It is typical that when a person thinks about amazing food, authentic Italian cuisine will make everyone salivate. Think pizza, pasta, gelato, cannoli, cappuccino, and so much more being available around every historic cobblestoned street. This is not an American reality, but for senior Milan Silverman it was during Spring 2015. In America, Olive Garden and Domino’s are considered “Italian” food unless someone is lucky enough to have family straight from Italy make them genuine Italian meals. Although Italy has much more to offer the world than just food, it is one of its many famous attractions for visitors and I wanted to get the juicy details.

**JEN:** “Why did you choose Florence, Italy to study abroad?”

**MILAN:** “I found out about study abroad opportunities through a campus wide email from SUCIE. I then chose Florence because I wanted a mix of city and Tuscan life.”

**JEN:** “Florence seems like such an amazing city. I can imagine why you chose it. What was your coursework like there?”

**MILAN:** “The first three weeks I took an Italian language course and once I passed that exam I started an internship. My internship was related to Communication Arts major and focused on public relations and event planning.”

**JEN:** “That must have been interesting working with a real Italian business. What I really want to know though is all about the food! What were some of your favorite dishes?”

**MILAN:** “I loved all the pastries there. I never used to like pastries but this one called cornetto was amazing. I had one for breakfast almost every day. The tomato sauce and buffalo mozzarella in Italy were also unbeatable. Everything was just so fresh.”

**JEN:** “Was there anything on the menus that really stood out to you?”

**MILAN:** “I pretty much stuck to what I knew while I was there but they did have some interesting things on the menu that I noticed. One dish was called tripe, and it is stomach lining fried up with some sauce wrapped in a sandwich. I just couldn’t build the nerve to try it but I wish I did. It was a really popular dish especially in Tuscany.”

**JEN:** “I definitely don’t think you’d see that on a typical American menu! Did you learn how to cook like a true Italian while you studied in Florence?”

**MILAN:** “I took a cooking class setup through the school and we learned to make spaghetti alla carbonara. It was basically cooked egg white in a thick sauce that had pancetta and bacon in it. We also were able to see them knead the dough and cut the pasta. For dessert we made tiramisu and it was so delicious.”
JE:
“Now I’m craving pasta! Have you tried to replicate any Italian meals back here in the US?”

MILAN: “I want to but it’s hard! I tried to make an authentic meal for my family but the ingredients just don’t compare. I tried to make my own pasta and tomato sauce but it didn’t live up to what I ate in Florence.”

JE: “How important do you think food is in Italian culture compared to American culture?”

MILAN: “I think the food is very important! Italians take two-hour lunch breaks just to socialize and relax. Americans use meals to socialize as well but I think it is more for a way to get together and not have it be awkward. In Italy, they just truly love their food and take time to enjoy it whether it’s alone or with company.”

Hearing about Milan’s study abroad experience in Florence, Italy left me feeling not only excited to learn more about other cultures, but also extremely hungry for a taste of Italy.

Contact SUCIE for further information on studying abroad!

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