



Location and Course Information

Florence, Italy

Final Payment

You have the following options for final payment:

1. **Preferred method** You should pay with cash on arrival, and payment **MUST BE** in Euro. The balance of course tuition must reflect the most recent (same day) exchange rate. In order to calculate the exchange rate, you might use www.xe.com which is a reliable website. In addition, there are numerous exchange counters throughout the city, and we can help you locate one should you need assistance. There is also an American Express office (Via Alighieri, 22r) in Florence where you can cash in traveler's cheques. Last, there are ATMs located throughout the city, and these will dispense Euro to you directly from your bank account. (Note: Some banks only allow a total daily withdrawal of between 200 - 500 Euro/day. Additionally, please check with your bank to inquire whether/how your bank card will work in Italy.)

If your case is an exception, and you need to pay in another currency, please contact your course administrator at info@learningcentertuscany.com.

2. Pay by credit card either before or upon arrival. ***Please let us know if you need to pay using this method.*** If you need to pay before your arrival, please telephone us at the phone number provided below. Again, we will charge based on the conversion rate that same day.
3. Pay by wire transfer. If you would like to pay by wire transfer, please write us at info@learningcentertuscany.com or call us at +39 055 051 5035, and we will give you our bank details.

If you have any questions about the payment process, please contact us at info@learningcentertuscany.com. We will be happy to assist you in any way that we can.

On the first morning of the course, administration will arrive early to handle final payments. All payments **MUST** be made by the end of lunch on the first day unless special arrangements have been made with the Course Director. Late fees of 25 Euro per day may be assessed if payment is not made.

If payments have not been received by the end of class on the first Wednesday, you must gain permission from the Course Director to remain in the course.

Visa and Passport Information

All visitors to Italy are required to carry a passport valid for at least six months after arrival date.

Visitors to Italy, provided that they stay no more than 90 days, from the following countries do NOT need a visa:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, South Korea, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, Japan, Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Nicaragua, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Romania, Singapore, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela.

Furthermore, all citizens of the countries included in the European Union, per the Schengen Agreement, do not need a visa to enter Italy. They do, however, need an identity document and we recommend they bring their passport as well.

All citizens from the Vatican City, Switzerland, and San Marino are not subject to a visa requirement in any case.

Citizens from all other countries should contact their local consulate to obtain current travel regulations.

For a full explanation of all visa requirements, please visit <http://www.poliziadistato.it/pds/cittadino/stranieri/inglese.pdf>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us for help. However, TEFL International Tuscany does not, in any way, assume responsibility for any student's visa obligations.

**As this information is subject to change at any time, we advise everyone to contact your local consulate for current travel regulations prior to planning your trip.*

Working in Italy and/or Europe

If you are planning to seek work in Italy, please make sure you have the necessary legal working documents including copies of your diploma and transcripts from college, university, technical school or high school, as well as a copy of your birth certificate.

There are many job opportunities throughout Europe. However, depending on the particular location, obtaining a job within the community could be a complex and/or difficult process for non-EU residents, and may involve quite a bit of paperwork.

There is great demand for qualified TEFL teachers throughout the world. TEFL International provides the following services in this area:

- Contact information and details of schools in the country of your choice
- Contact information and details of local schools and vacancies
- Information regarding CV and interview preparation
- Access to our alumni database so that you can contact current teachers already working all over the world for advice, assistance or job leads
- TEFL International's Alumni Portal (www.alumni.teflintl.com)

TEFL International has been very successful in assisting our course graduates locate teaching job opportunities and vacancies. In fact, our database has over 50,000 vacancies advertised for you to browse at your convenience.

Transportation upon Arrival

Your accommodation is available starting on the Saturday before the course begins through Friday (5:00 PM) following the final week. We hope you will plan to arrive in Florence by Saturday as this will give you a chance to relax and get accustomed to your surroundings before the course begins. Florence is a very walkable city,

which means that everything you need is right at your fingertips, and you will enjoy the chance to take in your surroundings and relax during your first weekend here.

Since Florence is a small city, it is quite easy to get from the Firenze Peretola International Airport to your housing accommodation. You can either take the bus from the airport to the city center (please remember to buy a bus ticket beforehand at the newsstand, or *tobaccaio*), or you can take a taxi directly from the airport to your accommodation. Provided that you have given us the details of your travel arrangements and have set a time for your landlord to meet you with the key to your building, you will be able to meet your landlord at your accommodation and he or she will hand you your keys. It is very important that you communicate with us regarding your travel arrangements so that we can accommodate you as much as possible.

