

brandiangrick

Paris, France

BRANDI'S MAJORS: French, International Studies, Liberal Arts & Management Program (LAMP)

YEAR/ TERM ABROAD: 2005-2006 Academic Year

REASON YOU CHOSE THIS PROGRAM: I chose the Paris IES program because it was the best place to meet French young people as there are over 600,000 students studying in Paris. I was also attracted to Paris's reputation as the City of Lights and romance, as well as the idea of studying amongst some of the oldest academic institutions and historic sites in the world. Mastering the cool Parisian attitude was just an added bonus!



Brandi Angrick, left, poses in front of the Eiffel Tower with a friend.

FAVORITE CLASSES: *Translation: Thème et Version.* We translated a page each week, going from English to French. We translated everything from Anais Nin and Truman Capote to Harry Potter. The most interesting class occurred when the professional translator for the Harry Potter books came and gave a lesson on how to translate different concepts and words that might not cross cultural boundaries and the trade-offs translators must make. This was the best French class that I've ever taken!

DESCRIBE THE HOUSING SITUATION: I lived with a different host family each semester. The first semester I lived in a room within the host family's apartment and shared a bathroom with twin girls my age. The second semester I lived in my own tiny apartment two floors above my family's apartment and had my own shower, fridge, sink, and stove top. I changed housing situations because I was ready for more independence the second semester.

EXPERIENCES WITH CULTURE SHOCK OR REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK: I was pretty prepared for the "culture shock" because I read a lot of books about French culture before I left. I think the best way to avoid culture shock is to prepare yourself and try to learn as much as you can about the culture before you go - read books, watch movies, listen to music, etc. My biggest problem was reverse culture shock; I found that I had grown accustomed to French culture and some parts of American culture rubbed me the wrong way when I returned.

WHAT I WISH I KNEW BEFORE I LEFT: French dining etiquette.

BEST MEMORY: Three girls, three glasses, one bottle of champagne, and the Eiffel Tower sparkling in the background, lighting up our "good-bye Paris" toast.

BIGGEST SURPRISE: I had no problems with rudeness, which seems to be a huge stereotype about the French. I found people to be generally pleasant and helpful if I ever had a question about something, as long as I asked politely.