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I’ve been accepted…
Now what?

Read this handbook!

One of the biggest regrets that many study abroad students have is their lack of research and preparation before departure. Your study abroad experience is an investment in your education as well as your future. As the weeks draw closer to your departure, think about preparing your mind for the journey, as well as your suitcase. A few hours spent researching the history and culture of your host country will pay off in a few short weeks. The more you prepare now, the better adjusted you will be when you arrive, and the more you will learn about your host culture and yourself.

Begin preparing yourself for the fact that things are going to be different in Italy. Some things in your daily life are going to be “better” than at home and some things are going to be “worse”. You will miss some things that you like, such as certain foods or your favorite hang-outs, but you will also come to like new things in Italy that you can’t find in the States. Keep in mind that you are the guest and it is up to you to conform to the customs and living habits in Italy. Italy will not change for you. You may have to modify your expectations about the lifestyles, habits and customs of the Italians. You will certainly encounter frustrations and you will go through an adjustment period, but that is part of what this experience is all about, and you will become a more open-minded person as a result.

Visas

The next step is to acquire your student visa from the Italian government if you are studying in the spring term. University of Wisconsin-Madison students have their visas processed through the International Academic Programs office.

You will receive instructions from IAP on the required next steps in the student visa process. U.S. citizens must have a passport valid for at least six months beyond the end of the program. If you are not a US citizen, contact your Study Abroad Advisor for guidance.

You are advised NOT to leave the U.S. for any international travel up to three months before the program begins as your passport must be turned over to the consulate for visa processing. If you must be out of the country more than a couple of days prior to the program start date, there is no guarantee that the consulate will process the visa in time for your departure.

Academics

Rigor

CET provides rigorous programs designed to help students maximize their experience abroad. Part of this design includes challenging classes that require students to devote significant portions of their time abroad to class work. Students should plan to devote week days to classes and homework, saving activities and exploring the city primarily for the weekend.

Course Selection and Offering

All courses are worth three credits with the exception of Italian language which are four credits each. You will take 12-18 credits and are required to take at least one of the two courses taught by the UW-Madison Resident Director. In addition, you will take one Italian language course offered at the beginner/intermediate level. If you’ve taken beyond 4th semester Italian language, this requirement will be waived.

Courses offered at Villa for Spring 2014

Western Culture: Literature and the Arts, Renaissance to Contemporary (Prof. Mike Vanden Heuvel)
The Legacy of Italian Experimental Art: From Futurism to the Present (Prof. Mike Vanden Heuvel)
Italian language (101, 102, 203, and 204)
Passion, Power & Pestilence: Art in Italy 1500-1650
Food and Culture in Italy

Courses offered in Florence at CET Academic Programs Center for Spring 2014

The two courses below will be open to UW in Italy participants. This option requires commuting (at your own expense) between Sesto and Florence for class.

Italian and European Politics
International Management

Most classes are held twice a week, with each meeting lasting 90 minutes; two hours when site visits are included. The Italian language classes meet for 50 minutes four days a week, Monday through Thursday.

Typically, classes meet on Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday. For some courses, such as those in art history, site visits and other required class-related activities may be scheduled at other times. The schedule is intended to provide blocks of time that enable site visit (and re-visit) of special interest in and around Florence and Tuscany. Students should note, however, that they are expected to attend class meetings and that attendance will be factored into their final grades; faculty members will inform students of the program’s attendance policy at the beginning of the semester. Students are to follow the CET attendance policy.
A final academic calendar and course schedule will be provided to you on-site during orientation. For additional information concerning academic policies and regulations at your home university, consult your study abroad office or refer to general study abroad handbooks and guidelines received prior to departure.

**Textbooks**
Textbooks differ according to each course. The books, and other resources, will be provided and assigned upon arrival in Italy.

**Library**
Academic facilities at the Villa include a library of approximately 3000 volumes, shelved in three interconnected rooms. The collection is intended to support the course offerings at the Villa each term, and while it is not as extensive a collection as at your home campus, it contains basic primary and secondary source materials. In addition, the library is furnished with tables and chairs and provides study space.

**Living at the Villa**
The Villa Corsi-Salviati and its grounds are both imposing and welcoming. Of Renaissance foundation, the Villa has been superbly maintained and successfully but discreetly updated. Begun over 500 years ago, the Villa has been added to and renovated over the years, and our program leases a portion, but not all, of the buildings and grounds. It is one of the great houses of Florence and its gardens are various and command wonderful views.

Living at the Villa is both a **privilege** and a **responsibility**. The privilege is that one lives in a home finer than almost any that others have lived in at any time, in any place.

The responsibility is to keep it that way—for our own enjoyment and for the enjoyment of those who follow us. The Villa was not built as a university set for classrooms and group living, but as a family country residence.

We have been permitted to adapt to our uses the home of a culturally and historically important Florentine family. Naturally, certain restrictions are placed on its use, and the Villa enjoys the special protection of the Fine Arts Commission of Italy.

You will learn more about the Villa and living there at orientation meetings but in general your own judgment should warn you when you are about to damage the physical or aesthetic character of the Villa. Your good taste should indicate, for example, that laundry is not to be hung out of windows to dry or that posters should not to be tacked or taped to the walls. Please check and then check again to make certain what may or may not be done in this splendid house. The property has been extensively renovated by the present owners.

