

German-Canadian student exchange report 2019

I have always wanted to spend some time in another country. This wish got even stronger when my elder brother went to Australia and told me about his experiences. So I was really happy when my teacher informed me about the exchange program. I did not hesitate and instantly filled out the application form. When the acceptance letter arrived, I was super excited to get to know my exchange partner and his family. In this moment I did not even realize how incredibly lucky I was.

I was not afraid to leave my family and friends behind for 3 months and I was simply looking forward to spending time abroad. I had already talked to my family before via video chat, but when I went to the airport, my calm attitude changed and I became really excited. The flight itself was relaxed and I was not anxious at all. When I saw my host family at the airport, I knew that I would have a good time.

My host family showed me around their house in Stony Plain. I was just overwhelmed by their kindness and tired from the long flight. I happily went to bed and was thrilled what the next days would have to



offer. The next week we were still on vacation so my family

decided to do a road trip with me. We first stopped at a wildlife park where I could see animals like lions, tigers and moose. I even took a picture with a black bear. The next stop on our list was the "Horseshoe Canyon" where we went on a small but exhausting hike. We continued our journey to Drumheller where I saw hoodoos for the first time. Drumheller is also known for all the dinosaurs skeletons which were discovered there. So all around the city we could see statues of them.



After we returned from Drumheller, school was already about to start and on the last day of summer vacation the volleyball tryouts took place in our school gym. My exchange partner had already played last year so he definitely wanted to get on the team this year. He asked me if I wanted to try it as well so I thought I could give it a shot. The practice was super fun and I was really happy when I heard that my exchange partner and me got on the junior volleyball team.

On my first day at the Spruce Grove Composite High School, my exchange partner showed me around the school and introduced me to the teachers. The Canadian school system is a bit different compared to the German one, because every student chooses four subjects every semester and has the same courses every day. I took Psychology, Anthropology, English and Physical Education because I wanted to do something that I cannot do in Germany and these subjects just sounded really interesting to me. And it turned out that Psychology was actually my favourite subject by far. After school, I usually had volleyball practice or did my homework in the cafeteria. In the evening we often watched movies or prepared dinner.

After the first week of school was over it was time for the infamous Adventure Camp, where all German exchange students spent a long weekend together at the Nordegg Centre in the Rocky Mountains. We spent most of our time outside, doing team exercises, climbing, doing archery, canoeing, hiking and rappelling. I had a lot of fun and the weather was simply amazing. The adventure camp was definitely one of the highlights of my entire stay and I would recommend it to everyone taking part in this exchange program.

The next weeks of school I felt like a real high school student. I did my quizzes, homework and presentations like everybody else. It was just a nice feeling being able to keep up with the other students even though my native language is not English. I had a lot of volleyball practice during the week and usually volleyball tournaments on the weekends. That meant I had no time to go on weekend trips with my family but that was okay for me because I really enjoyed the team spirit and the nerve-wracking games against other High Schools.

A week before my departure my family wanted to show me Banff and Lake Louise so we stayed at a hotel in Canmore for a few days. We also went skiing in Sunshine Village.

I would recommend taking part in this exchange to any other student because of all the new experiences they can make and because of how much it improves your English skills. I am really thankful for this opportunity and I would definitely do it again.

