

Coming to the Czech Republic was a surprise for me. Really. Something completely unexpected. And it is funny how it happened: I was at home, working on my



thesis, and I received a call from one of my professors at my university asking if I was interested in studying abroad. Of course, I said yes. I had an interview and few days later, I got an e-mail saying that I was selected to study at the University of Hradec Králové. Everything happened super-fast and suddenly, but like people say "if it's meant to be will always find a way" so, I'm glad this experience was meant to be for me. Because I wouldn't change a thing of everything I lived and learnt during this whole year.

After I knew I was coming, I had some months to get ready. Obviously, as time passed, I got more and more anxious. Thinking about leaving my comfort zone in Venezuela among my family and friends and coming to a country where I didn't know anybody, and it was even more terrifying because I didn't know neither how to speak the language nor much about Czech culture.

The day came, and I was nervous as never before. This wasn't my first time traveling abroad but surely, eight hours on a plane can make anyone anxious. However, all that nervousness disappeared as soon as I arrived in Prague. Since the very first moment when I arrived in the Czech Republic, everything was strange for me. Taking into account that I have never been in Central Europe before, all my senses were discovering something totally different. It was like receiving tons of new information at the same time, from the air I was breathing to the floor I was stepping on. I must admit that it was like taking a break from everything that is happening in my country, thus, it made it more wonderful.

When I arrived in Prague, I could not visit any place, because I came directly to Hradec Králové. At 10.00 p.m. It was an interesting night trip in an old train, discovering



Czech culture thanks to a buddy from ESN buddy system who took us here. We arrived at the Hlavní Nádraží for the first time at 1:00 a.m. and of course I have been many times there after that, but the first time it was special

because the moon was shining next to the clock tower, and I had to struggle for the first time to move my luggage through that rocky ground.

The following days I needed to get used to a lot of things. But the weather was the most difficult part: in Venezuela we don't have seasons, (we don't have winter) so, we don't have cold days or snow. Because it was so cold, I didn't want to go out. It was very tedious for me to wear all those layers of clothes. And sometimes I couldn't bear the cold. Moreover, it was shocking watching the sunset between 3 and 4 p.m everyday. However, when you get used to that, you can see the beauty behind it. It is completely wonderful watching all the streets full of snow, or feeling it falling on your face for the first time. And of course, having snow fights with your friends.



Now that I'm talking about friends, I would like to say that I never imagined I could make good friends so fast. It's amazing how easy you can make friends when everybody is in the same situation. I mean, we were all foreigners coming to a new country; we could

easily understand how others feel in this situation, so, we were the best ones to support each other. Each day you make new friends, each day your relationship with them makes stronger and each day you enjoy every moment with them to the fullest.



Surely, I didn't just come here to make friends and enjoy the weather. I had the opportunity to take some sociology and languages courses at the Philosophical Faculty. I had a great experience. All the professors were very nice, and they know

a lot about their subjects. Most of them could transmit their knowledge in the best possible way and make you feel interested about diverse topics. Moreover, being at the UHK is also an enjoyable experience thanks to the international office, they make your stay

comfortable, they help you with everything you need, and they organize nice activities where you can have a great time.

It is quite difficult to summarize a whole year in some pages. It is not easy to express feelings and describe memories with just a few words. I want to talk about all my trips with my friends. All the nice experiences visiting new places. Eating new food. Trying my best to communicate in Czech with Czech people. A lot of parties. Some cozy afternoons staying in bed doing nothing and a lot of them studying and doing homework. A lot of laughs. And the worst part, a lot of goodbyes accompanied with a lot of tears. That's why I think it is better when you live it for yourself. Even if I make a very detailed description of all my experiences nobody can imagine how nice it was to be in Hradec Králové, so at least you come here and live everything and create memories by yourself.



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