

ERFAHRUNGSBERICHT SOMMERSPRACHKURSE IN BAYERN 2018

Heimatland:	Slowenien
Studiengang:	Medizin
Sprachkurs in Bayern:	von 01.08. bis 30.08.2018
Bezeichnung des Sprachkurses:	Internationale DaF-Sommerakademie
Kursort in Bayern:	Würzburg
Sprachkursniveau des besuchten Kurses:	B2

The summer course in Würzburg meant a lot more than just a language course to me and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to spend an entire month in a foreign city. Not only did I improve my German and got much more confident using it during daily interactions, but also I immersed myself in a new culture, travelled around Germany a bit and made many new and hopefully long-lasting friendships. My month in Würzburg was truly a wonderful and unforgettable experience, which gave me way more than I expected. The whole month went by in a blink of an eye and I did not feel bored even for a second. The course was very well organized. The German lectures took place every day from 10 am until 4 pm. There were also various tours, trips and even workout sessions organized to spice up every day. Even though Würzburg is a small town, it is so charming. One can easily spend an entire month there and still have the feeling, that there is a lot more left to discover, in the end.

The support team of the summer course as well as BAYHOST were in contact with me even before my arrival. BAYHOST for example sent me the names of all recipients of the scholarship, so I could get in touch with them even before the course started. They were also very responsive to all possible questions I could have had. The summer course team sent me e-mails with important information regarding the course, lecture timetables, trips that were planned during the course, accommodation, as well as many useful information about the town itself. I did not need a visa to travel or stay in Germany. That is why I only sent the organizers of the course the exact time and location of my arrival and on the day of my arrival, they waited for me at the bus station, provided me with a map and directions how to reach the check-in place. There, I received keys to my apartment, a monthly bus ticket and a student chip card, which enabled me to eat for student prices in canteens around the city. A meal in a student cafeteria cost me around 3 to 4 euros. I travelled to Germany by bus (Flixbus) and bought my ticket about a month prior to my departure, as the prices tend to get higher with time. In Würzburg I was using public transportation (buses, trams), as connections are good and reliable. Even before arriving to the city, the organizers asked us if we would like to purchase a monthly bus ticket and organized all the paperwork for us. The card cost 20 euros and enabled me to travel all around the city and in near surrounding.

I was living in an International House, which was located at a 15 min walk from the city center and not more than a 5 min walk to a bus station, with great connections to the University or city

center. I had a single room with a private bathroom and kitchen, which I did not have to share with anyone else. The room was nice, comfortable and spacious; however, the kitchen was very poorly equipped. There were just two plates, two glasses, a mug and cutlery, but no kitchenware to cook in. There was also no Wi-Fi and in order to have internet access, a cable was needed. In the building, there were also a music and a fitness room free for use. It was also possible to wash clothes, as there was a laundry room. Overall, I was very satisfied with the accommodation, but I would advise future residents, to keep in mind that there are not necessarily cleaning supplies, toilet paper or cooking dishes in a room. Nevertheless, a super-friendly janitor was always ready to help, if possible. Prices of food in shops were approximately the same as in Slovenia. Ordering food or drink in a restaurant however, was more expensive. A surprise for me was the opening hours of shops. They closed at 7 pm every day and remained closed on Sundays.

The course building was located at approximately 15 min distance by bus. The classroom where we had German classes was modern and well equipped. The only disadvantage was that the air-conditioning was shut down during summer and studying was rather strenuous during hot summer days. I was placed in a B2 level of German and even though I was a bit skeptical about my knowledge of German, I had no troubles following the course as we got a book of exercises and grammar rules. If something was unclear, you could also always turn for help to a teacher. I enjoyed studying German in my course, as there was an emphasis on talking, which I wanted to improve the most. The teacher made sure everyone got a chance to speak and nicely corrected our mistakes. For example, he repeated a sentence with a mistake in it and asked the speaker and the rest of the class to correct it. Almost every day, we were given homework to practice grammar we learned in class, or to write a short essay about different topics. In the second part of the day (after lunch break), we usually worked in pairs and played out dialogues, where we practiced new vocabulary, or we played different German games. My favourite was the one where one had to describe a word written on a paper with other German words. I also liked it the most, as I could see my progress in German the best. In the beginning, I was really struggling with finding proper words, building a sentence and at the same time trying to pay attention on grammar. By the end of the month, I could see how all those processes were running much faster in my brain and I could react in German much faster. Of course, there is still much more room for improvement, but I think learning German really grew on me during this month and speaking it fluently does not seem such a mission impossible as in the beginning. Now I have an even bigger wish to learn German as before! Our teacher was constantly adjusting the lessons to our wishes – what we wanted to practice more, what topics interested us the most... Overall, I think the teaching methods were successful and the teacher managed to keep us motivated, even though there were in total six hours of German lessons a day and some days there were more than 35 °C in the classroom.

During the month, we had many interesting excursions. On the second day, we had a city tour, which not only taught us a lot about the history of the city, but also helped us with a better overview of the town and orientation in it. Other excursions were a boat trip to Veitshöchheim, Rothenburg and a visit of the newspaper factory. Every time, there was a guided tour in English, as well as in German language. I preferred the English ones, as some guides were speaking really fast or with accent and I wanted to understand as much as possible. The presentation of studying at the University in Würzburg was also interesting for me, but not too relevant, as I am almost

done with my studies. I found useful however, the information about Erasmus exchange program and perhaps I will decide to return to Würzburg for a semester in the future. Other activities provided from the organizers of the course were mostly social events. We gathered at the riverbank, swam in a river and drank wine or beer while getting to know each other better and sometimes continued in a local bar or disco club. One weekend we even visited a lake nearby to escape the summer heat. My favourite activities were organized workouts in a park or stadium.

In conclusion, I would like to thank BAYHOST for this opportunity. The course taught me a lot – I expanded my vocabulary, fortified my grammar, but most importantly, I started speaking German with confidence. I left Würzburg with numerous good memories, new friendships and the determination to improve my German even more.