



## The Erasmus Experiences

**My Erasmus: I was given an amazing opportunity**

● Shared by: Clara Benac Earle  
Erasmus Trip: Madrid - Uppsala  
It was: 2000

I always wanted to travel and live abroad but unfortunately the Erasmus money is so little that I did not even consider becoming an Erasmus student seriously. However, one day I dreamt at night that I was an Erasmus student. I told my dad the dream the following morning and he said "why not?". I asked my parents for a bit of economic help and I promised them that I would find a job at my destination to be able to support myself.

At first I wanted to go to the UK to improve my English, but there were very few places and I did not get one.

I decided to go to Sweden instead. The experience was a wonderful one. People at Uppsala University were extremely helpful and just after one week I had an interview for doing my final year project at Ericsson. I was paid for it and it opened up my working opportunities greatly. On top of that I made many Erasmus and non-Erasmus friends who were my family while I was there. I really enjoyed myself and learnt many new things, from how a Swedish university works (very different to Spanish universities) to everyday things.

I stayed in Sweden one year after I finish my Erasmus year. Now I am back in Spain but I brought a Swedish husband with me so I go back to Sweden several times a year.

Being an Erasmus student changed my life for the better!!!





## My Erasmus: I upgraded Myself

Shared by: Dj Nash

Erasmus Trip: Madrid - Århus

It was: 2002

Looking for advancing in my career, I took one of the best decisions in my life. The calling of Desiderius Erasmus. I answered back. **Not only I improved a foreign language, CV... but also I have "upgraded" myself, coped with obstacles and overcame them.**

- Upgrade myself learning life, becoming adult by hook or by crook (the fastest pace); surviving.

*From cooking poor pasta&rice dishes my cuisine become decent and healthy, weekly budgeting was a must, new environment and new social rules, NEW...*

- **Cope with obstacles and overcome them: Erasmus and little money goes hand by hand.**

*I worked hard at an assembly line with a group of friends. Kind of Ikea. If you bought tables in 2001-2002, probably you could find some four-legged tables with three left legs and a right one... Oops.(...)*

## My Erasmus: We dreamt and lived those dreams

Shared by: Jon Catshoek

Erasmus Trip: s-Gravenhage - Paris

It was: 2006

### La vie à l'envers

(...) Of all those concerned in the lectures, old-fashioned discipline is expected. A few keywords appear in chalk on the blackboard, the teacher talks and the student writes along in a terrifying speed. What I feared for doesn't happen, because I can follow the lectures very well. **There are a lot of Erasmus students in the classroom, so the professor explains some concepts extensively.** At moments like these, the French students roll their eyes. But when caution is thrown to the winds, it goes too fast sometimes and the message doesn't come across totally. Amongst international students the words of the speaker are being carefully followed: did he really say that the founder of the European Union liked baking cakes? (...)

## My Erasmus: I have found an "A stad" in Belgium! :-)

Shared by: Valentinas

Erasmus Trip: Vilnius - Antwerp

It was: 2006

Oh, I forgot to mention my problems with accommodation. I could not find anything for one week, but it is nothing in comparing with a perfect weather and good company of international students! (...)

Now I am gonna write a few words about my independent life. It was a great opportunity for me to understand what does it mean to live on your own, without parents. I mean washing your clothes, dishes, cooking, shopping, dealing with your neighbours in order to find a suitable compromise for both parties, etc. It was a really valuable experience for me, a serious help for the next step in my life. And what is most interesting I liked it! (...)

Finally are the studies, a main reason why I was in "A stad". I saw how Belgian students are studying here, what possibilities they have. Afterwards I understood the differences between Belgium and Lithuania, where I am from. Here we had a lot of teamwork not only among Erasmus students, but also and local guys. This is a one

of the main distinctions. Naturally my English speaking and writing skills rapidly grew up. I realised the communication differences between various people from EU countries and even Venezuela! (...)

## My Erasmus: We lived our perfect life

Shared by: andrea cantore

Erasmus Trip: Milano - Almeria

It was: 2005

A two weeks course before leaving gives you not exactly the ideal knowledge of a language. Luckily Spanish is not so far from Italian and it should be quite easy to understand what people say. But Andalucian, at beginning, is not so easy. So I found myself in an unknown airport, looking for an unknown train station, asking information to people I did not understand, directed to an unknown city. Once arrived I had to find the flat of a guy I met once in Milan a few weeks before, who promised to give me hospitality for a few days, while I was looking for a room. This was just the beginning. And it was exciting.

