

# Globe Trotters



## Destinations: France, India, and Italy



Gabi Marino is a senior studying French and Literature here at UNC Asheville. She has studied abroad with two UNCA short-term programs to northern Italy and India, and spent a semester in France. Here she recounts her travels:

“My family is Italian, so it had always been my dream to travel to Italy. Our faculty-led excursion in northern Italy offered the ideal summer trip: I could study abroad with familiar professors and fellow students while receiving course credit. During the program, we traveled from smaller Italian villages like Vagogna to larger metropolises

such as Milan and Rome. We were faced with obscene amounts of food, including arrays of pastas and sweet gelatos, pizzas, and Italian breads and cookies. Needless to say, I hired a personal trainer upon my return to the United States!

My travels in Italy led me to study abroad a second time in France. I’m a French and Literature double major, and studying abroad is an important aspect of learning a foreign language. I was abroad for five months and was lucky enough to live with a fantastic host family. My experience in France allowed me to cultivate my French, and I found myself becoming very comfortable in the laid-back French society. My friends and I were welcome to spend hours in cafes’ without being hurried out, and we indulged often. Adjusting to French culture was initially difficult, since I missed my American friends and family, and everyday tasks such as grocery shopping and sending mail were a challenge.

However, I found my time in France to be the most rewarding experience of my life. I’ve maintained correspondence with my wonderful French family, and I plan to cultivate this relationship for the rest of my life. I enjoyed my stay so much that I’ve applied to move abroad upon graduation to teach English and literature to French students.

In addition to my stays in Italy and France, I spent December of 2011 on a faculty-led program in northern India. While abroad, I received credit for LS479: Cultivating Citizenship in the Contemporary World. I experienced the most culture shock in India, since I had never visited a country outside the Western Hemisphere. I could not grow accustomed to the stares of passer-bys. In India, staring is not considered rude like it is in the United States, so hoards of people would hover around our group and marvel at us Americans. [cont. on pg 2]

## National Student Exchange

Are you interested in experiencing another culture without going overseas? Is there a certain state you have always wanted to live in? Do you want to take classes that are not offered at UNC Asheville? Do you want to visit a university at which you intend to go to graduate

school? If your answer to any of these questions is “yes,” then consider applying to National Student Exchange (NSE). NSE allows you to study in any of the 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Canada for a semester or a year. With almost 200 NSE colleges and

universities, you will almost certainly find a program that matches your personality, interests, and goals.

For more information, visit [studyabroad.unca.edu/nse-study-away](http://studyabroad.unca.edu/nse-study-away)

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## Destinations: Cont.



Varanasi by night.  
Photo taken from the back  
of a rickshaw.

[Cont. from pg. 1]  
Additionally, there are many beggars in the country, impoverished children unashamedly grabbed our shirtsleeves and jackets and walked along beside us pleading for cash. Despite these solemn experiences, India offered a rich selection of delicious foods. Being vegetarian, I found it easy to eat well in this country, where the majority is pescetarian or vegetarian. The shopping in India was phenomenal as well, since the country features thousands of talented artisans. Their handicrafts were incredibly elaborate and beautiful and so cheap, due to the favorable

exchange rate. I'd recommend that everyone visit India at least once, because it was some of the most fun I've had. Just crossing the street in New Delhi proved to be a life-threatening challenge! My studies abroad have positively affected my personal and academic interests. My first trip to Italy encouraged me to declare a double major in a foreign language after witnessing the benefits of communicating with people abroad. It has also stimulated a desire to finally learn Italian, the language of my heritage. My stay in France was perhaps the most influential, since I have chosen to pursue

a Master's in French and Francophone Studies. I hope to one day receive a job offer abroad. Finally, India taught me to be appreciative of my life and opportunities in America. These countries, though completely different from one another, taught me to be adaptive. Being versatile in a sometimes stressful, foreign environment is an indelible skill to have. I'm blessed to have cultivated my versatility while spending time abroad with such wonderful faculty and students."

