

# Eric's Intercultural Experiences



## Austria vs. Spain



By Maren

## *Eric in Austria*

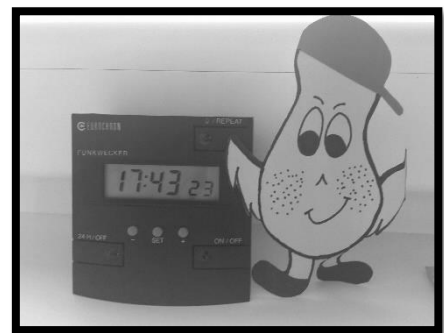
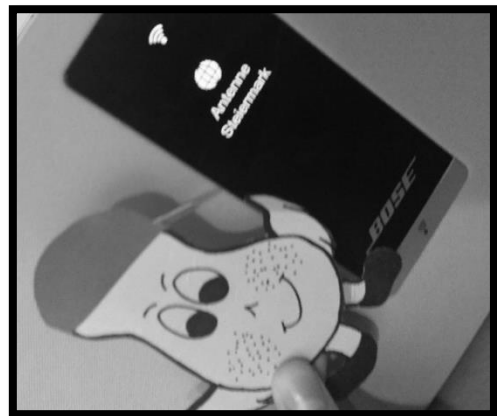
Already a few days before Eric came to our house me and my family were very excited about his arrival. Finally Eric arrived from Spain.

The first difference I noticed started already when we said hello to each other. I wanted to shake his hand and give him a kiss on the right and left side of his cheek. He didn't react to my hand. He just gave me a kiss on the left and right side.

My mom drove us home. Eric was listening to the radio announcer. Then, out of the blue, he said: "I do not really understand what the man is saying, but he seems awfully tired." I was puzzled – why that? Then I realized and told him that Austrians aren't as temperamental as Spaniards, therefore they also speak slower than Spaniards. A few minutes before we arrived at home Eric asked me why there are just so few houses and no shopping malls. I told him that I live in the countryside and that there are only a few houses because there live less people than in a city and more people know each other too.

When we were home at 7pm the first thing he asked my dad was why he was already at home. My dad told him that in Austria everything is a bit earlier for example we get up earlier and that's also why our day ends earlier.

On the next day when we had breakfast Eric was friendly and tried every food we gave him. In the morning his questions were pretty annoying because I'm always a bit grumpy though I always gave my best to answer his sometimes strange questions. When we were in the car he already had the next question for me. Eric asked me why so many cars in Austria



are so dark because in his country almost all the cars are silver or white. That's probably because of the climate. In summer the cars don't get heated up that quickly and in Spain the climate is definitely hotter than in Austria.

In the evening we made him a typical Austrian Rindfleischsalat. In the beginning Eric thought that the green pumpkin seed oil was toxic but when my mom explained to him what it was Eric tried it found it delicious too.

All in all I liked my exchange student Eric and I think he enjoyed his stay in Austria too.

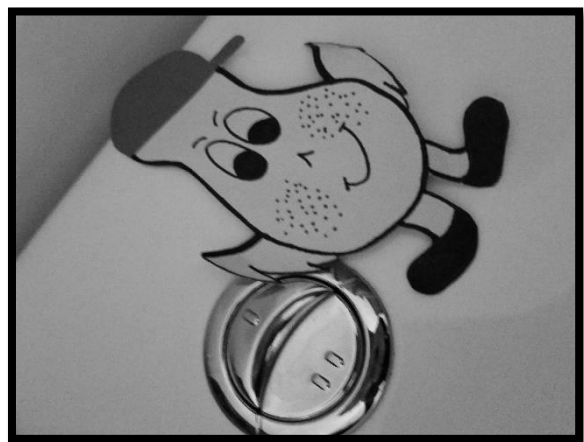


## *Eric en España*

My friend Eric has been in Catalonia, Spain for a week and told me about some really interesting differences. The first difference he told me about was that in the evening he was so hungry and wondered why they didn't have dinner. Well, they eat dinner but always at 9.30pm.

In the morning Eric got up at 6.30am but then he wondered why his host family was still sleeping. This was because the daily routine in Spain starts a bit later. Austria and Spain are in the same time zone but Spain is more in the west, that is why the sun rises later and therefore they get up later.

Eric wasn't used to the fact that the whole family takes a shower before they have dinner and also eat dinner in their pyjamas. He also told me about some typical Spanish bathroom facts. Firstly his host family lives in a small apartment, however they have 2 bathrooms. The toilet and the shower are not separated. Each bathroom has a shower or bath tub, a toilet and of course a sink. By flushing the toilet in Spain he realized that the button to flush the toilet always looked the same.



At 8.50am class started, at 2pm the students had a lunch break and school ended at 4.40pm, which means that Eric always had a very long day. Another thing Eric noticed was that in school all children always drank juice-boxes.



During the breaks it was really loud because everyone was screaming and fooling around. But also during the lessons the students didn't show a lot of respect to the teachers which Eric thought was sad. Only a few lessons were disciplined, but Eric thought that the students aren't allowed to use their phones during the breaks is pretty cool, because the children really lived the moment. Another observation Eric made was that every classroom was an intercom. Sometimes it rang and the teacher answered it, when this happened

Eric always had to laugh because he has never seen something like this before. Unfortunately he didn't tell for which kind of information it was used for.

After school he stayed with the son of his host family in the city and they went into a shopping mall that is called "Corte ingles". Eric told me that I would have loved it there because almost every other store in Barcelona is Mango or Desigual.

