



Summer Study Abroad Programs 2020

Prepared for: FCCIQ

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INTRODUCTION

About Us

Centre de la culture italienne 3E, founded in Florence, Italy as Triple E Travel in 2016, is a small Italian cultural centre that moved its flagship operations to Montreal in September 2018 and has been servicing the Italian-Canadian and Italian-loving community across the island since then. We offer Italian language and culture classes to children and adults. We also host a series of Italian-language low-cost or free community events every month. Our classes have been offered in selected participating elementary schools in Montreal, and our online platforms and virtual classrooms have made studying Italian from the comfort of home possible for students in Canada, the US, and Europe. We are a family business: a husband and wife team. Our Founder and Academic Director holds a Ph.D. in Italian language and literature from Johns Hopkins University and has traveled extensively throughout Italy in addition to living and working there, in Florence, from 2013 - 2018. She has over ten years' experience teaching foreign languages at all levels and to a wide range of international students. Our Director of Operations is a customer service and public relations specialist from Orbetello, whose work experiences range from the food and restoration industry to atmospheric and quality control for major oil and gas conglomerates. Together, they decided to bring their passion for Italy and contemporary as well as classic Italian culture to Canadians. 3E is committed to providing Montrealers specifically with the very best in Italian language-acquisition or improvement academic programming, online learning tools, and experiential learning through guided summer study abroad programs the effects of which expand beyond the traditional classroom.

Our mission

Our mission is built into our name: Education, Experience, Exchange. We promote a holistic approach to learning informed as much by traditional classroom practices as by lived experiences and international exchange. In other words, enrolling in a course with 3E means completing regular coursework. But it also means learning through contemporary film and song, interacting regularly with native-level speakers — both in the classroom and during class field trips and participation in planned events — and engaging with contemporary Italian culture in a variety of ways, from following recommended television programs to reading and interpreting the news. Our classroom responds to the needs of a variety of learners and aims to solidify their strengths by supporting their interests.

Next steps

Though Montreal boasts a large Italian community with a variety of services available to it, few of its younger members have had the opportunity to travel to Italy outside the traditional structure of a family vacation or standard tour, or to engage more deeply with contemporary Italian culture. 3E would like to fill this lacuna by offering month-long summer study abroad language programs in Florence and Monte Argentario to students of Italian heritage or studying Italian aged 18 to 23 and enrolled in a CEGEP or undergraduate university program in Quebec. Our programs, offered from May to August, aim not only to have students improve their basic Italian communication, but also to invite them to experience Italian culture directly at the source, allowing them both to appreciate the history of their ancestor's native land, and to separate fact from fiction, frequently-touted stereotype from truth.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objective

We would like to propose a collaboration with the FCCIQ that would allow us both to market our summer study abroad programs more efficiently to our targeted audience, and — more importantly — to offset the costs of enrolment for participating students.

Goals

Our goal is to offer travel bursaries to ten students of Italian heritage or studying Italian at the CEGEP or university level for the 2020 summer session. An FCCIQ endowment of \$50,000 would at least partially subsidize living costs in Italy over the month-long programs, as well as language course costs, weekend excursions, and extracurricular activities. We also propose using an additional \$10,000 grant or loan to hire staff, prepare and distribute promotional materials to interested students, host information sessions, and fund an elementary online language course, which selected students could follow from home to prepare for their stay in Italy.

Selection Criteria

All interested students will be invited to apply to our programs by completing an online application form supported by an in-person interview, presided by 3E in collaboration with the FCCIQ. As a core principle, 3E does not view formal grades as reliable indicators of a student's interest level, willingness to engage, or overall seriousness. More weight will be attributed to each individual student's demonstrated adaptability to new settings, emotional maturity, and, where applicable connection to his or her cultural heritage.

Project Outline

Our Summer Study Abroad Program Project can be broken down into three phases:

Phase 1: Call for applications (September - December 2019)

In this phase, information and promotional material will be distributed to high schools, CEGEPs, universities, and individual community businesses or places of gathering to encourage interested students to apply for our programs. One information session will be held at the end of October and another at the beginning of December to respond to student queries and disseminate additional promotional materials.

Phase 2: Selection (January - March 2020)

Once a pool of applicants has been identified, the selection committee can proceed with the assessment of all applications. They will be evaluated based on content rather than form or precision. Up to twenty candidates will then be selected to participate in an in-person interview, following which, the ten bursary recipients will be chosen and appropriately advised. 3E will be happy to coordinate fund-raising opportunities with the remaining candidates to further encourage their exposure to international exchange.

Phase 3: Planning (March - May 2020)

In this phase, 3E assumes all responsibility for making relevant arrangements for program participants. Accommodations will be booked from a short-list of trusted providers, meal plans will be arranged, weekend excursions, extracurricular activities, travel to and within Italy, classroom space and course materials will all be accounted for during this phase independent of the FCCIQ.

PROJECT DETAILS

Summer Study Abroad programs - Florence and Monte Argentario

Where do our programs take place?

