

The background is a blue gradient with white circular patterns and a scale on the left side. The scale has numbers from 140 to 260. There are several circular patterns, some with arrows, and a dotted line. The overall aesthetic is technical and modern.

MY TRIP TO ITALY

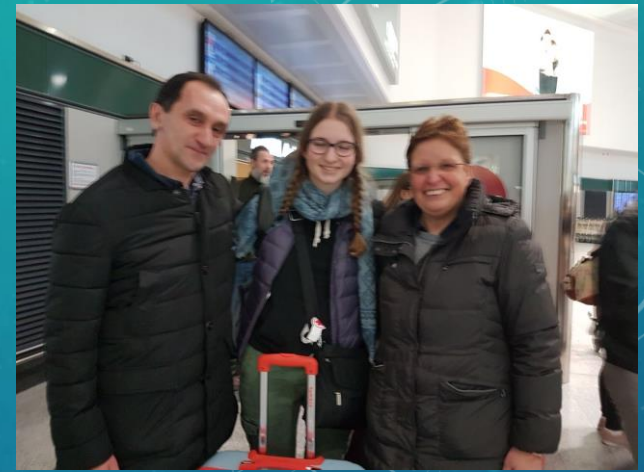
KAILEY MITCHELL

INTRO/WHY WANTED TO GO

Ever since I learnt about these international exchanges two years ago, it became one of my dreams to participate in one. I was accepted to go on a five month trip to Verbania, Italy from February 1 2018 to July 5 2018 and I was ecstatic! Verbania is a place I'd previously visited with the shorter two week long cultural exchange so it was fun to both see the people from last time and get to know more about the area.

Leaving/arriving

I left Comox on January 31st on the 6:00am flight to Vancouver, the first of four planes I'd have to take to arrive in Milan. Overall it was about 27 hours of travel, making my arrival time in Italy 13:00 on February 1st



January is named after the Roman god, Janus. March, named after the Roman war god Mars. May is named after Maia, the goddess of bounty and the mother of Mercury. June is named after the goddess Juno, the wife and sister of Jupiter. The other months were named according to their numerical order, the seasonal activities, deities and emperors.

My Birthday

Two days after arriving it was my birthday! This was my first time celebrating it away from home so I'm grateful that my homestay family decided to get me such a nice cake and make me feel at home.



Where I Lived

This house I was living was at the top of a hill so it had a beautiful view of the lake and the mountains.

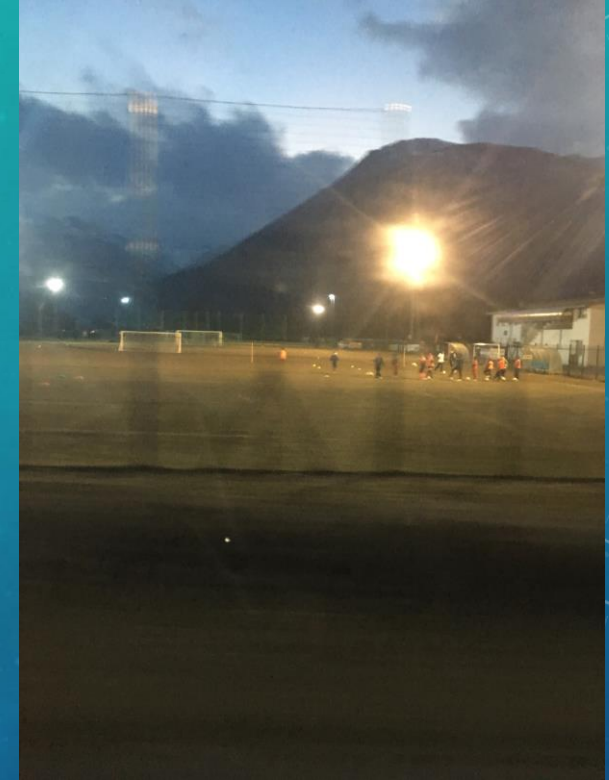


I learnt very quickly that nobody living in Verbania actually calls Verbania Verbania; they use the names of the localities such as Intra, Pallaza, Suna and Fondotoce. The technical name of area I lived in was Biganzolo which is just outside of Intra. For the sake of simplicity however I will just refer to the area as Verbania throughout this presentation.



Soccer/Football/Calcio

For the first month of my stay in Italy, I played with the women's football team in Masera. They play at a higher level than I do in Canada which made it difficult to keep up but also offered a fun challenge. They're was also another Canadian on the team from Quebec who helped translate what the coach was saying if I hadn't understood. Practices had a lot more fitness training than I'm used to so over the month my stamina definitely increased.



