

Through the eyes
of its students

sole
mar
academy

BOUTIQUE ITALIAN LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Solemar Academy

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



A message from the Director

Buongiorno from Solemar Academy

Warm greetings from the practically-always-sunny Cefalù! The weather is so great here that we named the school after it and the nearby sea.

With Solemar Academy now over 25 years old, I recently celebrated my tenth anniversary as director! It's hard to believe what a ride it's been over the years, we're always growing as a school and today working with more qualified, mother-tongue Italian teachers than ever before!

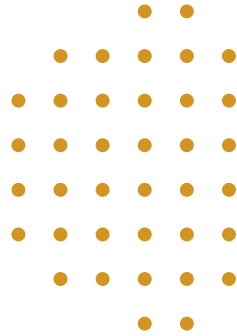
We've recently launched some exciting new collaborations with major American Universities including the University of Southern California (USC) and the University of Utah. We're also proud to be hosting ever greater numbers of high school study trips, becoming a regular partner for institutions from Austria and Scotland to as far away as South America! We've welcomed new faces to the staff and countless new travellers to the school, and the school itself is growing, with new classrooms and facilities.

Almost the only thing that's never changed is the special blend of personalised teaching and attention to customer care.

We want to share everything that makes us proud of Solemar Academy, but rather than blow our own trumpets, we thought we'd let you discover what we have to offer through the eyes of the people who matter most - our students. We've asked five of them to share their experiences of Solemar and Cefalù, and we hope that their words will speak for us.

If you have any more questions, please just ask! Otherwise, we hope to welcome you and your clients to Sicily very soon.

Valerio Gruessner



Solemar

S&A

OUR STUDENTS





High school student

Felix

17 from
age **Wiener Neustadt, Austria**

Solemar story

Came with his high school to study a week-long group course, June 2022



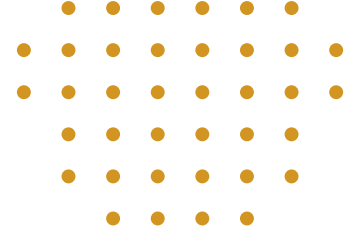
College student

Lorenza

22 from
age **Modesto, California, USA**

Solemar story

Spent a 'Julumester' month in Cefalù with a group of her coursemates from the University of Southern California



Recruitment manager & Digital nomad

Jillian

43 from
age **Dublin, Ireland**

Solemar story

First came to Solemar in 2018 and returned six times so far, following group and individual courses. Her most recent stay was February 2022



"Mostly" retired

Steffen & Lena

60 from
age **Heidelberg, Germany**

Solemar story

Visited for the 50+ course in October 2021; returned for a duo course in April 2022



DISCOVERING SOLEMAR



Steffen & Lena

Our son Jan is a first officer for Lufthansa, and came to Solemar to do a 'Bildungsurlaub' course before the pandemic. He had such a great time that we thought we'd follow his suggestion and check it out for ourselves! Then as soon as we started talking to the school we understood what he meant. We got personal messages from Giuseppe and Ivana, always replying really fast. She'd write to us in perfect German, too, which believe me you don't get everywhere. And we tease Giuseppe about his German, but seriously his English is really top*.

* Lena taught English for thirty years!



Jillian

I came across the Solemar through the ASILS* website. I've been studying Italian for about twelve years now, and had tried a whole bunch of different language academies in all the usual spots - Florence, Rome, even one in the other side of Sicily. But when I found Cefalù and this lovely bunch it was like I had a second family down in the Med. At this point I'd say studying anywhere else would feel like cheating!

*Associazione Scuole di Italiano come Lingua Seconda - the world's leading association of Italian language schools

CEFA

CEFALÙ





Lorenza

I actually have family history in Sicily, though I'd never been before, so when my faculty offered me this opportunity I couldn't wait. The actual place is cooler than anything I could have imagined though. Staying in Cefalù, it's like living on a film set.

