



Our academic approach to education abroad

OUR APPROACH

Our approach to education abroad is to make Italy your laboratory and classroom. Students enthusiastically say that participating in a Gustolab International program is more than study abroad. It is an unparalleled experience. One of the best decisions they ever made. Not just academically, but personally.

Participating in daily Italian life, visiting various neighborhoods, shops, restaurants, and markets, immerses them in a unique environment of constant investigation and discovery. Courses are richly supplemented by field work, special projects, workshops, excursions, and activities. They share that the process of stepping outside of the familiar “comfort zone” of home, adapting to a new international context, allows them to gain valuable skill sets.

It is a time of growth, broadening perspectives, and building future professional opportunities. Beyond examining the role of food in the culture at large, while in Rome, they also find themselves evaluating individual choices in regards to how the quality of food reflects on their quality of life. We strive to give students everything: guidance, structure, support, knowledge, and fun. Below, you can learn more about our approach to education abroad.

Place-based experiential learning

During your time abroad, you will learn about cultural particulars and nuances through the study of daily habits to visiting historic sites and buildings to walking old neighborhoods and comparing their layout, functions, and aesthetics with newer ones, to connecting with people working in the food & sustainability industries. In all cases, we encourage students to engage actively with such opportunities and to turn them into moments of discovery – exploring the patterns of local life in a second culture. These kinds of observations are essential to nearly all coursework at GLi and often become the basis of fieldwork carried out in restaurants, markets, factories, farms, and other settings. Gustolab International also keeps students informed of special activities occurring in Rome and



elsewhere in Italy and encourages participation. Be sure to bring good walking shoes and a notepad, you will need them.

According to the Association for Experiential education, Experiential education is Challenge and Experience followed by Reflection leading to Learning and Growth. Some of the principles of experiential education practice include:

- Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning.
- Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, soulfully, and/or physically. This involvement produces a perception that the learning task is authentic.
- The results of the learning are personal and form the basis for future experience and learning.
- Relationships are developed and nurtured: learner to self, learner to others, and learner to the world at large.

Interdisciplinary & co-curricular project-based learning

Our courses are designed to promote interdisciplinary discussion and learning, and practical co-curricular projects are part of course outcomes. These include projects with local organizations to help you learn how to apply your learning, solve real-world problems and improve your intercultural communication skills. Examples include:

- production of a short documentaries
- cooking practicums
- group work with other students from Italian universities
- participation in local events and hackathons.
- involvement in international initiatives such as SDGs for all students.
- participation in local competitions and workshops

Service Learning

Our approach to international education includes providing you with service learning and community



prominent players in the field of food entrepreneurship, critical food studies, and historical preservation of food culture. Nowhere else do students have the opportunity to discuss the cultural politics of food with the very people who are shaping the field of study on this topic in Rome.”



Ashley Y., PhD Student Previous Next

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