

Leah: “Welcome to Noles Abroad, a podcast by Florida State University International Programs. I'm Leah,”

Zoë: “and I'm Zoë, and we're your hosts. On this podcast we'll talk about study abroad from the perspective of the students, faculty, staff, and alumni who make it an experience worth sharing. We'll also bring you travel tips and fun facts from around the globe.”

Zoë: “In today's episode we're thrilled to be joined by Maya Sorensen, an IP ambassador who has studied abroad in Florence, London, and Valencia. Maya talks about her family's wanderlust, her passion for design, and her experiences studying abroad at all three of our European study centers. Let's get started!”

“Hi, Maya, how are you doing today?”

Maya: “I'm good, how are you guys?”

Leah: “Good!”

Zoë: “Good, we're doing well! I'm so excited to have you on the podcast and hear a little bit about your study abroad experience. First off, can you just introduce yourself to our listeners?”

Maya: “I'm Maya Sorensen, I'm an interior architecture and design major, and I studied abroad in Florence, Italy; London, England; and Valencia, Spain.”

Leah: “So cool! Can you tell us a little bit about your story of how you decided to study abroad, and then do it again?”

Maya: “Yeah, so I've always loved traveling, I've been traveling since a young age. My dad's from Denmark and all of my family is still over there so I've grown up traveling to see them every other summer and since I've always loved traveling I always knew that I wanted to travel when I was older and studying abroad in college gave me that opportunity. I just had a really great opportunity or a great time and experience in Italy the first time so I definitely knew I was interested in going abroad again and FSU had other study locations that I was interested in visiting as well so I decided to study again.”

Zoë: “Yeah that's awesome. I think that that's really unique a lot of our students only get to study abroad once, so the fact that you did it multiple times in different locations is really cool. Can you tell us about like some of your favorite classes while you were at the various study centers?”

Maya: “Yeah, so I first went to Italy – Florence, Italy and I took an art history class which I'm interested in design and history and so I knew that being able to take a class that was catered to Florence and the art that is there because it's very prevalent the Renaissance era and I really enjoyed that class and I also got the opportunity to take the same class the art architecture and artistic vision as well in Valencia so I could see and compare the different cultures and the different art within the cities that I was visiting in, and it was really neat because I've taken art history classes in the US like on the Tallahassee campus and I was able to see and experience firsthand the art pieces and architecture that I've learned and being able to learn about them again but firsthand see them in real life was really, really neat, and then when I was in London I think my favorite class I took was I did the studies and design program which is affiliated with my interior design major and that really enhanced my experience in London just being able to see the architecture because that's what I'm really interested in I got to see again places that I've learned

about in classes previously and seeing them in person is really, really cool and I wouldn't have been able to or might have not traveled and gone out to see the places that I saw in my class excursions. And going off of that the classes that you take really make your experience abroad unique I know for like my siblings also studied abroad my brother took London and Law, he learned about the law aspect of London which is so different than the design and art architecture and while he got to experience and learned things that he was passionate about in London but it was so different from mine so you can really cater your experience to your passions and things like that when you're abroad."

Leah: "Awesome! It's so unique that you studied at all three of our European study centers, and we're just curious what your favorite part of each study center is?"

Maya: "Yeah, so the study centers are amazing I loved them I think first first of all all three of them are in a great location in the cities that they're in you can't really beat the location that they're in but the Italy study center definitely my favorite part is there's a cafe inside and if you know Italy they don't really have ice which means they don't really have iced coffee and the cafe inside the study center was one of the only places in Florence that I was able to have my iced coffee in the morning which I loved and I know a lot of other students appreciated and they have a beautiful, beautiful library that I would go and study and during the day and fun fact if I'm little story my parents went and traveled to Italy this past year this past summer and they got in contact with the study center and they were able to tour it too and see where I was where it was for the six weeks I was in Italy so that was really really neat; and for the London study center, that one again great location right next to the tube line and my favorite part again I'm really into architecture and the design aspect of things and walking in they have like a grand staircase and a mural painted on the top that's original to the building and so being able to see a little one in history and the building I'm staying in was really really neat as well, and then the Valencia study center, it was unique because they kind of built and renovated the building around the history of the existing building and they have glass covering different archives that are found in the building so that's really cool to be able to basically my college and school over there is seen as a museum as well people can get can come in and take museums or take tours of the study center so really need to be able to just be doing homework right next to an archive."

Zoë: "Yeah, that's awesome! I think that it's cool that you talked about all the study centers kind of exhibit the history, or at least you know, well all of all three of those really do and they incorporate that history of the city also into the architecture or the way that students can study and live there so that's really cool. Shifting a little bit, we know that you're also an IP ambassador obviously so can you just tell us a little bit about what prompted you to want to be an IP ambassador and what's your favorite part of that role?"

