

PITZER IN ITALY HANDBOOK



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Visit the [Pre-Departure Information and Handbooks website](#) for additional information about the topics below and other helpful resources for study abroad.

CULTURAL IMMERSION WHILE ABROAD

The study abroad programs at Pitzer College provide ample opportunities for cultural immersion. They require adaptation. Wherever you go, we hope you will engage the local lifestyle, language, and culture as fully as possible, and begin to understand your hosts. Most programs provide experienced cross-cultural guidance as well as structured activities that facilitate interaction. Pitzer asks that you make the commitment to take those opportunities and follow that guidance when you participate in a study abroad program. Notice the word commitment. Immersion does not happen automatically. It takes a certain commitment over the course of the program— a mindfulness of why you came in the first place and faithfulness to that. Visit the website to learn more.

DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY ABROAD

Your various identities will influence your study abroad experience. Depending on how you identify, you may experience study abroad differently from your peers of other identities. This doesn't necessarily mean that you'll have negative experiences, but we know students from certain identity backgrounds, particularly students of color, women, LGBTQIA+ students and those of certain religious backgrounds, are more prone to face incidents related to their identity abroad. Therefore, it is important to know what the experience is like in-country for people who share your identity and make sure it's safe. Doing this research ahead of time will help you choose a location that suits your comfortability level and will help you better navigate various experiences while abroad. We encourage you to consult the articles and resources on the website and invite students to discuss questions and concerns with the Office of Study Abroad.

PITZER COLLEGE PROGRAM MODEL

Pitzer's Study Abroad programs ask students to engage in the local lifestyle, language, and culture as fully as possible. Our programs provide ample opportunities for cultural immersion and integrated learning. Rather than thinking about the program as separate courses or classes (which is how it shows up on the transcript), we want you to begin to see the program as it really is: a connected whole where each part of the program is related to and dependent on every other part of the program, and where all these components work together to create a particular kind of interconnected intercultural learning experience. Your program may consist of a combination of language learning, family stays, study trips, community interaction, the core class, and independent learning.

ITALY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

LOCATION

The city of Parma is part of the Emilia-Romagna of northern Italy. It is located between Milan and Bologna and throughout Italian history, has played a vital role in the nation's economic, cultural, and political life. Since Roman times the corridor of prosperity that runs from Parma through Bologna to Rome has produced an entrepreneurial spirit responsible for one of the world's most sophisticated and ecologically well-balanced economies. The city is known for its architecture, music, art, prosciutto (ham), cheese and surrounding countryside. Parma is the second most populous city in Emilia-Romagna after Bologna, the region's capital. The city is home to the University of Parma, one of the oldest universities in the world. Pitzer has selected the city of Parma as our preferred program site in Emilia-Romagna to provide students with a high degree of integration into Italian family life and community. The city is small enough to provide students with many opportunities to

practice their language learning. But large enough to offer students needed shops, restaurants, cultural activities, things to do, and opportunities for internships and service projects. It is also well connected by train to the rest of Italy.

ACADEMICS

HOST INSTITUTION

Pitzer in Italy is affiliated with the University of Parma and the Toschi Art Institute of Parma.

COURSES AND CREDITS

The program is comprised of the following coursework:

	Course Credits	Semester Units
Core Course: Studies in Italian Culture	1.0	4
Intensive Italian Language	2.0	8
Survey of Italian Renaissance Art, 1400-1550	0.5	2
Community-based Service-Learning Project	1.0	4
Semester Total	4.5	18

Grades for this program will be recorded on a Pitzer College transcript and included in the Pitzer GPA. Students are required to participate fully in all program components and are not allowed to withdraw from individual courses. Students must take all courses for a letter grade.

Students who wish to receive credit towards their major for a particular course should consult their academic adviser for guidelines. At Pitzer College the field group decides which courses may be counted towards a major or minor graduation requirement. The Pitzer registrar in conjunction with various field groups decides which courses may be counted towards general graduation requirements. Some schools, field groups, or departments may wish to see a syllabus, samples of coursework, texts, or other program materials to decide. Please check before you go.

PROGRAM DATES

The Pitzer in Italy Spring 2024 program runs Monday, January 22 (arrival) to Monday, May 6 (departure). Pitzer requires you to participate in the entire program. Late arrivals or early departures are unacceptable. Loss of credit or lowering of grades may result if you arrive late or depart early.

A TYPICAL WEEK SCHEDULE

- Attending language and culture classes, Monday through Friday (approximately 3 hours every morning and three afternoons each week)
- Completing at least two written assignments each week
- Participating in your CBSL for 10 to 15 hours per week
- Auditing classes at the University of Parma
- Participating fully in host family life

Students should be prepared to study during the day since all libraries and similar study places usually close between 7- 8 p.m.

CORE COURSE: STUDIES IN ITALIAN CULTURE

Using the city of Parma as a case study, you will explore topics in Italian history, politics, economy, religion, art, literature, and culture through a series of lectures by area scholars and specialists as well as take study trips to important sites in Parma. The course also incorporates the family stay and other more experiential components of the program to put a human face on the material presented in the lectures and readings.

To deepen students' understanding of topics covered in the core course, students visit important sites in the city of Parma and participate in study trips to Venice and Florence. In Florence, students spend two days exploring the Duomo, Piazza della Signoria and the Uffizi Museum. In Venice, students spend two days exploring Piazza San Marco, the Basilica, and the Church of the Frari.

If you are interested in visiting other cities in Italy, you may travel independently during your free time with permission from the program director. **Please note: participation in all program activities and classes is required.**

INTENSIVE ITALIAN LANGUAGE

Intensive Italian is offered at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels at the University of Parma. Becoming fluent in Italian, however, is not just a classroom exercise. It is part of your everyday life through interactions with your host family and local Italians. The competence you develop in Italian will be one of the treasures of your Pitzer in Italy experience. If you are advanced in Italian, you may enroll in a university course.

UNIVERSITY COURSES

All students on the program will audit sessions of courses at the University of Parma toward the second half of each semester as part of their intensive Italian studies.

