OCAD University

Florence Off-Campus Studies Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2017/2018

Studio Address:
Via Bonifacio Lupi 14
Due Piano
FIRENZE 50129 Italia

Inquiries can be directed to:
Vivian So, Program Assistant, Faculty of Art
416.977.6000 ext 307 / vso@ocadu.ca
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency / Useful Telephone Numbers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Accommodation and Accessibility</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Getting Things Done</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Housing/Hotels</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Restaurants</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Contemporary Art Galleries</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Shopping:</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Art Supplies / Special Resources</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Food / Household</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reading:</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bookstores</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Libraries</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Newspapers / Magazines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Banking and Finances</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Transportation / Travel</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Services:</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Post Office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Telephone and Internet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Medical Insurance (OHIP extension, travel health insurance)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Medical Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Personal Safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Police / Lost and Stolen Goods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Laundry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lesbian / Gay Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Churches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Entertainment:</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cinemas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clubs and Music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ballet/Dance/Opera/Theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sports/Recreation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Packing</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Comments and Suggestions from Students</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **INTRODUCTION**

The OCAD University Florence Off-Campus Studies Program was established in 1974. Since then our campus in Florence has annually provided a rich and challenging cultural experience for both students and faculty at OCAD U. This European campus offers a facilitated, directed study approach to learning and is open each year to a limited number of students from all areas that have completed at least two years of study.

While in Florence, students develop a body of work in a communal studio setting and study art history amidst a backdrop of architectural and artistic treasures from the Italian Renaissance. The studio component of Florence Off-Campus Studies is coordinated each year by different faculty members from our Toronto campus, while the history component is taught by our Florence resident expert on Italian art history. The Faculty of Art administers this program and facilitates students’ preparation for their studies abroad.

The Florence Off-Campus Studies Program includes three different levels of learning: 300 level, 400 level, and an Advanced Visual Studies Certificate for those who wish to further develop their studio practice and study abroad after graduating from OCAD U or another post-secondary art and design institution.

We began this publication in 1975/76; the program had been founded by Franklin (Archie) Arbuckle the previous year. Updates are completed each year by students and faculty.

It would be appreciated if each one of you would write any new or different information into your books throughout the academic year in Florence. Your successors will be as grateful as you are now that this information is at your fingertips. We hope that it helps you to see the city of Florence as yours to discover, to experience, and to enjoy.
### Emergency and Useful Telephone Numbers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Tel.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police Emergency (polizia)</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Emergency (ambulanza)</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Department Emergency</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Police Emergency</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Local phone numbers must be preceded by **055** followed by a six or seven digit number.

To call a landline phone in Florence from Canada first dial **011-39-055** then the number; omit the “055” if calling a cell phone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airport - Peretola</td>
<td>373 498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport - Pisa</td>
<td>050.28088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus card - ATAF abbonamenti</td>
<td>580 528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piazza Duomo 57/r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs - Dogana</td>
<td>265 4555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directory Assistance</td>
<td>1240 or 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel and Booking Information</td>
<td>282 893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Info</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost and Found - Oggetti Ritrovati</td>
<td>367 943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Police</td>
<td>212 290 or 212 296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Medical Service</td>
<td>475 411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train Information</td>
<td>888 088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Police Headquarters</td>
<td>549 971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence Against Women or Children</td>
<td>602 311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Hostel</td>
<td>268 338 or 601 451</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Embassy of Canada in Rome

**Consular Section, Via Zara 30**  
**00198 Rome**  
**[www.italy.gc.ca](http://www.italy.gc.ca)**

**Tel.:** **+39 06.85444.2911** (recorded information available; only emergency phone calls are answered by operators: follow the prompts—choose option 1, then 2 for emergencies.)

**Fax:** **+39 06.85444.2912**

**Email:** consul.rome@international.gc.ca

**For Emergencies you may also e-mail:** sos@international.gc.ca

**Toll-free number from Italy:** **00-800-2326-6831**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCAD University – Toronto, Canada</td>
<td>416-977-6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivian So (Faculty of Art)</td>
<td>ext. 307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Art Office</td>
<td>ext. 321, 371, 306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All OCAD U admin email addresses are:

[firstinitiallastname@ocadu.ca](mailto:firstinitiallastname@ocadu.ca) (eg. vso@ocadu.ca)
2. **ACCOMMODATIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY**

**Academic Accommodations for students with disabilities**

If you are registered with the Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at OCAD University and will need academic accommodations while you are in Florence, please speak to your primary advisor in the CSD and Vivian So, Program Assistant, Contemporary Painting and Print Media in the Faculty of Art office upon your acceptance to the Florence program.

**Accommodation and Accessibility Resources**

**Centre for Students with Disabilities**  
http://www.ocadu.ca/services/disability-services.htm

Telephone: 416-977-6000 ext. 339  
Email: csd@ocadu.ca  
Hours: Monday to Friday - 8:30 am to 4:30 pm; closed 12:00pm to 1:00pm

**Health and Wellness**  
http://www.ocadu.ca/services/health-and-wellness.htm  
Telephone: 416-977-6000 ext. 260  
Email: hwc@ocadu.ca  
Facebook:  
https://www.facebook.com/ocaduhealthandwellnesscentre/?fref=ts  
Twitter: @ocaduhwc  
Hours: Monday to Friday - 8:30 am to 4:30 pm; closed 12:00pm to 1:00pm

Here are some external online resources that you may find useful:

Transportation information for people with disabilities:  
http://tuscany.angloinfo.com/information/healthcare/people-with-disabilities/

Accessible Florence:  
http://www.aboutflorence.com/accessible-florence.html
3. GETTING THINGS DONE

When you arrive in Firenze, you will want to start getting organized, find an apartment (if you haven't arranged one beforehand- but we recommend you attempt to find one as early in advance as possible) and orient yourself to shopping. There are some important differences in how things are done which will be useful and important to know.

Generally, stores and offices are open in the mornings (8:30) until about noon (or 1:00 or 2:00pm), and reopen in the mid/late afternoon until early evening. **You will be out of luck trying to get things done during off-hours. Some stores are closed Monday mornings and/or Wednesday afternoons.** These hours are not always the same for different types of places and may change in different seasons. **You will have the most success doing practical stuff if you get an early start on the day and knock-off at noon.** Stores right in the tourist center will hold hours more similar to those we are used to in Toronto.

Be sure to get a street map and possibly a bus route map (available at the Tourist Info Point across from the train station next to the Santa Maria Novella church). You can walk to most places but refer to the Transportation section for how to get around by bus.

Payphones are now rare in Florence. For information about setting up your cell phone in Florence, see Services (p. 47). If you need to use a pay phones, get a phone card (Scheda Telefonica available at street stands/Tabacchi for approximately €6. Each call simply debits the cost from the card and returns it to you. Be sure to dial the prefix “055” for local landline numbers.

Learn to read street addresses. The r after a street address usually denotes a business. When searching for an address on the street, look for a red number on the side of the building (if your address is listed as Via San Gallo 45r, for example). Residences will have a black or blue number. If you are looking for Via San Gallo 45, the number will be black or blue. **The r and b numbers do not match in sequence on the street** (i.e. a black 40 may be a block away from a red 40). This applies only in Florence. Note that Google maps does not understand the distinction between red and black addresses.
Eating affordably will be a major concern until you get settled in your apartment. Be aware that buying in small corner shops is more expensive than the bigger grocery stores, and that buying in a café (things like bottled water) can be 4 or 5 times the cost. Anything in a cooler will cost more, as will anything when you sit down in a café (usually double). Prices in cafes are usually posted; sometimes you pay the cashier ahead of time. **Try to have small change close to the actual cost so that you will not accidentally or purposefully be shortchanged.**

Check the “Food/Household” section of this handbook for less expensive suggestions. **The studio has a refrigerator where you can temporarily keep food and drinks to cut down on Cafe consumption.**

**Legal Information:**

You MUST apply for a **Permit to Stay (Permesso di Soggiorno)** within 8 days of your arrival in Florence. The Class Assistant and/or Fall Coordinator will give you information on what the process entails and what paperwork will be required.

You may have to deal with two government-related applications. The first is to get an Italian Social Insurance number (**Codice Fiscale**). This **may** be required by the rental agency to complete your lease (only one of your group will need it). It is an easy process which involves going to a government office (Agenzie delle Entrate) in Via Santa Caterina d’Alessandria. Other reasons you may need one include certain registered purchases, such as getting an Internet or cell phone account.
4. **HOUSING/HOTELS**

In recent years, most students have used the Internet to contact rental agencies and secure apartments before arrival. There are a lot of international schools that will be looking to book apartments every spring, so get as early as a start as possible.

If you have not found somewhere in advance, you will want to start looking for a place to live for the school year as soon as you arrive.

**Finding an Apartment:**

Most rental agencies have websites that list available apartments. You can look at what is available and e-mail, fax or phone the agency for further details. This has been a successful approach for most students. You will need to clarify the kind of apartment you want, and through a series of communications, you should be able to rent something before arriving in Florence. You will have to pay a deposit up front when you reserve an apartment and you will then be committed to it. You cannot reserve a place without actually leasing it. Be sure to double-check all details.

If you don’t arrange an apartment beforehand, you can view lists of apartments at the agencies when you arrive. You can go to their offices, discuss possibilities, and set up appointments to see the apartments that interest you. The agencies will give all of you the same lists, so remember that you will be running into each other as you apartment hunt. You can afford to look at several places; however, there may not be that much choice due to the large number of American students arriving around the same time, most of which would have booked months in advance.

**Rental Agencies:**

The main agency that OCAD U students have dealt with in recent years is:

**Milligan & Milligan real estate /immobilare**

Via Degli Alfani 64RED, Firenze 50121  
FAX +39 055 23993577  
TELEFONO +39 (01139 from US) 055 27416000  
Email: info@milligansales.com / [www.milligansales.com](http://www.milligansales.com)  
Hours: 9-12 and 1-4 Monday – Friday, Saturday by appointment only **Staff speaks English**
Other agencies that have been used and recommended:

**Florence & Abroad** – [www.florenceandabroad.com](http://www.florenceandabroad.com)

**Best Homes in Tuscany** [www.besthousing.com](http://www.besthousing.com)

**Housing in Florence** – [www.HousinginFlorence.com](http://www.HousinginFlorence.com) – comment from 2008/09 Florence student: “*Housing in Florence* is a really good agency. I went with it and they were always there to help especially when there was trouble with our neighbors.”

**Tuscan Feeling** – [www.tuscanfeeling.com](http://www.tuscanfeeling.com) – this agency was recently used by a Florence student. She says that “they were very helpful in suggesting places once they knew what I was looking for. The finders fee is a little higher than most, but they liaisoned with the owner to let me have my dog in a 'no-pets-allowed' apartment.”

**FEES:** If an agency assists you in finding an apartment, you will have to pay an agency fee. Different agencies have different fees; expect to pay about 5-11% of the 8 months rent. The fee can be divided among roommates for payment. This payment is usually due in the first or second month of the contract. It may seem like a lot, but you are saving a great deal of time and hassle, particularly if you later have problems communicating with your landlord.

**CONTRACTS:** You will sign rental leases (contracts) through the agency, but they will be directly with the owners. The agency is only an intermediary and has no legal responsibility for rentals and contracts; however, the agency will calculate costs, collect rent and utility payments, and is available to help you resolve rental problems. Be as polite as you can be with the agency, but you can also be firm. They are there to help both you and the landlord, and may sometimes seem to be more on the landlord’s side. Follow the suggestions (below) for keeping things as clear as possible.

The contracts are legally binding. Once you sign and pay the deposit you will be locked into the lease unless the landlord is amenable to working it out. This is true for the entire lease, not just your individual share. It is important to read the contract carefully to understand all of the clauses of the lease (although they are pretty standard). In most cases, at least one month’s rent, one month’s security deposit, and the agency fee are payable upon signing the contract. Monthly rent is payable in advance and usually utilities are extra – calculated based on your usage each month.
The apartments must be left in the same condition as when you moved in. Most apartments are fully furnished, have cooking utensils, bed linens, blankets and towels, but you should ask to be sure. If linens are provided, they must be washed before you leave, otherwise you will be charged for final cleaning. It is important to clarify all details with the landlord and agency you may be using. It is quite normal to pay a Cleaning Fee when you leave, but you may be able to reduce it by making sure the apartment is in order.

