

I never would have dreamed that his trip would have been so much fun. Dr. Smalley and Dr. Van Iersel were the perfect professors for the trip. I would not have changed anything about it. To anyone else that reads this I hope that if you are sitting on the fence about going on a trip like this that you take all of these testimonials and they help you with your decision.

I am advertising major. Thought this trip did not provoke me to switch to horticulture, it did show me how the two are not as different as they seem. Both fields are about looking at a blank, or empty or unused space and filling that space up. To do so, you must consider proportions, shapes, colors, textures, and depths. You must consider what works together and what does not, be it plants and statues or graphics and texts. It is about turning something lifeless into something full of life, something beautiful that reflects art, history, culture, nature or just reflects you. It is about using all your skills and tools to reach people and make laugh or smile or be at peace or just stop for a moment and really think.

Who knew a garden could make you laugh? Or think? Who knew a garden could move you or probe you? This was how Little Sparta was to me. It was not a garden. It was artwork and poetry and history and culture. It was riddles and rhymes. It told jokes and asked questions. The layout of it was beautiful and the quotes were thought provoking and insightful. I could have spent all day there and probably never see the same thing twice. It was like being in wonderland.

I could have never in a million years imagined that a garden could be that enchanting. Nothing in my imagination compares to the beauty and mystery of the mountains and garden I just saw. The sun kept coming in and out of the clouds and I loved that because it was like we were seeing two different moods of Muckcross.

The gardens are so different than what the slides in class show.

At our closing dinner, you told us that you lied to us, that this trip wasn't a garden tour but a lesson in culture and friendship. The longer I look at this trip and as I tell my stories over and over, the more apparent this becomes. On top of all the great memories of my friends, I have actually learned stuff. It's funny I learned that the classes I have already taken are relevant and I remember things from them. I learned so much about plants and gardens and I have a huge book of pictures I can get design ideas from. The most important thing I learned that this hope to always remember is that learning is so much more than names, dates and that crappy grade you got on a test last week. It is much more. It is navigating the tube in London or seeing a courtyard that makes you feel comfortable and understand why. That is irreplaceable to me because my college grades are not pretty. You taught me that I am doing just fine and I couldn't possibly tell you how important that is. Thank you for leading us to the allee of our own learning. The grass looked like carpet and the sheep looked like kings feasting on the land. Some great things that I learned from this trip are to never give up (especially if you are lost), be creative and keep dreaming. Always talk to people, try to meet new people and go out of your way to get to know them, because there are some great people in the

world. Most importantly be yourself, love your professors, eat new food, have fun, and be safe while enjoying every minute.

The atmosphere really makes you feel you have left your comfort zone and you have new things to learn.

As Dr. Smalley tells us about the poets and writers who came to be inspired, I wish I was creative enough to put this beauty into words.

I was simply overwhelmed. Everything there just made me feel inundated with thoughts of everything I've ever learned. I thought of Latin high school, history, my new knowledge in gardening, just everything.

In terms of gardening and landscaping, I learned a great deal more than I know what to do with. As far as experiencing another culture, I couldn't seem to get enough. I was in a perpetual state of mixed emotions – glee, awe, fascination, exhaustion – and the insatiable feeling of never quite getting enough. That's why I have to go back but first I have to thank my two professors for this opportunity. Without your help I could not have gone on this trip. There aren't enough words to explain my gratitude so I leave you to my journal.

Sure, differences exist, but something, some core, some essence is the same. A spirit. A desire to be happy, to laugh, and to sing and dance. A sense of pride.

The walk was so nice, almost no one spoke as we simply tried to breathe it all in, to convince ourselves where we really were, what we were doing.

I feel like I walked around Powerscourt with my jaw on the ground.

This has been an experience like none other in my life. The group of students, adults and teachers could not have been any better and that's no exaggeration. I now have what some call the travel bug. I want to keep learning more about the other countries in our world and the culture they encompass. My journey throughout Europe ends here in London today, but my hopes of returning are higher than ever.

Sometimes I think that putting the emotions of the gardens into words lessens their impact. This definitely is a place to remember via pictures. It was an ornately magical sanctuary tucked away in the hills of England.

The tree was twisted and looked like something out of a fairy tale, old and wise, like it has seen many events, time passing by. I really felt the age and power of this abbey after experiencing the cloister garden.

Thank you for the opportunity of such wonderful experiences. I gained a lot of information about horticulture from this trip. I didn't know anything before we left. Most of all, I gained knowledge about myself through reflection in the gardens and pushing my

limits daily. Again, thank for my Grand Tour. With fond memories .Victim of the Travel Bug.

The feelings of security and tranquility that I felt here inspire me to add a similar feature to my own garden one day, providing an important location for quiet meditation and a study garden.

This garden looks like a real life version of the 17th century painter Claude Lorraine's paintings of the idyllic Roman countryside.

I witnessed sites that struck my heart with awe and astonishment. In the future I plan to continue to travel as I broaden my perception of the world around me.

Simplicity is what I often consider to be much more beautiful than a style like Arts and Crafts, which in my opinion often appears to be overcrowded.

This trip has been one I will never forget, and memories from this trip will carry with me for the rest of my life, and what's even better are the friends I've made while over here away from all that I know and call home.

My favorite picture was without a doubt the painting that resembled the landscape we had seen several days earlier in the gardens at Stourhead. It was incredible how much the landscape resembled the painting that I was currently looking at. I couldn't even imagine trying to recreate a painting more less paying for one.

The friends I have made, the sights I have witnessed, and the cultures I have tasted will forever be a part of me.