

Stockholm, spring semester 2007

The first thing I want to say: DO IT!

This was the greatest time I ever had. First you get to know a lot of people, people from all over the world and their cultures. That gives you a different view of the world. Second this is the best way to improve your language skills, English as well as Swedish. Third Stockholm is a beautiful city with lots of possibilities to enjoy your spare time. And last but not least you can go on with your studies.

I can't tell you so much about studies of biology at the Stockholm University because I did an internship at Karolinska Institute. For me this was a good choice, because I was done with all my courses here in Heidelberg and so I wanted to get a deeper insight into real lab life. The only thing I know is that the courses there comprise lectures and lab work and last either 5 or 10 weeks.

Swedish people are very friendly. And their habits to say "du" and introduce you with your first name makes everything more personally. But it's very hard to get in deeper contact with them, even if you speak Swedish. When you start in Swedish it happens quite often that they answer in English after they realize that you are no native speaker. Everyone you meet speaks nearly perfect English.

I studied Swedish two years before I left to Stockholm, then it's quite easy for us Germans to talk the language because of the similar words. The best possibility to talk is to live together with Swedes. If you get an accommodation via ERASMUS you live in one of the three "villages", Lappis, Kungshamra or Solna (there you live in your own small cabin) together with mostly exchange students, especially Germans and French. I wasn't lucky to get such a place but this was my chance to move into a house where no exchange students live. I signed up for SSSB, you have to do this several months before and read exactly how it works.

Everything else is very good organized, contact Ulla Renquist if you have any questions, she speaks perfect German, and don't miss the Orientation week.

In my first days I was really shocked about the prices, for food and for cosmetics. But then I found a LIDL where the food is just a bit more expensive than in Germany. In return the supermarkets are opened until 10 or 11. In contrast to System Bolaget, you really need to plan when you want to party. One big advantage of Swedish clubs is that you are not allowed to smoke there, even in discos and bars.

Finally I want to inform you about the weather. Winter is really nice, but spring doesn't really exist, trees are getting green in late April, and until June it's rarely warmer than 20 degrees. But Stockholm is a very sunny city and the nature around is just marvellous! In summer you have lakes everywhere with drinking water quality and you can get tanned as well.

Read the other reports if you want to know more about the preparation and the accommodations. One thing should be different from August 2007 on, they want to introduce something like the German "Semesterticket".

So once again: Sweden is a great country, Stockholm is a great city and ERASMUS is a great thing!

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