

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA STUDY ABROAD CONSORTIUM

NEWSLETTER

Vol: 3

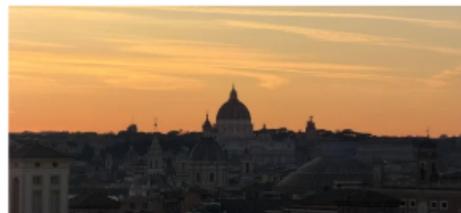
Florence, Italy
24 February 2026



NCSAC WEEK 3

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During week three, students had their ILC lecture on the Church & Papacy followed by a visit to the Santa Croce Church on Thursday. Art history students visited both the San Miniato Church and the Santa Maria Novella Church this week. Lastly, we had our first optional weekend excursion with AIFS staff! See below for more!



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ILC LECTURE ON THE CHURCH & PAPACY WITH A VISIT TO THE SANTA CROCE CHURCH

This week, students had a lecture on the Church and Papacy, taking a look at the role of the Catholic Church in Italian history, politics and culture, as well as the separation (or lack thereof) of church and state. This was followed by a guided tour of Santa Croce Church on Thursday, one of the largest Franciscan Basilica in the world and the burial place of Michelangelo, Galileo and Machiavelli.



ART HISTORY VISIT TO SAN MINIATO

Art history students and Professor Nicole White, on Tuesday, walked to visit the San Miniato Church; a historic Romanesque basilica in Florence, located on a hill above the city. Built between the 11th and 13th centuries, it's famous for its green-and-white marble facade and beautiful mosaic interior. It also offers one of the best panoramic views of Florence.

ART HISTORY VISIT TO SANTA MARIA NOVELLA

On Thursday, art history students and Professor White took another visit to the Santa Maria Novella Church; a major Dominican church, located near the main train station. Built in the 13th–15th centuries, it's known for its striking green and white marble facade and important Renaissance artworks inside, including Masaccio's Trinity. It is one of the city's most important historic and artistic landmarks.



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ROME EXCURSION

This weekend, students had their first optional weekend excursion to Rome with AIFS staff. On Friday, students left Florence in the early morning and took a high-speed train to Rome. Upon arrival, students dropped their bags off in the centrally located Hotel. We then gave them time to have lunch before their guided tour of the Colosseum & Roman Forums. The remainder of the day was free. On Saturday morning, students woke up and traveled to Saint Peter's Basilica for another guided tour. The remainder of the weekend, students were free to explore Rome on their own, visiting other famous sites like the Pantheon and the Trevi Fountain pictured below. Sunday afternoon, the group traveled back to Florence on another high-speed train, arriving in the early evening. What a great, successful first weekend trip!