You will be housed primarily in double and triple rooms. The property also contains classrooms, a small library and study space, computer facilities, a dining hall and kitchen, and reception rooms.

The Villa Corsi-Salviati is situated in Sesto Fiorentino on the outskirts of Florence. Literally, as the name indicates, it is at the sixth Roman mile (about 10 kilometers) from the center of the ancient city of Florence on the Roman Via Cassia (now the Via A. Gramsci). Originally a workers’ community, today Sesto is a bustling town, engaged primarily in the production of porcelain and maiolica, with a cinema, cafes, restaurants, shops, and other amenities.

Also in the immediate area are several other magnificent Villas and gardens which are open to the public, including the Medici Villas of Castello and Petraia. The area of Monte Morello, immediately to the north of the Villa Corsi-Salviati, offers the opportunity for beautiful walks. The Villa Corsi-Salviati and Sesto are on a direct bus line to the center of Florence (the bus lets you off at Santa Maria Novella, SMN, the central railway station), with easily accessible and frequent service. The bus ride is about 30 minutes although it can take longer during rush hour. One round trip ticket costs approximately €2.40 and a monthly pass is about €38. You might want to purchase a monthly bus pass for your convenience. There is a fast train with regular daytime service from the nearby Zambara station that takes about 13 minutes to arrive at SMN. Tickets must be purchased in advance.
**Security at the Villa**
For reasons of security, the Villa is always locked. You will be given a key to the front door and to your room upon arrival, and must pay a €100 security deposit. Students are liable for any damages to their housing facilities over the term. Deposits will be returned to students in full at the end of the term if no repairs or cleaning services are needed.

After 10 p.m. only enrolled students may enter the grounds and there can be NO overnight guests for any reason. The school cannot be responsible for any loss of money, jewelry, or valuable possessions on or off the Villa grounds. Care for your personal property should also be exercised at the Villa.

**Rooms**
Students are assigned to rooms based on information they provide in the housing preference form. This form will be made available to you after your admittance to the program. Most rooms are triples, with a few doubles, singles, and quadruples. Room and roommate assignments are made before arrival, and it is, therefore, critical that if you have needs or preferences that it would help us to know, you include that information on the housing form.

**Meals**
Meals are taken in the Limonaia, the room where lemon trees were once stored in winter. Lunch and dinner is provided Monday-Thursday. Breakfast and meals outside of the provided lunch and dinner are on your own. You will need to plan either to eat out or to purchase food at one of the nearby grocery stores. If you will not be at the Villa for a meal, we ask that you notify the program that you will be away. Provisions are made for vegetarians or those following religious dietary laws. Please provide this information in the housing form and talk with the Resident Director or Resident Assistant onsite.

**Arrival Information**
Participants are responsible for making their own travel plans to and from the program site. You are expected to arrive at the Villa on the date that the program begins. Students should arrive after 10:30 AM and not later than 7:00 PM on January 22, 2014. It is not possible to move in to the Villa at an earlier date or at a later hour that first day. That evening the first meal of the semester will be served. Orientation begins the following day and is mandatory. Students will receive comprehensive arrival instructions and housing information about 2 weeks before they depart. For details on making travel arrangements, see the “Travel” section in this handbook.

**Housing Deposit**
A housing deposit of a €100 will be collected during orientation. During the last days of the term the RA will check each room. The €100 deposit will be returned in full if there are no damages at the end of the semester. Any damage found, according to the CET policy, will be student’s individual responsibility and deducted directly from the housing deposit. If the damages affect shared living quarters, the amount will be deducted from each student’s deposit.

**Housing Rules**
Housing facilities are inspected prior to students’ arrival to ensure that everything is in good working order. Students are held responsible for all damages thereafter. Students have a responsibility to each other and their roommates to abide by these rules. In addition, students are responsible for keeping their housing clean and tidy and throwing out the garbage.

**Going from the Villa to Florence**
The Villa Corsi-Salviati is located in Sesto Fiorentino, on the outskirts of Florence, and can be reached by bus, train, or taxi. The method you choose for getting into Florence and returning to the Villa will likely vary according to the time of day, and over the course of your stay at the Villa, you may well resort to all three methods of transportation. Bus and taxi are the most convenient methods.

The bus to Florence runs approximately every 20 minutes, from early morning until late in the evening. The nearest stop for going into Florence will likely vary according to the time of day, and over the course of your stay at the Villa, you may well resort to all three methods of transportation. Bus and taxi are the most convenient methods.

The bus to Florence runs approximately every 20 minutes, from early morning until late in the evening. The nearest stop for going into Florence is a five-minute walk from the Villa. (On the return, the #2 bus stops across the street from the Villa; the #28 turns the corner just before the Villa and stops there.) The trip into Florence, to the train station Santa Maria Novella, takes from 30 minutes (when traffic is not heavy) to 45 minutes (during rush hour).
During orientation, students will be asked to sign a waiver that stipulates that they will be liable for any damages to the apartment over the semester and that they will pay for any repairs or housecleaning costs, as deemed necessary by the resident director and landlord. Failure to pay for incurred damages may result in the withholding of your transcript.