3E offers two summer study abroad programs. One in Florence, and the other in Monte Argentario: a beach location made up of three municipalities in the province of Grosseto halfway between Florence and Rome. The Florence program is recommended for university students with a greater appetite for art and art history, literature, music, fashion, and international relations. Our Monte Argentario program is recommended for students interested in living a closer Italian reality among avid advocates of health and wellness, physical fitness, environmental sustainability, and responsible tourism.

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Who is traveling?

- A maximum of 15 students per group, 18 - 23 years old supervised by 1 program director plus 1 staff member for every eight students present.

What do our programs include?

- 3 hours of daily language classes, broken down into two components: Fundamentals of Communication (classroom learning) and Communication in Practice (where lessons learned in the classroom get real-life applications). Language classes will take place M-F from 9:30am - 12:30pm
- Accommodations. In the case of Monte Argentario, students will be staying in a farmhouse (agriturismo) or private beach house attended to by both the property managers and the 3E staff. In the case of Florence, they will be staying in an international student residence shared by other international travellers and supervised by 3E staff.
- Meals. 2 per day. Breakfast will be provided on-premises by the managers of the students' accommodations. Dinner will be served at a local restaurant, by a selected service provider, or at a "sagra" (popular feast)
- Extracurricular activities. Students will sign up for one of three afternoon activities per day, which will take place between 2:30pm and 5:30pm. They will always be offered one active option (sport or physical fitness), one cultural option (museum or guided tour), and one leisurely option (shopping or casual touring). All extracurricular activities will be supervised by 3E staff. Students may also occasionally be given the opportunity to participate in more formal extracurricular events (a performance of a play or a night at the opera).
- Weekend field trips (optional). 1 final weekend field trip to Rome is included in both programs. For the remaining weekends, students may purchase ahead of time or opt-into weekend field trips for an additional \$750.00. These weekend excursions will differ depending on the selected travel month, group size, and student interest. Students uninterested in participating or unable to do so will be supervised at the home-base location by a 3E staff member.
- Travel to and within Italy. Airfare is included in the price of the comprehensive package. Students joining the group from another location in Italy may choose to be exempted of this fee and make their way to the program location independently with parental approval (if necessary).
- Free time. All students will have free time from 12:30 - 2:30pm, 5:30 - 8:30pm, and supervised free time after dinner during which they may explore their own interests within a set perimeter or, with parental consent, beyond it.

When are our programs offered?

Our goal is to offer the following programs for 2020:

Florence Program

May 1 - May 31 2020

June 5 - July 5 2020

July 10 - August 9 2020

Monte Argentario Program

June 19 - July 19 2020

July 24 - August 23 2020

Should all sections completely fill up, this would mean a total of 75 students for summer 2020.

How much do our programs cost?

In the past, we have proposed packages at different costs to respond to the needs of students with different price points. For the summer of 2020, and in the interest of creating the greatest amount of group cohesion, with the help of the FCCIQ, we would like to propose our “all-inclusive” option, which includes all of the elements listed above, for \$8,950.00 per student (plus the optional \$750.00 for weekend excursions).

Why 3E?

The journey that brought me where I am today started with a program like the one proposed here. I spent June 2005 studying in Florence, and found a way to get back to Italy almost every summer thereafter, until I decided to move there in 2013. 3E's fundamental mission is to facilitate that same opportunity for anyone as moved by Italian language and culture as we are.

Our understanding not only of Italian culture, but of the differences between it and Canadian as well as Italian-Canadian culture is fresh, accurate, current, and informed by years spent straddling the divide between these two worlds and trying to reconcile them. During my travels, and especially in a number of my work experiences with young students, I came into contact with a lot of frustration regarding exchange programs in Italy. From them, I learned to understand the sources of this frustration well: a fundamental difference in pedagogical approaches, a different daily rhythm and bureaucratic pace, a more relaxed, if more competitive lifestyle. The feedback I received from students on or coming back from organized trips to Italy ranged from dissatisfaction with the courses taught at the European partner institutions selected because unfamiliar with North American teaching methods, alienation the result of too great a cultural gap too poorly explained, or an only superficial engagement with Italian culture the result of sticking to a largely touristic itinerary. These are precisely the problems 3E's programs wish to remedy in order to provide students with the best possible summer study abroad experience in Italy.

3E's programs cut out the middle-man — European language schools — to offer students, instead, an academic program led by an instructor and researcher trained in North America but heavily informed by the best practices

and best didactic materials used in Europe today. It offers students the opportunity to engage with real Italian culture while guided by a staff who can explain social dynamics and guide social interactions between Italians and Canadians when necessary. Our aim is to accompany students on their journey, neither by coercing them into protective isolation, as many of our competitors do, perhaps unwittingly, nor by forcing them to fend entirely for themselves as is often the case with independent travel. We believe that our bipartite identity, both Canadian and Italian, puts us in a unique position better to serve the young members of our community.

