

**ASA**

*Location-Specific*

**GUIDE:**

**Rome, Italy**

*For parents and students*

## In this guide:

- Student Visa
- Helpful Local Information
- Host Institution & Housing
- Medical Care
- Cell Phones
- Mail, Computers, Internet

## Please read our ASA Guide to Study Abroad for information about:

- Contact Information
- Payment and Financial Aid
- Passport
- Keeping Your Important Documents Safe
- Vaccinations
- Prescription Medication
- Medical Insurance
- Money and Banking
- Travel Arrangements / Airport Pick-up
- What to Pack
- Orientation
- Safety
- Homesickness and Culture Shock
- Reverse Culture Shock

## ***Student Visa***

**All** students must have a passport that does not expire for at least 3 months after their proposed return date from Italy.

◆ **IMPORTANT: Semester students: you will need your valid passport in hand NO LATER THAN 60 days prior to departure, in order to apply for your Student Visa!**

**Semester/academic year students are required to obtain a Student VISA from their nearest Italian Consulate.** You will have to apply for your visa in person at the Consulate that represents your state's jurisdiction. Please plan ahead because you will have to apply for your visa no less than 60 days prior to your departure, to allow time for processing. Students attending a program of fewer than 90 days (i.e. summer) do not need student visas.

In addition, all **Semester students** will need to register at the local police station in Rome within 10 days of arrival to obtain a *permesso di soggiorno* (Permit to Stay). This is basically the 2<sup>nd</sup> step of the VISA process and costs approximately €138 (*cost is subject to change*).

◆ **Please read the document “Student Visa Information for Italy” for full details on how to apply for your visa.**

Applying for a VISA can be difficult and frustrating. You must apply in person at the Consulate that represents your state's jurisdiction after making an appointment with the Consulate weeks or months ahead of time. For some students, this will mean having to travel to the Consulate, even if that Consulate is far away. (For example, the Chicago jurisdiction is quite large, as is the Los Angeles jurisdiction.) The Italian Consulate is strict with its VISA application policies, so make sure you have all the necessary documents before your appointment. One of the required documents is an official enrollment letter from John Cabot University, written in Italian. ASA will provide you with this enrollment letter, but **it is ultimately the student's responsibility to submit all of the required visa paperwork to the Consulate on time for processing.**

◆ **YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND THE ASA PROGRAM IN ITALY WITHOUT A STUDENT VISA IF YOU ARE ATTENDING A PROGRAM THAT IS GREATER THAN 90 DAYS LONG.**

## ***Helpful Local Information***

ASA students in Rome will have a Site Director to assist them during their stay. Pilar works in the Student Services Department at John Cabot University.

**Pilar Murguia** email: [mmurguia@johncabot.edu](mailto:mmurguia@johncabot.edu)  
cell phone: 011-39-331 566 4361 (*dial from the U.S.*) / 331 566 4361 (*dial in Italy*)

### **Recommended Hotels in Rome**

Albergo del Sole\*\*\*\*  
Piazza della Rotonda, 63 (Pantheon)  
Tel: (+39) 06-6780441  
Single: approx. €214; Double: approx. €325  
<http://www.hotelsolealpantheon.com/>

Hotel Fontana\*\*\*\*  
Piazza di Trevi, 96  
Tel: (+39) 06-678 6113  
Single: approx. €180; Double: approx. €260; Triple: approx. €320  
<http://www.fontanahotel.com/>

Hotel Raphael\*\*\*\*  
Largo Febo, 2 (Piazza Navona)  
Tel: (+39) 06-682831  
Single: approx. €260; Double: approx. €390  
[www.raphaelhotel.com](http://www.raphaelhotel.com)

Hotel Bramante\*\*\*  
Vicolo delle Palline, 25  
Tel: (+39) 06 687 9881

Single: approx. €130; Double: approx. €160-185  
[www.hotelbramante.com](http://www.hotelbramante.com)

Hotel Gianicolo  
Viale della Mura Gianicolensi, 107  
Tel: (+39) 06-583 33405  
Single: approx. €160; Double: approx. €240; Triple: approx. €250  
<http://gianicolo.hotelinroma.com/>

