

PURPAN University France Study Abroad Experience



This summer, I was blessed to have the opportunity to study abroad at the University PURPAN in Toulouse, France. Along with 60 other students from all around the globe I learned about French culture, cuisine, landscape and traditions. I cannot imagine a better use of my time this summer than spending these weeks abroad and I would greatly encourage anyone in the college of agriculture interested in learning more about other colleges to go on this program.

Not only did I learn more about France than I ever could have here in the states, but I also made friends that will last a lifetime in countries as far away as Lebanon and China. I can't imagine this experience without my fellow students, and we had tons of fun while learning as much as we could in the month that we had before our internships began.

When four Purdue girls met up in the Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris before the program started, we had no idea how close we would become after getting to live in each other's pockets in a foreign country for two months. After spending a day in Paris, we flew to Toulouse-Blagnac Airport and began one of the most



amazing journeys of our lives. Living in the university residences with everybody else in the program as well as French students was a very interesting part of the trip. Most of my roommates were French, and they delighted in





showing me interesting pieces of French cuisine such as foie gras, which I love now but found a bit odd at first since its very fatty duck liver and isn't something typically sold in the U.S.

The first month flew by, and before we knew it, we were off to our internships throughout the French countryside all alone. I found myself on an amazing French showjumping farm where I soon learned all about how the French horse industry works. I was happy to find that it's very similar to what we do in the U.S. and that I was very able to help with all chores on the farm and make myself useful. At the end of the month, I was sad to leave the horses and the friends I'd made, but I was so excited to see my friends and the city of Toulouse again.

Our last two days in France flew by; we watched each other's internships presentations and shared funny

stories from our month on the farm. After many tearful goodbyes, Maddie and I boarded our plane to head back to Paris. I said goodbye to her in the terminal and went to my flight to Chicago. I bought one last ham cheese and butter sandwich on a baguette as well as a macaroon and settled in to wait for my flight. As I reflected on my time abroad, I couldn't imagine having a better experience in France, but I was so happy to be going home to see my family and all my pets.

At the end of the day, I truly can't express how much I loved my time in France. I know that that I'll go back to Toulouse someday. The beautiful La Ville Rose has stolen my heart and I'm looking forward to sharing my story with others and helping them start the journey that could potentially change their lives.