It is forbidden to have guests stay in the Villa—friends or family. Only registered students may sleep there. Please show the utmost consideration for your neighbors and keep noise levels down, especially after 10pm. You are not allowed to arrange parties and noisy dinners with lots of people. Do not waste utilities like water, gas and electricity. The utilities are very expensive in Italy and often run on a time system, so you could easily end up having to pay more than expected if you are not careful.

**Laundry**
Sheets, pillows, and blankets are provided, and you will be responsible for your own laundry. There are three token-operated industrial washing machines and one dryer at the Villa for you to use. (Tokens can be purchased at €1.50 per token from your resident assistant; one token buys a wash or 30 minutes’ drying time.) Laundry soap is provided, and an iron and an ironing board are also available.

**Sports Facilities**
Gyms and sports clubs offer short term memberships CET students can join for a seasonal fee. Remember that the number of amenities and size of facilities may differ from those found in the United States. However, there are many opportunities to stay fit and active during your time in Italy, so ask locals for their personal recommendations. In addition, there are places to jog nearby, including the Park of Villa Solaria. The Monte Morello with its rural roads and panoramic views of Sesto and Florence is also suitable for walks, running and bicycling.

**Internet and Electricity**
The Villa is set up for wireless internet. There are various computer facilities for students at the Villa (3 PC’s and two printers).

All computers are equipped with internet access and word processing and can be used to access e-mail. Students use their regular home university email accounts.

While it is not necessary, many students find it helpful to have their own computer.

Before you bring your laptop, make sure that the battery is in good working condition and that you have good virus protection software on your computer. Do not bring surge protectors, as they can ruin the electrical wiring of the Villa if combined with electrical converters.

The voltage in Italy is 220V. If you want to use an American appliance that requires 110V, you must use a converter, otherwise, the 220V from the outlet will destroy your American appliance as well as the electricity in your room. More expensive equipment, such as computers and MP3 players, already convert voltage in their power adapters.

Make sure you check your electronics’ user manual or look at the power adapter for information about the voltage. Know this information ahead of time so that you can be prepared in Italy with any necessary adapters! For other smaller appliances, such as hairdryers, it is advisable to purchase one in Italy or one that can switch to 220V. American flatirons generally do not work properly in Europe, but you can easily purchase them in Italy.

Italy uses two-pronged plugs, so you will need to pack a plug adapter as well for any electronics you are bringing with you. The adapter needs to be able to fit into a recessed outlet (see picture).

Both the converter and plug adapter for American appliances are very difficult to find in Italy, so you should bring them from the US if you plan on using American appliances in Italy, especially if you are bringing appliances with three-prong plugs. Even with the use of proper adapters, electrical equipment can burn out.

If you have a particularly expensive appliance, it is advisable to leave it at home; many appliances are readily available at drug stores throughout Italy, so you can purchase them after you arrive.
Health Issues

Health Tips
Whenever you go to any foreign country, you are exposed to germs to which your body has not yet built up a resistance. You may be more susceptible to illness than local people are. The most common areas for health problems are digestive and upper respiratory systems. Please take note of this if you have allergies or asthma and bring medication if necessary. Wear rubber slippers or sandals when bathing to prevent athlete’s foot from occurring. These items can be easily purchased abroad.

If You Get Sick
If you become ill, you should seek medical attention immediately. In emergencies, your resident director can help take you to the clinic or hospital. Be sure to keep all records of hospital/clinic visits and expenses for insurance purposes. Please note that CET policy prevents staff from making medical decisions; a resident director can accompany you to a hospital but cannot decide which medical services you should receive. Your resident director reserves the right to send any participant home who, in the judgment of the staff, is not mentally or physically fit to continue in the program.

Medical Services in Italy
For non-emergency purposes, specific hospitals treat specific conditions, so you may have a very limited number of choices. If you decide an ambulance is necessary, you will not be given a choice of hospitals, as the choice is up to the paramedics. Should you need to see a doctor in Italy, these are a few things about which you should be aware: Emergency care is free of charge, but you will need to pay a small fee on the spot for nonessential treatment. Remember to get a receipt for your medical insurance claim if one is not automatically given to you! If you are allergic to any commonly prescribed medicine, such as penicillin, be sure to notify your resident director and any doctors whose care you are under in Italy.

Ask your American doctor to suggest some alternatives to the medication before leaving the US. If you regularly take or are allergic to any medicines, it is also very important that you write down the generic name of that medicine. Ask your doctor to help you with this. You will be given a complete list of all emergency numbers and addresses during orientation. If you need medical assistance, you will need your passport and an adequate amount of money for immediate payment as necessary. Note that some doctors in Italy do not accept credit cards, so we recommend that you have access to an ATM.

CET Emergency Contact Info
Please carry CET Emergency Contact information and your CISI Insurance card with you at all times so that you are able to contact CET staff, a hospital and the insurance company in case of an emergency.

Emergencies
In the case of a medical emergency, the resident assistant may accompany you to the hospital. Be prepared to be patient at a time when you feel least able to be so; hospital visits can sometimes take hours. Such a situation can be a true test of your cultural sensitivity. The resident assistant will provide information concerning medical facilities so that students can make informed choices during emergencies.

Immunizations
For current, region-specific immunization information, visit the Center for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov or talk with your doctor. It is also a good idea to find out if you are allergic to penicillin, as it is often prescribed in some foreign countries. You should ask your doctor for advice regarding inoculations.

