

LAUREN THOMPSON

2023 Summey Scholar

Class: 2024

Major: Exercise & Sport Science
and Communication Studies

Study Abroad Program: Honors

Burch Field Research Seminar on

Sport and Cultural Innovation

Extension: History, Culture, and

Sustainability in Malta

Program in Spain

Courses: Connected Cities and Connected Teams

Research Focus:

- Connected Cities: Human well-being and smart living
- Connected Teams: Technology for soccer players' mental and physical well-being

Locations: Madrid, Toledo, Cordoba, Sevilla, Barcelona, Girona, Costa Brava

Key Activities: Individual reflections, mind maps, itineraries, micro-presentations, group reflections

Cultural Highlights: Museums, cathedrals, mosques, stadiums, local experts, workshops

Educational Approach: Hands-on and experiential learning with minimal classroom time.

Cultural Experience: Exposure to Spanish lifestyle, food, architecture, and traditions.

Language Skills: Improved Spanish language proficiency.

Transportation Skills: Navigating the metro in Barcelona independently.

Academic Growth: Developed research, note-taking, and professional engagement skills.

Extension in Malta

Educational Aim: Explore Connected Cities course further, focusing on aspects of history, culture, and sustainability

Research Focus: Intersection of history, culture, and sustainability.

Comparative Analysis: Compared Malta and Spain's experiences in terms of history, culture, and sustainability.

Activities: Exploring cathedrals, museums, ancient ruins, stadiums, architecture

Key Locations: Mellieha, Valletta, Ghajn Tuffieha, Mdina, Rabat, St. Paul's Bay

Friendly Environment: High English proficiency, low crime rate, community values

Cuisine: Blend of Italian, Mediterranean, Spanish, French, and British influences; learned about the historical influences on Maltese cuisine

Personal Growth: Confidence, adaptability, openness to strangers, self-discovery

Expanded Worldview: Developed a broader perspective through cultural interactions



History, Culture, and Sustainability: Spain & Malta

Across all locations, the influence of history was evident in the architecture, cuisine, transportation, and values, illustrating the interplay of time and culture.

Cultural Comparisons

- Similarities in fortified cities, medieval streets, historical depth
- Communitive dining styles emphasizing conversation and connectivity
- Prioritization of maintaining core cultural values
- Growing focus on sustainability within society
- Central focus on spirituality and community as there was a plethora of cathedrals and mosques in all locations
- Rich cultural heritage in the arts
- Sports seen as a unifying component of society
- Importance of community, food, and nature

