Studying Abroad in Swansea, Wales

Going for a year long study abroad program in Swansea brought so much excitement, but also so much worry for the unknown. Did it rain as much as everyone says it does? Do the Welsh tend to not like Americans? All these reservations did make me nervous for my upcoming year abroad, but little did I know, this would be the most eye-opening and wonderful years.

As I arrived in Swansea I was immediately greeted by my flat mates and the others living above us. All were so welcoming and warm, happy to bring me into their group. They knew I was coming from another country and wanted to know everything about California. They were all locals of either England or Wales. The warmth of every one of them made the transition to life abroad so simple. It immediately eased my mind of worrying about people not liking Americans or not caring much to split away from their already made friends to make another one. It was a year where I felt so grateful to be around the people I was, they made me feel so comfortable being different, but also showing me the way of a local. I made so many lifelong friends from only a short 7 months of being together.

Swansea is right on the water, so was absolutely expecting miserable weather and wind. I was so pleasantly surprised every single morning. Yes, Wales is a very wet and rainy area. I come from Northern California where it is warm during the Summer months, but you get hit with torrential downpours in the Winter months. Swansea weather was smack in the middle of the drastic mid seasonal shifts in California. It was so refreshing to never have to deal with heavy rain. It would light mist more days out of the year than California but felt like far less because of the amount it rains as once. It was so nice to be pleasantly surprised with how different the weather was than what everyone warned me about. Not to mention a break from the triple digit heat in California. It was always such a perfect temperature out and was so wonderful to never be too hot or too cold.

What started as worries or reservations I had going abroad, turned out to be such a wonderful, life-changing experience with even better people to spend the year with. I am so glad I trusted my instincts that no matter what Swansea would bring me, I would be able to handle it, just like you can!