Over the Counter Medicine
Most medications found in the United States are also available in Italy. If you regularly take or are allergic to any medicines, it is very important that you write down the generic name of that medicine. Ask your doctor to help you with this.

Allergies and Medical Questions

Allergies to Medication
If you are allergic to any commonly prescribed medicine, such as penicillin, be sure to notify your resident assistant and any doctors you see while abroad, and ask your personal doctor to suggest some alternatives to the medication before leaving the U.S. If you regularly take or are allergic to any medicines, it is very important that you write down the generic name of that medicine. Ask your doctor to help you with this.

Food Allergies
If you have serious allergies to foods, like peanuts or legumes, please let us know so that we can help you prepare yourself for the challenge of avoiding these foods in Italy.

Medical Questions
CET staff members cannot offer advice about medical matters. Specific questions concerning health should be directed to a healthcare professional.
CET monitors programs closely through current events, daily communication with staff overseas and State Department travel warnings. These warnings are posted at http://www.travel.state.gov. If for any reason a situation arises that we feel threatens the safety of our students, we will delay and / or cancel the program. Nonetheless, there are general safety measures that students should practice on site.

Prescription Drugs

If you take prescription drugs, you should bring enough for the duration of your stay abroad. In addition, you should also bring a list of generic names of any prescription drugs you use, a record of your allergies or chronic medical problems, and the phone number of your physician at home. This will allow you maximum flexibility should you lose your medication or require emergency treatment.

Personal Safety in Italy

Personal Belongings

As in any large city, you should take reasonable precautions about crime. Be sure to lock your room and guard your money and passport against pickpockets. CET recommends that in situations where you must have large amounts of money or your passport on your person that you keep it in a money belt that can be concealed under your clothing.

In the City

Students are advised to use the buddy system or go out in groups, especially at night. In addition, students should avoid places where large groups of drunken people congregate as well as confrontations with individuals who have had too much to drink. You should always carry your student ID with you for identification purposes. It is recommended that you keep a photocopy of your passport and current visa in your wallet or purse at all times. Remember, when it comes to safety, a little bit of common sense goes a long way! CET staff will go over safety issues and precautions particular to your location in detail during orientation.

Travel

Students should carry their passports when leaving the city. Traveling in groups is strongly recommended, as is making sure that CET, family and friends are all aware of your plans and can contact you in case of emergency. Students should carry extra copies of documents such as plane tickets, passports and visas. Carrying multiple forms of money (ATM/credit card/cash) in a secure location is advised.

CETArranges housing, courses and excursions for CET students only. Friends, family members or other guests may not stay in the dormitories or apartments, or attend any program-related activities without the explicit permission of the resident staff. The best time for family and friends to visit is before or after the program, during a semester break or over a weekend. Students receive a detailed semester schedule on site so that plans can be made accordingly. Unless there is an emergency, students may not end their term early. Program and final examination dates are set in advance with the host university and faculty and may not be adjusted.

Harassment

CET supports an atmosphere of respect and does not tolerate any form of harassment, sexual or otherwise. This includes, but is not limited to, unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or any intimidating or hostile acts directed toward any individual, regardless of his/her association with CET.
**Illegal Drugs**  
The possession and use of illegal drugs while attending a CET program are strictly prohibited and typically result in expulsion from the program. Use, purchase and receipt of drugs from outside the country are serious offenses in all countries in which CET operates, and penalties are usually harsher than in the United States. Status as a foreigner does not exempt students from these local laws.

**Impropriety**  
CET expects students to respect the rights and dignity of classmates, other foreigners, and local roommates, faculty and community members. Any behavior on the part of a student deemed improper by the resident staff or host institution is subject to formal reprimand or disciplinary action, and may result in expulsion from the program. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to: violent acts, offensive language, verbal abusiveness, sexual misconduct, disruption of classes or excursions, disorderly conduct, theft, alcohol or drug abuse, self-endangerment and academic dishonesty.

**Local Laws**  
As foreign residents of the host country, students are expected to abide by all local and national laws. Violation of these laws may result in expulsion from the program and/or criminal prosecution.

In the case of such a violation, students should understand that there is little or nothing that CET staff or anyone else associated with the program can do to assist. Likewise, the US Embassy can only work to ensure that the student is treated in the same manner as a citizen of the country charged with the same offense.

**Private Life**  
CET is neither eager nor able to regiment the private lives of students. However, students should recognize that norms of the host country are different from those of the home country. Romantic relationships, recreational use of alcohol, manner of dress, etc. are frequent areas of divergent assumptions. In these cases, the personal choices of students can have a negative impact on others and tarnish the reputation of the CET community as a whole. If residence staff members notice problematic behavior, they may intervene and, when necessary, expel a student from the program.

**Vandalism and Theft**  
Students are expected to respect the property of the host institution, all CET facilities and housing. Assessments for missing items and damages to property are the student’s individual responsibility.

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**CET Academic Integrity Policy**

**Overview**  
In each program, CET is committed to providing an environment in which all students can achieve their highest academic potential. CET asks students to approach their academic work with seriousness, dedication and honesty, and respect the rights of their classmates, roommates and faculty to do the same. The CET Academic Integrity Policy aims to safeguard these standards. An expelled student is given 24 hours to depart campus, without refund or transcript, and the home institution is notified. CET staff may be in contact with the student’s home institution for any reason and at any time when the student is on a CET program.

