



My stay in Hradec Králové

Dobrý den! My name is Nathalia Navarra, I'm 21 and I study Law in Brazil at the Federal University of Lavras (UFLA). I arrived at Hradec Králové on August 13th, 2018 for the Czech Language and Culture summer course. My first impressions of the city were very nice: it looked like Hradec Králové arose from a fairy tale and we were received warmly by the University staff.



During the first month, in the course, we were able to learn the basic aspects of the Czech language, especially the most important sentences for everyday use, which enabled us to perform the essential activities for survival, such as ordering for food or a “pivo”. We also had very nice moments to meet our colleagues and know the Czech Republic better, including a traditional Czech dinner from our faculty! We had the opportunity to visit the Art Gallery of Hradec Králové and an Archaeological Park, we played board games, visited the lake and had a tour through the city! During this period, we also had help with everything we needed to become a “local”, like the student card, the bus card, the bank account and the Czech number. We also travelled to very interesting places: Hrádek u Nechanic - a castle near the city; Terezín – a fortress and old Jewish ghetto and Kuks – an old hospital in a village.

Soon the semester began, and more students came to the city, we had more nice opportunities to meet them, such as the welcoming party, organized by the Buddy System. We started our official classes from a variety, of course, we could choose, even from different faculties. I focused on subjects of International Relations and Political Science since I am very interested in International Law and this knowledge represents an important aspect of my academic qualification. I chose to study U.S Foreign



Policy, Conflict Resolution, Central Europe during the Cold War, Derechos Humanos y Democracia en América Latina and Just War from the Philosophical Faculty. I had the opportunity to share these classes with people from all around the world, which brought a diversity of views and perspectives to the discussions. I also took a course from the Social Work Institute and two short courses concerning Latin America lectured by teachers who came from Peru and Guatemala. It's important to highlight that I had courses in Spanish and English, which was great for improving my language skills through weekly contact and practise!



The University also promoted events during the academic year, where we shared experiences with other foreign students, such as the UHK International Day, and, in my faculty, the event called "What's with the World Today"- casual meeting at a restaurant where we discussed the current affairs going on in a specific country. It was nice to be able to have different views and perspectives, including from the native people! The Buddy System was also responsible for planning various activities and trips we could join, like the country presentation - an event where we get to know other countries in a short

presentation made by the foreign students, the quiz game, the international dinner - where we tasted delicious and exotic dishes from the countries - and the invitation for cheering for our

University hockey team against Pardubice. The game was such a novelty for me as in Brazil we don't have this sport and we had a lot of fun watching it. We won!

The last trip I went to with the University was the skiing trip. It was very cool, even though I fell into the snow uncountable times. I had neither seen so much snow nor tried a sport like this. I wasn't good at it, but people were really patient with me, helped me a lot and made sure we had lots of fun!



Apart from the trips and events organized by the University and the Faculty, I had the opportunity to know many places and live a lot of amazing experiences during the weekends and breaks. The Czech Republic is in the middle of Europe and it's really easy and cheap to travel!



With the student ISIC card, we had a huge discount for traveling in the country as well! In summary, I visited a few Czech cities, like Kutná Hora, Brno, Karlstejn, Cesky Krumlov, Ceske Budejovice, and, of course, Prague! Prague is very close to Hradec and it's a wonderful city! There are many cultural activities and cool places to visit there. I love it! I've also had the opportunity to visit the neighbouring countries, Germany, Poland, Austria and Slovakia, as well as Italy, France, Hungary, Belgium, Holland, Portugal and England. One can't imagine how many different experiences I was lucky to live.

Last but not least, living in a country so different from my own, in its people, food, weather and language, taught me to accept the differences and appreciate each place for its singularity. Beyond the academic growth, the exchange gave me memories I will cherish forever, wonderful life experiences, personal growth and friendships I hope will endure and become new adventures together around the world. I am very glad for having had this opportunity and I hope our Universities strengthen their relations more! New students from UFLA are coming next semester and I am already sharing my tips. Hope we welcome Czech students in Brazil soon as well!