

EXCURSIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Learning about yourself and the world around you happens both in and outside the classroom. Read below for an overview of the excursions and activities offered during your Verto study abroad experience in Florence!

Excursions

The following is a list of excursions that Verto organizes, included as part of your abroad experience fee. You will go on excursions with your Care Team Leader as well as students of different Care Teams, giving you the opportunity to get closer to the Verto community while also seeing a new place!

Day Trip 1: Rome, September and October

A second day trip will lead you to Rome, the capital of Italy. The Eternal City's recognizable landmarks are a must see for anyone visiting Italy. After arriving by train, we'll walk to the largest amphitheater in the world, the Roman Colosseum, where a guided tour will facilitate a discussion of its history and construction along with the adjacent Roman Forum. You'll then have some free time to further explore some of Rome's best known sites, or wander through the streets of Centro Storico and enjoy a gelato in front of the Pantheon.

Day Trip 2: Tuscan Countryside, October and November

Experience the Tuscan countryside outside of Florence with visits to the surrounding towns. Meander the streets while popping in for visits to the little artisan shops and cafes. You will be guided through a food tasting experience while learning the techniques and special traditions that make this area so well known around the world.

Overnight Trip: Verona and Lake Garda, September and October

Vertoans will spend two days traveling to Verona and Lake Garda. Verona is a UNESCO world heritage city and the home of Romeo and Juliet. It is also a place of history, culture, music, architecture, and high society. Through a guided tour of the city center, you'll discover a jewel of the European Renaissance such as the Piazza Erbe while marveling at one of the world's finest Roman theaters still in use. After some free time to explore we will end the day with a group dinner at a local restaurant.

The following day we will travel to the charming town of Sirmione on the shores of Lake Garda. Take in the crystal-clear waters of the lake during a group cruise around the old town and the peninsula. You'll then have some free time to stroll the picturesque streets of the old town, visit the castle or go all the way to the end of the peninsula to the Grotte di Catullo, and have lunch at one of the many local restaurants.

Experiential Learning

Every course includes experiential learning as part of its delivery. This may include visits outside of the classroom, guest speakers, or hands-on class activities.

Here are a few examples of experiential learning activities that were offered in the past. Please note: The specific activities and courses described here are examples and may or may not be offered during term.

Artist River Walk with Scavenger Hunt, Drawing I

Bring your pencils and sketchbook along for an instructor-guided exploration of the Florentine riverside. You'll stop in designated areas to sketch your favorite images and map your route, which will later be shared with the rest of the class.

Florentine Renaissance Walk & Visit to Foundling Hospital, Inventing Our Modern World

Take the streets of Renaissance Florence to visit the sites that marked the development of the Foundling Hospital, or the *Spedale degli Innocenti*, one of the first public health and social welfare systems in the world.

Visit to the Galileo Museum, Art and Science In Renaissance Italy

Become intimately familiar with the life and works of Galileo Galilei, one of the most fascinating historical figures of all time, who risked his life for the advancement of knowledge and science.

Activities

During the week, Verto staff will organize activities for you to get to know one another, develop skills, and have fun. Students (aka YOU!) will also play a role in organizing activities. Here are highlight activities that we are excited to offer:

Student Clubs: You are encouraged to share your passions and interests with fellow Vertoans and create student-led clubs! During Discovery Week your Florence staff will share about how to plan and manage a club and what kind of support is available to help you.

Weekly Activities: The following are just some of the cultural events organized by Verto. You'll receive more information once onsite.

Pasta Making Class: Why do Italians love pasta sooooo much....? Learn how to make authentic, fresh Italian pasta (with or without eggs!) in different shapes and sizes during this hands-on pasta making class. You will discover the best fillings and sauces for your pasta dishes, and learn the secrets of making colored pasta.

Climb the main Florence Cathedral: Enjoy the beautiful view of Florence from above, a unique experience and a must-do while you're in Florence!

Opera Night: Don't miss the opportunity to experience a night at the Opera, enhancing your cultural journey with the exquisite blend of music and artistry.

Yoga Class and Hike: Experience a taste of the Florentine hillside as we walk past the city's historical walls, lined with Mediterranean olive and cypress trees, towards a small oasis of calm. After a scenic and informative walk, we will relax and recharge with a yoga practice under the trees. This activity focuses on living the present moment and discovering something new about Florence, and about yourself.

Community Engagement: In addition to the weekly activities, you also have the opportunity to volunteer around the city. Volunteering while in Florence allows you to develop your personal and professional skills, engage with local communities, and make a difference.

Independent Travel

If you wish to travel away from your Verto location on weekends, **you MUST fill out the Independent Travel Log** so we know where you're going. Don't worry, we're not going to track you! We just need to account for everyone in case of an emergency.

Check out Verto's social media to learn where students have traveled in previous years!

More resources

- [A Day in Lucca, Italy](#)