

**Grand Valley State University  
College of Community & Public Service  
Hospitality & Tourism Management Department**

HTM 175 International Food and Culture—Italy

Spring/Summer 2011—Study Abroad Section

Syllabus

**“Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.”**

Albert Einstein

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Welcome to the food and culture of Italy! This course is an exploration of Italian culture through an examination of its foodways—foods and food traditions. Our laboratory will consist of the country itself. As part of this course, we will live in an Italian community. We will travel together, shop together, cook together and enjoy many great meals representative of this great cuisine and its place in Italian culture. However, there is far more to achieving understanding than mere experience. Therefore, throughout the program you will be engaged in analysis of and critical reflection on your encounters with a culture that is different from yours.

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General Education: World Perspectives Requirement

The study of culture prompts students to recognize themselves as cultural beings and to understand the diverse ways in which people organize life and perceive the world. Courses that receive the Cultural Emphasis Designation analyze the sources, causes, implications, and ways of understanding diversity both in the United States and around the globe. They focus on the values, perceptions, history, creative expression, and social life of various cultures and sub-cultures in the United States and in other countries and world regions. Such study enhances one's ability to live and work intelligently, responsibly, and cooperatively. Courses with a Cultural Emphasis designation can appear anywhere in the curriculum, and, where appropriate, may double count.

### **Students with Special Needs:**

Any student with special needs related to a physical or learning challenge is encouraged to discuss the matter with the course instructor. Additional assistance is available in the Office of Academic Support (OAS) 331-2490.

### **Learning Materials:**

A variety of learning resources are online in Blackboard.

### **Learning Goals:**

The following are goals for the learning activities in which we will be engaged.

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the region of Piedmont in northern Italy that includes important historical, geographical and cultural factors and values that contribute to the region's identity
2. Describe the fundamental elements of the cuisine of the region of Piedmont
  - a. List foods and ingredients you would expect to find in a Piedmontese diet
  - b. Describe different preparation methods used by cooks in Piedmont
  - c. Describe both the menu and style of service of a typical restaurant in northern Italy
3. Compare the traditional foods of Piedmont with Italian foods popularized by American culture
  - a. Create a simple meal that includes dishes typical of Piedmont
4. Discuss the importance of various food industries including wine production to the region of Piedmont
  - a. Describe the major types of red and white wine produced in Piedmont
  - b. List different foods produced in Piedmont
5. Demonstrate familiarity with a minimal number of Italian words and phrases

### **Structure of the Course:**

While some learning activities will be scheduled prior to departure to Italy, most learning will occur throughout our trip. Together, we will engage in a variety of interesting and challenging experiences as we adapt to the culture of Italy. Some of these will involve the exploration of every day Italian life. We will, for example, explore a number of food markets where we will purchase, prepare and eat a variety of foods. We will also conduct field trips to places where foods such as cheeses and olive oil are produced. We will visit bakeries and wineries. We will attend festivals and take at least one trip to visit cultural destinations such as museums.

\*Note that the pre-departure schedule for HTM 175 does not include activities for HTM 202. While certain learning activities may include team exercises and other activities that bridge both courses, important pre-departure information is also provided in the HTM 202 syllabus.

### In-Country Activities:

- Participate actively in cooking lessons
- Complete a “digital scrapbook about your experiences with Italian foodways
- Visit at least one typical Italian city market, purchase food and help prepare meals with assistance of Program Directors, as needed
- Shop at typical Italian grocery stores and food specialty shops
- Visit wineries—learn about local wines and wine production, as well as about the families and communities associated with these wineries
- Engage in different forms of physical activities such as guided hikes
- Learn about Italian chocolate, salamis, cheeses, wines, olive oil, rice and other products
  - Attend seminars on foods produced in the region
  - Identify regional food specialties such as Ribiola d’ Alba
- Visit different museums, castles and other aspects of Italian culture
- Eat in different types of Italian foodservice operations
- Participate in and contribute to regular community meetings
- Discuss experiences at community meetings

### Itinerary:

Please refer to the proposed itinerary, a separate document.

### Assignments:

#### 1. Pre-departure reflective essay

Before you depart for Italy, you must have some expectations for what you will expect to learn about the foods of Italy. Please refer to the Assignment Guidelines for additional information.

#### 2. Post-program reflective essay

After you return from Italy, you will reflect on what you learned vs. what you had anticipated you would learn. Please refer to the Assignment Guidelines for additional information.

#### Assessment of reflective essays

Please refer to the Assignment Guidelines for additional information. This material is located within the assignment guidelines for each essay.

#### 3. Digital Scrapbook

This assignment provides you with an opportunity to encounter foods and food traditions of Italy.

4. In-country experiential activities

You and other participants in your apartment will be assigned to participate in a number of structured learning activities. Please refer to guidelines for these activities.

5. Quizzes related to assigned readings will be conducted in Italy.

Please refer to the Assignment Guidelines for additional information.

**Assessment:**

Quizzes (2 @ 5% each)	10%*
Pre-departure reflective essay	10%*
Post-program reflective essay	10%
Structured small group activities	20%
Participation	30%
Digital scrapbook	20%

\*Knowledge acquired through reading and participation in culinary instructions, experiential activities and lectures and discussions is important. As a result, it will form the basis for items on quizzes.

Grade scale:

A	93 – 100%	C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 92%	C-	70 – 73%
B+	86 – 90%	D+	67 – 69%
B	82 – 85%	D	65 – 66 %
B-	80 – 81%	F	Below 65%
C+	77 – 79%		