**Academic Honesty**  
Academic dishonesty of any kind during the program—is not tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarizing or using someone else’s work without proper documentation.
2. Cheating or helping a classmate cheat.
3. Submitting the same work in two different courses, or submitting work that has already received credit at another program or the home institution.

Academic dishonesty may result in failure of the course(s) in question, notification to the home university and/or expulsion from the program.

**Attendance**  
Attendance at all class sessions, as well as the vast majority of orientation sessions and out-of-classroom excursions such as traveling seminars, field trips and on-site lectures, is required. On rare occasions, such as illness or religious holidays, students may notify CET residence staff in advance to gain approval for an excused absence. All other absences, including those due to travel or guest visits, are considered unexcused.

CET faculty and staff track absences. The total number of missed class hours is noted on the final transcript and factored into the final grade. As absences accumulate over the course of the term, CET issues warning letters first to the student and then to the home institution.
Phones

Cell phones
The Villa is not equipped with land line telephones. However, cell phones have become extremely popular in Italy. It is a good idea to rent a cell phone before you leave. We highly recommend you obtain a cell phone so that you are reachable at all times in case of an emergency.

A good resource for renting cell phones in Italy is through Student Cells, Inc., [www.studentcells.com](http://www.studentcells.com), which is a company based in California that specializes in renting cell phones to American students studying abroad in Italy. Student Cells, Inc. will be in touch regarding your cell phone service for the coming semester.

Students who choose not to rent a cell phone must make their own arrangements and are required to provide the resident director with a phone number where they can be reached at all times during the semester.

Using US Cell Phones in Italy
We encourage students to rent phone through “Student Cells” because of the ease and good value of their services. However, if you plan on bringing and using your cell phone from the US, contact your local cell-phone company before your departure.

CET recommends obtaining an Italian phone number, as students sometimes have problems and often have high charges when using their US phone number in Italy. When you arrive in Italy, you will need to buy an Italian SIM card; you will then add pre-paid minutes to your phone throughout your time in Italy.

If you feel strongly about using your US phone and phone number in Italy, please contact your local cell phone company for international options to make sure you are aware of the cell phone usage costs.

Skype
Skype has become popular in Italy and among American students studying abroad and offers decent quality at a fraction of the cost of using landlines or cell phones.

Calling Cards
Phone cards can be found at local drug stores in the U.S., specifically for calls to Europe. Many have rates as low as 2 or 3 cents/minute. It does not cost any money for students in Italy to receive calls on their cell phones; it only costs money to make calls.

Calling between Italy and the US
In order to make a telephone call to or from Italy, please note the following information.
To call outside of Italy, dial: 00.

To call the US direct, dial: 001+ area code + number
People in the US dialing Italy must dial 011-039+ your telephone number.

City Specific Area Code Phone Numbers
Florence 055

Important General Phone Numbers
Police 113
Fire Department 115
Medical Emergencies 118

Mail

**Tips for Mailing Packages to Italy**

Italy’s postal service is usually reliable, but slower than what you may be used to in the US. Delivery time for international mail varies considerably, but on the average, mail sent from the United States to Italy takes about 10 days to arrive.

For packages or more valuable mail, family and friends are encouraged to use a global, traceable mailing service. Parents are advised not to send valuable packages to students in Italy through regular mail or other courier services. You may have to pay a customs fee when you receive a package if the sender does not indicate that the items are either USED or FOR PERSONAL USE, or if the sender declares a high value for insurance.

Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES should the following items be sent:
- Cosmetics
- Electronics
- Prescription Drugs
- Shoes

Please note, CET is not responsible for, nor will we be able to forward, any mail received for you after you leave the program.

All mail sent to students in the Italy programs should be sent to the address listed below. All questions should be directed to the CET Washington, DC office at 800.225.4262 or cet@academic-travel.com.

**Mailing Address**

UW Madison in Italy Program
c/o CET Academic Programs
Villa Corsi Salviati
Via A. Gramsci n. 460

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Money

**The Euro**

The Euro is officially used as Italy’s national currency. Your resident director will advise you of the most recent exchange rates after you arrive at your program site. However, the exchange rate will probably fluctuate while you are in Italy. You should always check your money when you exchange it- even at the bank.

**How Much to Bring?**

The amount of spending money you should bring varies greatly depending on the amount of shopping and independent travel you wish to do, either within Italy or in Europe. Basic living in Italy can be done at a slightly higher cost than in the US because prices for goods tend to be a little higher. Alumni of our program have told us that on average, they spent between 100 and 200 Euros a week, and food and personal travel were usually their biggest expenses. If you plan on travelling extensively or purchasing costly items, we recommend that you allow for this on top of the suggested amount.

**ATM and Credit Cards**

CET recommends using mainly debit or credit cards. ATMs, known as *Bancomats*, are found across Italy. ATM and credit cards can be used to obtain cash if they have a major credit card logo (Visa, Master Card) on them. Contact your bank before using a credit or debit card abroad to prevent your institution from flagging your card as stolen. Check with your bank regarding fees for using your card abroad.

ATMs are both widely available and convenient in Florence and Sesto. There are several ATMs within a 10 to 15 minute walk of the CET Center.

