



## Italy 2027 Itinerary

Travel Dates: June 1– June 10, 2027

### June 1<sup>st</sup> – Day 1

- Students and faculty depart home for Rome, Italy

### June 2<sup>nd</sup> – Day 2 - Rome/Florence

- We will arrive in Rome, Italy and travel by high-speed train to Florence. This is followed by Check-in, Relax and Refresh and an Orientation Walking Tour in Florence.
  - During orientation, we will become oriented with the neighborhood, the public transportation systems, nearby pharmacies, markets, ATMs, etc.

#### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Welcome Dinner

### June 3<sup>rd</sup> – Day 3 – Florence

The City of Florence, the capital of Italy’s Tuscany region, has a long history. “In the beginning, Florence was a fortified camp called Florentia that lay on the Via Cassia, a Roman road that ran between the foothills of the Apennines and the western coast of Italy, on the Tyrrhenian sea. It was the principal route between Rome and the North. Florence was originally founded by the Etruscans between the 6th and 7th centuries BC. This civilization came from Asia Minor and then settled in the Tuscany area.” Florence became part of the United Kingdom of Italy in 1861 when “the last Grand Duke of Tuscany was overthrown in a plebiscite and the region was annexed to the United Kingdom of Italy”. Florence became part of the United Kingdom of Italy in 1861 when [“the last Grand Duke of Tuscany was overthrown in a plebiscite and the region was annexed to the United Kingdom of Italy”](#).

- The day in Florence starts with *Breakfast & Day Briefing*. This is followed by various activities.
  - First, **Medici & Machiavelli Walking tour** - This guided walking tour explores

the rise of the Medici, from powerful bankers to Grand Dukes of Tuscany, and examines how they transformed economic influence into lasting political control. “The Medici family were the wealthiest in Florence and had great political ambition that was finally achieved by Cosimo de’ Medici (...) The Medicis were erudite sponsors of a few of the Renaissance’s greatest artists, including Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Donatello (...) The House of Medici was a family that closely connected to Florence’s history. They would control the city on and off during the following 350 years. Throughout these centuries, Florence would stand out for its wealth and power, as an art and cultural epicentre and as the main “bank” of the Pope.”

- At the same time, the tour introduces **Niccolò Machiavelli**, who served the Florentine Republic and later reflected on power and leadership after the Medici’s return. His most famous opus The Prince is a classic of political theory. Its recommendations form the basis of modern realism theory in international relations.
- Through Florence’s key sites, we will analyze the tension between republican ideals and princely rule, and the use of art and urban space as instruments of political legitimacy and cultural propaganda.
- The **Galleria dell'Accademia** will be our next stop. The Accademia Gallery collection includes priceless masterpieces and works of art in its various halls spread over two floors. According to its website, “La Galleria dell’Accademia di Firenze exhibits the largest number of Michelangelo's sculptures in the world”.
- The Galleria is part of the political history of Florence and international relations. Indeed, the website notes that “The foundation of the Galleria dates back to 1784, when the Grand Duke of Tuscany Pietro Leopoldo reorganized the Academy of Arts of Design in Florence, founded in 1563 by Cosimo I de ‘Medici, in the modern Academy of Fine Arts (...) The museum was enriched with the suppression of churches and convents ordered by Pietro Leopoldo in 1786 and by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1810 (...) Today’s Galleria dell’Accademia was established in 1882.” It shows how the local intertwines with the global in the political sphere. It shows how the local intertwines with the global in the political sphere.