**It is important to view the apartment contents and their condition with the agency when you are moving in.**

**Anything that is not in good shape should be noted at that time.** You can ask for items that are normal household needs. The landlord may be willing to pay for these. Take a good inventory upon your arrival, noting the condition of furniture, walls, electrical appliances, etc., and let the agency know what you find wrong. You can ask for improvements (which may happen), but more importantly, you have a record for later that you have not caused any damage. Be sure to let the agency know (in writing and with a date) immediately if something should break.

**TELEPHONES:** Few landlords will install telephones as Italian telephone bills are not itemized and it is impossible to establish responsibility for payment. If there is a telephone already in the apartment, it is normal for the owner to ask for a substantial extra deposit (approx. €300 to €600).

Cell phones are readily available from a number of service providers. You may also be able to buy one from a former Florence student, which is much cheaper. Nowadays, most people will get their smartphones unlocked and simply buy a SIM card upon arrival. Usually there are cheap student or ‘under 30’ plans for both minutes and data. If you go over the allotted amount, you can buy cards to top it up.

There are three major providers- TIM, WIND and VODAFONE. Note that WIND is not the same company as is the WIND currently operating in Canada. Some students in the past have run into problems with WIND listing fraudulent charges on their phone. Because of this it is recommended the whole class go with TIM.

If the whole class is with one service provider, then calls between you all are free. Unlike in Canada, you do not pay for incoming calls, only the calls that you make. So if family members want to call you from back home, you will not pay on your end.
Once you have a cell phone, you can get it re-charged (credited) at most Tabacchi stores. They can re-credit your cell for you without you having to use a calling card. They just need your cell number. Other Tabacchi will sell you cards in denominations of €5, €10, €20, €30 or €50. Instructions for these cards are in Italian, but are not difficult to figure out. TIM also has an English line you can call as an alternate, as the number for this service when you receive your number/SIM card. If you buy a cell phone from a former Florence student, the instructions will already have been converted into English (note: as of 2015 there no longer seem to be phones being passed on, as most people bring their own smart phone).

**UTILITIES:** These are not normally included in the rent: gas (ENI), heat, electricity (ENEL), and water. You should budget approximately €200 to €300 a month per household. Electricity and heat are expensive, so conserve energy. Stoves often do not always have pilot lights; it is advisable to buy a flint lighter, which is available in most hardware stores.

If you have a water heater with a reservoir (as we use in North America) you will save a lot of money by turning it off when not in use. Some places have instant heaters, which heat the water only as you run the tap (this is more efficient). **Heating is very expensive and the common practice is to heat only in the evenings when you are at home, turning the heat down at night and during the day. By law heating may be turned on from November 1-April 15.** Past students have suggested layering up with sweaters, socks and blankets to avoid paying a big heating bill. Bring hot water bottles!

**RENEWABLE LEASES:** You may wish to ask about the possibility of signing a renewable lease for 4 months, with the option of renewing the lease 1 month before it expires. This gives you the opportunity to experience your apartment, and to see if you get along well with your roommates and/or neighbours without locking you into an apartment for your full stay. Most agencies and landlords are **not** willing to offer such a lease, but you can always ask. The downside is that you may be apartment hunting again in December.

**Dormitories:**

1. **Residence Porta Al Prato:** via Ponte alle Mosse 16, 50144.
   Tel. 354 951. Web [www.portaalprato.com](http://www.portaalprato.com). Nice place to stay temporarily if you are searching for an apartment. Each studio apartment has a bathroom, sitting/dining room, and kitchenette.
Linen and kitchen equipment are provided. TV, phone, and air conditioning are available at extra cost. Minimum stay is 3 days. Be sure to ask about the deposit required.

2. **Scolopium**: via Venezia, 18b, 50121. Tel. 579 603. Student dorm facility located in a safe and fairly quiet neighbourhood. 15 min walk from studio. A student lived here in the 07/08 Florence Program and paid €460 per month for a single room. Rooms are furnished except for appliances. Need to buy own hotplate and cutlery. No refrigerator allowed in the rooms or building. Landlords and most of the students speak Italian only – good chance to practice!

**Reasonable Hotels/Pensiones (please contact individual establishments for prices):**

**Affitacamere Il Ghiro**: via Faenza 63. Tel. 0338 279 5544 or 055 282 086. Contact: Federico Bianchini.

**Albergo Anna**: via Faenza 56, 2nd floor. Tel. 298 322 (only 7 rooms). Small but clean. Includes breakfast.

**Hotel Derby**: via Nazionale 35. Tel. 219 308. Good prices, and includes breakfast.

**Hotel Nuova Italia**: via Faenza 26. Tel. 268 430 or 287 508. Centrally located and includes breakfast.

**Hotel Tirreno**: via Bonifacio Lupi 21. Tel. 472 143. Contact: Sig. Bartolini. A bed and breakfast hotel that will bargain with you on price if you wish an extended stay in the hotel. The longer you stay, the better the price that can be arranged. The owner speaks English.

**Istituto Gould**: via dei Serragli 49. Tel. 212 576. Fax 280 274. Better than a normal hostel and cheaper than a hotel, this is a great choice for the budget traveller. You have the option of getting a single room (for a bit more money) or to share a room with 1, 2, or 3 other people. Each room has its own bathroom with a sink and shower. Be aware of the limited office hours and the fact that you cannot check in or out on Sunday; otherwise, check-in is 3pm.

**Pensione Sole**: via del Sole 8, 3rd floor. Tel. 296 094. No breakfast. Without bath.
**Pensione Toscana:** via del Sole 8, 2nd floor. Tel. 213 156. The entrance and staircase are a bit shabby but the pensione is small and clean. Close to the train station and studio, and includes breakfast. All rooms have bathrooms.

**Soggiorno Casa Grossi:** piazza Giuochi 1, right near the train station. Tel. 211 235.

**Soggiorno Irena Rossa:** right next to studio. Tel. 230 2185. Fax. 282 552. [www.touristhouse.com](http://www.touristhouse.com) or management@touristhouse.com

**Hotel Centro:** via de’Ginori 17, Tel. 230 2901.

**Youth Hostels:**

1. **Santa Monaca:** via Santa Monaca 6; Tel. 268 338 / 239 6704; Fax. 280 185. Eight rooms: 85 beds; 8 baths.

2. **Villa Camerata:** viale A. Righi 2-4; Tel. 601 451. Twenty-nine rooms, 500 beds, 25 baths; open all year.

**In Addition:**
You may want to check the bulletin boards at the following locations:

1. **British Institute Library:** Lungarno Giucciardini 9.

2. **California State University:** via Leopardi 12, Tel. 240 775.

3. **Syracuse:** in piazzale Donatello.

4. **S.A.C.I.** (Studio Art Centres International): Via Sant’Antonino 11

5. **Paperback Exchange:** via delle Oche 4r; an Anglo-American bookstore that has a bulletin board with some apartment rental notices (in English and Italian). Hours: 9am-7:30pm Mon-Fri, Sat 10:30-7:30. [www.papex.it](http://www.papex.it) or e-mail papex@papex.it

6. **L’Università degli Studi di Firenze (U. of Florence):** The University has various branches throughout the city. At different locations there are bulletin boards with information about apartments. Try piazza Brunelleschi 1.
7. **The main train station, Firenze S.M.N.:** piazza della Stazione. Inside the train station there is a hotel/pensione information office that can give you prices/locations of local hotels. You can tell them how much you want to spend and they will help you find a place. This might be handy if you need a temporary place to stay in a hurry.

8. **The American Church:** via Ruccellai 13; places apartment rental notices on their bulletin board.

9. **Foreigners in Florence and A Friend in Florence**
   Facebook groups often have postings for shared apartments.

**Newspapers/Magazines/Media with Rental Sections:** *Most are also available online.*

The following is a list of newspapers and magazines that publish apartments and rooms for rent. Arrive early at the newsstand on the day(s) they are published. The best apartments go first. Remember, you will have to negotiate this yourself in Italian!

1. **La Pulce:** a bi-weekly paper published on Tues and Fri with a large rentals section; costs €1. Consult the indice (index) on the inside cover page. Look for the Affitto (rental) listings and the sublistsings for affitto, subaffitto, appartamenti & camere, offerte (rentals, sublets and rooms for rent, offers) to find the appropriate page number for these listings. http://www.lapulce.it/

2. **La Nazione:** Sunday edition has a large section on rentals. Look under PICCOLA PUBBLICITA’, Affitti locali, appart. e terreni (offerta), usually on the back of the Economy page (Economica). On Thurs, there is **Nazione Casa,** a pull-out section with information on buying or renting apartments.

3. **Secondamano:** via Ponte all’Asse 3/b; a tri-weekly newspaper with ads for second-hand goods, hobbies, local services, and a section for apartment rentals. Published on Mon, Wed and Fri. Consult the INDICE DELLE RUBRICHE (index) on the inside cover under the heading IMMOBILI TERRENI (apartments & property), CASA AFFITTI Firenze (apartment rentals) for the appropriate section number. https://www.secondamano.it/
4. **Panorama Casa:** a magazine published every Mon. with a lot of listings for apartment rentals in Florence and the surrounding area. Be sure to ask for the proximity to Florence. https://www.panoramacasa.it/

5. **RESTAURANTS**

**General Notes:**
Florence, as with most of Italy, is a marvelous place for restaurants. Regional and a mix of cuisines can be found ranging from affordable to expensive.

**A service charge of 10-15% will be added automatically to your bill if you sit down at a table to eat.** This service charge or “coperto” will be added in coffee bars, sandwich places, bars and restaurants, unless you stand at the counter.

Meals in restaurants are not inexpensive but there is a range. You can easily eat vegetarian, or have a full meal with primo and secondo (two courses), or just a soup and salad.

Traditional Florentine dishes rely on seasonal fruits and vegetables, and hearty grains. It is also known for trippa (tripe-- the original Florentine street food!) and Florentine steak (bistecca fiorentina).

Wine, beer, soft drinks, and mineral water (either frizzante sparkling or naturale/still) are common drinks with meals. Tuscan bread is unsalted and meant to be eaten with your meal, rather than while you wait. Vegetables (greens, potatoes, etc.) are served separately from main dishes and you order them individually. These are called contorni.

If you want to eat meat, your meal will cost more than in Canada. The Florentine steak is a specialty, but can be very expensive. Seafood and fish must be brought in to Florence and consequently are more expensive than in a coastal city like Venice, though some great fish restaurants have recently opened. **Other meat and poultry is more affordable.** Vegetables are much tastier and fresher than is generally the case in Toronto. Pasta is a staple dish in Italy and you will find many varieties in every restaurant. Pizza is common, as are soups. For a good, hearty, vegetarian soup try “ribollita” which means, literally, “reboiled” and is made with stale bread, beans and black cabbage, which have been boiled for two days. Delicious!
An Eatery Glossary:

**Aperitivo:** a ‘pre-dinner’ drink with finger foods served in the evening. Many bars offer extensive aperitivo buffets.

**Bar/Caffe:** found everywhere; serve panini (sandwiches), paste (pastries), dolci (sweet buns), pizza and of course all sorts of coffee and drinks. Generally less expensive, but it depends if you are in the tourist centre. Some also sell tickets for city buses (ATAF). **Best to stand to eat or drink unless you want to pay a hefty surcharge for a seat or table (usually double).** Italians don’t drink cappuccinos or lattes after noon hour. They consider these to be breakfast drinks. They only drink caffè or caffè macchiato (espresso) in the afternoon and evening.

**Enoteca:** wine bar or store (or both).

**Focacceria:** sells schiacciata (also called focaccia), a flat bread made with olive oil, stuffed schiacciata, and pizza to go.

**Friggitoria:** fried food shop selling fried polenta, bomboloni (doughnuts), coccoli, roventini, apple and rice fritters, and French fries.

**Paninoteca:** sandwich shop.

**Pizzeria:** pizza shop.

**Ristorante:** restaurant, usually implies better dining.

**Rosticceria:** usually serve tasty roasted and fried foods to take out or eat there; roast chicken, pork and French fries, bread, salami, sausages, ham, pork products and side dishes; see separate listings below.

**Torrefazione:** shop selling coffee beans and accessories.

**Trattoria:** a family-run, less expensive restaurant, often with a “Menu Turistico” or fixed price menu with first and second plate, wine and dessert for reasonable prices.

**Self-Service:** a cafeteria; designed to snag tourists, usually pricey and not very good. There are two self-service restaurants on via Nazionale (by studio), and others at borgo San Lorenzo 31/r, via de Pecori 35/r.
**Tavola Calda (hot table):** a quick, less expensive restaurant.

