

Student report Malaga

Monday 19th of November

On the Monday, all the country officially met with in the schools hall, we were given 20 minutes to introduce ourselves to the other country with our hosts, which was nice to get to meet people we did not meet the night before. An icebreaker was our first task of the day, we each had to stand up and introduce ourselves to the teachers and students (our names, age, where are from and our favourite thing to do in our free time,) then we were asked to write them down and the teachers would then distribute them and we would have to guess who it belonged to. We were then given more time to talk to others, which again was really enjoyable to learn about other people and their cultures.

We were now able to present our powerpoints about the main culture and heritage from our country and how this affects us as a citizen. Choosing such things that affect us all as a group (Big Ben, Houses of Parliament, Stone Henge and many more.) I thoroughly enjoyed this as I enjoyed learning about what was important to them and their countries heritage. On our breaks we socialised with the other countries and begun to get to know people and their cultures.

We finished our first day in a Spanish school, which were very different to many others, we would then go back to our hosts homes, many would have a traditional Spanish siesta, and then we would meet back up with the other countries and go out for the evening. On the Monday we went to the centre of Malaga and separated into our own individual countries and started to get to know our hosts more. Before we were aware of the time it would be 12 o'clock and would all be super tired but none of us wanted to leave. As we were all making memories that wouldn't be forgotten.

Tuesday 20th Nov

On Tuesday we visited Antequera, Archidona. When we were there we visited some archaeological and heritage sites that had buildings underground in a circular shape. These buildings were often used as homes and were positioned in such a way that the sun would shine directly through the entrances of the building.

We also visited a museum which exhibited many interesting pieces of artwork and objects. For example some of the objects they had on show were goblets and jewelled crowns. These would be used during special ceremonies and placed upon statues.

After this we went for a traditional Spanish meal in a quaint restaurant which was positioned next to an old bull fighting ring. The food was nice but very different to what we would normally eat. It was also very different to what our hosts ate, as they would eat more modern food rather than traditional meals.

Finally we walked up to a mosque at the top of the city. Although the shape of the building resembled a mosque, the building had been converted into a catholic church. The difference between what the building was before and how it is now is remarkable as catholic churches tend to be more illustrious than mosques, whereas mosques have much simpler interior decorations.

Overall I thought the day was very educational and it taught me a lot about religion within the area. I found the mosque the most interesting as the fact that it used to be a mosque and has then been converted to be a place of worship for another religion entirely is intriguing to me. It makes me wonder why they would want to do that.

Wednesday 21st Nov

On Wednesday we all met at the school at 8:30am and everyone walked for 45 minutes in the rain, all with umbrellas talking, laughing and enjoying the beautiful views along the way to the Malaga museum.

When we arrived, we split into the two groups, dropped our bags off and proceeded along with the first tour of the day, which was with an amazing archaeologist who showed us many pieces of art and old materials which would have been used many, many years ago in Malaga. There were loads of artefacts such as jewellery and cutlery. The archaeologist also told us stories about life, culture and history in Malaga. After the tour (which lasted two and a half hours) our mini group had a look in the gift shop and we then waited to swap with the other group.

My group then gathered up together and we went for a walk into Malaga city centre and visited some historical monuments with the Spanish history teacher explaining their historical significance.

After that we joined up together in a group of 20 and went for a pizza hunt, we walked for about 30 minutes along the beach to the said best place for pizza in Malaga. It tasted amazing. I spoke to more new people from the different countries which was lovely. We then had to dash to the Russian museum as we were very late.

Once we arrived at the museum, a tour guide took us straight away on a very interesting tour, discussing the historical and political art of Russia. The guide made the tour interactive when he added mini activities in. For example, we were split into groups of 5 and we got given a painting to come up with 3 hashtags to do with the painting that we were given. Another one was when one person from each country had to explain a painting and add how it could reflect to our specific culture.

In the evening there was nothing planned, so I spent the evening talking with the family I was staying with.



Thursday 22nd Nov

On Thursday we visited Grenada, Andalusia. When we were there we visited Alhambra which is one of Spain's world heritage sites. It was constructed as a small fortress on the remains of Roman fortifications but was then converted into a royal palace. On the grounds there are many religious areas as well. For example there is a converted mosque like there was in Antequera.

The grounds of Alhambra were stunning. They were filled with colourful plants and water features which really added to the beauty of the site. Alhambra is said to be the most beautiful place in the world and after visiting it I can understand why people might say that.

After this we travelled back to Malaga and a group of us met up in the city centre for my birthday meal. The city centre was quite busy due to the Christmas shopping already beginning to start. This allowed us to see Malaga in all its glory.

Overall I enjoyed my day as it was packed full of beautiful things to see and I spent it with some amazing people as well. I really loved Grenada as it was so pretty and again the converted mosques really intrigued me.

Friday 23rd Nov

Everyone didn't want it to be the last day, there was lots of sadness and "I will miss you". I think that it isn't well organized how, if you have made friends from outside the country that you will visit, it is very hard to stay in contact, as you have to fly to a different country to see them. I felt this way with the Finnish girls, as I had gotten on well with them, yet technically I would never see them again. I have managed to keep in contact by using Snapchat however.

Firstly we went to the court, where we got into our international groups as we were going to make monuments to represent our time in Spain. My group worked very well and planned as we went along and put together a staircase, using milk cartons and mounted it onto a cardboard box, with each nation's flag placed on the top stairs. We then spray painted it blue with gold stars painted gold onto the bottom. We won the competition of 'the best monument' and each got a Stabilo pencil set.

After that we had break and then went back to the hall, where each Spanish household had provided some Spanish food and we had a buffet and helped ourselves to the food. We then did some activities and discussed what thing of the week was our favorite and other aspects which we thought were good and also the ways that it could be improved. The teachers left for a bit and the students all started singing their own national anthem, while waving their flag. It was very funny and showed the pride each person felt for their country.

Then it was the end of the day and we all went home and said goodbyes to the people that we knew we weren't seeing later. It was weird because I knew that I was never going to see the majority of those people again and it was quite odd.

We then went home for a siesta, ready for the night. Some of the Spanish people were friends therefore there was a group of people that met up regularly after the day had finished. On Friday we went round the port, which was very beautiful, and the shops in the centre, which was very nice and I bought some clothes and things. We went for a nice meal and then we all had to say goodbye. These were the people I had gotten closest to over the week and it was very sad saying "goodbye" and there were a few tears shed. We all promised to keep in touch and so far we have.

