

One year of good vibes, sunshine, humidity and too much coffee

It did not take me long to fall in love with New Orleans and I feel nostalgic thinking about my time even though I barely left. You hear people speak of it as a unique city, not quite like any other in the US, and I can definitely say that this is true. If extremely friendly people, great food, music and warm weather sound appealing to you, you should definitely consider Tulane University for your year abroad.

Flat search

Before leaving for New Orleans, I joined the Facebook group “Tulane Classifieds” and searched through posts. Luckily, I found a very affordable room close to campus, and decided on a room before even arriving in New Orleans. A friend of mine left without having a room in advance, but if you arrive a few weeks early, finding a room should not be too difficult (I heard that as a male it is more difficult to find a room in a flat-share than for females though.)

Getting Around

Since the public transportation system is rather bad, you should get a bike upon arriving in New Orleans. If you are looking for a cheap bike, you should have no issues finding a bike for less than \$100 on Tulane Classifieds or Craigslist. This should suffice to get to and from campus. If you want a nicer bike, *Bokah Bikes* is a great bike shop selling refurbished vintage bikes and also probably offering the cheapest repairs in case you ever have a flat or any other bike related issues. Be aware though that beyond the campus/uptown area, the streets of New Orleans can be quite tricky; drivers are not necessarily the most respectful towards bikers, only major streets have bike lanes and a majority of streets is mined with potholes. I had an accident with my road bike, by choosing thicker tires or a mountain bike I could have avoided the accident. Either way, I would recommend wearing a helmet.

University Life

I truly enjoyed my classes at Tulane. Regardless of your major, you should have a variety of interesting classes to choose from. After finishing my core credits in Political Science, I took Philosophy and Psychology classes in my second semester and the latter also turned out to be my favorite classes. Take advantage of the wide variety of classes, look into different subject areas

and maybe try something new, or something unique you're unlikely to find at other universities or in Germany.

Tulane's campus is beautiful and you have everything you need; I particularly enjoyed the large gym located on campus, which offers great workout and yoga classes for free.

Coffee

Since I am a coffee addict, I possibly tried every coffee shop there is in New Orleans. If you care about good coffee, you should get excited because the coffee scene in New Orleans is definitely thriving. My favorite shops include Mammoth, Hi Volt Café and Coffee Science. A little closer to campus, Mojo's and French Truck Coffee are good options too. I would further recommend taking the ferry from downtown across to Algiers on a sunny day (the fare is only \$2). You get a nice view of the city, can have great coffee at Congregation Coffee Roasters in Algiers and go for a little ride on the levee.

Food

Because of its creole and multicultural influences, New Orleans is known for its cuisine that mixes French, Spanish and Southern cuisines. Especially if you are a meat eater, there is lots of specific food for you to try: Gumbo, Jambalaya, Po-Poys, oysters and crawfish... just to name a few. If you happen to be a vegan I can highly recommend HiVolt Café for vegan pastries (and great coffee!), Good Karma Café (veggie burger and smoked tofu sandwich) and vegan ramen at Kin.

Free time

I spent a large time of my free time just biking around the city, enjoying the usually beautiful weather in Audubon, City or Crescent Park. I would highly recommend leaving the uptown/campus area and not getting stuck in the campus bubble. New Orleans has so much to offer, take advantage of it and explore as much as you can.

Crescent Park offers great views of the skyline and is furthermore bordering the Bywater area with nice new cafés and street art (there's a lot of artsy stuff going on, look out for open gallery nights etc). If you are into wine and cheese, you should furthermore not miss Bacchanal, a bar where you can create your own cheese plate, buy a wine bottle, and share it with friends.

There's also a nice climbing gym in the Bywater, you can rent shoes for \$2 at the university gym and go bouldering for about \$10 or even get a monthly membership.

Of course, New Orleans also has a lot to offer music- and nightlife-wise. You will find good music in the French Quarter around Frenchmen Street, on Oak Street and pretty much in any decent bar.

Final Advice

Like anywhere in the States, everything is quite pricey, so consider this in case you have to rely on your own savings and do not receive a scholarship. In general, however, New Orleans is just such a great city, I would encourage anyone to apply if you can. I am already missing it!