

VISITING YOUR STUDENT IN FLORENCE

To help you gain insight into your student's transformative experience abroad with Verto, Verto staff host a **Mid-Semester Family Circle**. This event includes helpful sessions on subjects like academic & career success, affording college, and finding purpose. We believe that participating in the **Mid-Semester Family Circle** is the best way for families to connect with their student's experience while **encouraging them to focus on their coursework, academic success**, and building their abroad community.

If you plan on visiting, **please adhere to the following guidelines.**

Dropping Off Your Student

For family members who choose to drop-off their student in Florence, we welcome you! Please do keep in mind that this is **not required**, and students who travel independently will be received in great hands by Verto staff.

Please note that family members can only drop their student **outside** of their housing address. Only students are allowed inside of our housing, per our Housing Provider and Verto policies, and for the wellbeing of all students.

If You Plan to Visit Your Student While Abroad

Families are welcome to visit students, though we strongly recommend visiting **at the end** of the Verto abroad experience, rather than during. Students will be quite busy with their coursework and experiential learning activities, so visitors may not be able to spend as much time with their Vertoan as they may have hoped. Additionally, participants whose families visited in the past have experienced more intense homesickness or fallen behind in their coursework as a result of the visit.

Academic and attendance policies remain in place regardless of visitors. Participants are strongly discouraged from missing classes to host family, friends, and other visitors. Should a participant plan to miss class, they should speak with their instructors and Care Team Leader in advance to understand the consequences for doing so.

Please note, additional program activities have a required attendance, such as excursions. Families visiting should plan not to overlap their stay with these events as well.

Tips for Your Visit to Florence

Verto Participant Schedule

If you choose to visit during the abroad experience, you'll want to keep in mind your student's class and activity schedule. Classes typically take place between 9:00 am and 6:30 pm, though students may have free time in between classes. Every week, there are activities that may be optional or required as part of your student's coursework.

During Verto Discovery Week (the first week on-site), all participants will receive a semester calendar with their activity schedule. **We are not able to invite families to participate in student activities.** We encourage you to check with your student about their schedule before planning your visit. Please note, excursions' activities dates will be shared closer to the students arrival date in Florence, but they are required events.

Lodging in Florence

The Verto Florence Study Center and students' housing are both located within the historical city center. The following accommodations are near the Florence Study Center:

- Hotel Adler Cavalieri; Via della Scala, 40, 50123 Firenze FI
- Hotel Kraft; Via Solferino, 2, 50123 Firenze FI
- Hotel Ariele; Via Magenta, 11, 50123 Firenze FI
- Hotel Unicorno; Via dei Fossi, 27, 50123 Firenze FI

For longer stays, Airbnb can be a good option. Please also check booking.com for any last minute offers.

NOTE: All students will receive their housing address closer to the start date of their abroad experience along with details and arrival day logistics.

Getting Around the City

The best and easiest way to navigate Florence is by foot. In fact, you can walk from one end of the city center to the other in about 30 minutes.

Transportation Upon Arrival

From Florence Amerigo Vespucci Airport (also known as Peretola), the city center can be reached in about 15 minutes by taxi, or 20 minutes by TRAM.

- **Taxis** are stationed in front of the terminal. Take a right after exiting the arrival building. At the time of writing this document, taxis have a fixed set fee of €30-35, depending on the time of day (plus €1 supplement per suitcase) from the airport to the center.

- **TRAM:** This is the cheapest way to reach the center of Florence and takes about 15 minutes. It is only €1,70 each way, though if you have big suitcases, you need to buy a ticket for them too, max. 2 per person allowed. As you leave the airport, head out of the front door, and turn left. Follow signs that indicate the T2 tramway stop. When you get on the tram, you **MUST** validate your ticket by putting it in the small yellow machines near the doors to get a date/time stamp and avoid a fine. The Florence city center stop is the last one (Unità). Depending on your hotel location and/or how heavy your suitcases are, you might need to take a taxi from the TRAM stop. The taxi stand is located just outside the central train station a few minutes walking distance from the TRAM stop.

From Bologna Airport, you can take the Marconi Express to the Bologna central train station, and then a train to Florence. After baggage claim, follow the directions to Marconi Express. Purchase your ticket at the vending machine for Bologna Centrale train station, the last stop. Once at the Bologna Centrale Station, buy your ticket for Florence S.M.N. at the ticket office or the vending machine.

From the Milan Airport, you can take the train to Milano Centrale station (the last stop), and then a train to Florence. After baggage claim, follow the signs overhead indicating "Treni/Trains." Tickets can be purchased either at the kiosk during regular hours or from automated machines (which only accept chip and PIN cards or cash). Be sure to validate your ticket before you walk down onto the platform, as there are no validation machines on the platform or on the trains. You can buy a train ticket to Florence S.M.N. which includes the ride from the airport to Milano Centrale Station, or wait until you get to the Milano Centrale station to buy the Milan-Florence leg of the trip.

From the Rome Airport, take the Leonardo Express to the main Termini train station in Rome, and then a train to Florence. The Leonardo Express leaves the airport every half-hour, or every 15 minutes during peak hours, starting at 6:38 am., and ending at 11:38 pm. After claiming your luggage, follow the signs for the train area. Before you enter the train track area, purchase your ticket from an automated vending machine, the ticket counter, or the newspaper stand (the easiest and fastest way). Payments can be made in Euros or via credit card. Once you arrive at Roma Termini Central train station you will be able to get a train to Florence S.M.N., which leaves every 30 minutes. For the fastest route, select the high-speed trains: "Frecciarossa" or "Frecciargento."

Our team looks forward to meeting you in-person or virtually soon!