

PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE

SUMMER 2011



Welcome to Florence, Italy!

Pre-Departure Guide For Lorenzo De' Medici (Ldm) Students

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I. INTRODUCTION

Dear Student,

You are about to embark upon what we hope will be one of the most enriching adventures of your lifetime! The Lorenzo de' Medici (LdM) Pre-Departure Guide has been created to assist you in preparing for your stay in Italy. It gives you a clear overview of what to do before leaving your country. Good planning and proper time management of your responsibilities are fundamental in the final stages before your departure.

The guide provides you with the practical advice you will need:

- Before you leave home, including a Pre-Departure Planning Checklist
- When you arrive in Florence

We look forward seeing you!

Lorenzo De' Medici Institute

II. BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME

A. Important Required Documents

1. Passport

The most important document you will need before planning your trip abroad is a passport. Obtaining the passport is your responsibility. Your passport must be valid for at least three full months after your return date! It usually takes up to six weeks to get your passport, but during peak travel times it may take longer. **It is important to include your departure date on your passport application.** For further information about getting or renewing a U.S. passport, fees and obtaining passport application forms please visit the official website of the U.S. Government of State at: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.

Please make 3 copies of the face page of your passport, as well as your Student Visa.

- One copy is needed to apply for the Permit of Stay in Italy, so make sure you bring it to Italy.
- One copy to carry with you at all times. We suggest you keep your original passport at a safe place in your apartment (in Italy), and to carry the copy in case you need it for identification purposes, such as changing money, checking-in in a hotel.
- One copy to leave at home with your family. If your passport is lost or stolen, it is easier to replace it if you have a copy.

2. Student Visa, Permit Of Stay And Declaration Of Presence

To find out if you need a student visa, you need to first calculate if you will be studying in Italy for more than 90 days. If you will be studying in Italy for more than 90 days, see point A below. If you will be studying in Italy for up to 90 days, see point B below.

a. STUDY PERIODS OF OVER 90 DAYS

All Non-European Union citizens must obtain a student visa; it is MANDATORY. Students must contact the Italian Consulate or Embassy of their jurisdiction to see which documents are required in order to apply for a Study Visa (requirements vary from one Consulate to another). Once processed, the consulate will affix your visa on to your passport.

The following documents are USUALLY required to apply for a student visa:

- Valid passport
- Acceptance letter from Ldm bearing the official seal: 1 Original and 1 Copy
- A certified bank letter indicating your financial support
- Proof of health insurance.....etc.

For further information, please see the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at: www.esteri.it/visti/index_eng.asp.

The waiting period for a visa is approximately 4-6 weeks from the time of the application, but it may take up to 8 weeks if any documents are missing. To improve the chances of getting the visa on time, we advise students to begin this process approximately 3 months before their departure date since waiting time and lines become longer during peak travel periods

****IMPORTANT:** Please ensure upon receiving your visa that the Italian Consulate gives you back the acceptance letter from LDM bearing the official seal of the Consulate. This document is extremely important and a requirement for applying for the Permit of Stay once in Italy (so make sure you bring it with you!).

In the event that a consulate office does not issue a study visa, the negation of such must be requested in writing.

Besides the Visa, all Non-European Union citizens/students studying in Italy for more than 90 days will also be required to apply for the Permit of Stay once in Italy (see below).

PERMIT OF STAY (Permesso Di Soggiorno)

The Decree passed on the 11th of December 2006 by the Minister of Internal Affairs regarding the new procedure instituted for the request for the "Permesso di Soggiorno" (permit of stay) for all purposes - tourism, study, work, family etc. has remained unchanged. The permit of stay is a mandatory document for students studying in Italy more than 90 days and especially necessary for all students who wish to travel in Europe while in Italy.

If you are staying for either 3 consecutive summer terms or more, you are required to apply for the Permit of Stay in Italy. You will be given all information in orientation in Italy.

b. STUDY PERIODS UP TO 90 DAYS

- **YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR A STUDENT VISA** if you come from one of the following countries: Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Macao, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, San Marino, Seychelles, Singapore, South Korea, St. Kitts-Nevis, United States of America, Uruguay, Vatican City, Venezuela.

Once in Italy, you will also be required to apply for the Declaration of Presence. (See below)

- **YOU ARE REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR A STUDENT VISA**, if you come from a country which is not in the above list. Please, see point 2.a for information how to obtain a Student Visa.

Once in Italy, you will also be required to apply for the Declaration of Presence. (See below)

DECLARATION OF PRESENCE

All persons who come to Italy for a period of less than three months for visits, tourism, business and study no longer require the Permit of Stay, BUT DO necessitate a Declaration of Presence.

STEP 1. Please read the following and see which situation below applies to you:

- a. If you came **directly** to Italy (that is, you did not touch down in any other country), **AND you did get a stamp** in your passport at the Italian end when you landed, then you do **NOT** have to do this Declaration of Presence. Stop reading.
- b. If you came **directly** to Italy (that is, you did not touch down in any other country), **BUT you did NOT** get a stamp in your passport at the Italian end when you landed, then, **YES, you MUST** do the Declaration of Presence. See STEP 2 below.
- c. If your flight stopped in either a Schengen* country (see list below in italics) or Switzerland, England or Ireland, then **YES, you MUST** do the Declaration of Presence (unless your passport was stamped in Italy in which case you do not have to do the Declaration). See STEP 2 below.

***The Schengen Countries are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.**

STEP 2. After you have determined which one of the above applies to you and you have discovered that you **MUST** do the Declaration of Presence. Here is what you do.

You will be assisted by Eduitalia. This service costs 18 euro which is deducted from your credit card when you turn in your documents. In order to receive this service you must register on the following link:

<http://secure.eduitalia.org/LDMFlorence/Summer2011>

Once you have registered with Eduitalia, **you will be required to bring the following documents** to an official meeting (place and date to be disclosed during orientation in Florence):

1. A copy of the front photo-page of your passport
2. A copy of the Student Visa page (if it applies - see point b above)
3. If you did receive a stamp at border control, bring a copy of that page with the stamp on it

STEP 3. You may be contacted by your LDM advisor if a meeting at the public office Questura will be necessary.

B. Cell Phone

For purposes of safety and/or in the case of a national or personal emergency all students studying at the Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici **MUST** carry a mobile phone at all times so that you are available to be contacted 24/7 while studying in Italy. Since student apartments do not have land-lines, the mobile phone is also useful to keep in contact with family, faculty and friends.

If you decide to make use of the cellphone supplied to LDM students, **Platform3000 in collaboration with Pic-Cell Wireless**, must be contacted. **All phone orders must be done online! To order your phone, you must contact the office with whom you enrolled in order to get the proper link.**

If you order your phone at least 14 days in advance, the phone will be shipped in the US free of charge at the address

provided when you ordered it. If you order the phone less than 14 days before your departure, you will be able to pick it up when you arrive in Florence at Cyberlink in Via Bernardo Cennini 12 R (close to the LdM and the main train station).

LdM strongly suggest to have a phone with you throughout your trip to Italy, so that you can easily reach someone in case you need help.

Details include:

- You will receive a new phone to keep, an Italian SIM card rental and local service from VODAFONE Italy, all provided through PicCell Wireless.
- Lorenzo de' Medici is paying for all initial fees and you only pay for the calls you make.
- Incoming calls are free to your Italian number while you are in Italy regardless of where the call originates.
- You return the SIM card to PicCell Wireless at the end of your program.
- Order from the special link provided to you and receive the phone before you leave the US.
- Shipping is free if you order at least 14 days in advance.
- Please read all service details on the link including tips on using your phone responsibly while abroad, saving money on international calls and costs for local rates and roaming rates.
- All phones have Alarm clocks, Voicemail, text messaging, call waiting and caller ID.
- Insurance against loss and theft.
- A PicCell representative will be available during orientation.
- If you plan to travel around Europe while abroad, you can receive an additional Europe roaming SIM card for free after you arrive in Italy.

