, Via Gramsci 18 - Fiesole

Movies

Foreign films are usually dubbed in Italian. However, some cinemas give you the opportunity to view films in their original language (such as English) – these will be labeled “VO” which means Original Version. Going to an Italian movie could prove to be an interesting cultural experience as well as a great way to practice Italian. Sometimes you can get discounted movie tickets by showing your student card.

Astra Due: Piazza Beccaria

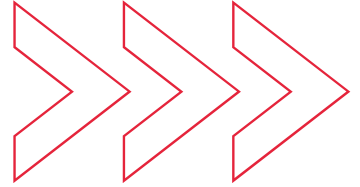
Castello Cineteca di Firenze: Via Reginaldo Giuliani, 347

Alfieri Atlier: Via dell'Ulivo, 6

Fulgor: Via Maso Finiguerra 1

Everyday Life

Religious Services



Anglican & Protestant
St. Mark's Church of England
V. Maggio 16
Tel. 055294764
Sunday 9 and 10:30 am

Catholic (in English)
Duomo
Piazza Duomo tel. 0552302885
Only on Saturday at 5 p.m.
(On the first Saturday of the month mass is at 5 p.m. in the Church of the Misericordia)

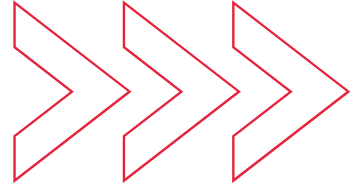
American Church of Saint James
Via B. Rucellai, 9
All services are in English

Jewish (Orthodox)
Tempio Israelito
V. Farini, 4
Tel. 055245252
Friday: sunset, Sat. 8:45 am

Synagogue
Via L.C. Farini, 4

Islamic
Centro Culturale Islamico
P. degli Scarlatti, 1
Tel. 055711648

Everyday Life



Luggage Storage

If you plan to travel before or after the program and need to store your luggage, here are some options:

Central Train Station

Santa Maria Novella

Piazza Stazione, 1

Track #16

€2.58 for 12 hours

Open daily from 4:15 a.m to 1:30 a.m

Tel: 055 2352190

The train station luggage storage only accepts luggage for a maximum weight of 20 kilos and for a maximum of five days.

Mail Boxes Etc.:

Via San Gallo, 26/r

Tel: 055 268173

Via della Scala 13/r

Tel: 055 4630418

Corso Tintori 39/r

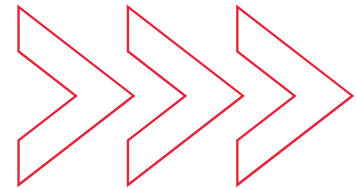
Tel: 055 2466660

Cyberlinkplus:

Via Bernardo Cennini, 12

Tel: 055 0119423

Everyday Life



Weather

The weather in Florence tends to be quite humid year-round, as the city was built on the Arno River.

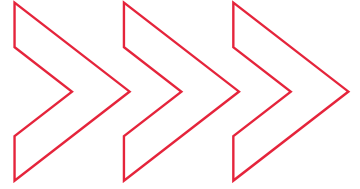
FALL - Be prepared for possible hot and humid summer temperatures upon arrival for the Fall semester that may last until the end of September. In October it will begin to cool down, and typically there are rain showers as the Winter temperatures arrive. From the beginning or middle of November, the weather may become quite wintry, and December is usually cold and wet.

SPRING - In January and February, Florence is at its coldest. Prepare for short days and cold temperatures, with sundown between 5-6pm. You will need to pack warm winter clothing that you can layer and a water resistant jacket and shoes/boots. There will be wet, windy and wintry days until mid-March, when it will start to warm up. European homes aren't heated as well as American homes, so pack accordingly, including warm pajamas and socks, and things you can layer. Students have reported that although the winter weather was not very cold, it felt colder because the heating didn't work as well. Layering your clothes will help.

SUMMER - Warm and usually humid weather (highs in the 70s-80s). Still, it could get chilly at night or even rain, so bring a sweater/jacket.

Months	Temperature
Jan - March	35-60° F
April - May	46-75° F
June - Sept	58-81° F
Oct - Dec	37-69° F

Everyday Life: Culture



Aperitivo

The custom of having an aperitivo before dinner is common in Italy. The word “aperitivo” derives from the Latin verb “aperire” which means “to open,” and that is just what an aperitivo is: an opener to the meal. While elsewhere in the world aperitivo usually refers to a pre-dinner drink or cocktail, in Italy it also implies tasty snacks put out for customers to enjoy (included in the price of the drink). The food varies from place to place and can range from olives and chips to elaborate buffets with hot pasta dishes, cheese, and ham. Standard aperitivo starts at 7:00 p.m. and ends around 9:00 p.m. The atmosphere is friendly and relaxed, and prices range from 6 to 8 euro.