SURVEY OF ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ART, 1400-1550

The course aims to give students an overview of the main artists and works of art that have characterized the Renaissance period in Italy. Students will get an introduction to the historical period, the concepts of Renaissance and Humanism, the main artistic techniques used by the different artists and the set-up of a "bottega". Students will analyze how the different artistic centers (Florence, Rome, Venice, Milan, and Parma) have influenced the artists and their works. Emphasis will be given to the analysis of the different works of art through images and originals. The course will include a series of on-site visits in Parma to see works by Correggio and Parmigianino and a full day trip to Milan or Bologna to see other important Renaissance works. Class will meet twice a week for a total of 30 hours. Students will receive a half course credit.

COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

The program provides you with two options for independent study: Standard Community-Based Service Learning or Studio Art Community-Based Service Learning. Projects are guided by local scholars, specialists, or artists and program staff and faculty at your home institution.

COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE LEARNING IN ART

Work with a mentor or enroll in a class at a local art institute to explore an area of interest in studio art. Whenever possible, students who choose art projects will also participate in a community-based service-learning project that is associated with

the school or institute where the student is studying, perhaps serving as a teacher's assistant or English mentor. Possible projects may vary from semester to semester depending on availability of teachers and classes. Current opportunities include drawing and painting (oil, tempera, watercolor), TV/film direction, graphic and computer design, sculpture, and theater (acting and/or directing).

Students will generally perform and/or make a formal final presentation at the art institute in Italy as part of their community-based service learning in art in lieu of submitting a final paper to Pitzer.

COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

The Community-based Service-Learning Project (CBSL) allows you to take one topic of special interest and explore it in depth. It presents a unique opportunity to utilize and build upon your language skills and cross-cultural competencies as you form new relationships with members of the host culture related to your field of study and systematically explore your topic of interest. If you use the CBSL period as an opportunity to enhance cultural immersion learning, you can expect to achieve some important outcomes: your language skills are likely to blossom as you tackle more challenging conversational topics with a wider range of people; your process of cultural adjustment will most likely accelerate as you function more fully and independently in the new culture; and your overall confidence will very likely increase dramatically as you use your language to forge new relationships and negotiate the many challenges of conducting field research in a new culture.

Students participating in CBSL projects abroad are held to high standards of academic and professional conduct, including adhering to the Ethical Standards for the Engagement of Communities Abroad (in Academics Handbook). Availability, locations, and responsibilities of CBSL projects are subject to change. Make sure you submit your application form with selection of preferred category within the deadline (be specific). Students will write a paper as part of their standard community-based service-learning project. Please see the following section *Community-based Service-Learning project* for CBSL final paper guidelines.

REQUIREMENTS

All projects, regardless of form and topic require the following:

1. A focused research question or topic that is viable and feasible given your progress in the language, your experience with field research, the time allotted and the available resources.
2. An appropriate methodology for exploring your topic.
3. A significant period of hands-on fieldwork that requires interaction with members of the host culture who are directly involved in your study topic.
4. A major paper reflecting on the experience. *

*Exception: Pitzer in Italy students who choose the community-based service -learning in art will generally perform and/or make a formal final presentation at the art institute or music school in Italy in lieu of a final paper to be submitted to Pitzer.

GRADING

Grading for projects will consider the process (e.g., proposal, methodology, relationship building, field work, internship performance, presentation of findings to program staff and students) as well as the final paper. Grading for art projects will be determined by the art professor guiding the project.

LIBRARY RESEARCH

The projects are not primarily based on library research. Exploring literature that is relevant to your topic will be an important step in formulating your proposal and in writing up your work in your final CBSL paper, but the bulk of your CBSL time should be spent using your language and cross-cultural skills to conduct actual field research.

INTERACTION WITH LOCAL EXPERTS

Members of the host culture who have studied your topic often serve as important resources for developing an appropriate methodology, and for placing your own work in the context of a larger body of work when you write your final paper. However, interviewing experts who have studied your topic, even when they are members of the host culture, should not be your primary means of collecting data and should not take up the bulk of your CBSL time. Most of your fieldwork should consist of hands-on work with people who are directly involved in your topic of interest. For example, the host culture university professor or NGO director, who is an expert on your topic, may provide you with important guidance for your project, but should not be seen as a substitute for working directly with members of the host culture involved in the issue you are studying.

THE USE OF INTERPRETERS, QUESTIONNAIRES OR SURVEYS

The use of a bilingual informant to help you translate interviews or conversations you tape may be appropriate, but you should design your project and plan your questions in ways that allow you to use and develop your own language skills. Project topics and methodology (questionnaires, surveys, etc.) should be designed to fit your language level whenever possible. Remember, the goal here is for you to learn about your area of interest in ways that allow you to interact directly with people involved in your topic. The relationships you form and the learning and growth you experience while doing this (which will be recorded in your final paper) will very likely become one of the most valuable and rewarding aspects of the program for you.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE CBSL

Students participating in CBSLs abroad are held to high standards of academic and professional conduct, including adhering to the Ethical Standards for the Engagement of Communities Abroad (see the Appendix).

SUMMARY

1. Pick a topic you are passionate about and that is feasible.
2. Do something you cannot do at your home institution.
3. Do something that enhances your language and culture learning.
4. Do something that promotes interaction with members of the host culture who are directly involved in your topic of interest.

GUIDELINES FOR FINAL PAPER

Project papers are due 15 days after the program departure date.

Papers should be emailed to both the program staff in Italy and studyabroad@pitzer.edu in Word or, pdf format.

Travel plans are not an acceptable reason for late submissions.