If you have questions about this, please contact PicCell Wireless at **info@piccellwireless.com**.

C. Local Currency & Banking

1. Local Currency

The Italian unit of currency is the **EURO** which is indicated by the symbol **€** before the amount and it is divided into cents. Banknotes come in 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500. They increase in size progressively according to the value and have different colors. There are 8 different coins which have common European face and on the reverse, a different symbol representing each of the EU countries. Check currency conversion websites for current rate of exchange. The same currency is also used in the following countries: Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Kosovo, Luxemburg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Portugal, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Vatican City.

Check currency conversion websites such as <http://www.xe.com> for daily currency conversion rates. By calculating Euro equivalents for \$1, \$5, \$10, and \$20 (and writing them down if you easily forget), students should adjust quickly after the first few days of travel.

Some students find it comforting to obtain \$50 to \$100 in Euros from their local bank before leaving for Italy. This will allow you to become familiar with the look and feel of the currency, and you will have one less thing, when tired, to think about upon arrival at the airport. Please remember however that most U.S. travelers are able to obtain Euros from ATMs in the airport in Rome and Florence without problems (see section below on ATMs).

2. Banking

Banks generally offer the best exchange rates but also charge a commission. Many independent, non-bank exchange offices do not charge commission, but offer poor rates of exchange.

*****Important Note:** Checks from US Bank accounts CANNOT be cashed in Italy.

ATM cards - You may be able to withdraw money from your bank account at home by using your ATM card if your bank card has the Cirrus or Plus symbol. You can find a machine with the same symbols and be able to access funds from your CHECKING account.

MasterCard-Visa - You can obtain cash advance from your credit card at an ATM machine with the Visa or MC symbols if you have a PIN number (different from your ATM PIN; **Get your PIN number** before you leave home). If you don't have a PIN number, you can usually get cash advance at an exchange office or a bank.

*****Important Note:** Be sure to let your bank and the credit card companies know you about your travel plans. Otherwise, European transactions could be flagged and service could be blocked.

US Banks in Florence

BANK OF AMERICA - BNL

Piazza della Repubblica, 21R telephone: +39 055 233 0502

Via dei Cerretani, 6N telephone +39 055 233 0440

Via Ghibellina corner of Via Verdi telephone: +39 055 244 851

CITIBANK - Barclays

Via Don G. Minzoni, 9 telephone: +39 055 537 2301

3. Budget

You should make a budget plan that guides you in handling your money. In determining your potential expenses for the semester, calculate your expenses on campus (i.e. books, entertainment, meals, etc.), while factoring in travel expenses, an emergency fund, and other excursions or supplies. Money needed per semester varies depending on students' preferences. Students on a medium budget spend between \$3000-\$5000 per semester, and a lavish budget can be \$8000 or more per semester.

Remember, students enrolled in courses with field trips are responsible for paying entrance fees during class visits to museums and should budget extra money accordingly. Most museum visits occur in relation with specific classes and can total between \$50.00 to \$75.00 each per semester. For avid museum goers, join **Friends of the Uffizi Gallery** and enjoy free entrance for a year to all of the state owned galleries in Florence. Only €40 for students under 26 years of age. Friends of the Uffizi was founded on the 9th of July 1993 in response to the May 27th terrorist bombing which damaged the structure and some of the art works in the Uffizi Gallery.

Benefits of the "Amici degli Uffizi" membership:

- **Free entrance to the Uffizi Gallery and the other State Museums in Florence:** Uffizi Gallery, Pitti Palace (Palatina Gallery e Royal Apartments, Gallery of Modern Art, Costume Gallery, Silver Museum, Porcelain Museum, Boboli Gardens), San Marco Museum, Accademia Gallery, Bargello Museum, Davanzati Palace Museum, Medici Chapels, Cenacolo by Sant'Andrea del Sarto (Refectory of the Santo Spirito Church), Cenacolo by Fuligno, Cenacolo di Ognissanti, Cenacolo di Santa Apollonia, Chiostro dello Scalzo, Medici Villa La Petraia, Medici Villa at Poggio a Caiano, Gardens of Medici Villa at Castello.
- **Other advantages of the membership card include:** exclusive guided visits to the Gallery, Subscription to the Uffizi Newspaper, invitations to exhibitions and cultural events, reduced price tickets for concerts by the Orchestra della Toscana at Teatro Verdi, reduced price tickets for concerts of the Teatro del Maggio Musicale, 20% discount on price ticket for premieres and Saturday performances during the theatre season at Teatro della Pergola.

Become a Member on http://www.amicidegliuffizi.it/soci_engl.html (payment with credit card and shipping to the address of the institute in a couple of days!)

Here are a few suggestions to keep your costs down:

- Walk whenever you can (you'll see more and feel better too).
- Avoid impulse buying.
- Shop for groceries rather than eating out.
- Keep a record of your expenses.
- Combine trips so as to get several things done at once. It will save time and money if you plan ahead for your trips by talking to those who have been there before and going over your guidebook.

4. Emergency Funds

In the event of an emergency, it is possible to have your parents wire money to you directly. This procedure takes about one hour on their part (more for you to retrieve it) and should be restricted to emergency use since there is a fee for both the service and transportation to the agency where you can obtain your wired funds. Please remember that the rate of exchange will be the official exchange rate on the day the transaction takes place.

An organization which provides wire transfer services is Western Union (800) 464464. You may want to call them before you leave to find out details and to see if this is even an option in the country or countries that you are studying in and visiting.

D. Student ID Cards

1. International Student ID Card (ISIC)

The ISIC card permits you to get discounts at many museums, galleries, performing arts events and for travel. This card can be purchased through your home institution, or AAA, or online through STA Travel. In Florence, you can buy this at the CTS travel agency.

2. Hostelling International Card

For inexpensive accommodations around the world see: <http://www.hiayh.org/>.

E. Rail Passes

Eurail Passes must be purchased in the U.S. before you leave. These rail passes can also be bought online. Please see www.eurail.com or www.raileurope.com for more information. The first time you use this pass you must go to the ticket window at the train station to validate your ticket before your departure. In order to use a Eurostar train with your Eurail pass, you must still buy a supplement ticket. Note: Beware of fraudulent companies on the Internet selling fake rail passes! In Italy it is possible to purchase a card in order to buy rail tickets at discount prices:

"CARTA VERDE" which costs Euro 40,00 (for students between 12 - 26 years of age) and is valid for a year. This card may be purchased at the train station's ticket office, authorized travel agencies, or online (see below), and offers a 10% discount on national trains' standard prices (1st and 2nd class) and sleeping carriages; and a 25% discount on travel in Europe.

As discount airlines offer inexpensive flights to and from nearby cities of interest, this pass may be less popular among travelling students. It is still a good idea however for those students who anticipate travelling often while in Europe.

Go on line (www.ferroviedellostato.it) as sometimes there can be special discounts if you buy your train ticket 30/15/7 days before departure.

F. Packing

1. Important Documents You Should Bring To Italy:

- Your passport with Student Visa (if it applies, see page 4)
- All documents stamped by the Italian Consulate
- ATM card
- Credit Card
- International Student ID card
- Rail Passes (if any)

2. Medication

- Get enough prescription drugs for the entire stay and an extra supply. Note: Pack these in their original containers.
 - Bring prescriptions from your doctor (as proof that you are allowed to have the medication).
 - All prescribed medications must be labeled clearly with your name to avoid any problems with local authorities.
- While US prescriptions justify you traveling with the medications, they are not valid in Italian pharmacies for a refill. Therefore, to obtain a prescription valid in Italy, you will need to visit a doctor there who will be able to write you a prescription.