How to Dress

Neatness is an Italian virtue. You should expect to dress more formally in Italy and you must be aware that you are not on a U.S. college campus. Italians tend to wear more dark/neutral colors (black, gray, beige, brown). If you bring clothes in these colors, you will not only blend in better, but you'll save space in your suitcase because you can mix and match using fewer pieces.

Example: You may walk into a local bar wearing flip-flops and a college T-shirt and ask for a can of coca-cola at 10:00 a.m. Immediately, you will notice that you are the only one in the bar with open-toed shoes, a short sleeved shirt, no jacket and drinking a Coke. The rest of the patrons of the bar will be “dressed up” wearing jackets, pants, closed-toe shoes or boots and ordering a coffee.

While people may, of course, dress as they prefer around Florence, keep in mind that it is easy to stick out as a foreigner because of your clothing. Italians simply tend to have a more formal way of dressing than is typical of American college students. Italians do not go out in public in sweats, stretch pants, yoga pants, or flip flops, unless they are on their way to the gym. Flip flops are only worn at the beach. Pajamas are never to be worn outside your apartment.

Many churches (the Vatican included) do not allow people to enter unless their legs and shoulders are covered, even in summer months, so keep this in mind while traveling or while on a program field trip/excursion.

Leave your high heels at home! Streets in Italy are notoriously uneven from the cobblestone. If you walk on cobblestone in any sort of heel (even a low heel) you can sprain your ankle. Students HAVE sprained their ankles this way and spent the rest of the semester on crutches. Finally, it is difficult to roll your suitcases on the cobblestone – you may have to carry them, so try not to pack too heavy. Watch out for broken suitcase wheels from the cobblestone. Happens all the time...some students have had to buy new luggage.

Everyday Life: Culture

Cash Is King

You will find that some establishments (restaurants and shops) only accept cash. Those that accept credit/debit cards may ask you if you have cash or discourage you from paying with your card. You'll need to carry more cash than you are used to carrying at home.

Don't Ask To Split The Bill

Do not ask your waiter to split up a bill for you, and NEVER ask them to charge the bill to more than one credit/debit card. This is generally an "American thing" and is not acceptable to request pretty much anywhere in Europe. You will need to simply calculate the amount owed by each person and then each person puts in some cash.

Italian Manners

When you enter a store, restaurant, coffee bar, or if you encounter the residents in your building, it is polite to greet them. In the morning, you would say, "buon giorno," and after lunch, "buona sera." Upon leaving, you would say "arrivederLa," or "arrivederci" for the people with whom you are more familiar. When you are introduced to someone, say "piacere" ("it's a pleasure") or "molto lieto" ("pleased to meet you").

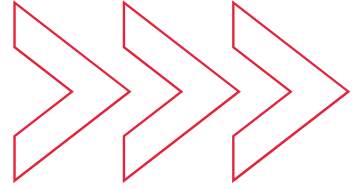
Italians do not consider a door to be "closed" unless it is locked—as in restroom doors.

Standing In Line

Throughout Italy, most people seem reluctant to stand in line. They often crowd around bank teller windows, ticket booths, food stands and cashiers with little respect for the fact that somebody else arrived there first. This can be a really frustrating experience for most Americans, who are used to an orderly line.

Just understand that this is a cultural difference, and not a display of mean spirited behavior. It is something that takes time to get used to. Patience is a virtue, because there will be times someone who got there after you gets served first! Take a deep breath and remember that this isn't necessarily rude – it's a different "system" to which you have not adapted yet. One tactic is to try to remember who got there before you and after you, stand your ground (don't let people push in front of you), and when it's your turn, step right up! Don't be afraid to be assertive. If you expect the cashier to keep track of who is next and then call you when it's your turn, you'll be waiting all day. The cashier leaves it up to the people to ascertain who is next. Again, don't be afraid to be assertive!

Everyday Life: Culture



Shopping

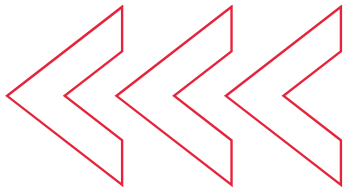
Upon entering a shop, one asks permission, “permesso?” Never touch items in a market or shop unless you ask “posso” (“may I?”) A rule of thumb is: Look at the other shoppers, and if you don’t see them touching the merchandise, do the same.

If you are in a food market and you are told it’s ok to touch things, always grab a sheet of plastic or a bag to pick up the produce – never touch produce with your bare hands in Italy, as this is considered extremely rude!

At some of the larger stores and chain stores (like H&M) it is perfectly ok to browse, touch things, and carry items to the dressing room, as you are used to doing at home. But at smaller stores and markets, you should always assume you are not permitted to touch things. What is the reasoning behind this? It not only helps prevent shoplifting, but there is a cultural difference behind this as well. People who work in markets or shops in Italy (as well as many other countries in Europe) feel it is their job to assist you in selecting something. To take that job away from them would be eliminating their purpose! In a food market, this is especially true because it is the vendor’s job to select the best, ripest produce for you.

