

Emily Crowell – UF in Rome

Majors: Biology & Business Administration

I studied abroad because...

I always had a fascination with other cultures, and being able to live and make a home in another culture for four months was a dream that I couldn't pass up!

One of my biggest challenges before studying abroad:

I loved my life in Gainesville, and the thought of missing out on irreplaceable memories was something I struggled with, but in the grand scheme of things, I knew it was only 1/8 of my time in college and that I would just be making a different sort of memory!

A typical meal I had while studying abroad:

Bruschetta with *Amatriciana* (my favorite Roman pasta!!)

My favorite spot in my host city:

The Villa Borghese was my go-to spot in Rome. It is a giant park with rolling hills, shady trees, quiet paths, and just a break from the buzz of the city. I would go on runs throughout the park and see Italian families and friends just spending quality time together. It was one of the most authentic places I would go, while also being incredibly rejuvenating!

One cool event I got to experience while abroad:

Easter took place at the end of our spring break, and my roommate and I got to take part in a good Friday mass with a large group of locals and our host university's priest. Easter has always been a meaningful holiday for me as a Christian, so to take part in celebrating it with Italians made it feel like home, and it was so cool to see how such a holiday was celebrated differently abroad. And on Easter itself, at one point we were five feet away from the Pope as he led the Easter service!

The most memorable experience for me while abroad:

I got asked out by a barista at a local coffee shop through coffee art; he wrote his phone number in my cappuccino's foam!

A habit I picked up while abroad:

I picked up the habit of getting a cappuccino from a coffee bar every day, which was very sustainable in Rome where cappuccinos are €1.20, but not so much so back home where a cappuccino can be \$4!!!

What I found most challenging while abroad:

Loneliness definitely crept in mid-way into the program when I was missing my friends, family, and soft serve ice cream! But amidst loneliness, I just had to make myself go out and explore, and remember why I loved Rome. Falling back in love with Rome wasn't hard when looking at the golden lights of the Vatican reflect off the Tiber at night, or when enjoying a perfect cappuccino at my favorite coffee shop!

What surprised me most about study abroad was...

I didn't expect Rome to feel as much like home as it did! Walking its narrow streets, discovering new art in churches, and going for runs or picnics in the park quickly made Rome a place that still feels like home to me!

My last bit of advice:

Almost nothing in life is all good or all bad; it would be unrealistic to think that you will never have a low moment when abroad. But it's what you do with those moments that matters the most; push through and remember the beauty and uniqueness of your situation - you're abroad! You have such freedom and richness soak up - so go live in it!