****Important Note**

The drug Adderal, commonly used in the US for people with ADD or ADHD, is not available in Italy and is, in fact, considered a narcotic and is **illegal**. If you have a prescription for this drug, please contact the US Consulate/Embassy for further details. Doctors cannot supply it in Italy, and you will not be able to have it sent over, so plan ahead. **The sharing of Adderal among students is considered a crime according to Italian law, and will be viewed by the LdM as a serious drug offense.**

3. Clothing And Other Items (you may either bring or buy these items in Florence)

- ☐ Bring proper clothing for weather conditions such as jeans, sweaters, etc. (see Weather section).
- ☐ Comfortable shoes: you will walk a lot! So, good thick-soled, closed shoes will provide protection and warmth for your feet on the cobblestone streets.
- ☐ Warm winter coat, gloves, scarves, hats.
- ☐ Raincoat & umbrella.
- ☐ Toiletries.
- ☐ Contact lenses solutions and eye glasses.
- ☐ Camera, film or sufficient memory, batteries (all of these can be more expensive abroad).
- ☐ Sunglasses.
- ☐ Small bilingual Italian-English Dictionary.
- ☐ Travel Guides: Lonely Planet, Michelin Green Guides, Eyewitness Italy, and Let's Go! etc.
- ☐ Journal for recording your experiences.
- ☐ Flip-flops or sandals that can be used at pools, on the beach, or in showers.
- ☐ Bathrobe; warm pajamas and slippers are also recommended, the apartments in Italy are not as warm as in your home country as the buildings are often old and difficult to heat adequately.
- ☐ Backpack, book bag or duffel for carrying books, picnic lunches, or supplies during tours and travel (perhaps one big enough for weekend excursions).
- ☐ Vitamins, aspirin (pain reliever), cough medicine, an antihistamine (especially if you know you suffer from allergies), medicine for motion sickness.

4. Items **Not** To Bring:

- Large electrical appliances
- Too much clothing (a handful of good outfits is all you will need)
- Cigarette cartons and alcohol
- Expensive jewelry
- Too much cash in US \$, as exchange rates are pretty high.

5. School Supplies

Most supplies can and should be purchased in Florence. As binder and paper sizes are different, you will need to buy these items in Italy. Students in photography lab classes should consult information on required equipment when registering. Additional information on materials for other classes will be given to you on the first day of class.

6. Small Appliances – Electronic Devices

The voltage in Europe is 220 volts, 50 hertz. If you have appliances (over 60 hertz) from home, you must use a **transformer** as well as a plug **adapter**. If you arrive to Italy without one, you can easily buy it there. We suggest that you do not bring any electronic items other than a laptop computer.

7. Photocopies Of Documents To Leave With Your Family

- Give a copy of your passport, a copy of your driver's license, and a copy of your credit cards (both sides) to your family in the U.S. In case one of these are lost or stolen, it might be easier for your family to help replace stolen items.
- Copy of your travel itinerary.
- Contact information, your address in Italy (if you already know it).

8. Important Notes For Packing

- You alone will carry what you bring! No porters. You will find cobblestone streets, flights of stairs -- can you carry it all by yourself? Find out before you leave the US and leave whatever you can't carry at home. You will thank yourself, believe us!

In addition to the above mentioned, the majority of students arrive to Florence on the same day which may increase your chances of having your luggage delayed especially if it's overweight.

- Be aware of items that are prohibited by your airline. For more information on what you cannot carry in your suitcase or carry-on bag, please call your airlines.
- Check your ticket or call your airline for luggage restrictions on size, weight, number of luggage items, etc.
- Be sure to lock all luggage and keep the keys with you.
- During your journey, watch your bags at all times and do not accept packages from anyone.
- After packing, see if you can weed out any items you don't think you'll wear or use.

9. Some Notes On Clothing

Italians are famous for fashion, and this is not just about names like Gucci and Dolce e Gabbana. Italians have a whole different philosophy towards clothing. In the States, it is very common for young women, for example, to spend the summer in spaghetti strap tank tops and flip-flop sandals. Italian girls, on the other hand, would wear these things only at the beach or at the pool. They believe in specific clothes for specific occasions, and they are not nearly as casual as Americans in their style of dress. While traveling around Italy, you should be aware (especially in the summer) that most churches require those who enter to be covered: no spaghetti straps and short shorts. So plan accordingly. At the very least keep a sweatshirt or scarf in your bag for such occasions. Keep in mind that clothing that is common in the States such as college regalia or sweatpants may make you stand out as a foreigner.

G. Students With Special Needs And Disabilities

1. Disability Resources

Many accommodations for disabilities that students are used to in the US are different or do not exist in Italy. Additionally, the experience of being in a completely different cultural environment can be stressful. As a result, accommodations that you may not have needed at home may become necessary in an unfamiliar setting. **You should anticipate and arrange for any disability accommodations at overseas sites well before your departure. Receiving accommodations once you are abroad will be more difficult and may not be possible.**

2. Physical Accommodations And Support

Students should keep in mind that things will be different, including accommodations and attitudes toward persons with disabilities, and that there will be a period of adjustment to your new surroundings and culture. You can prepare yourself by seeking out as much information as possible prior to departure. In Italy, in general, accommodations for those in wheelchairs are not as common; apartments and other buildings may not have elevators; streets are often cobblestone; and apartment hallways and stairways can be ill-lit or circuitous.

**** It is very important to let the LdM US Enrollment Services Office know about any physical disability and the requirements you may have well before your departure, so that accommodations can be made if possible.**

Access Abroad (www.umabroad.umn.edu/access/) - A comprehensive, highly recommended site sponsored by the University of Minnesota that offers information on disability issues.

Mobility International (www.miusa.org/) - A U.S.-based national non-profit organization. The mission of Mobility International USA (MIUSA) is to empower people with disabilities around the world through international exchange, information, technical assistance, and training, and to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in

international exchange and development programs.

Disability Travel and Recreation Resources (www.makoa.org/travel.htm) - This site includes information about disability travel.

3. Students With Learning Disabilities

Students with learning disabilities will be subject to local educational standards, and therefore will not be provided with the same special treatment offered by their home institution. However, based on current and official documentation of the disability, LdM offers reasonable assistance to these students. It is each student's responsibility to obtain written documentation from their home institution, and hand it in to their LdM Advisor in Florence upon arrival.

H. Social Issues

1. Women Traveling/Living Abroad

Women going on study abroad programs outnumber men by about 2 to 1. This information that follows is meant to help women feel knowledgeable, prepared, and safe.

One of the biggest problems seems to stem from the American woman's cultural bias that she is capable and independent, and that it is her right to do anything that a man can do and go anywhere that a man can go. Unfortunately, this is not how women are perceived in many other countries. Even in Western Europe (a place that we tend to think as very Americanized), attitudes vary tremendously, especially toward American women who are thought to be "loose" or "easy." This opinion is created/reinforced by American television shows and films.

It is helpful to remember to use the same common sense that you would at home. When engaging with members of the opposite sex, keep in mind that your words and body language may be interpreted differently than you intend. Remember that traveling with just one or two friends provides insights into the foreign culture that cannot be gained when traveling with an American group. It is a confidence builder and gives the traveler the freedom to plan what they really want to do and see. Travel also promotes language learning and creates opportunities to meet more people from the host country and other travelers. Women should have, and do have, the opportunity to experience this. In fact, in some cultures being a woman may actually be to your advantage. A woman might have access to women's society and friendship, something denied to men in Islamic cultures, for example.

