

Danna Michaely – Student Exchange at Bocconi, Milan – Fall 2010

The City

I personally loved Milan. In my opinion, it resembles Tel Aviv in terms of atmosphere, rhythm and international character. It is a city with style, the city of fashion, design and creativity. I would recommend experiencing all Milan has to offer – fashion events, games at San Siro, musicals, shows and of course aperitivi - many bars all over town hold aperitivi every evening from 19:00-22:00, during which you pay around 8-9 euro for an alcoholic drink and all-you-can-eat. A highly recommended aperitivo is in the “**Maya**” bar in Navigli, it was by far our favorite. Nightlife – I recommend making an “International Week” or ESEG (Erasmus) card, given to international students in Milan (for free), which grants free entrance / 10 euro including 2 drinks, to clubs all in Milan. Coffee – This is Italy and so coffee goes without saying... The coffee is great and there are plenty of places to drink. An important note is that you can either drink coffee on the bar or sit at a table, but the bar costs half-price (~ 1.1 euro vs. 2.2 euro at the table) and it is very common among the Italians to drink that way.

Transportation

Public transportation is pretty good in the city: There are buses, tram and metro. It is possible and recommended to issue a monthly travel card for the three together (30 euro a month is the regular price, 17 euro a month for students up to 25 yrs. old). Metro ends around midnight and tram stops at 2 AM, but there are always taxis. In addition, for traveling all over the Italy, the train is a perfect solution. It is not cheap at all, but it is quick, comfortable and efficient. I traveled almost every weekend and always via train. It is usually not necessary to book a seat in advance, with the exception of holiday-weekends, during which the train is packed...

Housing

Neither of us took the Bocconi housing. It is very expensive (almost 600 euro a month) and located in a remote area with limited transportation. I would highly recommend searching for an apartment – it is worth the effort. I rented with 2 Italian girls in the Porta Romana area, which is a great area and is walking distance from Bocconi. I paid 600 euro a month including everything. For an apartment alone, I would expect no less than 700 euro a month, but with flatmates you can find for 500-550 euro.

Courses

I took 4 courses and enjoyed all of them - Two courses of SDA Bocconi School of Management and two of Bocconi:

SDA Courses

- **Channel and Brand Management** – A very interesting course given by Sandro Castaldo, who is a fascinating lecturer, who gives many examples from real life throughout the course. There are 2-3 group assignments to submit during the course, as well as a final exam.
- **Regulations and Anti-Trust** – This course is given by 2 lecturers together and is very interesting as well. It is a mix of law and economics. There are no assignments throughout the exam, only a role-play game towards the end and a final exam as well.

Bocconi Courses:

- **International Business Management (Advanced Topics)** – This course is given by Prof. Fabrizio Perretti, who is extremely professional and knowledgeable. Perretti is very demanding and has high expectations of his students. You must come prepared for each class, having read the Economist article / case study or whatever he had assigned for class that day - Perretti loves the “cold call” system... Throughout the course there are two major assignments – a group presentation of an assigned case study, as well as a group essay on a certain topic. In addition, the final exam requires a lot of preparation and reading. The course is fascinating and I would definitely recommend it, for those of you who are not afraid of work.
- **Management of Fashion and Luxury Companies** – A special course, which is very characteristic of Milan. The lecturers: Stefania and Francesca are both very sweet and you can tell they love what they do. The course is a marketing class, focusing on the fashion and luxury industry. There are various guest lecturers throughout the class and also a team project for a real company (ours was for L’Oreal).

I would recommend taking courses of SDA Bocconi as well, as it is a special experience and the classes are very professional and interesting. Since the SDA classes are intense and concentrated in 2 months (as opposed to 4 months of the Bocconi courses), it could create more pressure during certain periods, In addition, the difficult communication between ISD (International Student Desk at Bocconi) and the SDA School of Management could be frustrating at times, but it is worth it all in my opinion.

Italian

I found the Italian crash course of Bocconi to be extremely helpful and professional. It is very intensive (classes are held also on Fridays and Saturdays...) but it is wonderful and really gave me a good basis for my Italian. After the course, I would recommend just trying and practicing your Italian. People are nice and happy to talk, so take the opportunity and make the most of it.

To conclude, the student exchange at Bocconi was an amazing experience and I highly recommend it! I met many people from around the world, the traveling is incredible and I will never forget my time in Milan. Feel free to contact me for any questions or advice seeking, I will be happy to help ☺

Danna Michaely, dannuni@yahoo.com