

YAE!! Noceto, Italy  
September 28 – October 7, 2017

We arrived on Friday night, the whole group was tired but very excited. We got out of the bus and stood outside of the city hall, with none of the Italian students in sight. Confused, we all stood there wondering where they were when suddenly, two Italians, one speaking English and one speaking Italian, started announcing something. They told us that we were going to play an Italian game and one by one our exchange students walked out, wearing white masks covering their faces. We were supposed to guess which one was our exchange student so we all walked up to them. After we all had found our exchange students we met with their family and went home with them. It was really weird looking at the Italian cars because they were all really small, but driving in them was even stranger. There are no stop lights in Noceto, just traffic circles and stop signs so you were constantly being tossed around the car. After arriving at my home, I got settled and chilled out for a while. A little while later we all left our hosts' house and went to a restaurant called Noce. That night was really fun because we got to try a lot of Italian foods and we got to hang out with both the American and Italian students.

The next day we started out with meeting the mayor at city hall. After that we spend the rest of the day and the following day with our families. My family took me to the Parma mountains and we played games and made pizzas out of a pizza oven. We mainly rested, which I found very helpful because I was super tired from all of the traveling.

The Monday after the family weekend we spent the morning exploring around Noceto. We took a tour of the school, went to the printing press museum and walked around the town market. After this we met with the Italians and went to a castle called the Fontanellato Castle. We took a tour of the castle and afterwards, we got gelato! For the rest of the day we hung out with our family.

The next day, we woke up bright and early and departed for Venice. It was a three-hour bus ride and it took a long time, but when we got there it was worth it. After getting into the city, we walked around to find a tour guide to lead us around the city. The tour was really cool, maneuvering us through all of the narrow streets and alleyways. After the tour, we got time to walk around the city and shop. Once we were done with that, we walked back to the bus and headed home. Upon getting back to Noceto, we went home with our families and spent time with them.

On Wednesday, we went to the Bertinelli Cheese Factory and took a tour of it. It was really cool because we got to see how they make parmesan cheese (which the region is known for). After that we drove to Parma and took a tour of the Lombardi museum and the Farnese Theater. After that, we had lunch with the Italian students, and then we shopped downtown. Later that night we had the group dinner, where we preformed the dance we had previously prepared.

The next day we visited Ravenna. It was another three-hour drive and we played lots of music during the bus trip. When we arrived, we split into groups and did a scavenger hunt, visiting many churches. After racing through the town, we got back on the bus and went to the Adriatic Sea. We caught crabs and ran around the

beach until it was time to head back. We got back to Noceto and went to a pizza place as a group.

On Friday, our last day there, we went to tour a castle and afterwards we went to a bakery and ate lots of Italian sweets. Then we went to the Italian school, met up with our Italian students, and went home with them. For the rest of the afternoon, we had free time to do whatever we wanted. We went for a bike ride and got some gelato and then went to a park. Later that night we had our farewell dinner where we ate pizza and cake. When we arrived back to the houses we packed our things, getting ready for our departure the next day.

On the day that we left we went to the Italian school and played a game with all of the student that were at the school. We started saying goodbye as we walked to the city hall where our airport shuttle awaited us. During our last moments with each other, everyone said goodbye and then finally climbed into the bus. We drove towards the airport, bidding our exchange students farewell. I would definitely recommend this to any student wanting to do this program because it was such a cool experience that will change the way you look at other countries.