#### Meals Included

- Breakfast

## June 4<sup>th</sup> – Day 4 – Florence/Venice

- Today, we will have a day trip to Venice and later return to Florence. Venice is better known for being 'Italy's historic floating city'.
  - It was "a prosperous city-state in the Middle Ages, playing a significant role in the Crusades and having a strong naval presence. However, it faced challenges including the Black Death and conflicts with neighbouring powers in the 14th century. Despite these obstacles, Venice managed to retain its maritime power, although its economic importance was diminished by the discovery of new trade routes(...) It later became part of Italy and saw a resurgence in tourism in the 19th century, becoming famous for its architecture, canals, and cultural heritage".
  - The city of Venice has always been at the center of global trade and politics. Indeed, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, it was "was one of the greatest trading powers in medieval and Renaissance Europe. At the end of the Silk Route from China, Venice was a cosmopolitan city that found its fortunes in luxurious trade and cargo from Europe, the Middle East and Asia".
  - In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Venice would become part of Italy. Indeed, "after nearly 1,000 years of independence, the Republic fell to Napoleon in 1797. The city then passed between French and Austrian control until 1866, when Venice finally joined the newly unified Kingdom of Italy through a public referendum, marking the end of its sovereignty but the beginning of its role in modern Italy".
- Venice's single activity will be a visit to the **Doge's Palace**. The Doge's Palace is one of the symbols of Venice. The palace has been used for everything from the residence of the Doge to the prison of the Venetian republic. The palace gets his name from the Doge. The latter was "the oldest and highest political position in the Venetian Republic. The word comes from the Latin dux, which means leader and was the title given to the governors of provinces in the Byzantine Empire, of which the Venice lagoon was a part in the 7th and 8th centuries, when documentation of the first doges is to be found".
  - The Doge palace is "a symbol and the very heart of the political and administrative life of the Venetian Republic's thousand-year history, it is visited every year by millions of people who come to explore its history and admire its architecture and artistic treasures".
- Following that activity, we will have cultural time in Venice to further explore the city.

### Meals Included

- Breakfast

## June 5<sup>th</sup> – Day 5 - Florence

- Today, we will continue to explore Florence. Today’s activities include the following:
  - A visit to the **Palazzo Vecchio** - Palazzo Vecchio symbolizes the city and has been its seat of government for more than seven centuries.
  - Then, we will tour both the **Medici Chapels** and/or **Vasari Corridor**.
    - The Chapels is the burial place of the Medici family. The Medici Chapels “form part of a monumental complex developed over almost two centuries in close connection with the adjoining church of San Lorenzo, considered the "official" church of the Medici family who lived in the neighbouring palace on Via Larga”. The Cappelle Medicee are “today a national monument and museum. It features the “Sagrestia Nuova”, whose architecture and sculptures are by Michelangelo Buonarroti, the “Cappella dei Principi”, a monumental grand ducal mausoleum, and the crypts below”.
    - The **Vasari Corridor** (Corridoio Vasariano) was closed in 2016 to allow for safety upgrades; it reopened in December 2024. The corridor is “About 750 metres long, it was built by architect Giorgio Vasari in 1565: the Medici family used it to reach Palazzo Vecchio from Pitti Palace undisturbed and without running risks to their safety”. The corridor is worth the visit. “Ultimately, the Vasari Corridor is a fascinating slice of Florentine history, but whether it’s a must-see depends on what kind of traveler you are. If you’re a Florence aficionado, a Medici enthusiast, or simply someone with an insatiable curiosity for historical oddities, then it’s definitely worth the visit. Walking in the footsteps of dukes while enjoying unique views of the city is an experience you won’t find elsewhere”.
- After those two activities, we will have some cultural time in the afternoon in Florence for further exploration.

### Meals Included

- Breakfast

## June 6<sup>th</sup> – Day 6 – Florence/Pisa

- Today, we will travel to Pisa. Pisa is better known for the Leaning Tower of Pisa or simply the Tower of Pisa (torre di Pisa). The tower is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is also “the city's symbol and the most famous Italian monument in the world”. The city of Pisa itself is, however, not just about the tower. To be sure, “Pisa’s history and character extend far beyond its famous lean. This riverside Tuscan city was once a powerful maritime republic, a center for science and scholarship, and a vibrant cultural crossroads—and it still carries the echoes of that past.” Pisa was at one point a ‘Maritime Republic. “Thanks to national and international trade, it became one of the naval powers of the Mediterranean. With its success in the First Crusade, it established lucrative ties with the Middle East, importing valuable materials and rare fabrics. Pisa's political dominance was undermined by the Battle of Meloria against Genoa in 1284, with the collapse of important trade activities”. It was merged with the Kingdom of Italy in 1860.
- In Pisa, activities include a **Political Walking tour of Pisa**. The city boasts a remarkable artistic heritage. The city’s monumental heart is Piazza dei Miracoli, home to the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, a masterpiece of Romanesque architecture, the majestic Baptistry of St. John, and the Monumental Cemetery.
- After those activities, we will have cultural time in Pisa to further explore the city.
- We will then return to Florence.