Probably the most important thing that women can do to keep safe is to be well informed of cultural differences, specifically those that pertain to attitudes toward women (and American women). Read as much as you can and speak with women who have been to your destination before you go, if possible. The Let's Go, Lonely Planet, and Rough Guide series of guide books have sections under trip planning for women travelers.

www.journeywoman.com has tips for traveling and packing suggestions.

2. Religion

You may want to learn about available resources for different religions, or find out the history of a particular religion in the country in which you are studying. The following is a list of websites that can help you in your quest for information:

- www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/ - the state of religious freedom, country by country as seen by the United States Department of State.
- www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlpubs/crlnews/backissues2002/june/worldreligions.htm - a newly compiled and annotated web guide of World Religions sponsored by the Association of College and Research Libraries.
- www.bahai.org/ - official website of the Baha'i faith.
- <http://www.buddhanet.net/wbd/> - a worldwide Buddhist directory.
- www.christianity.com - includes links to churches in other countries.
- www.hindu.org - guide to Hindu organizations and resources worldwide, including temples and ashrams by country.
- www.islamicfinder.org - information on mosques and prayer times around the world and basic information about Islam.
- www.jajz-ed.org.il/diaspora/index.html - contains information about Jewish resources, communities, and history in countries around the world.

I. Health/Vaccinations

Pre-departure Medical/Dental Examinations

- It is a good idea to have a medical checkup before you leave the US. Please see www.cdc.gov/travel/westeurp.htm for the Center for Disease Control's current recommendations on **immunizations**.
- It is IMPORTANT to bring copies of important **health records** and a doctor's statement about any special health problems.
- A visit/check-up with your **dentist** is also recommended.

J. Weather

From September until mid-October and from late March until May the weather is sunny and cool. Since Florence is set in a valley, the summer months and the winter months tend to be humid and rather extreme. January and February

are generally cold (32°F low, 48°F high). In March it will be still chilly, and often rainy too. April is little warmer and May is nice and warm (50° low, 75° high). In June, July and August, it gets very hot (70°F low, 100°F high). September and October are very good months with beautiful autumn days (57°F low, 75°F high). In November it can rain often and in December the cold weather begins (37°F low, 55°F high).
Note: Temperatures mentioned above are in Fahrenheit.

K. Housing

Here is some basic information regarding apartments in Florence:

1. General Information

- The landlord will provide clean **linens** and **kitchen utensils**, so there is no need to bring these items. Most landlords will also provide towels but we suggest to bring your own.
- **Elevators** are rare in Florence.
- You will be **shopping** more often for food because the refrigerators are usually medium or small in size.
- **Electricity and water** are expensive. Europeans generally are very conservative with their use of both. Buildings can be anywhere from 50 to 700+ years old and therefore the heating systems are not as powerful as the ones in the US. It helps to bring wool clothing or clothes you can layer.
- Air-conditioners in the apartment are not available, but most of them are equipped with fans. Open the windows to get a good ventilation in your apartment and when it is cool, this saves energy and feels good to get fresh air. However, please remind to close the windows when you are not in the apartment.
- House **slippers** may be helpful and comfortable, since Italian apartments don't have carpets. They can also avoid noise for the neighbours downstairs.
- Electric **plugs** look different in Europe. The voltage in Italy is 220 (US is 110). Make sure to use adapters when using electrical items from the US. As mentioned before, you can easily buy electrical appliances in Florence, so there is no need to bring these items from the US.
- **Phone landlines are not available** in your rented apartments.
- **INTERNET** is available in ALL LdM apartments. Information may be obtained from the housing department and/or your advisor in Florence.
- Washing machines are available but not **dryers**. You may hang your clothes on a rack or use the Laundromat.
- It might be a good idea to get **ear-plugs** for the night. Streets can be noisy with motorcycles and other traffic.
- **Heaters** are installed in all apartments for the winter.

2. Don't Let The Bed Bugs Bite!

Intercontinental travel whether for pleasure or necessity has boomed over the last 20 years, making it easy for anyone to hop onto an airplane to go anywhere. While this has broadened our horizons, brought nations together, made the world seem smaller and therefore other countries seem less remote, it has brought some disadvantages - one of which are bed bugs! Bed bugs literally jump from one bag to another as they travel along conveyor belts onto the airplanes. They hide in the folds or corners of one's bag. Bed bugs are reddish-brown and about 1/4 inch in length and live off human blood. Bed bugs do not transmit diseases and are not considered a serious health threat but they can cause psychological stress and insomnia.

3. Handling Bed Bugs

It is practically impossible to prevent bed bugs from getting onto bags or clothing, and they do not appear spontaneously in an apartment. People accidentally move bed bugs from place to place, most often from one bag to another when travelling. However there are various methods for getting rid of them.

If bed bugs do appear in an apartment, there are two methods of disinfestations. Depending on the gravity of the infestation, there is a simple method and a more thorough method of disinfestations.

Simple method: This process involves the use of an automatic gas distribution system and after 4 hours, a systematic vacuum cleaning.

Thorough method: This process involves the use of an automatic gas distribution system which is repeated up to 3 times, the washing of the clothes and bags, and sometimes the changing and purchase of new mattresses.

The decision on which method to adopt is decided upon consultation by the landlord and housing coordinator. Students may have to vacate the apartment during the disinfestation process.

REMEMBER: WHEN YOU ARRIVE TO YOUR APARTMENT DO NOT PUT YOUR BAGGAGE ON THE BED.

L. LdM Student Mail Service

LdM has a Student Mail Service to facilitate students' mail and packages sent from family and friends. It is easier for you and more reliable to have your mail sent to the Student Mail Office than to your apartment in Italy, since there is always someone to accept it and since your name does not appear anywhere on your apartment mailbox. Please have your friends and family address the letters/packages to:

YOUR NAME
C/O ISTITUTO LORENZO DE' MEDICI
VIA DEL MELARANCIO 6/r
50123 FIRENZE, ITALIA

Regular mail generally takes anywhere from 8-10 days to arrive, both to and from the US.

Packages take longer: 10-20 days if sent Airmail, 60 - 90 days if sent Surface rate.

Express mail (Fed-Ex, DHL, etc.) takes about 3-4 days.

We recommend using Fed-Ex, DHL, or TNT. **We do not recommend using UPS.**

It is your responsibility to check with the Student Mail Service, and to check your LdM mailbox frequently, especially when you are expecting a package.

Customs for Packages sent to Students

International imports are subject to strict customs controls, and many of them can entail fees.

Each time **food, cosmetics, electronics, leather products, medicines, vitamins and medical supplies**, e.g. **contact lenses**, are sent and/or declared, your packages are more likely to be **held up in customs**.

Customs Procedures/Fees - For packages held up in customs, you will have to send/fax a copy of your passport and a signed declaration to customs officials, often pay a customs fee, and sometimes pay a processing fee in addition to the customs fee. For this reason we suggest you avoid sending these types of goods.

Medicine/Medical Supplies - For medicine, contact lenses, etc, we recommend that you bring a supply with you for your whole stay in Italy. If you run out, these items can be prescribed by a doctor in Italy. There is a service with English-speaking doctors which you can use to get new prescriptions. If you have a specific medicine that you take, we recommend that you bring a prescription from your home doctor to show to the doctors here. If medicine or medical supplies are held up in customs, you will have to provide customs officials with a prescription from a doctor in Italy, and there is the risk that they won't arrive by the time you need them.

Import Value - Packages can also be held up in customs if the declared value doesn't match the actual value of the item(s). If sending items that are used (clothing, etc), they should be declared as such, specifying **"used personal effects"**. Be sure to write the **current value** of the items, not the original price. New items should be marked **"for private use"**. Goods marked with high values will almost certainly be held up in customs, and the student will have to complete a declaration of the content and value. An import tax of above 30% of the declared value may be charged for imported new clothing.

