Applying for Your Student Visa: Italy

What is a visa?
A visa is official authorization allowing you to enter a country and travel, work, live, or study there for a specific period of time. Generally, a visa is an elaborate stamp that is sealed onto one of the pages of your passport. Visas are issued to American citizens by a foreign country's Embassy or Consulate located in the United States. Every country has its own regulations governing the issuance of visas.

Do I need a visa to go to Italy?
A visa is required for all students travelling to Italy for the purpose of study, research or internship. Regardless of your length of stay, a student visa is required. Students (short and long-term stay) are exempt from visa application fees. All foreigners (including students) must report to the QUESTURA of the city where they are staying to obtain a PERMESSO DI SOGGIORNO (Permit to Stay) within 8 days of entry into Italy.

What do I need to apply for a visa to Italy?
► Attention: Visa requirements change constantly and vary by Consulate Office! Verify this information with the Consulate that has jurisdiction over your permanent address, as the application process can change and vary by consulate.
http://www.ambwashingtondc.esteri.it/Ambasciata_Washington/Menu/Informazioni_e_servizi/La_rete_consolare/

You need the following documents to apply for a visa:
• A valid passport, valid for three months after the date you will leave Italy (1 original and 1 copy)
  ❖ Please see page 1 in the Study Abroad Handbook for how to apply for a passport.
  ❖ Apply early for your passport! It may take 6-8 weeks to process your application.
• A completed visa application form with one recent passport photograph (2x2 inches in size, full face, front view, color), glued to the application. The form is available to download at the website of the Consulate General's office that holds jurisdiction over the state of your residence.
• Letters of Acceptance (1 original and 1 copy of each):
  a) Letter from the U.S academic institution stating that the applicant is currently enrolled and admitted to its foreign affiliate or branch or to an Italian school (available through UM’s Registrar’s Office) AND
  b) Original and one copy of acceptance letter in Italian from the host university in Italy stating that the applicant has been admitted.
Note: These letters must indicate: (1) the name of the student, (2) The complete name and address of the school in Italy, (3) The exact period of study including day/month/year and weekly hours, (4) That tuition, room and board and health insurance are covered or that the student has made arrangements with the Academic Institution for the same. Both letters must be on original letterhead of the school, stamped with the official seal of the Institution and signed by an official representative.
• Proof of Funds: Please note that the financial information is confidential, required of all applicants, and must be present on file. Student must show that they have access to no less than €417.30/month of the academic year. This can be proven through proof of personal or family resources (e.g., bank statements), or guarantee of financial resources by accredited Italian institutions or agencies, local governments, or foreign institutions or agencies considered trustworthy by the Italian Diplomatic Representation (e.g., official student loan documents).
• Proof of adequate lodgings available for the entire stay. If this is not specified in the acceptance letter, provide lodging information (signed lease contract, letter from housing department, etc.).
How do I obtain a visa?

A. Work with the UM Office of International Programs (OIP) to submit your visa documents. OIP can submit the visa application on behalf of the student so you do not have to apply in person.

- Submit all documents, including your passport, in a FedEx, US Overnight Mail, or other express mail service that provides a tracking number for your parcel, to OIP. Keep a photocopy of all documents, including your passport, for yourself.
- Enclose a postage paid USPS Express Mail envelope addressed to yourself. No other postage services will be accepted.
- Apply early: normal processing time is three to six weeks and cannot be started until all paperwork is submitted.
- Be sure all documents are in order. Missing documents may cause delays in the processing of your application.
- Do not leave the country until you have received your passport and visa.

B. In person (Please note: Unless you are working with OIP, you must apply for the visa in person, and you must apply at the consulate with jurisdiction over the state of your permanent address.)

- Take the above documents to the Italian consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence.
- Call the consulate before you visit to verify hours of operation, location and paperwork requirements.
- Avoid waiting until the last minute to apply for your visa, as omitting one document or failing to complete a form completely may delay the processing of your visa for weeks.
- To avoid having to pick up the visa in person after submitting all of your application materials, you may choose to supply a self-addressed pre-paid USPS Express Mail envelope. No other postage services will be accepted.

General tips for applying for a visa:

Foreign embassies and consulates in the US receive hundreds of inquiries every day so contacting them may be a trying experience. Have patience. Some consulates only receive visitors or calls during certain hours of the day or on certain days of the week; visit their website to learn their hours or call back at different times of the day. You may find that you are placed on hold or that your call is never forwarded to the appropriate person. Don't be discouraged: be persistent, but polite. Remember that US consulates in foreign countries operate in a similar fashion!

Italian Embassy/Consulates

Visit http://www.ambwashingtondc.esteri.it/Ambasciata_Washington/Menu/Informazioni_e_servizi/La_rete_consolare/La+rete+consolare.htm to find the Consulate General office that has jurisdiction over the state of your residence.

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