I realized soon how it all would have been evolved. The Erasmus community in Almeria was small, we did not reached

author: Annabel Thomas





one hundred units, so we all knew one other, we went to the same parties and so on. There were dozen people groups flowing through the city talking with their vocabulary in the hand with strange Spanish-Andalucian accents, sunbathing in November and “dating” in front of university’s pc rooms to send home some news. We were recognizable. But we did not care about it. **We were studying. We were travelling. We were visiting new cities. We were learning new languages. We were melting with othes cultures. We were meeting new friends. We were happy.**

**We were just living our perfect life.**

### **My Erasmus:** *I believed I can flight*

Shared by: Pauline  
Erasmus Trip: Lyon - Łódź  
It was: 2006

Arrival in Lodz, which will be my city for one year. The first days were scaring, everybody were speaking Polish, unfortunately, I didn’t know almost nothing in this language. (...)

One week. Such meeting. Our reception was so nice. A Polish student group take care, and help us for everything. We visited all the greatest part of our new city each afternoon. Just one week, but so lots of feelings. We began to discover everybody, each culture, each difference...(...)

### **My Erasmus:** *We had a blast!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*

Shared by: Ruxandra Carburaru  
Erasmus Trip: Buzau - Pisa  
It was: 2006

Although it is quite hard to describe it, I will say this: so far it has been the funniest I have ever experienced in my life. Anyone who hasn’t thought about it should not only think it, but do it. You

author: Claudia



will probably never have the opportunity to meet as many interesting people and live as many fascinating events (parties, dinners, movie nights etc etc...). Sure, I was also lucky to have a great ESN team where I study, so I can only wish that to everyone doing Erasmus. Or you could all just come to Pisa:)

### *My Erasmus: I face life with an open point de vue*

Shared by: Zahira Leticia Servera  
Erasmus Trip: Madrid - Evry  
It was: 2005

(...) It was very cool because at the Int we had everything!! Tennis courts, rooms with kitchens, cafeteria, discotheque, all the kind of classes and activities. As you can see in my videos I was part of the dance group!! And the volleyball team, the Italian and French classes... (...)

### *My Erasmus: I discovered a new side of me*

Shared by: Maarika  
Erasmus Trip: Tartu - Thessaloniki  
It was: 2003

One of the most important things I gained during my Erasmus was a new skill of being persistent. I learned how to chew myself through a whole year of bureaucracy, with the image of going to Greece in front of my eyes, motivating me.

I learned that when you arrive to a new country, it takes more than pure enthusiasm and excitement to settle down there. I

learned that different people need a different approach - from sharing nice smiles to setting ultimatums. I learned that it is not really necessary to travel between two hospitals in different parts of town to have your health tests done even though people tell you so. I learned that the easiest way to get a residence permit in a foreign country is to be honest about how you feel about your own homeland. (...)

### *My Erasmus: I did took the right choice...*

Shared by: maria teresa biosca  
Erasmus Trip: Barcelona - Roma  
It was: 2003

(...) I went to the LUISS Guido Carlo University in Rome and I undertook different subjects in international Law. It was so interesting to compare both law systems (Spanish-Italian) and share courses with many others students coming from other countries. Apart from meeting a fantastic city like Rome and welcoming people as Italians, I got the experience to learn a lot about different cultures, lifestyles and, the most important thing, about LIFE. (...)





author: Paulina

### **My Erasmus: *We discovered the world together***

Shared by: Sanna  
Erasmus Trip: Joensuu - Arnhem  
It was: 1993

It was the best time of my youth! We, Erasmus students, formed a very intensive group. We learned a lot about each others' cultures. (...)

Social life played a major role during the Erasmus semester but we also took studies seriously. Without that Erasmus experience and some other periods abroad I would not be in my present position: Institutional Socrates coordinator of one university. (...)

### **My Erasmus: *I grew addicted to the Erasmus Spirit!***

Shared by: Karin  
Erasmus Trip: Zurich - Helsinki  
It was: 2004

I definitely wanted to go to Helsinki for an exchange but sadly discovered that my university didn't maintain an exchange program with my future guest university. Everybody told me trying on my own would be too difficult but it turned out to be only a matter of writing some letters and filling out some

forms... The only drawbacks were the finances (I had to pay the tuition fees on my own) and I was not eligible for a room in the student union's dorms.

