

# **Exchange with Switzerland: Students' view**

## **WEEKLY SUMMARY OF THE EXCHANGE IN FTAN**

First I would like to tell briefly the principal group activities that we have carried out during this week in Ftan:

On Sunday we walked along a snow-covered path with the bobsleds, and we fell sometimes, which did not prevent us from having a lot of fun and laughs.

On Monday we went to the high school for the first time (I have to say that it seems to me to be large and wonderful). I was fascinated by the language classrooms because I think that linguistic variety is indispensable. In the evening we went on a tour around Ftan, where we ended up drinking hot chocolate in a hotel where we were lucky to find two Spanish people. To end the day we went to have dinner at Corsin's, where we had pasta and we spent a very good evening because we played different card games and, I think it is convenient to say that something that surprised me of the mates that received us is that they have a concept of friendship very different from that of Spain: I mean that they are more close and it is not important for them to meet anywhere.

As for Tuesday, in the morning we went again to the high school, but I had lunch with my foster family instead of at the school, which I liked, not only for the delicious food, but also for the kindness of the parents. In the evening we went to visit and walk across Scuol, and went to relax to a spa where there were outdoor thermal swimming pools, salted ones, saunas of eucalyptus... wonderful in short.

On Wednesday we went on quite a long trip up to Bern. We visited the Spanish embassy and, although it may seem incredible, I felt like at home and I missed our country. We also visited the museum, with an exhibition on Einstein. When we returned to Ftan we went out, since it was Latrina's birthday, and we all had a lot of fun, we shared experiences and laughs ...

## **EXCHANGE BENIDORM - FTAN**

### **Weekend:**

Saturday: We departed at 4:20 from Alicante, without any delay; we took the plane to Zurich. From the airport we took the first train, followed by four more. The arrival in Scuol was at 11:20. After this they took us to a restaurant in the mountain where we had a party on the seventies; the difference is noticeable as for music and dance.

On Sunday: We got up at 11 a.m.; after having breakfast I went with Sandra and Elvira to do some sport with the bobsled. This has been the most remarkable thing, for the time being. We finished at 3:30 and we went to the house of Natalia and Sandra where we watched TV and talked. Anita and I returned to Ftan; her mother picked us up and we had dinner at 6:30. After dinner we watched TV in family. We went to bed at 10:30.

Monday: This morning we have got up at 7:10; the remarkable thing has been the arrival to the high school since, beside being covered in snow, it is very big. As regards education I do not see any difference; what stuns are the wide facilities and the diverse courts.

Being English the language that we use more, the practice helps us to improve our knowledge.

## **EXCHANGE SPAIN-SWITZERLAND**

## **EXPERIENCES AND IMPRESSIONS**

After our arrival in Zurich on March 23rd, we took the typical Swiss reddish trains. We changed trains four times, and we could walk freely for the long and immense double-decker trains with cafeteria. The silence enveloping the atmosphere inside this country stands out, our voices resounding among the crowd. At about eight o'clock in the afternoon we could admire the landscape of an uninhabited city. Besides getting dark much earlier, it was difficult to make out a person walking along the streets of the

cities that we were crossing. It is surprising the way in which the climate determines the way of life of a population, since between both countries, Spain and Switzerland, a great quantity of contrasts can be noticed in spite of both being inside western culture and separated only for less than 3 hours of plane.

On arriving at Ftan's train station, we were welcomed by a beautiful winter vision. Thin snowflakes were falling down on our shoulders and an immense white layer was covering the roofs and fields of the city. Our shouts of amazement gave away our foreign nature and we received the surprised look of many tourists.

We were distributed among Ftan, Scuol and Sent, the villages closer to the high school whose classes we were going to attend. We had the first impressions of the respective mates who would take us in their houses during the following seven days. We met the family and little by little we reinforced the ties between both cultures and got used to the ways of life and leisure of a mountain city with such different climate and schedules.

## **EDUCATION AND SCHOOL ORGANIZATION**

Most of the students have to take the bus to come to the high school. The way to control and facilitate the trip of the students to the school is very similar to that of Spain; each of us got a card that had to be showed to the bus driver. Nevertheless, it differs from Spain in the organization to get in the bus, without pushes and hurries due to a quiet queue before the door.

Public transport, in this case the bus, is called CarPostal, since it is used, besides for people's transport, for the distribution of mail among the cities around. With this method they collaborate with a greater care of the environment and a greater responsibility towards pollution.

The organization of classes in the school is very different from the Spanish one, being more similar to the timetable of a Spanish university. Classes begin at 8 a.m., with a changeable duration of approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. Between classes there is a 15 minute break. The students have a snack then and relax along the corridors of the school. Being a high school that is also a hall of residence, there is a great dining room with kitchen, where the students can stay to have lunch at midday by presenting a simple card.

### **Teresa López Páez**

When I came to Scuol for the first time, it was night and I could not see the landscape very well; but on the following day, when it was the break of dawn and I could see it through the window of the room, it seemed to me to be impressive.

My mate, Anina, took us for a walk in bobsled. It was very entertaining and we spend a very good time. The family welcomed me with great happiness and really wishing to meet me.

### **Maya Recio Cortés**

What impressed me more on arriving at Switzerland was how cold it was. Houses are very big and you may walk without shoes.

In my house there was neither television nor warm water thermos. On Sunday we went to ride on the bobsled and I realized that there was a lot of snow and that the views of the mountains were beautiful.

On the following day we went to class. The buses are very punctual and they always arrive on the dot. At the school the facilities are very good; the blackboards are double; there is a very big gym. There are also different things.

### **My trip**

The trip on the train was tiring because of the continuous changes in a short time.

Initially, the meeting with a stranger was shocking on not knowing what to say.

It has been a very busy weekend, since on reaching Scuol we got on a cable car to go to a party up in the mountain.

The next day, the family asked me things on Benidorm and its customs. Being a Sunday and not being able to practise winter sports, we decided to see Scuol with its sloping streets and with its fountains

of mineral water. Later, we went to see a friend of Mariuss' who had endured a difficult operation and we went back home.

The next day, we went to the high school, where we were given an introduction and were taught the different classes. In the evening, we visited Ftan and admired its landscapes.

On Tuesday I went to St. Moritz, where I was seeing it alone just for an hour. In the evening we were in a spa with thermal waters.

On Wednesday we went to Bern, to the Council of Education of the embassy of Spain in Switzerland. There they gave us a snack to gain strength. While we were eating, we had a talk with the Councillor of Education of the Spanish embassy, with the person in charge of our exchange, Cristina Seoane, and also with Silvia Mitteregger, responsible for the exchanges in Switzerland.

Later we visited Einstein's museum, where we enjoyed a guided visit in Spanish. Since we had little time we went to take the train to return to Scuol. The experience was nice, Bern is beautiful, but I believe that all of us prefer Scuol, Sent and Ftan.

At night we went to celebrate Katrin's birthday. We had a very good time.

Our mates took us to a very cosy place and we enjoyed a lot the night with our mates.

### **Weekend**

Saturday: We departed at 16:20 h. from Alicante airport and arrived in Zurich at 18:40 h. Later we took five trains to come to Scuol. There the mates of the exchange were waiting and they immediately took us to a party in a discotheque.

Sunday: We went ice-skating and then we had hot chocolate. At 17:00 h we went to the sports hall to see a game of hockey (on ice) in which Corsin, Kike's mate, was playing.