**RESTAURANTS** *List is always changing*

**Trattora da Garibardi**
Piazza del Mercato Centrale, 38r
This place is great, and not too pricey either. They have a desert called 'tris di panna cotta' which is to die for! Was the OCAD U hangout for years.

**Ciro and Sons**
Via del Giglio, 28
Students used to call this place 'pizza of the gods', because it’s some of the best pizza ever. It’s right near San Lorenzo. Interior has original frescos.

**Osteria Santo Spirito**
Piazza Santo Spirito, 19 r,
Santo Spirito square is a big hang out area at night. They serve olive tapenade as a starter and the Chitarra pomodoro e basilico is amazing!

**Gusto Panino** and **GustoPizza**
Two restaurants that are good for grabbing either pizza or panini on the go. Also in Santo Spirito. Touristy.

**Palle D’oro**
A small rustic kitchen tavern near the studio that also does take away at lunchtime.

**Kome**
Via dè Benci, 41r
Japanese food (Wednesday: aperitivo 19:00 to 21:30)

**Ristorante Messicano Tijuana**
Two locations:
Via Ghibellina, 156 (original restaurant in the center)
Via il Prato 57-59r (second location near Porta al Prato)
Mexican food (and Margaritas!) that takes reservations online. Not exactly authentic, but not bad.
**Cafe Rossano**  
San Gallo. It's a 5 minute walk from the studio and the most charming nicest man owns it and will treat you well! If you are missing your favourite cafe back at home, this will soon take it's place. Also you can get a sandwich, coffee, and water for 3.50 euro.

**Caffetteria delle Oblate**  
Via dell'Oriuolo 26  
Also does exhibitions and is part of La Biblioteca delle Oblate. Serves aparativo.

**Il Giardino di Barbano**  
Piazza dell’ Independenza, Tel: 055 486752  
Pizza, pasta, and really good salads!.

**Kitsch**  
Aperitivo  
2 locations:  
Viale Antonio Gramsci, 1  
Via San Gallo 22r (right near the studio)

**Soul Kitchen**  
Via de’ Benci, 34R

**YELLOW BAR**  
Via del Proconsolo 39r. Tel:. 055 211766  
Fabulous Pizzas.

**ZA’ZA’**  
Piazza Mercato Centrale, next to Mario Tel: 055 215 411.  
Traditional Italian food, pasta etc. Touristy, but good.

**Vegetarian restaurants**

**Dolce Vegan**  
Via San Gallo, 92 A new vegan restaurant in the same area as Il Vegetariano. The highlight is they have a back room where you can buy fair trade, vegan and gluten free groceries. This might be pretty handy if anyone in the class has these dietary restrictions.

**Il Vegetariano**  
Via delle Ruote, 30r Great vegetarian restaurant that is a hit with the non-vegetarians too. Its cafeteria style, not too pricey and the menu changes daily. Open for lunch and dinner, but I have always found the dinner offerings better.
**Liberia Brac**  
Via dei Vagellai, 18 A little bookshop/vegetarian restaurant and lounge. Call or email a few days ahead to make a reservation.

**RUTH’S**  
Via L.C. Farini 2A Tel: 055 2480888  
Kosher vegetarian food

**GELATO**

**Vivoli**  
Via Dell’Isola delle Stinche, 7r Wins awards every year for best gelato in Italy.

**Gelateria de Neri**  
Via dei Neri 9/10  
Owned by the brother of the owner of Vivoli and said to be preferred by locals.

**Gelateria la Carraia**  
Piazza Nazario Sauro, 25-r  
Good for creamy gelatos- try the amarena!

**Badiani**  
Viale dei Mille, 20r

**Gelateria s. Trinita**  
Piazza Frescobaldi, 11-12r

**Gelato della Passera**  
Via Toscanella 15 R  
Just a short walk from Santo Spirito (down an alley) really nice ‘gourmet flavours’.

**GROM**  
Via delle Oche, 24-r  
All natural and open almost 24 hours.

**Le Cure / Gelateria Cavini**  
Piazza delle Cure, 19

**Venchi**  
Piazza del Mercato Nuovo This is a small chain chocolate company that recently opened up a store that also has (mostly) chocolate flavoured gelatos and great fresh fruit
granita(slush).

6. CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERIES

Creative People in Florence – a Facebook group with local and expats living in Florence who have a wide range of creative practices and knowledge about sourcing atypical or hard to find resources. They have quasi-regular social get-togethers as well. Definitely worth joining and following the social network profiles.

Aria Art Gallery - Borgo Santi Apostoli 40, Florence
Hours: Monday – Saturday 10:30-1:30 and 3:30-7:30pm (Sunday by appointment)
www.ariaartgallery.com

BASE - Via San Niccolò 18r, Florence
www.baseitaly.org

Biagiotti Arte Contemporanea - Via delle Belle Donne 39r, Florence
Hours: Tuesday – Saturday 2-7pm
www.artbiagiotti.com/en/

C2 – Contemporanea 2 - Via Ugo Foscolo 6, Florence
www.c2contemporanea2.com

Eduardo Secci Contemporary
Piazza Goldoni 2,
www.eduardosecci.com

Frittelli Arte Contemporanea
- Centro d’arte Spaziotempo - Via Val Di Marina 15, Florence
Hours: Monday – Saturday 10am – 1pm and 3:30pm – 7:30pm
(Sunday by appointment)
www.frittelliarte.it/en

Galleria Il Ponte
Via di Mezzo, 42/b, Florence
www.galleriailponte.com

Galleria Poggiali e Forconi
Via della Scala, 35/a, Florence
Via Benedetta, 3r, Florence
www.poggialielforconi.it

Le Murate
Piazza delle Murate, 50122 Firenze
+ 39 055 234 6872
http://www.lemurate.comune.fi.it/lemurate/
Another contemporary venue that also has a bar/restaurant as well as an interesting architectural reno/conversion. This venue is usually more focused on local contemporary talent with a wide range of artistic mediums/genres. Similar to 401 Richmond in Toronto.

SENSUS – Luoghi per l’Arte Contemporanea
Viale Gramsci 42, Florence
http://www.sensusstorage.com/

Palazzo Strozzi - Piazza degli Strozzi, 50123 Firenze
Large, international exhibitions.

Tethys Photography Gallery
Via dei Vellutini 17/R, Florence
Hours: Monday – Friday 10am-1pm, 3-7pm, Saturday 3-7pm
www.tethysgallery.com

Tornabuoni Arte
Lungarno Benvenuto Cellini, 13/a, Florence
Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-1pm / 3:30-7:30pm, Saturday 11am-1pm / 2:30-6:30pm
www.tornabuoniarte.it

Villa Romana - Via Senese, 68, 50124 Firenze
Contemporary artist residency and exhibition space.

7. *SHOPPING*

**Art Supplies:**

*Note – Airlines will no longer allow you to carry any kind of paint with you, even in your checked baggage. Some have tried and been successful- but do so at your own risk.*

There are good art supply stores in Florence that carry the brands with which we are familiar in Canada, as well as brands unavailable at home. **Many prices are comparable, although with exchange fluctuations it may be more expensive overall. Most regular supplies are available.** In particular, you can buy beautiful bound sketchbooks, an unimaginable range of colours and pigments, innumerable types of painting media, pre-primed canvases and linens, unique handmade papers, portable sketchbox easels, and every type of brush at a range of prices.
You should consider trying Italian-made paints such as the Maimeri line. Any specialty materials can be hard to locate, so bring these along if you can. Mostly it just takes time and perseverance to locate them. Some things which students have had trouble finding include: plexiglass for printmaking plates, photocopy transparency materials, and odd hardware materials. Canvas is of poor quality and is extremely expensive, so it is recommended that you bring some with you from Canada. It is also recommended that Photography majors bring film from Canada.

Many stores will offer a student discount and we have a good reputation in the main art stores, so mention that you are a student at OCAD.

**Major Art Supply Stores:**

**Zecchi**: via dello Studio 19, Tel. 211 470; near the Duomo. Sandro the owner speaks English and offers OCAD students a 10% discount. Very friendly and has the widest selection in town. Carries own line of very good oil and acrylic paints at reasonable prices.

**Rigacci**: via dei Servi 71/r, Tel. 216 206. Good for drawing and tinted papers, graphic and watercolour supplies, and cheap sketchbooks; also sculpture and etching supplies. They carry their own bulk acrylic media. Mention OCAD and ask for a student discount. DOES'NT CLOSE FOR LUNCH

**Salvini**: via degli Alfani 127/r. Has a little of most things, but is a small supplier. A handy source for newsprint (you won’t see it – ask for it) cheap and close-by. Ask for student discount. They carry Windsor Newton “Winton” and their paint and paper prices are generally cheaper than at Zecchi.

**Lory**: Piazza Frescobaldi 4-9/R, just south of the Ponte S. Trinita. The best to find different types of pencils and paper (Student discount on €10+, also offers a "fidelity" card where you collect points on purchases)

**Leoncini**: via Ricasoli 57/r, Tel. 212 875; opposite the Accademia di Belli Arte. Complete range of drawing, painting, etching, and design equipment. English spoken.

**Mugnai**: via San Gallo 105/r. Paint, graphic and coloured pencils, markers, pens, papers (plain and coloured) of all kinds, including for printmaking. Foamboard, art brushes,
concentrated liquid watercolours, design tools, stationery, etc.

**Photography Supplies**

**Bongi**
Via Por Santa Maria 82/r, Tel. 055 2398972. Photo Supplies and equipment, used cameras and developing.

**Carnicelli**: piazza del Duomo 4/r. Basic photo supplies, but more expensive.

**Foto Ottica Fontani**: viale Filippo Strozzi 18-20a. The photo store in Florence for the cheapest and fastest film processing in town; most photography products that you would find at home are available. Good friendly service.

**Sky**: Viale Spartaco Lavagni 4/r., Tel. 055 2342545. Photo Supplies and developing

**M.B. Photo**: via Ghibellina 131/r. Basic photo supplies.

**General Paper/Stationery Stores:**

**Deposito di Carta e Cartoni**: borgo degli Albizi 86/r. This is a paper shop which is good for gesture paper and mat board; factory warehouse atmosphere.

**Corsini**: via del Anguillara 20/r. Good for gesture paper.

**Cartoleria**: piazza Mercato Centrale. Good for newsprint, tape; sold by the kilo or individual sheets; very inexpensive.

**Cartiera Verdi**: via Pisana, 15-17/r. Papers and shipping supplies.

**Photocopies:**

**CopisteriaX, Via San Gallo 72r**
The closest copy shop to the studio, easily identifiable with the green sign. They do not offer cutting services like Lory, but are very helpful otherwise. They also have a large photocopy machine that you can make your own copies on very quickly.

**Centro Copia Lensi**: via Cavour 134r – 140/r. High quality copier services including enlargements/colour copies from
disk. Probably the best equipped in Florence.

**Copisteria San Marco**: piazza San Marco 7. Photocopies, photostats, offset, etc; good prices.

**Lory** (a copy shop beside the main art store): Piazza Frescobaldi 4-9/R, just south of the Ponte S. Trinità. Copy shop with capability to do large format digital prints, posters, etc. from CD and disk. Also carries art and office supplies.

**Sidi Copy**: via Fratelli Roselli 29/31r, [www.sidicopy.it](http://www.sidicopy.it) High quality copy services, including digital prints (all sizes) from CD and disk. Will sometimes give student discounts for large quantities.

**Technocopia**: via C.Ridolfi 5/r. Photocopies, etc.

**Technocopia**: by ponte Santa Trinita. Art supplies and colour copies – not the friendliest nor cheapest, but high tech.

**Hardware/Lumber:**

**Il Plastico**: is the best place for plexiglass and other similar materials. Vanessa is the owner and she also speaks English; really helpful if you're looking for anything specific or need advice. Via San Gallo 127r.

**Ferramenta Masini**: via San Gallo 60/r. Hardware galore along with sandpaper, cheap brushes, tape, turpentine, solvents, acid, dry pigment; inexpensive house paints to use as grounds, etc.

**Color & Hobby Via Dei Serragli**: Tel: 055 282121. This hardware store keeps a supply of canvas and stretchers for painting.

**Colorifico Poli**: via Guelfa 49/r. Nylon dyes, spray paint, silicon, smalts, roulant brushes, working gloves, powder colour. Also: clay, glazes, firing services.

