

SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA

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Program: UW Spanish Language in Costa Rica, Winter

Sarah's Majors: Spanish; Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies

Academic Life: I took Spanish 203 at Maximo Nivel, a school in San Jose set up for foreigners who want to learn Spanish. We had class in the afternoon from 2-6 on weekdays. My class was one-on-one, which gave me a great opportunity to practice my Spanish and have long conversations with my instructor. All of the teachers at Maximo Nivel were native Spanish speakers, which helped a lot to improve my speaking ability and comprehension.

Tips for Future Students: I would advise students who have not recently taken a Spanish class to refresh their grammar and vocabulary; this will help immensely in the first week of class.

Housing: I lived in a homestay with a Costa Rican family. I lived with an elderly Costa Rican woman and her adult son. My host mother was very sweet and made me breakfast and dinner every day. She and her son were very helpful in showing me around San Jose and giving me advice on other places to visit in Costa Rica. She lived a ten-minute bus ride from the school, and took the bus with me on the first day of class.

Advice for Someone Considering Costa Rica: Costa Rica is a great country to improve your Spanish, and the people I met there were eager to help me practice. San Jose is a large enough city that there was always something to do. It was easy for us to hop on a bus for less than \$10 and spend the weekend in another city or town, which we did every weekend.

Benefits of Study Abroad: Immersing myself in Costa Rican culture allowed me to understand the language and its roots much better. Learning to navigate cultural and language barriers are crucial skills in a globalized workforce, and I think studying abroad has prepared me immensely.



Sarah at La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

“Studying abroad has definitely put me at an advantage when applying to future jobs.”