Felix

Take the most insanely beautiful place you know and multiply it by the second most beautiful. Then forget it because Cefalù is just better. You can get from your lessons to the beach in two minutes forty seconds - yeah, I'm such a geek I literally timed it.

Jillian

Anyone who knows me will confirm I'm a massive foodie, and not only is food just about bigger than Jesus down here, it's also a passion for half the teachers. To be honest my first course here I really just bullied Simona into telling me how to order every local speciality and where to find the best versions of them all! Not that she took much persuading... if you want to make friends in Sicily, start a conversation about food! When you come, you absolutely have to eat the fish they serve fresh off the boat, and I recommend enough homemade caponata to sedate a horse.

Steffen & Lena

We thought we knew a little about the history of Italy, but Sicily was something totally different. We never expected to see so much Norman and Arabic architecture down here, the cathedral is something really special. Also you have to see the old town from the top of the Rock - it's a once in a lifetime view.



Lorenza

It's a big family atmosphere. Because we were such a big group some of our lessons were away from the main school building but we always felt like we could drop in and say hi, ask for tourist tips, find out about what's going on. Plus the school's beautiful, I'm an art and design major and you really notice the little touches. Every room is different and none of them feel like any other school I've been in. It's honestly more like hanging out at your friends' place.

Steffen & Lena

Something we love about Solemar is that it's a really responsible place ecologically. They don't have any plastic, they recycle and compost well, nobody's buying those horrible bottles of water that you see everywhere else in Italy. It's all super nice but it's also being done in a way we really want to support.

THE SCHOOL AND STAFF



Valerio Director
Giuseppe Course Director



Felix

One of the first things you notice when you get to Solemar is that everybody working there is really young, and that makes them so easy to relate to. One of my passions is stand-up and I spent half my week here talking to Marco and Giuseppe about their favourite comedians in Italy and America.

Jillian

The biggest difference from other places, in my experience, is that you're one of six or seven in a class. Time it right in the low season and it could even be three or four - I've been at some places where it's closer to twenty. And then with the number of courses running at once you can just feel a bit lost. At Solemar you're getting the same people answering your emails, the same teachers, you'll make real friends with the guys you're studying with.

THE COURSES



Jillian

The key word is flexibility. You want to chill and enjoy the beach, take a group course. If you're putting in the grinds for your exam you can go one to one. And the staff really go the extra mile, they'll even stay in touch after you head home. I've actually done online lessons while I've been away to keep me topped up. Another fab thing is that you can work towards your CELI exams and sit them right there and then at the school. Last year I got my CELI 4* - if you'd told me that when I first arrived at Solemar I'd never have believed you!

*Equivalent to C1 in the CEFR

Steffen & Lena

All the teaching is so intuitive, so conversational. You don't feel like you're studying, just soaking up all this culture and the language comes along like a great little bonus. And they'll tailor it to your interests. I honestly believe that you could challenge them to teach you about anything from renaissance art to the X-Factor and there'd be someone at the school willing to take on the challenge.

Felix

We followed a really cool, engaging program. Lots of the history of Italy and putting the language into its logical place.



| Solemar Academy

Jillian

With my work travelling with me I've arrived from all over the place, but one thing I'll always treat myself to is the airport pick-up the Solemar offer. Once you get through arrivals in Palermo it's like, boom, there's Emilio, we know what we're doing, no problems or fuss. You can do it by train easy enough but that's my little ritual.

Steffen & Lena

The first time we had absolutely no problems finding a flight. I think you could get a direct one into Palermo from just about any city in Germany. The second trip we actually decided to do it the nice way and drive down. The guys helped us manage the route and were super flexible with our arrangements.

TRAVEL





VILLA
CATERINA

Lorenza

We stayed in a really great hotel near the centre of town. The pool was fabulous and the beach was right there.

