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UQ Program: Architecture

My twin sister and myself,
Galway, Ireland ESN trip

Two years ago I never saw myself living in a foreign city (Dublin, Ireland) let alone parentless, studying architecture abroad and seeing the wonders of the world. Recently, having just returned to my family home, I am still in disbelief as well as dumbfounded by my 5 month independent accomplishments and forever life-changing experiences. In all honesty, I don't believe that my time overseas [*Amsterdam, Munich, Rhine River (Germany), Tyrol (Austria), Christmas Skiing in Hopfgarten (Austria), Salzburg, Vienna (Austria), Switzerland, Venice, Rome, Florence, Paris, London, Barcelona (Spain), Hong Kong and townships of Ireland*] could ever outshine even my most fondest recollections or experiences I have had or will ever have within the next ten years. My Dublin experience will never be a faint memory, but something I keep very close to my heart, my new found home...a place I instantaneously yearn for.



Studying my second semester of 2nd year architecture at UCD was not only creatively challenging and inspiring but also exploited my architectural boundaries of design concepts and presentation in a fresh and satisfying degree. Although my architectural peers were in their 1st semester of their second year (UQ is one semester in front of UCD), the weekly pin ups of design and technology reflected high standards and advanced workload. The one week architectural workshop which explored drawing techniques of lighting and shadows, hatching as well as charcoal drawing, photography and model making opened my eyes to new drawing techniques and presentation guidelines.

I thoroughly recommend weekend travelling to the outer regions of Ireland (*the cliffs of Mohar, Kilarney, kissing the Blarney Stone, Galway, Belfast, Cork during Jazz weekend and Wicklow*) as early as possible in the semester as well as participating in the *ESN trips* to Belfast and Galway (UCD international student exchange trips).

Avoid living in apartments off campus or in remote areas. Living in college at UCD (Glenomma Residence) was a three minute walk to the laundrette, on campus grocery store "Centra" and other party college "Merville". Not only is it easier to commute but also, enables you to form friendships with college locals and internationals (the Irish are extremely friendly).

Tips for Dublin:

1. Be prepared for it to always rain and IN OUR CASE SNOW AS WELL. Always have an umbrella handy and clothes that can withstand 0 degree weather in winter (starting in November).
2. Try the well priced and delicious nearest TESCO grocery store to UCD (a 30 minute walk).



3. Clubbing: Dices, D2's, Coppers, Button factory etc (Hardcourt Street). Some clubs are strictly 21 and over.
4. Try some guinness at the local Guinness Factory and see the Dublin Castle. Visit areas in Ireland outside Dublin on the weekends (ESN trips and your own). Book in advance for European trips on the weekend (prices rise with time).
5. Travel before and after your exchange around Europe with Contiki (I did the European discovery listing all the above cities in 12 days) and Austria Skii Contiki over Christmas (my first white Christmas). Vienna for New Years is the party capital!
6. Whilst travelling in Europe beware of pick pockets on trains especially in Paris and Rome. Know where your valuables are at all times and don't trust anyone.
7. Only travel with a mate you know really well or a family member.



Giant Causeway

If you have the chance to go on exchange, don't be foolish and walk away or delay it for anything or anyone. Take the opportunity because it might not present itself again. Apply now...there is more to life than just Australia! Not only will you not regret a five month trip but also, you'll find out more about yourself and come back significantly changed.