

GRANADA, SPAIN

ALISON GRUEN

Program: UIUC Spanish Studies in Granada, Fall

Alison's Majors: Dietetics, Spanish

Academic Life: I attended CEGRI, a small language school, with only American students that were in the program. All of my classes were taught in Spanish and each class size was no bigger than 20 students. I took 5 classes while I was in Granada, consisting of cultural studies of Spain, Arab-Islamic culture, conversation, phonetics and art history. I loved the small classroom setting because I formed great relationships with the teachers and students in my class. Therefore, I felt more comfortable to participate and engage in the class.

First Impression: I was extremely nervous as I stepped off the airplane, as I knew from that point on my life for four months would be filled with challenges, language barriers and new experiences. My first impression of Granada when we all arrived was that it was a huge city filled with a lot of people and small roads with no street signs. However, with the help of the directors, I quickly felt more comfortable in the city and gained more confidence every day, speaking Spanish with locals. My first and lasting impression of Granada is that the culture and people living there are extremely welcoming, and that Granada is one of the most unique and beautiful cities I have ever visited.

Most Memorable Moment: Definitely the most memorable experience while I was studying abroad was the first day I went out for tapas with my host mom. The second day I was living with her, she invited me to go to her favorite tapas bar, where we started the tradition of going to tapas at least once a week together. I can still remember the first tapas I ordered, morcilla, and how I understood about half of what my host mom said. However, by our last outing for tapas, I was fully engaged in the conversation and understood everything she said.



Alison at her favorite spot in Granada, Mirador de San Nicolas.

“It was the perfect environment to learn Spanish and explore a culture different from that of Wisconsin.”

