

FOOD STUDIES PROGRAM



We eat three times a day, yet hardly ever stop to ask the basic questions about how or what we eat. Where does the food come from? Is it important that it be local or organic? What do the labels really mean? These questions are fundamental to life in our globalized world.

Food is the intersection between politics, the market, and society. The Food Studies Program at the Umbra Institute employs an interdisciplinary approach to the study of food to investigate broader issues of sustainability, human rights, the logic of the market, and identity.

The program consists of three courses in food studies, an Italian language course, and an optional elective for a total of 15-18 credits. Students who enroll and complete study in all three of the food program courses will receive a certificate from the Umbra Institute documenting their participation and satisfactory completion of the Italian Food Studies Program.

Each course includes a series of co- and extra-curricular activities that are a fundamental part of the curriculum. These activities allow students to relate classroom experience to Italian food culture, equipping them with the skills needed to understand it. Demanding an exceptional level of competence and curiosity, these activities train students to be fully appreciative of Italian food production, distribution, and consumption. Students visit production facilities, as well as learn to evaluate quality and typology in certain foodstuffs. Finally, students become familiar with food production by running, over a limited number of nights, their own trattoria.

Note: Students may take one or more of the food studies courses if they do not wish to participate in the entire program.

The Courses

SOIT 350 - History and Culture of Food in Italy (Sociology/Italian Studies)
The core course of the Food Studies Program, this class presents a history of food culture in Italy from Roman times through the Renaissance to the present. Students learn that far from being stable, Italian culinary "traditions" have been in a state of constant flux, the result of an ever-changing combination of political, economic, and social variables. Students participate in six workshops with local experts to learn about fundamental Italian foods: olive oil, wine, cheese, chocolate, gelato, and forgotten fruits. These graded workshops incorporate a working knowledge of production, quality evaluation, and biochemical information.

SUFS 330 - Sustainability and Food Production in Italy (Social Science/Sustainability/Food Studies)
This course focuses on the radical increase in food production over the last fifty years and the ecological and social problems it has created, as well as discussing some of the possible solutions: the organic movement, Slow Food, and the "local food" movement. This course includes a series of fieldtrips where students explore the range of Italian food production, from foraging (truffles in the Apennines) to the hyper-modern (Barilla's main plant in Parma).

BUFS 380 - The Business of Food: Italy and Beyond (Business/Food Studies)
This course seeks to give students a rich understanding of the feedback loops between the consumption and production of food in Italy, the US, and worldwide. Topics include not only the business of production, distribution, and sale of food, but also food-related industries in the areas of marketing, journalism, television, travel, and entertainment. This course concludes with a case study in restaurant management or a workshop in which students either create and operate their own "trattoria". Students are actively involved in every stage of the process—from advertising to menu choice, from local sourcing to food presentation, from cooking to making a profit in the unforgiving Italian food market.

ITAL 101-420 - Italian Language
All students who attend the Umbra Institute must take Italian language or courses taught in Italian as part of their semester curriculum. All levels of study are available from beginner to advanced in both 4- and 6-credit options.

Optional Elective
Students who take all three food courses and Italian language may also take an additional course if desired. They may choose from any of the Umbra Institute's offerings in areas such as history, literature, studio art, art history, creative writing, business, politics, and psychology.



About the Umbra Institute

Nestled in the historic center of Perugia, Italy, the Umbra Institute offers semester, summer, and year-long study abroad programs for American and Italian college students. Since its origin in 1999, the Institute has continued to set itself apart as a provider of distinctive academic programs, allowing students the opportunity to learn both in and beyond the classroom in the vibrant city of Perugia. Continuing its tradition of excellence, the Umbra Institute offers exciting opportunities for service learning and community engagement, internships, and volunteer activities. Umbra semester programs include:

- The General Studies Semester Program (Free Elective program)
- Italian Language & Culture Program (Direct Enrollment at the *Università per Stranieri di Perugia*)
- Direct Enrollment at the *Università degli Studi di Perugia*
- The Food Studies Program
- Academic Internships, Service Learning, and Honors Programs

Our Ideal Location

Perugia is located about halfway between Florence and Rome in Umbria, a region known as the "green heart of Italy" for its lush natural treasures and central location. Umbria is a large and diverse region—abundant with mountains, lakes, river valleys, and agricultural fields—and is well-situated for those enticed by the local hilltop towns and scenic luminescence of Umbria and Tuscany.

As the regional and provincial capital—known in Italian as "capoluogo"—the city of Perugia is a focal point for many visitors to the region. This authentic and intimate town exudes regional pride for its art, tradition, and cuisine, not to mention a history that spans over 2,500 years.

Remarkably, the historic center of Perugia has preserved an old-world feel, uniquely characterized by its Etruscan walls, medieval churches, winding cobblestone streets, and Renaissance and Baroque architecture. Against this charming backdrop, you'll find many modern amenities. Corso Vannucci, which pierces the city center, is a broad pedestrian thoroughfare constantly pulsing with energy from the countless restaurants, jazz cafes, pubs, and cultural exhibits nearby.

One of the most appealing aspects of Perugia is its population. Nicknamed Italy's "University City," Perugia is home to tens of thousands of students—the largest single group in the city—who attend the *Università degli Studi di Perugia*, the *Università per Stranieri di Perugia*, and the many studio and performing arts schools in the area. Living and studying in Italy's preeminent university town offers extraordinary educational and cultural opportunities. Students have the opportunity to interact on a daily basis in and out of the classroom with both local Italian students and their professors. It's difficult to find a more appropriate backdrop for truly immersive student life in Italy.

Academic Excellence and Recognition

The Umbra Institute is recognized by the Ministry of Education in Italy, and accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges through its partnership with Arcadia University in Glenside, Pennsylvania. In 2006, the Institute became recognized by Italian universities as an approved provider of credit-bearing courses for the *Università degli Studi di Perugia*.



Discover More

Visit our website at www.umbra-institute.com or contact us by email at info@umbra-institute.com for additional information.

THE UMBRA INSTITUTE

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Co- and Extra-Curricular Activities

Due to potential conflicts, only those students who enroll in all three of the program's food courses are able to participate in all the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

GOURMET WORKSHOPS AND TASTINGS:

Forgotten Fruits and Vegetables
Wine
Olive Oil
Cheese, Meats, and Insaccati
Gelato
Student-run "Trattoria Umbra"

FIELD TRIPS:

Weekend in Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna
Olive-Picking in the Umbrian Countryside
Visits to Local Organic and Self-Sustaining Farms
Traditional Food Festivals (Sagre)
Altrocioccolato Chocolate Festival
Truffle-Hunting Day Trip to the Apennines

What's Included in the Program

Airport pick-up, 3-day orientation, tuition, housing, resident director and support staff, Institute & university facilities, cultural activities, discount card, 24-hour emergency services, all gourmet workshops, all field trips including weekend discovery tour of Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, textbooks and readers, grade report/transcript. (Note: This is an all-inclusive program. The only expenses not covered are airfare and meals.)

"Umbra was a great choice for me because there are a lot of opportunities to get involved with the school as well as the community. I really felt at home here. There is time to travel and explore, and at the same time I received a quality education and had an amazing experience!"

Jenna Barone, University of Mississippi
Umbra Spring 2011



Study
abroad
in Italy



FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

The Interdisciplinary Food Studies Program
The Umbra Institute in Perugia, Italy



Italian Food Culture
History
Politics
Sustainability
Business & Technology

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