

A Student's report – Portugal mobility

On April 21, 2022 my friends and I left on Erasmus for a small town in Portugal. We were looking forward to leaving and were very excited about the departure. After spending 10 hours between various airports and two flights, a bus took us to Vila Viçosa, a city about two hours from Lisbon. My host family was very welcoming to me and I was very happy because from the first day I felt very comfortable. The next morning we visited the school, the classrooms and met the Portuguese and other students from other countries. I was very impressed with the relationship between students and teachers, it was evident that he was very genuine and friendly. Furthermore, the school was very large and modern, I had never seen one like this before in fact I was very perplexed and fascinated by



The building. After lunch, we visited the city even though it was raining a lot. The city castle was very large and in Italy I had never seen one like it. Inside there were many flowers and beautiful gardens. We all had dinner together in the evening and it was great because I got to know the Spanish and Portuguese guys better. I had a lot of fun. The second day we went to a building where we paddled. I had a lot of fun even though it was my first time playing it. Later in the afternoon I had lunch with the Portuguese boys and then with my Italian companions we went to see a football match. The city's soccer team had to win the match in order to get the championship trophy but sadly they lost. I enjoyed it a lot because there were choirs, flags, drums and a lot of fans. In the evening I had dinner in a fast food restaurant with the others and then all together we went to a bar where we had a lot of fun with music and we had the chance to get to know each other better.



On the third day, once we gathered at school, we went by bus to the lake of Monsaraz.



When we arrived we settled on the beach with towels, the water was very cold, but the climate was pleasant.

Then we started with the activities, some with paddle and others with kayaks. my Italian friend and I chose kayaks. Initially it was difficult to coordinate and maneuver the oars.



However we found a balance and stayed in the water for a long time. At noon we had lunch in a local restaurant and in the afternoon we played volleyball with Portuguese, Turkish and Spanish boys. It was very funny. Then we took a ferry and toured the lake. we saw beautiful landscapes and the sound of the water was very relaxing, in fact my Portuguese friends fell asleep. However there were many spiders on the boat and I was terrified, then we took the bus back to town.



When we arrived, I and others walked around the town and the boy who was hosting me and I accompanied our friends to their homes.

When we got home we rested, ate and then got ready to go to a party in Borba, a nearby town. So first we went to a Portuguese girl's house where we would all sleep together and we left our things. We waited for everyone else and then went to this bar with techno music. We danced, sang and took many photos. They are a bit different from Italian parties but we still enjoyed it. At midnight we all saw the fireworks together. However, me, my Italian friend and two other Spanish friends were tired and went home.

On the fourth day, on April 25, we all woke up very late in the morning, ate breakfast and then we all had lunch together. Some left, while we stayed there all day. We saw a horror movie in Portuguese, although we didn't understand much. We joked, ate and enjoyed ourselves. Towards evening my host mother came to pick us up and we went back to Vila Viçosa. Once we got home we had dinner and rested, as we were too tired to go out.

April 26th and 27th were the last two days. Aware of this, the other guys and I enjoyed this fantastic experience right up to the end. On the 26th we went again to a lake in Avis to practice water sports such as kayaking and paddle. After having lunch we started with the activities. I personally decided to practice both sports and despite the initial difficulties, I had a lot of fun. Towards the early afternoon we went home to have dinner and then go out again in the evening.

We had a lot of fun listening to Portuguese songs and singing Italian ones.



On the 27th a bus took us to Campo Maior to visit the so-called Science Coffee Center. It was interesting to discover the history of coffee and visit this center.



Also, at the end of the visit, my host family bought some local souvenirs for me. At noon we left again for Vila Viçosa. After arriving, everyone had lunch with their families and rested. Everyone got ready for the final dinner, that dinner at which we would say goodbye to everyone, to the Portuguese boys, to those from other countries and to Vila Viçosa. Despite some moments of despair, we had a lot of fun and some Portuguese guys sang typical local songs. The 28th was the day of the return home. We left early, around 6 in the morning, where a bus took us to Lisbon to take the plane. The final greeting, with the families and all the children, was truly moving and emotional. All together we cried for having spent a fantastic week full of activities, new knowledge and that everyone will carry within themselves. We landed at 9pm in Italy and our families welcomed us and brought us home after spending a week without us. Despite the initial sorrow for leaving Vila Viçosa we were happy to have embraced our families again.

My thoughts and impressions on the Erasmus experience in Portugal are very positive. I met a lot of people from other countries and until that moment it had never happened, I am very happy to have established relationships with the Portuguese and Spanish guys above all, they were very kind to me and I did not imagine I would make so many friends. Even the guy who hosted me and his family were very welcoming and kind to me, I didn't expect them to treat me so well and in fact I am very happy and satisfied about it. In addition, the places and activities that we visited were very interesting and left me with a positive memory each of them, especially the lakes. I can't wait to be able to host my Portuguese friends here in Italy.

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