

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

KASEY CRAGG

Program: Academic Program in Aix-en-Provence, Fall

Kasey's Major: Psychology

Academic Life: I took classes at SUFLE, an international student school in conjunction with Aix-Marseille University. My schedule was based around a grammar class which was 4 hours per day, 3 times per week with a French professor. In addition, I chose three "ateliers," themed courses once per week for 2 hours; these were multimedia/French culture, scientific vocabulary class, and literature class. My classmates were mostly students studying abroad, coming from countries like China, Colombia, Singapore, and others, but there was also a large percentage of adults (age 25-30) who had moved to France and needed to learn the language. Each class tested us in "the four competencies": listening comprehension, reading comprehension, written production, and oral production.

Housing: I lived in a little apartment on the 11th floor with a 90-year-old Frenchwoman and another study abroad student from Indiana. It was definitely an eye-opening experience! I was kind of a messy person back in the States, so I had to learn quickly that my old habits would not fly with my new host mom. She was strict, but also very caring and taught me all kind of amazing French recipes. Plus, I had someone to practice my speaking with and correct my papers living right in my house!

Kasey's Most Memorable Moment: On Halloween, a friend and I went to Paris and visited Le Cimetière Père Lachaise, which is where tons of famous people (Oscar Wilde, Jim Morrison, Edith Piaf) are buried. Not only was it one of the spookiest moments of the trip, but it was also very powerful. There's something magical about seeing someone's grave adorned with flowers and lipstick kisses almost 60 years after they died...it's like love transcending life and death.

Kasey's Advice For Someone Considering This Program: Do not do this program if you're not ready to work hard. French professors demand effort and they're going to push you every step of the way, but it's only because they believe in you and know you're capable of greatness. I was exhausted by the end of every school day, but I have never been more satisfied with the result of a semester.



Kasey picking olives in the French countryside.

"I fell in love with myself again and finally got to a point where I'm no longer afraid to face the world."