Students will draw from their weekly journal, discussion sessions, readings, and interviews to write a major paper (15 to 20 pages) that will include the following:

1. **Description** of the organization, its structure, funding, history, philosophy, goals, and methods of achieving goals
2. **Description** of the professionals working in the agency
3. **Description** of the clients or recipients of the agency's services. Who are they? (Interviews, oral histories etc.). What are their needs? What opportunities do they have to participate in identifying their needs, planning, decision making and implementation of the agency's services? What are their views of the organization's role and effectiveness?
4. **Integration/Synthesis:** moving from micro to macro, from the particulars of the field site to a larger context or issue. Write about the context, the urban communities in general, the problem or issue that the organization is addressing, and the student is exploring. This type of general background information will provide a context for the work an organization is engaged in and a student's own experience working within that organization.
5. **Reflection and Evaluation** (done in two parts):
 - A. **Reflection**
 - 1) Describe and evaluate your personal experience and work with the organization
 - 2) Describe what you did
 - 3) Describe and reflect upon your encounters with the recipients or clients of the organization's work or service
 - 4) Describe your relationship with professionals in the organization.
 - 5) Reflect on your relationship with your internship mentor.
Was it a learning relationship?
 - 6) Reflect upon the effect you think you had on the organization and its work.
What were your original service objectives?
Were you able to realize these objectives?
What were the organization's goals in having you?
What knowledge and skills did you bring with you into the internship that proved useful?
Do you feel that you were able to contribute in a meaningful way?
 - 7) Express what you learned, the connections you made, and the growth you experienced.
What were your original learning goals and objectives? Were they met? Why or why not?
What knowledge and skills did you gain?
What specific competencies (interpersonal, intercultural, etc.) did you gain?
How did your participation in the internship help you to develop your understanding of the issue you were exploring, both at a local level and more generally?
How have your views and perspectives of the community and city changed as a result of your service?
 - 8) Finally, would you want to work for this or a similar agency in the future?
What preparation would you recommend to better meet the challenges and demands of this type of work?
 - B. **Evaluation**
Write an overall evaluation of the work, effectiveness and success of the organization including your recommendations to the organization for improving services.

FAMILY STAYS

The heart of the Pitzer in Italy program is being a full member of an Italian family with all its privileges and responsibilities. Through your family, you have the best opportunity to be incorporated into the social fabric of the local community. You witness the real rather than the theoretical culture and, consequently, come closer to knowing what it means to be Italian. Most families speak little or no English, though younger family members may be studying English in school. They usually live in apartments with amenities like those of an American middle-class home. You will find there is less privacy than you may be

used to and that there is the expectation that you will spend time with the family. Host families may be in central areas or outside the town of Parma. Our criteria of selection are primarily based on the family's willingness to open their homes to our students making them feel as members of the family.

TIPS FOR LIVING WITH AN ITALIAN FAMILY

The following tips may help you to decipher Italian culture as you settle into the Italian way of life.

To assure that your acclimation in your new "home" goes smoothly, you must cultivate awareness and sensitivity towards your host family members. Remember that you are not living in a dorm room nor staying at a hotel, but that you are living in someone else's home, where there are traditional ways of running the house, simple but often unspoken rules of conduct and systems of etiquette. Often these things are only discernible upon settling into the home and getting to know your host family. Feel free to ask your Italian family any questions, even at the risk of sounding naive.

GREETINGS

"Ciao," "Buongiorno," "Buonasera," and "Arrivederci" are probably the most used words in the Italian vocabulary. You should **always** greet your host family members whenever you come home or go out.

NO BARE FEET!

Even the most open-minded Italians consider it to be extremely rude, even vulgar, to go around the house with bare feet. You should always wear slippers when hanging out around the house. In some instances, in some families, both slippers **and** socks may be necessary!

PHONE/WIFI USE

Unlike phone systems in the US, **all local calls in Italy are timed for their charges** (local calls cost .10 Euro Cents for two minutes).

Ask your family if they have wifi and ask for permission to connect. We know that you want to keep connected to your family and friends back home through zoom or other networks. However, remember that you are living in a family setting, and you should try to spend time with them and not only in your room alone talking to people in the US.

You should not talk late at night from your room because you might disturb your family's sleep. Please advise friends and family members back home of the time difference so that incoming calls do not disturb your host family at odd hours.

MEALS

Food and the art of dining are highly valued in Italy, and your host family's dining habits may be quite different from your personal practices. Set mealtimes are practically the only times when Italians eat. Snacking at odd hours throughout the day is rare, practiced normally only by young children. Italian patterns of purchasing and storing food may also surprise you. Italians usually go shopping more often and for fewer groceries than Americans do. Taken together these differences render the Italian refrigerator much less accessible. It is probably stocked with just enough food for meals that are carefully planned; so, helping yourself to portions outside meal hours may be very frustrating for your host family. If you have difficulty adjusting to three meals a day, ask your host family if you can keep a small section in the refrigerator or pantry for some of your snacks, preferably items that are easily discarded and require little preparation like cookies, fruit, or yogurt.

Two additional and very important dining considerations are timing and attendance. Like many Mediterranean countries, Italians dine late in the evening, usually around 8:00 or 8:30. Italians regard mealtimes as fixed reunions. Italian university

students, for example, will return home at 7:30 or 7:45 to eat with their families. Being on time for dinner and observing the family mealtime customs exhibit respect and appreciation for your host family. Always inform them at least one day in advance if you are not able to dine with them.

What you eat can vary greatly depending on the individual preferences of your family. In general, Italians eat well-balanced, healthy meals with an emphasis on different kinds of pasta and meats. If you have dietary restrictions or preferences talk to your host family. Open communication will help you and your host family live well together. Although Italian cuisine is much different from American food, certain possibilities may not excite you, and the more open you are to trying new things, and in doing so demonstrating respect for an essential aspect of Italian culture, the more your family will be able to respect your preferences.

Even at-home dining attire is not to be overlooked. You should always dress appropriately for dinner with your family, especially if there are guests. Sportswear, tennis shoes, and other casual attire may be seen as too informal, and you should never go to the table with bare feet or in pajamas. Table manners also require some attention. There are a few subtleties that you should pick up as you go along. It is tradition, for example, to wait until the hostess is served to begin eating unless she insists otherwise. It is also considered rude to leave a substantial portion of your meal on your plate, so you should serve yourself portions that you are certain to eat and then ask for seconds, which is often a compliment to the chef. The posture at the table might surprise you. Resting your forearms on the table is normal in Italy, and it may be considered rude by some families to keep your hands on your lap during pauses in the dinner. Discussions about the cultural definitions of good manners can be entertaining and educational for both you and your family. When in doubt, watch how others act around you and follow the example of your host or hostess.

