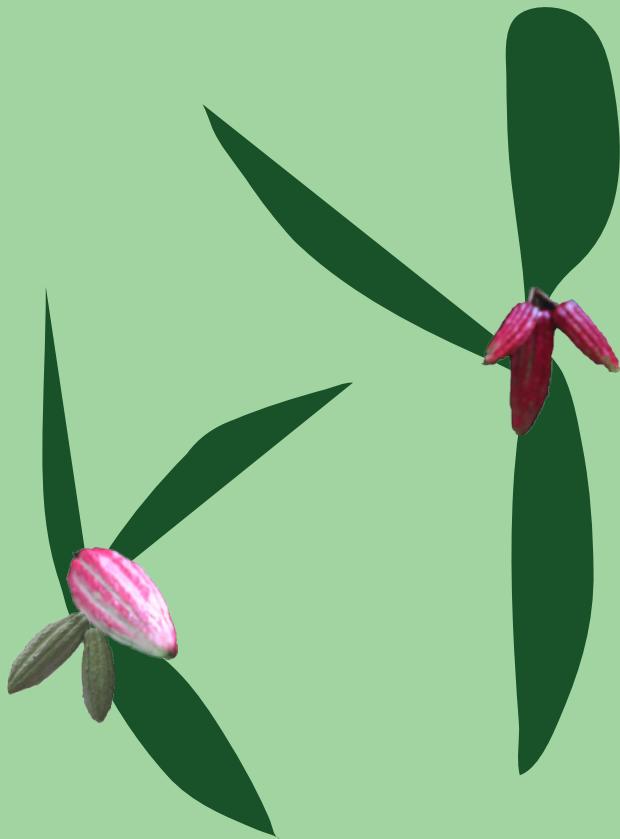


The Epitome of Food, Sunshine, Culture, and Critical Thought: the Dominican Republic 2020



by Susie Fordi

“You could read 100 articles and not feel it in your bones the way you feel it while sitting on this beach and having that experience in the moment.”

Professor Alyshia Gálvez, PhD

“I talk to everybody about how we’re all travelers, so we’re all in the same mindset, and we’re all New School students so we all have these commonalities that easily draw us together.”

Catalina O’Connor, ‘20



Beyond the Beach: Food and Sustainable Tourism Program Gives Students A Glimpse Into Caribbean Realities

"Food and Sustainable Tourism in the Dominican Republic" gave students a deeper view of life in one part of the Caribbean

by Susie Fordi

This January, while many New School students were facing the cold, a group of 13 students traveled to Altos de Chavón: a design school in the Dominican Republic for the 3-credit course "Food and Sustainable Tourism in the Dominican Republic." The program was led by Alyshia Gálvez, Professor of Food Studies and Anthropology. The reporter participated in this study abroad trip as a student in the field and has interviewed participants since then.

Throughout the course students participated in the bread-making pro-

cess at a local bakery in La Sison to sugar cane field — Romana, studied beekeep one of many that border the ing and active composting highways throughout the Do at the sustainable resort minican Republic. "We drove Fundación Grupo Punta through the sugar fields and it Cana, cheered on Los To was actually very interesting ros-a local baseball team- to see how people live. It was -, walked through acres of interesting, seeing this is what cacao trees, attended localthey don't show you when and resort-created beach you're traveling on Casa de es, as well as other excur Campo on the golf courses," said Joanna Hurwitz, fourth-



One of the most moving sections of the trip was the excursion to a local baseball team to see how people live. It was a local they don't show you when you're traveling on Casa de Campo, as well as other excursions. Both credits and costs were included in the Spring 2020

tuition, although students paid "housing and program fee" of \$1250 plored and learned about more of... and especially each and were individually responsible for food sovereignty, the is during the time that [the sues with tourism, and group] was here" said Miyar. human rights all day, and airfare.

"A lot of the information that I learned in the program are things that can somehow be applied to how students on Casa de Campo — approach their artwork and subject matter that sort where they decide to tackle," said Raul Miyar, 59, the Chair of the Fine Arts Department at Chavón. Miyar spent almost every day accompanying the group of TNS students on their excursions around the coun-

"I think [the partnership] is great, and it's really



"This is what they don't show you when you're traveling on Casa de Campo on the golf courses"



something that the school is looking into doing during the time that [the group] was here" said Miyar. Alyshia was amazing. I think she's an incredible person, professor, intellectual, and an encyclopedia of information, and on top of that she's just a piña coladas are served for breakfast. Casa de Campo is owned by the company Central Romana, which also owns the largest sugar mill in the Dominican Republic. Students spoke highly of the group's ability to communicate and learn from one another throughout the course. One particular day, the group met for a presentation by the United States Agricultural Attaché in the Dominican Republic. The presentation was to discuss the United States' interests in international food trade and food sovereignty without self-awareness from any position than the US agenda.

"We got in the van afterward and immediately began discussing what

we liked in the conversation but more so what we thought was quite problematic in what she [The United States Agricultural Attaché] was saying," said Emma Shafer, 20, an Urban Studies major.

work. "I did not yet see the trip as a negotiation of power between the various partners and institutions that have stood to benefit from the trading of power and resources through their ongoing personal and

"To see the way that colonialism — in this case, neocolonialism — is impacting senior food studies implemented through very major and capitalism studies minor policies that push aside minor."

certain model of food security on to our trading partners whether they want it or not, and oblige them to arts major in the Bachelor's in a certain way destabilize Program for Adult and their own agriculture. To Transfer Students [BPATS] see that actually happen at The New School.“I ing and to see it described learned so much about my to us by a member of our own culture that I had no own government that our idea about. So it was real taxpayer dollars are paying ly eye opening too.” Du for was infuriating, it was ran’s parents were born in shocking,” said Gálvez. Santo Domingo and most

Students praised the of her time in the country group's ability to communicate before this trip consisted of nicate and learn from one of relaxing and tanning at another throughout the a resort. The study abroad course. Overall, everyone experience gave Duran agreed that the trip was a student's point of view of great and worthwhile experience the country.

perience. "I came away really thinking that this should be something that everybody does — professors included" said Gálvez. "It made me deeply appreciative of our New School students and how different people's ideas and perspectives can really gel."

"Traveling through the lens of beauty and pain, we see on a daily basis versus what's deeper ... when traveling, people only see the resorts and the Americanized beauty that we're supposed to see," said Hwitz.*

The van rides served as the group's discussion space after seeing complex and intense things throughout their field





"This was on the site, in the field, hands on experience where we were actually pushed out of our comfort zone... and there was no way to put your all in because you were actually participating."





Throughout the course, students participated in the bread making process at a local bakery in La Romana.



"I'm much more mindful of traveling [now]" she said. "Going to all these places and hearing their stories really made a huge impact on our learning."

Yulissa Duran

I have been deeply humbled by the difficulty I experienced with trying to figure out the most honest and ethical way to speak to everything I saw and what I chose to research when there is often a lack of time and space within the traditional academic realm set aside for that very task. I am even more humbled by the way in which our professor actively fights for the right to that time, for that space.

Mallory Seegal, '20

Thank you to everyone who made
this experience possible.

So much love and gratitude