

Roman Holiday Summer Studies FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Below find examples of questions often asked during evening information sessions in October and April.

- 1. What kind of supervision will students receive when they are in Rome?**
As the programme director and classroom instructor, I will personally supervise students in the *Roman Holiday Summer Studies* programme. In all cases we have both male and female supervisors on the trip. For example, in addition to Mr. Lombardi, an English teacher who is new to the College, Mr. De Mita (a colleague of mine from Bishop Allen Academy will be teaching again with me). My wife will also attend this summer as usual, (and possibly another female supervisor, will be assisting me). That brings the chaperone-student ratio to approximately 1:12, a requirement for trips of this nature by De La Salle College.
- 2. What are my responsibilities as programme coordinator during the trip?**
I am responsible for the management of the entire group which includes supervision, curriculum and tour programming as well as discipline. As a programme coordinator, teacher and guide I will organize a daily number of activities for our students who will visit local sites but above all I am responsible for ensuring that they receive all that has been promised: a well-organized, stimulating, challenging and safe educational experience of a life-time. I will motivate students and ensure an enjoyable atmosphere during the entire trip. In the event parents or guardians wish to deviate from our travel arrangements, they will have to make special accommodations for "door-to-door" transit of their children while *Roman Holiday Summer Studies* assumes no responsibility or liability for such plans.
- 3. Can a parent accompany the group and receive an honorarium?**
Yes, anyone can receive an honorarium who volunteers to assist me on the trip. I need adult supervisors for the group. Presently, my wife will be coming with me again this year. The chaperone-student ratio with 16 and 17 year olds on a trip of this nature remains 1:12.
- 4. Why choose Cianfarani Travel as our travel agency?**
Cianfarani Travel has been operating since 1957. It is one of the city's most experienced travel agencies specializing in tour packages specifically to Italy. Each year's itinerary is tailored to meet the needs of our school group. The tour operator can also help students and their families plan trips before or after the completion of the course.
- 5. Are tips included in the trip?**
Yes they are when we are paying for services as a group. Tips have already been calculated for the meals at the hotel that are included in the entire programme cost. The teacher-chaperone pays for the following services during the trip (per person):

\$1 to \$2 per day for the travel guides and tour bus driver
\$1 per day per cleaning staff for room-keeping
\$1 per day for hotel clerks, pool and bar staff, maintenance staff
\$1 to \$2 for the city tour guide (local guide)

Of course, the decision to leave a tip after one eats at a restaurant for lunch, for example, is at the student's discretion. We believe that this is part of the traveling experience students should acquire. Here are some suggested amounts:

15% for restaurants (N.B.: when meals are included in your package, the tips are already calculated into the overall cost); Note: some restaurants consider tips "extra" for good service while others include a "service" fee on the bill meaning the tip has already been calculated and included; 15% for taxis.

6. Where do the classes take place?

Classes take place in a conference room at the hotel where we will be staying. Hotel accommodations included in our programme include air-conditioning, mini refrigerator, swimming pool, three single beds per room, a desk, and an ensuite bathroom.

7. Do students have access to computers, the Internet or do they need laptop computers to complete their assignments?

I bring a lap top computer every year and keep it locked in my luggage on those afternoons we tour in the city. For those students who wish to, I encourage them to do the same. However, lap tops are not mandatory. Students have hand-written revised drafts of compositions in a timely manner without much difficulty. Students who wish to submit electronic copies of their work should also purchase a USB, which will be handed in to the teacher periodically. As well, for several years now our hotel makes Wi-Fi available to our students for free. Students can also purchase an Internet stick at one of the local cellphone retailers.