### **My Erasmus: *I discovered me, myself and life***

Shared by: Ilke Taner  
Erasmus Trip: Izmir - Groningen  
It was: 2006

I wanted to do something marginal in life that I could remember and smile when I become an oldy, so I decided to exchange my life through Erasmus (...). The first thing that made me smile was Wings-ESN, the local section, with a warm welcome to the city. And throughout the year, they never left us time to get bored. I was so satisfied there that when I returned back to my city, I have done whatever I could as a president of my local section, for the incomings coming to my city. (...)

### **My Erasmus: *I was Erasmus!***

Shared by: Eirini Vlasakaki  
Erasmus Trip: Athens - Viseu  
It was: 2002

Study, travel, meet new people. A unique experience that only Erasmus programme offers. Young people from all over Europe go abroad to experience a new and different life. What is the motivation? The Love for Life.

I was Erasmus student at the age of 20, in the Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal. (...) All the students and professors at the University treated me in an excellent way, thought some of them could not speak very well English, something that obliged me to learn Portuguese. (...)

Before closing I should not forget to say how helpful was this Erasmus

experience to me and generally to my career. Living in Portugal among foreigners helped me to adjust easier in Sweden, where I went for my practical work experience (Leonardo da Vinci programme) and later in Norway for paid work. Today I'm looking for an international career. (...)

### *My Erasmus: I smelled the essence of being European*

Shared by: Francesca Bozzetti  
Erasmus Trip: Milano - Barcelona  
It was: 1996

(...) It was my first experience abroad a part from holidays and I was excited and frightened at the same time... My parents paid me an hotel room for a week and that was all the

do business cases. Exams as well were much more interesting since you didn't need to study books by heart but just to understand the subject thus being able to solve cases.(...)

### *My Erasmus: I discovered Lund*

Shared by: Sebastian  
Erasmus Trip: Augsburg - Lund  
It was: 1995

(...) Since courses were taught in English, I applied for it and got accepted. The year really left a deep impact, academically but also as a personal experience. I studied great courses at the Raoul-Wallenberg-Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law with wonderful professors and likewise wonderful students from all over the



author: German

time I had to find a nice room in a flat to share... and I was lucky it took me only 40 hours...(...) Classes were more relaxed, mainly aimed to get the practical side of the subject (we could study the theory by ourselves) and to

world, not only Europe, but also the Americas, Africa and Asia. That was my entry into the world of international law.

Besides I had a wonderful time in Lund, managed to learn Swedish and thus lived in a country I had never

been before, knew very little about in the beginning, and came back as a in many ways richer person. (...)

### My Erasmus: *I discovered life*

Shared by: Ilari Sohlo  
Erasmus Trip: Oulu - Gent  
It was: 1993

(...) In the Spring I extended my stay for the spring term, since no one from my school wanted to come! I ended up getting no credits the whole year, since it was the first year of Erasmus in Finland, and I signed up thru a department I was not taking courses at, but they were desperate for people, as no one from their department wanted to go. But I ended up not taking the exams in that department, since I was not interested in that field: I took courses that were more relevant for me, but I could not transfer over. They were not too pleased when I came back to Finland and wanted me to pay back the spring term. (...)

### My Erasmus: *We discovered a new way of living!*

Shared by: Bruno Fernandes  
Erasmus Trip: Guimarães - Lund  
It was: 2002

(...) What can I say, was one of the best years of my life! Everything was perfect up there! The welcome reception, the courses, the activities were all prepared and very nice indeed. (...)

With the Erasmus program I had not only the opportunity to study abroad, but to meet new people, new ways of living, new cultures, new places and countries... to get in touch with a lot of other new things!

(...) When I finished my Erasmus program I felt not only Portuguese! But a bit Swedish (1 of my 22 years was Swedish)... a little bit Italian also, and Spanish, German, French and so on...

With my Erasmus program I had the opportunity to start an international work career, once I've been abroad studying I thought.... *Why not to work abroad as well?* That's what I'm doing now! Spain, Germany... and in the future? Maybe pass through Sweden again... :)



author: Claudia