

Ciao ragazzi!

On behalf of the Villa Aurora administration and the staff of the Dipartimento di Lingua, we want to welcome you to the 2019 - 2020 Academic year.

Most of you are busy packing bags for your time abroad, and we thought we would add a few important things that might help all of you prepare. Many of the items we recommend you pack *can* be found in Florence, but in some instances (adapters) it can be troublesome to find immediately, we hope to help you save yourself some time and money.

PACKING SUGGESTIONS

Below are listed some packing/shopping suggestions specific to our Italian program:

- Toiletries (if you use a specific brand)
- Pharmaceutical items: Neosporin, aspirin, allergy pills, cold medicine (Nyquil, Dayquil)
- Lightweight jacket/rain jacket
- Contact lens solution
- Musical instruments: guitar, ukes, clarinet, anything you can carry on the plane
- Good two-language dictionary
- Comfortable shoes: for church, walking, and for exercising
- Electric converter & adapter plugs
- Your favourite snacks: Oreos, M&Ms, Snickers, Twix, Kombucha, Doritos, Cheez-its, etc
- Extra prescription glasses & the prescription
- Hair dryers: preferably ones that adapt to foreign voltage
- Hats/caps for sunny weather
- Luggage locks and tags (for when you travel, especially alone)

LADIES SPECIFICALLY:

- Modest swim-wear
- Exercise clothes, sweats, etc
- Toiletries: if you use a specific brand for makeup, toothpaste, feminine products, shampoo, lotion (for skin problems such as eczema).

GENTLEMEN SPECIFICALLY:

- Swim trunks (unless you're into the European style of speedos...)
- Shorts for summer and travelling
- Sweats and running shoes

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE COMING TO VILLA

CLOTHING

- + Florence can be very hot in the summertime; however, it tends to cool off in the evenings. You should pack a light jacket or a cardigan.
- + You will want a swimming suit (2 piece is fine for women).
- + Dress code at the school is similar to a normal Adventist American university. No overly tight or revealing clothing.
- + To enter churches (many of which we visit on school trips) you must have your shoulders covered as well as knee-length shorts or skirt.
- + Bring comfortable walking shoes and prepare for a lot of walking! It's the stuff adventures are made of 😊

POWER ADAPTERS AND CONVERTERS

Get your adapters before leaving the States (if possible). Voltage in Italy (and the rest of Europe) is 220Hz, in the US it is 110Hz. It is best to buy both the plug adapter AND voltage converter in one, especially for small appliances. RadioShack sells a good one. Computers are generally already rated up to 240Hz with their own adapters. All small appliances however can be found here, hairdryers, straighteners, etc and you may be best served buying them here as sometimes the voltage change and adapters eventually burn them out.

CELL PHONES

Many American cell phones are not “unlocked”, so its not always possible to just switch SIM cards once you get over here. If you wish to use your cell phone from home, you should check to see if it can be “unlocked.” Cell phones are cheap (30-100€), signing up with a SIM card is 10€, and cell phone plans are pay as you go and very cheap. It can greatly simplify your life here, and it makes keeping in contact with friends and travel logistics much easier. In Italy, incoming calls, even from the U.S., are free on a cell phone.

COMPUTERS

Bringing a laptop computer is recommended, as we do not have a computer lab available for personal use. All dorms and school buildings are equipped with wireless internet. As soon as possible when you arrive, bring your laptop and passport to the secretary's office in the school building to get your wireless password.

CHANGING MONEY

We strongly suggest that you do NOT bring cash. Also, please do not bring traveller's checks. They are rarely accepted. It is best to bring an ATM card (with a 4-digit pin), and just make occasional large withdrawals while you are here (ex. €250 at a time). Inform your bank of the timeframe that you will be in Europe before you leave, this way your card will not get cancelled when they see overseas transactions. The ATM fee here is usually a 1% charge plus whatever your banks fee is to get the exact real time exchange rate. This is much better than a cash exchange fee where they often charge about 15% of your total exchange.

MOSQUITOES

Unfortunately, we do have many mosquitoes in the area when there is warm weather. The deans provide each room with a mosquito-killing plug-in. You may also want to bring some insect repellent and/or itch eraser if you generally have problems with bug bites. These products are not easy to find in Italy and they're usually quite expensive.

STUDY MATERIALS

Villa Aurora will provide each student with a small notebook, a folder, a pen, a pencil, and your textbooks upon arrival. Any additional materials you may want can be easily purchased nearby. It is suggested that you bring an Italian/English pocket dictionary, and you may want to bring a book of verbs (such as 501 Italian Verbs) as well. Dictionaries can be found easily, but 501 Italian Verbs can be hard to find (at least some bookstores sell out of it quickly). Text books for grammar class will be given to you. For your electives (e.g. Painting, Sculpture, Cuisine), all the materials needed for projects, will also be provided.

MORE ABOUT VILLA AURORA

WHAT ARE THE CAMPUS RULES AND REGULATIONS?

Students are expected to respect themselves, others, and the school. You are expected to act in accordance with the principles of the Adventist church. Therefore, alcohol and drug consumption are forbidden both on and off campus. Violation of these rules will result in a punishment decided by the disciplinary committee. Punishments may range from a fine to expulsion.

DORM ROOMS

The rooms are shared by two to three people. They may be smaller than what you are used to at your home university, but they are cozy. Each room contains either single beds or bunk beds. There are closets for each student, as well as desks, lamps, and a mirror.

Villa Aurora also provides each student with the basic linens: sheets, a pillow, pillowcase, blanket, and bath & hand towels.

SOCIAL, SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in the spiritual, cultural, and recreational activities organized by our School Dean/Chaplain. These activities have been planned to provide you with a well-rounded experience of the Italian-Adventist lifestyle.

CURFEW

Curfew is at 11:30 p.m, from Sunday to Friday. On Saturday nights at 1:00 a.m. If you need to stay out any later, contact one of the Deans ahead of time, and further arrangements may be made. Failure to do so will result in a punishment decided by the discipline committee depending on the gravity of the situation. Punishments may range from a fine to expulsion.

CAFETERIA

There may not be as many options as you are used to on your home campus or the same types of food that you would normally eat. However, we ask that you have an open mind and enjoy our traditional Italian food. For each meal we serve one first course (usually pasta), a second course (vegetables and/or vegetarian meat), fruit, bread, and salad.

LAUNDRY

A free laundry service is offered at Villa Aurora, with token usage. More information will be given on your arrival to campus. The school provides all bedding, sheets, and towels, and you may pick up clean ones every week from the laundry.

There is a laundromat near the school, €6 total for wash and dry. Some students use this service, if you are willing to take the time it's quite convenient. There is also a place in the girls' dorm for hand-washing, and boys have access to the bathroom sinks in their rooms as well, for smaller items.

TRANSPORTATION

You will be given a bus card with 30 rides for your time here. However, if these are not enough you can purchase additional tickets. They can be purchased at newspaper kiosks (the nearest is close by the bus stop) or tobacco stores.

- + A single ticket costs 1.50 and you can ride for 90 minutes

- + A *Carta Agile* for 10, 20, or 30 euro which is loaded with multiple rides

As soon as you enter the bus, the tickets must be stamped on the green/yellow machine near the front and the *Carte Agile* is a digital card that you swipe immediately upon entry. If you are caught riding the bus without a ticket you will get a fine.

We are looking forward to meeting all of you, and we wish you all a "Buon Viaggio!". The following is a list of numbers in case you would like to contact personally with one of the staff regarding travel information or living arrangements:

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