Finally, do not forget to bring a small gift, such as flowers or wine, whenever you are invited to visit another family or are invited over for dinner!

THE BATHROOM

Because of the small size of most Italian accommodations, there is usually only one bathroom for the whole family. Timing and cleanliness are very important. It is inconsiderate to stay more than 15 minutes in the bathroom, especially if there are people waiting. Make sure to ask your family how many times a week you can take a shower, as water is used sparingly in Italy. Cleaning the toilet, bidets, sink, and tub for the next person in line is expected. Italian bathrooms usually have a scrub brush next to the toilet, which everyone in the family uses on a regular basis.

LAUNDRY

Laundry habits vary from family to family. Some families will insist on doing your laundry for you, while others will show you how to use the washing machine, and how to hang your clothes to dry. As with all family customs you should respect their habits.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity is very expensive. Most Italians are very conscientious and habitually turn off all electrical appliances and lights that are not in use. You should be equally conscientious about not wasting electricity, no matter where in the world you live, but this is especially important to your host family. Make an extra special effort to develop an awareness of how much electricity you use, and to avoid wasting it by leaving lights on when not in use.

GUESTS

Having friends over to “hang out” and for “sleep-overs”, even for short naps during the day, is **very** uncommon. It is also extremely impolite to bring unexpected guests to dinner. While families may differ, and some host parents may express to you that having friends over is fine, do not assume that because they have granted permission once that it applies to everyone all the time. Ask permission each time you would like to invite a guest to your home.

If you have friends or family planning to visit you for a whirlwind tour of Parma during your stay, you should not plan to offer them lodging with your host family. Even if there is extra room in the apartment or your host family is away during the time of your guest’s arrival, the assumption that your family or friends can stay with you is a serious insult to the acute Italian sense of privacy.

GOING OUT

Socializing and creating strong, meaningful friendships are very much a part of the Italian culture, but so is creating a strong family bond. Excessive weeknight activities outside of the home will certainly make your host family feel abused. It will seem as if you are trying to isolate yourself or that you are not willing to spend the time required to get to know them. Going out too much during the week may also disrupt some households, especially those with younger children. Your host families understand that you are here to explore a new world and new culture, but you must also remember that excessive weeknight activities outside of the home not only hurts your family but also hinders your understanding of an integral aspect of the Italian culture. Finally, you may not believe it but your host families feel a strong sense of responsibility for you. They will worry if they do not know where you are, if you come home very late, or if you do not come home at all. Always make sure they know what your plans are and when you expect to return from an outing.

FEELING AT HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Your host family will make a special effort to incorporate you into their household, but it is not their responsibility to provide you with entertainment or an active social life. They will, of course, be happy to include you in their activities if you show a sincere interest in the family. Do not be hesitant to share with your family your emotions. Kissing, touching, and shaking hands is very common among the members of the family. Once Italian friendships are made, they are almost always deep and long lasting.

DAMAGES

It should go without saying that you are personally responsible for any damages you may cause during your homestay or during visits to your friends’ homes. This includes lost keys, stolen or damaged bicycles, or broken appliances.

A FINAL NOTE

Half of the fun of living abroad is making *passi falsi* and learning from them. As you struggle through the days and weeks you spend getting to know fellow students, family members and friends you will discover aspects of the Italian culture that no textbook in the US can teach you. Patience is a virtue in cross-cultural learning

PLANNING FOR TRAVEL AND FLIGHTS

PASSPORTS

Everyone on the program needs a passport. Check the expiration date. If you do not have a passport valid for six months after your planned return from study abroad, expedite the application or renewal process. Processing a new passport application or renewal may take several weeks.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A US PASSPORT

For information on how to apply for or renew a US passport go to the US Department of State's website at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html> or call 877.487.2778.



IF YOUR US PASSPORT IS LOST OR STOLEN

If your passport is lost or stolen while you are abroad, report the loss immediately to local police authorities and the nearest US embassy or consulate. In addition, you should report your passport lost or stolen by visiting the US Department of State's website for details: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>. A copy will expedite the replacement process. It is wise to email a copy of your passport to yourself and keep a photocopy of your passport in your luggage or with your on-site program representatives.

VISAS

All students on the Pitzer in Parma program will need to obtain a NATIONAL VISA for Italy before leaving the US. Visa applications will neither be accepted more than 90 days in advance nor less than 30 days before the departure date. To apply, you must make an online appointment and appear in person at the Italian consulate.

The Office of Study Abroad & International Programs will provide you with detailed instructions on how to book an appointment (required to submit visa paperwork) and what to bring to your visa appointment. **Once you receive information from Pitzer, you should not wait to schedule your appointment as slots fill extremely fast.**

To get an idea of what to expect for the visa appointment, please visit:

https://conslosangeles.esteri.it/consolato_losanageles/en/i_servizi/per_chi_si_reca_in_italia

If your itinerary includes layovers or stops in other countries on your way to Italy, you may need a visa for those countries even if you do not need a visa for your destination country. Check with your travel agent and the relevant embassies for information.

We suggest that students who are planning to travel to other countries after the end of the program obtain their visas before departing the US. Although it may be possible to get visas after your arrival in the host country, the process of obtaining a visa in the host country, if even possible, may involve visits to an embassy at inopportune times or relinquishing your passport, which is not advised.

DICHIARAZIONE DI PRESENZA

Italy and several countries around the European Union (but not all EU countries) are members of the **Schengen Area**. Students will have their passports stamped when they arrive in the Schengen Area. Within 7 days of your arrival in Italy you must appear before the local police authority to apply for a Dichiarazione di Presenza. The Pitzer staff will help you register for this. Students should not make plans to travel outside the Schengen Area during the semester.

TRAVEL IN THE SCHENGEN AREA FOR NON-EU CITIZENS WITH A STUDENT VISA

Countries where it is currently possible to travel for less than 90 days before the expiration of your student visa: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and The Netherlands.

EU Countries where it is NOT permissible to travel with a student visa: Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Countries still in the process of accepting the Schengen contract and where it is necessary to double-check before organizing a trip: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Lichtenstein, and Romania.

Regulations may change without notice. Check before you plan your travel.

