

Ciao Milano!

General information

I study Econometrics and Operations Research and from the end of August until the end of December I studied at Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi. This university is located in Milan, Italy. The courses start in the first week of September but since I applied for the Italian crash course, I started on August 26. Most activities for exchange students also started around this date so I would recommend future students to be in Milan by this time.

Preparation

When I got the email stating that Bocconi would be my exchange destination, I found out that a good friend of mine also was going there. We decided that it was best to look for an apartment together. We started looking for accommodation after we got our acceptance letter from Bocconi, around the end of May. We used a few websites and joined several Facebook groups which I got from another student report. (At the bottom of this page I will post the best websites and Facebook groups) In a few of these groups I posted a message stating that we were looking for a 2-bedroom apartment in the area of the university. Soon a real estate agency called 'Domum Immobiliare' replied. They had a few apartments that were suited for us. Because we heard some rumours about frauds being active on the Facebook groups, we decided we first wanted to see the apartment before transferring any deposit or rent. We made a list of other apartments we wanted to visit as well and went to Milan around mid-July. The apartment Domum offered us was really close to the university and looked really good, so we decided to go for it. A minus was that we had to pay a service fee of 15% of the total amount, which was pretty expensive. The rent was €750 a person, and the one-time fee was €550 each. The apartment wasn't cheap but the location was really good and we didn't have to share anything like the bathroom or kitchen.

Visiting Milan before the start of our exchange period turned out to be a good thing. This way we already got familiar with the city and could get some paperwork done at the university.

By the way, we also applied for the Bocconi dorms but we both did not get accepted. We applied within the first half hour and were already too late. After living in Milan for a while we both were glad that we did not get accepted because of all the disadvantages. You have to be quiet after a certain time and you can only invite a certain amount of people to your dorm. So I would not recommend future exchange students to apply for the dorms.

Websites: www.spotahome.com, www.erasmusu.com, www.dovevivo.it and www.airbnb.com

Facebook groups: Bocconi Rents, ESEG MILANO Housing Service, Milano Easy Renting, ERASMUS MILANO 2015/2016, Students' accommodations in Milan and Milan Housing: rental flats, apartments and roommates.

Arrival

I arrived in Milan on August 23rd, met with my friend and picked up the keys from the real estate agency. The first few days we applied for our courses and got our public transportation card and stuff like that. On Friday the Italian crash course began. This is a quite intensive course offered by Bocconi. I can really recommend taking this course as you meet a lot of new people and learn the basics of the Italian language. There also is a follow-up course which I applied for. This is a bit less intensive but because of our (boring) teacher and the late hours, I decided to quit after a few weeks.

Courses

The overall level of the courses I took is lower than what I am used to at our university. The pace is much lower, but the teachers know how to keep it interesting. I incorporated all my courses into my elective space.

- Microeconomics (8 ECTS)

This course equips students with economic models of individuals as consumers and producers, as well as of price determination through their interaction in markets. The level of the course is not really high, but it requires a lot of effort. There are several assignments (individually and in groups) which take a lot of time. It was fun to follow this course because of the really passionate and personal teacher.

- Financial Macroeconomics (6 ECTS)

The course teaches you about what caused the financial crisis, and what central banks can do in order to end a financial crisis. There are 4 problem sets that count towards 40% of the final grade. The problem sets and final exam aren't difficult, and the teacher explains the topics clearly.

- Introduction to Options and Futures (6 ECTS)

This was the most interesting course I attended at Bocconi. The name already explains its contents. In this course you learn different ways to price derivatives like forwards, futures and options and you get to know how to use them. The teacher explains everything in a calm and relaxed way. There were 2 cases which counted towards 40% of your final grade. I would recommend to attend the course if you are interested in derivatives.

- Corporate Finance (6 ECTS)

This course teaches the foundations and tools needed for corporate investment and financing decisions, in order to create value for shareholders. The teacher, Hannes Wagner, was one of the best I have ever had. He really knew how to combine theory with practise and how to keep it interesting.

Finances

Housing	€750 a month + initial service fee of €550
Public transportation	€100 for 4 months
Phone	€20 a month
Groceries	€100 a month
Trips	€150 a month on average
Eating out	€500-€600 a month
Leisure (partying, visiting football matches etc)	€100 - €150 a month
Books, hairdresser etc	€400 in total

The housing in Milan is more expensive than in Rotterdam, but other than that you can make your stay as expensive as you want. My roommate and I didn't like to cook, so we went out for dinner almost every day (117 times out of 122 days). Because of this we spent a lot in restaurants, but spent less on groceries. Partying is not really expensive because ESN (an exchange student organization) offers great deals at the clubs, like €10 for entrance and 2 drinks.

Daily life

Life as an exchange student in Milan is one of the best experiences you will ever have. You don't have many classes or other obligations resulting in lots of spare time. Before going to class, you start the day with a nice cappuccino and brioche. After class we used to have lunch in the little bakery near our house and for dinner we visited lots of different restaurants or ate at other people's apartments. You will visit lots of aperitivi, it's a restaurant where you pay 10€ for your drink but can eat as much as you want after that.

During your exchange period you will get to know a lot of other people from all over the world. There is always someone who wants to hang out with you such that you never have a dull moment. People always ask you for coffee or dinner and whether you are going to party that day or not. As I mentioned before, ESN organizes lots of parties for only €10. These parties are really good and always packed with other exchange students.

In the weekends I went on various trips to different places in Italy like Bologna, Cinque Terre and Rome. I always went on trips with friends but you can also go with ESN. The costs of transportation were low because I had a 'carta freccia'. This card gives you a 50% discount on your train rides, and is available for free. I would definitely recommend getting one of these. Accommodation was often arranged via Airbnb and was not expensive either.

I really enjoyed my stay in Milan and would recommend everyone to go there.



The main building of Bocconi. Students should never walk between the two lions in the middle, according to the 'myth' you will not graduate when you do so.



This area is called Navigli. There are lots of restaurants where you can have an aperitivo here.

