

briangray

Perth, Australia



— Brian Gray takes a breather from surfing while at the Trigg Beach in Perth. Every morning before 6 a.m., Gray would load up the car he bought in Perth and head to the beach to surf. Learning to surf was one of many new experiences for Gray while he studied abroad.

BRIAN'S MAJOR(S): business - marketing, operations management and international studies

YEAR/TERM ABROAD: spring 2004

REASON YOU CHOSE THIS PROGRAM: In my X220 class, a student came to the class and talked about studying in Australia, and he said how it was the best experience. That stayed with me. I looked into Sydney and Melbourne, but I wanted some place more remote so I chose Perth.

DESCRIBE THE HOUSING SITUATION: I lived in a dorm or what they call colleges, Trinity College specifically. I had a single; each one had a balcony. It was more of a community, like a fraternity, rather than a dorm. The food was good, and the people were incredible. They made you feel comfortable and were so accommodating. I would definitely recommend it.

BEST MEMORY: Going to Lancelin, this small town of 170 people, to surf. The scenery was great, and the waves were incredible, a 4-meter swell. It was pretty intense.

BIGGEST SURPRISE: Their way of life, their perspective. Life outside of work is much more important than work itself. They'll blow their life savings on a trip to Europe, no problem. Here, we really like our nest eggs.

GOING ABROAD VS. STAYING ON CAMPUS, DISCUSS: Definitely do it. I'm so glad I did it. It's so repetitive here (in Bloomington); you can only do so much.

WHAT YOU KNOW NOW THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE GOING ABROAD ... The sense that once you do set your goals and achieve them, it's a great feeling. And it's unbelievable how you can make such ridiculously good friends while you're there. But you're all going through it together, experiencing another culture.

FACT ABOUT YOUR HOST COUNTRY THAT YOU THINK PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO LEARN: Perth [the capital of Western Australia] has a population of 1.7 million and all of Western Australia has 2 million, which is one-third the size of the U.S.

“Nothing can ever compare to choosing to study abroad. You meet so many new people, make so many memories that will last ... *People on campus can't top your stories.*”

ADVICE TO FUTURE STUDY ABROAD PARTICIPANTS: Don't hold back. Do everything you ever wanted to do. And buy a car, you can sell it back for a profit (that's what I did), and it will get you to most everywhere you want to go.