IF YOU ARE NOT A US CITIZEN

If you are not a US citizen and you do not have a US passport, please notify the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs as soon as possible. Depending on the country in which you have citizenship, you may have different requirements.

If you do not have a passport from your home country, or if it is expired, please start the process of acquiring or renewing your documents immediately. In some countries, this process can take months, so it is imperative that you start working on it as soon as possible.

If you have an F-1 visa, please be sure you obtain the necessary travel signature on your I-20 to ensure that re-entry to the US will be permitted after your study abroad program. Speak with your international student adviser. Check before you go!

CODICE FISCALE

Persons residing in Italy are asked to provide a Codice Fiscale or Tax Code Number for a variety of financial and official transactions. It may be requested in conjunction with health insurance. The program director will apply on your behalf once she has your passport, visa information and registration to the Università di Parma. This procedure may take from 8 to 15 days..

FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

You should arrive in Milan's Malpensa by 4:00 pm local time on the arrival date of January 22. The staff and host families cannot accommodate you before the arrival date. If you plan to arrive in Europe earlier for independent travel, we ask that you make your own arrangements to arrive in Milan before 4 p.m. on the arrival date, or in Parma by 8 p.m. on the same day. Please notify the program director of your arrival plans well before the arrival date, so that she can plan to meet you. Late arrivals cause significant disruption of the program, so it is important that you arrive on time.

You are free to depart Parma on or after the departure date of May 6. Do not schedule your departure in the early morning (plan your return flight after 11.00 a.m.) since travel from Parma to Milan is difficult at that time due to bus and train schedules.

Before you can book your flight, you are required to submit the Pitzer acceptance paperwork and complete orientation requirements by the dates listed in the Pitzer study abroad application portal. If you complete these requirements less than two weeks prior to your departure, you will be responsible for any charges incurred to expedite your ticket.

BOOKING YOUR FLIGHT

All students are required to book their flight through Pitzer's designated travel agent. If you are a student from Bard College or Sarah Lawrence College, please contact your study abroad office for the policy that applies to you as it is different. Allow ample time to work with our travel agent to arrange your flight. When you contact the travel agent, identify yourself as a student in the Pitzer in Italy program and inform her of your program dates. Visit the [Travel and Communications](#) section of the website for additional information about travel policies.

KIM RUDD at Corniche Travel

Email: pitzer@corniche.com

Phone: 951.698.0089 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Additional agents are available from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., (Pacific time zone)

Phone: 310.854.6000 Monday through Friday, closed major holidays

Office: 8721 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 200, West Hollywood, CA 90069

www.corniche.com

Airfare Policy

Tickets not purchased through the Pitzer designated travel agent will NOT be reimbursed or credited to student accounts. Frequent flier miles may NOT be used to book flights.

The maximum airfare Pitzer College will pay is based upon the cost of a round trip ticket from the closest major international airport to the student's permanent address city in the US to the designated international airport near the program site for the exact dates of the program. For international students, the maximum airfare is based upon the cost of a round trip ticket from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The travel agent will bill Pitzer for the approved ticket. Students will pay the travel agent directly for the additional costs of an itinerary that is more expensive than the approved flight. No refund or credit is given if the ticket costs less than the maximum.

The following items may increase the cost of a ticket. Students will only be charged for actual overages.

- Finalizing travel arrangements after the due date listed in the student's study abroad application portal
- Travel dates that vary from the dates of the program, including going early or staying after the program ends
- Special requests for routing or stopovers through specific cities or countries
- Open return tickets - these are discouraged and may not be possible due to visa requirements
- Extra luggage charges - airlines may change luggage restrictions without notice.
- Changing the ticket after it is issued. These costs include change fees and any increase in airfare.
- Replacing lost tickets

If for any reason, you are not able to use an airline ticket, the **airline must be notified *prior to the departure of the first flight*** that you will be changing the ticket. **Unused tickets including E-tickets become worthless once the plane departs.** You are responsible for the replacement cost of an unused ticket.

Flight Itinerary

Upload a copy of your itinerary to your study abroad portal when you book your flights.

Travel Delays

Unforeseen circumstances (weather, missed flights, equipment problems, etc.) may result in unforeseen expenses due to the delay. Students should travel with emergency funds in the event of unavoidable delays in transit. Pitzer College is not responsible for these expenses. The travel insurance provided by Pitzer may have some coverage for costs incurred due to travel delays. Should you have expenses related to such delays, be sure to keep your receipts in order to make a claim.

ARRIVING EARLY OR STAYING PAST THE END OF THE PROGRAM

The program makes special arrangements for your arrival. For health and safety reasons, early arrivals at the program site are not acceptable. Pitzer can take no responsibility for early arrivals. Early students must make their own arrangements for ground transportation, room and board. Students who choose to arrive in-country before the beginning date of the program must contact the program staff well in advance of the beginning of the program to arrange a time and place to meet on the arrival date.

If you think you may want to stay on past the end of the program, please advise Pitzer's travel agent before you make the final confirmation of your ticket. Otherwise, you will be booked for departure from the program site on the program departure date, and any additional costs due to changes made after your ticket is issued will be your responsibility. Please know that Pitzer can assume no responsibility for students who stay on past the departure date.

FLIGHT CHANGES

If you choose to change the date of your return once you are in the host country, you need to check with the airline and the travel agent of the regulations, required tickets, and fees associated with changing your flight. Pitzer and the travel agent will not be responsible for expenses incurred for changing your return dates and/or itinerary after you make your initial confirmation with the travel agent, especially once you are in the host country.

FURTHER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO COVID-19

As of November 2022, travelers do not need to provide a negative COVID-19 test for entry. In addition, as of 1 June 2022, the Green Pass or other equivalent certification is no longer required for entry or re-entry into Italy.

COVID-19 restrictive measures for arrivals from abroad are no longer in force.

In Italy, some containment measures – such as the use of masks under specific circumstances – shall remain in force.

Regulations may change, so please refer to current information available through the US Embassy in Italy available here: <https://it.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/> as well as through the [Italy Ministry of Health](#).

