Sarah Tolman

BOLOGNA, ITALY

Sarah’s Major: German, Italian, Certificate in European Studies

Program: Bologna, Italy (Academic Year)

Most Memorable Moments: Almost all of my favorite memories this year have taken place with my best friend and roommate abroad, who’s from Brazil but has been living here in Italy for five years. We speak only Italian together. We had many adventures this year but one of the most memorable was when we were invited to a professional soccer game in Milan and got to meet and get to know some of the players afterwards. I will never forget that night!

Advice for Someone Considering Bologna: As far as the country goes, of course everyone wants to spend time in Italy. The food is wonderful, the people are welcoming, there’s so many pieces of history and culture that you can get to know by living here and traveling around the country. If you ask me, the BCSP program in Bologna is the best way to do that, because in this program you have to find your own apartment, which automatically gives you Italian friends and helps you completely immerse yourself in the culture. Bologna is also the perfect city to become immersed in, because it’s a true University town, and because it’s not so famous, there are hardly any tourists and you’re not tempted to slip back into English all the time. It also has the best food in all of Italy!

Internship: I had an internship at an Italian middle school. I went in once a week to teach English to one middle school class, for the entire year. Each week I would prepare a topic or theme to teach them about me, or about American culture, sometimes it was an upcoming American holiday, sometimes it was sports, or vacations, or something else like that. I taught them vocabulary and had them practice speaking and writing in English. The most important aspect of it was the conversation, because that was something they didn’t get to practice as much during the rest of the week.

“Make friends who are from that country. Learn the language to the best of your ability. Have an open mind. Be adventurous. If you do these things, you will be sure to have an authentic and rewarding immersion experience.”