**Ditta Antolini Benvenuti**: via Panicale 24/r. Iron supplies.

**Materiali per l’Ediliza**: viale Spartaco Lavagnini 7/r. Cement, gesso, sand.

**Centro Bricolage del Legno**: viale Gramsci, 13R, near Piazza Beccaria. Provides lots of wood, plywood, masonite
and artist paint (acrylics, watercolours). The person at the back speaks English and will cut wood for you in any size you like.

**Fiorentina Legno:** via Zanella 13/r. A lumberyard.

**Textile Materials:**

**Bacci:** via dell’Ariento 32/r. Dress fabrics, silk, wool, cotton, and linen.

**Campolmi Robert Filati:** Via Folco Portinari, 19-21. Great shop to buy any type of yarn, knitting supplies or raw wool for felting. The staff is very helpful. Can be a bit expensive, but they have 'sale buckets' with balls of yarn ranging from 1-3 euros. http://www.campolmifilati.it/

**Samba**
Via Santa Elisabetta 10/r. Sewing materials, trims, buttons and more. Best place to find buttons in Florence.

**Scampoli:** via dell’Oriuolo. Inexpensive basic fabrics and remnants.

**Embroidery supply store:** in via Olio near the piazza Duomo.

**Chiusure Lampo:** via Nazionale 115/r. Sewing supplies, fasteners, hooks, patches, etc.

**Scatolini:** via Anguillara 66r Tel: 055 398408. Bookmaking supplies: book cloth, paper & book board.

**Zest**
Via della Mattonaia, 50121 This is a great place to find more Sewing ‘craft’-like supplies. The owners do not speak a lot of English, so be patient and try to practice Italian with them.

**Miscellaneous:**

**Bizzarri:** via Condotta 32/r. For rosin, dammar crystals, pure acids, analine dyes.

**Stiavelli Romano:** via de’Ginori 29/r. Electrical wires, light bulbs, batteries, radios, tv's, spotlights. English spoken.

**Stiac:** via Colletta. Electrical parts, such as power converters.

**Ilmar:** via Scialoia. Electrical parts and supplies, lighting, etc.
Special Resources:

**Il Bisonte:** [http://www.ilbisonte.it/](http://www.ilbisonte.it/)

**Address:** Via di San Niccolò, 24, 50125 Firenze, Italy

**Phone:** +39 055 234 2585

A print studio with facilities for lithography, etching and letterpress. The owner Simone is very welcoming and excited to work with students- those with print experience and first-timers! OCAD U students have arranged discounted group classes in 2014/15.

**The Florence Studio:**

**Address:** Borgo Santi Apostoli, 18, 50123 Firenze, Italy

Canadian owners Frank and Laura run this traditional studio in Florence and have welcomed in OCAD U students for workshops and life drawing. Specialize in painting and sculpture (including casting and mold making).

**Art Studio Fuji:** via Guelfa 79A/85 [www.artfuji.it](http://www.artfuji.it)

Tel. 055 216 877 Fax. 055 214 500, email [info@artfuji.it](mailto:info@artfuji.it)

Kathy Knippel, Director. A studio school for Material Art & Design with good facilities. In the past, has offered OCAD students positions as Studio Assistants in exchange for studio/ equipment usage. In 2012/13, the studio began the process of cutting back their services as the founder is retiring. Therefore services to OCAD U students may be affected and limited.

**Donald Sutfin:** via Pisana 12, Tel. 225 072. An American artist in Florence who has a printmaking studio which students can arrange to use for a fee. He has a small etching press in a small studio in a beautiful setting below San Miniato.

**Fratelli Alinari:** Largo Alinari, 15. Photographic archive of mostly documentary images made and collected over the past 150 years. You can view and purchase prints, books and posters in the store. A tour of the archive can be arranged by calling Paola de Polo at 055 238 2857, but it is expensive (€20/person).
**Food/Household:**

Florentines traditionally shop at single purpose stores, though this is changing as more big supermarkets appear around the city. Refrigerators are small and many people buy fresh food daily. Shops are normally open from 8am-1pm, closed for siesta until 4:30 or 5pm, and open until 7pm. Some are closed Monday mornings and Wednesday afternoons.

**Alimentari:** small grocery store (all types of food), often more expensive than larger supermarkets

**Supermercato:** supermarket (major chains are Coop, Esselunga, and Conad)

**Bottiglieria:** liquor store

**Civaie:** specialty shop selling dried legumes and ground grains i.e. flour.

**Drogheria:** spice shop

**Erboristeria:** herb shop

**Forno:** bakery

**Frutta e Verdura:** greengrocer (also called ortolano or fruttavendolo)

**Gelateria/Gelataio:** ice cream

**Latteria/Lattaio:** dairy goods

**Macelleria/Macellaio:** butcher

**Panifico/Panetterie:** bakery

**Pasticceria:** pastry shop

**Pescheria/Pesciaiolo:** fish shop

**Pizzicheria/Pizzicagnolo:** delicatessen

**Polleria/Pollaiolo:** poultry shop

**Salsamentaria/Salumeria:** delicatessen

**Supermarkets (supermercati) or markets (the Central Market’s first floor or Sant’Ambrogio Market) is where you will find the best prices on regular food and household needs.** Supermarket hours are 8:30am-7 or 8pm, usually closed Sun. These are large North American style stores with packaged, frozen or canned goods and legions of household supplies; plastic bags cost extra so bring your own.

**The Central Market closes at 2 pm daily.**

The following list includes some of the main supermarkets:

**COOP:** good quality and low prices. Chain with many locations throughout Florence. Recent students have found this to be a better grocery store than Conad or Esselunga. The cost of items is cheaper and the variety is better too. It might be useful to get a Coop card at the start of the year because they always have
deals/reduced prices for those with the Coop cards.

**ESSELUNGA:** many locations including: via Milanesi 32/34; via Galliano 136; via Gianotti 75/77; viale de Amicis 89; via Masaccio 274/276; via Baracca 134; via Pisano 130/132; via dell’Argin 47.

**Sign-up for a discount (Fidaty) card** at the front counter by filling out a simple name+address form and look for discounted items. You can save up to 50% on some items. There is a discount aisle with different products each week. Collect bonus points for prizes!

**CONAD:** many locations including: via Pietrapiana 42/b, borgo san Lorenzo 15-17; Largo Fratelli Alinari, 6/7, via dei Bardi 45-47 piazza Dalmazia 12/14; viale dei Mille 140.

There are many small grocery stores, often with tiny entrances and surprisingly large interiors, such as CRAI, SISA, Il Centro. These are more expensive than big supermarkets, but are much better for things like bottled water than the bars and cafes.

**Note:** When shopping for fresh produce, **do not touch unless you are wearing a plastic glove.** Bins of gloves are provided in the fresh produce section. Weigh the produce on the scales provided, printing out a pricing label by punching the right button.

**Markets:** Most of these sell food; some sell dry goods. There are many other markets all over the city. You may feel less in control in these situations, but know what you are buying and what it should cost. Do some comparison shopping at the various stalls. For non-food items, feel free to bargain and use your Italian! Try to pay with small bills, close to the amount you are being charged. For food products, **do not touch.** Ask for what you want: “Mi da quattro mele e un kilo di patate, per favore.” Buying vegetables and produce from the markets or the smaller farmer shops is cheaper and the quality is a lot better.

The following is a list of the main markets:

**Mercato Centrale:**

a) **in piazza San Lorenzo:** leather, clothes, accessories, souvenirs, etc. Hours: summer: Mon-Sat 8:30am-7pm; winter: Tues-Sat 9am-6pm, extended hours at Christmas; closed first Mon of every month, may be open some Sundays.
b) **via dell’Arentino** (inside the large building): food. Hours: 7:30am-2pm; 4-8pm, Sat 7:30am-1pm; closed Sun and Wed afternoon. Lower floor has meat, cheeses and dry goods while the upper floor has fruits and vegetables; outside fruit veg stalls also. An excellent place for cheapest + widest selection of fruit, vegetables, meats and cheeses...although the range of products varies with the seasons. Get to know a few vendors by going back to them and they will be more friendly. Know what you are buying and what it should cost – use your Italian! Remember not to touch the products unless you are told to choose them yourself.

**Mercato delle Cascine:** Parco delle Cascine; off viale F.Lli Rosselli at ponte della Vittoria on the Arno river. Big park with an open market of little stalls carrying everything from food to clothing to household goods; only on Tues mornings from 8am-1pm. Well worth the visit even if you don’t want to buy anything.

**Mercatino delle Pulci:** piazza Ciompi (currently relocated to Piazza Ghiberti). Open daily. A huge version of the daily flea market takes place on the last Sun of each month.

**Mercato del Porcellino:** loggia del Mercato Nuovo. Open daily all day. Lace and things made from woven straw, small leather goods.

**Mercato di Sant’Ambrogio:** Sant’Ambrogio. Open daily. Mainly food, some retail. Cheap and affordable used clothing and flowers/produce, great place to find cheap beads.

**Second Hand Market:** St. James Church, via B.Rucellai 9. Open Wed mornings.

**Sunday Market** in piazza Santa Spirito. A different type of market each Sunday. Always great stuff from antiques to crafts to natural food products.

**Specialty Stores:**

**Civaie Casalinghi Poggesi:** via Taddea 5/r. Dried foods galore such as beans, peas, and seeds. Household goods too.

**Civaie Magni e Salvadori:** via Vincenzo Gioberti 13/r. All types of beans; premixed combinations of legumes for soups.
**Gelo In**: via F.Martin 14, next to via Rondinelli. Frozen foods of all types, especially fish and seafood; also macrobiotic food products as well as pricey foreign goods such as pancake mix and maple syrup.

**Indian Fast Food and Doner**: via Ginori 60/r. Good samosas and rice dishes. 20% discount for students.

**Filipino Food Store (no one knows the real name)**: Via Faenza. Sells great snacks and peanut butter!

**Latteria Merendi**: via Vincenzo Gioberti 65/r. Dairy specializing in macrobiotic products made from soy milk as well as whole-grain cereals, rice, and seaweed.

**Penny Market**: a German grocery store chain with limited stock but very cheap prices. One located west of Porta Romana.

**Sugar Blues**: in the Oltrarno, up via Serragli, via xxvii Aprile 46-48/r. Natural food from all over the world.

**Rice/Import**: via Panicale near the Mercato Centrale. Has two import food shops.

**Troponais**: via San Gallo 92/r. Health-oriented bakery that makes their natural ingredient pastries without milk, butter, or eggs; more expensive than average.

**Vivimarket**: via del Melarancio 17/r. Imported “world” and natural foods.
Other:

Department Stores: Hours: 9am-7/8pm;

**COIN:** via Calziauloi 56. Affordable and less-affordable goods including clothes, housewares etc.

**La Rinascente:** Piazza della Repubblica 1. Clothing (men and women), kitchen wares.

**OVS:** via Nazionale and Via Panzani. A mid-range department store – a good place to pick up clothing items reasonably cheap.

**UPIM:** via Gioberti 12. A mid-range department store – a good place to pick up household items and cheap paper goods, stationery, and scholastic supplies.

**Pharmacies (Farmacia):** Hours: 9am-1pm, 3:30-7:30pm; some will be closed on Sat and others open on Sun. These are denoted by a lit green cross above the door and most carry the equivalent to North American non-prescription drugs and toilet items. If you can’t live without certain items then bring them with you, but Italy is a very well-equipped country where most needs can be met. For any medicines (even non-prescription) you must ask at the counter.

**Prescription items may be more expensive than at home so bring what you need along with copies of your prescriptions. You may be asked to provide evidence of medications at Customs.**

Don’t confuse farmacias with profumerias which carry makeup, perfume, jewellery and accessories, hair colour and feminine hygiene products.

**Farmacia Codeca:** via de’Ginori 48/50/r. Run by two English-speaking pharmacists who can translate and interpret your prescriptions.

