

**The Monteverdi Archaeological Field School  
Tuscany, ITALY  
Summer 2023**



# **Study Abroad Program Guide**

**Study Abroad Programs  
Cooper Union  
Michelle Hobart**

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## DESTINATION: ITALY

*Information from Wikipedia*



Archeology in Italy is allowing us today to rethink local narratives and break away from Eurocentric views of the western world. The traditional western cultures starts with paradigms that were shaped by the Roman Empire, Roman Catholic Church, the Renaissance Fascism (both Mussolini and Berlusconi) and other cultural and educational reforms. Italy has a long history of colonialism with well-known civilizations, including the Etruscans, Greeks, and the Romans. For more than 2,000 years Italy experienced migrations, invasions and was divided into many independent city states until 1862 when it became a nation-state.

Italy is home to many UNESCO World Heritage Sites (49) to date out of a total of 981 and then owns 4.99% of the world's heritage and one estimate says that the country is home to half the world's great

art treasures. According to the Court of Auditors, Italy has 3,609 museums. Then there are 479 archaeological sites, 5,000 cultural heritages, 12,609 libraries, 46,025 architectural heritage bound, 10,000 churches, 1,500 monasteries, 40,000 assorted castles, towers and fortresses, 30,000 stately homes, 4,000 gardens, 1,000 major historic town centers and more besides. Finally, Italy was a founding member of the European Community in 1957, which became part of the European Union in 1993.

## PROGRAM DIRECTORS

**Dr. Michelle Hobart** uses archeology and scientific data in her teaching to counter the traditional, Eurocentric historical narratives of the medieval Mediterranean. She was trained in medieval history and archaeology in the University of Siena, Italy, and received an M.A. in medieval architecture from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. Her Ph.D. is from the Institute of Fine Arts, NYU and her focus explores the interface between archaeology and architecture in medieval Tuscany, Sardinia, and the Mediterranean. Her work explores historical narratives and matches them against material evidence – gathered through archaeology and new, non-invasive techniques, geophysical surveys. She is particularly interested in questioning

authorities and challenge lacunae in historical records throughout received doctrines, be they, religious, economic, and social.

**Dr. Alessandro Sebastiani** is a Classical to Late Medieval archaeologist who focuses his research on settlement patterns and economic trends of the Roman and Medieval Mediterranean. He obtained his doctorate at the University of Siena and has worked for the Penn Museum and the Butrint Foundation. He was awarded a Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship at the University of Sheffield in 2012. Since 2017 he has been an Assistant Professor in Roman Archaeology at the Department of Classics of the University at Buffalo.

## **SPECIAL NOTES REGARDING OUR DESTINATION**

### **Climate**

Summers in Tuscany are hot and sunny. Our field school takes place between May 28 and June 30, 2021 and the weather should be mild at that stage. It is recommended to have light clothes as well as some sweaters/pullovers as the evenings could be chiller. Hats are required to protect your heads during the fieldwork, as the excavation is exposed to direct sunlight. For the same reason, it is wise to bring sunscreen and to wear long-sleeves shirts on sites to protect your skin. Fresh water will be always present on site, however feel free to bring your own flasks/canteens to stay hydrated during the activities.

### **Local Transportation**

On May 23, we will all meet at the International Airport of Fiumicino (Rome) and we will drive you to the accommodations. We will also drive you back to the airport on June 30. All transportations to and from site, as well as the group excursions, will be provided by vans. If you plan your own excursions during the weekends, remember that it is always safer to travel in groups rather than alone. Bus and trains services to main cities like Rome, Siena, Florence are available from the nearby village of Paganico (these trips costs are not included in the program fee).

### **Food**

During the entire staying at the program, food will be provided by the housing staff. This includes a continental breakfast, packed lunch (cold pasta/rice) and a full dinner. Food costs are all included in the program fee, seven days per week. Meals are generally based on the Mediterranean diet. If you have any specific dietary requirement (vegetarian, vegan, allergies) please let us know in your application.