ARRIVAL

BAGGAGE CLAIM

In the unlikely event that your baggage is lost on the way to Italy, you will most likely first realize this in your host country. File a claim with the airline before you depart the airport. Program staff will follow up by contacting the airline's office in the host country. Keep your baggage tags. Usually lost baggage is recovered in two to three days.

CUSTOMS

After you present your passport to airport officials and collect your luggage, follow the crowd of people through the double doors into Customs.

WHERE TO MEET THE PROGRAM STAFF

After you get off the bus from the airport, a program representative will be at the Milan train station to meet you. If you will be in Italy before the start of the program, please contact the director well in advance to arrange a time to meet the program representative either in Milan or Parma on the arrival date.

If your plans should change in transit, please call or email the staff in Italy or, if you cannot get through, contact the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs in Claremont. Contact numbers are on the last page of the student version of this Handbook.

TAKE THE BUS FROM THE AIRPORT TO THE MILAN TRAIN STATION

1. Go outside the airport and look for a shuttle bus heading for the train station. It will say "**Stazione Centrale Milano.**" (if you need to exchange money, there is a currency exchange in the terminal).
2. Buy a bus ticket from the driver. (Approximately Euro 10,00 depending on the airport.)
The journey to the Milan train station will take approximately one hour from the Malpensa Airport. When you arrive at the main station:
3. Get off the bus, collect your bags and wait in that general area.
4. A Pitzer in Italy program representative will be waiting for you in the shuttle bus arrival area with a "Pitzer College" sign in hand. If they are not in sight, **do not** leave the area where you are waiting. They may be sending other students on their way to Parma but will return to the bus terminal area immediately after. The program assistant will then assist you in buying your train ticket (the program will pay) and catching a train to Parma, where the Program Director or Coordinator and your host family will be waiting for you.



If your plane was delayed or if for any reason you are unable to find the program representative at the train station, call Franca Mora, the Pitzer in Italy Director, at the numbers listed inside the back cover of this handbook.

Do NOT board a train to Parma unless you have met the program representative at the station or have spoken to the program director.

VISITORS AND INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

The details of your class syllabus, exam schedule, or the final schedule for your program will be given to you during your on-site orientation or the first day of classes. It is crucial that you **not** plan visitors or independent travel until you receive the schedule during orientation and check with your program director.

BEFORE YOU GO AND WHAT TO BRING

As a participant in the program, you are **required to read A Concise History of Italy by Christopher Duggan**, prior to your arrival in Italy. The book is available through the Claremont Colleges Library [A Concise History of Italy Online](#). For non-Claremont Colleges students, the book is available on Amazon. There will be an Italian history session based on this book at the beginning of the program.

We also encourage students to review the additional information in the [Prepare to Go](#) section of the website. It has additional considerations and checklists to review before departing for a semester abroad.

CLOTHING, MEDICINE, AND MISCELLANEOUS

What you bring is an individual matter. It depends upon what you may want to buy in Italy, how much you want to carry (the lighter the better), and what you plan to do during your semester. Everything you might need is available in Italy, but you may not have access to your favorite brands and some items may cost more than in the US. We suggest you come **as light as possible** and buy anything else you need in Italy. Traveling becomes much more enjoyable as the weight of your bags decreases. Whether you bring it with you or buy it, the following items are suggested:

CLOTHING

You should prepare for all seasons. In late November through February, the weather in Parma can be very cold and foggy with occasional snow. We recommend that students check the average temperatures for their time in Parma here:

<https://www.weather-atlas.com/en/italy/parma-climate>

- Jeans**, long pants, or light-weight slacks
- T-shirts** (Avoid words/designs that could call attention to yourself as a foreigner)
- 1 or 2 **nice dresses**
- 2 or 3 **skirts**, knee length or lower
- 1 or 2 **collar dress shirts** and **ties**
- At least one pair of **nice dress pants**
- Underwear**
- Socks** (2 - 3 pairs wool), stockings, tights
- 1 pair **dress shoes**
- 1 pair **walking shoes**
- 1 pair of **sandals**
- Sweaters** and 1 **sweatshirt**
- Light jacket** (with hood, if possible)
- A **weatherproof coat** or raincoat with a very warm lining
- Gloves, hat and scarf**
- Light bathrobe**, below the knee
- Bathing suit**
- Slippers** to wear around your host family's home

TOILETRIES

You will need items like those you would use regularly at home (e.g., soap, razors, nail clippers, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, comb and brush, shampoo, etc.). Most items are available in Italy, including many brand names, but if you are attached to a particular brand, you should bring it with you. You should not pack razors or any other potential weapon-like accessories in your carry-on luggage.

MEDICINES

- Bring **prescription medicines** in their original containers and copies of your prescriptions. You may also wish to bring a physician's note explaining the need for the medication. We recommend bringing enough for the entire semester. Shipping may be unreliable, and it is difficult to mail medication to Italy due to custom controls. Some medications may not be available even with a local physician's prescription. Be aware that some medicines are controlled substances and may be illegal in some countries. Refer to the section on Traveling with Medication.
- Vitamins, cold medicine**

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- Umbrella**
- English/Italian dictionary**
- Small towel, large bath towel, washcloth, and scrub brush**
- Sunglasses**
- TSA approved locks for your baggage**
- Travel alarm clock**
- Camera**
- Extra **batteries** if needed
- Hair dryer, electric razor**
- 110/220 power converter and adapter plug for rectangular 2-hole plug**
- Photos of family and friends**
- Stationery and a book for **personal journal**
- Favorite ink **pens**
- USB flash drive**

BAGGAGE

- 1 piece of luggage to check in. Most international flights have a 50 lb. weight limit for 1 checked bag. Check with your airline before you pack.**
- Money belt** – for around the waist or neck
- One regulation size **carry-on bag**
- Day pack** or duffle bag (may also be used as a carry on)



Check the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website for current regulations about prohibited and permitted items for carry-on luggage and checked baggage. <http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/prohibited-items>

LAPTOPS:

You should bring your laptop to Italy. Do not forget to bring a power converter and an adapter plug. If you have specific questions regarding what to bring, feel free to contact the program staff directly.