**The International Pharmacy:** via Tournabuoni 2. Multilingual staff.

The following farmacias are open all night:

**Farmacia Comunale:** piazza Stazione n. 13 (inside the train station), Tel. 263 435.

**Farmacia Molteni:** via Calziauloi 7/r.

**Farmacia Taverna:** piazza San Giovanni.
Useful Terms:
Allergy: allergia         Flu: influenza
Antibiotic: antibiotico  Fracture: frattura
Bandage: cerotto         Headache: mal di
Testa Blood: sangue
Indigestion: indigestione
Bruise: livido            Jet lag: fuso orario
Burn: bruciatura         Motion sickness: mal d’auto
Cold: raffreddore         Nausea: nausea
Cold sweat: sudori freddi Shivers: brividi
Cough: tosse              Sore throat: mal di gola
Cramps: crampi            Stomach ache: mal di pancia
Cut: ferita               Sunburn: insolazione
Diarrhea: diarrea         Vertigo: vertigine
Faint: svenimento         Vomit: vomito
Fever: febbre

Clothing: Everyone will have their own tastes and Florence is full of beautiful clothing stores. It is recommended that you wait until after Christmas when there are sales with 30 to 40% reductions in most clothing and shoe stores. You’ll find many of the same stores you’d find in Canada like Zara and H&M for cheaper, but still fashionable, clothing. Warm woolen sweaters can be bought at the Sant’Ambrogio Market or Le Cascine for five to ten euros, before bargaining!

Second hand clothing stores change so rapidly that the following addresses may be out of date, but more and more are appearing rapidly:
Via Pandolfini 4; volta di San Piero; via del Corso 74/r; via Ghibellina 149/r; via delle Stinche 31/r; Babalonia, piazza Mercato Centrale.

8. **READING**

**Italian Contemporary Art Web-sites:**
[www.exibart.com](http://www.exibart.com)
[www.cittadellarte.it](http://www.cittadellarte.it)
[www.spiraleartecontempora.ne.it](http://www.spiraleartecontempora.ne.it)
[www.fondsr.org](http://www.fondsr.org)
[www.artecommunications.com](http://www.artecommunications.com)
[www.artecontinua.org](http://www.artecontinua.org)
[www.conexarte.com](http://www.conexarte.com)
**Bookstores (listings may not be current):**

**Feltrinelli RED:** Piazza della Republica 27/r and at Santa Maria Novella train station. Bookstore/café, Florence’s version of Chapters. Open until midnight. Small selection of English books and lots of art catalogues (mainly in Italian).

**IBS:** Via dei Cerretani 16r. Large bookstore, some books in English.

**Libreria delle Donne (Woman’s Bookstore):** via Fiesolana 2/r. Also a women’s center, sponsoring women’s lectures, events, etc.

**Libreria Le Monnier:** via San Gallo 53/r. Italian textbooks and travel guides.

**Paperback Exchange:** Right near Zecchi art store on via dello Studio. Hours: Mon-Sat (Apr-Oct) 9am-1pm; 3:30-7pm; Nov-Mar, closed Mon. You can exchange your used books and get credit for new or used ones. General fiction, classics, European literature in translation, history. They will order books from North America fast! Good place to meet English speaking people.

**Salimbeni:** via Matteo Palmieri 6/r. Large selection of art and architecture books.

**Libraries:** *Indicates that you need a letter of introduction permitting you to enter. These will be prepared when requested. All of the Italian libraries have some English resources.

**British Institute Library:** Lungarno Giucciardini 9. Hours: weekdays 9:45am-1pm, 3:30-6:30pm. Open stacks. Reading room overlooks the Arno. Great selection of movies and CD’s. Borrowing permitted with a €26 deposit plus a €24 annual student membership fee (if you can get the majority of the class to register as ‘OCAD’, you can get a discount). Recent students have said that this library is not a good resource for research on contemporary art but their card is good to have for discounts on movie tickets at the Odeon Cinema.

**Instituto Universitario Olandese di Storia dell’Arte:** viale Torricelli 5; Art History. **This is the library which has agreed to give OCAD free access for research purposes. The staff are helpful and friendly.** Take the #11 or #12 bus up the hill beyond Porta Romana.*
**Centro per l’Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci:** viale della Repubblica, 277, Prato. This museum centre houses an excellent library of international art magazines, catalogues, books; and is free to use. Open 10am-18.45, closed on weekends. Take the blue Lazzi bus near to Prato – let the driver know that you wish to go to the Museo Pecci (you will see the museum once the bus leaves the highway). **This is the best resource for contemporary art books.**

**American Church Library:** via Bernardo Rucellai. Fiction.

**Biblioteca Americana (American Library):** Facolta di Magistero (of the University of Florence); via San Gallo 10. Hours: weekdays 9:30am-tpm. English reference collection, although there are no art books. *

**Biblioteca Comunale Le Oblate:** via Sant’Egidio 2. Public Library, open shelves.

**Biblioteca dell’Accademia delle Belle Arti:** via Ricasoli 62. Art History. *

**Biblioteca della Facolta di Lettere e Filosofia:** piazza Brunelleschi 4. European Literature, History, Philosophy.

**Biblioteca della Facolta di Magistero:** via Parione 7. European Literature, History and Philosophy.

**Biblioteca della Storia dell’Arte (Art History Library):** via della Pergola 56. Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-6:30pm; Sat 9am-1:30pm. Art History library of the University of Florence.

**Biblioteca delle Gallerie di Firenze:** via della Ninna 5, behind the Uffizi. Hours: Mon-Sat. 9am-1pm. Art History. *

**Biblioteca della Societa Dantesca Italiana:** via Arte della Lana 1. Italian Literature, Medieval Culture. *

**Biblioteca ed Archivo del Risorgimento:** via Sant’Egidio 2. Modern Italian History. *

**Biblioteca Marucelliana:** via Cavour 43-45. Hours: weekdays 9am-1pm; 4-7pm; Sat 9am-1pm. Art, literature, and opera. Note: there is a beautiful old reading room which is lovely to sit in, but is often crowded with students.

**Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale:** piazza Cavalleggeri 1, near Santa Croce. Hours: 9am-7pm.
**European University Institute Library:** via dei Roccettini 5, Fiesole. *

**Gabinetto Vieseux:** Palazzo Strozzi in piazza Strozzi. Hours: weekdays 9am-12:30pm; 3:15-6:45pm, Sat 9am-12:30pm. Books and a handsome periodical and newspaper room; approx. €4 borrowing fee.

**Harvard University Library:** Villa I Tatti, Fiesole. *

**Instituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento:** Palazzo Strozzi. Medieval and Renaissance History. *

**Newspapers/Magazines:**

- **La Nazione:** good entertainment listings.
- **La Città:** more emphasis on local news.
- **La Repubblica:** published in Rome; has listings for art shows, etc., in Rome.
- **Corriere della Sera:** published in Milan.

- **Paese Sera:** based in Rome and Florence; good information about cultural events for both cities.
- **Firenze Spettacolo:** monthly cultural guide for Florence.
- **La Pulce:** weekly (every Tues morning); buy and sell magazine, good for everything from Vespas to guitar amps. **Flash Art:** contemporary Italian and international art.
- **Arte:** not too contemporary, Italian art, glossy.
- **Il Giornale dell’Arte:** newspaper format, reviews and advertising for art shows throughout Italy.
- **International Herald Tribune:** includes stories from the Manchester Guardian, the New York items and Le Monde. **USA Today, TIME magazine** etc, are all readily available.
9. **Banking**

Banks are generally open on weekdays only from 8:20am to 1:20pm and 2:45 to 3:45pm. To avoid fees use the bank machines outside.

Universal Currency Converter: [http://www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com)

We recommend that you access your personal account in Canada as opposed to opening your own account in Florence. The fees attached to opening and closing a local bank account are high and wiring money is a very slow process. Most bank cards allow you to access your Canadian account from anywhere in the world using your PIN number. **Be sure to bring the phone numbers for your banks/credit card companies in Canada to sort out any problems you may encounter (try to get a call-collect advice number if you can).**

**Bank Cards:**

There are bank machines (bancomat) all over Florence, Italy, and Europe. **Before leaving Canada, you should check with your bank to ensure that your card is set up for international service. Make sure that your PIN number has 4 or 5 digits only and that your bank card will work in CIRRUS or PLUS machines.** PLUS machines are more scarce but work at least with the Banca di Toscana and the Banca Nazionale di Lavoro.

On a bancomat, you will only be able to access chequing accounts (transfer funds between accounts online). Make sure you have online banking set up, as you do not receive your balance through the bank machine.

Remember to always cover your hand when entering your PIN number. Like in Canada, fraud and theft at bank machines is now commonplace.

If you have a PC (President’s Choice) bank card, be aware that there are only one or two banks that allow you to withdraw money as the card is not universal. Intesa San Paolo bank is one of the banks.

**Bank Drafts:**

These must be negotiated through a bank which charges a commission and **they can take up to 2 or 3 weeks to clear!** It is probably easier and cheaper to have someone at home deposit money or cheques owing to you (e.g. OSAP) directly
into your home account and so that you can access it with your bank card. **Remember to assign Power of Attorney to an individual to do your banking and negotiate your OSAP in your absence.**

**Credit Cards:**
An **International Access PIN number for a credit card** should allow you to get a cash advance. Your normal PIN number may not work. Don’t count on this working everywhere. You also can pay directly for goods and services by credit card in most places. Be sure to check with your credit card company about international transaction fees. Canadian debit cards will not work in Italy.

**Cheques:**
Cheques in € (Euro) drawn on your home account will **not** be accepted even with identification.

**Traveler’s Cheques:**
Traveler’s Cheques are not really useful anymore in Italy as they once were since you will be able to use the bank machines. There is a high commission levied by banks to cash traveler’s cheques regardless of the amount. There is an exchange office in the underground mall by the central train station that gives the most reasonable rate for exchange of traveler’s cheques. **Avoid the many quick tourist exchange offices you see everywhere as you will get poorer exchange rates and/or hidden service charges.**

**Financial Services:**
1. **Automatic Exchange Station/ATM Cash Advance:** many banks have Automatic Exchange Stations and Instabanks; Services offered:
   - Exchange of foreign currency into Euro [€] up to a limit of €250 per transaction;
   - Access to your home account, although you may not be able to get a full range of services at every station, i.e. current bank balance, transfer of funds; deposits;
   - Access 24 hours a day including holidays.

2. **VISA or Mastercard:** via Strozzi 16, Tel. 669 0270; via Por Santa Maria 44/r, Tel. 665 3283/668 3283; via G.B.Foggini 81, Tel.665 5713/935; Banca ‘dAmerica e d’Italia has three ATM machines. If your card doesn’t work in the ATM machine, you can enter these banks and get a cash advance from your credit card (you need to
have an international PIN to use the ATM).

3. **Thomas Cook**: Lungarno Acciaiuoli 6/r Tel. 289 781
Various services offered, including exchange of foreign money to Euro with better rate for large amounts.

**Important Note**: American Express has SHUT DOWN in Florence since the spring of 2009. Those of you considering getting American Express travelers cheques are advised NOT to do so.

**Other Financial Considerations:**

Remember also that you may need to file your income tax returns during your absence. Someone with power of attorney can do this on your behalf if you arrange to have your T4 and T2202A slips mailed to them. Forms from the College can be directed to this person at your request. If you don’t owe money and don’t expect a refund you can wait till you’re home again. Otherwise you will be penalized for not paying, or you may benefit from a refund, particularly at that point in the year.
10. **TRANSPORTATION/TRAVEL**

**On Foot:** Florence is best experienced on foot. The center is dense and closely packed with many things to see and do. Keep a good map with bus routes and a street index with you at all times and the experience will be a good one. Watch out for traffic! Small scooters and motorbikes (and even taxis) often don’t adhere to normal rules and patterns and may jump up into the sidewalks to avoid cars and also drive through stop signs (red lights) and the wrong way on one-way streets.

**By Wheelchair:** Florence, Italy, and most of Europe are not highly accessible to the wheelchair traveler.

**Public Transportation (ATAF):** Florence has a remarkable bus system which runs frequently and spreads out in a huge network over the city. Stops are marked by large orange signs (FERMATA) indicating which buses stop here and their routes. Some lines run only in the day, but night buses (indicated on the signs in black) often take over their routes. Schedules for each route are available on the ataf website ([www.ataf.net](http://www.ataf.net)) and app (Ataf 2.0). The info point near the Santa Maria Novella Train Station has free bus route maps (when they have not run out of them). Get one and don’t lose it.

To take a bus you need to buy a ticket and stamp it in one of the orange boxes when you first get on the bus. **If one of the plain-clothed ATAF checkers catches you riding the bus without a stamped ticket, you’ll be required to pay up to a €60 fine** (approx. $90). They board buses in teams and are quick and efficient. Have your stamped ticket handy.