## Spring Break: Costa Rica



Atenas, Costa Rica

At UNC Asheville students have the opportunity to study abroad over Spring Break in Atenas, Costa Rica. The short term program is an intensive study in the business and economics practices in Costa Rica. Furthermore the experience aims to develop and improve students' Spanish language skills and provide a new global perspective on multi-ethnic and multi-lingual workplaces and communities. The trip is a collaborative program with the departments of Foreign Language, International Studies, Management and Accountancy. It will be led by Dr. Michelle Bettencourt of the Spanish department and Dr. Alycia Fogle of the Management and Accountancy department. Some of the classes will be offered in English for students from other disciplines, though the majority of the classes

will be in Spanish. Moreover, students will spend their ten day expedition living with a local family for a home-stay experience, thus Spanish 310 is a strongly recommended pre-requisite. Additional excursions during the trip may include discussions with local business people, the volcano Poas, the National Culture Museum, a hydroponic lettuce farm, the National University Business School, the Pacific Coast beach of Esterillos, and many more. There will also be a community service day, where students learn about the industrial roles of an organic coffee cooperative on the local, national, and international economy.

Overall, students will develop cross-cultural communication

skills and gain international outlook on the intricacy of intercontinental business and economic systems.

This short term faculty-led program is planned for Spring Break 2013.

For more information on studying abroad in Costa Rica, visit:  
[studyabroad.unca.edu](http://studyabroad.unca.edu)

## Adventures in South Africa

Katy Petrisin is a sophomore International Studies major currently abroad in South Africa. Here she describes her host city of Stellenbosch and her first visit to a South African township:

“Imagine the city of Charleston. Downsize it, add more plants and dirt paths, surround it with huge craggy mountains, then fill with Californians who all have accents. Now you have Stellenbosch, South Africa. The town is full of coffee shops and cafes and the university here is huge and beautiful.

The International office took all the [incoming] students on a trip to Cape Town our first weekend here. We drove through one of the biggest townships [urban living area]

in South Africa. It consists of a sea of shacks that stretches to the horizon. The homes are made of whatever people can get their hands on, mostly wood and corrugated tin. The township is a very dynamic community with people selling a variety of goods and services, like old windows and doorframes and hair salons.

Our guide tried to explain some of the complications of the situation. Many of the residents were displaced into these racially segregated communities during apartheid. Tests were used to determine race, including one where a pencil was stuck into the individual's hair and they were told to lean forward, if the pencil stayed they were

black, if it fell they were white. As part of their reparations, the government is building homes for the people living in the townships.

Electric poles run through the townships going from city to city where some residents illegally tap them and drive up the prices for the people who are using it legitimately. South Africa has a huge wealth gap, and situations like these only hurt the shrinking middle class.

I have only seen a small portion of South Africa but can assure you that it is unlike anywhere else you will see. The landscape is inspiring, the poverty humbling, the experience overall is quite remarkable.”



Cape Town, S. Africa  
Katy Petrisin

## Upcoming International Events/Special Points of Interest

*Asheville and Western North Carolina has a very vibrant and interactive international community. Below are a couple upcoming events open to the public.*

- **April 4-11th**—*International Festival*, performers and film project series, at Western Carolina University
- **Through April 16th**—*The Heroic Present: The Gypsy Photographs of Jan Yoors*, photographs taken before and after World War II of the Roma communities, displayed in Karpen Hall lobby
- **April 18th**—*Undergraduate Research Spring Symposium*, at UNC Asheville (more info: <http://urp.unca.edu/> )
- **May 10-13th**—*Lake Eden Arts Festival (LEAF)*, connecting cultures and creating community through music and art, at Lake Eden (more info: [www.theleaf.com](http://www.theleaf.com))
- **June 14-16th**—*Fifth Annual Art in Bloom*, Japanese art of flower design and culture, at the Black Mountain Center for Arts
- **July 18-29th**—*Folk moot International Festival*, two week celebration of global heritage through folk music and dance, throughout Western North Carolina (more info: <http://www.folkmootusa.org/> )



Spain

## Photos from Abroad!

The photos featured below are intriguing images from around the world. Here are some of the visual students' experiences.



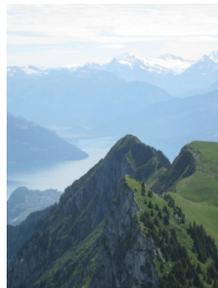
Kelly Giarrocco  
Barcelona, Spain



Katherine Kendall  
Kyoto, Japan



Lisa Allen  
Island of Tanna, Vanuatu



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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, 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!**  
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