

# Report of my first month in Croatia

My name is Klervi, I am 16 years old and I am in Croatia for two months thanks to Erasmus.

I arrived on the 23 of February and we are now one month later. I would start by saying that the most difficult thing is to change all of your habits and your lifestyle. Being away from your country and your family is not that easy but you get used to it and you try focusing on the good things of your exchange.

I like discovering new cultures and languages. I obviously started to learn Croatian, but it is very difficult and the alphabet is different from that of France. The pronunciation is also different and as a French person; it is hard to pronounce it correctly. I am really happy and glad to be here. I feel really integrate and I appreciate the life here.

The school is also very different from France. We have school from 8.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. They have around seventeen school subjects to study in a week. It is a lot of work and I feel like it is exhausting for them. They are marked out five here and they write on chalk black boards. Their lessons last 45 minutes and it may seem like nothing but contrary to France where a lesson lasts one hour, it goes so fast. I still wondering how much they can do in one lesson. Such a big difference! As I obviously do not understand and do not talk Croatian, there are some classes, which I do not surrender. I usually go to different English lessons (that make me progress a lot), one or two Italian lessons a week because I wanted to try to speak this language, and, of course, I go to French lessons (not all of them). It is funny how people are scared to speak in the presence of a native speaker. They say they are scared to fail and it is awkward for them but I always say I will not judge and I am also here to help them. I like feeling useful in the country that is not mine. It is another way to feel integrate.

I have made some friends here and everyone I met was so kind and nice with me. I am reassured because many people worried about me and they want me to feel good. I think it is something you really need when you visit another country by yourself. Feeling confident is the key.

Now let us talk a little bit about my family. We live in a little village called Štaglinec; it is 6-7 minutes away from Koprivica (city where the high school is). They are four in Ana's family: her mother, her father, her brother and her. Her parents do not speak English so we try to communicate as we can, it means with Google translate. Her brother speaks a little bit English so we can talk together quite easily. From day one, I knew I was going to feel good in this family. They always are here when and I need something, they always care about what I want and what I do not want. I can say that they take care of me. I just want to say something that does not bother me but I was quite shocked at the beginning, they do not eat together, in family except on Sunday. I usually eat with my family in France and here I do not. It does not bother me at all, they have their own habits of course, it is just probably the big change for me here.

To stay talking about the food field, the typical dishes and dishes in general are very salty. Same for the deserts, there is a lot of sugar. Probably too much. Sometimes I have to drink three or four glasses of water in a row. When you used to eat French gastronomy, it could be impressive. It is something I was scared about; not like the food. Nevertheless, it is a big surprise that I kind of like it.

Now, I will talk about the activities we did since I am here. First, I have visited Koprinica, which is an old city, the buildings are old and I like the way it was constructed. People often go to cafés as soon as they have an occasion, so I have also been in some. Fun fact: they always serve a glass of water with your coffee and they can smoke inside the buildings. One Saturday, a friend of Ana’s mom came and we made some activities with lavender because she has fields of lavender. This product is very popular in Croatia and I did not know about this.

I have also been to Zagreb two times. Once to make shopping and the other time two visit the center. This is a huge city and it is so beautiful! Zagreb is a town separated in two parts. There is one normal part, on the ground and another built in height. The view is beautiful. No joke I think I fell in love with this city.

To conclude my report, I will talk about my expectations for this exchange. The first thing I wanted was of course discovering a new country, a new culture and a new language. I already learned a lot in one month and it is not finished yet. I wanted to meet new people and make some friends and I have done it. I wanted to go away from my country, to think about something else and focusing on myself. Because for me, traveling is not only memories but also it is also learning about what you are able to do and what your limits are. When I go back to France, I want to have a lot of stories to tell and a new way of thinking.