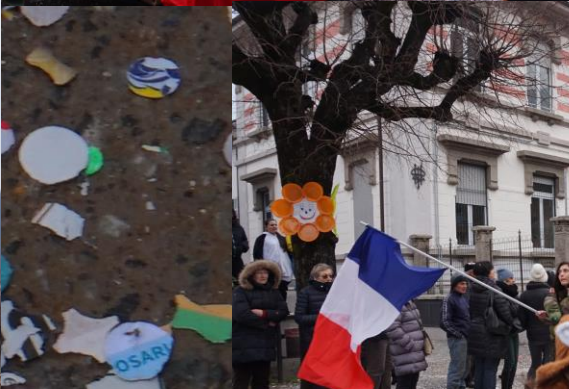
Carnevale

My second week in was Carnevale, which meant a five day long weekend. During that time I got to go hiking (as seen on this page), see a parade, and go to the hot springs up in the mountains.

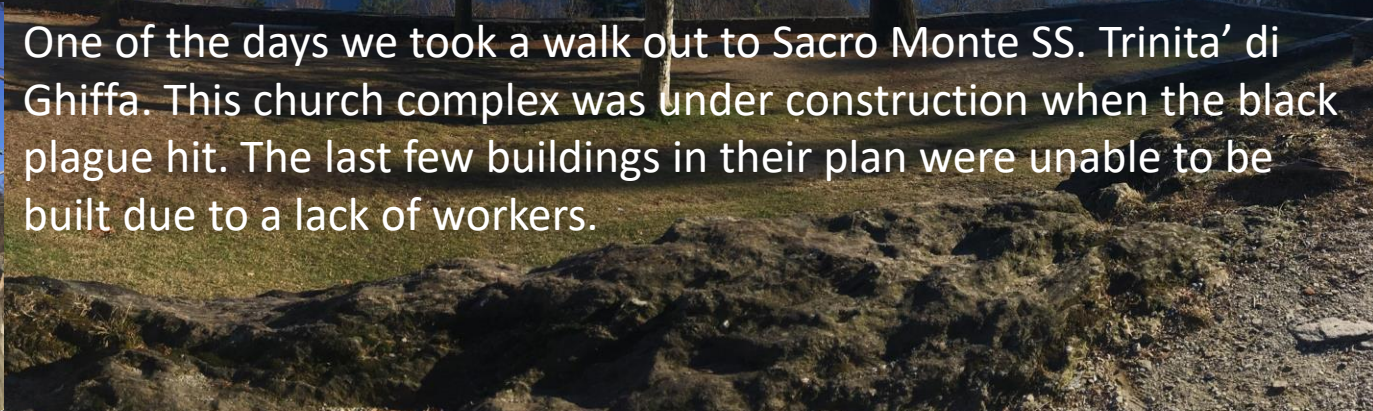


The parade was the main celebration of Carnevale. The floats consisted of funny costumes, political caricature, and confetti being thrown everywhere and at everyone. It was interesting to compare it to what I know of Carnaval in Quebec from my elementary school celebrating it every year. Overall, the main difference is that Quebec features more winter sports such as ice sculpting and sledding as winters are much colder there.





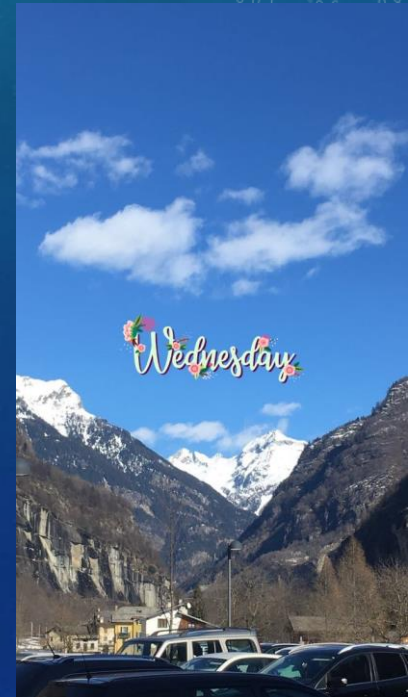




One of the days we took a walk out to Sacro Monte SS. Trinita' di Ghiffa. This church complex was under construction when the black plague hit. The last few buildings in their plan were unable to be built due to a lack of workers.



The Premia thermal bathes I went to are located fairly far into the mountains, so there was beautiful views the entire way there and back. It was a good way to relax on the last day of the break before returning to school.



