



Elizabeth

from
Cambridge Sunrise
to
Italy

“Representing My Country In Another Country Is Absolutely Unbelievable”



Ciao, this is Elizabeth Yeomans, writing from Grumello, Italy. It feels like just last week I arrived at the airport in Milan, when in reality, I have been here for almost 70 days. My flight over to Italy was my first time flying, as well as my first time flying alone, so while I was a little nervous, I was also very excited. I was greeted at the airport by my host mother, as well as her niece and two of her children's friends. Since school in Italy starts later in September, I had time to settle in and be shown around the area before it started.

The school culture here in Italy is very different than it is in Canada. All of the students here take school very seriously and hold a lot of respect for their teachers. For example, we stand when the teacher enters the room, we greet them and wait to be dismissed to be seated again. The students in my class are all very nice to me and even made me a welcome sign, and although my name was spelled wrong, I still loved it.



School in Italy is shorter than school in Canada, we only go for 4 hours and 55 minutes a day, however, we go to school 6 days a week, Monday through Saturday, with Sunday off. I have to wake up pretty early for school, since I live outside of the city and must take a bus to school. I wake up at 6:00 am, leave the house by 7:00 am, and arrive at school shortly before 8:00 am when school starts. We have 5 classes every day and each class lasts 55 minutes, with a 5-minute break in between each class and a longer 15 minute break in between our third and fourth classes. I am finished school at 12:55 pm and arrive home for lunch by 1:45 pm. I like this school structure as I feel like I have more time in the day to experience new things. Sometimes after school the other exchange students in the area and I will go out for lunch or go to the mall together. It is so much fun to hang out with such a diverse group of people and hear everyone's stories and journeys.



During my exchange in Italy I have learned so many new things, met so many amazing people, and had so many amazing experiences. There are around 30 people in my district and there are around 190 total exchange students in Italy. In Italy, there are 7 other Canadians, however, I am the only Canadian in my district. The other exchange students in my district are so nice and friendly that we have all become good friends very quickly.

I am with my first host family now and I think we will be moved to a new family in January. My current host family speaks little to no English. My host dad loves to learn random words in English; his favourite is currently "chocolate chip". I really love the host family that I am with currently. The host mom is very nice, and I love to help her bake. She is such a nice person; she is very sweet and helpful. We recently celebrated her birthday, which was a lot of fun.

All of the students in my district recently attended the "Fiesta di Torrone", which had lots of different vendors selling different kinds of Toronne. It was so much fun to walk around and try so many different kinds of Toronne. Cremona is famous for and the birthplace of Toronne, so at this fiesta there were several different marching bands, live band performances, and a wedding reenactment to celebrate.



I love the rich and fascinating history Italy has, it is so interesting to learn about. In some places in Cremona there are spots where you can look down beneath your feet and see Ancient Roman streets.

I love all the new things I get to try and experience while I am here. I've gotten to try authentic Italian food, and I love it. The ingredients are of such high quality and the food is prepared so well. I love trying new foods and even if it's not my thing, I'm still glad I got the opportunity to try it. I've also had some unforgettable, amazing new experiences. From walking around Cremona with my friends, to sitting in a mountainside cafe with my host mom, to meeting an Olympic athlete, and getting to represent my country in another country is absolutely unbelievable. I will never forget being able to leave home and travel and see and experience the world at such a young age! I can't wait to experience more!

Ciao for now,
-Elizabeth