

Faculty-Led

# Emily

## Costa Rica 2014

**Major:** Graphic Design

**Why did you choose Costa Rica?** I really wanted to step outside the country. I had never been outside of the U.S. and this trip was also a great way to fulfill a science credit. Another reason that I chose Costa Rica was that there was no language requirement, and it was more affordable than other trips offered.

**Housing:** I was so excited getting off the plane! I was immediately ecstatic when I saw palm trees lining the runway. We stayed in San Jose, which was kind of our base of operations. The house I stayed in had great architecture that I had never really seen in homes before. It let in a lot of natural light.

*“As an artist, I’m into beautiful scenery and landscapes. I knew by going to Costa Rica, I would be taken to another world.”*

**Academics:** We went on excursions and saw the jungles, we cleaned the beach at a sea turtle sanctuary on the Atlantic Ocean, and we saw volcanoes. The night before our tours, Nan lectured about what our excursions would be about. We had class at the end of the day after each trip, and we talked about what we saw and learned during that day.

**Biggest Cultural Difference:** I’ve never experienced hospitality like I did in Costa Rica; I felt so welcomed and taken care of while I was there. This was a good place to go for my first time out of the country. I felt safe everywhere I went, and they are in the same time zone as we are here. I would definitely recommend this trip for students who are nervous about leaving the county. Plus, it’s the perfect length of time.

**How were you transformed?** I learned that I am a lot braver than I ever thought I was. I surprised myself by jumping right in and participating in everything I could. I didn’t want to have any regrets about not doing something while there. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. This trip really helped me become a more confident person.

**Most memorable moment:** The waterfall was quite a hike, but it was well worth it to feel the mist spraying up onto you from below, and to see the clear blue water with the rainforest all around.

**A Piece of Advice:** Take the opportunity! You won’t regret it because there is so much you can gain. Don’t be scared to try new foods. I learned I like new foods I had never liked before — like pineapple. College is the time to study abroad because some things you can’t experience here in the U.S. By going abroad, you will become more cultured.



Emily (l.) with another student at the beach by the Tortuguero River.

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