Hotel Ponte Sisto  
Via dei Pettinari, 64  
Tel: (+39) 06 686 3100  
Single: approx. €150; Double: approx. €240; Triple: approx. €340; Suite: approx. €420  
<http://www.hotelpontesisto.it/web/>

◆ *SEE "CELL PHONES" SECTION FOR TELEPHONE DIALING INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITALY.*

## ***Host Institution & Housing***

### **ASA students in Rome will attend:**

John Cabot University  
Via della Lungara, 233  
00165 Rome  
ITALY  
Tel: (+39) 06 681 9121  
Fax: (+39) 06 589 7429  
[www.johncabot.edu](http://www.johncabot.edu)

### **Where will students live?**

All ASA students will live in shared student apartments. All of the apartments are fully furnished and have anywhere from 4 to 8 occupants. The ratio of students to bathrooms is 4:1. Apartments with more than 5 occupants will have at least 2 full bathrooms. Bedrooms are double occupancy; a small number are triple occupancy. Single bedrooms are VERY scarce; you may request one if you wish, but there is an additional fee of \$1,000 per semester for a single room (fee subject to change). Students are responsible for their own meals and laundry; each apartment has a fully equipped kitchen. The apartments are clustered in 2 main areas of Rome which are equidistant from JCU's campuses - the Trastevere and Vatican neighborhoods. This means that the apartments are usually a 15-30 minute walk from campus.

**JCU has a network of Resident Assistants** to help students with housing issues. ASA students will have a "neighborhood" RA, housed in a central location in their neighborhood in Rome. RAs make themselves available to students by visiting all the apartments throughout the semester, and of course, students will meet their RA during orientation. RAs are there to encourage student responsibility and accountability, explain University policies, provide personal and academic referrals, and organize fun activities such as study groups, pizza dinners, etc. RAs will also carry out announced sanitary inspections of the apartments on a regular basis, to ensure the health and safety of the students.

◆ **Sheets, comforter, pillow and towels are provided with the apartments.** Of course, you may bring your own if you wish (though we don't recommend it because it takes up a lot of space in your suitcase).

◆ **John Cabot University allows students to check into their housing *on the official arrival date between 10am and 7pm.* They also have an airport shuttle *from 9am-7pm on the official arrival date* that takes students from FCO directly to the JCU housing office, where they will check into their apartment. *We strongly recommend that you arrive at FCO by 2pm to allow plenty of time to check into your housing. If a 2pm arrival is not possible for you, we ask that you arrive at 4pm at the absolute latest, to allow time to get to the JCU housing office before closing.***

◆ **If, for any reason, you do not make it to the JCU housing office by 7pm on the official arrival date, you will have to get a hotel room for the night and go to JCU the next morning to check into your housing. Even if the reason is beyond anyone's control, such as a flight delay/cancellation, the JCU shuttle cannot pick you up after 7pm and you cannot check into your JCU housing until the housing office re-opens the next morning.**

♦ You may **not** move in early to your program housing or stay after the program ends. Students who choose to arrive early or stay late must make their own lodging arrangements for any extra days. **OVERNIGHT GUESTS ARE NOT ALLOWED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE.**

### **How will I get to class from my residence?**

Students will be able to walk or take the bus/subway to the university. The apartments are usually a 15-30 minute walk from campus. Rome has extensive bus and subway service all over the city, should you need to use it, and the rates for tickets and passes are reasonable. Although Italy is a safe country, we recommend that our students take taxis after 10 pm.

## **Medical Care**

### **What happens if I get sick while I'm in Italy?**

Our students' health and safety is always our number-one priority. The first and most important step to take is for the student to notify their Site Director immediately if they are ill. She will help the student in any way possible – by locating medical care, translating, accompanying him/her to the doctor, etc. Modern medical facilities and medications are widely available in Italy.

## **Cell Phones**

### **What is the time difference between Italy and where I live?**

The following times are the number of hours BEHIND Italy each region is:

Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
9 hours	8 hours	7 hours	6 hours

So, if it is 6pm in Italy, then it is 12 noon Eastern, 11am Central, and 9am Pacific.

