

Summer School

A Trip to Italy to Study Abroad

BY DANA EDWARDS

I made it my goal to study abroad before I graduate from college next year. So, from July 1 through August 10 I visited Italy on the UF in Rome study abroad program, taking Italian and classics courses while living among the natives in the historic, non-air-conditioned apartments of Trastevere.

This was my first international flight and the plane ride to Rome took eight hours. I met a cold shower my first night in Italy, which was both startling and refreshing since the city was so hot. At our program's group dinner that night, the 40 of us enjoyed the simple, yet tasty, cuisine of Italy. Most dishes are prepared without preservatives.

Our first night was especially interesting for three of my classmates; the girls got locked inside their apartment until 10 a.m. the next day. Some Italian doors have multiple locks on the door handle and on the top of the door, which are difficult to open with keys that look like they belong to a castle. The top lock attached to the ceiling had shifted, locking the girls inside. Our teachers called a locksmith, however he was watching the

Euro Cup Finals and came at his leisure.

To reach the study center in just under two minutes from the Pantheon, we walked across a bridge overlooking the Tiber River every day. Our study center was part of the Baths of Agrippa built around 25 B.C.

For my Italian class, we were instructed to frequent local shops and bars (coffee bars, not liquor bars) to get to know locals and to interview one in Italian. I interviewed a server at my favorite Gelateria. Through my rough Italian, I

Cinque Terre is known for its pesto and seafood, along with its sandy stone beaches and mountain-hiking trails.

learned she enjoyed living in the big city of Rome and loved to travel. She hoped her next trip would be to Australia.

One afternoon, a friend and I stumbled upon Piazza Navona. We learned the piazza was once a Roman circus used for races — not clowns. I took pictures with the Fountain of the Four Rivers by Bernini, complete with an Egyptian

obelisk. Obelisks can be found all over the city of Rome due to Roman plunder or presents; some are imitations.

To reach the catacombs on our first weekend, we bought bus tickets at a Tabaccheria (tobacco store, much like a gas station). We visited the catacombs of San Callisto and San Sebastiano. Each tour costs 8 euros. (One euro equates to \$1.33.) The catacombs were chilly, a nice break from the exhausting heat of Rome. These catacombs were originally caves used by pagans to bury their dead.

The Latin phrase “ad catacumbas” means “near the hollow.” In later years, catacombs became the burial grounds for Jews and Christians. Since the dead were not allowed inside the city of Rome, the catacombs can be found on the outskirts of the city.

To attend mass at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, we left enough time to