You can buy a ticket at any tobacconist or other shop with an orange ATAF sign. Automatic ticket machines are spread around town; there is one in piazza San Marco and another two by the train station. Tickets are valid for 90 minutes on any ATAF bus once it has been stamped. Single tickets cost **€1.20**, or a 4-ride ticket (biglietto multiplo) costs **€4.70**. Stamp the **biglietto multiplo** on each end and on both sides for the four rides. Once stamped, your ticket is valid on as many buses as you want during its time duration. If you ride the bus often it is cheaper to buy a **Carta Agile** ticket for **€10** (10 rides), **€20** (21 rides), **€30** (35 rides) than individual tickets. The Carta Agile is valid for 12 months. You can also buy single tickets directly from the driver for **€2** or
use your cell phone to buy a ticket (for €1.50) by texting the word Ataf to the number 488 0105. You will receive a text message with your ticket information. You can also buy tickets through the smartphone app Ataf 2.0.

Special **monthly bus passes- tessere- (€30 per month)** are the most economical option if you take the bus at least once a day. You can buy them at most ATAF sellers at the beginning of each month. These passes need to be stamped the first time you use them and you should write your name on the ticket. You will need some form of picture ID to help identify yourself if you are asked to prove this is your pass.

**Bikes:** This is a great way to explore the area around Florence, but be careful! Cobblestones, potholes, traffic and one-way streets can be hard to navigate.

You can bring your bicycle with you as one of your pieces of luggage, but it is not recommended. You would be better off getting a cheap used bike in Florence. Some bikes are passed on from year to year. In any case, if you choose to bring your bike, you need a bicycle box or bag which the airline will provide in advance or at the airport. However, you must disassemble the bike to travel and this can be a long and messy process. The tires must be deflated, the pedals removed and the handlebars turned sideways.

**Bicycle theft is rampant** and most Florentines ride wrecks. Anything fancy will be stolen immediately. Bringing a Kryptonite lock would be helpful although you can also buy one in Florence. **Most people use two locks.** Bikes need to be parked in the bike corral areas unless you want to risk it being removed. Buying a used bicycle is easy, but may take some hunting. Try: Fais Marco, **Centro BICL** (correct name?), via Pagnini 4/r-6/r Tel: 005 476 964 or **Gigli Bike** on via Guelfa. **You may have the best luck on the Facebook group** “vivo a firenze compro/vendo bici”. Otherwise, you can rent a bicycle, motorbike, or mountain bike at a number of locations.

**Florence By Bike**
http://www.florencebybike.it/en/
Via San Zanobi, 54R, 50129 (very close to studio)
Great staff, speak English
Rent town bikes that are great if you have visitors and want to bike around town.
Rent road bikes and mountain bikes.
They have a bike club that you can join and ride with if you want to road ride in Tuscany. They meet Saturday’s and Sunday’s. It’s fun. You need some experience road riding.

**Alinari Rental:** via Guelfa 85/r. Bicycles, mopeds, motorinos and motocycles.

**Forteza da Basso:** rampe del Romito on the bus parking lot side. Bicycles.

**Bicicita:** porta Romano; piazza Liberta; piazza Cavalleggeri and piazza Stazione. The major bicycle-renting chain.

**Motorent:** via San Zanobia 9/r. For mopeds, motorinos or motocycles.

**Program:** borgo Ognissanti 96. Mopeds, motorinos, motocycles.

**Sabra:** via degli Artisti 8. Mopeds, motorinos, motocycles.

You can buy all of these forms of used transportation by checking in the newspapers listed above. Be sure that the motorized vehicles have their proper accompanying documents, or the items may have been stolen. You need a driver’s license to own or rent and you will need to be at least 18 years of age with a valid ID. It is illegal for more than one person to ride on a moped at a time and there is a helmet law.

**Taxis:** Expensive, but economical for groups. Also, one of the safest ways to get home if you are traveling late at night after bus operation hours. Call 4242, 4390 or 4798. Give your address, wait for an operator to give you the number of the taxi which is coming to pick you up. They will also tell you how long it will take for the taxi to get to you. You cannot hail a taxi in Italy.

**Outside of Florence:** ATAF will take you to Fiesole or Settignano. The lightrail “Tramvia” will take you to Scandicci with the regular ATAF bus ticket. Otherwise, the regional bus lines run to most destinations in the areas surrounding Florence. They depart from spots near the train station:

**C.A.P Tours:** via Nazionale 9. For Impruneta.

**C.A.T.:** via Fiume 2/r. For destinations such as Arezzo and Città di Castello

- Burri collection.

**C.O.P.I.T.:** piazza Santa Maria Novella.

**Lazzi Express:** Piazza Adua. For destinations such as Prato, Pisa, Lucca, and Viareggio.

**S.I.T.A.:** via Santa Caterina di Siena 15/r; for destinations such as Siena, Volterra and Arezzo.
For a day at the beach: The closest beach is in Viareggio. It’s a one hour ride from Florence and short walk from the train station in Viareggio. This beach stretches for miles along the Tuscan coast through many different towns. For a bigger excursion you can reach the island of Elba with is a train/bus from Florence to Piombino. From Piombino, take the Toremar or Navarma ferry, which takes you to the Elban port of Portoferraio.

Train: Most Europeans travel by train. The system and schedules are extensive and frequent. There are machines available in some stations to help you plan your route, as well as staff. Check the detailed Departure and Arrival schedules posted at the platforms and waiting areas to select your train and schedule. Use trenitalia.com or italotreno.it to consult schedules and buy tickets on line.

Eurail passes and Eurail Flexipasses, for travel throughout Europe, must be purchased in Canada. If you fax or call the agent who booked your flight, arrangements can be made to have the pass sent directly to you in Florence, or your family can arrange to send one to you.

Other types of tickets may be available in Florence through the travel agencies listed below, including:

The carta verde is a travel pass for students under 26. You must have your passport or other ID which shows your date of birth. The price is approx. €15, and you can get discounts on train travel in Italy as follows: 20% in July, Aug, Christmas and Easter, 30% for the rest of the year. Valid for one year.

B.I.G.E. discount tickets in Italy and Europe for students under 26 are available at the Transalpino booth at the train station. Some round trip tickets (biglietti andata e ritorno) will be discounted by 15%.

Group tickets for groups of at least 10 people receive a 20% discount for travel in Italy. Groups of 6-24 people receive a 20% discount for travel outside of Italy. Groups of at least 25 people receive a 30% discount traveling in or out of Italy. Groups of at least 6 people, under the age of 26 receive a discount of 30% for travel outside of Italy.

Inter Rail, for people under 26, allows for travel for one month in up to 22 countries with a 40% discount for travel in Italy.
**Air:** Ryan Air and Easyjet airlines offer cheap flights within Europe and often have ‘webfare’ specials, some for as little as €0.01. You basically just pay the plane tax (total of €25).

**Travel Agencies:**

**Amici del Turismo:** via Cavour 36/r, Tel. 239 8529.

**Arci Turismo:** via Guelfa 50/r, Tel. 294 634. Specializes in student travel; they offer a 30% discount on flights and train tickets and can make hotel reservations for you.

**Centro Turistico Studentesco (C.T.S.):** via dei Ginori 25/r, Tel. 289 570 web: www.cts.it. This is the Italian equivalent of TravelCUTS, offering budget fares for students. You can also renew your International Student Identity Card (ISIC) here.

**C.I.T. Viaggi:** piazza Stazione 51/r, Tel. 284 145.

**STS (Student Travel Service):** via Zannetti 18/r, Tel. 284 183.

**Universalturismo:** via Cavour 180/r, Tel. 50391.

**Via Cavour 56:** Tel. 294 306. You can make train reservations and buy train tickets here.
11. SERVICES

Post Offices:
Main Branch: via Pellicceria (under the loggia near Piazza Repubblica). Open weekdays 8:15am-1:30pm, 3:30-6:45pm; Sat 8:15-noon. They have a scale where you can weigh your mail before you send it.

Other Offices are open generally open weekdays 8:15am-1:30pm; Sat 8:15-noon.

You may purchase stamps (francobolli) at any Tabacchi shop with a sign that says "Valori e Bollati". They can usually help you with the postage needed for regular mail to Canada. Red mailboxes are located around town and at post offices. Put your mail in the "other destinations/altre destinazioni" slot.

Post offices can be identified by the little round yellow sign with 'PT' marked on it.

Postal rates vary from time to time, as they do here. You will need to check on the rates when in Florence.

Receiving packages from Canada

If you are not home when a package is delivered, the Italian postal service may choose to re-route the package to a post office outside the centre of town. You will then have to go and pick it up. If you are picking up a package from the post office, be sure to bring identification.

Some former Florence students recommended having packages sent to the studio, rather than to your home address.

You may be able to have packages air freighted to you through Alitalia airlines. For more information and rates, contact the Toronto Alitalia Cargo Information & Service office at 905-676-3360. Packages should be labeled “personal items”. You can have the airline mail you the package once it arrives in Italy, otherwise you will have to go to pick up the package in the town of Scandicci where the Alitalia Centre is housed. There is a customs procedure to fulfill at this point.

Mailing Packages from Italy: There are two basic ways to send packages; by the post office, or by private shippers. A private shipper can send anything, but the post office has strict regulations about the size of packages to be mailed. Ask for
their guidelines before attempting to do this. You can buy boxes at some Poste offices, or you can simply pack things in your own padded envelope or cardboard box. You will have to fill out customs forms specifying the contents at the Poste if mailing abroad.

**Baldacci:** piazza del Mercato Centrale 5/r. A good place for shipping supplies.

**Picone:** via Canacci 4/r on the corner of via della Scala. Open weekdays 9:30am-1:30pm; 3:30-5pm. The place to go to get your things wrapped for shipping if you don’t want to do it yourself. Reasonable prices.

**Packing books:** There used to be a book rate which was more economical than other shipping rates. However, recently it has been changed and the book rate applies only if you are shipping books within Italy. You may want to check this when you are at the post office. Otherwise, to mail 5kg of books to Canada costs 29 euros (almost $50)!

**Packing artwork:**

OCAD U will ship works consisting solely of canvas or paper which can be rolled into a tube. All efforts will be made to ship works back in time for scholarships and Grad Ex.

You are responsible for anything produced after the shipping date that you wish to send home. There are strict regulations about shipping artwork out of Italy. You must obtain official authorization from the **Ufficio di Exportazione**, via Lambertesca 4, open Tues-Thurs and Sat from 8:30-9:00am ONLY! Your work may be held up at customs otherwise until it is determined that your paintings are not historical Italian treasures. This has happened to us before.

Bring your work to the Office, correctly packed so that it can be opened for inspection and with a carto da bollo (an official stamped paper available from any tobacconist for about €3). You will also need enough string and piombini to cross-tie and weight your packages. After you fill out a sheet describing your work, you’re ready to send it.

**Centro Copia:** via Cavour 136-140/r. May have poster tubes.

**Mazzanti Imballaggi:** via del Piaggione 9/r. Will pack and send your artwork through the official process for you. Give them the exact dimensions of your work for a price quote.

**Poggi:** via Porcellana 35/r. Has large shipping tubes which they will cut to size.
Once your package is ready to ship, bring it to the Central Post Office in piazza della Repubblica or any other post office. Open weekdays 8:30am-7pm, Sat 8:15-noon. You will need to fill out several forms detailing the contents and value of the packages. One way to avoid extra charges is to identify your package as “articoli personali usati” (used personal items) and give it a low value.

Mail rates for packages: Airmail is usually quite expensive, but will arrive within 2 to 3 weeks. Shipping by sea is cheaper, but will take 2 to 3 months or more.

**Private shipping companies** often provide faster service, but charge for the convenience. There are lots of private shippers in Florence. Generally they will ship by the cubic meter rather than by weight. There are handling fees, taxes and duties to pay as well which will drastically increase the cost from that quoted in Florence.

**Fracassi:** via Santo Spirito 11, Tel. 289 340. Take bus #11 from piazza San Marco. Open weekdays 9-11am, 2:30-4:30pm. Provide door to door package service. They also offer a 3-6 day courier service for urgent mail weighing less than 150 grams for approx. €21. English spoken.

**Albini-Pittigliani:** Lungarno, Vespucci 58, Tel. 27891. A former student recommends this company. They will pick up boxes from your home once you have wrapped them according to their specifications or you can take it in to them. They are linked to **Olympic Forwarders** in Toronto (905-678-6162) who also arrange to ship items to Italy. (This is the current company used by OCAD.) For shipping to Canada, you can contact Davide at 278 942.