### **Alcohol**

All participants will be of legal drinking age while in Italy. Every participant must behave responsibly in choices involving alcohol, as the abuse of alcohol endangers not only the individual who partakes, but other participants in the program as well. Alcohol **abuse** is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program, at the discretion of the program directors. **No tolerance** will be shown to aggressive attitudes induced by alcohol consumption. However, wine and beer are certainly staples of the Italian culture, and can be enjoyed in moderation. Remember, students should feel no pressure or obligation whatsoever to participate in the consumption of alcohol.

## **USEFUL WEBSITES**

Tourism: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/italy>

Train Reservation: <http://www.trenitalia.com/tcom-en>

U.S. Embassy in Rome: <https://it.usembassy.gov/>

US Dept. of State, Italy Information: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Italy.html>

Estate website: <http://www.grimaldisavelli.com/tenuta-di-monteverdi-estate/>

Weather: <https://www.accuweather.com/en/it/italy-weather>

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

Once all the participants have committed to the program by making their down payment, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michelle Hobart with any questions or concerns.

The study abroad program will take place from May 28, to June 21<sup>st</sup> 2023 (3 and a half weeks). The location is at the archaeological excavations of a Late Etruscan to Roman sanctuary at Podere Cannicci (Civitella Paganico, Grosseto – Italy) and the medieval deserted village of Castellaraccio. Students and research staff will be accommodated at the Tenuta di Monteverdi (Civitella Paganico, Grosseto – Italy) for the full period of the program.

Working days are Monday to Friday, from 8:00am to 5:00pm.

Weekends are free, although archaeological excursions have been planned to guarantee students and participants a full immersion on the Etruscan, Roman and medieval landscape of Central Italy and South Etruria. The course is a fundamental introduction to Roman and medieval archaeology, art and architectural history in Italy between the 3rd century BCE and 15th century CE.

The course is an on-site, practical introduction to the methods and techniques of archaeological excavation and interpretation. On-site training and seminars led by specialists provide students with a well-rounded overview of the methods of field surveys, recording, analysis of artifacts, environmental studies, archaeological research, interpretation and architectural and engineering reconstructions. For the latter, architects and engineers during the course will learn how to apply noninvasive technologies, such as CAD, GIS and GPS, 3D modeling, virtual and augmented reality on the field while experimenting models for ruin reconstructions. The goal will be that of reconstructing a medieval bridge in 3D after surveying the steep coast of the river and outline a hypothetical village around the hilltop of the medieval castle. The applicants will learn and apply their creative skills to reconstruct what we find.

### **Course Aim**

The course forms part of a Research Project that investigates international exchange networks and settlement patterns in Roman central Italy between the late Etruscan period and the Middle Ages. The focus is aimed to a series of related excavations: a sanctuary with votive offerings, a Roman Republican rural settlement, possibly a village with a related cemetery (necropolis), and a medieval collapsed bridge that led to a now deserted village of the same period.

The course provides students with firm practical experience of stratigraphic archaeology and different methods of recording. This forms the basis for a well-grounded understanding of the techniques of identifying, contextualizing and interpreting archaeological data and how to reconstruct historical events. The course will offer tools to evaluate finds in an historical and



regional context, and hence to develop good overall comprehension of archaeological research approaches and its potential in rethinking the past.

### **Course Content**

The course combines training in field survey, on-site excavation and material culture studies, with seminars and lectures that will include the history of the region, and its socio political impact in the Mediterranean. Visits to neighboring archaeological sites and museums will contextualize the archaeological results and encourage considerations of developmental histories.

Working days are Monday to Friday. Weekends are free but a number of visits to archaeological sites will be organized and offered for free. Thursday evenings before dinner are reserved for lectures by specialists, and for discussions of the progress of the excavation work and how to interpret the results to date.

The primary components of the course are:

- Training in stratigraphic excavation methods. Subjects covered include excavation methods and their application, analysis of built structures and archaeological features, context analysis, building archeology, and introduction to surveying and landscape archaeology.
- Training in archaeological recording and methods applied to structural reconstructions, geophysical surveying, hypothetical renderings of landscapes, reconstruction of a medieval infrastructures sketching objects, and 3D augmented reality applied to findings and records and to the GIS.
- Consideration of other archaeological parks, cities and museums will be decided upon arrival of students. The course is complemented by visits to places that provide context to the historical understanding of the excavations and the wider scope of the project within the region.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Students will gain in-depth knowledge of architectural, engineering and approaches, a firm introduction to the interdisciplinary aspect of the field, and a good appreciation of archaeological research methods and its potential in reconstructing a site.

