

WHAT'S UP?

EXCHANGE PROJECT

IES Pío del Río Horteiga – Spain

St.-Jan Diest 2^{de} en 3^{de} graad ASO Belgium

PART 1 : PORTILLO → DIEST

5/10/2013 – 12/10/2013

DIARY

04/10/2013 – 05/10/2013

The 4th of October we started the trip from Portillo to Diest. Everybody was very excited and nervous. We stopped several times to eat something and to go to the bathroom; and also because Félix wanted to smoke. We watched some films such as "The Notebook", "Sorry if I call you love" etc. All students enjoyed the films but some of them got asleep.

The 5th of October when we woke up we were a little bit tired because it's too difficult to sleep in a bus. We stopped near Paris to have breakfast and to have a little walk. After the walk we got into the bus to continue our wished trip to Belgium. We enjoyed the views through the windows of the bus.

We hope the next 20 hours from Diest to Portillo will be as fun as the previous ones.

05/10/2013

When we received a message from our partners, we knew a special week was coming. So, at three o'clock we went to the Graanmarkt to pick up our partners who were coming by bus. We were excited to meet them, and we were happy that we had a very good first meeting. Then we went home and we unloaded their bags. After they met the family, the Spanish partners gave us some presents. Because

of their long trip, they took a shower. Afterwards we ate and we went to a party in Diest where we met up with the others.

Gitte and Estíbaliz & Frederike and Mónica



06/10/2013

Day 2: family day

- Rani & Kaat: Did you have a good sleep the first night in the guesthouse?
- Lucia & Natalia: Yes, we slept very well.
- Rani & Kaat: Did you like the food you had for breakfast?
- Lucia & Natalia: Yes, we were very hungry.
- Rani & Kaat: Is there any difference between the Belgian breakfast and Spanish breakfast?
- Lucia & Natalia: Yes, because we normally drink milk and maybe we eat some biscuits or cereals and here Belgians eat bread, cornflakes, ham, yoghurt.... They give more importance to breakfast than Spanish people.
- Rani & Kaat: In Belgium they say that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. We love to eat to have enough energy for the day. After breakfast we went to our friends to cook for the BYO (Bring Your Own). Did you enjoy cooking with your Belgian partners?
- Lucia & Natalia: Yes, for example (Natalia) we cooked macaroni with Rani, Laura, Nikkie, Susana and Lien, and we had a very good time! We (Lucia) cooked pasta with vegetables and a chocolate mousse, also we played singstar together.
- Rani & Kaat: Do you usually cook with your friends in Spain?
- Lucia & Natalia: (Natalia) Yes, we love to cook together because we always have a good time. (Lucia) No, we use to prepare the food at home and then we meet to eat it together.
- Rani & Kaat: Was it difficult to adapt to the eating hours?
- Lucia & Natalia: At the beginning it was a little bit difficult, but then we could adapt perfectly to the eating hours.

- Rani & Kaat: Did you like to meet all your friends again at dinner at our school?
- Lucia & Natalia: Yes, because when we met again we could talk about the first impression we had of our families.
- Rani & Kaat: After dinner we were all together to have some drinks. We went to a local pub nearby our school. Did you like it?
- Lucia & Natalia: Yes, we really liked it because we had a good time with the Belgians and the Spanish.
- Rani & Kaat: did you taste some 'Kriek'?
- Lucia & Natalia: Yes, it is really good, because it tastes like cherries. Sadly, we don't have this drink in Spain.
- Rani & Kaat: maybe we can bring it when we visit Spain in March 😊.

07/10/2013

First day at school, the Spanish students had Dutch lessons and also learned about the geography and history of Belgium. They found the Dutch lessons very difficult, we asked in the evening if they knew some words. There was one word that everybody knew "Goedemorgen". In the afternoon they get a question list about Diest from the teachers and they had to find the answers in the city.

After we all had dinner we went to Frederike's house to drink something and talk with the other people from the exchange. It was a very nice day and everyone had a good time.



08/10/2013

The day after the Spanish pupils had visited Diest, it was time to take the bus on the Graanmarkt to go and visit our capital, Brussels.

First we drove to the Atomium, where Carlien and Marie gave us some information about our Belgian pride. After this, the bus drove us to Brussels centre. When we finally got off the bus, it was time to do some sight-seeing. We visited the Royal Palace, 'Het Warandepark', 'Manneke Pis', and much more. Every time our Belgian pupils acted like professional tour guides! At noon we got some free time to

get lunch and afterwards we visited the European Parliament. Here we got a presentation about the EU and how it works. After this it was time to visit Leuven. We divided the group in two. For half of the students the hour in Leuven went by very fast, the other half got an hour that was a little bit slower. But still, we all loved the sight-seeing in Belgium's biggest student city! For dinner, we went to a student 'restaurant', the Alma, and after dinner we got some free time to get to know Leuven by night. We went to drink something at the place to be, 'de Oude Markt'! Sadly we already had to leave at 22h. But for most of us the party wasn't over yet and we started a real song festival between the Spanish and Belgian pupils. Who won this competition? That's another question...

