

Here's my Study Abroad Story

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Major: Psychology/Government

Program Description: My program was with the Danish Institute for Study Abroad (DIS). I was in the Psychology of Children in a Multicultural Setting core class. I had five classes throughout the week, with each usually being two times a week for about an hour and fifteen minutes. DIS is right in the heart of Copenhagen, it sits one block north of Strøget (the walking street) which consists of many shops, restaurants, bars, etc. and cuts right through Copenhagen.

Typical Day: A normal day consisted of me waking up, eating breakfast with my host brother and sister while watching Hanna Montana (in Danish, kind of crazy) and then heading to school. I would walk about 10 minutes to the train station, take it one stop, get off and get on the metro and head about three more stops. Then I would get off and walk about 3 minutes to "World Fitness", a gym where I lifted weights. After that I would take the metro into



Copenhagen (took about 10 minutes) and would walk to my school. I would have 2 or 3 classes a day then I would either wander Copenhagen with a few friends or get back on the train and head home. If I went home I would usually do some homework, jump on the trampoline with my host siblings and then have dinner with my entire host family. On school nights I would do some more work or have "hygger" (relax) with my host family watching television and do some push ups with my little host brother. On weekends, I would then take the train to meet up with my friends and we would go out to the bars and clubs in Copenhagen.

Highlights: Absolutely everything. I could write a hundred pages on the highlights of my experience. I had the greatest host family in the world, I met amazing people (Americans and Europeans) that I will never forget, Copenhagen is an amazing city and I truly loved getting to know it. I also had ample time to travel Europe. My best weekend was

when I got to go bike riding all around a tiny Danish island of Bornholm with a few of my closest friends. It was beautiful, peaceful, I ate ice cream three times a day and for some reason there were lots of cats running around and I like cats (the picture is of me outside of a Church in Bornholm holding a kitten). My favorite memory will be dancing (or trying to dance) in various clubs with my friends to the song "Infinity" by the Guru Josh Project.

Challenges: I can only explain my challenges through a story. When I first arrived I was very shy around my host family and didn't want to ask them questions. I didn't wash my clothes the first week because I wasn't sure if they had a washer and dryer. Luckily my host mom showed me the little room (not attached to the house) with the washer and dryer before I ran out of clothes. Also, I didn't realize we had a microwave in the house until about 2 months into my stay when my host brother came into the living room with heated leftovers. Basically what I'm trying to say is don't be shy. You are in a new place, ask for help. You are not nearly as out of place as you think you are. Plus if you're outgoing, you will meet many amazing people who you will never forget (plus you will have clean clothes and be able to heat your leftovers).

Advice? Three things:

1. If you're thinking about whether or not you want to go abroad... stop thinking, just go. I was completely torn up over staying at CMC for the spring or going abroad. I had a list of both positive reasons to go and negative reasons not to go. The list was about even, I had around 25 positives and 25 negatives. Looking back over my experience, I think I nailed pretty much all the negatives. I thought of every single one before I left. However, I wasn't even close to coming up with all the positives. If I made that same list now I would have 25 negatives, but thousands of positives. Just go, it will be the time of your life!
2. Take lots and lots of pictures. Don't worry about seeming like a tourist (you are one!). Take pictures of all the important monuments and all that great jazz but also remember to take pictures of your friends, your host family, your neighborhood, the metro you took to school everyday and any other thing that will remind you of a story and make you smile when you look back on it.
3. Lastly, put yourself out on a limb. Take chances, learn about this new country but also take the time to learn about yourself.