GIFTS

It is always nice to bring several small gifts from home for your Italian family members. Pictures of yourself, your own family and your home are very much appreciated. Picture books of your state or country would also be a good idea. Something typical to your state, calendars, hats, mugs, or t-shirts (with slogans from home) would also be nice.

MONEY MATTERS

Students are encouraged to review the information in the [Financial Matters](#) section of the website for additional information about billing and budgeting while abroad.

HOW MUCH TO BRING AND HOW TO BRING IT

Italy's currency is the Euro £. Refer to <https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/> for current exchange rates.

Most students spend a bit more in Italy than they would during a semester in the US. How much you spend will be determined by 1) whether you bring everything from home or buy items in Italy, 2) your plans for study trips and independent travel before and after the program and 3) any gifts or souvenirs you wish to buy. **In any event, we strongly recommend that you have access to at least US \$1500 to cover personal and emergency expenses during the semester.** We recommend you bring 200,00 EUROS with you in cash.

ATMS

ATMs with the Visa, Cirrus and Star symbols are widely accepted throughout Italy. Your bank will usually charge you a small fee for withdrawing funds from an international ATM, but this is a good way to transfer funds to Italy.

CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards are accepted in Italy and can be very handy in case of emergency, although **it is the norm to pay daily expenses in cash.** MasterCard and Visa are best. In Europe, credit cards are usually chip and pin which is different than the chip and signature cards in the US. There are locations and businesses such as the train station ticket machines in Italy that may only accept chip and pin cards. Expect to be asked to show photo ID when using a credit card. If you bring a credit card, be sure to leave your card number and the 'Lost or Stolen' phone number at home. In the unlikely event that your credit card is lost or stolen while abroad, this information will help your parents or friends cancel your card quickly. Please note: only a person previously authorized to make changes on your account will be able to cancel a lost or stolen card. You should also notify your credit card company that you will be traveling and may make expenditures on your card in your destination country and other

countries on the way to Italy. Otherwise, when the first few foreign charges show up, your credit card company may put a freeze on your card.

HOW TO RECEIVE FUNDS FROM HOME

The best ways to transfer additional funds from home to Italy is to use an ATM card or draw a cash advance on your credit card. Western Union and American Express also provide wire transfer services, but these tend to be more expensive than standard ATM and cash advance fees. If you do not have an ATM or credit card, and you need to have money wired to you, you will need to obtain the latest details from the banks in Italy and forward that information to your parents (or another benefactor).

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

The **Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** and the **World Health Organization (WHO)** provide up-to-date health information on their websites at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm> and <http://www.who.int/ith>.

Italy is a relatively healthy country. In most cases, you should observe health precautions like those that would apply while traveling in the United States. Students are encouraged to do their own research about health in their host country and should review the information in the [Health, Safety, and Emergency Information](#) section of the website.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES FOR STAYING HEALTHY

General health precautions for students in Italy will be covered thoroughly during the on-site orientation immediately after arrival in Italy. The important thing is to be in control of your own health. Here are the key points to remember for staying healthy:

1. Have a complete physical examination before you go. Be aware of and prevent possible problems. **Let the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs and your program sponsor know if you are on any medications, have any allergies, or any other medical conditions that could possibly require accommodation while you are abroad.** Plan to take adequate supplies of medications and copies of medical prescriptions with you. See the section *Traveling with Medication*.
2. Make sure that your childhood immunizations are complete and up to date. Booster shots for tetanus are required every ten years; it may be time for another. We also recommend that you get your flu shot and, if able, your COVID-19 booster.
3. Visit your dentist and have a check-up to ensure that your teeth are in good shape before you leave.
4. Eat well over the break, exercise and get plenty of sleep so that you are rested and fit as you depart, and your body can better fight off disease. Do not exhaust yourself with packing and preparations at the last minute. Plan so that you can make your departure as stress free as possible.
5. On the long flight, bring along a bottle of water and drink plenty of fluids as you travel. Avoid alcoholic beverages. They lead to dehydration. Do isometric exercises in your seat and get up to walk up and down the aisle periodically to stretch your muscles. During flu and cold season, you may want to consider a breathing mask since the recycled air in planes can easily spread contagious diseases.
6. Follow all guidelines provided by your program about food and drink and personal hygiene. They are making these recommendations for a good reason.

7. Remember that AIDS/HIV infection rates in other regions of the world can be significantly higher than in the US. Practice safe sex, or better yet, abstinence.
8. Beware that use of recreational drugs is illegal in most places and is not permitted under Pitzer College policies. Additionally, the strength and content of drugs overseas are different than what you may find in the US and may be deadly.
9. **Follow and adhere to all COVID-19 protocols set by your host institution and host country.**
10. Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://step.state.gov/step/>. Use the program address Via Taro 3, 43125 Parma, ITALY

A NOTE ON COVID AND COVID PROTOCOLS

Pitzer College has attempted to set up a **vaccine-to-vaccine study abroad model** in all our sites, including Italy. This model calls for all students to be fully vaccinated (including getting a booster (if eligible) at least two weeks before departure), and for our key people at each site (program staff, faculty, language schoolteachers, guest speakers, homestays) to be vaccinated. The idea is that we will mitigate the risk of catching a break-through infection and/or spreading the virus by structuring our program as much as possible to have students interacting primarily in environments where most people are vaccinated. Of course, this is not going to be 100% possible in Italy, just as it isn't possible in our surrounding communities here in Claremont and SoCal, or anywhere in the US for that matter, but we believe we can organize the program in Italy to minimize student exposure to unvaccinated people and, of course, have strong protocols in place for social distancing, mask wearing, hand washing etc.

Vaccinations:

A large percentage of the population in Italy.

Moreover:

- All the host families (age 12 and up) will be fully vaccinated
- Program staff, guest speakers and teachers are fully vaccinated with the 2 doses
- Program staff will select community service placements and study trips with Covid 19 safety in mind.

Testing:

There are many places in Parma where students can get the PCR tests and rapid antigen tests. The program will facilitate testing for students as needed.

Quarantine:

During the program, if a student tests positive, the student will quarantine at their host family's home, with all the protocols. All the host families have internet so a student in quarantine will be able to keep up with their classwork. If a host family member tests positive, we will follow guidelines for quarantine and testing to assure the student is not positive or capable of spreading the virus outside the host family.

