



Colie Winsor and Karly Maier exploring Santorini, Greece

Study Abroad: Barcelona and Beyond

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Barcelona, Spain is a city full of rich history, cosmopolitan culture, breathtaking architecture and a warm Mediterranean climate. In other words, it's a far cry from Fargo, North Dakota. That's just what Colie Winsor and Karly Maier were searching for when they decided to study abroad in Spain for the spring 2016 semester.

Colie was especially looking forward to the beautiful mountains and sea, and Karly hoped to experience the unique culture and improve her Spanish skills. The Retail Merchandising students didn't just get to experience the sights and tastes of Barcelona; they also travelled to 15 other nearby cities including London, England; Paris, France; Athens, Greece; Rome, Italy; and Valencia, Spain during the semester. Colie loved getting to travel around Europe and said her favorite memory was seeing the Eiffel Tower at night on Valentine's Day. "My favorite part has just been exploring Barcelona and meeting new people," Karly said, "It's such a big city, and you can walk to most places. I've loved going out with friends and practicing my Spanish. Barcelona is so much fun. It's a safe city and extremely beautiful."

The girls have also been taking classes in Spanish, hospitality, and marketing while abroad. Karly said her classes were like the ones at NDSU except that the students came from all over the world. They've also learned a lot about Spain's culture, noting differences from America such as eating dinner at 9 p.m. with tapas (appetizers), taking to fashion trends quicker, and generally taking life at a more leisurely pace. Both students agreed that studying abroad has been an eye-opening and life-changing experience. "I learn something new every day," Colie said, "Even if it's a simple thing, like a new word in Spanish, it's still exciting to watch yourself grow. When you're pushed outside of your comfort zone and put in a completely different culture, you find out so much about yourself."