Lindt

After the purchase of both the slice of cheesecake AND the apple strudel did not go at all as planned, I decided to pick up some reliable Lindt truffles. There was a store remarkably right next to the palace gardens I aimed to visit. However, instead of redeeming myself from the unexpectedly poor purchases, I just felt low-energy for eating too much sugar. During my exploration of the gardens I saw that dude walking with his headphones on looking intense as hell and I had a moment of so powerfully wishing I were the type of person who could go up to him, tap him on the shoulder and ask what he was listening to. He looked like he was about to face his nemesis or avenge someone’s death. He positioned himself right at the center of the most grand view and I started walking in that direction, hoping that by the time I got there I would have summoned the courage to make eye contact with him and motion for him to move his headphones aside. Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, he moved on before I reached him. I’m always at war with my comfort zone, and this time fate decided the battle for me.

Bus Schedule

ALWAYS BE PREPARED. After a full day of hiking in the sun (in which I climbed 180 floors according to my iPhone), I found myself seated on the last bus back to my hostel in Sorrento next to an American woman fanning herself and complaining of nausea on the windy coastal roads. I carry bags with me everywhere, along with silverware, napkins, pens, and hair ties, since they're ALWAYS useful. All those items have made my life easier at one point or another, but I think this incidence tops the list of moments I was most glad to be prepared. About two minutes after I lent this woman a bag, she pitched over and hurled her whole stomach into it right next to me on this packed bus. Through a pounding headache and heavy revulsion I managed to smile politely and graciously accept her repeated thanks and subsequent attempts at small talk.

Biennale

Carrefour 1

Carrefour 2

I don't think I'll ever forget the man who stopped me in the cookie aisle to ask me where I was from. “Sei Italiana?” When I responded that I wasn’t Italian, but American, he replied in strained English that he knew, he could tell, he knew from the second I passed him. “Italian people never smile like that,” he said. I became aware of how much I make eye contact with strangers and smile at them and how some people have seemed to be legitimately surprised by this. Is friendliness something to be proud of? Or am I just being strange here? I was uncertain if the man’s comment was praise or mild warning, like he was gently letting me know of a faux pas. I’ve continued to smile at people here, and they smile back. It’s already obvious I’m not from here, and I think friendliness is a small way to feel connected to strangers and society as a whole.