Also keep in mind that in Italy, shops are very small. The window displays may already give an accurate picture of the merchandise available, and the prices are often listed in the window display, too. This is to prevent too much foot traffic in such a small space. It is general practice to enter these small shops only if you are looking to buy, if you see something in the window that sparks your interest and is within your price range. Leisurely browsing in tiny shops may be discouraged the shopkeeper. Window shopping, on the other hand, is always acceptable and the displays are generally quite beautiful (Italians are very good at optimizing the little space they have). You will find many people pausing in front of store windows to gaze.

In Florence, the mall is located outside of the city center but is accessible by bus. While there are supermarkets, most of them are much smaller than those in the US. You will not find a “wholesale” (Costco) type of store. Most shops specialize in certain types of products (i.e., a key store, a jewelry store, a stationery store, a hardware store, a vegetable market, a fruit market, a butcher, etc). Sometimes, this makes it more challenging to find a specific product, but it can also be fun to see all the different kinds of shops that are around!



Everyday Life: Culture

Coffee

While in Italy coffee is certainly an important part of the culture, it differs greatly from the American “stay all day with your laptop” coffeehouse culture. Places considered “cafes” in the US are typically called “bars” in Italian. Bars offer both coffee and alcoholic beverages, and are usually frequented during the day. There is a reason that Italians drink espresso rather than the large cups of coffee that Americans tend to prefer: speed. A coffee break is a brief event, in and out of the caffè in 5-10 minutes, mostly standing up at the bar counter. In most bars, there are actually different prices for those who drink their espresso standing up and those who prefer table service. There is generally a price list on the wall which indicates both prices. Depending on the location of the bar, this price difference can be quite significant. Bars in the center of Florence (especially those with tables outside in the main squares) tend to charge you not just for the coffee, but for the view as well. A 1 euro coffee can easily become a €6/7 coffee, so be aware. Ordering a “caffè” automatically means “espresso”. If you prefer American style coffee, you need to specify: “caffè Americano” or “caffè lungo”.

Siesta

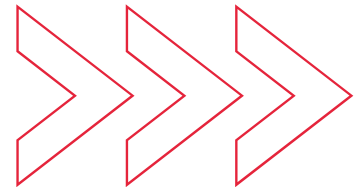
Many businesses close for a few hours in the afternoon for the Italian version of “siesta”. They typically close around 1 pm and re-open between 3:30-4 pm. This includes pharmacies (there are always pharmacies open 24 hours a day), clothing stores, etc. Since Florence is a tourist city, you may even find that things actually stay open (the closer you are to the center). Don’t assume they will, though. The farther you are from the center, and especially when you travel to smaller cities in Italy, the more you will need to take these closures into consideration. Businesses tend to stay open until 7 or 8 in the evening.

Eating/Dining Out

Italians eat well, and they enjoy the social as well as the gastronomic aspects of a meal. In a good restaurant you are expected to spend enough time and money to eat at least two courses. The first course, the “primo,” can be an “antipasto,” or pasta; the second course, the “secondo,” is meat, vegetables, or fish.

You may find that restaurant service seems less attentive – the waiter will probably not come back multiple times to ask, “How is everything.” This is because the expectation is that you are there to enjoy the food and company and do not want to be interrupted constantly.

Everyday Life: Culture



Vegetarian & Gluten Free

It is easy to eat vegetarian and gluten free meals in Italy. Most pasta dishes are non-meat; vegetables are plentiful, varied, and well cooked. It is perfectly acceptable to order a couple of vegetables for a second plate (“secondo”).

Italy is considered one of the most gluten-free friendly countries in the world. Students with a gluten-free diet will have no problem finding gluten-free products in markets and supermarkets, as well as gluten-free items on restaurant menus.

Paying The Restaurant Bill

You usually have to ask for the bill (“conto”) in a restaurant, as opposed to waiting for them to bring you the bill. Again, this is because the cultural expectation is that you have come to the restaurant to enjoy yourself and do not want to be rushed.

Also, the charges on a restaurant bill can confuse non-Italians. You will see a charge for “servizio” or “coperto.” This is a standard charge per person and covers the tip/service and bread (usually runs between €1-€2 pp). This means that you need to leave only a minimal tip - €0.50 per person is fine.

In a coffee bar, the bill works differently. Usually you have to pay first, then take the receipt “scontrino” to the bar and order your “caffè” or other beverage. When you pay they will ask you, “a tavola?” or “al bar?” which is asking you if you want to eat/drink at a table, or standing at the bar. In most coffee bars, they will charge a bit more if you want to take your food/drinks to a table (as opposed to eating/drinking standing at the bar).

