



**KRANJ**  
**Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> 2012**  
**We feel Slovenia,**  
**our travel journal**



### Monday December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012

After a splendid weekend with our host families, we met at the high school in Kranj early at 7.00 on Monday morning. The Slovenian students introduced themselves and they presented their school and its system. The French students put on a movie, '*Focus on Condorcet*', a short film they created specifically for the Slovenian students and we surprised our hosts with food from our region. Afterwards, the Slovenian students gave us several Slovenian language survival tips and we learned basic phrases to use during the exchange.



While at school, we had the chance to observe a variety of courses, including biology, French, English and philosophy. In biology, we were divided into groups of four and we completed an experiment on diffusion and osmosis. The lesson was taught in English because the students are in the international baccalaureate class. Another baccalaureate course that we observed was called Theory of Knowledge, a philosophy course that focused on forming arguments. During the lesson, we watched a video that presented the « Allegory of the Cave » by Plato and we had the opportunity to debate about it in English.

In the French course, we all agreed that the teacher was very pleasant because she was always smiling and was full of energy. During the lesson the teacher separated us into groups with the Slovenian students to better communicate in French. We discussed our hobbies and what we like doing when we have free time. During these conversations, we discovered that our Slovenian friends have more free time than us because they do not have courses in the afternoon. Moreover, the Slovenian lessons last only 45 minutes, which is 10 minutes less than ours.

After the French course, many of us attended the English course that was taught by the same teacher. In class, we discussed French and Slovenian stereotypes and revealed our first impressions since our arrival in Slovenia. The Slovenians said they see the French people as very intelligent and great lovers. However, they said the French seemed quite shy and reserved about speaking other

languages. Some of us said that we see the Slovenians as welcoming and warm-hearted people. We also expressed that we think they love parties and drinking. The teacher challenged us to define stereotypes and we agreed on the fact stereotypes are not based on experience but on generalization, so it may be best to think by ourselves!

A fun fact: did you know that in most schools in Slovenia, students wear slippers during their lessons?

### Visit of the City

After a quick lunch at the high school's canteen, we visited Kranj in the afternoon. Kranj is the fourth largest city in the country with a population of 40,000 people. This city is particularly known as a former industrial city and the city of France Preseren, who is the most celebrated Slovenian poet. At the end of the day, we toured the tunnels beneath the old town center. These tunnels were built during World War II to protect the inhabitants from potential German bombings. At 4.30, everyone went back...home!

### Tuesday December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012

From 7.00 to 11.00 am on Tuesday morning, we had a math lesson, concentration please!!! Our math teacher, Mr. NEJJARI came with us on this trip to the delight of everyone and this 3-hour class allowed us not to lose too much time from our curriculum! It was the first time we were separated from our Slovene friends who also went to their own classes, but it did not last too long. So we did an activity to introduce the concept of logarithm. Our teacher was very funny when he tried to speak English because he has a very French accent. It was serious work but it was cooler than usual. Basically, this moment reminded us of the importance of our final exam during this wonderful trip!

After the math lesson, we went by coach to Bled, a small town located in the North West of Slovenia where there are approximately 5,200 inhabitants. When we arrived, we went to a café to have a piece of traditional Slovenian cake called Kremsnita. It really is a pleasant desert... but it is filling because there is a lot of cream! Next we had a stroll around the lake in Bled, Bledsko Jezero. It was a good opportunity for team building and we asked the Slovenes what they can do in Bled. Their activities change with the seasons so in winter when the lake is frozen, they go ice-skating but in summer they go swimming or rent a traditional wooden boat for a tour around the lake. This can really be entertaining because all around this lake, there are nice monuments and the scenery is splendid. There is a remarkable mix between mountain and water landscapes. The history of the place is interesting: a Swiss man called Arnold Ritz who lived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century contributed to the development of the city. Now Bled is a touristic place which offers a lot of activities. In the middle of the lake, there is a small island with a church where tourists can ring a bell for good luck. Before this church was built, there was a temple dedicated to the Goddess of love.

To conclude Bled is like an image of Slovenia, a wonderful country!

We went back to Kranj by coach and rushed to the station to get a train for Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia where we had some free time to go for lunch. In Ljubljana, there is a population of about 290,000 inhabitants. We saw Krizanek which used to be a monastery in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In 1952, the famous architect Joze Plecnik rearranged it into a place for Ljubljana festivals where many singers come, even the French pop singer Zaz. Then we walked along the National University Library, which is the biggest in the country, with about 2,600,000 books. Later on, we walked in Preseren Square where there was a Franciscan church which was built between 1646 and 1660. We also saw Hauptmann's house, designed by Joze Plecnik. There is the triple bridge as well which connects the medieval and modern parts of the city. Our Slovene counterparts had prepared a guided visit for us and they spoke about the must-sees belonging to the patrimony of Slovenia. For example, we visited the cathedral, an impressive building called Saint Nicholas' Church, with a green dome and twin towers. We also saw the Skyscraper, a tall building located in the center of the capital and the Palace of Parliament, built in 1959.

