

Inspiration for Future Freiburgers

My name is Christine and in Ontario I go to Trent University and study Biology and German. I had a bit of a tough road getting to go to Freiburg, but with some determination and help from my exchange office I was able to live my dream. I arrived in Freiburg in early September 2011 and was fortunate enough to be going on exchange with one of my classmates. That way we were able to struggle together haha! It was not my first time in Germany, I had been 6 or 7 times previously because I have family here and in Hungary so that was also great having someone here to help me if I needed it! Even though I had all these people with me this time was different, I was finally on my own! Yes it was a very scary thought at first, but you slowly get used to it.

During my first month here I took a Sprach Kurs with the SLI(Sprach Lern Institute), which I recommend that everyone do! You get to shake the rust off from a summer with little German, get you speaking more and you get to meet so many people who will become very important in your new life! With my group we did all the Bureaucratic work together and it made it so much more stress free than doing it all by yourself! Here in Freiburg the Faculty who ran the Sprach Kurs also had lots of activities for us to get used to our town, know all the history and the best places in town for food and a drink.

This whole month was a bit of a roller coaster, never mind dealing with missing your family but with starting to speak German and trying your best to make what sense you can with what you know and having a large sense of confusion the whole time due to language barriers. Also we had a full day of class combined with a fully planned evening didn't give much room to budge. This month sets you up for the year to come and in Freiburg you have a month off from the end of the Sprach Kurs to the beginning of classes so you have some time to explore!

I study Biology and was able to take several Biology classes here in Freiburg in German! I did make alternate arrangements for the final testing (such as an essay or oral exam instead of a written exam) and did go to the library to find text books in English to help me. I had to go out there and find all the classes I wanted to take, don't be afraid to email professors or just show up at the Faculty and ask for someone to help you(that's what I did!). All of my professors were very accommodating in helping me find what I needed and get the most out of the class. I also HIGHLY recommend doing an internship or "Praktikum" while you are here! I did one in the Pathology Faculty. I was able to work in their Molecular Diagnostic Lab and was offered a project to do Doctoral Thesis Research work for a scientific paper they want to publish, and my name will be on that paper too! I was able to do hands on work and better my German by learning new words that are relevant to my Field. It was a lot of work but it changed my whole exchange experience and was a lot of fun!

This town is so beautiful and is unlike any other German town I have been too! Freiburg has pretty much anything that you need and it's in the middle of the Schwarzwald! Everywhere you look in Freiburg is so picturesque Every time I look out my bedroom window I think that I am seeing something from a fairy tale! Freiburg is a student friendly town and it's so easy to get around on the trams and

your bike. I made so many friends from around the world and this whole experience has changed me in so many ways! You create your own new little family here and it becomes your second home! At the end it's hard to imagine yourself not being there!

For my final words of advice, just go out there and do it!! Your exchange will not disappoint you, no matter how hard it seems to be away from your family and friends for almost a year I promise you it will be worth it!