8. What hours will they be in class? Are classes every weekday?

In order to fulfill the regular number of instructional hours for any day course at the College (110 hours) and specified by the Ministry of Education of Ontario, we exercise a little creativity with the regular allotment of classes. Prior to the trip we will hold 4 or 5 classes at Del in June on Tuesday and Thursday evenings to make up 14 hours. Then in Rome classes will run from 8:30 to 12:30 in the morning at the hotel in a conference room at least five or six times a week. Those dates will be flexible based on the daily touring schedule. The remaining 16 hours will come from daily activities students will take part in during the touring component of the programme usually in the afternoons.

9. In addition to their studies, what other kinds of activities will students be involved in? Do they attend any trips outside of Rome?

We will conduct a day-trip to Florence and at least one other destination as part of our academic studies. The cost of this trip is included in the travel package. Then we will use several week-end excursions to explore some of the ancient Roman villas, monasteries and castles around the Eternal City. Rome is also 45 minutes away from Ostia Lido (a pleasant beach) and 3 to 4 hours by bus from

Pompeii. All possibilities again for our programme this summer.

- 10. Will students have easy access to laundry facilities?** The hotel has a functioning washing machine on site and at our disposal. However, most of our students opt to wash their belongings in their bathtubs and use clothes racks provided by the hotel. As well, it would be prudent to teach students about how to wash small amounts of their whites and coloured clothes with laundry soap. Dry-cleaning services in Rome are quite expensive approximately 3 Euros to wash individual pieces or garments.
- 11. Which meals are included?**
Breakfast and dinner.
- 12. How much spending money do you think students will need?**
I survived on twenty Canadian dollars a day and even less on those days when we did not pay for museums or other tourist attractions. Admission to private art galleries is 8 Euros for example, Dante Alighieri's home in Florence is 3 Euros...But mostly, students should be aware of the exchange rate especially these past few years with the Euro performing well against the American and Canadian dollar. Rome is one of the most expensive cities in Europe as most of you know. A can of Coke can cost as much as €3.50 in the city. In Pietralata, the neighbourhood we stay in, a comparable soft-drink was approximately €1.60. Needless-to-say, I will encourage students to make use of water bottles for our afternoon treks into the city as there are fresh water fountains virtually around every corner. Rome is also a shopper's Mecca. Not a difficult place to part with one's money. So I cannot stress enough the need to teach our students to set daily budgets.
- 13. What is more convenient to bring: a debit card, credit card or travelers cheques?**
Hands down a debit card has greatest ease of use in Rome. However, there are a number of points you might want to keep in mind if you're planning to give your son or daughter a debit card for use at bank machines outside Canada:
- The card will work at any machine displaying the PLUS, INTERAC, CIRRUS logo etc.
 - There's usually a fee of \$5 or more for each withdrawal made outside North America.
 - There may be an extra fee for using the ATM machine charged by an Italian financial institution.
 - Some ATM machines will only accept a 4-digit PIN number.
 - Some ATM machines won't allow you to withdraw from more than one account. Instead, they'll automatically default to your primary chequing account. So you should make sure the money you'll need while traveling is in this account.

For more information, including the location of ATM machines and bank branches using the PLUS, INTERAC, CIRRUS system in Italy contact your bank.

