

## ERASMUS-Erfahrungsbericht

Persönliche Angaben			
Name:		Vorname:	
E-Mail-Adresse			
Gastland	Estland		
Gasthochschule	University of Tallinn		
Aufenthalt	von:	August 16	bis: Dezember 16

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At the beginning of the journey Estonia was an unknown territory for me. A lot of stories about visits, half-knowledge and Google researches created an unclear picture of the country. Estonia seemed to be: small, cold and grey and the Estonians as well. But even this undefined picture of a country and its inhabitants motivated me to discover it by myself.

While I was arriving at the End of August, Estonia seemed to be in prime of life. Not only trees, parks and blossoms, even the whole city flourished. The old town welcomed me with millions of flowers at the Viru gate and the introduction program at Tallinn University changed my expectations about Ests.

Now Estonia and especially Tallinn is beautiful and interesting country with many mysterious places to visit and stories to hear. This is due to the mere facts about history of the country. Estonia suffered a lot because of the different leaderships and wars which where fought out in Estonia without giving a reason to do it. But these happenings created Estonia and the population to a very strong community and to a unique country as it is. The past events are still palpable while discovering Tallinn. It's the first time in my live that I could hear and see people talking and grapple with their countries' history especially with the Soviet Union. The Russian government which were ruled over 40 years in Estonia is still recognizable. Even one of the directors at Viro Hotel or Russian people at the street while having a guided old town tour, everybody try to handle the history and the future and to express their feelings. Moreover many places in Tallinn show the different leaderships like the german-like old town, Telliskivi with its modern cafes and shops or Linnahall as a memory for the Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980. Tallinn seems to be very flexible and strong, it could only grow out of negative experiences.

The other parts of the country are fading in the glow of Tallinn. But they shouldn't hide. I drove to Otepää, Tartu and Pärnu. I couldn't manage to see more places or even one place of every part of the country. But even these places show the unremarkable variety of such a small country. Otepää Natural Park is giving the feeling that you are the only person on the world and that you could reach everything what you want. The breathtaking nature is very impressive and you could feel the spirituals reloading your vital energy. You could feel the same in Pärnu. The small dozy city with its never ending beach, many cosy cafes and beautiful villas is one kind of typical cities in Estonia.

Typical for Estonia as well is the strange traditional food. As Justin Petrone in his bestseller *Minu Eesti* writes:" [...] it wasn't the weather that starved me of joy in Estonia; it was the awful food." My opinion about the food doesn't change at all after trying different traditional

meals. Fortunately there is a huge variety of different restaurants and pubs in Tallinn so that I hadn't to eat typical Estonian food.

Estonia is in change. You could feel and see it. Young Estonians wearing luxury brands, international companies with employees coming from all over the world and new modern buildings rising along the coast like flowers in spring. Even the universities offer a very wide range of different international courses for students. The Tallinn University has a really great reputation about his Baltic Film, Media, Arts and Communication School which is known as the best school in northern Europe. However, the number of English-speaking courses in many different subjects is enormous.

My image about Estonia now changed a lot. Now I am part of this young aspiring country. I can say: Yes, Estonia is as beautiful as any other European city and definitely a good choice for a semester abroad.