09/10/2013

We got up very early to leave on time for school, a day like another. The Belgians continued their day like it was just a normal school day. The Spanish had lessons like physical education, Dutch, French, English and cooking. After the boring school day we went to the 'tiptop' to eat a sandwich. When we finished that one we went to the bus station. It looked like the easiest job but it turned out to be that busses are never on time. Take public transport is what they said; I guess that advice wasn't the best of the day. After waiting for more than half an hour we finally arrived. When we all got on the bus, it was a trip of half an hour. We arrived at the bowling alley, a bit later than expected, but we were glad that we were there. We bowled, we drank and we had fun. After a few games of bowling, we gave up and took the bus back home. We can say that most of our 'family time' was more like 'friends time'. We all need to introduce once again the Belgian food to our Spanish guests. I, Melissa, took my Spanish to my dance classes; it was a lot different than they are there. Kato unfortunately was ill that day, so she couldn't enjoy our great bowling skills. But she watched a movie with her Spanish friend Olga. At the end of the day we all went quietly to bed, tired of another exhausted day.

10/10/2013

We started the trip at 8:30 by train to Antwerpen.

When we arrived we met a guide and she took us around the city. She explained us the most typical and beautiful monuments around the Romanic roads and squares. Some of these buildings were:

- Ruben's house, which had loads of drawings of dead animals.
- The church
- The cathedral, which had a very tall tower with Romanic details and a clock.
- Town Hall whose name is Grote Markt and where the main statue (a man called Silvio Bravo who fights a giant) gives the name to Antwerpen,
- A castle that was near the main fish market.
- etc

Also, we were buying some souvenirs in their typical shops, some chocolate and drinks (mostly beer/bier in Dutch) for our families.

Finally, we took our train back to Diest at 4:30 and we arrived at 6.

11/10/2013

Today school started at 9:30. All of the exchange students had to follow courses in the morning. They were divided in groups of 6. Every group had to attend different classes, including: Sports, French and English. Eduardo: 'The first period we went to English class. We made some exercises about usual mistakes in English and we played a game with a song. The second period, we attended French class. We had to present ourselves in French and in Dutch. We taught the other students how to do it

in Spanish. In the third period the students had an exam and we came to the computer room. During the fourth period we had French. Rodrigo: 'The first and the second period we went to the computer room because there was no French class. After that, we attended sport, in the third and fourth period where we ran 8 km through the forest.' After lunch we had to write our reports and sent them to Emma.

DAILY ROUTINES

Everyday life in Belgium it is kind of different. The day starts in the morning between 6:30 and 7:00, and then we get ready for high school where we go by bus, car, bike or walking. Between the classes we have two breaks, the last one starts at 12:00 and is for having lunch. High school ends at 15:30, then everybody goes home. They usually do homework and have a rest. They have dinner between 18:00 and 19:00, this is the biggest meal. Later we hang out with some Belgian and Spanish friends, we use to go to have a drink which usually is a beer. Some people go to play sports. Finally, the day ends at 23:00 when we go to sleep.

Lucía Gutiérrez and Lucía Izquierdo

SPORTS

We played volleyball and football, but in Belgium there are some important sports like tennis, badminton, cycling etc.

In physical education, we did running, dance and gymnastics.

We went by bicycle to everywhere.

The cycling is so important in Belgium.

Today October 11th there is going to be an important Belgium football match against Croatia.

Guillermo and Mario

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

In Belgium the students start their classes at 8:30 like in Spain and they have got two breaks and six classes each day too, but they finish at 15:30. In this high school there is a school with little kids and in the break they are all together. They have got two hours of sports in another place, not in the school and sometimes you have to take a bus. They have got a break and two hours after they eat in the dining room of the high school. Next they have got other two classes.

Spanish students were divided in several different groups. Each group went to 8 different classes that were Sports, Dutch, Cooking classes (in Spain we don't have it), French and English.

By Elisa Rodríguez and María Cubero

HOUSES AND BUILDINGS

The first impression was that the houses are very different to Spain. The roof is steep and each house is separated by some bushes, they aren't together. The garden is too big and it's covered with green grass. Normally here the family has a lot of plants, trees, trampolines (some of them have a swimming pool) and sometimes you can see animals on the ground.