- Students will gain familiarity with the terminology and methodologies of archaeological excavation, field surveys and building archaeology, data recording and illustration.
- They will develop a critical appreciation of the scope of archaeological interpretation, and an understanding of its inherently interdisciplinary approaches.
- They will attain a contextual understanding of the excavations through the exposure to material culture and it's local surroundings.
- Student will acquire an awareness of developmental histories of other sites in the region.

### **ASSESSMENT METHODS**

Journal or Project	30%
Oral presentation	30%
Practical work on site	40%

### **Journal**

The journal is a daily written record detailing and analyzing the work carried out and evaluating the skills acquired. If applicable, it will be published daily or weekly on the project website and project Facebook page.

### **Presentations** (each is worth 15%)

Two 10-minute presentations on the archaeological features and characteristics of the area or trench in which the student has worked.

### **Practical work**

The evaluation of individual work performance will consider the student's participation in the excavations over the entire period of the course.

### **Grading and Conduct**

Students will receive a grade letter for the course. Conduct will affect the overall grade, hopefully in a positive way. While abroad, CU students are ambassadors to our institution and our country, and are held to high standards and to all university regulations.

## **ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE INFORMATION**

Students are responsible for making their own international travel arrangements to Rome. Certain airlines have now low cost options to fly cheap from Newark to Rome and this could be something you may think about (kayak.com and many other similar sites)

Early arrivals/late departures cannot be accommodated. Students are expected to arrive in the morning of Sunday, May 28 which means leaving the day before and taking an overnight flight departing from the USA on Saturday May 27, 2023. All students will leave the accommodations in the morning of Wednesday, June 21, 2023.

Students will be driven to the accommodations on rented vans and will be accompanied to the airport on June 21, 2023 in the morning.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

The properties you will be staying in are traditional comfortable houses, recently renovated, with a spectacular views of the Tuscan countryside. The bedrooms are large full of light. All the apartments have Wi-Fi, a TV a fully equipped kitchen, laundry, private bathrooms and a furnished living room. Housing costs are included in the program fee. The nearest village is Paganico (5 mins drive), which has ATMs, supermarkets, cafes, laundry and other facilities. The nearest two cities are Grosseto and Siena, while the nearest beaches are about half an hour away. Public transports from Paganico can provide you a day trip to Rome, Siena, Grosseto or Florence quite easily

## **PASSPORTS AND VISAS**

Program participants must have a valid passport and are responsible for checking the **expiration date to ensure that it is no less than six months after the end of the program or last day of personal travel.**

US citizens will NOT be required to apply for a visa to participate in this program. The Office of Study Abroad Programs will provide instructions for students from other countries if they are required to apply for a visa in order to travel to France and participate in this program.

## **KEEP YOUR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS AND ITEMS SAFE**

Carry all important documents such as money, credit cards, passport, and plane tickets with you in your carry-on bag. One of the best ways to keep these items safe from harm is to purchase a holder that you wear under your clothes. These are available from most luggage stores, and AAA. etc..

Make two photocopies of your passport and leave one at home with someone you can easily contact should you lose your passport. In the unfortunate event you were to lose your passport and/or bank/credit cards, hide the other copy in your luggage, separate from your passport. In addition, scan and/or copy all key documents. Leave a copy at home with someone and upload a pdf so that you can easily retrieve the information and contact the appropriate companies.

## **LIVING SAFELY IN ITALY**

Italy is a safe country. Crime is low, and most tourists will never be bothered by safety concerns other than the possibility of petty crime. Pickpockets may sometimes be an issue near crowded places like the country's most famous touristic landmarks, so you will want to be extra cautious in such situations. Do not have your phone in your hand and keep it along with your money/bank/credit cards securely stored in a neck wallet or money belt underneath your clothing for optimal security.

Avoid areas of demonstrations and be careful within the vicinity of demonstrations. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate to violence. Stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of your surroundings. Avoid showing signs of affluence and carrying large sums of cash.

