

DESCRIPTION

Throughout my 8 weeks in Siena, Italy, I was fortunate enough to take classes, serve the community, connect with locals, explore neighboring areas and divulge in rich cultural practices all while residing with a host family. My language escalated in ways that I could not have imagined. Having taken only 4 Italian classes prior, I never imagined that my language abilities would be where they are today. From grammar, to vocabulary, to colloquial terms, my residence in Siena was profound for my language comprehension. Even more so than my love for the language, I learned and engaged myself in the rich culture of the Palio. The Palio is not just a horse race – families are born and baptized into contradas. The rivalries, endless church worships, and celebrations for the Palio are unmatched to anything we hold in America. My 8 weeks in Siena, Italy were some of the most impactful weeks of my life, focusing on growth both personally and intellectually.

SIENA ITALIAN STUDIES

TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCE

People will tell you time and time again that you should study abroad, that it will change you, or maybe that it will be the best experience of your life. All of these things are true and I will preach the same sermon but if you are wondering what makes it life changing... that answer resides in the people. Italy is a profound country, built on history or culture, but without the institute forcing us to fully emerge ourselves in the culture, I would not have benefited merely as much. I would not have understood the gravity of the Palio, the culture and relationships formed in families centered over hours of dinner each and every night, and I would not have become the mediocre cook I am with out this. The group of students that attended Siena Italian Studies with me joined me in cooking classes, endless tours of duomos and cathedrals, family birthday parties, Wednesday morning market strolls and an adventure every weekend. These memories and experiences have molded me into a curious individual and will remain with me forever.

KATRINA ORR
STUDY ABROAD
ANDREW MARTIN
PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES & ITALIAN



FAVORITE PART

Without a doubt, my favorite part of my experience was my host family. In such a short time, the set of people that fed me, asked about my day, and sat through painful conversations with me as a messed up on their language over and over again, became my second family. I have a sister that is 5 years old, Noemi, and a bother that is 11, Gabby. My family made me feel as though I was not a tourist, but a member of Siena. I vividly remember on Noemi's 5th birthday, looking around at her birthday party in complete awe that I was living the life of an average Italian. My brother forced me to learn soccer as we went to the park every day after school and as I sat through his numerous games. I took Noemi to the bouncy-house inflatables and danced around the garden every night after dinner as she perfected her cartwheel. I sat through hours and hours of dinners, joined their contrada dinner, attended church, learned to brew my own espresso, and learned how to love people like family. My host family made this the safest experience I could have imagined, filled with love, authentic experiences and an experience that I will never forget.



MOTIVATION

Studying abroad is something I new I wanted to accomplish before I ever stepped foot on a college campus. I studied Spanish in high school and my mom had attended college in Paris, France. I had my heart set on studying aboard like my mom, but didn't know the language or the country I wanted to explore next. After deciding to pursue Italian, their were so many options – I had no idea which I would benefit most from or where I wanted to go. Luckily, Professor April Weintritt, my Italian 1103 professor, helped me pave the way to finding this journey. She planted the seed of the benefits of staying with a host family, in a more historical town, and being forced to emerge myself in the culture. I attribute the best decision I ever made, to study abroad in Siena, to Professor Weintritt.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

STEP

Second-year Transformational Experience Program