Customs Notification - If the customs office notifies the LdM Student Mail Service directly of a package held up in customs, we email the student immediately. However, sometimes these notifications are in the form of letters addressed to the student, and in this case we cannot know that a package is held up in customs until the student finds the letter in their mailbox and tells us. This is why students should check their mailboxes and check in with the Student Mail Service regularly, especially when expecting a package. The customs office will wait for the requested documentation from 5-15 work days, after which the package will either be sent back or destroyed, depending on the package's content.

Customs Assistance - LdM Student Mail Service offers assistance to students for packages which are being held in Italian customs for import restrictions. LdM's package service consists of assisting students in:

- filling out forms and documents;
- e-mailing or faxing the requested documents, or else explaining how to send them through the mail (the customs office may specify they want the documents faxed, scanned or sent);
- acting as an intermediary between the student and the customs office/shipping company when possible;
- transferring payments made by the students to the customs office/shipping company.

LdM is not responsible for any errors or delays by the customs office/ shipping companies, or any damages caused by the student's delays in finding the customs notification, filling out the forms, etc.

Timing for Customs Clearance - The customs clearance time below starts from the moment a student informs LdM about this notification.

- o Approximately 5-15 days for goods held in customs for tax reasons
- o Approximately 10-45 days for packages held due to restricted content

III. PRE-DEPARTURE PLANNING CHECKLIST

- ☐ Valid **passport**
- ☐ Apply and obtain **Student Visa** (if it applies, see page 4)
- ☐ All US citizens must **register with the American Consulate** (<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/home.asp> - short term traveler)
- ☐ All **documents necessary for Permit of Stay**
- ☐ Obtain **Health Insurance Coverage** for living abroad or purchase the Italian health insurance once you arrive in Florence
- ☐ Purchase **plane ticket**

- Obtain **cell phone**
- Make a **budget** plan that itemizes your expenses (food, travel, supplies, social activities, sports, etc.)
- Learn about **Health and Safety Issues**
- Pre-departure **medical** and **dental** check-ups and Immunizations
- **Prescriptions** if needed, prescription drugs, vitamins
- **ATM card**
- **Credit Card(s)**
- **Traveler's checks**
- Cash in **euros** for the journey & first few days
- International Student ID Card (ISIC)
- **Rail Passes** (if any)
- **Converter with adapter** (if bringing Laptop Computer)
- Italian/English **dictionary**
- Travel **guidebooks**
- **Camera**
- LdM Pre-Departure Guide (it has useful information you will need when you arrive to Florence).

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.ostellionline.org (Italian and English) - to find/book hostels in Italy and the rest of the world.

www.hostels.com (English) - to find/book hostels in Italy and the rest of the world.

www.hostelworld.com (English) - to find/book hostels in Italy and the rest of the world.

www.cts.it (Italian only) - website of the Student Travel Agency. Good fares for students under 26!

www.raileurope.com (English) - all the info on EurailPasses.

www.ferroviedellostato.com (Italian and English) - official website of Italy's train system. You may check schedules, prices and buy tickets online.

www.aeroporto.firenze.it (Italian and English) - web site of the Florence airport. It's possible to check the status of the flights.

www.firenzeturismo.it (Italian and English) - official web site of the Florence's tourist office. To check events, museums' opening times, restaurants, useful information, etc.

www.ataf.net (Italian and English) - official website of the Florence's bus company. To check routes, schedules, etc.

www.paginegialle.it (Italian only) - Italian Yellow Pages.

www.paginebianche.it (Italian only) - phone book of any city in Italy.

www.boxol.it (Italian and English) - to check about events, concerts, operas, etc. in Florence and Tuscany. It is possible to buy tickets online.

www.lega-calcio.it/ita/atim.html (official website of Italian soccer) - to check Italian teams' games, results, dates, etc.

www.lapulce.it (Italian only) - classified ads online.

www.cinehall.it (English) - to check the schedule of movies in English at Odeon movie theater. **With the LDM student card there is a special rate for the movie shows.**

www.eurometeo.com (Italian and English) - weather in Italy and the rest of Europe.

www.tuttocitta.it (Italian only) - Italian version of MapQuest.

IV. WHEN YOU ARRIVE IN FLORENCE

A. Getting Settled

1. Calling Home (**MANDATORY TO INFORM YOUR FAMILY OF YOUR SAFE ARRIVAL!**)

The prefix for the USA is: 001 - if you are dialing direct, dial: 001+ area code + number.

Cell phone calls are expensive in Italy! But the good news is that incoming calls are free in Italy!! Consult the Platform3000 website (www.piccellwireless.com) for all information and rates. Please remember that the time difference from Florence to the US is -6 hours for the East Coast, -7 hours for Central, -8 hours for Mountain, and -9 hours to the West Coast.

2. Using A Calling Card

- **We suggest that you also buy a calling card before you leave the U.S. as you can save money in the event of a long distance call.** Calling family or friends back home using the U.S. calling card is always more economical due to the high telephone rates in Europe, especially Italy. Not using a calling card tends to cost five times more for a transatlantic call. By calling with an American phone card, you are charged with US rates, no matter where you are calling from. All calling cards have local access numbers that connect you to the American operator.
- If you have one of the following phone cards, you can charge your calls and pay later. The following are access codes to use from Italy to the major US long distance companies:

ATTENTION: US 800 numbers can only be reached by using a phone card from a pay phone.

Just dial the access number and the operator or a recording will answer. These operators can also place COLLECT CALLS for those who do not have calling cards.

- If you want to use your calling card from a public pay telephone, you need to insert coins or a 'scheda telefonica' in the telephone in order to access the phone line and then dial your operator. At the end of the call the coin or card will be returned to you. If you want to use your calling card from a cellular phone, be aware that it may not work depending on the cellular company you have or from whom you are renting the phone from.
- Be careful if you call from one European country to another, it is as though you were calling a European country from the USA. In this case it would be less expensive dialing direct from Italy.
- **Public Telephones** - Public telephones are located in most public places, including on the streets and in train and bus stations. Coin operated telephones are quite rare; therefore, you may consider buying a phone card, "scheda telefonica" (available in various tariffs). Before you can use this card you will have to tear off the marked corner! Then you must insert it in the pay phone and it will work as a debit card. This way, you see (on the computerized monitor) the total on your card decreasing as you talk, and can monitor the length of your conversations.

Warning: Do not use the 800 numbers posted on the public phone booth asking for your credit card number! Their rates are extremely high and there is also a risk - even after your call home, they might continue charging your credit card fraudulently!

B. Important Phone Numbers, Emergency, Medical Services

For EMERGENCY ONLY:

Carabinieri	112
Police Emergency	113
Ambulance - First Aid	118
Tourist Medical Center	055 475 411

Information Phone Numbers

Florence Airport - Flight Information (24 hrs atom)	055 306 1700/702
Flounce Airport - Flight Information (7,30am -11,00pm)	055 306 1300
Florence Airport Lost Luggage	055 306 1302
Railway Information	892 021
Train Station (switchboard)	055 260 8609

Tourist Information Center (APT)

Via Cavour 7/ r	055 290 832
Piazza Stazione 4	055 212 245, 055 272 8208
Borgo S.Croce, 29/ r	055 234 0444

United States Consulate - Lungarno Vespucci 38 055 266 951 (switchboard)
(open to the public: Monday-Friday 9:00am - 12:30pm). For emergency situations and afternoon appointments they can be reached by phone.

Medical Care

a) MEDICAL SERVICE - Tel. 055 475 411 (24/7h) www.medicalservice.firenze.it.

English speaking general practitioners and specialists.

Via Lorenzo il Magnifico 59 (10 minutes walking distance from LdM): without appointment from Monday to Friday from 11:00am to 12:00pm and from 5:00pm to 6:00pm. On Saturday from 11:00am to 12:00pm.

