

RETURNEE OF THE MONTH

MARCH 2019



ABOUT KATE GIESLER

Program: SIT: Indonesia: Arts, Religion, and Social Change

Duration: Fall 2018

Major: English

Minor: Global Sustainability

MOST INTERESTING CLASS & WHY?

My most interesting class was my independent study project. It was worth 4 credits and was basically a completely open ended research project that we had a month to do and could be on any topic we wanted. I decided to do my project on plastic pollution in Bali since I'm an environmentalist and Global Sustainability minor and over the month of November I travelled around Bali, did interviews, read laws, met with teachers and government officials and ultimately wrote a 40 page thesis style research paper. It was an incredible month that was definitely being thrown into the deep end and hoping we could swim, but it was a priceless experience.

3 of my classes (Field Methods and Ethics; Religion, Art and Social Change; and my Independent Study Project) all counted towards my Global Sustainability minor.



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HOW WAS EDUCATION ABROAD DIFFERENT THAN ANTICIPATED?

My study abroad experience was nothing like I imagined. I knew very little about Indonesia before going there and nothing could have prepared me for the 4 months I spent there. There were moments in villages with no internet and running water and then weekends in private resorts with pools and spa service, so it was 4 months of contrast. The difference in culture in truly every aspect of life was something I couldn't have prepared for. By the first week we learned to have no expectations for anything at all because then we were always happy with anything that happened. Our two best weekends were in the village with no water or internet and at the resort.

NUMBER ONE WAY THE EXPERIENCE CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR GROWTH

I am so much more open to experience after coming back. I've learned that I'll try anything once and even some of my more permanent decisions are ones that I don't regret at all.

MOST INTERESTING/DELICIOUS CUISINE TRIED

Nasi Goreng! Nasi Goreng is Indonesian for fried rice, but Indonesian fried rice is unlike anything else. It is the most intoxicating combination of rice and sauces and vegetables and we probably ate it every other day for 4 months. Best of all, it was only \$1 for a serving at the local market.



KERAMBITAN IN 3 WORDS

Tiny

Traditional

Homey

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MOST MEANINGFUL INTERACTION WITH A LOCAL

I lived with a series of host families for most of my time in Indonesia and the best moment that I had was with my main host family in Kerambitan. I was with them for a total of 7 weeks and my host mom really loved this Indonesian song "Meraih Bintang", so I learned all the words and we sang a duet together that she recorded on her phone. It was awesome being able to sing along with my mom and sisters around the house. My sisters and I were also constantly singing Ed Sheeran songs.



ANYTHING ELSE TO ADD?

The 4 months that I spent in Indonesia were easily some of the best of my life and I miss everything about my time there. My classmates and I are all still friends and we stay in contact through our group chat and group snap, but I miss them all so much. There really are no words to describe how truly incredible my time abroad was and I couldn't recommend it more. Indonesia, saya merindukanmu!

