The Story:

Fast food has not replaced pasta, parmesan cheese and prosciutto ham at the center of the Italian diet. Industrial agriculture has not replaced the family farm. And local specialties that celebrate the bounty of the land and sea remain central to la dolce vita. The Slow Food movement, born in rural Italy celebrates the link between food, culture and biodiversity. This summer, slow down, savor your food, learn from organic farmers, cover your hands in soil and work with skilled chefs as you learn about the rich Italian culture and learn to cook slow food.

The Program:

Your Italian adventure begins in Rome. You and your fellow Corps members practice survival Italian language over cups of fresh gelato, gaze upon Michelangelo’s masterpiece in the Sistine Chapel, climb the ancient steps of the Coliseum and interview locals on the Spanish Steps. From Rome, travel north to the Ligurian coast. Visit a fish auction on the Mediterranean and olive oil mill in the back country. Create your own Piemontese culinary masterpieces during classes with a skilled Italian chef and visit the world famous University of Gastronomy to learn about the Slow Food movement and the nexus between food and culture in Italy. After developing your skills in the kitchen, you become part of an Italian family. Cook fresh pasta with your host mother, sip coffee with new Italian friends in outdoor cafes and practice the art of la lingua Italiana while creating your own mosaic in Ravenna. Then explore the ancient streets of Parma, learn how balsamic vinegar and parmesan cheese are made and stroll through the campus of the world’s oldest university in Bologna. Your summer of food, history, art and architecture wraps up with a few days on the Adriatic and on the canals of Venice before your journey home.
The Activities:

Orientation in Rome

- Practice survival Italian language skills in markets, cafes and restaurants.
- Visit the Vatican to see the Sistine Chapel.
- Meet locals at the Trevi Fountain and on the Spanish Steps.
- Explore the narrow medieval streets of Roman neighborhoods throughout the city.

The Seminar in Asti

- Take classes with a master chef at a renowned cooking school.
- Visit the University of Gastronomy to learn about the Slow Foods movement.
- Harvest your own vegetables from the rich Northern Italian soil for the evening meal.
- Meet with farmers and organic food producers.

Family and Community stay in Ravenna

- Become part of an Italian family.
- Cook with your host mother.
- See the magnificent mosaics of Ravenna and then attend a workshop where you’ll create your own.
- Enjoy Adriatic beaches and villages.
- Practice your Italian language skills with new friends.

Field-Based Exploration

- Travel to the Ligurian coast and spend some time on the beach.
- Learn how pesto is made.
- Learn cheese making and ham curing in Emilia-Romagna.
- Explore Modena and Parma.

Journey’s End

- Visit Bologna, home to Europe’s oldest university.
- Eat local specialties in one of the gastronomic capitals of Italy.
- Share Stories, reflect on all that you’ve learned and prepare for re-entry and the journey home.

The Details:

Dates: 5 weeks in July and early August
Start/End: New York’s JFK International Airport

Student Diplomacy Corps works collaboratively with in-country experts to build safe, dynamic programs. In order to provide high quality experiences that take advantage of local resources and adapt to fluid circumstances, all activities, venues, fees and descriptions of the program itinerary are subject to change.