

Here's my Study Abroad Story

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Program: My semester in New Zealand began after a long flight from South East Asia. I landed in Auckland in the middle of winter (southern hemisphere), while my luggage (with all my pants) stayed behind. My program coordinator, Jane Lewis, immediately offered some suggestions on where to buy "trousers" but never failed to comically remind me of my misfortune. Things you need to know about Jane: she is amazing, adventurous, witty and the best program coordinator in the southern hemisphere. She planned a great orientation; we went zorbing, ate at a Maori feast, explored Rotorua's geothermal areas and watched a sheep shearing demonstration. After the quick orientation, I traveled down to Dunedin to begin my fall semester. Arcadia set up several fun weekend activities throughout the semester, including hiking, skiing, surfing, and cycling. Each study abroad location has an Arcadia representative that was available for any questions 24/7 (shout out to Emma von Veh). New Zealand is an amazing place and Arcadia helped me have an incredible semester.

Typical Day: One thing that is important is to remember is that you are going abroad to study. Eventually the novelty of your new home will subside and you will find yourself reverting to a daily routine. On a typical weekday, I woke up and ran to the shower (please note there is limited heating in student flats), prepared myself a quick breakfast, went to class, then enjoyed my free time for the rest of the day. In New Zealand classes have less internal assignments because the final usually counts as 70-80% of your semester grade. After University, I would usually read, attempt to swim/workout, cook & eat dinner with my flatmates and relax with friends. While the weeks may have adopted a typical format, the weekends were another story. Almost every weekend, my friends and I would travel to a different location in the country. My friends and I spent a semester's worth of weekends traveling around the entire South Island, yet we still missed a few places. With regards to budgeting, the transportation will be your biggest costs; in terms of housing and food, costs will vary, and my friends and I slept in a tent and lived off pb&j sandwiches.

Highlights: My Spring break road trip around the entire South Island. During my mid-semester break my friends and I spent a week traveling around the entire South Island. This included hiking in Marlborough sounds, Abel Tasman and Queenstown. New Zealand is a beautiful country and as we found on our road trip, best when explored with friends. Also, go bungee jumping! While you may be terrified of the almost 5 second free fall, it is well worth the fear.



Challenges: For me the class sizes and weather were the hardest aspects of studying abroad in New Zealand. After spending two months in Cambodia (for McKenna International), the shift from tropical to temperate was a shock. One thing that I did not realize was the lack of substantial heating in the student flats, I was able to see my breath at night/slept in a sweatshirt for the first month. The second hardest part was the size of my university classes; one of my classes had almost 300 students. After having CMC classes capped at 19 students for the last two years, being in a large lecture hall was an initial challenge. However, I adjusted and was able to effectively learn in a larger environment.

Advice: Do a Milford boat cruise! Go bungee jumping, eat at FERGBURGER! (I went 5-6 times), see lake Tekapo, travel to Wellington and do the Tongariro alpine crossing, do NOT sneak a few samples from the Wellington New World pantry...a secret shopper will see you and ban you from the store, hike the Routeburn track, watch an All Blacks game, hike in Abel Tasman, and get a Kebab at Café Nesli in Dunedin!