You are strongly encouraged to sign up for the U.S. Department of State [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive up-to-date safety and security information and help them reach you in case of an emergency abroad, whether natural disaster, civil unrest or a family emergency. This will also help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency.

## **ADVICE ON MONEY, PHONE, ETC.**

### **Money**

Meals, accommodations, group excursions and transportations once in Italy are all included in your program fee. However, you may want to buy extra food (good artisanal gelatos are sold in Paganico), souvenirs, soft drinks or organize your own weekend excursions in Tuscany or Rome. For all these reasons, it is good to have some cash money with you. In Paganico there are ATMs (although you may want to check with your bank for foreign fees applied to transactions!) and in certain places (supermarkets for instance) you may use your debit/credit card. Double check that your PIN number will work abroad! Not all ATM cards automatically do: some need activation. There also may be problems if your debit card is linked to a savings account vs. a checking account. Make sure you contact your bank before departure to set a "travel alert" and to check on how to

use your debit card/ATM in Italy and what it will cost.

Do not carry large amounts of US currency, but have some as a back-up that you can exchange in a pinch, in case of difficulties with your credit or debit card. To summarize: Use cash whenever possible (using an ATM card to withdraw cash as necessary) and keep very close track of debit and credit card usage and fees.

### **Electrical Equipment**

The European standard is 220V compared to 110V in the US, and the electrical plug shape in Italy is different from that in the US. Therefore, there are two distinct possible problems: (1) US cords cannot be plugged into the wall outlet without a plug adaptor, and (2) even with a plug adaptor, some appliances cannot be used without a voltage converter.

Electronic devices like laptops and smartphones have a built-in voltage converter. Look for information printed directly on the plug itself, or, check your owner's manual. Typically, such devices will accept 100-240 volts and 50-60 cycles; this will usually be printed somewhere on the cord. These will work fine in Italy, but you will need a plug adaptor to make the plug fit into the wall. Plug adaptors are usually cheap, weigh almost nothing, and are about the size of a plug itself.

Electric devices like hairdryers do NOT have built-in voltage converters. These will require a separate voltage converter, which is more expensive than a plug adaptor, so you may want to consider living without such items while in Italy OR buying a cheap one upon arrival. If you do decide to bring a voltage converter to be able to use your electric device, be sure to match the maximum power output (Watts) of the convertor to your device. A hairdryer may take 1500 or more Watts, so you must use a voltage converter with that much capacity or it won't work.

Plug adapters and voltage converters are available at AAA, Best Buy, Target, Amazon and Wal-Mart.

### **Phones**

Check with your cell/mobile phone carrier to find out your international coverage, package while in Italy. If you are able to unlock your phone, you will be able to remove its SIM card and replace it with a SIM card purchased in Italy to localize your phone. Please be sure to purchase a temporary SIM card that comes with a certain number of minutes/data and not a monthly plan. You should also make sure to put your US SIM card in a safe place to put it back into your phone once you leave Italy. WhatsApp and Facetime are also convenient ways to check in with home. Italy's country code is +39, so your family and friends will need to dial 011 39 before dialing an Italian phone number. Dialing 011 will be required to dial outside of the US.

### **Time**

Italy is 6 hours ahead of New York.

12:30 PM in New York = 6:30 PM in Italy

### **Water**

Tap water in Italy is clean and safe to drink. Save money by using a refillable water bottle, instead of purchasing water or other drinks.



## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

### Cooper Union Study Abroad Program Director:

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Tel. +1 9179401293 or (Italy) +39 333 691 4309 (WhatsApp)

### Embassy:

United States Embassy Rome  
via Vittorio Veneto 121  
00187 Rome, Italy  
Tel. (+39) 06 46741 (switchboard)  
<https://it.usembassy.gov/>

### Police/Fire/Ambulance emergencies in Italy:

Police ( <i>Carabinieri</i> )	Tel. 112
General Emergency ( <i>Soccorso pubblico di emergenza</i> )	Tel. 113
Fire brigade ( <i>Incendio boschivo</i> )	Tel. 115
Ambulance/Medical Emergency ( <i>Emergenza sanitaria</i> )	Tel. 118