Which city and country did you live in abroad?

I lived in Stellenbosch University in South Africa. Where we stayed at a guest house about five minutes away from campus. I went into the schools in South Africa throughout the month and were able to teach those kids. Stellenbosch University was a five minute walk from our guest house that we stayed at.

What is the climate like in that location?

(Describe the weather when you were there. What are some things students should take with them to prepare for the weather in this location?)

When we were there for the month it was their winter season. The weather would vary from 50s to 70s throughout the 4 weeks we were there. It rains in the winter there which is when they can recover from the drought. Students should pack like winter and bring rain gear.

What was the city’s public transportation like?

(Describe how you got to and from the city center or the university day-to-day. Did they have a subway line, buses, could you walk most places? What were the costs of these transportation options? Were they easy to utilize? Did they have Uber/Lyft available in this city? Did you have any challenges navigating through the city?)

We walked to most places in the Stellenbosch area. When we were to go to our schools we got picked up but student drivers from the university. Otherwise if we wanted to go into capetown we would have to take an uber. The University drove us to all of our excursions and planned activities.

Describe the types of food that are common in that city.

(What were the types of foods you could find at most restaurants? What were some delicacies of that city? What were your favorite or least favorite foods?)

Most of the food was very American, your typical burgers and bar food. They are known for their ostrich steak which was amazing. The ostrich steak was my favorite food that I tried there. My least favorite was the burgers they were too dry for me.
Are there any particular restaurants you would recommend students try if they are in that city?
(If possible, list the name of the restaurant and a link to the website)
Kauwai- Smoothies and Wraps, Tigers Milke- Bar Food, Any of the Italian food

Was it easy to travel to nearby cities and countries?
(If you traveled in your personal time, what modes of transportation did you use (e.g. bus, train, airplane, etc.). How did you book these travel plans? Online? Local bus station? Generally what was the cost of travelling in that region? Where did you stay (e.g. Airbnb, hostels, hotels) when you travelled?)

Yes, It was easy for us because we would just have a thirty minute ride into Cape Town. We would just go there for the day and then come back that night.

What are some of the differences between U.S. culture and the host country culture?
(Are there any gestures or differences in communication style that is different from the US that you noticed? (smiling, eye contact etc.))

Dancing, The Afriikans love to use their culture dance and music to show their love.

Generally, how would you describe the locals in the host city?
(Were the locals friendly and helpful? Would you recommend approaching the locals for help?)

Some were friendly and some were not. A lot of South Africa people stand on the streets and beg for money. I would not approach anyone on the street but I would approach workers in places they worked at for help.
Are there any cultural events that you attended during your stay that you would recommend to students (e.g. festivals, holidays, etc.)?
(How did you find out about these events?)
Mandela Day, At the elementary schools we atteneding their Mandela Day ceremony. Where they talked about who Mandela was and what he did for their country.

Describe any culture shock that you experienced while abroad.
(If culture shock was present what would you recommend for future students to avoid or lessen the shock?)
Just be prepared... it is not like the media portrays it as. Yes there is poverty like there is everywhere. Don't think of them as all poor because they are not all poor they have chose to live this life.

Did you find it difficult to meet locals of the host city? Why or why not?
(In your experience were the locals open and welcoming of tourists? Where and how did you befriend the locals during your stay?)
No, because they wanted to get to know more about us and we wanted to get to know more about them. We talked to alot of waiters and waitresses as well as became friends with our drivers.

What type of housing did you live in (e.g. homestay, dorm, apartment, etc.)?
(Why did you choose this style of housing? Did you have access to a kitchen? How often/what was the process for doing laundry (in house or local laundry mat?)?)
We stayed in a guest house five minutes from campus. We had cooks and maids everyday and they cooked us breakfast. They would collect our laundry once a week and bring it back the next day.
Describe your accommodations.
(Did you have access to hot water? Wifi? Did you live with roommates?)

Yes we had access to hot water, we had to be careful of our water use due to the shortage of water in South Africa. We had wifi pretty much every place we went too. Each of us had a roommate that we shared a bathroom and bedroom with.

Where was your housing located in regards to the city center or host university?
(How long did it take, using public transportation or walking, to get to classes every day? How long did it take to travel to the center of the city or any other major locations in that city?)

It took us about 5-10 minutes to walk to Stellenbosch center city. It took about 30-40 minutes to get to Cape Town.

What was the cost of living like? What ways can you keep costs low in that city?
(Compared to the cost of living in the city of Charlotte was it more or less expensive in that city? Were there any student discounts you took advantage of?)

Cost was 13 rand to 1 U.S. dollar. Things were pretty cheap there and you would receive student discounts at most places.

Are you expected to tip servers or taxi drivers abroad?
(If so, what was the common tip rate? Was it the same rate as here in Charlotte (10-20%)?)

Yes common tip was about 10%.
How did you communicate when you were abroad?
(e.g. did you use your own phone, did you only communicate if there was access to Wi-Fi, did you purchase a phone abroad, etc.)? (Would you recommend any helpful apps? Maybe whatsapp or a currency exchange app?)
I used wifi when we had it which was alot of the time. As well as whatsapp and facetime.

What would you recommend students bring to be able to charge their electronics?
(Describe the electrical outlets, tips to keep in mind, etc.).
South Africa adapter for the wall.

What do you know now about the location or program that you wish you would have known before going abroad?
The background and citizens that live there.

STUDY ABROAD ALUMNI INFORMATION

What’s your first and last name?
Cameron Dixon

Which semester and year did you go abroad (e.g. fall 2016, summer 2017, etc.)?
Summer 2018
Which program did you participate in?
South Africa Summer 2018 (Elem Education)

What was your student level when you went abroad (e.g. freshman, sophomore, etc.)?
If you would be open to being contact by other UNC Charlotte students who are interested in your experience abroad, please provide your contact information (email, phone number, social medial, etc.)

Junior going into Senior year, cdixon31@uncc.edu