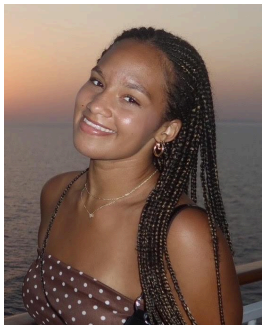
Sydnee Norwood



My Travel Log #4: Dubrovnik, Croatia

Monday, July 27th

The next morning, our cruise ship was docked in Dubrovnik, Croatia, our first stop. After a late breakfast, my family and I disembarked and headed into town. We walked for a while, noticing the orange-topped roofs on the houses before reaching Croatia's "Old Town". Right outside the entrance, my sister, Jordyn, and I booked a boat tour to go to the Blue Cave. The Blue Cave is a special cave that glows electric blue. We then grabbed some fresh gelato at a nearby shop. Massive stone walls enclosed the old town, and the ground was a beautiful, slippery marble. The entrance to the old town was grand, with many stairways that led to higher parts of the walls. Only pedestrians roamed the streets; no cars. After exploring the town, it was now time for our boat tour. A van picked up a small group of people who signed up for the tour and transported us to the dock. We all boarded a speedboat and met our boat driver. The boat driver was definitely a character; he was opinionated and sassy, blasting loud music while drinking beer and smoking. He told us we would not be visiting the Blue Cave because it would be unsafe to enter due to the high tide and rough waves. The rest of the passengers and I were annoyed because it felt like a scam since the company could have communicated this to us before we booked the tour. Although we were disappointed, we made the most of the tour. We still visited mini caves, jumped off the boat, and swam in the clear, blue water. The views in Croatia were absolutely breathtaking! After swimming, the boat driver let Jordyn drive us in the boat. He then dropped us off on an island for an hour. He informed us that a bigger ship would take us back. This whole situation felt sketchy and made all of the passengers uneasy because of the lack of communication and organization. Also, being in a foreign place without Wi-Fi was unsettling for all of us. Jordyn and I had a late lunch/dinner at a fish restaurant. Jordyn ate a freshly cooked fish, and I ate spaghetti bolognese. Even though I had been in Europe for multiple days now, it was still interesting that there are no tips in Europe, but you still have to pay for water at your table. Just as the boat driver told us, a giant ship came to pick us up, along with other larger tours. Jordyn and I sat down next to a girl around our age who was on one of the other tours. The ride back took forever, and we ended up talking for over an hour with the girl. Her name was Dio, and she is from Belgium. She was fascinated with America and our life in California. She asked about guns, the president, high school football games and cheerleaders, college, shopping malls, and our food and restaurants. Dio's dream is to be an exchange student in America. She tried teaching us about Belgium's government and explained to us how certain parts are very racist. It was so cool to talk to someone from a completely different part of the world. We exchanged Instagrams and TikToks, and it turns out Dio is an influencer in Belgium and creates social media content. The ship dropped us off at a different location from where we originally boarded, which caused a lot of confusion. Despite how unorganized the excursion was, this was the most fun I had off the ship and was one of my favorite countries on the trip.