**Mailboxes Etc:** via San Gallo and Via della Scala. Pricey, but reliable and convenient.

**Telephone:**

Most of you will not have a phone in your residences. **There is no phone in the studio.**

To use public telephones, a telephone card (scheda telefonica) is recommended. Some local public telephone booths in Florence accept coins but there are many which only take the phone card. You are charged by time. There are very few public telephones left in Florence and using them can be
complicated.

**Cell Phones:** You can expect to pay about €30 a month in minutes. Incoming calls are usually free.

**Phone cards** (scheda telefonica) are very convenient. You keep making calls with them until you use them up. There are cards for €5 or more which are available in bars (with the big blue and white T sign in the entrance) or Tabacchi (tobacconists). Some phones only accept these cards. These do work for calling overseas from a phone booth, but you can also buy International Phone Cards which cost €5 and up. These cards are probably the cheapest way to call home. €5 gives you about 1 hour of calling time to Toronto. As in Canada, you get a local phone number and an access code so that you can use the card on any fixed line phone.

**Note:** The dial tone on an Italian telephone may sound to you like a busy signal, as it sounds like two beeps together, then a short pause, then another two beeps. Wait until you hear the beeps after you have lifted the receiver, before inserting your coins. The busy signal sounds more like a series of quick beeps.

To call Canada, dial 001+area code+number. When calling Canada, remember the time difference (6 hours behind Florence).

There are also Post Office phone centres (SIP) where you can place calls:

1. **The SIP Office:** via Cavour 21. 9am-8pm.
2. **The Train Station:** 7:30am-9:30pm.
3. **The Main Post Office:** via Pellicceria (right off piazza della Repubblica). Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can call long distance through a Bell calling card attached to your home phone in Canada. However, keep in mind that you will be charged full rates and will not be able to use any home discount plan you may already have in place. Contact your long distance provider or Bell Canada to ask for current rates and get access codes. The country-direct service number for Canada in Italy is 172-1001. To charge major credit cards, dial 1678-74001. To call other countries direct, you can call collect by dialing 170. An Italian operator who also speaks English can assist you.
Many students just use Skype or Google Phone (through gchat).

You can also use fax services in local stores/e-mail centres.

**Internet and E-mail:**

You can use the studio for unlimited wireless internet access. Wifi is widely available in most cafes and most apartments have wifi. For a cozy place to get online go to:

**British Institute:** Located on Lungarno Guicciardini, 9 on the other side of the Arno River. Cost is €3 for the day or €10 for a week, unlimited. Not open in evening or on weekends.

**Medical Insurance:**

The Ontario Ministry of Health requires that you extend your OHIP coverage if you will be absent from Ontario for more than 212 days. Also, the Italian Consulate will not issue your study permit if you have not extended your OHIP coverage. You can extend your OHIP coverage by presenting documentation confirming your absence from Ontario and filling out “Change of Information” forms at your local Ministry of Health office. OCAD will provide you with a letter confirming your acceptance to the Florence Program and will tell you what other documentation is required to complete this process.

When you return to Ontario, you can have your OHIP coverage reinstated immediately by visiting the Ministry of Health again – don’t forget to do this! You must take with you the same information you used to extend your OHIP coverage.

International students have UHIP coverage instead of OHIP. Make sure you have followed whatever procedures are required for you to be covered outside the country.

Since OHIP entitles you to limited funding for a limited range of medical services while traveling outside of Canada, you **must** purchase supplementary travel health insurance before leaving Canada. You can purchase the insurance through the travel agent who books your flights to Florence.

Make sure that you have your health card numbers and your health insurance plan policy number with you at all times in order to use them in Italy. You will be asked to pay the full
amount of your medical care otherwise. Your supplementary travel health insurance plan will provide information about making a claim, which you will need to pass on to the person billing you.

**Medical Services:**

In an emergency, call 118 or, if convenient, head for the Pronto Soccorso (Emergency Room) station located in the front of all major hospitals (see list below). Remember that you have your supplemental medical insurance to cover costs, so don’t hesitate to go to a hospital if needed. Hospitals will treat you no matter what, whether you have your insurance info with you or not.

**Santa Maria Nuova:** piazza Santa Maria Nuova 1. Tel. 27581. (Emergency Room)
**Careggi Hospital:** viale Morgagni 45. Tel. 427 7111.
**Nuovo San Giovanni di Dio:** via Torregalli 3. Tel. 71921.
**Santa Maria Annunziata:** via dell’Antella. Tel. 24967.
**Oftalmico Fiorentino (Eye trauma hospital):** via Masaccio/angolo via Pico della Mirandola. Tel. 56621.
**Instituto Ortopedico Toscano:** viale Michelangelo 41. Tel. 65771.
**Consulitorio per la Salute delle Persone Omosessuali:** Tel. 288 126. Medical & Gynecological exams, counseling and support. Free and anonymous AIDS testing.
**Guardia Medica (night service doctor on call):** Tel. 28 77 88. This is the number to call for non-emergency night illnesses if you are in the centre by Santa Maria Novella/the Duomo. Otherwise, local area numbers are:

Proconsolo, via Cavour 233 9456
Campo di Marte 67 92 93
Galluzzo 232 0082
Santa Spirito 21 56 16
Gavinana / Sorgane 653 0333
Isolotto 70 05 36
Rifredi 436 1541
Firenze Nuova 41 97 79
Novoli 31 52 25
English-speaking Doctors: You can call directly to the Tourist Medical Service, via Roma 4, Tel. 475 411. Open for walk-ins Mon-Fri 11am-12pm, 1pm-3pm, 5-6pm, Sat 1pm-3pm. They provide medical service including house calls in a variety of languages for a range of problems.

The doctor that OCAD students normally visit for non-emergency care is:
Dr. Stephen Kerr - www.dr-kerr.com, kerr@iol.it
Piazza Mercato Nuovo 1, 50123, by the leather market between the Ponte Vecchio and Piazza Repubblica. Tel 288 055, cell 0335 836 1682.
Open Clinic 3-5pm or call for an appointment. You pay in advance for these services, and will be reimbursed through your medical plan upon return.
Dentist: It is advisable to have any problems looked after before you leave Canada, but there are many English-speaking dentists in Florence.

Dr. Jacopo Colasanti
Via Melchiorre Gioia 10, tel. 055 490445.
Available Monday-Thursday, 9am-1pm, 3pm-7pm; Friday 9am-5pm.

Drs. Giovanni and Riccardo Bindi
Dentists
Via Carducci 16, tel. 055 2638544
Available Monday-Friday, 9am-7pm.

Prescription Drugs: Stock up and bring a copy of your prescriptions with you in case you have to show it to a customs officer. The prescription drugs you use here are generally available by the same or similar names in Italy. Common cold and cough remedies, vitamins, and birth control items are available at farmacias.

If you are caught with illicit drugs in Italy or Europe, you will undoubtedly end up in jail. OCAD cannot assist if you choose to break the laws in this or any other manner.

Eyewear: Bring an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses, your prescription, and extra supplies for your contacts if your eyes are sensitive to a change in brands of solutions. You may find your brand available only if it is also manufactured in Europe.
**Personal Safety:**

You should be able to walk around central Florence during the day without encountering any major problems. At night, use common sense and take the basic safety precautions you would in any other city. **The best way to avoid problems, especially for women, is to walk in groups and stay in well-lit areas.** If you are going home alone at night and have missed the last bus, it is best to call a taxi (Tel. 4242, 4390, 4798).

You should not carry your passport, flight tickets, or large amounts of money in your purse. Carry your money in two or more places. Do not carry your money and credit cards together. Make photocopies of all important documents. Leave a set at home with someone (e.g. Power of Attorney) and carry a second set with you. Be sure to store the second set in a different location than the original documents.

Florence has its share of pickpockets. Be especially careful in crowded buses or streets. Watch out if someone is deliberately distracting you, which may allow another person (sometimes a child) to come at you from behind. This is a common ruse.

Try to carry a bag that closes completely and that you can always keep an eye on. It is also suggested to get hooks or carabiners to use to make sure your zipperd areas on your bags remain shut.

**Police/Lost or Stolen Goods:**

You will need to go to the Questura, via Duca d/Aosta 3, which is open 24 hours a day for emergencies but during regular hours for simple things, and fill out a police report at the Ufficio Denunce. There are English-speaking officers who can help you fill out the report. Bring some ID. The police will follow up from that point and provide you with legal proof of your loss which will be needed when you request replacement of credit cards, passport, and other personal documents. If you are insured, the insurance company will also require a copy.

**Laundry:**

Hopefully, your apartment will have a washer. Dryers are not common because of electricity costs. Unfortunately, doing your laundry away from home is expensive. You will very
rarely see a dryer in Italy- you dry your clothes on a line. In the winter, many people do this on a rack inside.

**Self-service Laundromats:** many locations, including via Della Scala near the corner of Oricellari and also via Nazionale.

**Tintoria, Lavanderia and Lavasecco** may offer laundry and dry cleaning services. Lavanderia may bleach items liberally unless you specify senza varichina (no bleach) when you leave your laundry.

**Lavanderia:** on the corner of via XXVii Aprile and Santa Reparata, across from the Bar Degli Amici. Approx. prices for 5 kilos:

“lavati” (only washed) - €5  
“lavati/asciutti” (washed and dried) - €7  
“stirati” (ironed) – price depends on piece  
“a secco” (dry cleaned) – price depends on piece

Dry cleaners (lavasecco) usually charge by the kilogram.  
**Lavasecco**, via Guelfa (1/2 block from via Nazionale). Normal load €5-10, 1-2 day service, (or regular wash is self-service €3 for wash or dry).

**Lesbian/Gay Resources:**

**Circolo Gai Arci:** 488 288. This is a source of local information for gay men in Florence.

**Arci Gay/Lesbica:** 398 772 or 288 1269 (for counseling). This is the primary queer organization in the city and there are regular meetings.  
**Arci Lesbica:** 476 557. Arci Lesbica runs support groups, conversation groups for foreigners, and sponsors lesbian events. There is a membership fee of approx. €13 ($21) annually.

**Legal Counselling:** 288 502. These services are provided free, courtesy of Arci Gai.

**Consulitorio per la Salute delle Persone Omosessuali:**  
Tel. 288 126. Medical & Gynecological exams, counseling, and support. Free and anonymous AIDS testing.

Books, magazines, newspapers, etc., and **Quir**, a monthly newsletter published by Arci Lesbica with events, advertising
and women-only venues are available, as is a gay map of Tuscany (€3, or free from Arci Gai) at The Paperback exchange, Via Fiesolana 31r.

**Churches:**
There are many churches of all denominations where services are held. Many of the beautiful historical church buildings have active congregations and daily services. Hours are generally posted outside. Masses in English are said at Santa Maria del Fiore (the Duomo) on Sat at 5, confession before Mass Wed, Fri, Sat from 10am-12pm, and at the Church of the Hospital of Saint John of God, borgo Ognissanti 16-20, Sun and holidays at 10am. The majority of churches are Roman Catholic. Listed are other denominations:

**American Episcopal Church (St. James):** via B. Rucellai 13. Sun 8-11am. There is a Wed evening program for English-speaking students with a good dinner including a veggie option. OCAD students say that this is a great place to meet people and have a filing dinner; also excellent Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. In the past, OCAD students have helped to prepare dinners in exchange for a free meal. In addition, there’s good company and lots of fun.

**Adventist Church:** via Guelfa 12. Sat 10:30am. **Baptist Church:** via borgo Ognissanti 6. Sun 11am. **Christian Science Church:** via Baracca. **Jewish Synagogue:** via Farini 4. Winter Sat 8:45am-4pm; summer 8:30am-5pm. **Lutheran Church:** lungarne Torrigiani 11. **Mormon Church:** piazza Stazione 1. Hours: 9-12. **St. Mark’s Anglican Church:** via Maggio 16. Sun 9-10:30am.

**The Florence Gospel Fellowship** provides services in both Italian (4pm) and English (6pm) on Sundays. Some 2008/09 Florence students said that there are a lot of university students that attend and the format is less traditional and very welcoming.

Contact: [www.florence-gospel-fellowship.blogspot.com](http://www.florence-gospel-fellowship.blogspot.com)

Email: Florence.gospel.fellowship@gmail.com

Phone: +39.335.1505784 and +39.338.4975434
12. **ENTERTAINMENT (list is always changing)**

Other-language movies released in Italy are usually dubbed, which makes it fascinating to go to a film and see your favourite actors speaking in a foreign tongue. The following, though, have English-language movies:

**Odeon Cinema:** Piazza Strozzi near Piazza Republica. Beautiful theatre. English films every Mon, Tue and Thurs. (get a schedule). €5 entry on English language film nights if you have a British Institute card. Regular admission €7.20. A pass for a block of films reduces the cost.

