

We are all  
made of stories

## Americans of Tübingen: *Renée*

*“Coming to Tübingen was really a dream come true. Each day spent in that special town only served to remind me of the hidden magic of life, a way of life that certainly shaped my being.”*

Shortly after undergraduate studies I flew the nest, moving straight from Long Island, New York to Tübingen, having in mind a quintessential medieval town I'd only ever seen on the Internet. I am sixth-generation American with strong European roots (predominantly German), and was naturally tempted to explore the culture further. Alas, despite these ancestral roots, I am 100% American, and quickly figuring out what that means.

Before life in Tübingen, I knew there would be something invaluable about living internationally and obtaining worldly perspectives. This opening of the mind, I told myself, would help me understand people better and also help to expand my network as I build an academic career. With that prevailing mindset, I left my cozy island, but it goes without saying that the motivation was driven primarily by science. The intellectual and scientific opportunities that came with Tübingen were unlimited.

After living there for 6 years, I realized one reason why the Universitätsstadt is so unique is the remarkable retention of local tradition combined with the cultural diversity of all internationals passing thru Tübingen on their own journeys. This Schwäbisch international meeting ground has become home to so many over the years. Some remain in Tübingen for life, while others take all that is good with them to the next stage of life. I am thankful to have had the Tübingen experience and to have met so many wonderful people from all over the world. Tübingen will always be a place to call home.

While I thought the next stage in life would have already brought me back to New York, life is seemingly unpredictable (and political). If there is one great philosophy that has proven time and time again its practical strength, it is to roll with the punches. So, with that I began enjoying Germany's own rendition of Manhattan – the city of Frankfurt – and have since traded in the Neckar for the Main. I am still on the career-building route for now and rejoicing in the strong ties made to Germany. Once America becomes the open, welcoming country I know it to be, I do hope to move back.

If there is one grand perspective gleaned from life abroad, it is that America has a substantial impact on the citizens of this world. Such perspective, one cannot simply grasp living within America itself.

If one really wants to develop personally, it begins with the appreciation of what others have to offer. The most important thing I've learnt from my time in Tübingen is we all have something to bring to the table and the opportunities at such an international level are endless. So here goes, hopefully, to a future of international camaraderie and an appreciation of all kindred souls.”

