

Ainsley

From Ingersoll to Austria



In Austria Art is Everywhere

I look back 3 months and think about how much has happened in such a short time. I still can't believe I'm in Austria! I look out my window every day, to see beautiful mountains, and it reminds me how lucky I am to be here. It seems strange to think of how much was really out there and how much I really didn't know back in Canada. Everything is a new thing to explore and there are always new opportunities.

My first month here was interesting. I got off the plane knowing no German and no idea what to say or expect. But little did I know that I had just come to the most amazing family and friends. Everyone welcomed me and made me feel really comfortable instantly. And I can proudly say I have not had homesickness since I have arrived. I was kept busy everyday meeting new people and trying new things.

The start of school was interesting. My class mates were really nice and did there best to help me when I was frustrated with learning German. I found it extremely hard to sit for the classes and the irregular hours of school. I wasn't interested in many of the subjects so it really was hard for me to be motivated in

class. But I now focus mainly on the learning of German and not the subject; this is what gets me by in class. I've already made some amazing friends who definitely make school great to go to.

Austria is amazing I love making art here and I've even come to enjoy sports a lot now. In Canada I had no interest in sports but since I have come here I've started turnen (a gym class in a way), volleyball, running, dancing, and am starting a self-defense course soon. I've joined Band and theatre and I take up any extra curricular activities as I can. I love all the people I am meeting and the new skills I am learning.

My first family here is amazing they are already like my second family and I dread the thought of leaving. I have 3 younger siblings who are always looking out for me and teaching me German. My parents are always extremely understanding and always have an open mind. They are all really remarkable people and do so much for me. I am never bored here as there are always things going on (I've never used my planner so much!).

When I had my birthday here I had no idea what to expect, but I can honestly say this was the most amazing birthday I have ever had. I wore a traditional Dirndl and with my new friends and family we stayed up all night dancing and talking.

Eighteen is a really special age here and they really made my day special for me 😊.

My German has improved immensely since the day I arrived and now I can understand almost everything people say. My own speaking on the other hand is a different story. It's really hard to talk because I am not good with sentence order as of yet. I always try however, and now people can understand the gist of what I am trying to say. They know it is very difficult for me and always help me by correcting me. I love Deutsch, it's fun to speak and I enjoy trying to say the extremely long words. I am learning two different types of Deutsch; Austrian dialect and High German! I've learned that there are so many types and it's exciting that I will come back knowing both.

Transportation here is very efficient. I have been able to be very independent as there is a train to anywhere and everywhere in every country in Europe. It is one of the most amazing things in Europe! I am never restricted and can travel all around Austria by myself. I can independently cross Austria to explore and meet with other exchange students in the other parts of the country. We have amazing adventures and learn how to travel with independence and safety. Rotary also has a monthly trip and we always go to see different parts of Austria. Last month we all met up in Vienna and travelled around the city.

November 2011

Rotary sent me to the right country for sure! Art is everywhere, and it is breathtaking to see the history all around in the buildings! Austria is incredibly rich in culture and beauty. Every morning I look out on a beautiful landscape, which I now call home and appreciate the amazing opportunity I have been provided with.

I am so thankful for the people who are making this possible for me including my extremely supportive friends and family back home, and the amazing new family and friends I am surrounded by here. This is an amazing opportunity Rotary has given me. I cannot thank you enough for what you all are doing for me. Dankeschön!

I am looking forward to the rest of my exchange and will do my best to continue to live in the moment. Austria is beautiful and is an amazing place to live. The thought of having to leave some day is dreadful for me.

Dankeschön to everyone back home, everyone is always so much help☺.

Auf Wiedersehen!

Ainsley

Grüß