Via Porta Rossa 1 (2 minutes walking distance from the Duomo): without appointment from Monday to Saturday from 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

Visit to regular doctor (no appointment needed) €40 – cash and credit card payment

Visit to see a specialist (by appointment only) €70 - €100 – cash only

For students with HTH health insurance, visits are free **(mandatory to bring a photocopy of the HTH card).**

Doctor's visit to your home: (Credit cards / cash)

-Day-afternoon visits: €70 (for students with HTH health insurance, cost is €30)

-Evening-night (including overnight, weekends, and holidays) €100 (for students with HTH health insurance, cost is €60)

b) Guardia Medica Turistica - Tel. 055 212 221

English speaking general practitioners.

Vicolo degli Aldimari 1 (from Piazza del Duomo, take Via Calzaiuoli and turn the first right): without appointment from Monday to Friday from 2:00pm to 4:30pm. Cost €29. Specialist visits by appointment ONLY (approximate cost €29/39 – N.B. not all the specialists speak English).

Pharmacies Open 24 hours

Piazza Duomo tel. 055 211 343
Inside train station tel. 055 216 761

C. Jet Lag

Jet lag occurs when your body's own time clock is out of synchronization with the country you are visiting. Symptoms of jet lag include insomnia, fatigue, irritability, dehydration, problems concentrating and sometimes nausea, anxiety, sweats etc.

Tips for minimizing jet lag during air travel:

- Get good sleep the night before you leave.
- Drink plenty of water on the flight to avoid dehydration. Avoid coffee and alcohol during the flight and upon arrival.
- Avoid overeating; this may give you indigestion.
- Exercise your legs by taking a walk around the aircraft. Stretch your back, arms and leg muscles, walk up and down the aisle.
- Wear loose clothing for comfort. Your feet may swell during the flight so wear loose fitting shoes or slippers.

Tips for adjusting to a new time zone on arrival:

- Take a short nap on arrival and only sleep at night.
- Try to keep the day on arrival free to rest.
- Drink lots of water and avoid caffeine.

D. Culture Shock

When studying abroad, a normal and expected response is culture shock. Culture shock occurs when one experiences a clash between his/her way of viewing and interacting with the world (determined by a person's home culture) and a new cultural environment. Typical reactions to culture shock include feelings of helplessness, loss of control, fear, anxiety, depression, loneliness, anger, vulnerability and confusion. Such reactions are normal responses to abnormal situations that are usually transitory, lasting only a short amount of time. Culture shock is not a psychological disorder and does not indicate an inability to cope with change. When one experiences culture shock, it is important to talk to others about these feelings; connect to others through LdM activities, excursions and clubs; keep a journal to record your thoughts, feelings and experiences; eat well and stay physically active. Roommates, friends, faculty members, advisors, family and religious/spiritual leaders can all be sources of support. If you are struggling with culture shock, an LdM counsellor is also available to speak with students about their thoughts, feelings and experiences.

E. Getting Around The City

This section has brief information that will help you during your first week in Florence before the Orientation meeting. **Florence Bus System** - The city bus company is called **ATAF**. It is definitely the cheapest way for getting around the city. All buses have buttons to signal for a stop. Most buses usually run from early morning (about 6:00am) to midnight. For bus routes, schedules and other information, you may visit **www.ataf.net**, call the toll free # 800 424 500 or go directly to the Ataf office located next to the train station.

Bus tickets - A single ticket costs €1,20, lasts 90 minutes from the time it is validated, and must be purchased at Tabacchi shops or news stand before getting on the bus. **IMPORTANT:** Single, 90 minute tickets must be punched in the machine immediately upon entering the bus. Fines are very expensive for those caught without a valid ticket.

Taxis - Keep in mind that taking a taxi in Florence is very expensive. Generally taxis cannot be hailed; you must either go to the taxi stands in the main squares (Duomo, San Marco, Repubblica), at the train station, at the airport or you can call a taxi at the following numbers to tell them where you are: **055 4390 or 055 4798**. Only cash is accepted. No checks or credit card are accepted for payment.

F. Safety Tips

Florence is a safe city, as long as you follow common sense, and take precautions.

Learn about the customs and local laws of the country to which you are going. Remember that you are subject to their laws and are not protected by U.S. laws. In general, keep a low profile. In many countries Americans are not always viewed in a positive light. Once you have some time to adjust to your new location, you will have a better sense of how you wish to act in your new surroundings.

- **Always carry a copy of your passport with you.** Carrying a personal document is mandatory by law, but it is always safer when you are coming to class, or just taking a walk, to carry the copy rather than the original. Note that if you will be traveling, or going to the bank to cash traveler's checks, you'll need your original. For lost or stolen passport, call your consulate or go online **www.usembassy.it**.
- **Beware of gypsies and pick-pockets.** They are generally women and children, and have mastered the art of pick-pocketing, and quickly take advantage of easily accessible purses or wallets in large crowds and packed buses.

They are easy to recognize, and concentrate near the main tourist attractions and museums; most of the children carry newspapers or pieces of cardboard to distract their targets.

- **WOMEN SHOULD NOT WALK ALONE LATE AT NIGHT**, especially if they have had too much to drink - it is unsafe and inappropriate. Call a taxi or walk with someone. Women who travel alone in taxi have a 10% discount from 9pm to 2am.
- Although there is no drinking age limit in Italy, this does not mean that you can drink on the street any time, day or night. The police can and will stop you and ask for documents. Remember, **if you are in an inebriated state**, you are at a greater risk of being physically or verbally attacked.

G. Shopping

Shop hours: Large supermarkets and department stores as well as most of the stores in the city center stay open all day. Boutiques and some shops can be closed between 1:00pm and 3:30pm and on Monday morning.

Markets hours: Mercato Centrale (Via dell' Ariento) and Sant' Ambrogio (Piazza Ghiberti) food markets 7:30am – 2:00pm (Mon – Sat). Closed Sunday. Every Tuesday morning there is a general market at the Cascine Park.

Grocery Stores

Here is a list of some of the small supermarkets/grocery stores are in the historic center:

Billa Via Pietrapiana 42

Centro il Supermercato Via de' Ginori 41/r, Via delle Ruote 42/r, Via Ricasoli 109/r - open 7 days/week

CONAD Via del Melarancio 7/r (close to the campus), Via dei Servi 56/r

Magi Market Via Santa Monaca 6/r (on the other side of the river) - open 7 days/week

Margherita/Conad Via Alamanni (next to the train station), Via dei Servi 56/r

VIVI Market Via del Giglio 20/r

Punto Via Faenza 48/r

Smaller foodstores called Alimentari, can be found all around the city and usually carry dry and canned goods and often have a deli counter or dairy case: Forno (bread and baked goods), Macelleria (Butcher shop), Pasticceria (bakery and pastry shop), Latteria (dairy products), Ortofrutta/Fruttivendolo (fruit and vegetables), Pizzicheria/Gastronomia (delicatessen).

School Supplies/Stationery: You will find notebooks and other school supplies in a Cartoleria, in the general stores and supermarkets, bookstores and 99 Cents stores.

Painting, Drawing and Sculpture Supplies

Zecchi - Via dello Studio 19/r

Salvini - Via degli Alfani 127/r

Rigacci - Via dei Servi 71/r

Photography Supplies and Film Developing

MB Photo - Via Ghibellina 131/r

Fontani - Viale Strozzi 18-20/A

Carnicelli - P.za Duomo 4/r

H. Cultural Hints

Shopping

In Florence, as in much of Italy, the shops are very small. The window displays are set up so as to give an accurate picture of the merchandise available, and the prices are usually listed as well. This is to prevent too much foot traffic in such a small space. It is general practice to enter a shop only if you are looking to buy, if you see something in the window that sparks your interest and is within your price range. Browsing is discouraged. In the States, we are used to large department stores where one can try on as much as they like; while there are larger stores in Italy as well, it is a good idea to keep this difference in mind. Window shopping, on the other hand, is always acceptable and the displays are generally quite beautiful (Italians are very good at optimizing the little space they have).