Italian partners

3E has begun discussing partnerships with various suppliers in Italy directly. Among them are the following:

Monte Argentario:

- OrbitLingua: language school with an international exchange chapter
- I camminatori liberi: organized nature tours in the Monte Argentario arcipelago
- Parco nazionale arcipelago toscano: organized nature tours in the Monte Argentario arcipelago
- Gelateria da Pia: food and beverage provider in Orbetello
- Il fornetto: food and beverage provider in Orbetello
- Cacioteca: artisanal food provider and ecotourism expert in Saturnia
- Girobike: bike rentals in Orbetello
- Agriturismo il Girasole (ecotourism)
- Le poste di Terranova (ecotourism)
- Agriturismo El Molino (ecotourism)
- Agriturismo La Parrina (ecotourism)
- private partners and sponsors

Florence

- Simply English: language school in Florence specializing in summer programming
- Florence by bike: bike rentals in Florence
- The Diner: food and beverage supplier in Florence
- Il Teatro: food and beverage supplier in Florence
- Osteria Il gatto e la volpe: food and beverage supplier in Florence
- Gelateria de' Medici: food and beverage supplier in Florence
- POPartment: accommodations
- Residenza Riscasoli: accommodations
- Albergo Firenze: accommodations
- Florence Prestige Real Estate: accommodations
- private partners and sponsors

Montreal Timeline

2019

August 27 - October 27:

- distribution/ dissemination of promotional materials to CEGEPs and universities in Montreal
- events and mixers hosted at and around CEGEPs and universities in Montreal to raise awareness of our trips and brand
- call for applications

Last week of October/ First week of November:

Information sessions hosted at Montreal universities, CEGEPs, at our cultural centre in Ahuntsic-Cartierville, and at selected venues in the Italian-Canadian community (Centre Leonardo Da Vinci, Italian Chamber of Commerce, etc.)

Second week of December

- second information session
- final call for applications: December 23, 2019

2020

January 7 - January 31

- selection of applicants called to interview

February 1 - February 28

- interviews of selected candidates
- selection of ten bursary recipients

March 1 - March 31

- visit with service providers in Italy
- booking for flights, accommodations, and private travel for May and June programs
- online course for program participants launched
- deadline for July and August programs extended to March 31st if necessary

April 1 - April 30

- review of final applications for July and August programs
- booking for flights, accommodations and private travel for July and August programs
- final information session for students participating in the May program

mid-May

- final information session for students participating in the June programs

mid-June

- final information session for students participating in the July programs

BUDGET

Sample budget for one month-long program

Fixed costs will be distributed equally among program participants. Costs per student are indicated in separate categories below. All amounts are estimates.

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Fixed costs			\$ 0
Language course (in hours)	60	\$ 40	\$ 2,400
Staff	2	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,000
Accommodations for staff (per night)	29	\$ 150	\$ 4,350
Airfare for staff	3	\$ 1,000	\$ 3,000
Chartered bus	1	\$ 900	\$ 900
Costs per student			
Accommodations (per night)	29	\$ 75	\$ 2,175
Meals (per day)	29	\$ 35	\$ 1,015
Extracurricular activities (per day)	29	\$ 25	\$ 725
Transportation			
- Airfare (one-time fee)		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
- Public transit (over the course of the month)		\$ 50	\$ 50
- Other		\$ 50	\$ 50
Total			\$ 18,665

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“The students have learned so much in such a short time. They already speak so well, even the non-Italians among them.”

- Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, École Augustin Roscelli

“[Tania is] the VERY best Italian prof. I couldn’t have [reached my writing goals] without her.”

- Christina Sforza

(From Rome, on behalf of a 3E student) “Lila is doing extremely well with her Italian. Not only is she speaking to Italians only in Italian but she is translating for me. She is finally confident to speak in Italian even if she is spoken to in English. Your lessons have been a great help.”

- Marc Donahue, on behalf of Lila Tarmin

(From Florence) “It’s so easy for me to speak Italian. It’s been a week I am here (sic), and everything is much easier, it’s as if I’ve been living in Italy for a while now. Two years ago today was the first time I came to Italy. I remember I felt awful, because after studying for so many years I could barely say a few words in Italian. I understood everyone, but I choked on my words, and in frustration I just smiled and nodded. I couldn’t keep conversations going after a few words. It’s been a week now that I am in Italy and I’ve been communicating so easily and comfortably. I’m really happy and confident and I can’t thank you enough!”

- Meghri Doumanian

“I wanted to thank you for your help throughout the semester; the several study sessions you organized were extremely helpful to me. I don’t think I would have done as well on the final as I did without them.”

- Marion Dessalles

“I really liked your course. You inspired me so much, that I am going on a two-week vacation to Italy!”

- Tamara Belair

“Thank you, Tania, for being there and for listening! I am so grateful to have had a teacher you like you, even if it was for a short period of time.”

- Tiziana Di Minno

FCCIQ and 3E: Committed to the Italian-Canadian Community

A collaboration between the FCCIQ and Centre de la culture italienne 3E would make safe travel to Italy and authentic engagement with Italian culture there a reality for a number of youth in the Italo-phile community of Montreal. A grant from the FCCIQ, duly recognized on all of 3E’s promotional materials and marketing capital as well as in our online courses, would cover over half of the cost of a month-long program for each of the ten intended student beneficiaries of this initiative, allowing 3E the opportunity to hire the very best and most highly qualified staff to accompany students on their trip. An additional \$10,000 grant or loan would provide for an effective and convincing marketing campaign for these 2020 trips.