



Student realizes dream studying abroad in Heidelberg

By Elizabeth Fernandez
LOGOS STAFF WRITER

HEIDELBERG, Germany -- Ever since I was in middle school, I have always wanted to visit Heidelberg, Germany.

Today, as a 19-year-old freshman female student member of a minority, I have achieved my long-awaited dream by studying abroad here.

As I doubted my ability to study abroad, my friends, family and University of the Incarnate Word's faculty members encouraged me to pursue my goal. Aside from the acceptance letter, buying my plane ticket was the true realization I was actually going to study abroad.

I felt excited as well as nervous for the weather change. As I bought lots of winter clothes, the cashier looked at me strangely knowing that Texas' weather is bipolar.

This was going to be my first time on a plane and I expected the worst, such as an announcement saying there was a delay or my luggage was lost. However, my first plane ride was actually a smooth and great experience, not only because I got a window seat but also because there were no children screaming or crying on the way.

Since my arrival, I have noticed many things were different such as the language of the country. I will admit I do not know any German. However, I have tried my hardest to ask questions in the language and so far I have received excitement from the cashiers trying to speak English to me instead.

The German food is amazing, such as their Schnitzel's and Doner Kebab, which happen to be Turkish but are very popular in Heidelberg.

When looking for a place to eat, I would consider the mom-and-pop restaurants to be better than others.

It still shocks me when they give me a menu specifically for alcoholic drinks, as the drinking age is 16.

In Germany, my favorite type of food is from the bakeries. I love the Streusels, which are basically sweet bread coated in the streusel crumbly topping. These remind me of the pan dulce called "conchas" from back home.

The Heidelberg Castle is breathtaking, along with the garden that gives you a city view. Looking down you can see some people walking and bicycling along the bridge, as a majority of the citizens of Heidelberg walk or ride bikes.

Visiting Kurpfälzisches Museum was another beautiful sight. It truly gave more meaning and history to Heidelberg itself, as it showed both the modernization and pieces of all historical evidence that was found or left behind.

Heidelberg is also a very clean city, and recycling is part of their lifestyle. When going to a market or store



Elizabeth Fernandez/ LOGOS Staff
Elizabeth Fernandez takes a selfie with the countryside of Heidelberg, Germany, behind her.

you must take your own bags, or buy one at the store for 50 cents or more.

The weather is cold right now, but in my opinion I love it more than the heat and would prefer it to humidity and sweat.

For now, I still have a lot to see. All this has helped me discover myself more than a vacation, seeing the world, or even academics. Studying abroad has provided me with a unique opportunity and experience, even with all its stresses and hoops to jump through to get here.

E-mail Fernandez at erfernan@student.uiwtx.edu