"Siesta"

Many businesses close for a few hours in the afternoon for the Italian version of "siesta". They typically close around 1pm and reopen between 3:30pm-4pm. This includes pharmacies (there are always pharmacies open 24 hours a day), clothing stores, etc. Since Florence is a tourist city, you may even find that things actually stay open (the closer you are to the center). Don't assume they will, though. The farther you are from the center, and especially when you travel to smaller cities in Italy, you will need to take these closures into consideration. Businesses tend to stay open until 7 or 8 in the evening.

Tipping

In Italian restaurants, especially in Florence, you will be charged a coperto or servizio per person, which usually runs between €1-€2. This will be automatically included on your bill and covers the tip, as well as bread. If you wish to leave more, pocket change is completely acceptable. It is not necessary to calculate 20% of the bill and tip accordingly as in your country. A little extra is of course appreciated, but large tips are not expected nor required. Likewise, it is not necessary to tip bartenders. Tipping taxi drivers is also not necessary, though a little extra on top of the fare is generally acceptable.

Coffee

While in Italy coffee is certainly a very important part of the culture, it differs greatly from the American "stay all day with your laptop" coffeehouse culture in places normally called "bars". Italian bars offer both coffee and alcoholic

beverages, and are usually frequented during the day. There is a reason that Italians drink espresso rather than those enormous cups of coffee that Americans tend to prefer: speed. A coffee break is a brief event, in and out of the caffè in 5-10 minutes, mostly standing up at the bar counter. In most bars, there are actually different prices for those who drink their espresso standing up and those who prefer table service. There is generally a price list on the wall which indicates both prices. Depending on the location of the bar, this price difference could be quite significant. Cafès in the center of Florence, especially near the Duomo and Piazza della Signoria (especially those with tables outside in the piazza) tend to charge you not just for the coffee, but for the view as well. A 90 cent coffee can easily become a €6/7 coffee, so be aware. Ordering a caffè automatically means "espresso". If you prefer American style coffee, you need to specify: caffè Americano/ caffè lungo.

I. Orientation Meeting

It is **ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED** that all students attend the Orientation meeting in Florence. Therefore, please make sure you plan your travel itinerary accordingly. You will receive an **Orientation Packet** which will give detailed practical information regarding the campus, services, health and safety tips, bus passes, shopping, free time activities, field trips, etc. We will include more details (date, time, etc.) of this meeting in the final packet you will receive through e-mail before your departure.

V. POLICIES AND RULES

A. Policies On Conduct

Introduction and General Clause

Lorenzo de' Medici takes seriously its academic mission of fostering the creative and intellectual potential of each of its students in an international environment that values tolerance and respect. We believe in the concept of informed decision-making and wish to promote healthy behaviour.

In order to maintain an atmosphere that nurtures this potential, Lorenzo de' Medici has established Rules of Conduct consistent with this goal.

By accepting admission to Lorenzo de' Medici, students are accepting the conditions as described in these Rules of Conduct.

These conditions apply to behaviour both on and off campus (e.g. in the city, pubs, discos, clubs and other meeting places). These Rules apply also to students' behavior in the apartment (or family) where they reside while attending Lorenzo de' Medici. In addition, the Rules contained herein supersede other LDM publications or documents (e.g. housing flyers, residence life brochures or handbooks, etc.)

1. General Conduct

Each student is expected to:

- a) act as a responsible member of the academic community, in language, personal interactions and the treatment of property. They are expected to treat others as they would like to be treated, and to recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every person in the community.
- b) behave and dress in classes according to the standards of a serious learning environment. Dressing in a disrespectful or offensive manner is not allowed. Appropriate dress and footwear during all studio art and cooking courses is required.
- c) refrain from using computers, mobile telephones and blackberry systems during lectures.
- d) avoid eating and drinking during all lectures and/or academic activities.
- e) respect the personal and property rights of all other persons, of Lorenzo de' Medici itself, and of the community at-large; be responsible in helping keep the community safe, and work with the community to prevent vandalism, hate speech, physical violence and harassment.
- f) acknowledge that we are all different – rural, urban, gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, from differing religions, philosophies, ethnic groups, cultural backgrounds, physical abilities, and so on. We are expected to strive to understand one another and protect and affirm the right of each person to be themselves.

2. Alcohol

Alcohol may be consumed, but not abused, by students who are of legal drinking age in their host country. All students are responsible for discouraging alcohol-related behavior that is abusive to themselves or to others. Moreover, Lorenzo de' Medici considers drunkenness and intoxication in public, whether inside or outside the Institute's premises, unacceptable regardless of age.

LDM will not be held responsible for students' alcohol abuse and for all the consequences arising from that abuse. Penalties for violating the alcohol policy of LDM include but are not limited to: warnings, probations, fines, parental notification and educational service projects. It is hoped that education will help students understand more about the residual effects of alcohol both physically and socially. Alcohol violations may also result in suspension or expulsion from LDM. Penalties are levied on a per-person basis.

3. Drugs

The possession, use or distribution of any substances that are considered illicit or illegal drugs or controlled substances is prohibited and is considered a violation of Lorenzo de' Medici Rules as well as Italian laws. Violators are subject to both disciplinary action by Lorenzo de' Medici and prosecution by the Italian authorities. Any drug infraction will be considered a grave violation of policy and will result in serious sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the program.

4. Assault And Fighting

Assault, fighting and similar behavior are serious offences that are considered detrimental to the name of the Institute.

5. Academic Dishonesty (Cheating And Plagiarism)

The Institute will make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct. Students should at all times act with integrity and honesty in their academic and personal affairs and within a framework of mutual respect, and be honest in their writing and classroom work. If a faculty member believes that there is evidence of academic dishonesty on the part of a student, it is the faculty member's responsibility to take action in accordance with the Lorenzo de' Medici Student Policy.

6. Privacy Policy

- a) The LDM privacy policy may be different from the privacy policy of the state where the students come from.
- b) The LDM privacy policy is governed by Italian law.
- c) In case of any form of infringement of the Lorenzo de' Medici Rules of Conduct, or in every case of a health problem for a student, every LDM student agrees to permit LDM Academic Advisors or the Directorate notify the home university and/or the family about all information concerning the infringement or the health problem.

7. Enforcement of the Rules of Conduct

- a) Determination of Violation. In the case of a possible violation of the Rules the following process will be followed. After a report is filed, the student will be required to meet with the Dean of Students or a designate. This meeting will provide an opportunity for the student and the Dean or designate to discuss the possible violation. If the student does not admit to a violation, the Dean of Students or designate will decide whether the preponderance of the evidence shows that the student has violated Lorenzo de' Medici's Rules of Conduct.
- b) Sanctions. In all cases involving a violation of any of these Rules, the Dean of Students or designate may impose any combination of the following sanctions: **oral or written admonition, written warning, probation, fines, withholding of academic transcripts and expulsion from Lorenzo de' Medici. All sanctions will be notified in writing to the program or university to which the student belongs and at the Institute's discretion, to the parent/s. Any sanctions by Lorenzo de' Medici do not necessarily signify that further sanctions cannot be forthcoming from the home institution.**
In case of expulsion the Dean of Students or designate will decide the timing and the modality of execution. From the moment that notice is delivered, the student will no longer be a student of LDM, and will be obliged to leave LDM without any form of refunding.
- c) Appeals. In all cases involving a violation of any of these Rules, the student may appeal to the Board of Directors of the Institute on the grounds of insufficient evidence, violation of rights, or severity of the sanction. The appeal will be based on the record of the original meeting, unless new material evidence has been discovered since that time.
- d) Disciplinary Files. Files involving violations of the Rules by students will be maintained for two years from the date of sanction. Personally identifiable information about individual students in these files will be protected.

