



# Siena Italian Studies

## Siena, Italy

Eight-Week Summer Education Abroad Experience  
with Siena Italian Studies  
in Siena, Italy



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**HOW DID YOUR EXPERIENCE IMPACT YOUR ACADEMIC, PERSONAL, AND LIFE GOALS MOVING FORWARD?**

This education abroad experience impacted not only my academic goals but also my career and life goals. This experience further cemented my desire to work and travel abroad as well as use the diverse language skills I have acquired thus far in my life. I plan to continue my language study and to find a career where I'm able to both work abroad but also impact people's lives while I do so. This is something I was unsure of before going on the trip, but after living abroad, I feel confident that this is both something that I desire to do, but also something that is feasible.



**WHAT DID YOU LEARN?**

Through Siena Italian Studies I was able to experience a very intense but wonderful learning environment for the Italian Language. The eight-week program had a large focus on language acquisition and practical use. This allowed for my Italian to improve but also for my cultural and social knowledge of Italy to expand. There were many opportunities to practice interacting with people of different cultural heritages, effectively helping those in the program navigate the language barrier. There was also the opportunity to learn how to cook a couple of signature Italian dishes. This was awesome because those of us in the program learned more about the food culture in Italy, which is both immense and exciting. I also had the distinct pleasure of booking travel arrangements first hand while managing time and money. I became adept at navigating the train, bus, and metro systems all throughout Italy.



**FAVORITE PART OF YOUR EXPERIENCE**

I have two favorite aspects of my abroad experience. I had the opportunity live with a host family while studying in Siena. This was an amazing experience. Not only did this help to improve my Italian, but it also helped me to learn more about family life, differing aspects of Italian culture, and social norms. While my host family didn't speak English, we made due with the growing amount of Italian that I knew, google translate, charades, and occasionally the use of French or Spanish. I grew to love my host family as if they were my own. They were very patient with me and helped me in so many ways. I still talk with my family multiple times a week, and the program ended months ago.

The second portion of the Siena Italian Studies program that I really enjoyed was the volunteering/community service aspect. Those of us in the program were able to volunteer in a variety of places. We volunteered everywhere from summer kids' camps to an ambulance to an animal shelter to a nursing home. There were so many opportunities that there was something for everyone; we were able to impact people in very small ways. I volunteered with the ambulance, called Misericordia, one of the kids' camps, and with the language partners program.



This picture is courtesy of Siena Italian Studies

**HOW DID YOUR EXPERIENCE IMPACT YOU PERSONALLY?**

This experience had changed my view of myself. As cliché as it sounds, I do feel as though I have changed since the beginning of the program. Not only has my confidence grown but I also feel like this is something I should continue for the rest of my life. I want to continue to speak Italian and other languages and learn about other peoples and cultures, even though it might be challenging sometimes. I made a ton of friends along the way too. This past summer was super challenging, but I wouldn't take anything back.



**Siena Italian Studies**  
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