

Student Exchange Program to Bordeaux, France

A lot of people have asked me- “Was it worth it?”, “What did you learn that we didn’t?”, “Why did you go?” etc. - regarding my student exchange program. Let me pen down my experiences and help you guys decide!



- The international students’ batch had students from close to 14 countries and faculties from 2 continents. The mode and delivery to studies however, wasn’t too different; and case presentations and discussions were a given. But what impressed me the most was the *informality* of the class atmosphere and the *diversity* of the topics, with views from 14 different places. It also helped that they used Prezi instead of Microsoft PowerPoint.
- In a country where people loathe speaking English, and with my “smartphone” being of no credible help, I was pleasantly (un)surprised when I found myself running around in circles looking for a place whose pronunciation was as confusing as the preparation of Dal Makhani in our hostel mess. What did I do then? (un)Fortunately I did what every Mumbaikar does when boarding the local train: FOLLOW THE CROWD. It was entirely another matter that I still *failed* to reach my destination! Thus, out of necessity, was the “international” vagabond, ready to get *lost* anytime, anywhere.
- The first month was a bit hectic, moving from one accommodation to the next, trying to balance studies, travelling *and* budget as much as possible. To my surprise, I found

out that Europe wasn't as expensive as people made it out to be (low-normal indulgences allowed); and *adjusting* to life there wasn't as big an issue either. They had a healthy mix of Indian and Asian cuisines, partying was affordable, and drinking-very cheap! My favourite part was where you could ride a tram from one part of the city to the next while reading a book!

- Indulging the (self-proclaimed) *gamer* within me, I got myself a game developer as a friend who still keeps me updated about few of my favourite games which he helped develop. The *perks* have extended to getting invitations to gaming conferences.
- Italy was a complete eye-opener, and was quite easily the best part of my trip. Right from the “Path of Illumination” in Rome/Vatican to the “Wild-fire” in Bologna, I *indulged* my dreams, desires and gluttony, to levels which I never thought capable. My partners in crime were three brilliant and amazing expatriates who were staying at the place where I bunked, and who promptly *adopted* me as the “fourth” musketeer. Our adventures would make a fine tale in itself!



There were also other little details that bring in a different meaning to this trip- for example, what I would like to term as “the Airport incident”, or “the Party routine”, etc. They still chortle me up when I think about it. Sadly enough, I am too bad a writer to do a proper job of it.

Well there it is- my experiences, and my learnings from the exchange program. What do you think? Was it in fact worth it?

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