As one of the things I brought from Canada for my host family was maple syrup, I also decided to show them how to make pancakes. It was quite the experience for me to learn how to adjust the heat on a gas stove top as I kept accidentally turning it off. Some batches of pancakes turned out better than others.

Non c'era abbastanza di lievito per fare questi ma abbiamo provato



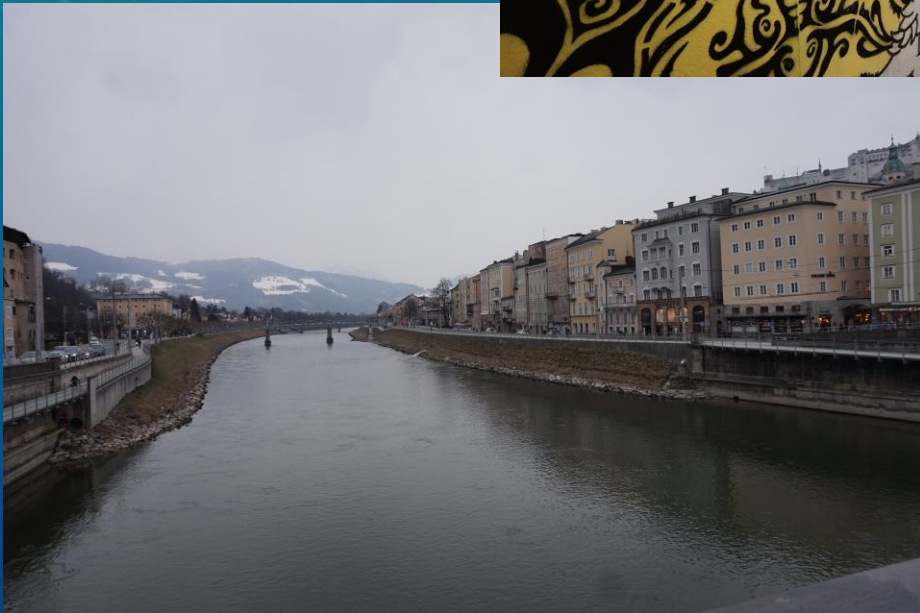
Trip to Austria

At the end of my first month in Italy, I got to go on a school trip to Austria with the two fifth year human sciences classes for five days. We went to both Salzburg and Vienna, and I ended up making some good friends. Some of the things we did in these location were walk around the city, visit important churches, admire art in museums, and go ice skating. Unfortunately this was also the week Europe suffered from a cold wave, so temperatures were consistently under -5c. If it looks like any of the people in the next slides of people are freezing, it's because we are, but don't worry, we're all still having fun.



Day one in Salzburg!

We arrived late so we didn't have enough time to do much so we walked around the city and went to a church.



Day 2!

Overnight it snowed, giving the view of the castle from the hotel a magical touch. Unfortunately we weren't able to stay and appreciate it for very long as it was cold outside and we had over four hours of driving ahead of us.

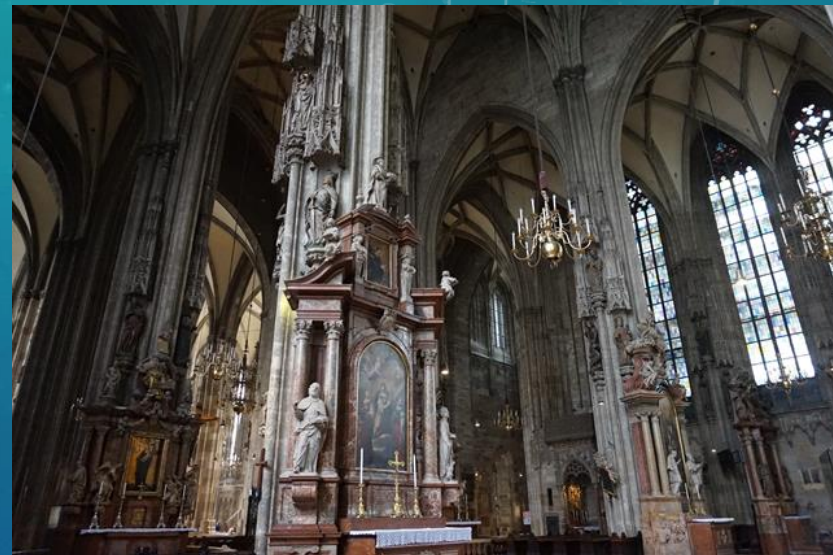


Quest'era di la notte prima. Io e le mie amiche abbiamo deciso di comprare questo gioco così potevamo giocare ogni giorno della viaggio.