**Fiamma:** via Pacinotti. Take bus #10, 11, 20 or 17 in piazza San Marco going towards the stadium, the stop is right on that street. Check La Nazione newspaper on Wed mornings for Wed evening English movies.

**Spazio Uno:** via del Sole 10. Great student hangout. Three Italian and foreign films are shown every evening for €4-5. Downstairs, there’s live jazz and other music on the weekends.

**Clubs:**
Florence doesn’t have a big club scene, but if you want to dance try:

**Auditorium Flog:** via M Mercati 24. Closest thing that you will find to dance cave on a Saturday night. Club turns into fun dance party after concert ends, but it’s out outside the centre of town – a long walk home, take a taxi. To get there take bus 14 to the stop “Celso” or 4 to “Mercati”.

**Tenax:** Outside of town but reliably good djs/music. Take a taxi. Via Pratese 46. Don’t walk.

**Downstairs Club:** Better than it’s neighbor YAB. Piazza degli Strozzi 2. Go down the stairs next to Odeon Bistro

**Vanilla Club:** Modeled on a 1920s speakeasy, this club often hosts theme nights and sometimes opens up a secret downstairs room. Via dei Saponai 14r

**Bars:**
You’ll find great bars in **Piazza Sant’Ambrogio** and **Piazza Santo Spirito**. Both are fun areas to hang out and have a glass of wine as the locals do.
Others recommended by students:


**Mayday Club:** via Dante Alighieri 16/R. Have hosted a few OCAD U student exhibitions over the years. Really nice owner and art director. Theme nights and good atmosphere.

**Teatro Scribe:** via delle Seggole 8/R Cheap drinks and slow bartenders. If music is bad, give man at door a CD and he’ll probably play it.

**Music:**

Downloading online is illegal in Italy and you should not do it unless using a VPN- they can trace it to you and charge you. 

DO NOT DOWNLOAD OR STREAM ANYTHING ILLEGALLY IN THE STUDIO.

For musical instruments and scores go to **Ceccherini**, Via De’Ginori 75/r or **Ricordi**, via Brunelleschi 8.

For live contemporary music, check the clubs listed above and theatre/music listings in the local papers or Firenze Spettacolo.

For ticket information and box office contact **Box Office**, past the train station or by phone/web. You can buy tickets, make reservations and get information about all events (theatre, contemporary, and classical concerts).

**Ballet, Dance, Opera, Classical Music, Theatre:** Florence is a major centre for these activities, both locally and on tour. Check the listings in the daily papers and Firenze Spettacolo. May has the **Maggio Musicale** festival throughout the city celebrating music, theatre, and dance. There are lots of free and inexpensive classical concerts held during the year, usually in beautiful locations and settings advertised on posters or in the papers. The Ballet di Toscana usually has two productions each year which are well worthwhile. The new Teatro dell’Opera runs shows year round.

**Sports/Recreational Facilities:**

1. **University of Florence:** sports and recreational facilities and offers a number of activities free or for a small fee. Facilities are located at palazzetto Universitario, via Vittoria della Rovere 2, Tel. 450 244 and at other centres in
Florence. Call to find out how to join.

2. **Filippo Mazzel Association “Campus in Tuscany”:** via Main 2. Tel. 241 768. Ask for Lucia or Sig. Gentili. This organization provides a variety of services for American Universities in Florence. The following sports activities are offered by "Campus in Tuscany": soccer, tennis, gym, swimming. Call to find out how to join.

3. **Aerobic Dancing:** offered at Palestra Body Works, via Calandrino 5, Tel. 587 399; Palestra Buonarroti, via dei Macci 99/r, Tel. 283 395; Centro Oroboro, via Palazzo Diavoli 59, Tel. 706 035; Rombo Klatt, viale Cadorna 53, Tel. 472 158; and Ricciardi, borgo Pinti 75, Tel. 247 8444/247 8462 (also a gym).

4. **Baseball:** in season, call 571 126/579 282, Federazione Italiana Baseball-Softball.

5. **Football:** Delegazione Regionale della Federazione Italiana. American football, Tel. 366 361. Ask for Claudio Cornioli or Zien Zaccarelli.

6. **Body Building:** is offered at Swan, via dei Pepi 28/r, Tel. 240 802; North Gymnasium, via Caccini 13/a, Tel. 436 0479; and Meeting, via del Romito 8/r, Tel. 472 699.

7. **Gyms:** located at Savana, via j. da Diacceto 26, Tel. 287 373; the two Palestra locations listed above; and Gruppo Sportivo Athletic Centre, via Maggio 39, Tel. 217 294.

8. **Horseback Riding:** is offered at Centro Ippico Toscano, via de’Vespucci 5/a, Tel. 315 621 (need proof in Italian of medical insurance; lessons given); Montefreddi, strada Statale della Futa (via Bolognese), Tel. 813 433; Vallebono, via Grignano 31, Pontassieve, Tel. 839 246; Pistoiese Ranch (for weekend of riding), via Samminiatesi Le Mura 117, Montaione (Firenze), Tel. (0571) 69196.

9. **Roller Skating/Blading:** is available at Assi, viale Michelangelo 66/r, Tel. 681 2686; and piazzale Michelangelo, viale Michelangelo 61, Tel. 681 1880.

10. **Skiing:** The nearest slopes for intermediate-advanced are at Abetone (2-3 hours drive). Also on the same road about 30 minutes past Abetone is Val di Luce where it is less crowded. COPIT, piazza Santa Maria Novella, runs buses there and many sports shops organize one day trips
throughout the winter.

11. **Yoga:** Scuola di Yoga, via delle Ruote n.49. Tel 48 04 50, pc.paola@tin.it
A group class can be arranged twice a week [Mondays & Thursdays], 17:15-18:15, for €35 per month. Less than a 10 minutes walk from studio.

12. **It’s Yoga**
http://www.itsyogafirenze.it/it/home
Really friendly instructors, all speak English
Classes mostly in Italian but often do half and half. If you know yoga a bit you can follow the Italian classes no problem. It sounds really beautiful too.
Good schedule of options for classes, different times and different levels.
13. **PACKING**  
**Ultimately, only pack what you can carry.**

A sleeping bag is useful for traveling and staying over at each other’s apartments and for putting over your bed as a bedspread in the winter. A small, compact sleeping bag is best.

You may wish to bring a money belt to carry your valuables to prevent pick-pocketing. Or just make sure you have a bag you can securely close and keep in front of you.

Dress for a cool, damp winter with less central heating than in Canada. Bring a warm winter coat, sweaters, and **good walking shoes**. It rains a lot in JAN/FEB so bring waterproof shoes/a jacket. Apartments can be cold in the winter, so you may want to bring long underwear with you. You may also want to bring dressier clothes for evenings out, parties, holidays, openings, etc. Sweaters, gloves, scarves and hats may be bought very reasonably.

Because having your laundry done is expensive, you may want to bring things that are easily hand-washed and dried.

Leave valuable and irreplaceable jewelry at home.

Don’t bother bringing heavy travel guides – use the internet and the guides available at the studio.

Don’t bring any hair styling appliances from home. They don’t work well, even with voltage convertors and adaptors. You can buy inexpensive hair dryers in Florence.

If you work in the studio with a mask or ventilator, bring it and extra cartridges with you.

Don’t attempt to take any paints, solvents (mineral spirits, turps, etc.) in your checked baggage or cabin baggage. They will most likely be confiscated by the airline.

You can rent ski equipment, in-line skates, tennis rackets, etc. in Florence which may be more convenient than bringing these with you.

**Photocopy all your documents** and leave a copy with someone you can easily reach at home in case of loss or theft. You will need the document numbers to replace them.
14. COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS FROM FORMER FLORENCE STUDENTS

Take a serious Italian language class before going to Florence and while in Florence and try to meet people outside of the program.

Before leaving Toronto, find out what the conditions are for changing the date of your return flight to Canada. There is normally a cost involved and it is best to know the details ahead of time.

Choose your housemates well. Meet with them in advance. BOOK YOUR APARTMENTS ASAP!

Travel around by bicycle.

Charcoal is much more expensive than back in Toronto.

When going out, try to get away from the Duomo area (city centre) to avoid cheesy American-style nightclubs. Outside the city centre, you’ll find hip venues where Italians hang out. There are a lot of really good places to go, but you have to look for them. Meet some Italians and they’ll show you the best places.

You can bargain down prices anywhere!

Do not touch the vegetables in the markets (protective gloves are provided for use). Make sure you weigh and label fruit and vegetables yourself.

Dog poop everywhere! Don’t look up. We’ve all stepped in it at least once!

The all-night bakery opens at 1am. Via delle Route near S. Gallo.

Quick meals and more healthy than McDonald’s – chicken or beef kebab wraps for €4. Available everywhere!

Verrizano on via Corso – best lunch and bread

Joshua Tree Pub at via della Scala 41 has Happy Hour from 4pm to 9pm. A pint of beer is just €3.

Eat healthy – take advantage of the wonderful produce. If a group trip is not organized, go to Pisa and Siena.

Bring good walking shoes as art history classes can be like
walking marathons.

Drinking wine and beer in public is ok – just don’t overdo it!

A hot water bottle helps during those damp winter nights.

Bring a year’s supply of music and more than one adaptor. Some places have no tv. Bring speakers. Demidoff gardens are beautiful and big. #25 bus to the end.

Buses, trains, postal systems go on strike often!

If you play an instrument, bring it.

Count your change.

You can go into almost any caffe and use their washroom for free. Bigger book and music shops also have free, accessible washrooms.

Mosquitoes are very bad. Mosquito nets are good. Bring something from home to stop the itch! Bugspray is highly recommended.

Most landlords want a deposit when you move in. This will be returned to you at the end of your stay if everything in the apartment is in order. The deposit is NOT last month’s rent. You will still need to pay rent your last month there.

At winter time keep the windows open for at least a half hour each day to avoid getting seasonal mold. If you do get a lot of mold on your walls, contact your rental agency. It’s common.

Surge protectors are highly advised for Macs—especially if they are under warranty. You can buy them in Florence for around 10 euros.

For women, bring sufficient amounts of pads or tampons as the quality of these items are different in Italy. It has also been recommended that the ladies invest in a Divacup as tampons/pads are expensive in Florence.

When you first move in with your roommate/s discuss how you will deal with groceries. For the first semester my two flatmates and I had a jar that we would fill to pool in money. Everyone put in the same amount of money and we would pick a day in the week to go groceries (check out Supermarket) together. With this system we ate and cooked together. For second
semester we decided to do separate groceries since we found that we were all on different schedules; however, we each took turns purchasing the communal items such as: garlic, onions, oil, vinegar, butter, milk, baking soda, paper towels and toilet paper. This all depends on how you and your roommates function together. It is best to set everything straight at the very beginning to avoid any conflict. This goes for cleaning duties as well. My flatmates and I split the duties - one person cleaned the kitchen, another cleaned the washroom and the other swept and mopped the floors.

Bistrot la Capannina sells excellent pasta for 4 euros, it is right near San Lorenzo market just off of Via Faenza. Walk 4 metres past this Bistrot and you will find an excellent sandwich stand. Good paninis for a fair price. They don’t speak a lot of English but if you know a little Italian they’ll love you!

Trattoria Mario in piazza mercato centrale is a great restaurant. Lots of Italians eat here and parts of the menu change daily. It is only open in the afternoons so make sure you arrive at 12:30pm.

Tutti 99cent: dollar stores in and around the city are the same as here and have scissors and exacto knives, etc.

Pizzaciere: on other side of the river (arno)... right by the stairs up to piazza michelangelo has the best pizza in the city!

Pack only one suitcase! This experience makes you realize clothing and materialistic goods are not important. I ended up getting rid of half my things. Only bring what's really important to you. And you will save the extra 200 dollars of baggage at the airport.

The tabacchi in Piazza Republica sells canadian stamps without waiting in the post office line. (No other tabacchi has Canadian stamps.)

Any postamat (like a bancomat but with the post office they are yellow) works with interac bank cards if the cards have the vplus or mastercard loops on the back.

Don’t waste your time shopping; spend all your time in the studio!

And finally...be safe, be creative, and enjoy!

*Note: information is subject to changes since distribution*
PERSONAL NOTES / YOUR UPDATES TO THE HANDBOOK: