**My Trip to Spain By Rachel O’Sullivan**

On Sunday, 20th May 2018, Nicole, Ger, Conor and I set off on an Erasmus+ Trip to Igualada in Spain. We arrived safely at the airport in Barcelona and met our host families shortly after. That night I went out for dinner and slept in the same room as my host partner Jana. The next morning, we got up at 7a.m. and set off for school. The school day was from 8 until 5 in the evening. They had lunch from 1p.m. until 3p.m. where some students went home and some stayed in school. We went to the arts and crafts room and did sewing. The classroom was smaller than ours but there was a similar amount of people. After school, we went to the Chocolate Box which was really delicious. Before we went to bed we watched a movie in English. My host family were quite good at English which was nice. On Tuesday, it was a boy’s birthday in our class. He brought in breakfast and we did Just Dance. We also had a Sport’s Day in the field where we showed off our talents from Ireland. In the evening, we had a Moixiganguers workshop which is a traditional activity from Igualada which involves making human towers. We all practiced climbing and balancing together. It was lots of fun!

Wednesday was the best day because we went to Barcelona. We visited Sagrada Familia which is a massive Roman Catholic Cathedral. We also visited Montjuic, Parc Guell and Les Rambles. In the afternoon, we went to the Camp Nou which was my favourite part. It is the second largest stadium in the world and holds more than 99,000 people. Thursday, we visited the Town Mayor of Igualada in the Town Hall. We also visited a really amazing church and held our Entrepreneurship Fair in the afternoon. We were the first country to sell our products as our Happy Pencils were very popular. We then saw a concert with the pupils from the school performing music. On Friday, we went to the beach after the Farewell Ceremony. We firstly played in the fountain and at the beach, there was lovely white sand. Saturday we went on a tour of Tarragona and went shopping in a really cool shopping centre.

We were very tired after our trip but really enjoyed it. We made lifelong friends and hope to stay in contact with them in the future. It was a very worthwhile programme and I learned a lot about the different cultures. I especially enjoyed staying with the family as it was nice to see how a different culture lives. They drive on the opposite side of the road and the steering wheel is on the opposite side which is different to here. The trip made me realise that I really like going to school in Ireland as our school day finishes at 3p.m and theirs doesn’t finish until 5p.m. which is really long. They have a really nice school though with really cool facilities. Overall, it was an amazing experience and I’m so glad that I got the opportunity to go!

**My trip to Spain By Ger McCarthy**

On Sunday we left Ireland and went to Spain. We landed in Barcelona and then a minibus took us to Igualada where our host families took us home. When I got home, Iker, our host friend, gave me and Conor a tour of the house. The house was very big. The Mother, Father, Grandmother and Grandad, Iker and his sister lived there. It was in an estate and was split in two so the grandparents lived in one half and Iker and his family lived in the other half. They had a pool and a place where they grew vegetables and in the front of the house they had a pond where they had fish. They gave us a tour of the town afterwards and we got ice-cream and we met some other Erasmus+ students. On Monday, we got up at around half Sunday and got dressed. We had croissants for breakfast and then we went to school with Iker. During the week, I realised that they really liked their chocolate and fish. We had fish a lot for dinner. One night we had paella which is lots of different kinds of fish mixed together with rice. It was delicious! They had chocolate croissants, chocolate ice-cream, chocolate yoghurts and chocolate sweets. In school that day, we went to see a play about St. George who was a historical figure in Igualada. My favourite character in the play was the dragon because they put a lot of effort into making the dragon and it was cool. In the evening, we had an arts and crafts workshop where we made a decorative hanger. We went to the Chocolate Box in the evening and had xurros which is a fried dough pastry with chocolate. It was very nice.

On Tuesday, I was woken up by Conor and Sandra, Iker’s Mother, after repeated attempts from them as I am a very heavy sleeper! That day, we had Sport’s Day. We did soccer, rounders and a type of hockey. We went to a Moixigangeur’s workshop where we built human pyramids. It was very good but I would hate to be the person standing on the bottom as there is a lot of pressure on your shoulders. I would also not like to be the Crowner on the top as I don’t like heights. I’d like to be the person on the base who helps support from the outside! After that, me and Conor went rock climbing. It was great fun. On Wednesday, we went to Barcelona. We visited Montjuic and bought some stuff. Next, we went to a cathedral called Sagrada Familia which is being built by donations from the people and so it is constantly being added to. It was very nice inside there. We went to Camp Nou, the stadium of Barcelona. We started off the tour by viewing all the trophies and memorabilia they had ever gotten. Next, we went down to the pitch and looked at where all the subs and Manager and team sat. I really enjoyed the experience there.

On Thursday, we had our Erasmus+ fair in the school. We were very successful in selling our product. Our pencils were one of the most popular items there. It was easy enough to sell them. The most difficult thing was trying to find change for people when they gave you a tenner. Overall, it was a very enjoyable experience and the skills that I learned there will probably help me out in my life. I learned a bit about marketing and selling and what is involved in creating a product for a business. After school that day, we went to MacDonalds and I had the Grand Macstreme. It was absolutely delicious! It was one of the best burgers I ever had. I also cut my finger that day but it was grand! On Friday, we went to the beach but before we went to the beach, we had lunch. My lunch was pasta and a roll. The pasta was delicious but I never tried the roll because I had filled up on pasta. After, we waited by a fountain and played spikeball in the fountain. It was fun. Then we went to the beach and went into the water for a while but then we went back to the beach and started building a sandcastle. Well really it was more of a sandpit. We build a trench that diverted water into holes. It was just invincible. The only reason it got flooded in the end was because me and Conor kicked in the walls of it. Afterwards we went to a shop and Mr. Courtney bought us pizza and a drink. In the evening we met up with Nicole’s host family and went for dinner.

On Saturday we went on a day trip to Tarragona where we were split into groups of twelve. My group’s tour guide was called Garrett and he gave us a tour and quizzed us on the places we had visited. When we were finished we went to a shopping centre and I bought a jumper and a screen protector for my phone. When we went home, we watching the Liverpool and Real Madrid game. Real Madrid won because Liverpool did not have the best keeper. I’d say they will be replacing him soon. Sunday, we said goodbye to our families and flew home to Ireland. Overall, my trip was a very good experience and has definitely taught me skills that will be useful to me later on in my life. It was definitely a once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget because it was also my first holiday. I would like to thank Mr. Courtney for picking me for this trip and I will never forget it and I can’t extend my gratitude enough to him and the teachers.

**My trip to Spain by Nicole Cooney**

On Sunday, 20th May, me and Rachel woke up at 3.15a.m. and collected Conor and Ger and went to Cork airport. The flight was at 6.15a.m. and lasted about two hours. When we got to Barcelona we were waiting for the taxi and went and met our host families. My host family consisted of the Dad, the Mom and two daughters. They lived in an apartment building. Me and one of the daughters Noa shared a room for the week. It was next to a shop which was handy. We went to the beach that day and then we went out to eat after. It was good. On Monday we both woke up at 8a.m. and got to Academia Igualada at five to nine. The children of 6th grade gave us a tour of the school and they did a play about St. George. At 1p.m we went home for lunch and got back to school at 3p.m. Their school day starts 9a.m and finishes at 5p.m. After school we went to Chocolate Box with the other Erasmus+ people. I got a chocolate muffin and a can of coke. When we got home, I had chicken soup and a roll for dinner.

Tuesday, we had sports day in the school. There was football, hockey, rounders and parachute games. We went to the Moixigangeurs workshop which are human towers. It was good and interesting. I liked being on the base because I don’t like climbing people. After school, Noa and I went swimming for an hour and a half. I had pasta for dinner that day. On Wednesday we had a day trip to Barcelona. First, we went to Montjuic which had nice views. Secondly, we went to Parc Guell which was also very nice. It is a natural park with lots of nice buildings designed by Antonio Gaudi. We visited Sagrada Familia also and we found out that they have been building it for 136 years so far. We went to Camp Nou which was very cool. It can hold 99,000 people. We tried a virtual reality tour where we put on a head projector and got to watch a mini match. It was really good. I bought a jumper that was 65 euro. I had soup, bread and fruit for dinner.

On Thursday, we went to visit the Town Hall and the Town Mayor. In the afternoon, we held our Entrepreneurship fair. We sold Happy Pencils and we were the first to sell out. They were handcrafted by our committee and they were 2 euro each. Spain made pencil cases which were nice. Poland made heart shaped hanging decorations. Greece made magnets out of clay. England made keychains and Germany’s product was also very nice. After school, we went to the theatre to listen to live music. There were violins and flutes and they played traditional music from Igualada. Then we went to MacDonalds and I got chicken nuggets. Friday, we had a farewell ceremony in the school library. The Music Teacher performed a solo with the flute and a solo on the piano and the children sang a Spanish song for us. We got gifts from the Principal. We went to the beach which was windy and sand kept getting in our eyes. The waves were big enough. After we went to a bakery which served pizza.

On Saturday, we got to Tarragona at half 11 and had a tour around the city for an hour. We went to an amphitheatre which had a nice balcony over the sea where you could see some of the other Spanish islands. We went to a big shopping centre and ate MacDonalds. The food during the week was similar to Ireland except they ate more fish than us. I liked how they put loads of fruit out at dinner. I liked all the food. The weather was always around 22 degrees there. On Tuesday there was a thunder storm and it rained heavily for a bit. In the school, they take children from 4 months old and you can stay until you’re going to college. There was a nursery, a primary school and a secondary school all in the one building. But they only have one yard and there are more than 800 students so their yards times are different. The best part of the trip was when we went to Barcelona because I liked Camp Nou. My host family asked me to go back in the Summer for two weeks. They were really nice and friendly. All the students in my class were very nice to me and they had really good English. They celebrate birthdays differently there. They take an hour off to celebrate birthdays and the birthday person brings in food and they play games. Overall, I had a good time. The Erasmus+ programme is a really good idea in my opinion because it helps get kids ready for their adult lives by showing them how to make products and set up a business and what’s involved in a company. It also allows different countries to connect with each other. It was a great experience overall.

