

# *Eric in Austria/Spain*

*Experiencing new cultures*



## Eric in Spain

Last week an Austrian exchange student named Eric came to our house to stay with us for a week. Immediately after he arrived I noticed that he was pretty relieved as if he had nothing to worry about anymore. We took him to our apartment and as he stepped his eyes widened, I'm quite sure that he was overwhelmed by the atmosphere and maybe also the noise that was present in the whole flat. For me it is totally normal that there is always something going on, therefore it is never silent. My everyday life didn't change a lot, as always my family members came to visit or have lunch with. It felt like the exchange student was enjoying himself, nevertheless he seemed a bit exhausted. In my opinion staying up till half past eleven during the week is not at all unusual. We don't have to get up very early for school, since it is just around the corner.



My school appears to be normal to me, but when we entered my class Eric looked completely distraught. Considering the sound level, it is maybe understandable, but that it is just the way we are. Even when the teacher enters the classroom, the volume doesn't go down, of course this way of teaching might be not that efficient. Furthermore, it is comfortable and I don't get stressed out. Eric asked me about the relation we have with our teachers, because for him it seemed a bit like a friendship. However, I can say that I interact completely different with teachers than I do with friends.

After school we normally wandered through the streets or sat down in a park. In the end there was always a huge group, obviously the Austrians couldn't really deal with that, meaning that they were swamped by the huge crowd. Eric told me though, that he really enjoyed getting to know so many new people. At the end of the trip I was really sad that they had to leave, even though I was convinced that I will meet them again some time.



## Eric in Graz



Last week we had a guest at our house, his name was Eric. My family tried to make everything comfortable for him and we took a whole lot of work on us to do so. I wanted to experience the whole

Austrian culture with him, so we took him to all the sights we could think of. He didn't seem really interested though. The things that fascinated him more were the little ones, which were totally normal for me. We went to a soccer match, but this made him think that I'm rich, because where he comes from only the upper class get to go to such sport events. He was overwhelmed by the atmosphere and the excitement. After spending the



weekend with my family, we went to my school. For Eric, the time it took us to get there felt like an eternity, in his home country it only takes him 5 minutes. When we walked in my class he couldn't believe his eyes. "Is your class from the future?", he asked. I was a bit surprised, because for me a beamer, speakers and a computer belong



to an ordinary classroom, just like a blackboard or a piece of chalk. For him though, these devices were not at all typical to have in a school. Often the whole exchange group went in the city, so we could show them the

town and places we normally visit. Once we went to have lunch and as we walked on the pavement I noticed that my exchange student was continuously starrng on the street. He looked at me and asked if the streets are always that clean, for him it was astonishing that there was no garbage lying around. The week passed by quickly and Eric was slowly getting the hang of all the different things we have in Austria. Saying goodbye wasn't easy, but it was good to know that we'll be meeting again soon.