TRAVELING WITH MEDICATION

If you have a health condition that requires medication, you will need to plan ahead for your semester abroad. Usually, it is necessary to take adequate supplies of medications and copies of prescriptions with you. Shipping may be unreliable, and some medications may not be available even with a local physician's prescription. Although many over-the-counter medicines

may be carried internationally, some cannot. Medications prescribed in the US may be unlicensed or controlled substances not only in your destination country but in countries along your route. Some medications have restrictions on the amount that can be carried through customs. For details of US regulations, consult the following website: <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go/prohibited-and-restricted-items>. **You should also check with your doctor and the consulate of your host country about any restrictions or special procedures required for transporting prescriptions into the country. Be sure to find out and make a plan before you go.**

INSURANCE

HEALTH INSURANCE

Each student is responsible for obtaining a policy that will provide comprehensive health coverage and emergency medical and accident coverage both in the US and abroad for the duration of their program. Students may need to return to the US unexpectedly.

Regardless of what type of insurance you have, you will usually have to pay cash upfront at clinics and hospitals abroad, collect the receipts for all expenses and submit them to your insurance company for reimbursement. The insurance policy available to you through your school may provide adequate coverage abroad, but it is your responsibility to call the company to discuss the specifics of your study abroad program to ensure that you will indeed be covered.

TRAVEL INSURANCE PROVIDED BY PITZER COLLEGE

Pitzer students and visiting students on Pitzer programs are covered by supplemental travel insurance available through a plan with Zurich. This plan is offered by the Claremont Colleges and coverage is automatic. Students do not need to enroll themselves. This travel insurance is for accident and emergency care overseas and should not be confused with SHIP (Student Health Insurance Program). While this insurance will cover a variety of medical emergencies abroad, it does not cover routine or ongoing medical care/treatment a student may need during their program. For this reason, we strongly advise students to maintain their comprehensive medical insurance in the event they would need to return to the US (or other home country) or need ongoing care/treatment while abroad.

A copy of the insurance letter, plan brochure, ID document and medical claim reimbursement form will be uploaded to your study abroad application portal. Please familiarize yourself with the benefits outlined in the brochure.

ITALIAN INSURANCE PLAN

The program will register each of you with Italian Health Insurance. You will be assigned a primary care physician who can prescribe medicines and lab tests. You still will have to pay for medicines and tests. This insurance will also cover **emergency** care, including hospitalization, surgery, etc.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The Office of Study Abroad & International Programs will provide all students with Italy program staff phone numbers and the program email address prior to their departure for Italy. Contact information will be uploaded to each student's study abroad application portal account as well as emailed to them. Students are encouraged to do their own research about safety in their host country and should review the information in the [Health, Safety, and Emergency Information](#) section of the website.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY AT YOUR PROGRAM SITE

Contact the program staff as soon as possible. You will be given a list of emergency contact numbers during your on-site orientation. There is also emergency contact information that students will be sent by email and uploaded to their study abroad application portal. While you are certainly free to contact your parents and families in any emergency, and indeed you should, please **inform the program staff first** since they can address your concerns immediately. Calling home only delays the process of intervention and may put undue stress on families who feel as though they are unable to help their child abroad.

Pitzer provides supplemental travel insurance, which includes insurance to cover emergency evacuations. In the event of a political crisis or a natural disaster that would necessitate evacuation, the program staff will work closely with the US Embassy and other embassies (if you are not a US citizen) to facilitate your return home.

Provide your contact information abroad to your family and friends. Your family should also be advised to contact the Pitzer College staff members listed in the information our office will provide you before you leave for Italy.

True emergencies are quite rare. While losing luggage, tickets or even a passport is inconvenient and upsetting, it is not an emergency. Emergencies are situations in which there is an immediate threat to a student's health or safety.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY AT HOME - FAMILY AND FRIENDS

In case of emergency, parents or friends should contact the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs at the number listed below. The Study Abroad staff in Claremont can usually contact students and staff quickly, even when they are away from the program base on study trips. If they call the office number and we are closed, they will be directed to Campus Safety, which has additional contact information on file. Please have them continue down the list until they can speak directly with a member of our staff.

CONTACT INFORMATION IN CLAREMONT

Pitzer College

Office of Study Abroad & International Programs

Office hours:

Mailing address:

Monday through Friday

West Hall, Suite Q100

8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

1050 North Mills Avenue

Hours will vary during holiday periods

Claremont, CA 91711

Phone: 909.621.8104

Email: studyabroad@pitzer.edu

Campus Safety for after-hours emergencies: 909.621.8170

Primary Staff Members in Claremont to Contact in Claremont:

Regina Range, Director of Pitzer Programs

Regina.Range@pitzer.edu

WAYS TO MAKE CONTACT WHILE ABROAD

WhatsApp is commonly used in-country as well as to reach family and friends at home. We recommend that you download the app if you don't already have this on your phone. Students may also communicate in other ways – Email, Skype, FaceTime or calling.

MOBILE PHONES

You may bring your own mobile phone and purchase a local SIM card once in country. The program will cover the expense of a basic plan to make you able to call through an Italian SIM card. If you do this, you must have your phone unlocked in the US or your home country. If your own phone does not work once in Italy (sometimes the case), a family-authorized member may unlock it for you. If you want to have internet access to use instant messaging, you will have to use your own phone in which case you may want to increase your data plan. You will be responsible for keeping a working mobile phone (charged, paid up and ready to use in an emergency) on your person throughout the program.

Pitzer expects all students to use mobile phones in ways that are appropriate and responsible. In particular, mobile phones should be turned off (including texting) during classes, program discussion sessions, and study trips when interacting with program staff, faculty, or guest speakers. In addition, students need to learn and practice appropriate mobile phone use in their homestays. For some families it may be considered rude, for instance, to make or receive calls or text messages during a family meal or while engaged in conversation after dinner.

MAILING TO ITALY

Please email studyabroad@pitzer.edu if you wish to mail anything to Parma. We will provide you with an appropriate address and contact number.