

Greetings from Canada

Hello again my friends! Het ben ik (it is I)! Ruben from Canada! Your friendly Canadian has returned once more at the noble request from the great people from the Semester in Amsterdam program with another blog to provide a little more background information about the "boring" subject that is myself. I thought I'd start by answering some simple questions that you were perhaps curious about. Some questions might include: "Who are you and where in Canada are you from Ruben?" Because let's face it, Canada is a BIG place. Or perhaps you were also curious about what made me decide to enroll in the Semester in Amsterdam program? Well wonder no longer my friends because I will answer all of your questions to the best of my ability. So! Let us begin!

As previously stated, my name is Ruben, I have revolved around the sun 26 times (meaning I'm 26 years old), and I'm from a small town called Williams Lake located within the beautiful Canadian province of British Columbia. My parents are both Dutch citizens that immigrated to this quaint little Canadian town about 2 years before I was born. Making me a first generation Canadian! As a result I am fortunate enough to possess dual citizenship with both Canada and the Netherlands!

Growing up in Canada was certainly an amazing experience and my hometown is a melting pot of unique individuals. You'll find a wide variety of people from all walks of life in Williams Lake. We have cowboys and cowgirls, lumberjacks, miners, semi-truck drivers, forest firefighters (which is what I do for work), tree planters, wild game hunters, ranchers, farmers, log home builders, and of course hockey players (because we Canadians love our ice hockey!). Williams Lake is a town full of amazing hard working people and I'm proud that it is my hometown. Growing up in Canada was also a privilege for me because I have had the opportunity to live in, and explore the great outdoors in one of the most beautiful places in the world. If you like hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, rock climbing, mountain biking, etc (the list goes on and on) then I highly recommend that you visit Canada sometime in the near future.

If you were curious about what I am like personally, I would sum myself up with one word... "chill." I once took an online test to discover what my "spirit animal" was and learned that it was a sloth! That's right folks, an animal so slow that moss grows on its fur. You might assume the worst when hearing this, however, they say that "still waters run deep." While I am an relaxed and easygoing guy, I have many hobbies and interests that include: playing guitar, writing music, fishing, camping, hiking, rock climbing, skydiving, and playing sports such as hockey or soccer (also known as football). I also enjoy hanging out with friends and family, meeting new people, reading psychology books, and traveling. In fact, I recently returned from a magical journey from the many beautiful countries of South East Asia.

While I love Canada with all of my heart, I am EXTREMELY excited to be moving to Amsterdam for the upcoming semester at VU! While I call Canada home, I consider the Netherlands the home of my ancestors. My parents have always encouraged me to live in the Netherlands so that I could reconnect with my Dutch roots. Once I graduated from the University of Victoria in 2015, I told

myself that when I went to school again it would be in the Netherlands. VU caught my eye because of the Semester in Amsterdam program. It seemed like a great opportunity to experience the Netherlands and Europe as a whole while getting a quality education.

I am planning to study Business Administration while at VU and with the knowledge gained I hope to begin my hostile corporate takeover of Apple Incorporated! I am joking of course (or am I?!?) but besides the Business Administration Minor I hope to accomplish a great many things while in Amsterdam. I hope to become fluent in Dutch while exploring the whole country from top to bottom (as well as visit some neighboring countries), make new amazing friends, and sample as many delicious beers as possible (yummy!).

When told that I would be the Semester in Amsterdam student blogger I was extremely grateful for the opportunity. I love to write because I feel it is a human art form that allows us to use the power of our imaginations to create whatever we want. In other words, our potential is limitless.

My goal as your student blogger is to create entertaining blogs for you all to read that are both informative and funny. I promise that I will do my best to create blogs that you will all enjoy and I look forward to experiencing Amsterdam with all of you in the coming months.

In closing, I just want to thank the fine people from the Semester in Amsterdam program once more for the opportunity to write for you all, and that I am extremely excited to share in this journey with all of you. That's it for now friends! Thanks for reading!

Hup Holland!
-Ruben