Those arriving at any other time will be responsible for arranging their own transportation; please review the following recommendations.

Arrival in Pisa:

If you can't get a flight directly into Florence, then the airport in Pisa is the next best thing. There is a train which goes directly to Florence that you can get at the airport. The ride will be less than a half hour to Florence, and it will leave you at the central Santa Maria Novella train station in Florence.

Arrival in Rome:

If you must arrive in Rome, we recommend that you either take a marked taxi from the airport to the train station (Roma Termini) or you can take the train that goes directly from the airport to Roma Termini. At Roma Termini, you will need to buy a train ticket to the central train station in Florence, *i.e.*, *Firenze - Santa Maria Novella*. The most direct, and quickest choice of train is the one called the Eurostar (most expensive), and the slowest (least expensive) in the Inter-city. Both types will get you to Florence, and the approximate cost will be between 14,00 Euro and 25,00 Euro. The journey by train is between 2.5 and 3 hours, approximately.

Arrival in Milan or Venice:

Please contact us directly if you plan to arrive in either of these cities. You may want to consult the following website:

http://www.travelplan.it/florence_guide_getting_there.htm

Private Transfer:

TEFL International is happy to arrange a private car service to greet you at the airport and transfer you directly to the school, or your apartment. Please email info@learningcentertuscany.com if this option interests you.

Important Note:

Regardless of your arrival day and time, we ask that you assist us in preparing for all arrivals by providing us with your travel arrangements via email at info@learningcentertuscany.com. Please do so as soon as your travel plans are confirmed and at least one week prior to your scheduled arrival time.

Should you have any problems with transportation to Florence or meeting the driver, please feel free to call us at the telephone/mobile numbers below:

School: +39 055 0515035

Course Director: +39 3478698517

Recommended Accommodation in Florence

If you plan to stay in Florence/Tuscany for a few nights before or after the course, please contact us directly. We can provide some choices for accommodations.

Accommodation Details

Florence accommodation options:

1. A private room in Florence. We have a few different locations in Florence itself for you to choose from, and you may or may not be placed with other students from TEFL International. Some of our apartments are also rented by Italian students who attend the Università degli Studi di Firenze who would be delighted to share their apartment with a visiting student. You would have your own room, so you would have your privacy, while at the same time you would have access to a “real” Florentine student’s life. You might even learn some Italian!
2. A shared room in Florence (limited availability). This is also a popular option—especially if you are coming to take the course with a friend or spouse. You will have a single bed (double in the case that you are with your spouse) in a shared room in the city. All apartments are furnished, and conveniently located in the city. This is also a good way to get to know another student in the area. TEFL International students will most likely be rooming together in this option, so you’ll have someone with whom to discuss your lesson planning ideas or just go and take a coffee break!
3. Home-stay. Some students want the experience of staying with a host family. This option is for those who really want to experience the Italian lifestyle! While you will usually be very busy preparing lessons and teaching, you will have the chance to go home and eat an authentic Italian dinner nightly. If you have some knowledge of Italian, it’s a great opportunity to practice! Notes: No overnight guests will be allowed. We will need to schedule a telephone call if you are interested in this option.
4. Pensione. If you don’t want to worry about making your bed or going to the grocery store for breakfast, then you might want to stay at the Pensione Ferretti, conveniently located in the center of Florence. Roberto and Sandra, a Florentine married couple, would be happy to welcome you to their establishment. Pensione Ferretti also offers free internet and there are fixed phones available for use in every room! Note: No overnight guests will be allowed. Single rooms are available as well as an apartment that includes a kitchen for preparing meals.

Please be assured that any special requests or requirements regarding accommodation will be taken into account, and TEFL International will make every effort to honor such requests.

You may check in from 9:00 AM on the Saturday prior to the course start date and you must check out by 12 noon on the Sunday after the course.

Accommodation prices **start** at 360 Euro per month, plus deposit.

Guest Policy

Guests are welcome to stay with you in apartment stays ONLY. However, for security reasons, they should be a friend or relative that you have known for a long time and certainly not someone that you have just met during your stay.

Room Keys

Many Italian apartments still use skeleton keys, which are quite expensive to make, so please take care not to lose them.

Building Hours

The School building hours will be 9:00 am to 7:00 pm Monday through Friday. It will be closed at all other times. These hours are subject to change based on the class schedule of your particular session. You will receive a class schedule the first week of class.