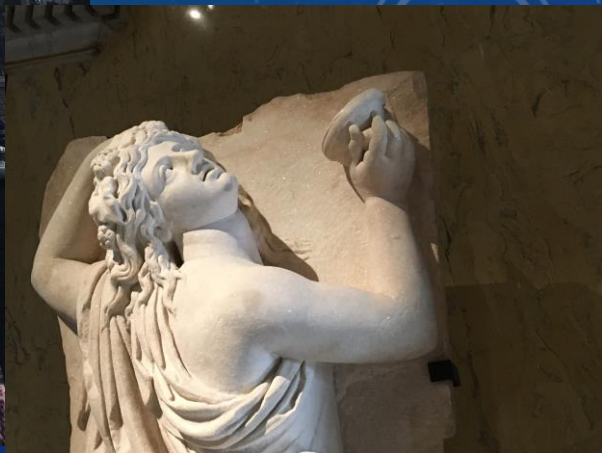
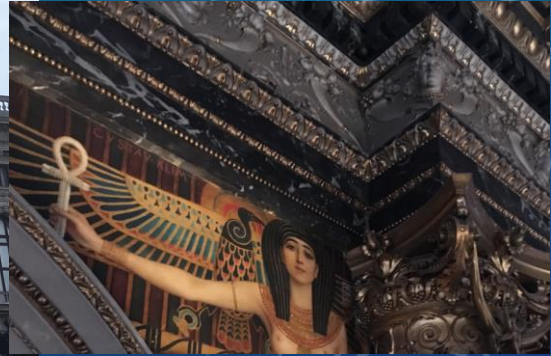


Day 3

Day three was a lot of sightseeing. The morning started off with meeting our lovely tour guide who took us to see the Hundertwasserhaus and then to St. Stephen's Cathedral.



We then went to the Kunsthistorisches museum after lunch. It features ancient Egyptian artefacts, statues, paintings, and some of Gustav Klimt's early work.





Day 4

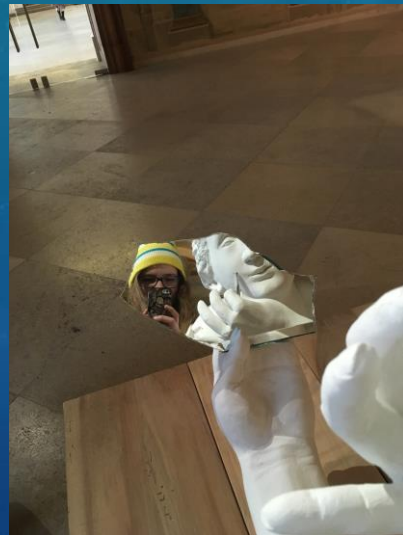
In the morning we went for a tour of Schönbrunn palace. Schönbrunn means beautiful spring in English, after the artisian well from which the court drew its water.

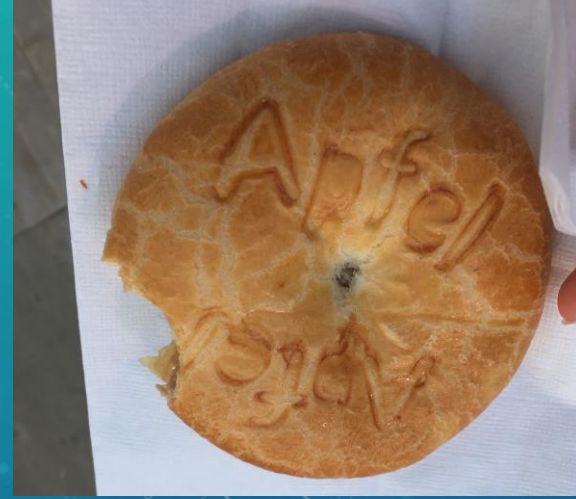


Il Belvedere

In the afternoon we then went to the Belvedere museum (beautiful view in English). This museum mainly features works by Gustav Klimt but also has one of the most famous paintings of Napoleon. My friends were excited for this museum as they had studied Klimt in they're art history class. His style of art is unique because it's paint and collage mixed together.