**My trip to Spain by Conor Adams**

We landed in Barcelona at about 10.05a.m. Some of us got dressed into shorts and some of us got water. We waited for about 20 minutes for our minibus driver that was at the wrong terminal. We landed in Igualada outside Burger King where Ger and I met Iker and his Mom and Dad. They drove us to a big house in the middle of a small enough village about the size of Kilgarvan. Iker’s brother and sister are twins Jan and Natalia and they are seven. He took us on a tour of the house which is three storeys with a mini astroturf and a pool which we went in and it was freezing. Ger nearly went into shock! After a while we put on a Simpsons movie with Spanish subtitles. The Mom studied English and knew a lot and the rest knew a bit too. Their cousins came then and we had to end the movie early. We had paella which was made up of fish and rice and I ate the rice which was quite tasty but I didn’t eat the fish. We went into Igualada and got ice-cream and talked to a Spanish friend who was also hosting people from Germany. On Monday, we went to their school and their class was on the third floor. They had a decent sized class and five groups of tables kind of like ours. We introduced ourselves and told them our hobbies. I noticed a lot of the boys over there play Fortnite. They put on a play about St. George and a dragon in the school hall. It was a good play and well-rehearsed. Straight after, we went home for lunch and had sausages. They had about an hour and 15 minute break and we came back to school and did workshops on sewing but I was so bad at the sewing so I ended mine. After school, we walked to the Chocolate Box café and got xerros with chocolate sauce. We also walked around Igualada. I didn’t see any homeless people. All the buildings were brown. They had a good bit of fountains. They like their fountains.

On Tuesday, Sandra knocked on the door for ages and kept saying “Conor” and “Ger” for ages until I woke up and walked to the kitchen and had about three mini sugared croissants. I sat down for about 5 minutes and Sandra said “is Ger up?” and I said “no” so she walked into the room and repeatedly said “Ger, Ger, Ger”. Then Ger responded saying “Ya, Ya”. We all started laughing as Ger was lying on the bed asleep so I shook the bed and he got up eventually! We got into Igualada and went to a sports field and playing different sports. My favourite was either soccer or hockey because in soccer I scored a halfway screamer and in hockey, I was taring into everyone. After the sports we walked to a weird hall where we did human towers. But the thing I enjoyed the most was when me and Nicole climbed the poles. For dinner, Sandra mashed up veg and heated it. I slurped it down and filled up on bread and special K bars too. All in all, it was a good day.

We arrived in Barcelona on Wednesday and went to Montjuic. There were stalls there and I wanted sunglasses so I asked the guy how much they cost and he said “8” and I asked him how much the faded blue pair were and he said “8 but I’ll give them for 6” and I said “I only have a fiver” and so I got a three euro discount. We then drove to the Parc Guell and had lunch. At Camp Nou, we walked through a museum and then a balcony. It was cool and the pitch was being sanded at the time. We saw all the trophies. They were so big. We kept going and walked to the away dressing room and it was huge and there was a jacuzzi. We walked to where the Managers go before the game for their speeches and got pictures. We left but some people got stuff in the gift shop and at the end of the day we went back to Ikers to have cake.

On Thursday we went to the Mayors office and they asked for a volunteer and I love volunteering so I put up my hand and they told me to talk about Kenmare and my mind went blank but I said some random things about Kenmare anyway. We had this lovely pork belly and fried egg for lunch. It was so good. After lunch we sold the Pencils in like 15 minutes because of my expertise in Sales. We made a lot of money. The fluffy pencils sold the best. If I was to do the fair again I would make them all with faces on them because children want the big cute ones that look funny. I would also make many more to make more profit. In MacDonalds that evening and they had a savage play area and Ger was trying to catch me but I could fit in the tunnels easier than him. It was fun.

On Friday, we went to the beach and we got the back of the bus with a Greek lad. At the town, we had a water fight in the fountain and then went to the beach. The beach was unreal apart from the wind. We made a beast of a sandcastle but like me and Nicole were doing all the work. In the evening, I realised I had sunburn where my suncream didn’t touch. On Saturday, we drove to Tarragona. We met Mr. Hussey’s cousin and he told us how to get to the shopping centre. In the shopping centre there was a basketball shop and I got three hats. They were meant for presents. I got Mkenzie shorts that were a deal for 15 euro in JD Sports. I also got a present for Darragh and for my sisters. It was a great holiday and a great experience. I enjoyed it a lot.