Internet

There is internet access at the school, and there is a computer available for student usage. In addition, we have wireless internet access. If you have your own laptop with a wireless receptor, then just bring it with you and you'll be able to get online. If you do not have a wireless card in your computer, then you can plug it into the cable manually and receive internet access. If the internet is down or if there is a line for computers, you can go to one of the many internet points located throughout the city.

Telephone Service

There may be a telephone set up in your apartment for your use, but calls in Italy are typically much more expensive than calls in other countries. Because of this, you might want to get a calling card to help eliminate any surprises at the end of the month. For emergencies, you may use the phone at the school.

Valuables

You are responsible for any valuables that you bring with you to Florence. Please only bring valuables if it is necessary, and please take care to keep them safe and close to you during your stay.

If you need to lock an item up during your stay, you can bring it to the school and it can be locked in the office area. However, we assume no responsibility if the item is lost or stolen.

First Aid

All minor injuries can be treated at the school. Many types of medicine are available over the counter at the pharmacy in Italy. While there are many pharmacies around the city, there are one (rotating location) that remains open 24 hours/day, 7 days/week as well as one pharmacy at the central train station Santa Maria Novella which is open 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.

If there is any serious injury, please inform the Course Director or one of the staff and transportation will be provided to the nearest hospital for treatment. An emergency contact list is posted in the classroom. The emergency medical phone number in Italy is 118.

Meals

What country is better known for its cuisine? You might want to get a guidebook that will direct you to different restaurants around Florence. From the *bistecca alla fiorentina* to the *pizza* to the *gelato*, you could spend your whole month enjoying the many *gusti* that await you in Tuscany! We do have our favorites, of course, and we'll direct you to the little known *trattorie* as well as the more popular spots.

For lunch, you might have time to go to the local pizzeria, but most likely, you will have to pick up a sandwich, or a *panino*. We will provide you a list of places near the school where you can get one. You might also want to pack a lunch so that you will have more time to complete your lesson planning.

Drinks, Snacks, Personal Food Items

You'll enjoy coffee breaks in Italy, as do the locals, but it sure isn't Starbucks! A coffee is really an espresso, and it comes in only one flavor: strong! You won't find coffee to go here, but this quick pick-me-up will surely be an experience. And, in Italy, we take our coffee standing at the bar, so you'll have to forfeit the to-go cup. You will have the chance to go out for a break to the bars (coffee shops) nearby. Water should always be bottled—the tap water in Florence is not safe to drink. If you would like to buy a snack throughout the day, you can get some at any bar.

Laundry

You will need to go to a laundromat near your residence. Your apartment may have a washing machine, but no dryer. Dryers are not common in Italy.

Smoking and Drinking Policy

Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside the school facilities. Should you wish to smoke, smoke outside the school. Please dispose of your trash properly.

Possession or the use of drugs is illegal. We have a zero tolerance rule pertaining to drugs, on or off of the premises.

There is also a strict "No Drinking" policy while on school grounds. What you do in your spare time is your business. However, public intoxication at the school will not be tolerated.

COURSE ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Training Course Schedule

The initial orientation is usually on Monday, the morning of the start date at 8:00 a.m., unless otherwise specified.

The first class will take place Monday morning at 9:00 a.m. The course schedule will be provided the first week of class. Sessions generally run between 9:00 a.m. And 5:00 p.m. with appropriate breaks, though this schedule is subject to change.

Trainees are expected to attend all input and other sessions included on the schedule unless they are sick and require medical treatment. This is particularly important for Teaching Practice (TP). It is very difficult to arrange an alternate TP time and there will be an additional fee for rescheduled TP.

Course Dress Requirements

For all input and tutorial sessions at the training location, there are no specific dress requirements, yet we ask that you be mindful of your peers and respectful of the fact that you are a visitor in another country.

During Teaching Practice, however, there are specific dress requirements that adhere to the local working culture and basic ideas of professionalism. All trainees are expected to dress "casually smart" according to the following guidelines:

Women:

Please do not wear very low-cut necklines or very short skirts. Bare midriffs must not be visible, even when lifting arms up. Open-toed shoes are acceptable, but no hiking or flip-flop sandals.

Men:

Long pants; no raggedy jeans. Short- or long-sleeved shirt with a collar; tie is not required. Loafers or dress shoes, sandals are not acceptable.

Resources

Please bring a pen and a notebook for taking notes during class. All relevant forms and instructions will be provided, as well as notes from the input sessions.

A materials fee of 25 Euro will be charged for the textbooks. You may pay this upon arrival along with the balance due.