Weather, Clothing and Packing

**Weather Information**

Students going to Italy in the spring months should keep in mind that they will experience all types of weather. It will be hot in September and May, and it will be cold in November, December, January and February. During the winter, please note that the heating systems in Italy are not as warm as they are in the US. Be sure to pack warm clothing, clothing that can be layered and even some long-underwear if you get cold easily, as it will be cool inside buildings and the CET Center. For all seasons we suggest rain gear and good walking shoes. Sesto and Florence are walking cities made up of cobblestones and hilly, uneven pedestrian streets, rather than sidewalks. Comfortable shoes will make your experience much more
Travel

U.S. Customs- Declaration of Purchases
American citizens and permanent residents must complete the front side of the declarations forms distributed on the return flight, listing in U.S. dollars the total value of good acquired and signing the reverse side. It may prove helpful to save your receipts and pack purchases in one section of your luggage. More information can be found at: http://www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel/

Luggage Requirements
The standard international baggage regulations permit one piece of checked luggage. Size and weight restrictions apply. Contact your air carrier for further information about baggage restrictions and the cost of checking additional baggage. Any charges due to oversized and/or extra pieces of luggage are your responsibility.

CET recommends packing a change of clothes and necessary medications in your carry-on bag in case a checked bag should go astray temporarily. If your luggage does get lost, be sure to fill out a lost luggage report before leaving the airport and to notify your resident director immediately.

Travel-On
Travel-On is the official travel agency for CET Academic Programs. To book your flight or learn about special airfares, please contact a Travel-On agent.

You may call Travel-On: 1-855-387-4676 or 240-387-4676, email: cet@tvlon.com, or visit the Travel-On website: http://www.tvlon.com/ata. Please allow your mailbox to receive emails from cet@tvlon.com, to ensure you will receive flight information from Travel-On. Airfare is not included in the program price.

For travel
Money belt
Travel-size first aid kit
Disinfectant wipes
Insect repellent
Travel alarm clock
Small travel bag

Special occasions & purposes
Swimsuit
At least one formal outfit
Gifts for new Italian friends (e.g. clothing or souvenirs from your university, English print magazines, books, chocolate/candy)

Enjoyable. You may bring rain gear with you or you can purchase it in Italy; umbrellas are easy to find, but rain jackets are more expensive. It is also highly recommended to bring slippers or flip-flops for comfort and warmth in your apartment.

Dressing Appropriately
While clothing styles in Europe are generally the same as those in the US, there are still situations in which conservative clothing is most appropriate, and CET students are expected to observe and respect these conventions. The resident director has the right to request that any student change his or her clothes if, in the director’s judgment, the clothing is unacceptable.

Items That Are Provided
Linens, blankets, pillows and towels are provided at each of the programs.

“What you can’t get in Italy”
Virtually every common daily item, necessity, tool and appliance, as well as all kinds of clothes and accessories, are easily available in Italy- though they may not be in your favorite brand or style. Program alumni recommend bringing a backpack for textbooks, a voltage converter, as well as an Italian-English Dictionary and phrase book. Remember that your favorite product brand names may not be readily available in Italy so bring your preferred brand of good quality deodorant, good quality lip balm, and saline solution for sensitive eyes. Bring your preferred brand of pain relievers, too.

Suggested items to pack
The vast majority of the students we surveyed also told us that they wish they hadn’t brought so many clothes! Italy is known for its high quality clothing items, so keep in mind that you will be accumulating many other items during your stay (gifts, artwork, Italian books, etc.) and you’ll want to have room in your suitcase for your return. If you have any questions about what to pack, contact us! Many members of the CET Italy team have studied or worked in Italy and have visited there recently. We can help you decide what to bring.

Everyday
Clothes that layer
Short-sleeved shirts
Long-sleeved shirts
Sturdy windproof and waterproof jacket
Warm, waterproof walking shoes or boots
Sturdy, comfortable walking shoes
Warm hat and scarf Winter coat
Several sweaters or sweat shirts
Warm pajamas
Continuing to a second term with CET/Changing return flight

Travel-on can assist students with date changes to their return flight for a fee, dependent upon availability. For more information, contact Travel-On at (855)-387-4676 or cet@tvlon.com. Any costs associated with flight changes are the student’s responsibility.

Excursions and Activities with CET

CET arranges a variety of excursions and extracurricular activities for students on all of our programs. Activities may include performances, museums, parks, lectures, films, and holiday activities. Extra activities will be suggested, and all students are encouraged to take part. A small participation fee may be charged for some optional activities.

More information on the activity schedule will be provided during onsite orientation. CET staff attempts to arrange several activities per semester at times when both Italian and foreign students are able to participate.

Timing Independent Travel

During your term abroad, if you wish to travel outside of the scheduled program sites, there are many places to visit within the rest of Italy. It is easy to travel throughout regions of Tuscany and Sicily—we encourage you to explore!

Trains are a popular way of traveling within Italy. Bus transportation also connects many cities. For personal travel, you should use whatever best first your needs. Learning how to plan your own travel and navigate through Italy is a liberating part of study abroad!

In addition to advising students to travel throughout Italy, CET recommends that you do not fall into the trap of spending all your free time with other American. CET is located in Sesto to give you the opportunity to integrate into Italian society.

CET strongly urges that students do not book any independent travel plans until you arrive and receive your finalized schedule during your on-site orientation.

