

My Project GO Story

Namaste, y'all! I'm taking a break from my Urdu language program to spend a weekend in Rishikesh - the "Capital of Yoga" - staying in a famous Hindu ashram on the banks of the holy Ganges river. The streets are filled with religious men, hippies, and soul-seekers. I have gone crystal shopping, visited meditation caves and mountaintop temples, and witnessed sunset Ganga Aarti rituals! Though our room is filled with spiders and lizards, it's only \$12 a night, and this is the most peaceful place I've ever been.



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Memorable Moments

Funniest: We hired a driver to take us in a Jeep to go up into the mountains. As we went higher, my friend and I were both laughing uncontrollably from the exhilaration, crazy driving, altitude, views, and the improbability and spontaneity of it all.

Most challenging: Taking a bus in India is so confusing, because drop off and pick up points are so random and varied. A missed bus once resulted in hiring Uber drivers and getting soaked in the rain to catch it two hours later.

Favorite: My favorite moment was sitting on the marble floor at the Taj Mahal with my friends, tired from a night of bonding and wondering if we'd ever see anything so beautiful again.

Cultural Differences

Something I found interesting was... everything in India is so far apart, kind of like Texas, but much, much worse.

New Perspective

What I learned from my homestay family... Resource conservation! They were sticklers for turning off the lights, A/C, and water. Although there was a washing machine, we had to hand-wash our clothes.

A worthwhile perspective: India expanded my mind in such a way that I was in awe at all of the amazing monuments, palaces, and natural scenes in one country - a country often portrayed as scary, dirty, ugly, etc.

Advice to students considering this program: You will get lots of individual attention during the language program, so don't stress too hard about studying or having too much homework.

How this experience will help me in my future career: My dream job is to be a foreign attache, and I would love for that to involve Urdu or Hindi, or even Arabic!