Maya: "Yeah definitely. I have been following the IP Instagram and I've seen them posting the job of different times to apply for it but also the different ambassadors doing stories talking about their experience and I also had a friend who is an IP ambassador just kind of hearing a little bit about their experience with the job and after I'd been to all three study centers I felt like I could be a little qualified and to do that and I didn't want to kind of end my study abroad experience when I left the country so kind of being involved in the IP International Programs office on campus was a great way to still stay connected in the community. And I would definitely say my favorite part is when I get calls from students and parents asking about like my own experience and then being really interested in hearing about specifics of things of when I'm abroad when I while I was abroad and hearing how they're excited

about when they're going abroad and just being able to help them out feel more comfortable and ease their nerves a little bit before they go.”

Leah: “That’s nice! So earlier you mentioned that traveling is important to you and your family, can you talk about how your family heritage inspired you to study abroad?”

Maya: “Yeah! So like I said previously I’ve grown up going to Europe every other summer to visit my family and again, that also made me know or want to travel while I was older and study abroad the FSU program was a very tangible way to do that in a practical way while taking classes and experience different cultures other than the Danish culture obviously, but on my own, kind of make my own like my own experiences and travel to places that I might not have traveled with my family necessarily but yeah my I’m very fortunate that my family does place importance on traveling since it is a big big thing in Europe to travel it’s easier to travel from country to country and so FSU really provided that opportunity for me and my siblings umm like I said my brother also studied abroad and my sister also studied abroad with FSU and we’ve all had great experiences with the classes we’ve taken and the friends that we were able to make.”

Zoë: “Yeah that’s so cool! What a unique story from like, not just you but your siblings too, and like your whole family so I love that. Do you see traveling or living abroad as being part of your future now that you’ve had the experience of living in Europe during your study abroad experience?”

Maya: “Yes, I definitely see traveling in my future. I remember while I was abroad I would hear about people taking trips to different places like France and you know all the places you hear and I remember thinking to myself like I’m saving that trip or I’m saving that place for when I’m older so I definitely have plans to go back when I’m when I’m out of college and have more money to spend on a more lavish trip than my little salary in college. But yes, I’m definitely traveling when I’m older and living abroad, I think since I’m most comfortable with the Danish culture I would choose to move to Denmark and I don’t know if I would move anywhere else outside of that but I definitely have thought about and talked with my parents about moving or at least doing an internship or something over in Denmark, yeah.”

Leah: “Awesome. So, our final question is something we ask everyone on this podcast what advice do you have for students who are considering studying abroad?”

Maya: “Yeah that’s a good question. I would say that my advice is obviously it’s very nerve wracking I think for a lot of people it’s their first time traveling alone let alone outside of the country so there is a lot of nerves that go along with it and personally for me for most of the trips I didn’t know anyone going over there I just kind of relied on making friends with my roommates or people in my classes but my advice is and just to let you guys know it all works out everyone has a great time everyone makes lifelong friends and another thing I would say is like expectations while going over there you like the weeks following up to it you have a lot of expectations with the trips are going to be like one of your experience is going to be like from other people who have gone but from my personal experience saying that going in with no expectations I think is the best way to do it and kind of just immersing yourself in the culture and just kind of taking out like oh maybe this is different from the US or like something about Italy not having ice like it’s OK like you’re going to make it through it’s going to be a little different than the US but you’re going to end up loving it and not wanting to come back when you’re at when it’s done so yeah just know you’re going to have a great time and you’re going to make this lifelong friendships.”

Zoë: "Yeah absolutely, I love that advice. I think that you know going in with no expectations applies so well to study abroad but also just to life in general and I think that that's really great advice for our students. That's all the questions we have for you today, thanks so much for being on the podcast!"

Maya: "Yeah, thank you so much for having me!"

Zoë: "Awesome!"

"Before we disembark, we want to talk about our multi term discount! Did you know that we have a multi term discount for students who study abroad with IP multiple times students who study abroad and take 15 or more credits and earn at least a 3.0 GPA broad are eligible for a discount on their next IP program."

Leah: "The discount is \$500 for a summer session or \$1000 for a fall or spring semester. This is a great opportunity for students like Maya who are interested in studying abroad multiple times you can learn more on our website at international.fsu.edu."

Zoë: "Thanks to Maya for talking with us today and thanks for all of you for listening."

Leah: "This podcast is a production of FSU International Programs. The music for this podcast was composed by John Bartmann and our logo was designed by Vanessa Guiery. Thanks to GEOSET Studios and Michael Susnjer at FSU for sound engineering. Editing and research is done by us, Leah Canavan and Zoë Crook."