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Dinner

## June 7<sup>th</sup> – Day 7 - Rome

- Today, we leave Florence and the Tuscany region for Rome. It is Italy’s capital city and seat of political power.
  - The city of Rome “was called the “Eternal City” by the ancient Romans because they believed that no matter what happened in the rest of the world, the city of Rome would always remain standing. Exploring the city centre by foot surrounded by glorious monuments and colossal remains takes you back in time to the glory that was Rome.”
  - Rome has a long history. It “is said to have been founded on 21 April 753 BC by Romulus. A series of wars and conquests led to the Roman Empire’s founding in 27 BC. In 395 it was divided into two parts: the Western Roman Empire, which ended in 476, and the Eastern Roman Empire, which lasted until 1453. Rome again became the centre of the world during the Renaissance: between the 1440s and the first half of the 1500s it was a real hotbed of talents such as Michelangelo and

Raphael. The works from that period include the new St Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel (...) After the Second World War, Rome became the capital of the Italian Republic in 1946 and began to flourish again”.

- Italy in general has a lot of international presence. Indeed, the country “vaunts a widespread presence of United Nations agencies throughout the national territory that was built over the decades and addresses a wide range of sectors of activity”. International organizations present headquartered in the city include the FAO (the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization); the World Food Programme (WFP); and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- Today’s activities in Rome include the following:
  - **Historical & Cultural Walking Tour of Rome** - Bernini’s Ecstasy, 4 Fountains Crossroad, Quirinale, Piazza Navona, Trevi Fountain & Spanish Steps.
    - **Bernini’s Ecstasy** is famous marble sculpture set in the Cornaro Chapel of the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome.
    - The **4Fountains Crossroad** are four fountains (*Tiber, Arno, Diana, and Juno/Fortress*) crafted to symbolize Rome, Florence, chastity and strength.
    - The **Quirinale** is the residence of the President of the Italian Republic.
    - The **Piazza Navona** is a famous public square that shows Baroque Roman architecture.
    - The **Trevi Fountain** is the largest Baroque fountain in Rome and is designed by Nicola Salvi and Giuseppe Pannini.
    - The **Spanish Steps** is a world-famous 18<sup>th</sup> century stairway with 135 steps. It has been seen in films such as: Fast X, To Rome with Love, Mission Impossible – Dead Reckoning Pt 1 and more.
  - **Colosseum, Palatine Hill, Roman Forum** - After visiting the most iconic monument of Italy, the Colosseum, the group will explore the Palatine Hill and Roman Forum: the largest archeological area of Rome, the ancient city center. It hosts temples, triumph arches and basilicas from the Roman Kingdom (8th century BC) to the Byzantine Empire (6th century AD). The history of Rome and the Roman Empire still reverberates with us today.

#### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

## June 8<sup>th</sup> – Day 8 - Rome

- This is our first full day in Rome. We will embark on a **Guided Tour Vatican Museum and St. Peter’s Basilica**. “The Vatican is a city-state nestled in the heart of Rome, renowned worldwide as the epicenter of the Catholic Church. To grasp the dimensions of the Vatican, it’s important to note that it is the smallest state in Europe, covering just 0.44 square kilometers and housing fewer than 1,000 residents within its walls. Within this compact area lies the Pope's residence, a palace surrounded by beautiful gardens that can be visited by reservation. The Holy See's independence from Italy was officially declared on February 11, 1929, through the Lateran Pacts”.
  - The **Vatican Museums** are the public museums of the Vatican City. They display works from the immense collection amassed by the Catholic Church and the papacy throughout the centuries, including several of the most renowned Roman sculptures and most important masterpieces of Renaissance art in the world.
  - **St. Peter’s Basilica** is the jewel of Vatican City. Dominating the skyline of the area, the Basilica is spread over a massive 23,000 square meters of land.
- Subsequently, the group will head to the **FAO MuNe** – Museo e Rete per l’Alimentazione el’Agricoltura. The Food and Agriculture Museum & Network (FAO MuNe) is a new permanent cultural and educational space at the FAO headquarters in Rome, dedicated to exploring the global story of food, agriculture, traditions, and innovation.
  - “Donated by FAO’s Members, the Museum tells the diverse stories of food and agriculture, spanning from North, Central, and Latin America and the Caribbean, across Africa – from the North to sub-Saharan regions – through Europe and the Mediterranean to the Near East, and onward to Asia and the Pacific Islands, the Museum brings each region’s art and heritage to life. The collection celebrated the enduring traditions of farmers and Indigenous Peoples, their practices, the importance of agricultural heritage, and the colorful culinary cultures across the world.”
- With those two activities, we will have been immersing in the history of Rome and Italy as international actors or centers of global politics.

### Meals Included

- Breakfast

## June 9<sup>th</sup> – Day 9 - Rome

- This is our second full day in Rome. The day's activities include the following:
  - A visit to the **Quirinale Palace – Presidential Residence and Guided Tour** - Note: While the external visit is guaranteed, the internal tour must be authorized upon approval. While Study Abroad Association (SAA) will attempt to guarantee the internal visit, the Institution may decline authorization.
    - Since 1946, the **Quirinale Palace** “has been the symbolic place of the Repubblica italiana and the official seat of the Presidente della Repubblica. The Quirinale has been, for over three centuries, the summer residence of the popes and the home of the kings of Italy (...) With its 110,500 square meters, the Quirinale is the sixth largest palace in the world, 20 times larger than the White House”.
  - Then, the tour of Rome concludes with a visit to the **Galleria Borghese** and/or **Castel Sant'Angelo**.
    - The **Galleria** is exceptional. “Located within the homonymous Villa, the Borghese Gallery houses a remarkable collection painting of sculptures, bass-reliefs, ancient mosaics, sixteenth-seventeenth century paintings, and sculptures (...) The original core of this marvelous collection dates back to the 17th century, when Cardinal Scipio Borghese (1579-1633), the nephew of Pope Paul V, motivated by his love for art and history, begun to collect paintings, sculptures and antiquities (...) Since 1902, the Gallery is owned by the Italian state, along with the entire Borghese estate and surrounding gardens and parkland”.
    - For its part, **Castel Sant'Angelo**, “Due to its unique features, Castel Sant'Angelo can be considered a monument, an archaeological area and a museum at the same time”. It has a rich and complex history. “Built in the second century AD by the Roman emperor Hadrian as a funeral mausoleum for himself and his family, the monument – known here as Mole Adriana – was later included in the city walls of Rome and transformed into a sort of fortress for defending the city, acquiring the epithet of castellum. In the early mediaeval period, it also took on the name of sancti Angeli thanks to a legend, according to which, in 590, Pope Gregory the Great had a vision of the archangel Michael here, who sheathed his sword, symbolizing the end of the plague that afflicted the city (...) Its proximity to San Pietro, its strategic position, its closed interiors and its imposing size made Castel Sant'Angelo the centre of political interests. Its fate was inseparably linked to that of the Church when the keys of the building were handed over to Pope Urban V in 1367, to urge him to return to Rome from exile in Avignon (...) After being

included in the Italian State property in 1870 as a military prison and barracks, it became a National Museum in 1925. At that time, extensive works had already begun to reorganize and restore the site, acquire works and collections and set up various rooms.”

- After those two forays into the political history of Rome, we will enjoy the rest of the afternoon in the city and a cooking class in the evening.

Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Dinner

**June 10<sup>th</sup> – Day 10 - Home**

- Today, we will leave Rome and fly back to Tampa, FL, USA.

Meals Included

- Breakfast