

Italy for me always seemed to be a place full of possibilities and adventures and this venture was no exception.

After being collected by our lovely coach driver Voltar we headed for our first factory visit of our trip. San Pelligrino not only welcomed us with a smile and well crafted presentation but also with the ever popular 'tasting session'. I never thought water could taste so good. The impressive production plant boasted the highest of technology and bottles of various flavours and tastes pumped through the factory at an impressive pace. The brand 'San Pelligrino' has a reputation of excellence worldwide and this was reflected in both the product and service we received during our time here.

Apparently drinking a cup of coffee in the morning improves blood flow or so I told myself after my third espresso in the beautiful surroundings of the rustic sweet smelling L'Art Café. The hand selected green coffee beans were roasted and brewed before our eyes and highly skilled baristas created their unique masterpieces suspended on the creamy white foam. Excellent customer service, educated employees and outstanding Italian work ethic gave this business the chance to not only survive but thrive in the ever growing coffee industry. I have to admit that I was very sad to leave this small family-run business. Their passion and love for high quality coffee and bringing people together touched us all.

What do you have after breakfast? Gelato of course! Day two began with a visit to the highly anticipated Carpigiani factory and museum. After being greeted with aprons and chef hats we began to learn about the competitive ice-cream industry and the traits a business in this field needs in order to survive. The factory had recently been upgraded and their system of production had changed. This gave us a brilliant chance to see a real assembly line in action on such a large scale. The tour was made all the sweeter with our master class on the art of gelato making, and of course all chefs must test their creations...

No one was more excited for our final business visit than, my business teacher Mr. Friel. Italy is well known for its fantastic food but also for its luxury, beautifully crafted cars and Ferrari was no different. A brief campus tour was followed by a marketing presentation and Q&A session with a very knowledgeable and engaging employee. Our visit closed with a guided tour of the Ferrari museum along with its many spotless red cars. It is easy to see why this business and its brand has become one of the worlds leading names in business, a common occurrence with Italian companies.

We each got our fair share of thrills and spills in the Gardaland theme park on day three. I must admit that I was not looking forward to this at all however great attractions and even better company made this a really enjoyable day for everyone. Our little holiday concluded with a visit to the infamous city of Verona along with its bustling restaurants and corner shops. Following the compulsory picture beside Juliet's balcony and statue we parted for an authentic Italian lunch overlooking the ancient amphitheatre. After soaking up the culture (and some rain) of Italy in the small walled city we headed for a local shopping centre en route to the airport.

However it was the group of business students who attended were really what made this trip one of the most memorable. They say Italians are stubborn and after this trip. I can definitely say that this is true. Italians do things one way and one way only, the right way.

