

Erasmus Journey

From 7th April 2024 to 14th April 2024

Welcome To My Travel

My name is Daniela Putignano and from the 7th of April to the 14th of April 2024, I took part in the Erasmus project. As an experience it was truly beautiful and I invite all the boys and girls to participate in this project which, although short, can mark one's life, not only with regards to the school sphere but also and above all, with regards to the social and relational.

What is Erasmus+?

The Erasmus programme, acronym for European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students, is a student mobility program of the European Union, born on 15 June 1987. It gives a European student the opportunity to complete a period of study legally recognized by their school in a school in another EU state. The name of the program comes from the Dutch humanist and theologian Erasmus of Rotterdam, who traveled for several years throughout Europe to understand its different cultures. Since 2014, the program has been called Erasmus+ for education, training, youth and sport.

Take off

After waiting months before the start of the mobility in France, my journey finally began with a direct outward flight to Bordeaux starting from Bari Airport. Full of desire to begin this new experience together with my Italian classmates and teachers in a different nation from ours and to meet the host students, we boarded the Ryanair line and took off.

After landing in Bordeaux we stayed in a hotel in the city and the following morning we packed our bags to take a bus which took us to our destination within two hours: Niort.

My french correspondent

Waiting for us in the town of Niort, Professor Grégoire welcomed us and accompanied us to his school: the **Lycée de la Venise Verte**. It is a general and technological education high school. What strikes me from the first moment is its size, the presence of many green lawns, the fact that it is well stocked with spacious classrooms on several floors and it provides a service of boarding school where students can sleep and live. Our French correspondents and their classmates gave us a first tour of the school. In fact, it is here that I meet Stefania, a very kind and sweet girl with everyone, surrounded by many friends who she takes care of and above all enthusiastic to meet me.

Activities in the school

After our tour we were led to a science classroom equipped with tools suitable for conducting experiments of any kind. The professor divided us into mixed groups and handed over the outline of an experiment that we had to carry out using the appropriate tools. For some the experiment consisted of measuring the heart rate during physical activity, for others measuring the presence of oxygen in the air. During the whole week we have been participating to different kinds of lessons: economics, mathematics, english and italian too!

Visit to La Rochelle

We reached the city of La Rochelle after taking a train from Niort station. It is a seaside city, very quiet but with a strong wind, where we visited the maritime museum and carried out a very long treasure hunt which allowed us to visit the main streets and squares of the city. It is a much loved and important city for french people, as they spend their summer holidays here. What I loved the most about La Rochelle was the fact that,

even though it is a big city and destination for thousands of tourists, it still remains a very quiet and enjoyable city!

Visit to Le Marais Poitevin

Our french correspondents, together with their teacher Gregoire, made us explore a place surrounded by nature and full of activities to discover during our walk and complete with our new friends. We played a Bingo consisting in taking pictures of things we met during our exploration, ate a crêpes and practiced canoeing in the river nearby. It was difficult and very tiring, however, we made it and tiredness left space to creativity when Gregoire took us in the middle of the woods and made us draw the calm and silent landscape.

Visit to Niort

During the week we have been to Niort two times and I loved the town both times I went there. I didn't expect that the town was divided in two halves by a river, la Sèvre niortaise, and that, all around the city, nature has took its right with colourful gardens, in french Les Jardins des fleurs. I think that on top of all the places I have been, this is my absolute favourite. Niort is a very nice town where traditions mix with the power of nature.

Carnival day

Friday was a special day! That's because the high school organised a Carnival day. Everyone, teachers and headmaster included, dressed up with really funny costumes and showed up in the middle of the back lawn of the school and put on a really enjoyable show that made everyone laugh with music, dances and prizes.

Food

My correspondent Stefania made me discover new food by taking me in the market of the city of Niort. The market was huge and there was a infinite quantity of fresh french products: from bakery, to honey, typical cheeses, macarons, meat, baguettes and much of tourteau fromager. I was shocked when I saw this speciality because what seems to be a burnt cake..is actually a tasty sweet product of bakery.

Skills I learnt

Self-management and responsibility. The Erasmus experience made me a more confident and independent person and traveller. I have already travelled alone once, but this made me even more sure about my needs and wants during a journey and how to behave in a different country with people I don't know.

Ability to interact with others. I discovered that I am a very social person by getting myself always involved in any situation possible (could be games, lessons, asking information to people passing by).

Language skills. Developed my language skills (both english and french) more than

I expected.

- listening skills
- communication skills

Cultural awareness. Having relationships abroad gave me the opportunity to enter another culture, something that a simple trip does not allow you to do. The school and my daily experiences allowed me to discover how different the customs and traditions are in other cities, in particular in Niort.

Daniela Putignano