- 14. How much homework will be expected of the students each week?**
No question this will feel more like a summer school programme. Less weekends in between assignments simply means that we will be limited by the amount of writing and daily reading that we can accomplish. But this is an Ontario Ministry credit, a De La Salle credit and a TCDSB credit which entails a mandatory number of hours and a number of compulsory assignments: essay compositions, seminars, major research project and exam at the end of this course.
- 15. Does insurance cover all health problems?**
It is very important that you completely fill out the "Confidential Medical History Form" especially if you have pre-existing health conditions or special health needs that we need to be aware of. The principle is simple: if you have a health condition before the trip that requires hospitalization during the trip, the costs incurred are not covered by our travel insurance (Manulife Travel, in our case). The Government of Ontario will pay part of the hospital expenses but our travel insurance will not cover the difference.
- Here are two examples:
You have a cavity during the trip and have to see a dentist: you are not covered.
An accident causes you to lose a tooth while in Rome: you are covered.
- 16. Is our money protected in case of problems?**
The flight and hotel portion of our money is protected by a TICO registered travel agency that also guarantees our air travel—in the event of a problem with an unanticipated cancellation of our flight. Cianfarani Travel Ltd. will reimburse us for what we have paid or provide us with alternative travel arrangements. Check personal insurance plans for theft or loss of personal belongings coverage.
- 17. What are the penalties a student incurs for cancellation of the trip?**
The "Terms and Conditions" registration form notes that cancellation 45 days or more prior to departure will result in a \$1000 penalty; 45 to 21 days before departure 50% of the total price of air fare; Less than 21 days before departure results in no refund.
- 18. Can we pay by credit card?**
Unfortunately, no we do not accept this form of payment. However, some credit card companies like VISA now issue their own cheques, which when used, allow you to accumulate reward points.
- 19. How much spending money should students bring?**
This trip includes two meals a day and the bus trip to Florence, our second day-trip, a monthly metro pass and a few entry fees to museums and tourist attractions. Set aside some money for extras, such as souvenirs, snacks, shopping, and some entry fees to museums and churches. I recommend debit cards and credit cards for specially-created accounts over traveler's cheques which are difficult to cash in Rome during those hours when we are touring the city.

The table below can help suggest how much pocket money to make available for

meals only.

DESTINATION	DAILYALLOWANCE
Italy	\$10 to \$15 Cdn

20. What do I do if I am separated from my tour guide or teacher-chaperone during the trip?

I will supervise the entire group at all times while in Rome. At any time, seven days a week and twenty-four hours a day, parents/guardians can contact the course director in the event of an emergency. In most cases, parents will be able to speak directly with the teacher responsible for supervising students. We will also make our cell phone numbers available to students and parents before leaving for Rome.

21. When is the best time to send the deposit and the balance for the trip?

Cianfarani Travel, requires that the initial deposit must be paid immediately when booking the exact number of seats for our flight. The balance must be paid 45 days before departure: **Friday, April 30, 2016.**

22. Do I need to prepare in advance for the course?

Students are required to complete an Independent Study Project (ISP) before leaving for Rome in July. The requirements of the project and a list of novels for consideration can be found on the *Roman Holiday* web site at www.romanholiday.ca. Otherwise, the rest of the course is conducted in Rome.

23. What kinds of meals are included in the package?

Unless otherwise advised, our travel arrangements include typical meals to satisfy young appetites (pizza, chicken, veal, pasta, salad, vegetables, fruit, and desert). Breakfast includes juices, coffee, cereal, bread, yogurt, Melba toast, jam and butter. On request, we can ask for special meals for students with dietary restrictions. The hotel restaurant staff is very accommodating.

24. My child is vegetarian and/or has allergies; can he/she order the appropriate airline meals?

If I can inform the travel agency 45 days before departure of the number of participants requiring special meals, in most cases, their needs can be met.

25. My child is not a Canadian citizen; what documentation is required for travel?

If your son or daughter is not a Canadian citizen, the best advice is to let me know, so I can inform the travel agency and airline. You will have to contact the embassy or consulate directly about passport and visa requirements when visiting Italy. In this way, you will avoid errors in interpretation at Customs or unexpected changes to Italy's admission policy. And remember, passports must be valid for at least six months prior to leaving.

26. What vaccinations are required or recommended?

You can contact Cianfarani Travel or consult a travel web-site. Before you leave,

a web site like Traveling-Doctor.com will indicate necessary vaccinations for those traveling to Italy. I recommend mandatory Hepatitis A and B shots, if possible. If a student has specific medical needs that require attention, then consult a family physician, and perhaps arrangements need to be made about securing the services of a physician in Rome if need be. I will have the name of a Toronto physician with me at all times in the event I need professional advice about a student's medical condition. Our hotel is also in walking distance of a hospital, a pharmacy and several walk-in clinics.