

Europe trips popular with grads

By Sally Mathieson
Emerald Contributor

After four years of exams, bookstore lines, caffeine-induced all nighters and registration at Mac Court, many seniors choose to catch the first flight overseas they can get. Finally free, after spending more than three-fourths of their life in school, these exstudents are in search of travel, play and a non-academic education.

Instead of rushing out in search of the world's greatest job, these students forgo resumes and cover letters for plane tickets to another country and an opportunity to further their education in a setting outside of the classroom.

"After having studied for so long, traveling is a proving ground for all of those theories that we learn in college," said Matt Mixer, a graduate majoring in psychology and business. Instead of being responsible to professors, parents and pieces of employment, ex-students find themselves learning about different cultures, people and experiences.

"Traveling at this point in my life is entirely for myself. It is an experience that can only benefit me later down the road," added Mixer, who will be traveling to Thailand in the fall.

Most students who choose to travel after graduation realize that they will probably never have such an opportunity to do so again.

"After I go out and get a

job, when will I have eight months to go on a vacation?" said journalism major Kim Gnau, who will be leaving for London in June. "Hopefully I'll be more attractive to employers after they see that I have traveled. I will have learned so much more about other cultures," added Gnau.

Some travelers choose to work while they are visiting another country. "Working is part of the experience," said Mixer. "It adds a different dimension because dealing with the natives of a country lets you see the culture in a firsthand way."

Gnau, who hopes to get a work permit while living in London, wants to get a job working for a British magazine. "I'd like to get a journalistic job, but I'll settle for anything just as long as I'm employed," she said.

Depending on one's budget and taste for adventure, hitchhiking, bicycling and walking are ways to see a country firsthand. Youth hostels are an inexpensive, as well as interesting, place to stay while traveling. Some students choose to hook up with friends, relatives or former University of Oregon exchange students who can personally show them the sights of a country, many of which a traditional tour would miss. *Let's Go Europe*, available at most bookstores, is a valuable guide for finding cheap but interesting restaurants, lodging and places of interest.

For those who choose to go on a guided tour, which offers

more deluxe accommodations, arrangements need to be made before leaving the United States. A spokesperson for the Eugene Travel Agency said that seniors are already starting to come in and inquire about the different tours.

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