

## My Best Memories of the Summer of 2009

I have always loved the summer season. It is the season of my birthday, no School, warm weather, and family vacations. Although every summer season is special to me in some way, the summer of 2009 was definitely one of the most memorable summers of my life.

The beginning of the summer 2009 was marked by my graduation from the University of Illinois at Chicago. After four long years of non-stop exams, laboratory practicals, pop quizzes, and hours upon hours of lectures, I am proud to say that I have finally graduated with a Bachelor's degree in the biological sciences. The same week of my graduation was also my sister's Confirmation and my brother's First Communion. My summer was definitely off to a busy start!

About three weeks following my graduation, I flew to Cambridge, Massachusetts to see my boyfriend of five years. Michael, graduate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This was an extremely important trip to me, one that I was saving money for and planning for three years. Michael and I viewed this trip as a celebration of our triumph over the obstacles of a long-distance relationship, as well as an end to this distance. Furthermore, this trip was symbolic of my newly gained independence, as it was the first trip I ever took by myself, without my friends or family present.



I purposely arrived in Cambridge about a week and a half before Michael's Graduation to do a little sight-seeing. I loved touring M.I.T.'s creative campus and finally witnessing how Michael lived his academic life for four years. I also enjoyed walking around Harvard University's beautiful campus, where Michael and I ran into an actress and took pictures with her. This was my first ever celebrity encounter!

*View of Boston from Cambridge*

After spending a few more days touring the historic cities of Cambridge and Boston, Michael and I decided to take a bus to New York City for a day. There, we had a moment of silence at the Twin Towers' ruins, embraced our patriotism in the presence of the Statue of Liberty, and reconnected with our immigrant roots on Ellis Island. After taking hundreds of pictures in Central Park, Times Square, Union Square, and running into yet another celebrity, Michael and I finally called it a day and took the bus back to M.I.T.



*Times Square in NYC*

My East Coast excursion was concluded with Michael's beautiful graduation Ceremony on M.I.T.'s famous courtyard. After a celebratory graduation dinner, Michael and I flew home to Chicago together. It was a wonderful ending to a perfect and extremely memorable vacation. Thus, it was this trip, along with my graduation, that have caused me to deem the summer of 2009 one the best summers of my life.