<<Il baccio>>





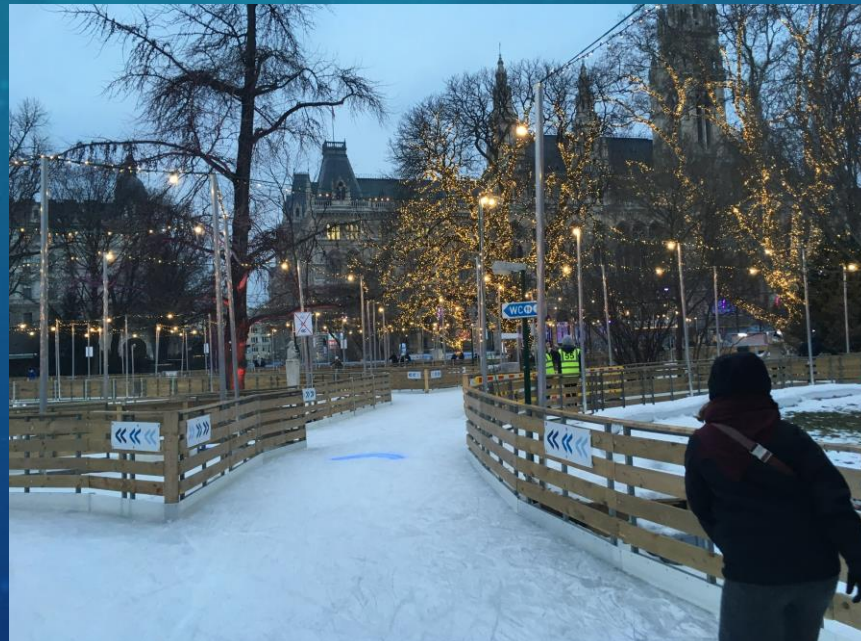
Traduzione: Apple, pomme, mela, manzana.

On the last evening I decided to go skating with the group that was doing that. Easily both the location in front of the Rathaus and the layout of the rink made it the coolest place I'd ever skated at.





An interesting expression my friends taught me was “In bocca al lupo.” It’s an old expression to wish someone good luck, literally translating to in the mouth of the wolf. The idea behind it is that while hunting if one person is in the mouth of the wolf, the other will be able to get away. Unfortunately for me, I did not have much luck on my last day in Austria.



Hurting my knee

While skating, I went to turn around but I slipped and my left knee gave out. Getting back to the bus was a pain even with people helping me and when we got back to the hotel my group had to switch rooms because the heating had stopped working in ours. Luckily the next day was mostly just travel to get home. For almost a month and a half, I couldn't do almost anything as I was on crutches and had difficulties walking with them. A running joke with my host family was that I had visited every hospital in the area.



crutches

I won't lie, this was one of the hardest months of my life, because I had a major injury, was away from my family, and was unable to do anything on an exchange which is supposed to be about doing new things. Thankfully my mom was able to come visit from her trip to Germany and I also got to see some of my Canadian friends when they arrived with their cultural exchange. Also the Gelaterias finally opened so I got to have my first Gelato of the trip.



After being cleared by the doctor, I got down to using one crutch to walk by Easter, meaning I got to go for a day trip to Milan with my family. Over that weekend I also joined a youth group which I attended for about a month. When I finally got down to no crutches, I got a gym membership so I could go there three times a week to strengthen my knee.



history

Because I got to go to so many medical facilities, I also got to learn about their histories and what else they may have been used for. For example the yellow building in the bottom right used to be a Nazi SS. Base during WW2. I also learnt later that the partisan movement had been quite active in my town. In fact, the piazza in front of my school, Martiri di Trarego, there was named after nine boys who were murdered for participating in the resistance, two of which had been attending Cobianchi at the time. I still have a hard time wrapping my head around this.

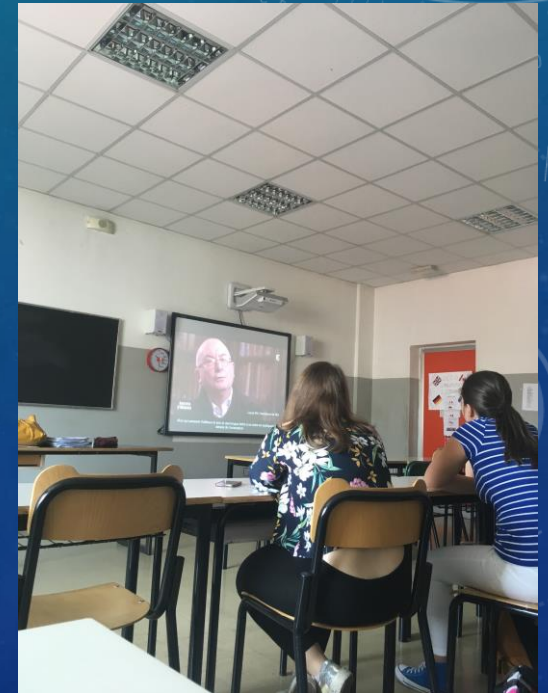


School

An average day at Cobianchi in languages started at 8:30 and ended at 14:00 with music starting at 14:30-16:00. There were six classes every day each just under an hour long. After two classes there would be a 10 minute break where almost everyone in my class would go to the canteen. One major difference between my school here in Canada and my school in Italy was that in Italy the teachers changed classes and the kids stay in the same class. Another difference is that the overall class sizes were not nearly as large as here, my class there only having fourteen people. A few more differences were the subjects and choosing a class. Going into highschool, students get to choose what type of course they'd like to pursue for the next five years, such as languages or sciences or robotics. Some of the new subjects I got to do that are not offered at my school in Canada are: Philosophy (my favourite), art history, French literature, German, and of course Italian (although the two languages can be done online).



