MaryKate Bruckbauer

DUBLIN, IRELAND

MaryKate’s Majors: Elementary Education and History

Program: USIT Irish Studies Summer School

Most Memorable Moments: By far one of the most memorable experiences I had in Ireland was when some friends and I decided to embark on a 21 mile adventure through the Gap of Dunloe in Killarney. We first had a 14 mile boat ride through three long lakes in the valleys of some of the most beautiful mountains and hills of County Kerry, passing under some ancient bridges until we got to our land destination. Then, we still had a seven mile hike up a mountain and down through the valley on the other side passing stone ruins, lakes, and sheep the whole way. We even thought we saw where Hogwarts is located in a misty valley in the mountains! The scenery was absolutely breathtaking as we came down through the fog on the other side of the Gap, passing horse-drawn carriages trotting past us.

Academic Life: My classes all took place in a beautiful historic room in the Graduate Memorial Building of Trinity College in Dublin! In this amazing room I took classes on Irish history since the time of the Great Famine, Irish theatre and drama (which included seeing two plays by the renowned Irish playwright Brian Friel), Gaelic culture, and the visual culture of Ireland. All of my classes were taught by Irish professors, and I took these classes with other American students.

Advice for Someone Considering Dublin: Whenever I meet people considering studying abroad in Ireland, I immediately try to convince them to go because I know, without a doubt, that they would have the time of their life! The people in Ireland are incredibly friendly and funny, which makes anything you do in Ireland seem light-hearted and fun. Also, it has the most gorgeous scenery that I have ever seen, so anyone who likes beautiful landscapes would fall in love with Ireland, like I did.

“Studying abroad was truly a life-changing experience, and I wouldn’t trade it for the world.”