All dates are subject to change until you receive your program calendar upon arrival. Please note that attendance on the traveling seminars and in your classes is required. Any visits due to personal travel, or visits from friends or family will not be excused. CET takes its academics very seriously. Please review the Academic Integrity Policy in your CET account for details.

Being Green While Abroad

At CET Academic Programs, we are committed to protecting our planet, its natural treasures and its people. In our offices around the world, we have taken steps to reduce our carbon footprint. We encourage our students to join us in our quest for environmental sustainability. Here is our list of the Top Five Ways to be Green Abroad:

1. Turn off all lights, heaters and air conditioners before leaving your dorm room or apartment.
2. Walk or take public transportation. Avoid taxis.
3. Use water sparingly. Take short showers. Turn off the water while brushing teeth.
4. Purchase locally produced food and products.
5. Reuse whenever you can. Use cloth napkins, reusable shopping bags and water bottles, non-disposable eating utensils, scratch paper, etc.

For more information about our efforts to promote environmental conservation and local philanthropy, visit our website at: www.cetacademicprograms.com.

Living in Italy as a Study Abroad Student

Cultural Adjustments

It is important to keep in mind that experiencing a cycle of culture shock is a normal part of living abroad. Once you arrive in Italy, you may find that you are feeling down or homesick. If so, we encourage you to stop by the CET office to talk with your Resident Director about it. As challenging as it may be at times, we encourage you to immerse yourself in your new environment as much as possible, taking advantage of all the opportunities to do and see things unavailable to you at home.

It is important to understand that the feelings and experiences you are going through are part of the normal adjustments to living in a foreign culture and that with time and determination, you will get through any difficulties you are experiencing.

To deal with culture shock, make a concerted effort to keep things in perspective. It is wise to always remember that living in Italy may be different from living in your home country and city. Cultural differences have a long basis in history, and while some things may seem irrational to you, it is because Italians operate according to different cultural norms. For more information, you should ask CET staff, your teachers, and your roommates. The following are a few things to keep in mind:

- Like anywhere else, Italy has both good and bad sides.
- Avoid making judgments about Italy. It is what it is. Don’t let the difficult times prevent you from finding the good things that Italy has to offer. Try to focus on what is available, rather than what isn’t.
• When something annoys you, try to understand why it is the way it is.
• Look for ways to enjoy Italian life and meet Italian people. Living abroad is a challenge—rise to that challenge!

**Gender Differences and Safety**

In Italy, norms for some behaviors, like dress, may seem much stricter, while other behaviors, like physical contact between men, may seem much looser. In some countries, including Italy, American women may find themselves uncomfortable with the looks and comments of the men, while American men may find it very difficult to meet women of the host country. Firmly say “no” to invitations you don’t want and turn away. Ignore persistent overtures. Never feel you need to be polite to an unwanted show of interest.

One significant area of difference between the U.S. and Italy has to do with consumption of alcohol. While there is not the rigid enforcement of a “drinking age” in Italy, you will also find that Italians seldom drink to become intoxicated. Rather, alcohol is consumed in moderation on social occasions and with meals. Public drunkenness and rowdy behavior, by both men and women, are frowned upon. Moreover, over-consumption of alcohol poses special difficulties for women: Not only are women who are publicly drunk in Italy looked upon as “loose,” they also put themselves at risk for sexual assault and other unwanted attentions.

**Words of wisdom from former CET students**

Among the differences in history, language, politics and culture, you will also discover images and ideals strangely similar to those in the States. Most students find that they learn a great deal about themselves and their beliefs as they gain a better understanding and appreciation of Italy. Each day will bring new challenges and discoveries. Past students have told us that keeping a journal or a blog during their time abroad was an ideal way to come to terms with their experiences. By regularly articulating your perceptions and ideas about life in Italy, you not only maintain a record of your experiences, but also put these experiences in context with your understanding or misunderstandings about Italy. A journal will help you understand and appreciate what you find most enjoyable, most perplexing or most curious about life abroad.

**Culture Shock and Resolving Problems**

**Culture Shock and Homesickness**

Almost everyone experiences culture shock and homesickness at some point during their time abroad. Even those who have traveled extensively, visited Italy before or have studied Italian for a long time. It is normal. It will probably happen to you at some point while you are in Italy as well. Culture shock and homesickness come in waves. The length of each stage varies depending on the individual. First is the Honeymoon Stage where everything about the host country is wonderful, new, and amazing. Eventually, the novelty wears off and what used to be fascinating is now irritating.

This is the Negotiation Stage and when you feel the worst—you may want to go home, you may dislike your host country. The next stage, the Adjustment Stage, would probably occur towards the end of your stay. This is when you develop a routine and feel comfortable with life in the host country. Then, once you return to the US, you’ll probably go through these same stages again in reverse, feeling that everything was better in Italy, that people at home can’t understand you, etc.

This stage is called Reverse Culture Shock.

The following tips can help make the worst part of culture shock, the Negotiation Stage, as short as possible.

• Make concrete goals that you can work towards. For example: explore a new part of town. Meet a local other than through your Czech Buddy. Order by yourself at a restaurant. Being able to see your progress helps reinforce the benefits of coming.

• Get out! Instead of staying in your room, get out and explore the city, meet locals, get involved in a club. Stewing alone often just makes things worse.

