



# France 2023

The adventure of a lifetime

# The Beginning

To begin our study abroad adventure we all went to Paris. In Paris we got to explore the city through guided tours which were very informational. Paris is a very beautiful city, and I will never forget how massive the Eiffel tower is in person. All my life when I had seen it in pictures, I never thought much about the sheer size of the structure, so once I saw it in real life, I couldn't help but be in awe of its size and beauty. In Paris I also started making some of the friends that I would end up spending a lot of my time with for the coming 4 weeks. After only a couple days I had found a solid group to hang out with (Luke, Jake, Aaron, Jordan, Sophia, and Erika). I would grow so close to these people in the coming 4 weeks and that is something I'm truly grateful for.



# Aggies in Paris

Paris was an absolute blast; the bus tours and school organized events only scratch the surface of what we did. While in Paris my group and me spent pretty much every waking moment of the day exploring the city. Some of the special highlights were; Jordan and I did an Eiffel tower tour which was awesome, we all visited a couple museums, and toured through some of the more memorable parts of the city. However, the night life was when the true fun always started. On our first night out, we went to a place called Pachamama which was an incredible club unlike any I had ever been to. The night we had there will forever set my standards for what a club night can be. But miraculously that night was surpassed by another night that we had at a place called duplex. We went there with a large amount of people from our program and had the night of a lifetime. It was that night when Ben lost his phone, and I ended up getting stuck having to chug a whole water bottle full of "mineral water". In Paris we also went on a boat tour of Paris which was an absolute vibe. Basically, Paris over-delivered in every way possible.



# Time For Aix-En-Provence

Following the extreme high of Paris, we were launched to Aix-En-Provence. We got there at around 8 PM and I remember when we first went out how much of a contrast Aix was to Paris. We all genuinely thought that the city was fake and that it was made out of cardboard because of how quite and subdued the city was. However, the following day we got to truly experience the city through a daytime tour of the city. Aix-En-Provence might be the most beautiful city I have ever spent time in, I love this city so much that I would genuinely consider moving to Aix and having a whole life there. The people in Aix were very nice and I love how small it is. Even though I was only there for about a month, by the end of it I knew people at every corner of the city, and it was almost like high school in the way that I would just be walking around and would come across people I knew. Overall, I'm so grateful we got to spend time here out of all places.



# Extracurriculars

In Aix we spent a lot of time on long and beautiful dinners. The food was pretty much exclusively good, and even above the food, the environment was simply phenomenal. I loved eating outside and getting to enjoy the city as I enjoyed a nice glass of wine with good company. The night life in Aix was also surprisingly good. We went out pretty much every weekend we had there, and we were never disappointed. I especially remember this little green bar in this square near the big cathedral, its name was Des Mon PPT and it was the home of 3-dollar Jager shots. That place served as stereotypical "sit-com home bar" where we all met. I will also never forget Mistral club which had urinals within the smoke room itself (mans restroom and smoke room all in one, 2 birds with 1 stone I guess). It was odd, but memorable. Overall, I had so many unbelievable nights and dinners in Aix, I have no choice but to come back some day.



# Call For Adventure

While on our study abroad trip, we were given multiple opportunities to go out and explore other parts of Europe. On our first long weekend we ventured out to Nice. Although poorly planned because of the time crunch and the pricing we were still able to enjoy 2 very beautiful days at the beach. Then on our long 5-day weekend we went on our master trip, and we decided to go to Switzerland. Although Switzerland had very beautiful mountains and homey villages I will never go back. The night life was unimpressive and the cost of everything was quite frankly absurd. Switzerland is probably my least favorite place I've ever been to, but at least now I know. A lot of it probably has to do with the fact that we stayed in a tiny village in the middle of nowhere, however I still stand by this; I am never going back to that god forbidden tourist trap of a nation.



# The Final Chapter

Finally, when we finished our school course in Aix (crazy to think we were doing school this whole time), it was time to finish off our study abroad program. To finish off this incredible experience we went to Marseille for a couple days. Marseille against all odds ended up being my favorite city that we visited. We were there for just a couple days, and I was charmed. I will never forget dangerously walking through downtown Marseille at 3 in the morning to meet some friends in some random city square where a bunch of North Africans had set up shop, and were hosting a celebration, serving up the equivalent of jungle juice (a type of drink we make here in the states) in the streets. These North Africans would be the nicest people I meet this whole trip. Even though at this point I had no euros left these people hooked me up with free drinks and I'll never forget that. Finally, it was time to leave, luckily, I got one last night in Paris which Jordan, Luke, Aaron, Erika and I spent well by going back to duplex for one final hurrah.



# Reflections

All in all, these have been the best 5 weeks of my life. This experience was amazing not because of France per say but because of the people. Yes, France was beautiful, and its architecture and structures were inspirational. The reality is however, that we could have done this study abroad program in Houston Texas, and it would have been just as much fun. The thing that made this experience truly special was the group of people with which I got to spend all this time with. Something about being isolated with a large group of people which is then given a task, brings about a deeper sense of kinship, its almost tribal in a sense. Being part of a little tribe for 5 weeks, turns out, is a pretty amazing feeling. I would strongly recommend anybody to do this, and if I'm ever given a chance to be put in this type of situation again, I will do it in a heartbeat.





**Thank you Paco you were an  
awesome professor!**

