

**Participant: Magdalena from Göttingen (Germany)**  
**Duration of her stay: one school trimester**  
**Place: Valencia**

## My stay in Spain

### The Organisation

I was super satisfied with the organization of Openmind. The orientation in Barcelona made me fit for the stay and on site I was well looked after by the coordinators. The photo is from a trip to the "Parque de Atracciones" in Madrid, organised by the coordinators.



### What are the biggest cultural differences between Germany and Spain?

I think the biggest difference that you notice immediately is the eating habits.

There are five "official" meals (breakfast "desayuno", a kind of second breakfast "almuerzo", lunch "comida", "merienda" and dinner "cena").

The eating times are also different from those in Germany, which you must get used to in the beginning (e.g. lunch around 3pm and dinner at 9pm or later).

**Family life is also different.** My host siblings and I had lunch with the grandparents three times a week and on almost every weekend we met with the grandparents, cousins and uncles for dinner or to celebrate birthdays.

You will notice another difference if you go downtown on Sunday or on holidays: **The streets are full of people** who meet for eating, shopping... not like in my city in Germany where the streets are like empty on Sunday.



### What did you like best during your stay? (What will you miss in Germany?)

Of course my host family and my friends!!! In general, the helpfulness, warmth and openness of the people. Everyone wants to do the best for you and help you as much as possible if you have problems or questions.

What I also miss a lot is the serenity of people in everyday life. **The Spaniards rarely let themselves be upset.**

**Plus, I've fallen madly in love with Valencia,**

the city is super beautiful and there are a lot to see. Although it is a city of over a million inhabitants, it does not feel so big, because everything is very easy to reach on foot or by subway.

### How would you describe the school in Spain? (For example, what was difficult for you, what was easy for you?)

The school is different from my German school in many ways. The lessons consist mainly of frontal teaching, the cooperation is almost not assessed. and the students are not as motivated to participate in the lessons.

After each topic there was a test to study at home and additional homework and reading. That's why I (almost) never did anything with the Spanish students during the week, but we did even more on the weekends.



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What has the stay in Spain personally brought you? What did you learn for yourself?

**I notice that I have become more independent, mature and confident.** I have learned to deal with new situations and problems. **Besides, my horizon has broadened, I got to know a new way of life and mentality and now I can learn some things.**

I see many things with different eyes, I notice things I hadn't thought about before.

What tips would you give to a future exchange student?

It is important that you are open to everything and everyone and participate in as many things as possible. Whenever your family or friends ask you to do something with them, say "yes" as often as possible. You should use the time; it goes by so fast and there is so much you can experience.

The most important thing is to think positively and enjoy the time (after all it should be the best time of your life).

