

The Erasmus Experience that Changed Me

by Anita Salamon from the Faculty of Commerce, Hospitality and Tourism in Spain at Best Life Experience (Outgoing Traineeship Mobility)

I completed my compulsory internship with the organisation „Best Life Experience“ in Granada, Spain between August and December 2022. Granada is the capital city of the province of Granada and it welcomes over 2000 international students each year. What I enjoyed the most about the city is that I could walk everywhere and it barely rained, the large amount of international people, Alhambra and the Moorish architecture, and the beautiful viewpoints. Best Life Experience is a small company with less than ten employees that organizes trips and events for international students arriving to Andalusia – it also creates a community for these students coming from all over the world. Our team of interns was very diverse and consisted of students from Austria, France, Belgium, Germany, Mexico, Bulgaria, Poland, Morocco, Spain, Latvia, the Netherlands, Italy and Hungary.

I worked on a variety of assignments during my internship, which made my time there very interesting. I had to create content for the company’s social media platforms, which was one of my favorite tasks, because I could be really creative. I kept in touch with the students before and after their arrival, promoting the trips and events to them. I worked on administrative tasks, such as preparing trips and events, making lists and completing other small tasks to make sure that all the trips and events ran smoothly. But my most favorite thing about this internship was that I could try myself out in new roles – being a coordinator of trips and events taught me a lot.

In Marbella, we organized the first beach day for international students. We also went to a beach in a nature reserve in Cabo de Grata, where the view was mesmerizing! My first trip outside of Spain was to Gibraltar, where it was exhausting climbing up the Rock of Gibraltar but the view was worth it. I also coordinated a 3-day trip to the Algarve coast in Portugal. Our hotel was in Albufeira, and we visited Lagos, Benagil and we watched the sunset in Sagres, Europe’s most south-western point, known as “The End of the World” – that was the highlight of the trip for me, especially because I celebrated my birthday there! We also planned a trip to Jaén in October, where at this time the Fería (festival) de San Lucas was held – there were concerts, cultural activities, amusement rides and a lot more! We had a lot of fun there. I helped put together two trips to the North of Morocco as well, which were stressful because I had so much to do as a coordinator. Overall, however, I had an amazing time and I fell in love with Moroccan culture through my visit to Chefchaouen, Tetouan, Asilah, Fez and Tangier. I also got to ride a camel in the middle of the Merzouga desert and learned how to tie a Hijab but spending one night in nomad tents in the desert was the highlight of my Erasmus experience! Other than the trips, we also organized a lot of events for the students, such as tapas nights, sightseeing tours around the city, karaoke nights, theme parties and quiz nights!

Some of the difficulties I faced during my mobility were finding accommodation for a short time of only 4 and a half months, experiencing a culture shock at the beginning of my Erasmus, and finding it hard to understand the Andalusian accent at first. **But the highlights made it all worth it. I got to meet beautiful people from all over the world and made true friendships. I gained a lot of experiences from the company that I could use in my future jobs. I practiced my English and Spanish language skills, and lastly, I had the chance to live in a beautiful city and got to learn its culture.**

“The journey changes you; it should change you. It leaves marks on your memory, on your consciousness, on your heart, and on your body. You take something with you. Hopefully, you leave something good behind.” - Anthony Bourdain