Finally, in a restaurant the waiter will usually ask you: “Frizzante o naturale” which means: Do you want sparkling water (acqua frizzante) or flat/tap water (acqua naturale). There is always a charge for sparkling water. Once in a while, they may charge you for tap water as well.

Tipping

Once again, in Italian restaurants, you will be charged a “coperto” or “servizio”, which is a standard charge per person which usually runs between €1-€2 pp. This will be automatically included on your bill and covers the tip/service, as well as bread. If you wish to leave more of a tip, pocket change is completely acceptable. It is NOT necessary to tip 20% of the bill. A little extra is of course appreciated, but large tips are not expected nor required. Likewise, it is not necessary to tip bartenders. You will be wasting your money if you give them a tip for every drink. Tipping taxi drivers is also not necessary, though a little extra on top of the fare is generally acceptable and appreciated, especially if they have helped you with your luggage.

Everyday Life: Culture

Drinking Alcohol

Italians have certain expectations about drinking that are not in line with the drinking habits of many American college students. Disregarding these standards can lead to uncomfortable or dangerous moments.

Italians seldom drink alcohol other than with meals and do not binge drink – this is considered unseemly and in poor taste. “Going out drinking” is not an Italian activity. It is true that wine is considered an integral part of the cuisine, but the expectation is that you drink a glass or two with a meal. Italian law does not tolerate public drunkenness either. Not only will you give a “brutta figura” (a bad impression), you can be arrested and incarcerated for public intoxication. Culturally speaking, in Italy simply being drunk is itself an offense, and it is certainly not an excuse for other types of behavior.

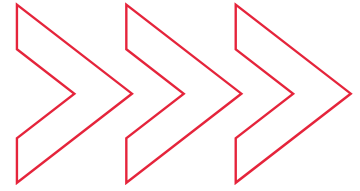
How can I meet Italians?

Italians can be guarded and reserved individuals at first. As with many Europeans constantly surrounded by foreigners, they may not seem friendly at first, but give them a chance. In order to meet Italians it is suggested that Americans not go out together in large groups, as this tends to intimidate the locals. Italians will be less likely to approach a group of Americans than just two or three of you. It is also easier to meet Italian students if you make an effort to speak their language. Upon hearing Italian, they will recognize that you are open to learning more about them and their culture. Also please be aware that Italians do not award a lot of personal space. They will typically stand or sit very close to one another, often touching each other on the arm or shoulder. This may make you feel uncomfortable at first, but you can observe the people around you to determine what is considered normal.

One of the best ways to make friends with the local students is to participate in an exchange, where you will help an Italian student practice their English and they will help you practice your Italian.

As with any initial learning experience, you will encounter people who do not understand you and whom you will not understand. This is part of the learning experience, and the only way for you to overcome the language barrier is to immerse yourself in your language classes and make an active effort to learn the Italian language. Frustration is a natural emotion, but do not let it overwhelm you, as your skills will improve daily!

Everyday Life: Culture



National Holidays

The following is a list of Italy's national holidays. Please keep in mind that many local holidays, saints' days and festivals are also observed. In August, particularly during the weeks either side of Ferragosto, when most of the country flees to the coast, many towns are dead, with shops, bars and restaurants closed and a reduced public transport service. Local religious holidays don't generally close down shops and businesses for the whole day, but they do mean that hotels will be fully booked. On Italy's official national holidays, everything closes down except bars and restaurants.

January 1 New Year's Day

January 6 Epiphany

Easter Sunday

Easter Monday (Monday following Easter - Pasquetta)

April 25 Liberation Day

May 1 Labor Day

June 2 Italian National Holiday

June 24 San Giovanni (Patron Saint)

August 15 Assumption

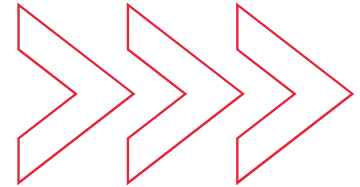
November 1 All Saints' day

December 8 Immaculate Conception

December 25 Christmas Day

December 26 Saint Stephen's day

Staying In Touch



Cell Phones

For information about cell phones abroad, please see:
ASA PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE FOR ALL PROGRAMS

Time Difference

The following are the number of hours BEHIND Italy each region is:

Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
9 hours	8 hours	7 hours	6 hours

So, if it is 6pm in Italy, then it is 12 noon Eastern, 11am Central, and 9am Pacific.

For date and time around the world, to help schedule meetings, sunrise and sunset, use the [Time and Date](#) website.

Computers & Internet

Should I bring a laptop? YES. You will have free wireless Internet access on campus and in your program housing.

HELPFUL TIPS

For information about using a plug adapter with your laptop,
see PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE FOR ALL PROGRAMS