

Erasmus Personal Report

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Carmen Gijón Feo

UNIVERSITY OF ALCALÁ DE HENARES MADRID



Hello, I'm Carmen, a student from Madrid. I had the incredible opportunity to participate in an Erasmus exchange in Stuttgart as part of the international program at DHBW Stuttgart. My field of study is Law and Business Administration at the University of Alcalá de Henares, and I spent an enriching 5 months in Germany, from September 2023 to February 2024.

The decision to choose Germany was driven by my longstanding commitment to learning the German language, and the desire to enhance my proficiency. Additionally, Germany's reputation for providing substantial opportunities for young individuals was a compelling factor. In preparation for my stay, I conducted thorough research on Stuttgart, reaching out to those who had previously undertaken Erasmus in the city. I also dedicated extra time to practicing and refining my German language skills to ensure a smoother transition.

At DHBW, I found the academic experience to be quite fulfilling. The courses were engaging, and the emphasis on practical learning was a refreshing change. The professors were well-prepared and delivered their lessons in an interesting and interactive manner. Coming from a background where learning is predominantly theoretical, this practical approach allowed me to appreciate and compare the two educational methodologies.





Outside the academic realm, I seized the opportunity to explore Germany and neighboring European countries. Stuttgart's strategic location made travel easy and affordable. Adapting to life in Germany came with its challenges, from different schedules and early closures to a more work-centric lifestyle, higher costs, and diverse culinary experiences. Yet, some of my fondest memories include exploring the charming villages around Stuttgart and immersing myself in the vibrant culture of the Oktoberfest celebrations in Stuttgart and Munich.

Stuttgart revealed itself as a remarkably multicultural city, providing me with exposure not only to German culture but also allowing me to form connections with individuals from diverse backgrounds. I forged friendships with people from various countries, in addition to fellow Spanish students studying there. Regular attendance at a German language academy each week significantly contributed to a noticeable improvement in my proficiency.

My advice to fellow students embarking on a similar journey revolves around maintaining an open mind. While there is an initial cultural shock, embracing the experience, understanding, and gradually enjoying the differences is key. It's important not to get discouraged but rather to actively seek to immerse oneself in the local culture and connect with the people. Furthermore, I strongly recommend utilizing the experience to improve language skills. In my case, practicing English came naturally due to my limited proficiency in German, but for mastering the latter, enrolling in a language academy or engaging with native speakers proved immensely beneficial.

Reflecting on my time in Stuttgart, it has been an immensely rewarding experience. Initial worries about making new acquaintances, navigating the intricacies of accommodation, and adapting to university life were overshadowed by a reality that far exceeded my expectations.

Despite certain inconveniences associated with cost-effective student accommodation, I adapted sufficiently, and the city itself left an indelible mark on my heart. Stuttgart, with its excellent public transportation, vibrant student-oriented leisure options, aesthetic appeal, and the overall experience, is a place I will always hold dear.

Germany, as a whole, is a remarkable country, and my travels to various cities and towns such as Munich, Berlin, Frankfurt, Esslingen, Ulm, the Black Forest, and Neuschwanstein were truly enlightening. Establishing connections with students from diverse backgrounds, appreciating the university infrastructure, and engaging with dedicated professors made my academic journey in Germany highly rewarding.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly recommend the experience of living in Stuttgart for a few months, whether for work or study purposes. The diverse cultural exposure, language enhancement, and the overall personal growth make it an invaluable chapter in one's academic journey.



