"It's a combination vacation and school experience. We saw so much that it was like a vacation, and still I learned a lot in classes." That reaction summarizes the response of the hundreds of IU students who spent summer 1993 on Indiana University's Overseas Study programs, giving life to the foreign languages they had studied in texts at IU and putting European economic integration, the Mexican Revolution, post-USSR Russia, and Renaissance architecture into perspective on site. "Just do it," returning students advise friends exploring IU's summer options abroad. "Bring your textbook, but don't come without a good pair of walking shoes."

Summer abroad programs also provide an excellent professional development for IU faculty systemwide. The seven faculty members who directed IU's 1993 summer overseas study programs represented three IU campuses and disciplines which ranged from Latin American ethnomusicology to French history.

Bohdan Bochan, Associate Professor of German at IU-SE, taught "Austrian Culture and Civilization" to 20 IU undergraduates in Graz, a city 100 miles south of Vienna noted for its sidewalk cafés, summer music festivals, and museums. Students lived with Austrian families and studied German language with associate instructors who accompanied the group. "The highlights of our program," Bochan reported, "were trips to Salzburg, Admont and Vienna, where we retraced the colorful chronicle of Austria's illustrious past."

Barry Gealt, IU-B Professor of Fine Arts, and Andrea Ciccarelli, IU-B Assistant Professor of Italian, took 26 students to Florence for a six-week program of instruction in Italian language, drawing, and the culture of Renaissance.
Florence. Students were housed in a 16th century palazzo only blocks from the Ponte Vecchio. One enthusiastic participant wrote in a program evaluation, “Now studying the Renaissance will have a great impact on me, because I was really there and saw things in person,” but another moaned, “I am sure there is more to Italy than churches.”

Mexico City, where IU established its first overseas study program in 1957, continues to excite and fascinate the students who spend six weeks residing with Mexican families and working toward mastery of Spanish grammar at Iberoamerican University. Undeterred by daily afternoon rains or the pitfalls of subjunctive verbs, the group led by Martha Davis, Visiting Associate Professor of Anthropology, described their summer as “Awesome,” “Excellent,” and “Two thumbs up!”

Under the guidance of Kevin Robbins, Assistant Professor of History at IUPUI, 26 students studied French grammar and conversation with peers from throughout Europe at the University of Burgundy’s International Summer School in Dijon. In addition, Robbins counseled students as they pursued research on topics that encouraged them to get to know Dijon and its citizens. Subjects ranged from the French press to French attitudes toward Americans.

The students who accompanied Nancy Newton, IUPUI Associate Professor of Spanish, to Salamanca, Spain for six weeks of Spanish language study recognized the broader education that study abroad provides. One remarked, “I’m glad I did it. I learned a lot, not only Spanish, but other things as well.” Another confessed, “It was stressful at times and scary, but educational.”

The IU School of Business launched a summer program in Mikkeli, Finland that enabled nine IU students to investigate international marketing and European Community issues in a series of intensive three-week class modules with Finnish undergraduates. A week-long trip to Russia brought alive the material covered in a course on “Tradition and Change in the Former USSR.” The spirited response of the pioneering class of 1993 should encourage others to take advantage of an academic program that also offers 22-hour days, 70-degree temperatures, and a verdant setting among lakes and forests.

Twenty-five School of Business students examined the economics of European integration this summer in Maastricht, a city whose very name is synonymous with Western Europe’s goal of economic and monetary unity. Maastricht’s medieval walls, churches, and quaint cobbled streets make it a magnet for Dutch and German tourists, and its location on the narrow tip of the Netherlands wedged between Belgium and Germany make it a particularly apt setting for a course entitled “Inter-cultural Communication.”

Other distinctive 1993 summer programs included Russian language study in St. Petersburg and travel to Kiev, Moscow, and Baku with Lawrence Richter of the IU-B Slavics Department; a six-week study of the art and architecture of Italy that swept from Rome and Pompeii to Florence and Ravenna with Ian Fraser of the Herron School of Art; and a course on international newsfeatures in Paris under the experienced hand of IU alumna, Dr. Aralynn McMane.

Libby Gitlitz, Associate Director, Overseas Study

Application deadlines for summer programs are in early February. Evaluations, handbooks, course descriptions, and flyers for all of IU’s summer Overseas Study programs are available in the Information Center, Franklin Hall 303, IU-Bloomington, tel. (812)855-9304. In addition, Overseas Study coordinators on every Indiana University campus can answer student questions and provide flyers and applications.