• Think about what activities you love to do and make time for it while abroad.

• Communicate your feelings to other CETers. Most likely you are not the only one feeling this way! On the other hand, avoid complaining to friends and family back home since they will feel bad that they can’t help.

**Resolving Problems**

Note: This section addresses problems related to your academic program, CET roommates, etc. It does not address emergencies such as accidents, serious illnesses, security problems on campus or crimes that require the assistance of the police. **In real emergencies, students should seek out CET staff immediately for assistance, regardless of the time or day.**

The following guidelines have been created to help you identify and solve problems you may encounter in your classes, housing, meals or adjustment to your new environment. Even if you have lived abroad before you will undoubtedly encounter problems in one or more of these areas during your stay. These guidelines will help you define your problem, and when appropriate, seek out the right person to assist in the problem’s resolution. Students should actively take responsibility to resolve problems with the help of CET.
Only when students take the initiative to bring problems to the attention of the staff can problems be solved in a timely fashion. You should not, however, always seek out your CET directors as the first step in solving a problem. CET believes that problem resolution is a valuable skill that can be acquired with practice and will provide great opportunities for students to learn about Italian culture and society, as well as develop cross-cultural skills.

**How to Proceed**

1. Try to solve the problem yourself. If you feel your class pace is too slow, speak to your teacher directly about your concern. If you have a conflict with your roommate(s) first try to talk to them about it. This approach might quickly solve the problem; it also helps you learn vocabulary, discourse, and cultural skills that you might not otherwise learn.

2. Seek out the appropriate CET staff member. Please respect the posted office hours.

3. In some cases, you may be asked to make an appointment to discuss the problem. If you are experiencing a problem in your academic program, and you have already spoken to your teacher, please make an appointment to see CET’s Academic Director during office hours.

4. We cannot guarantee that all problems will be resolved. You are expected to respect the host culture and recognize the fact that what is appropriate in Italy is not always the same as at home. Also, please bear in mind that some problems take longer to resolve than you might expect; few can be solved overnight. Unfortunately, some problems simply cannot be resolved, despite the best efforts of our staff.

**Media and Cultural Resources**

**Websites**

- International Student Identity Card
- U.S. Department of State
  [http://travel.state.gov/](http://travel.state.gov/)
- U.S. Customs
- General Italy information:
  [http://www.initaly.com](http://www.initaly.com/)
- Florence website with English and Italian links:
  [http://english.firenze.net/](http://english.firenze.net/)
- Italian Tourist Web Guide (in English):
- Map of Tuscany:

**Books**

- The Sixteen Pleasures, R. Hellenga
- The Stones of Florence, M. McCarthy
- The Birth of Venus, S. Dunant
- A Room with a View, E.M. Forster
- A Thousand Days in Venice/A Thousand Days in Tuscany, M. De Blasi
- An Italian Education, T. Parks
- War in Val d’Orcia, Iris Origo
- La Bella Figura: An Insider’s Guide to the Italian Mind, Beppe Severgnini
- The Dark Heart of Italy, Tobias Jones
- The Leopard, Giuseppe Tomasi de Lampedusa

**Some useful Italian phrases**

- How are you? *Come stai?*
- Very well, thank you. *Molto bene, grazie.*
- Nice to meet you. *Piacere di conoscerti.*
- See you soon. *A più tardi.*
- That’s fine. *Va bene.*
- Where is/are…? *Dov’è/Dove sono?*
- How long does it take to get to…? *Quanto tempo ci vuole per andare...?*
- How do I get to…? *Come faccio per arrivare a...?*
- Do you speak English? *Parla inglese?*
- I don’t understand. *Non capisco.*
- Could you speak more slowly please? *Può parlare più lentamente, per favore?*
- I’m sorry. *Mi dispiace.*
- Help! *Aiuto!*
- Stop! *Basta!*
- I need a doctor. *Ho bisogno di un medico.*
- I need an ambulance. *Ho bisogno di un’ambulanza.*
- Call the police. *Chiama la polizia.*
- Call the fire department. *Chiama I pompieri.*
- Where is the hospital? *Dov’è l’ospedale?*
Movies
Notte prima degli esami
Ricordati di me
Come te nessuno mai
Caterina va in citta
Ovo sodo
Mediterraneo
Mio fratello è figlio unico
Respiro
Che sarà de noi
Pane e tulipani
Agata e la tempest
Giorni e nuvole
Manuale d’amore
La stanza del figlio
Scusa ma ti chiamo amore
Tre metri sopra il cielo
Caro diario
Le chiavi di casa
I cento passi
L’ultimo cabio
Le fati ignorant
La finestra di fronte
Io speriamo che me la cavo
Nuovo Mondo
La Meglio Gioventu
Gomorra
La Vita E’ Bella
Nuovo Cinema Paradiso

Communication Essentials
Yes/No            Si/No
Please            Per favore
Thank you         Grazie
Excuse me         Mi scusi
Hello             Buon giorno
Goodbye           Arrivederci
Good evening      Buona sera
Morning           Mattina
Afternoon         Pomeriggio
Evening           Sera
Night             Notte
Yesterday         Ieri
Today             Oggi
Tomorrow          Domani
Here              Qui
There             La
What?             Cosa?
When?             Quando?
Why?              Perchè?
Where?            Dove?