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### **From the Foot of the Alps**

I was an Erasmus student in Austria in Alpe-Adria University Klagenfurt for 5.5 months. I have spent the best days of my life there and I have gained invaluable experiences during my stay in Austria. Nothing remained undone, I have managed to do everything I yearned for in my Erasmus life. This kind of Life Long Learning Programmes give a lot to the person if you know how to get what you want. And if you don't, the result is often regretion.

There are several good aspects of being an Erasmus student. Perhaps the best is improving the foreign language. I have really improved my German in Austria. It's really more effective when you learn the language in a country where it is spoken because there is a lot of chance to practice in daily life. I believe I couldn't have done this improvement in such a short time if I were in Turkey. Another good aspect of Erasmus is of course experiencing new cultures. My roommate was from Senegal, Africa. She was the only exchange student among us who is from Africa. Our cultures, foods were extremely different but we made it. And we were getting on well. Needless to say we learned a lot from each other. She taught me some words of her language and I thought her Turkish. Even if I will forget the words she thought, it's really impossible to forget her.

The aim of an exchange student, as indicated in the word itself, is to exchange cultures, knowledge etc. Besides learning from other cultures, an exchange student should also show and represent his/her culture in the best way he/she can. There were enough prejudices on people's mind about my country. And I was really happy to answer all of the questions they have addressed. Some of these questions are: 'Are going to school with camels in Turkey?' 'Is it forbidden for a woman to go out without a man?' 'Have you left your headcover(turban) in abroad?' and 'Is thsyour first time that you wear a mini?'. These

are just a few of the odd questions, however; they are the realities which upset us. That's why I'm glad to be an exchange student because I believe I and my friends were very efficient in changing their bad opinions about Turkey and Turkish citizens.

Of course my Erasmus life didn't only mean studying. I have travelled and seen a lot. I have been to 12 different countries and I have visited dozens of cities. Throughout the Easter break, I interrailed around Europe, and I had the chance to take photos of the places I have dreamed of going to. These experiences and also my friends in those places are priceless. I have many friends throughout the world and I have learned a lot from them. We had great time together and I had the fun I had ever have.

If there is someone reading this article who is willing to go to Austria particularly to Klagenfurt, I have some advices. Do not turn back to your country without swimming in the Worthersee which is occured from the melted snows of the Alps, do not forget to rent a bicycle, at least for a day, which is the common transportation and cycle around the city; do eat Italian Pizza in Pizzerias because they really do beter than that of in Italy.

As a conclusion, I have spent the best days of my life in that city, and in that country. So whatever I say is not enough. I am very grateful to those people who have encouraged me to do so, and help me through this hard process before going and after coming. Nothing is the same as before now, and I am very glad to say this. This is exactly what I was expecting from my Erasmus life.