

Globe Trotters



Destination: India



Junior International Studies major, Xandra Bent is currently studying abroad in India. Here is her bittersweet experience thus far:

“I am the only person from UNC Asheville in India this semester. I am the only set of eyes from our community over here...and let me tell you, it rocks.

You get very mixed reactions when you tell people you’re going to India. Either people are insanely excited for you

and envious of your adventure, or they say things to you that are down right racist. I’ve faced a fair share of both reactions.

Funny thing is, when you get here, people’s reactions to you are genuinely excited and curious about your adventure or react to you in a way that makes you hyper aware of being foreign and of a different race. Sometimes the reactions are positive and sometimes they are negative, but either way it reminds you that we live in a world of color, and people tend to really care about it one way or another. I will be so sad to leave this place. Late night dosas, feeling important because everyone stares all the time, arguing for the price of anything from a hotel room to a new dress. So many things I see

and experience every day simply have no parallel to how things are back home. And on top of that, the friends I’ve made here are truly incredible people. Everyone is so strong and inspiring in such different ways. I feel like I’ve learned so much from everyone here. There are so many things I hope to take away from people here; ways of living and thinking and being that I strive to emulate. All I can hope is that I’ve given them even half as much as they’ve given me, whether they know what they’ve done for me or not. I feel like there’s no way I can do this, but I spread the love and friendship everywhere I can, and pray in my heart of hearts that it will be enough, or at least a little something.”

Abroad in Estonia

Chelsea Beyer has recently started her term in Estonia. Here’s her journey so far: “My first two weeks in Tartu were rough. I spent those days doubting whether going 5,000 miles away from Asheville was the right decision. I researched Estonia before I came here, but a guidebook can teach very little com-

pared to a face-to-face encounter with a culture. I began to follow the advice I was given about culture shock and made a list of things I wanted to accomplish in Tartu: to meet new people, to learn to appreciate both my home and my host cultures, and to learn to be more confident. Setting goals helped me

focus my energy into a productive form. I spent the next two weeks establishing a residence permit, a bank account, a student ID card, and a support system of friends. Now I’ve encountered another stage of the study abroad experience: I don’t want to leave Tartu!”

Special points of interest:

- INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK: NOVEMBER 14-18TH
- INTERNATIONAL PHOTO CONTEST EXHIBIT AND RECEPTION: NOV. 17TH IN RAMSEY LIBRARY
- SPRING STUDY ABROAD FAIR: JANUARY 25TH
- SUMMER/FALL APPLICATION DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 10TH
- NATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE (NSE) DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 17TH

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Abroad for the Summer

Teaching Fellow Kelsey Cain recently studied abroad with the UNC Asheville faculty-led program to Ghana, West Africa. Here is her journey:

“A long time ago I told myself I would travel the world, whether that be as a student or a teacher. I have been to several places in the world, but no previous trip was anything like my adventure in Ghana, West Africa. It definitely felt personal in both the environment in which we lived and the interactions we had with each other and with new friends. We traveled to many

parts of the country, each one unlike the one before - climbing the canopy of the rainforest, teaching in the schools, researching the history of cocoa products in West Africa, learning how to dance to traditional African music and many other once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.

Through the course of the trip, from location to location, I not only immersed myself in the culture of Ghana, but also figured out why I want to be a teacher. Each person we met seemed to hold a unique innocence that kept me smiling every

day of the trip. Seeing the world for myself is one thing, but bringing the world into my classroom one day is the foundation of cultivating values of global citizenship in my students.”

For more information on UNC Asheville summer programs, visit:

studyabroad.unca.edu

“...NO TRIP WAS ANYTHING LIKE MY ADVENTURE TO GHANA, WEST AFRICA...”

Discovering Latin America

Senior Lindsay Sprague is currently studying abroad in Chile. Here is her story:

“For the first time in my life, an answer came to me in a dream. The answer addressed this idea of “Latin American-ness” I’ve been thinking about since I arrived in the Southern Hemisphere. The streets are filled with people bundled in dark clothes, in unassuming styles, who don’t say hello to strangers. And yet every single surface in Valparaiso is covered in street art, the buildings are painted turquoise, pink, and orange, and there are boys who run out in front of the cars stopped at red lights to perform juggling shows all over the city. I think it’s a pervasive, somber sensibility tempered by the lingering awareness of complete possibility. And if not possibility then impending frenzy. My host

mom works 60-hour weeks and the dance clubs are open until 5 a.m.. I’m not making any connections between any of these things, they’re just tellingly odd and contradictory. Back to my revelatory dream.

I was dreaming about being in class. I was sitting at my desk, and I raised my hand and asked the teacher why Chile is the way it is. He looked at me and said “Boundaries.”

That’s all I remember from the dream, but I’ve been thinking about it for two days. I think the word “boundaries” actually explains a lot about Chile. For one, it’s a tiny slice of the Earth bound to the east by the Andes mountains, to the West by the Pacific Ocean, to the South by Antarctica, and to the North by a giant desert.