Another thing was that there wasn't a projector in every room, only those big enough to fit them had them, meaning my class who were also in the older part of the school had to walk up to the third floor computer lab if we ever needed a projector



Market

Every Saturday and Sunday there's a market in Intra. The Saturday markets were bigger and you could buy anything from leather to clothing to food and would take up to parking lots of space. The Sunday markets were mainly knickknacks and foods such as cheese, meat, and dried fruits and were held along the lakeside.

Speaking of cheese, that was one of the biggest differences between food in Italy vs Canada and even Germany

Canada



Italy



Germany



While it is possible to buy wedges of cheese in both Canada and Germany, in Italy it is almost impossible to buy cheese in any other way. Cheddar also isn't even a type of cheese sold in Italy.

C'era anche le cose per i bambini come questo 'bouncy castle' di Harry Potter



Lucca

At the end of April/start of May there was a long weekend so me and my homestay family went to Lucca, Sienna and Pisa in Tuscany. Lucca (on this slide was interesting because it's a city that decided to maintain it's original walls and also has a peculiar tower that has trees growing at the top of it. This was the cheapest way for the owners to have the tallest tower as the trees would grow raising the building higher.



Sienna



Sienna is a city with a history of racing. The picture to the left and above are where they hold horse races. To the right is the church which has beautiful images painted onto the floor.



Pisa



Pisa was the most touristic place I visited while in Italy. While there I got to enter the church and climb up the leaning tower. The stairs were interesting because you could tell which way it was leaning based on where the steps had eroded.



Val D'Aosta

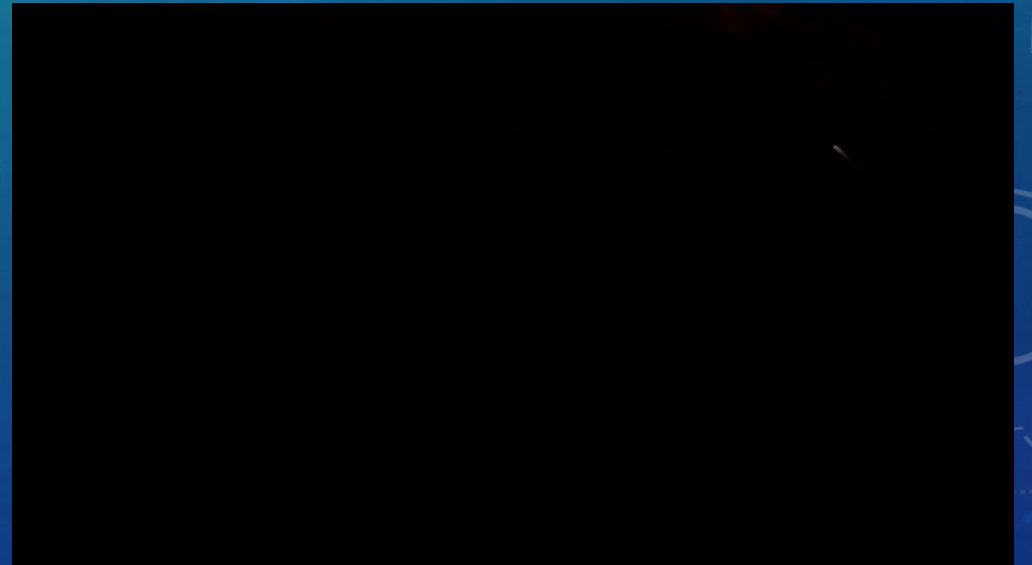
Towards the end of the year I got to go on a day trip to Val D'Aosta and Monte Bianco with the first and second year students. A couple of my friends were on the trip which made it fun.

C'era anche un Gruppo della Thailandia a Monte Bianco che hanno preso i photo con noi.