Jillian

Nowadays I often stay with friends but when I first came it would always be to Villa Caterina. The place is magical, especially in the summer when they get the barbecue going, and I miss the chickens, and Valerio stopping by with fresh eggs in the morning. There's a lovely little studio, but my first years I'd book a room in a shared apartment - it was sociable but not too studenty. The perfect way to meet new people really.

Steffen & Lena

They have these amazing little apartments in the old town, right by the sea. We could cook for ourselves and walk to school directly along the beach. The second time we talked about camping but in the end it was like, who are we kidding? We're going back to Daria's place!

ACCOMMO- DATION

Solemar Academy

Solemar runs a huge programme of activities varying by season and group size. We asked our alumni to pick their very favourite:

EXPERIENCES



Lorenza

We were so lucky, while we were there they put together a film-making workshop with a guy who'd just won Italy's answer to an Oscar for his animation. That was just amazing.

*Nico Bonomolo, winner of the 2022 Premio David di Donatello for best Short Film for his work *Maestale*, attended a special screening with our USC students and spoke to them at length about his work and creative process.

Steffen

That was such a beautiful day, but if I'm going to be honest I want you to say that for me it's the aperitivo evenings they run at that little beer pub. I thought Italy was going to be all grapes and no hops, but they make their own beer there and it's honestly better than I've had back home. Great opportunity to get to know the staff properly too.

Lena

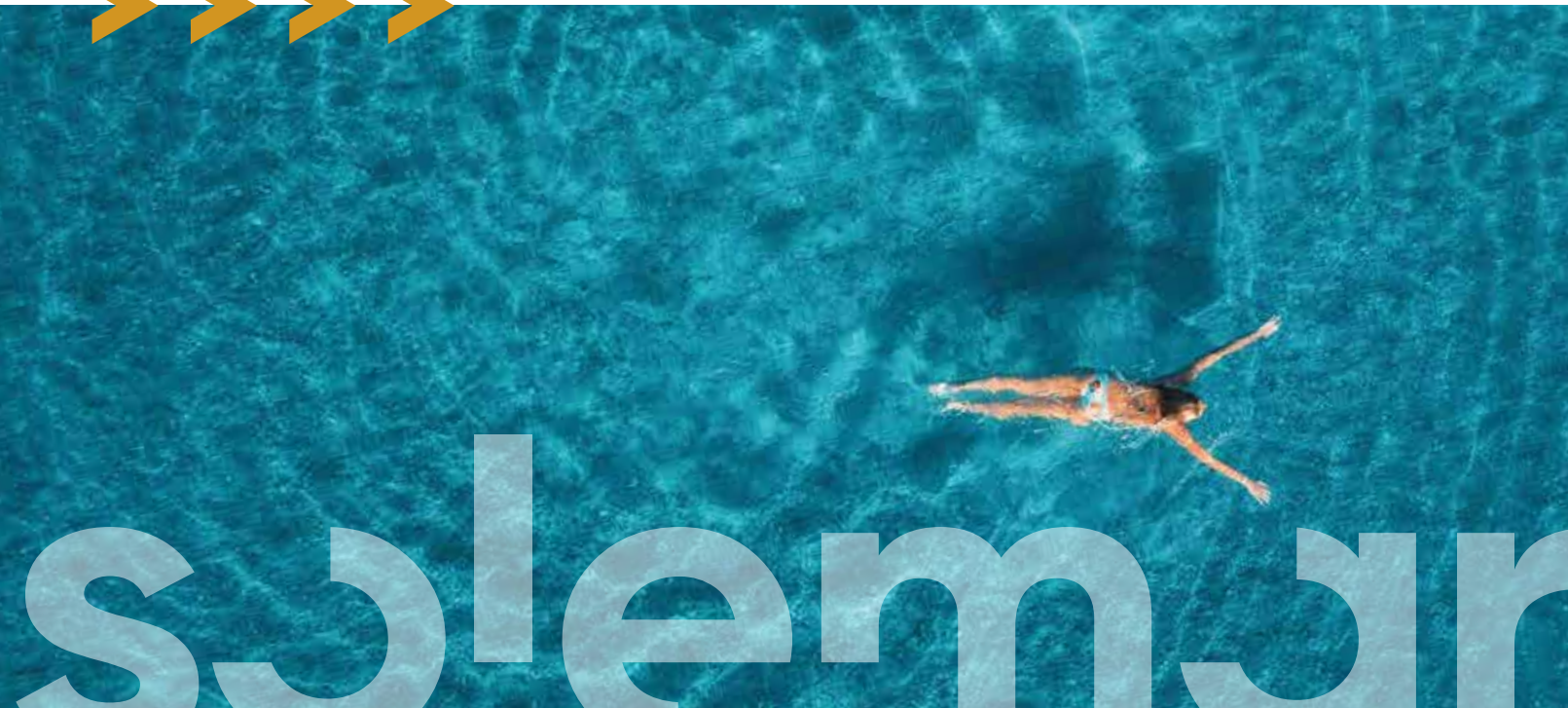
Honestly the social programme is all top level, but my favourite was a day when we did the group course at a kind of agriturismo olive farm resort*. We found out all about the process of growing olives and helped with the harvest in the morning, it was amazing how much was done by hand. Then we had a cooking course and ate this huge banquet with everything grown on the premises**, and a swim in the afternoon to cool off. It was magical.