B. Academic Regulations

REGISTRATION REGULATIONS

1. Students may be enrolled in one of the following Programs without exceeding the total number of credits allowed by their home institution:
 - 6-Credit Italian Language (6 crs.)
 - Workshop OR Field School (6 crs.)
 - 3-Credit Elective OR 3-Credit Italian Language (3 crs.)
 - Combination of Two 3-Credit Electives OR
 - Combination of 3-Credit Italian Language + 3-Credit Elective (6 crs.)
2. Students will not be allowed to change Program or Location after arrival at LdM.
3. Students will be charged an additional 260 Euro for non-credit cuisine courses, or 280 Euro for non-credit wine courses.
4. Students must remain full-time students, with a minimum of 3 credits per term. Students may not drop or withdraw (with a "W" or "W/F") from a course if it would bring them below the minimum number of credits. Non-credit offerings are available only in addition to for-credit classes.
5. Students are responsible for ensuring that their home institution will grant them credits for courses taken at LdM. This includes any new courses resulting from placement test/level adjustments.

6. Students may attend only the courses listed on their Official Registration form. Auditing is not allowed.
7. Students pre-registered for an intermediate or advanced level course, including Italian language, must check the LdM Catalogue and Course Schedule to make sure they meet all the prerequisites. A placement test will be administered to confirm the students' level.
8. Only one class can be changed upon arrival at LdM, depending on course availability. This change must be made no later than 7:15 p.m. on Final Registration Day. Each student is responsible for requesting courses for which their study abroad program will grant them credits.
9. To add/drop a class, students must ask their advisor for the Add & Drop Request form, fill out and sign the form and give it to their advisor, who will submit it to the Registrar for final approval. It is each student's responsibility to confirm the outcome of their request in person with their advisor.
10. Switching from one section to another of the same course, including Italian language, is considered a course change.
11. Switching levels of the same course does not constitute a change.
12. Add/drop regulations and procedure and all deadlines related to registration changes will be explained during Orientation. No exceptions will be made to these rules and deadlines.
13. No refunds will be issued for classes dropped after arrival at LdM.
14. All lab fees and extra course fees must be paid by the deadline.
15. After Final Registration Day, students will no longer be allowed to add a class. Courses dropped after Final Registration but during the first two weeks of classes will result in a "W" grade. Courses dropped after the second week of classes and before the "W/F" deadline will result in a "W/F" grade.
16. Mid-term and final exams will be given only on the scheduled days that appear on each course syllabus. For no reason (i.e. religious issues, travel plans, family matters, etc.) will they be moved. Exams are scheduled during normal class times, so more than one exam may be administered on the same day.
17. Students with learning disabilities will be subject to local educational standards, and therefore will not be provided with the same special treatment offered by their home institute. However, based on current and official documentation of the disability, LdM offers reasonable assistance to these students. It is each student's responsibility to obtain written documentation from their home institution, and hand it in to their LdM Advisor by the deadline.
18. LdM does not offer Pass/Fail grades or Incompletes, only letter grades. All classes registered for and grades received will appear on each student's final transcript notwithstanding their intent to transfer credits to their home institution.
19. LdM reserves the right to withhold the transcript and/or housing deposit of students who violate contract agreements related to housing and/or academic issues (i.e. any balance or debt incurred) and/or whose behavior is considered detrimental towards the institute and other students.
 - a) It has to be clear that the Rules of Conduct applied at this Institute are different from the rules applied by the student's home college or university.
 - b) All that being stated it is understood that the Lorenzo de' Medici Rules of Conduct must be carefully read by each student. A copy of the Rules of Conduct is included in the orientation packet given to every student and is also shown in every building of the Institute.
20. The signing of the Academic Regulations means acceptance of the abovementioned Rules of Conduct.

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

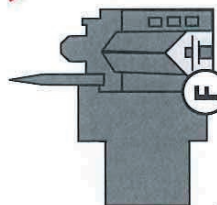
1. Course attendance is a primary requirement for a responsible learning experience at LdM.
2. Punctuality is mandatory. Students must arrive in class on time: any lateness, leaving class during the lesson without notice, not showing up on time after the break, or leaving earlier, will impact the participation grade and the Final Grade. In addition:
 - A) Three late arrivals or equivalent (10 minutes or more) result in one absence on the attendance count.
 - B) Missing half a lesson or more will be considered as one full absence.
3. Students are responsible for keeping track of their absences and for catching up on any missed work.
4. Make-up classes are always mandatory as part of the course program.
5. If a class occasionally creates conflict with another class, the student is required to inform both instructors in advance.
6. For no reason (i.e. religious issues, travel plans, family matters, etc.) will absences be excused.
7. Students will receive an "F" on each exam they miss.
8. Students who need to leave the Program before the end of the term must fill out an Official Withdrawal Request form and submit it to their advisor. A "W" for each course will appear on their transcript. Students who leave the Program without submitting the form will receive an "F" in each course. In either case, students will not be eligible for credits or receive a refund.
9. Students who absent themselves from courses will have their final grade penalized as indicated on the following table:

ALL SUMMER SESSION COURSES	
Final grade lowered by one full letter when you have	Final grade = "F" (No credit awarded) when you have
3 absences	4 or more absences

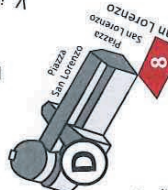
PLEASE NOTE: LDM IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONAL ITEMS THAT ARE LOST OR STOLEN ON ITS PREMISES.

VI. CONCLUSION

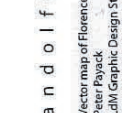
We hope this Pre-Departure Guide is useful in your preparation for your study abroad experience in Italy. Remember to bring it with you, since it also has useful information you will need when you arrive in Florence. When you arrive, try to keep an open mind - remember, you are in another country with a different culture and lifestyle. You are a welcomed guest and a representative of your country, so try your best to convey a positive image. It really helps to embrace the differences, have an adventurous spirit and a good sense of humor! Have fun, but remember safety always comes first. Please come to the LdM office first with your questions before listening to a local stranger. We'll be glad to help or refer you to someone who can. We would like for you to have an educational, memorable, and a successful Study Abroad experience! Have a safe trip!



- 1 Via Faenza, 44A
- 2 Via Faenza, 43
- 2 Via Faenza, 69/R
- 2 Via Faenza, 71/R
- 3 Via del Melarancio, 6/R
- 4 Via del Giglio, 4
- 5 Via dell'Alloro, 14/R
- 6 Via dell'Alloro, 13
- 7 Via dell'Alloro, 17/R
- 8 Piazza San Lorenzo, 7
- 9 Via S. Egidio, 8
- 10 Piazza Strozzi 2
(Palazzo di Palla Strozzi
detto Lo Strozzi)
- 11 Via del Giglio, 15



- (A) DUOMO
 (B) BAPTISTRY
 (C) PALAZZO VECCHIO
 (D) SAN LORENZO
 (E) GALLERIA DELL'ACCADEMIA
 (F) SANTA MARIA NOVELLA
 (G) STAZIONE S. M. NOVELLA
 (H) MUSEO DEL BARGELLO
 (I) OSPEDALE (HOSPITAL)



Vector map of Florence by:
Peter Payack
LdM Graphic Design Student
Spring 2008 Graphic Design 2 course
Project:
the new LdM Florence Orientation Booklet