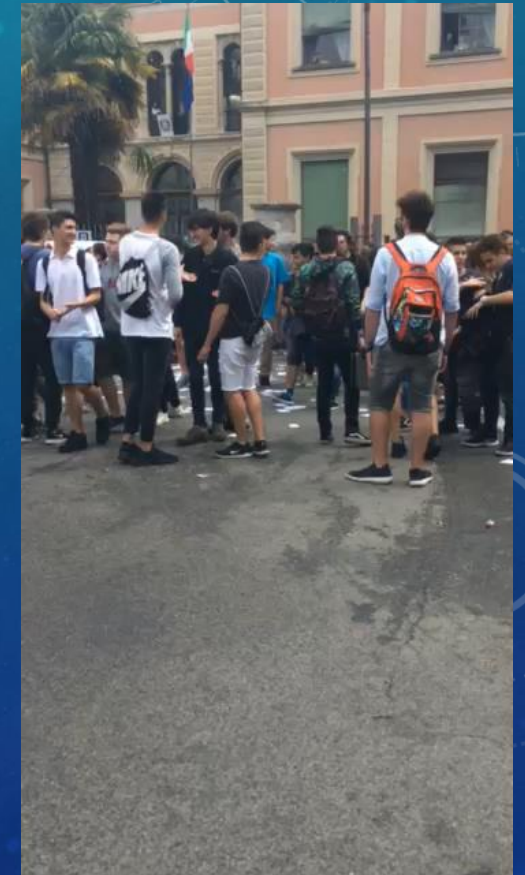
BAND

In April I started attending Band again twice a week so at the end of the year I was also able to play in the five concerts the school held for the students. This was the most fun part of the school year.



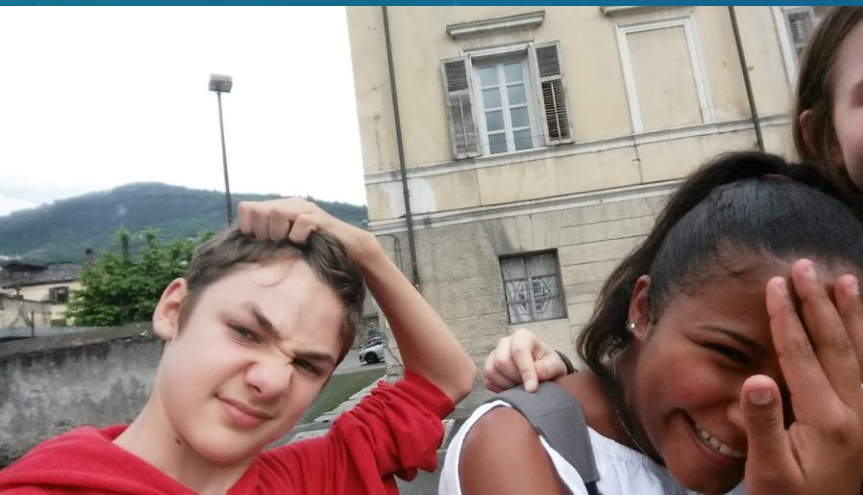
Last day school

The last day of school was pretty crazy. At 11:00, the teachers opened the gates letting the students pour out. Basically what happens at Cobianchi on the last day is a giant party in the parking lot, with the older students spraying champagne everywhere, motorcycles biking back and forth, and other generic chaos.



Friends

Throughout my five months I made many great friends, most of whom were also originally from different countries.



Germany

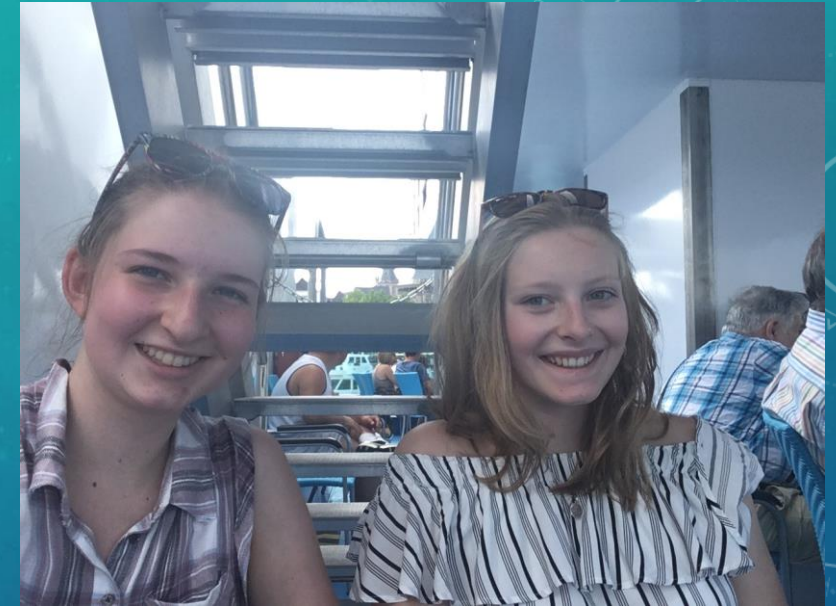
Because I also did a two week exchange to Germany and hosted a German student for six months last year, I knew that I wanted to visit them at some point while in Europe. First, I went to Ulm to visit my exchange partners. We all went bowling and to a castle.



