

MY STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE



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PARIS



In Paris we got to see the Palace of Versailles and explore the gardens. Some of my friends and I arrived late to France because of delayed flights (very stressful) so this excursion was our first experience in Paris! The gardens were beautiful and we had such a great time relaxing in the grass getting to know each other on our first day abroad. We learned

how to use the metro which was actually very useful for the rest of the trip. One of my favorite memories is from later that day when a few of us went to the grocery store and grabbed some baguettes, meat, and cheese to make sandwiches for dinner. We had a little picnic on the balcony of our hotel and had such a fun time just hanging out and watching the sun set



PARIS



During our free time in Paris we explored the city, went shopping, and visited some really cool places like Sainte Chapelle, the Monet Museum, and the Eiffel Tower! We had a crazy experience at the eiffel tower, while we were playing card games on the lawn our friend got his phone pickpocketed right in front of us and we didn't even notice. Luckily another group of americans were watching and they got the phone back! After that happened it really made me realize that we were in another country and we still needed to be aware of our surroundings. Other than that I had a great time exploring the beautiful city and enjoying great food! My favorites are pictured on this slide, baguettes and escargot!

AIX EN PROVENCE



Our first week in Aix we got to know some of the french students at Arts et Métiers. Meeting the french students was one of my favorite parts of this trip because they were all so nice and so excited to talk to us and get to know us! In Aix we ate lots of good food. My personal favorite was Prima Pasta we also frequented Pita Pit and Italian Trattoria (shoutout Paco for showing us). One of our favorite hobbies to do during our free time in Aix was going to the movie theater! We saw three movies over the course of the trip. I also loved shopping at the local pop up markets in Aix. Aix en Provence was such a cute little town that was small enough for us to feel like locals. In my opinion Aix was the perfect place to get to call home for a month. I feel like I really got to experience what it would be like to go to school there.



NICE & CALANQUES



During our first free weekend we were able to travel to Nice! We spent most of our time at the beach. The water was crystal clear and the beach was rocks instead of sand, I had never seen anything like it! I had so much fun relaxing all day and this trip was especially fun because almost our entire civil class was there so it was really special getting to see everyone all together outside of class. Once we got back to Aix the next day was our trip to the Calanques in Cassis! Our boat tour was so pretty and we even got to spend some more time at the beach. One of our french friends, Zoe, talked to us about how the Calanques are a normal weekend getaway spot for her and her friends!

BARCELONA



Barcelona is definitely my favorite city that we went to during the whole trip! I had such a great experience with the culture and the people! We stumbled across random Catalonia festivals in the streets and met so many locals who had so much pride in their city which I thought was really cool. We stayed in a hostile and met so many new people from all over, and we got to tour around the city with them. We visited La Sagrada Familia, Park Guell, Casa Batlló, and the Picasso Museum. The architecture was amazing and I really loved the unique style especially in Casa Batlló. On this trip I also discovered that Paella is one of my new favorite foods! Barcelona had such a fun environment and was overall an incredible city.

ITALY

ROME



For our long weekend we flew to Italy! We actually met up with a few of our other friends from A&M who were studying abroad in Greece! It was a really fun experience to be able to plan a trip with our friends who were also doing a TAMU study abroad program. Our first stop was Rome and we were only there for two days but got to see so many things. The first day we arrived we went to the Vatican and got to go inside St. Peter's Basilica. This was very special to me because I am Catholic, so just going to Vatican City was something that I was really looking forward to. While we were inside there was actually a mass service going on, we got to watch the end of the mass and see the precession outside. Inside the church there were confessional booths in every language, beautiful ceiling artwork, and so many sculptures of saints all around. This was undoubtedly my favorite thing that we got to see in Italy. During the rest of our time in Rome we walked around the whole city and went to the spanish steps, the trevi fountain, the pantheon and the colosseum.

ITALY

AMALFI & NAPLES



After exploring Rome we took a train to the Amalfi coast! It was one of the most beautiful coastlines I have ever seen and we got to relax on the beach and walk around the cute town. My favorite part was definitely getting lemon gelato inside an actual lemon. After that we took another train to Naples and got to explore Pompeii. We did have a lot of long travel days but over the course of 6 days we were able to see so much of Italy!



AIX EN PROVENCE

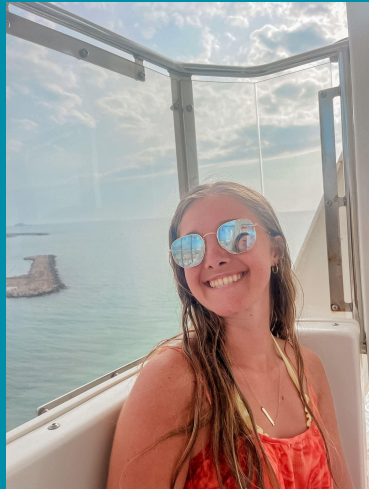
LAST WEEK IN AIX



Our last week in Aix was one to remember! Our trip to Verdon Gorge had breathtaking views and just getting to paddle the canoes with our friends through the gorgeous water was so much fun! We also hiked the mountain that is located just outside of Aix. To be

honestly I was not very excited to go on that hike at first but it actually ended up being so much fun and one of my favorite memories! We found a fun tree to climb in and we also found a stream of cold water to swim in! Also not pictured, during our last week we got to meet Zoe's other friends from Arts et Métiers! They had a barbeque for us at their dorm which was so cool to get to see what their normal lives looked like! I was so sad to say goodbye to Aix, it was definitely a home away from home for me.

MARSEILLE



Marseille was a cool place to end our trip. Even though we didn't do a lot of sight seeing here, I still had some great memories in Marseille. One of my all time favorite moments from this study abroad is the very last day here in Marseille. We all went to the beach and just hung out, played music, and swam in the ocean, and for some reason it was just so much fun. I think the reason I loved this moment so much is because I looked around and saw that a majority of the people on our trip were all there together. We had such a great group of people including civil, mechanical, and hybrid on this trip so just seeing everyone all together on the last day made me very happy!!

THE END



Reflecting on my overall study abroad experience I cannot even describe how amazing it was. I have grown so much and learned so many new things about others cultures, and even got to learn a little fluid dynamics along the way. I loved the small classroom environment where I really got to be involved in class and get to know my professor (Paco is the best!!). Overall this was one of the best experiences of my life and I am forever grateful that I was able to be a part of this program. Starting with the location, Aix en Provence was a nice, safe, and welcoming town with a great central location that made it so easy to travel all across Europe! Also being partners with Arts et Métiers was so cool because we got to see what it's like being an engineer in another country, and we also got to make personal connections with the French students. Definitely the biggest thing that I took away from my experience was the friendships that I made. Spending so much time with people getting to explore a foreign country with them allowed us to grow so close in such a short amount of time. I think that this trip had an absolutely amazing group of people. Towards the end of the trip I felt like I had made connections with almost everyone and I am so glad that I got to spend five weeks with this group! Some of these people are now my friends for life and I would have never even met them if it weren't for this program. Pictured to the left is us being very sad to leave. Five weeks wasn't long enough, this experience has provided me memories that I will remember for a lifetime and I am counting down the days til I can hopefully one day travel to Europe again!