

# Snow Day: Italian Exchange Student Style

- Kyra Veprek

One of the most exciting parts of the 2015-2016 school year of Marblehead High School has been the expansion of the foreign exchange student program. This year, Marblehead families collectively host upwards of 20 students from every corner of the world, including Brazil, Indonesia, and Germany. Becoming friends with these world travelers is exciting to say the least; their stories of home and eagerness to learn about America makes one feel part of an entirely separate world. The greatest part of spending time with the Exchangers is watching them assimilate to American culture. Today, I sat down with Marco Radaelli of Milan, Italy and Giulio Angius of Palermo, Italy to discuss their very first snow day ever.

**Kyra:** Prior to coming to America, did you guys even know a snow day existed?

**Marco:** Of course, we have snow days too.

**Giulio:** Not really.

**Marco:** Well, he lives in Sicily, of course there's no snow there.

**Kyra:** Well, how did you celebrate your first American snow day?

**Marco:** It was actually really nice to have the day off from academics. We don't have any sort of midterms in Italy so the stress of midterms week was something I was unaccustomed to. I came to Marblehead High School because of the great academics and spend most of my time studying, so having the snow day was a nice way to just relax and recover from the week.

**Giulio:** I think snow days are my favorite part of American schools so far. My time in America has been all about new experiences and spending the day with my friends watching movies was great. I love celebrating every new experience I have in America and my first snow day was another great one for the books.

**Kyra:** Was there anything negative about your snow day that you would've changed? (Marco laughs at the ridiculousness of my question.)

**Marco:** Not really. I mean, it's a snow day. I think the worst part is probably shoveling snow. In Milan it doesn't really snow enough to need to shovel. Walking in the snow isn't really a problem for me or my friends, we just sort of put up with it. I go skiing in the Alps though and have shoveled snow there a couple times. It's just part of the experience.

**Giulio:** My only problem with snow days is that they're too short, I would prefer they last a week, at least. I'm a senior so I don't have to make up any of the lost time. I leave for Senior Project in the spring, so I'm really enjoying my snow days.

**Kyra:** And just to be cliché, how has your American experience been so far?

**Marco:** I'm honestly enjoying this entire experience more than I anticipated. I came to America expecting to focus on school and learn about American culture. It's become a lot more than that to me though. I have made some of the greatest friends and I really need to thank them for making my American experience the best I could imagine.

**Giulio:** It has been great! I am incredibly happy I made the decision to stay for a full year. In the beginning, I made a few mistakes and let this experience intimidate me. But now everything is great. I never want to leave.

Although neither boy shared my same excitement about their first American snow day (and both think I'm a little ridiculous), speaking to them helped me realize my ignorance as a world citizen. Not only did I not know it snowed in Milan, but I wasn't aware of the variation of climate and

culture throughout the country of Italy. Many of my exchange friends made the decision to come to America for the experience — to learn about a new culture through new American friends; however, few of them realized how their presence opens up a small town to a big world.