### **Dialing Instructions for Italy**

011-INTERNATIONAL CODE 39-COUNTRY CODE FOR ITALY + PHONE NUMBER

For example, if the number you want to call is (+39) 123 456 789, you would dial 011-39-123-456-789 when calling from the U.S. To call this example number inside Italy, you would dial 123-456-789.

For more information on calling abroad, go to <http://www.howtocallabroad.com/>

### **How do the cell phones work?**

Each student receives a cell phone from Piccell Wireless. ASA provides the phone, while students are responsible for the cost of all calls. Students will receive email instructions from ASA on how to order the phone about a month prior to departure. *(Please do not order your phone until you receive instructions from ASA.)* Students will get their cell phone number when the phone arrives in the mail. The rates for calls and text messages can be found at <https://www.piccellwireless.com/latest/ratesandinfo.php> (click on Italy). Piccell offers fairly reasonable call rates to the U.S. Piccell will bill the student's credit card monthly for their phone calls, text messages, etc

INCOMING CALLS TO THE INTERNATIONAL (ITALIAN) PHONE NUMBER ARE FREE. INCOMING CALLS TO THE U.S. VIRTUAL NUMBER ARE **NOT** FREE. Piccell assigns each student an international (Italian) phone number and a U.S. Virtual Number (USVN for short). Be sure to call their international number, since students are charged for calls received on their USVN. As long as you dial their international number and they are in Italy at the time, the student will NOT be charged for the call.

The U.S. Virtual Number is basically a way for someone in the U.S. to call the student "collect." The USVN is a U.S. phone number that connects you to the student's phone abroad. The caller pays only for the local or long distance call. However, while it's cheaper for the caller, the student is charged for the incoming call at the rate given by Piccell. Check the link above for current rates. The USVN is automatically assigned, but students aren't obligated to use it. If you don't use the USVN for 45 days, it is automatically deactivated.

**ROAMING CHARGES: When you're outside your home service area of Italy, all phone usage, including calls/text messages received or placed, is considered ROAMING and is therefore, subject to high roaming charges.**

**To avoid roaming charges, students should NOT use their Italian cell phone outside of Italy.** Students can order a SIM card online from Piccell for any country they're going to travel to, in which case you would just swap out your SIM card.

### **What is the best way to call to/from Italy?**

Many students use **SKYPE** which gives you **free international calls** over the Internet. For details, go to [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com).

You can also contact your long distance provider about their international calling plan. Or, use an international pre-paid calling card. To use an international pre-paid calling card, you dial the access number, enter your PIN number/calling card number, then enter the number you want to call.

Try [www.nobel.com](http://www.nobel.com) or [www.tel3advantage.com](http://www.tel3advantage.com) for international pre-paid calling cards for calling U.S. – abroad. Try [www.enjoyprepaid.com](http://www.enjoyprepaid.com) for international pre-paid calling cards that parents or students can use to call each other, anywhere in the world.

### **TIPS ON CHOOSING A GOOD CALLING CARD:**

- Make sure the rate you're looking at is for a mobile phone and not a landline. Usually the rate to call a mobile phone abroad is higher than the rate to call a landline.
- Check to see if the card has a connection fee or disconnection fee.
- Some cards charge a small weekly or monthly MAINTENANCE FEE that is deducted from your balance.
- Watch out for MINUTE ROUNDING. For example, if your card has 3-minute rounding and you make a 1-minute call, you will actually be charged for 3 minutes of talk time; if you make a 5-minute call, you will actually be charged for 6 minutes of talk time; if you make a 7-minute call, you will be charged for 9 minutes of talk time. So, 1-minute rounding is much more desirable than 5-minute rounding.
- Most cards will give you a toll-free OR local access number to use. Try to use their LOCAL ACCESS NUMBER, if possible, because some cards charge a per-minute or flat fee for using their toll-free access number.
- Normally, the fewer "fees" a card has, the higher the per-minute rate. Conversely, the more "fees" a card has, the lower the per-minute rate. If a card seems "too good to be true," with no fees AND a super low rate...then it probably is! Therefore, it's important to READ ALL OF THE FINE PRINT before purchasing any phone card, and don't be afraid to call the company to ask questions before purchasing anything.
- Don't forget that you may have to pay for the call you make to the access number. If you call the access number from your cell phone, that call uses your minutes (or in the case of students abroad, Piccell will bill you for the call to the access number).

