



## ***Top 10 Reasons to Go to Rome: A Firsthand Perspective***

**By Madeline Smith**

### ***1. An Academic Experience Like No Other***

Forget dry lectures and dusty chalkboards. **Mr. Bellisario and fellow colleagues** bring a level of passion to the curriculum that makes learning actually... fun. While the schedule is intense—think four hours of class, six days a week—the payoff is massive. It isn't exactly a "walk in the park" (though we visited plenty of those), but the academic rigor builds the kind of independence that makes university look like a breeze.

### ***2. A Parent-Free Paradise***

For many of us, this was our first month "living" on our own. You haven't truly experienced independence until you're scrubbing your socks in a hotel bathtub or navigating a Roman lunch menu without a translator. It's the perfect "test drive" for moving away to university.

### ***3. English with a Side of Gelato***

Why take Grade 12 English in a stuffy classroom when you can earn that compulsory credit in Italy? University admissions (including big names like Waterloo) view this as a "**unique enrichment programme**" rather than a summer school shortcut. Plus, there is no better way to "cram" for a final exam than with a cone of stracciatella in hand.

### ***4. Delizioso Dining***

Nothing on earth tastes better than fresh rigatoni enjoyed by the Spanish Steps. Our four-star hotel was a strategic masterpiece, surrounded by pizzerias, bakeries, and gelaterias. You'll find flavours you never knew you needed, like Kiwi, Pistachio, and even Kinder Egg.

### ***5. Glovo to the Rescue***

Missing home? When your taste buds need a break from tradition, **Glovo** (Europe's answer to UberEATS) delivers right to the hotel lobby. If you need a midnight 20-piece Chicken McNugget or a Baci McFlurry to power through an essay, the Roman Golden Arches have your back.

### ***6. Rome Like a Local***

We didn't just see the tourist traps that much; we lived in a Roman neighborhood. From the cobblestone charm of **Trastevere** to the lively evening scenes in local piazzas, you learn to appreciate the city from the perspective of the people who call this ancient place home.

### ***7. The Historical Heartbeat***

With grand fountains, ancient obelisks, and monuments at every turn, the city is a living museum. Our tour guides turned "showstoppers" like the Colosseum and St. Peter's Basilica into vivid stories. Every tour is a masterclass in history that stays with you long after the flight home.

### ***8. Peak "Chill" Factor***

It wasn't all work. We spent days lounging on the beach in **Ostia**, riding bicycles through the **Borghese Gardens**, and cooling off by the hotel pool. We even took a detour to **Florence** for the legendary sandwiches that **Mr. Bellisario** claims are the sole reason he keeps coming back every year.

### ***9. Postcard-Worthy "Digitals"***

Your digital camera will never recover. From the breathtaking heights of the **Janiculum Hill** to the shimmering Tiber River, every corner of Rome and Florence is a "feast for the eyes." Whether it's majestic sculptures or lush hidden gardens, you're guaranteed a spectacular view every single day.

### ***10. Lifelong Memories***

You'll endure the heat, the long walks, and the intense study sessions together, creating a bond with your fellow students that day-school simply can't replicate. You'll leave Rome with a transcript full of credits and a heart full of stories.

### ***Conclusion: The Grand Tour***

This trip is a rare trifecta: top-tier academics, expert-led tours, and the chance to explore one of the world's most beautiful cities with your best friends. **Mr. Bellisario and fellow colleagues** have built a programme that covers Rome from the catacombs to the rooftops. But ultimately, Rome is the star—a city that will change the way you see the world forever.