

Report on the STEP program in Jihlava

On the day when I applied to the STEP program in Jihlava, I wasn't really sure about what I should expect of these two weeks in the Czech Republic. But my skepticism was soon to be vanished. Already on the train to Jihlava I get to know the other students who took part on the program, and I noticed that presumably nothing could go wrong with such huge motivation of them to learn as much as possible of the Czech culture and tradition.

On arrival we were expected by two young, pretty and good-humored students, who were very polite and told us the most important stuff and took us to our stay in Jihlava for these two weeks. The pension Mahler was a nice little complex of two buildings, and the rooms were comfortable and clean (more than expected ☺).

Already on the first day our two guides showed us a little bit around in the city, with a nice ending of the evening in a local pub.

With the days passing our group including two guides became friends as the chemistry between our international group was perfectly right. After the first week we already had visited two companies, namely "Valeo", who expected us in a very welcoming way, and gave us a very deep insight in their production of compressors, and Optokon, who gave us a small insight in their complicated production of various cables. Furthermore we had already passed some Czech language lessons in the Polyglot language school in Jihlava, which was more fun than expected. Furthermore we visited the beautiful and exceptional castle in Telc. In general the first week passed by very fast and my expectations very fulfilled, even exceeded.

On the weekend our guides proposed us an unscheduled visit to Prague. We took the chance and the trip was worth it... Lots of beautiful sights like the Charles Bridge, and the Royal Castle.

In the second week the language school continued and the Czech skills got better and better, so that a small conversation in the restaurant wasn't a problem... like ordering something to drink or to eat.

Furthermore we visited two more companies in that week, namely Bosch, which as everybody knows where one of the main producers of all kind of electrical parts all over the world and Centropen, which was a small company for the production of pens.

As the two weeks passed my impression of the Czech Republic was a complete different and positive one, because I actually never gave much of my attention to our neighboring country.

As conclusion I can say that it was completely worth it to join the STEP program, because otherwise I wouldn't probably ever get such nice insight of the Czech culture as I have got it.

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