

# Home Away from Home

Written by Emily Glynn

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Today marks my sixth week in New Zealand and I think I can finally say that I've settled in. When I got here, I wanted so badly to fast-forward through the first month—I didn't want to go through the process of getting accustomed to new things or put in the effort to make friends. I just wanted to wake up one morning and be, I don't know...content? Comfortable? It's hard to describe. It's that feeling you have at home, where everything moves fluidly but you don't really notice it because it's just what you're used to.

To be completely honest, I'm amazed at how perfectly everything worked out here. On my housing application, I listed Bryant Hall (my dorm) as my absolute last choice. All I can think now is THANK GOD I ended up where I did. I have a wonderful RA, who made settling in a million times easier than it should have been. I've found my Kiwi soul mate (no, not a boyfriend). And I've met a handful of American kids who I can be myself around—and one Canadian.

I have to say, getting away from campus, no matter where we go, is always a relief. It reminds me of why I made the crazy decision to come here in the first place. New Zealand is beautiful, exotic, and wonderful, and in a way, the country sort of embodies everything I hope to be one day. I've visited Hobbiton, the movie set from Lord of the Rings, hiked the Tongariro crossing with people from all over the world, swum with dolphins in Tauranga... It sounds dreamy, I know. And for the most part, it is. But there's no escaping the day-to-day struggles and I've been working hard to stay strong. Because for every bad day, there's a handful of good ones.

In a few weeks, I have 14 days off for "spring" break (it's actually winter here). Possible destinations include Sydney, Australia and the South Island (I'm on the North Island)—but I'll keep you posted.

Well, that's all I've got for now, although I do have a quick confession to make... I might have brought a copy of the magazine with me. And I might have showed it to a few of my friends. And they might think my life is ridiculously glamorous now. Phew. Thanks AZ Foothills :)



Hiking the Tongariro Crossing



The view from Mt. Maunganui in Tauranga



## Swimming with dolphins



## Me at The Shire