Most of the students went back to Kranj by bus while a few lucky others whose Slovene partners were involved attended the yearly school concert, held at Cankorjev Dom, a huge concert hall. It was a great experience. There was an orchestra and a choir made up of former students of Gymnasia Kranj. The show was excellent, from Christmas songs, to Offenbach's 'French Cancan' and the famous Radetsky march, with the audience clapping all the while. It was really excellent but too bad that all the students could not enjoy this impressive concert. The concert hall was packed, which shows the importance of the event and the prestige of our partner school from where famous musicians are from!!!

Wednesday December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Today we went to Planica, which is the place where many people go to ski jump and ski fly: there are 2 jumping hills and 1 flying hill. Every year in March; the world championship takes place there. We went hiking in the snow for about 2 hours and we stopped for lunch in a mountain house located between two mountains, in a place called Tamar. A warm cup of tea and chips for some students were delightful after such a walk. The snow fight we had with our teachers and our Slovene friends was fun. On our way back, the sun came out and it allowed us to see the top of the mountains for the first time. We went to Radovljica for lunch and as we were quite tired we decided to go back to Kranj earlier than planned.

Thursday December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012

In the morning, after a 1-hour drive, we visited the Postojnska vivarium where we saw different species and creatures that live in caves, including human fish, bats, cave fish or cave spiders. It was so interesting! Then we had lunch in a nearby restaurant. After we did cave trekking for 3 hours in the famous Postojna Cave: its 21 kilometers of galleries, tunnels and magnificent halls, all of this makes this cave one of the world's best known tourist attractions. The temperature inside is around 10 degrees. The Postojna cave is the only one where we can experience an exciting train ride through a beautiful underground. We sang many French and Slovenian songs and there was a good atmosphere! We saw a lot of stalactites and stalagmites which have already enchanted 34 million visitors from the whole world. We found the cave beautiful and impressive: it was amazing to see that!

### Anecdotes

*'For the first time in my life, I was able to snowboard thanks to my Slovene host family who took me to the mountains at the week-end!'* Mirek

*'Since my arrival I have noticed little differences with France, except for meals and the meal schedule. In Slovenia; for breakfast, there are cheese, bacon, tuna! This difference is not a negative point, it is very delicious. The only negative point for us is the meal schedule because in fact, there is none!!! This is very disturbing for a French person who is used to having food at different times.'*

*'In France, we have dinner at about 8 pm but in Slovenia, they eat at 6.00 pm.'* Charlène  
*" Slovenia is a beautiful country.'* Fanny

*'When I arrived for the week-end, it was a great moment to decorate the Christmas tree with my host family'.*

*'I was surprised when I saw Slovenian people taking the food like salad or beet in the dish instead of serving food in their plates.'* Florent

*'When we visited Ljubljana during the week-end with my host family, I was amazed by the Christmas decorations and lights. However it was surprising to see shoes suspended from an electricity line as a Christmas decoration!!!'* Alban

### A survival kit in Slovene by Jérémy

I have learnt a few Slovenian words and I am pleased to list them for you:

<b>Slovene</b>	Zivijo	Dober jutro	Dober dan	Adijo	Hvala	Prosim	Ja / Ne
<b>English</b>	hello	Good morning	Good afternoon	Good bye	Thank you	please	Oui / Non

'How are you?' is 'Kako si?' and we answer 'Dobro!' for 'well'.

There are 3 important sounds which are: z = /je/; c = /tch/; s = /ch/

'Pir' is used to say 'beer', and the slogan of the most famous beer in Slovenia which is Lasko is 'Lasko ma novo flasko', to say 'Lasko my new bottle'.

The numbers are: ena / dva / tri / stiri / pet / sest / sedem / osem / devet / deset.

For the next numbers, we add 'najst', for example 'enajst' or 'dvanajst' for twenty.

For the number with zero, we add 'deset' (ten) for example 'stirideset'. For the numbers before 100, we do this: 1<sup>st</sup> number + in + 2<sup>nd</sup> number.

100 is 'sto'; 200 is 'dvisto', 300 is 'tristo' so for example 123 is 'sto tri in dvajset'.

1000 is 'tisac'.

To tell the time, Slovene people say minutes + cez + hours. They use 1é hours ( not 24) so for example 23h27 is 11h27 so: 'sedamnajst cez enoyst'.