*The Casette di Calzata estate, where many of our students also choose to stay

** We'll be honest - not EVERYTHING Lena ate is grown there but the dinner was entirely prepared with fresh locally-sourced ingredients!

Felix

I'll never forget the sight of Cefalù from the boat trip we took along the coast. It's beautiful from the land but so much better from the water.



Felix

I think this has to be one of the best language schools out there. Six stars out of five!

Lorenza

It's a long way to Sicily from California, but I'm for sure going to try to persuade my mom to come back and investigate her family history.

Jillian

Tell my friends? Most of them want to know when I'm ever going to start talking about anything else!

Steffen & Lena

We're almost like evangelists for this place now. Some of our friends are booked for the course this October. Cefalù is a little paradise and the people who run the school are just the best.

**TELL YOUR
FRIENDS?**





A huge thank you to all five of our fabulous students for their kind words. We can't wait to welcome you all back to Solemar Academy!

thank you

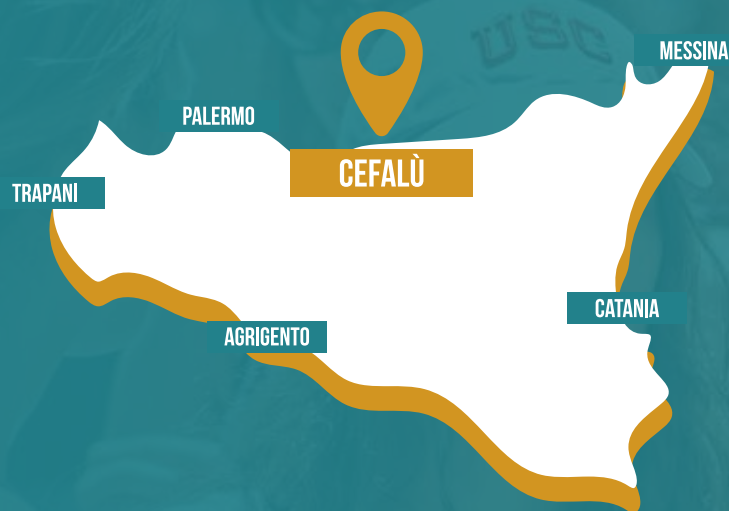


Solemar Academy
Via M.C. Tomasini 5
90015 Cefalù (PA) - Italy

+39 0921 92 10 29
info@solemar-academy.com

Scan to discover
more about our
courses and prices

www.solemar-academy.com



Members of and accredited by



Inspected by

Members of



CONSEQUENCE