## ***Mail, Computers & Internet***

### **Will students have Internet/email access while in Italy?**

Yes. All students will have free wireless Internet on campus at John Cabot University, so **bring your laptop!** *Please note, students will NOT have Internet access in their apartments.* Students can also access Internet and email at Internet cafes, which are reasonably priced and easy to find throughout Rome.

*Please note that most classes at JCU require the use of personal computers. While computer labs are available on campus, students are better off bringing laptops.*

### **What kind of adaptor do students need in order to use their laptop in Italy?**

In Italy, the power supply is 220 volts/50 cycles, while in the U.S. it is 120 volts/60 cycles. Most laptops have a power supply that supports both 110 and 220 volts and 60 and 50 cycles (dual voltage). If your computer meets these requirements, you will only need to buy a plug adaptor so that the U.S. plug will fit into the Italian wall socket. Voltage adaptors and converters can be purchased at most hardware stores or places like Target, Wal-Mart, etc.

### **Can students receive mail?**

Yes. However,

- We do NOT recommend mailing packages to Italy unless it is absolutely necessary.
- All mail/packages must arrive AFTER the student has moved in.

JCU does NOT allow students to receive packages at the university. You will have a mailbox for letters only (address below). You will not know your Italian apartment address until you arrive, so if you want to ship something ahead of time, please use **Futura Forwarders**: <http://www.futuraforwarders.it/it/students.htm> which is recommended by JCU.

In general, it is problematic to receive packages in Italy— the recipient is usually charged a customs tax to receive the package. Therefore, it is not advisable to mail anything— especially not items such as clothing, gifts, etc. that are of a non-urgent nature. The customs tax can be anywhere from €5 (approx. \$8) to €200 (approx. \$350), depending on the

package's declared value and contents. It is difficult to predict what the tax will be when sending a package. If you declare a value, it is not uncommon to pay fees as high as US\$60-\$150 to pick up the package! Remember that all insured packages require a declared value.

If you do choose to send something, the following information will assist you. On the customs form, you should mark your items as "used" whenever possible (i.e. "used books" or "used clothing"), or "FOR PERSONAL USE ONLY – NO COMMERCIAL VALUE," as packages containing new items will be taxed exorbitantly. You will also have to declare a value on the customs form. The higher the declared value, the higher the tax will be on the receiving end. Declaring a value of less than €10/\$10 may help to keep the customs tax to a minimum.

For sending packages, we recommend FedEx, UPS, or DHL because they will give you a tracking number. Although FedEx, DHL, and UPS are not the cheapest ways to mail items abroad, they are the fastest and most secure. You may contact any of these companies for a price quote and estimated transit time by giving them the weight, dimensions and destination of your package. For sending mail (letters, cards, papers, photographs, etc.), we recommend the U.S. Postal Service.

**Students will have a mailbox on campus at JCU for receiving LETTERS ONLY (no bubble envelopes or packages).** The address format for your mailbox is:

Your name  
c/o John Cabot University  
Via della Lungara 233  
00165 Rome  
Italy

► **OVERNIGHT MAIL**

"Overnight" from the U.S. does NOT mean overnight to Italy! If someone in the U.S. sends an overnight document to Italy, it will arrive in Italy AFTER 2 DAYS OR MORE. For urgent documents, ATM cards, etc., use a reliable service such as FedEx or UPS. While the express or overnight USPS Global Priority service is reliable, it will actually take several EXTRA days to reach its destination because when the item enters Italy it is placed directly into the Italian postal system, which delays its delivery.

*Example:* If a FedEx letter classified as "overnight" leaves the U.S. on a Monday morning, the student will likely receive the item at the *earliest* on Wednesday or Thursday of the same week. Other couriers (UPS, USPS) may take longer.