

French, German, Italian Lifestyles

We started this wonderful project in 2013. We flew from Toulouse to Casalpusterlengo, October 11. We were at the same time happy and impatient but we also felt a big apprehension at the idea of meeting our host family.

As we arrived we discovered Milan, a beautiful city, the capital of fashion as they say.

During our stay in Casalpusterlengo, we did a lot of activities. Among them, we visited Milan and its beautiful cathedral named "Il Duomo" as well as Florence and its famous museum.

During the meeting with the Italian and German students, we visited Cesaris High School and we discovered what they had prepared for the conference: paintings, photos about their lifestyle and stereotypes.

Then, we realized posters in order to make an exhibition and a presentation about stereotypes of the three countries, France, Italy and Germany.



The Italian students had taken some photos about the feelings of people, moods, and face expressions. The photos were really beautiful because they showed a lot of different feelings and because the colors of the photos were very varied. They also presented us the Italian style, with different brands and outfits and what they like to wear.



The German students showed us German stereotypes and their way of life. They mostly talked about music, especially rock'n'roll, and cars because Audi, BMW, Opel, Volkswagen and Porsche are made in Germany. They also showed us pictures of German people wearing beach sandals with socks, it was quite funny and a true stereotype!!!

The French students showed a poster depicting food stereotypes like wine, bread, specialties and what former students had cooked last year in France (during the January conference in Albi) with their pen pals (lemon pies and cannelés).



They also spoke about French style and French fashion designers like Jean-Paul Gaultier who likes creating and wearing striped jerseys.

In the evening, we all cooked a typical Italian meal, with risotto and veal cutlet among other specialties, in teams of four people in the families.

During our stay, we became aware that some stereotypes were true like the Italian's warmth, friendliness, smile and loud way of speaking! Germans proved to be more reserved, which corresponds to what we usually think of them.

However, some other Italian stereotypes are not true at all. For example, Italians do not eat only pizza and pasta and Italian mothers do not have so many children as we may think! As far as Germans are concerned, they don't drink only beer and they don't dress only in traditional costumes.



The stay was very rewarding because we met very nice people, saw and visited varied and interesting things. The host families were very welcoming and our pen friends too. We had lots of fun in Italy.

This project allowed us to make progress in English and to feel more comfortable when speaking in class.

In conclusion, to participate in such a project, it is necessary to like going towards the others, to know how to integrate into a group in which people don't speak your language, to be open-minded and, above all, to respect the others' culture .



Cooking

In March 2013, we went to Herford, Germany, to participate in a conference whose topic was "cooking".

We had the task to form teams representing the 3 nations of the project and prepare a typical meal of the host nation, Germany. We also had to document what we had to do including the shopping part, the cooking, the setting of tables, the dining itself and the cleaning in the end. First we had learned how to take nice pictures, taking into consideration perspective, shadow, highlight, in a workshop lead by a professional photographer.

Most of us prepared sauerkraut, which was really delicious and a bit different from the recipe we use in Alsace, France.



The next day, we showed our Power Point presentations of the cooking task. We realized that we had had all a lot of fun going shopping and preparing German food.



In May 2013, we went to Albi where, in teams, we participated in a cooking workshop. With a professional cook, we learned how to prepare typical French desserts: Lemon pies with a spectacular meringue and Cannelés, a speciality from Bordeaux.



During the workshop we had to take pictures paying special attention to the light and the



viewpoint, as we had learned to do in the last conference in Herford. We also took down notes in order to keep the recipe. Then we prepared a PowerPoint presentation of our work that we showed and commented on the next morning.

Everybody got involved in the workshop, and the best moment was when we ate together what we had made. We got to know each other; we had good time together while we were cooking. We could share our culture.



During this conference we also visited the Museum of Chocolate located in Cordes-Sur-Ciel, a UNESCO World Heritage medieval village. We could learn about the making of chocolate from the cocoa beans to the sweets. We saw beautiful sculptures made in sugar, chocolate and almond paste. To finish, we made our own lollipops and tasted the local speciality: the "Croquants de Cordes", which are cookies made with sugar, egg whites and almonds. DE-LI-CIOUS!

"Even if I wasn't in Italy, working on stereotypes sounds very interesting and we all should get to know more about them."
Julie

"I wish I were part of the Albi Conference, because I really wanted to try all the pastries that were made!"
Axl

"I really enjoyed all the different types of food... it was soooooo tasty!!!"
Lisa



"It was nice to get to know what the three countries think about each other!"
Sarah

"I like the Italian extraordinary dressing style (e.g. in Milan)."
Vincent

"We really enjoyed the relaxed way of life in Italy!"
Lisa + Sarah

"I enjoyed seeing the way they dress in the other countries!"
Mélissa

"It was nice to get to know the different sports in each country."
Lisa



"It was so much fun to cook together and to try all the different dishes!"
Sarah



“THE GREAT BEAUTY”

What is beauty? We don't know, but we can look for it in everyday life. Every moment we can meet it and understand it through our feelings. Beauty is everywhere. Beauty is the way through which anything becomes unique. As unique, things acquire an identity.

Each country is known all around the world for its buildings. They make citizens proud of their origins. They're also a source of feelings.



If you are walking on a sad foggy day and you are feeling down, when you run into a beautiful monument such as Milan Dome, the Eiffel Tower or Brandenburg Gate your feelings change immediately.

You could stay there, in front of that beauty, for hours and be happy.

As something unique and creative, beauty is never the same; it changes over time.

Nowadays in our society female beauty is identified with thin bodies, but the painter

Tiziano would not agree as you see in picture 2. In the first part of our project we examined examples of beauty created from people's imagination and monuments that are unique symbols of a country while our second task was to find out how human beings sometimes destroy the beauty of Nature.

We looked for landscape where the contrast between beauty and ugliness - often caused by humans - is extremely clear and discussed about the negative effect brought by humans and about the

increasing ugliness of some places caused by our indifference. And what about Street Art?



Is it increasing the beauty of our cities or is it just a form of vandalism? First of all we have defined Street Art.

Offensive words on the wall of an old castle cannot be considered street art, whereas when artists colour the empty grey walls of suburbs, the dark dusty walls of an underground or the painful wall of Berlin, that is Art, a piece of beauty where there was none. The Berlin Wall, painted both by famous artists and common people is one of the best examples of Street Art.

And when we are running from place to place, what can be better than a musician in the street or a street painter who make us stop and be enchanted, leaving our daily concerns behind.

