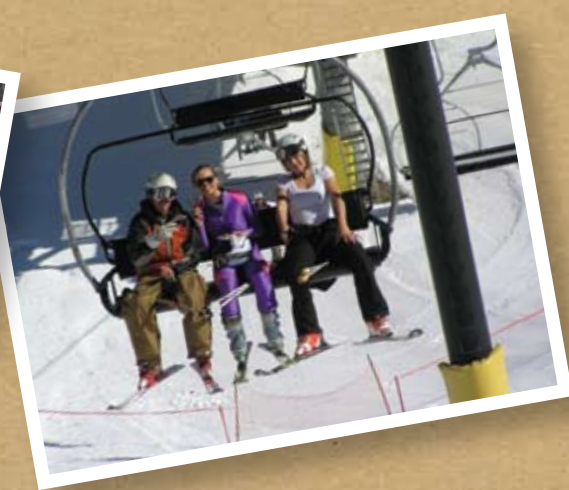


Profile: Katie Jackson



Hometown:

Christchurch

Program:

Work USA

Total length of time spent overseas / or intended length of travel:

3 months Summer 08-09

How did you find out about IEPs Work USA program?

Through a Fellow Ski Instructor

Tell us in a few hundred words where you lived and what you got up to in the USA?

I was employed at Mammoth Mountain Resort and had a fantastic time! California is such a sweet state! I met so many interesting people! I was Ski instructing 5 days a week and travelled to Lake Tahoe, Los Vegas, LA, and San Fran on my days off!

I went over with a kiwi girl who was on a seasonal shortage visa (H2B). There were a couple of other Kiwi's there and 1 girl on the Work USA Plus program (12month J1-visa) - which she was raving about!

I lived in a little town called Mammoth lakes that was about a 3hour drive from Reno, right by the Yosemite National Park. It was a small happy town that swelled from a population of 5,000 to 25,000 when all the guests arrived. The scenery was beautiful, some of the most breathtaking mountain ranges and stunning lakes I've ever seen and the best powder I have ever skied. Mammoth Mountain itself is as the name would suggest is Massive! There are 3 lodges and each lodge employs about 700 people, so that's a lot of colleagues to meet!

I worked at a restaurant and a cafe at night time! When I told people that I was working 3 jobs they were really jealous! It was awesome getting all the money!!

For work, I suggest Whiskey Creek and Lakanuki Café and Restaurant (run by a real nice kiwi guy!). Not only are all the staff friendly and easy to relate to, the management is awesome! You get sweet as perks working for them and I had the chance to meet some big names including the Hoff! Trust me; they also know how to party!

If you're into Skiing/riding the park, Mammoth has one of the best half pipes ever built, 5 different parks and some big names who train and compete there! Rent was cheap, 400 per month (took a while to work out the per month rent thing). Staff accommodation was choice too, however a little more expensive!

What are some of the experiences that you had which made an impact on you?

Skiing double black runs and some of the best snow in the world! Exploring San Francisco, seeing all the Casinos in Reno and meeting so many awesome people!

Were there any times that were hard?

Yes! Sorting out how much money I was going to need to set myself up in a flat before I got my first pay cheque! Also saying goodbye to all the awesome people I met!

What is something unexpected/different/strange about the USA compared with other places you have lived?

- 1) The way they talk!! If you say 'thank-you' they normally reply with 'uh-huh' - I thought they were being rude, but it's just different!
- 2) The massive food portions!
- 3) How expensive it is to text and how cheap it is to call on cell phones
- 4) How relaxed most of them are, that was definitely unexpected!

What is your advice for someone who wants an American adventure?

Just do it! Don't just sit around and wait, go for it! Pack up your bags and experience life! You won't regret it!

What did you find valuable in going to the USA on an IEP program?

The support you had by email, the check lists to make sure you didn't forget anything, the help in applying for your visa and the awesome helpful staff!

What next? Where to next?

Europe! - I've heard they've got pretty good snow too!

