



Brandon Nguyen's
~ Journey to Italy ~
Summer 2021



The Uniqueness of Italian Cities

For this project, I photographed the cities that the Journey to Italy program took us students on, focusing on the differences in buildings, landscape, and architecture. Just being able to witness these cities in person was breathtaking, as each city that we visited had its own distinct feeling, landscape, culture, etc. This is something that I found amazing and was inspired by. With this project, I want to express the uniqueness of each city through the pictures I took. Enjoy!



ROME







ROME

Rome was the first city we stopped by, so it was my first impression of the country. And wow was it stunning. As one of the historical capitals of the world, everywhere you look there is something worth learning about. Old churches line the streets, beautiful fountains left and right; as the Catholic capital, the historical influence is very evident. Roman and Renaissance architecture bares its fangs with pride, as old monuments are preserved and even still used. You are able to see the history behind every street, every back alley. As the first city in Italy that I witnessed, it was one that was worth the hype. Compared to the other cities I will discuss, it is the one that oozes its historical significance.

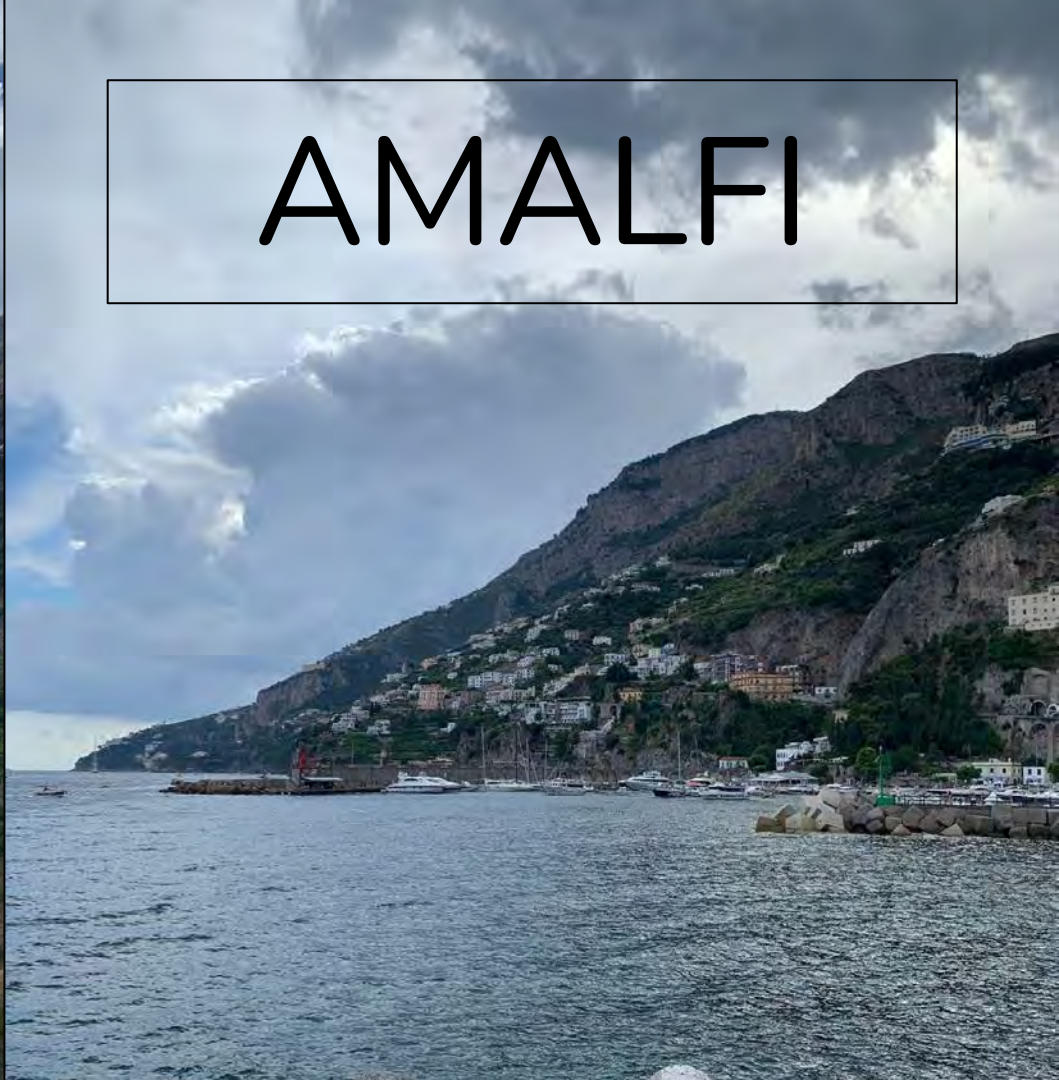
SORRENTO



CAPRI



AMALFI



SORRENTO/CAPRI/AMALFI

The next leg of the Journey to Italy trip was Sorrento. I included the Island of Capri and Amalfi because they were part of the same leg: 3 days. These three cities shared a common theme: being on the coast. This defined the culture, architecture, and landscape of the city. Seafood was abundant, boats and billionaires' yachts lined the shores, and all of the buildings were located on the port/coast. This was definitely my favorite part of the trip, as it was the most distinct out of all of the cities visited. Being on the coast, everything was different from the other cities that were in-land. As you can see from the pictures, the common theme is the sea, and I was swept up by its magnificent waves (quite literally, I am not a great swimmer).



VENICE







VENICE

The famous city on the water, Venice, was the third leg of the trip. Although it was very, very hot and humid, walking around this man-made city was still breathtaking and unique. With its narrow streets and majestic canals, there is quite nothing like it. The architecture in Venice is also very distinct from the other cities we visited, as the buildings are much more colorful, akin to the Venetian art movement that originated in the iconic city. Although it was not my favorite city on the trip, there was nothing like getting lost in the streets of Venice, only to find your way back to where you started.

AREZZO





AREZZO

Arezzo was the place we called home, as this hill town is where OU has its monastery. This amazing hill town was the most “authentic” Italian experience on the trip. Arezzo shopkeepers and restaurants don’t automatically speak English to you, if at all. This was refreshing from the touristic experiences of the major Italian cities we visited. The distinct characteristic of this town is of course the landscape. In the photos, you can see that everything is centered from the top of the hill. The old ancient Atruscan buildings were structured to be defensive against attacking forces. It just had this cozy vibe that really made me feel at home. This city was one of my favorites, and one I would love to come back to because of its character.



VERONA





VERONA



Verona was the additional city that I visited with my family on my trip. It was a beautiful place, home to many culturally significant scenes like Romeo and Juliet. The way this city is structured is akin to Arezzo in that the older, historical part of the city is concentrated in one place. The picture of the archway and the clock showcases the entrance to this part of the city. The following pictures showcase the insides of the older city. One thing I was not expecting was how beautiful and modern this part of the city actually was. Although it still had older architecture, the businesses that occupied them were name brands like Nike, Gucci, etc. This part of my journey was a very pleasant one, one that I look back on with fond memories.

FINAL THOUGHTS!

This month I spent in Italy was perhaps the most amazing month of my life. Being able to learn the uniqueness of each cities and its cultures was something I will never forget. Also being able to witness landscapes riddled with historical importance was breathtaking as well. Although I was not able to fully pick up on the language, I felt I was able to immerse myself in the country, learn about the ins and outs of the culture, and actually navigate its transportation system with ease (a large victory for me!). I will make returning to Italy a priority for myself in the future, as there is quite nothing like it.