You may want to bring a walkman with you, especially one which records. It is not required equipment, but many trainees have commented that the possession of their recording walkman made the course easier for them (in preparing tapes, interviewing and listening to conversations with students).

Various books are provided for use by trainees. However, no books should be removed from the library without specific permission from the Course Academic Director. Signing in and out of all books is required.

You will be required to prepare materials for your Teaching Practice. The school keeps an initial supply of basic tools necessary to make student materials. However, the trainees are responsible for providing additional poster board, markers, glue, pens, paper, etc., for creating teaching materials. These can be purchased at a local stationery store, or *cartoleria*.

A photocopying machine is available for use by all trainees. Please do not make more photocopies than are actually needed.

TRAINEE COURSE FEEDBACK SESSIONS

There will be a trainee feedback session at the end of the course and we try to schedule one after the first two weeks as well. These sessions are aimed to give trainees the opportunity to provide feedback regarding anything to do with the course, accommodations, and so on. We welcome your open and honest feedback so we can continue to improve the training course and the facilities provided at the training location. Although there are scheduled feedback times, please feel free to give feedback to the Course Director or the Academic Director at any time. Of course, we welcome all positive comments as well!

Problems and Complaints

If any trainee has a personal problem which may interfere with course studies, please talk to one of the trainers.

If any trainee has a complaint about any aspect of the course or about any of the trainers, please see the Course Director. If you feel that you would like to keep your complaint anonymous, please write or type your complaint and leave it in the suggestion box at the front desk.

In-town Transportation

You will probably be walking most places, but in the case you would like to use public transportation, the following are available to you:

There are city buses which run continuously. We can help you acquire a bus map and help you determine which one is best for your route.

Taxis are available throughout the city. While there are taxi stands throughout, it is customary to actually call a taxi as opposed to flagging one down. We will have some numbers of some taxi companies ready for you upon arrival.

If you would like to visit another city or Tuscan town on the weekend, trains are a great way to get there. We can help you locate group tours and we also offer our own art history tours. The schedule will be ready when you arrive.

Shopping

After art history, Florence is best known for its shopping! From leather to shoes to renaissance style ceramics, you can find it all here. The best part is that you can find the artisans in their shops actually working on the pieces that they sell. We recommend taking at least a day to get lost in the small streets where you happen upon a shoemaker, a potter, or a jewelry maker. In Florence you will find prices in every range and a special shopping experience to match each individual shop's personality. Shopkeeping is a profession and an art here, and shopkeepers are proud to welcome you into their special worlds.

Of course, there are also many outdoor markets in Florence as well. Some of the better known ones are the market at San Lorenzo which is famous for its clothes and especially its leather, and the market at Sant'Ambrogio square where you can

find exquisite fruit and vegetables along with anything else. Pay attention to the day of the week, because you will find most vendors only on one day in particular. Perhaps the biggest one occurs every Tuesday when there is a huge market at the *cascine*, or the city's public park.

Day Trips

Tuscany offers many day trips. From Siena to San Gimignano, to the wine-tasting in Chianti to the alabaster and glowing hills around Volterra, you will certainly be charmed as you are transported into a different world with each trip. We recommend that you research the areas in Tuscany that you would like to visit the most, using a good guidebook. We will plan some trips as a school (on the weekends), and the schedule will be available upon your arrival.

Local Weather Conditions

There are four distinct seasons in Florence. Summer can be incredibly hot and humid, and many Florentines head for the beach in July and August. While it does snow in winter in the northern Tuscan hills and mountains (There is a famous ski resort called Abetone in the Dolomites.), it is very rare that a snowflake falls in the city of Florence itself. This is because it is located between mountains and is therefore a few degrees warmer, thus eliminating the problems that snowfall can bring. Spring and fall are truly beautiful seasons here. Spring brings a wealth of flora with it for all to enjoy, and fall is a welcome temperature change from the hot August sun.

Please bring clothes which correspond to the season in which you will find yourself in Florence.

Get Acquainted!

Before your arrival, we highly recommend you purchase a descriptive guide book or do some online research to familiarize yourself and get acquainted with Italy and all it has to offer. For more information on Italy and the historic city of Florence, we recommend the following sites:

Florence Guide:

www.travelplan.it/florence_guide.htm

Lonely Planet Online:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/europe/italy/florence/>

Fodor's Online Guide:

<http://www.fodors.com/miniguides/mgresults.cfm?destination=florence@63>

Frommer's Online Guide:

<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/florence/>

Welcome to Tuscany! We look forward to meeting you in person!