Köln



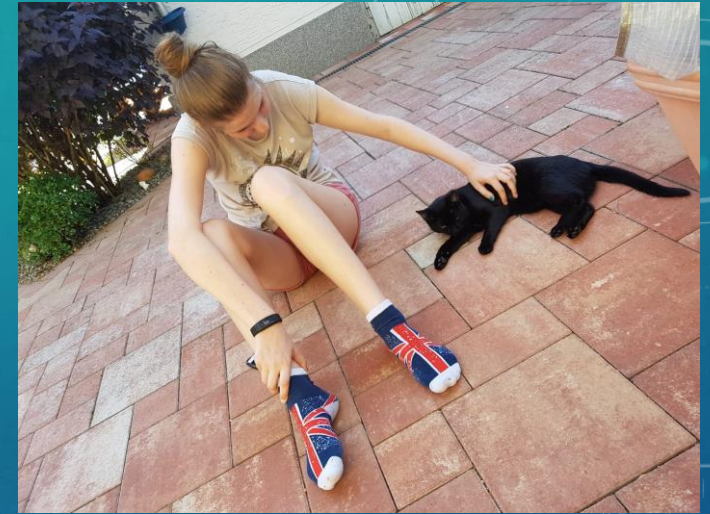
The second place I stayed was Dortmund, which is not far from Köln, so me and my friend hopped on the train for a day trip to there. We got to see the church and go on a river boat tour of the city.



Faceva troppo caldo allora è per questo che abbiamo scelto di fare un giro sul barco.



While in Dortmund we also visited an old castle which had a lovely view of the city. My friends family also had a couple of cats which was nice as I had begun to miss mine.



Una
tipisch
Italinisch
Pizzaeis,
fatto con
quatro tipi
di gelati e
le frutta.



Food

Main foods in Italy are pretty much what you think of when you think of Italy: pizza, pasta, and gelato. However during the winter it's almost impossible to find gelato so hot chocolate is a better solution. Italian hot chocolate is a lot thicker than your typical Canadian hot chocolate which gives it more flavour.



There are also some foods that are only available around easter such as Chiacchiere (a thin, sweat cracker type of thing), la colomba (bread in the shape of a dove with a sweat layer covering the top), and instead of several small eggs, a big one with a toy inside.



Mi piace piu il cioccolato italiano che il cioccolato canadese.



CULTURAL COMPARISONS

Some big differences I noticed that I haven't included yet: how old the buildings all were and how different the material they're made from is, the way houses were built into small villages going all the way up the hill/mountains, and how almost all places operate on a line based system; you take a number and wait for it to be called, even if you have been given a time to be there (ex: doctor appointment). Some other interesting differences involving age are that you can drink beer and drive a scooter at sixteen but you have to be eighteen before you can drive a car.

CLOSING SECTION

Despite having injured my knee, I still had a great time in Italy. I did struggle with speaking the language in the beginning but by the end of the trip I was conversing with my friends in Italian. While physically the only difference between then and now is that my hair grew longer, as a person I gained more self confidence and expanded my world views greatly. I now know that our current prime minister is remembered as the guy who wore colourful socks. But on a serious note, I learnt how privileged I am to speak English as my first language. When travelling the world, the international language of communication has become English. To be more eligible for jobs speaking English can help advance your career. Even at school, all the different courses include English as a subject. It's strange to think about how being bilingual is for the most part a necessity but in north America if you already speak English learning another language is just a bonus. For me however, from both my time in Italy and twelve years in French immersion, I'm currently thinking of pursuing languages at post-secondary and looking for a job in that field. I'd also like to go back to Italy someday to see my friends there again.

OTHER HONORABLE MENTION STORIES

- While this doesn't strictly meet any criteria for this project, I'd also like to share a couple memories from being able to translate things for people. First, while in Italy, I helped an English couple find out what was inside the cookies they wanted to buy and translated how many they wanted. Next on my flight home I was next to an Italian couple who I helped navigate the entertainment menu to find movies in Italian and later help them fill out the declaration card.