



More than sight-seeing

Woman travels the world by couch surfing, working along the way

By Lisa Larson

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From the moment Keena McArthur starts talking about her recent four-month trip to Spain and Morocco, the passion she exudes about the experience is not only apparent, it is infectious.

More than a sight-seeing excursion to sample some of the touristy hotspots in that portion of the world, McArthur's trip was cultural integration that molded her in ways she never expected, and none of it would have been possible had she not let go of the one thing that holds so many people back: fear.

"It was amazing; better than I ever could have imagined," McArthur says.

Living in St. George for the majority of her life, McArthur has always had the desire to see the world, a goal she is well on her way to accomplishing with trips to Europe, Ecuador, Belize, Russia, Thailand and Cambodia already filling her passport.

All of those trips have included the company of family or friends. For her most recent excursion, however, McArthur decided she wanted to try going solo.

Coming off a particularly demanding phase of her life, running McArthur Jeweler's for her parents while they served a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Russia, as well as completing her bachelor's degree at Dixie State University, McArthur knew that 2013 was going to be her chance to feed the travel bug. After completing a humanitarian trip to Cam-



Keena McArthur poses with a Spanish woman dressed in the traditional clothing from Burgos, Spain.

bodia and a sight-seeing vacation to Thailand in the spring, she thought her need would be satisfied for the time being, but those trips only seemed to add fuel to the fire.

"I was still chomping at the bit," McArthur says.

McArthur has always wanted to move overseas, and the opportunity to improve her Spanish skills was appealing, making Spain a logical destination for her next excursion. She started researching solo female travel online and was pleased with what she found.

Although she read many things talking about the dangers associated with this kind of travel, she was encouraged to note that these experiences seemed to be the exception, rather than the rule.

The logistics of embarking on a four-month excursion fell into place. She was able to take a "sabbatical" from the family business, rent her home and lend her parents her car. Meanwhile she focused on how to make the

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