Inside the house the stairs also have spiral form and they are steep, so sometimes it's difficult to go upstairs (and still more if your room is in the attic). People have pets living with them for example cats, dogs... Houses are cold, this is the reason why there is a chimney and a lot of radiators.

The buildings are high, most of them made of stone and with many cooper figures. Some monuments have large domes, whereby when you enter you are like awesome.

Adrián y Susana

THE WEATHER

When we arrived in Diest the weather was very good, sunny. We were surprised because we thought that the weather was going to be colder. On Wednesday the weather changed with rain and cold. When we went to Antwerp the weather was changing all the time, when we went out it started to rain and when we were inside somewhere it stopped. At night the temperature declines faster than in Spain. To sum up the weather was cold and wet.

By Eduardo Garnacho and Manuel Villafañe

FOOD AND MEALS

In Belgium the meal schedule is very different from Spain. They have a strong breakfast, a little lunch and a strong dinner too. The schedule of eating is very different from the Spanish one, being three hours before.

The most popular food in Belgium is chocolate. It can be found in almost every shop. There are a lot of different shops such as Leonidas or Godiva, where you can find good quality. Another famous food in Belgium is waffles. The best place to buy them is near the manneken-piss, the statue of the kid peeing.

The most famous drink in Belgium is beer. There are tons of different types, like the kriel (cherry flavour), dark beer, light beer...

Marcos y Rodrigo

HOBBIES

In our trip we have seen that most of the people have the same hobbies, like:

- They have horses in their houses and they ride them in competitions.
- They also play football. They play football at breaks in the high school.
- When they meet together, they meet at pubs and drink different types of beer and have fun.
- They ride bikes a lot, to go to school, to go shopping, to go to work....

Estibaliz González & Olga Ortega

BELGIUM

It has been an awesome week in Belgium, because when you are with good people, everything goes nice, but also fast, which is a little bit sad. When I arrived in Diest, I was tired because I had barely slept. Immediately Bregt took me to have some fun with the scouts, and then we went home. My host family has been very hospitable with me and they have done all they could to assure I had fun. Maybe we would have had more fun here because sometimes we had to split up and other times we just

didn't have enough time for some things. But it was amazing how my family accepted me as another son more in their house. Finally I want to say that I hope our mates have fun in Spain as we did here.

Andrés García Martín

THE FAMILIES

It was an amazing experience living with a Belgian family for a week.

Before the exchange, we all tried to talk to our Belgian partners to discover how their personality was and where and with who they lived, so it would be easier becoming good friends.

I luckily chose Tom to be my exchange partner. He was a tall, strong Belgian with incredibly blonde hair who enjoyed listening to music and having fun. I soon got on well with him and we became good friends.

He lived with his father at weekends, and then moved with his mother for the weekdays. His father lived in Tielt-Winge, a small village 15km away from Diest, so we had to take the bus to go there. He was very kind and funny, and I had a good time there. They showed me the village and we went to the youth movement there.

On Monday I moved with his mother to a big house they had in Diest, as it was easier to go to school from there. She is called Hilde, and was very nice and friendly. She cooked great dinners and carried us to the soccer training and Diest lots of times.

Overall, I really liked my exchange family due to the friendly and nice treatment I had from them, and I always felt really comfortable there.

Alejandro Sanz Mediavilla

HOW ARE WE ALIKE / HOW ARE WE DIFFERENT

When you came to Belgium you could appreciate at first sight the most outstanding differences, the physical appearance and the language. Most of the Belgian people are blond with light skin and eyes, while the Spanish people's majority is more dark-haired with darker eyes and skin. And of course, you can hear them speaking a different language, they speak Flemish.

Another difference is the meal times and the meals quantity. They have breakfast at around 7 in the morning, and they eat every kind of food: milk, coffee, cereals, juices, cold meat, bread... Moreover, they have a little lunch at 12 a.m., when they eat a sandwich and fruits. Finally, they have dinner at 7 p.m. and they eat a lot of food: meat, pasta, frites, fish, vegetables...

Also, they study different subjects at school, especially languages. They must study Dutch and French, but not all the students have to study English or Spanish.

Furthermore, people in Belgium use the bike a lot. They bike for everything, students go to school by bike instead of using the bus and people use the bike to go to work too. But in Spain we mainly go by car.

But, apart from the differences, we also have some things in common. One example is their hobbies because they are the same as in Spain. Girls love dancing and boys love playing football, and all the teenagers love partying (there are always some exceptions). They also spend time using social networks and the internet.

Food is more or less the same, we use the same ingredients, but we cook them in a different way.

Susana Santos, Jenifer and Laura