In addition to its extreme geography, Chile is hit with

crippling earthquakes every ten years or so, has about a thousand volcanoes, and is a hot spot for tsunamis. No wonder they call it the “Land of the Poets.” It makes me want to write a love sonnet *while I still can*. I’m exaggerating. But I do think geography is the underpinning of culture. People show up to a place, they decide to live there, and the society they create is limited and sustained by what’s around them.”

Sprague continues to find fascinating contradictions of Chilean culture, and she concludes with an explanation of Chile’s unpredictability by stating, “It’s overcast a lot and people don’t walk around smiling, but there is this sense that something amazing might happen, and it might be tonight, so you want to be ready.”



Lindsay Sprague
Chile

Experience Cambridge, England

Over the summer, UNC Asheville student Halcyon Garrett traveled to Cambridge, England. Here's her experience:

"Going to Cambridge this summer with UNC Asheville was one of the greatest adventures of my life so far. We arrived in London and were immediately immersed in everything London had to offer. We saw famous plays, toured museums, visited all the main sites, and were allowed to simply wander the streets and get lost zig-zagging along the underground. From London we took a train through the lush green hillsides to Cambridge - a city so rich with history that it seems to seep through the

very cobblestones that line the streets. After class each day we were led on walking tours of the city where we were able to look at what we had read about in our textbooks. Studying abroad makes history come alive, and it's because of this that study abroad is so powerful. It's one thing to read about Sir Isaac Newton and his discovery of calculus; it's an entirely different thing to visit the school he attended and see "the apple tree" that led to his discovery of gravity.

Study abroad also broadens students' world views and causes them to question how

they view the world. While in Cambridge we were exposed to things we never come into contact with here at home, which made us re-examine how we viewed our own culture.

I believe that study abroad is a crucial element in a well-rounded education, because it exposes us to so many things we never experienced. It's challenging, thought-provoking, and life changing. In addition, study abroad is fun! If I had the opportunity again, I would sign up for the Cambridge trip in a heartbeat!"



Photo taken by
Halcyon Garrett
London, England

Adventures in Spain

Senior Elizabeth Keil is currently studying abroad in Spain. Here she describes her initial culture shock of arriving in her host country:

"There's no denying the fact that every country around the world does things differently. That is what makes up their culture. Whether for good or bad, when you visit or live in a new country these differences can be very apparent. My first week in Spain, if given the choice, I wouldn't repeat. I felt that I had been dropped into a house by myself with a woman who didn't speak my language and was responsible for my well-being for the next four months. I hadn't been told to take a nap since I was a child and I had never lived in such a small room.

It only took me four or five days to realize that while everything was different it wasn't wrong. My room was small because the Spaniards do not spend time in their houses like we do in the States. Friends always meet at a tapas bar and enjoy the free food with their drink, go walking around the city or go to the many free shows where there is dancing. Nap time, or siesta, is the Spanish version of taking time off during the day to be with the family and to remember that they work to live not live to work. Things are slower here, dinner is later, they kiss instead of hug, they stay out late, and they say exactly what they are thinking.

While these differences made me uncomfortable at first, I soon realized that if I wanted

the same life I had in the States I should not have left. Now I am enjoying the Spanish way of life more and more every day. And I love noticing the little differences that make each country unique and amazing in their own ways. By living in a new country you have the time to begin to appreciate their point of view and their culture."

For more information on studying abroad in Spain, visit:
studyabroad.unca.edu



Elizabeth Keil
Spain

2011-12 International Photo Contest Winners Announced

Every academic year, the Study Abroad/Study Away and International Studies departments sponsor the International Photo Contest. This year's theme is the story behind the photo. After much deliberation, the pictures featured here have been judged as the best of the 2011-12 academic year. All photos and their stories will be on display in the Blower's Gallery, the main floor of Ramsey library from November 2nd-30th.

Best in Show



Katherine Clark
Desfile de las Rosas
Ecuador

First Place: Portraits



Georgia Stahl
A Day on the Job
Ecuador

First Place: Landscape



Elizabeth Anne Becker
Rainy Season
Sierra Leone

First Place: General



Chris Bell
Armando's Match Box
Cuba

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The UNC Asheville Study Abroad/Study Away department serves to broaden students' horizons and expand their educational opportunities through international and domestic travel. We work with UNC Asheville students who want to visit another country or state, as well as with students from other countries who wish to visit UNC Asheville as part of an exchange program. We offer traditional programs of study in which students attend foreign universities, as well as UNC Asheville faculty-led programs and international service learning opportunities. Students have the option of studying abroad or away for a semester, academic year, spring break, or summer. No matter what your particular interests, goals, or budget might be, you are sure to find a program that works for you through the UNC Asheville Study Abroad/Study Away department.

We're on the Web!
studyabroad.unca.edu