

THE PORTUGUESE DREAM

Erasmus programme 2010/2011

Student: Adelina Radu

Coordinator: Clara Sarmento

Course: Intercultural Studies

Home Organization: Constantin Brâncoveanu University,
Romania

Porto, also known as Oporto in English, is the second largest city in Portugal and one of the major urban areas in the Iberian Peninsula.

In addition to studying to know cultures, travel and make friends, this is a city that meets all these requirements:

very rich in culture and cuisine, Porto is definitely a good choice because you have all kinds of modern transportation.

Prices of housing are affordable and the people very welcoming and friendly.

And now about the housing and accommodations:

Let's start by describing my new place. Me and my other Romanians colleagues are living in a house for students, called Breyner House, like the street itself, Breyner.

This house was for us a very good start to socialize with new people .

New people who have become even our friends. Since I came here, every night we organized something, barbecue, birthdays, dinner, and dishes of different countries. It is very interesting to eat something new, to have that emotion of new. I believe that this has united us. Here are different people, but together, we form ERASMUS , unity in diversity.

Here we were at our first barbeque:



And here is "Bacalhau" fish dinner:



We all tasted the Portuguese specialty “Bacalhau” fish, and we liked it very much. Another specific portuguese specialty we liked was “Francesinha”, hmm delicious.



And because not all the fun takes place at home, we started going out, and started to know better the surroundings of Porto. We went to different bars and clubs, and I noticed that is a very welcoming atmosphere. Here we were at a local pub in Porto, called Piolho, near us. Here we met a lot of ERASMUS Students from different places, and we became friends with them.



After that, the days have flown, and my birthday came. For my birthday I prepared a Romanian dinner with my traditional food, and all the guys from the house were to celebrate me.

My Romanian colleagues and I prepared a plate called in our country "sarmale cu mamaliga si smantana", cabbage and polenta with meat and sour cream.

And for desert,we prepared also an traditional desert with chocolate called :Brownie (Negresa). We spent all day in the kitchen, but the effort was worth it because the food was pleasing to all, even some of them asked for the recipe.





But the most beautiful moment of the party, was when they sang Happy Birthday to me in different languages like:

Portuguese, Lithuanian, Polish, English, and of course in Romanian.

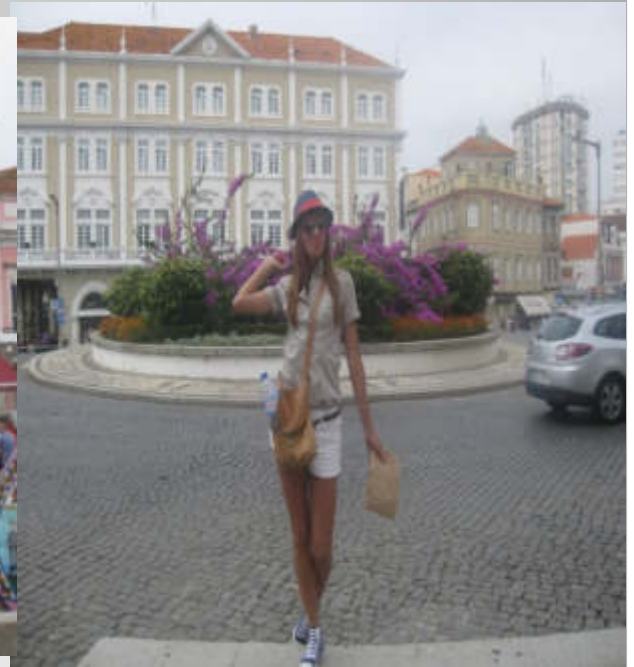
So I will certainly not forget this moment.

So enough with the fun, let's start and visit what Portugal has to offer. We first decided to visit Aveiro.

We had bad luck with the weather, and we could not visit too much, only I had the opportunity to buy some stuff for my family, like souvenirs.

There was a fair in Aveiro with traditional things .

We took some photos there:





AVEIRO SALINE



Near the town of Aveiro you can visit the sea, and more specifically, the traditional salt. These days there are in production just over three dozens of salines, by the Marnotos (men who extract the salt water) who are "endangered." Interestingly, the females are known as Salineira. As a rule, all Aveiro salt has the name of the corresponding saline.

The salt of Aveiro is "much more than salt." It is raw material for some quality products, in which the first salt is produced in a traditional green. The "flower of salt", which is the "diamond of salt", is another of the recalled products Caravela British Navy, along with Salicornia. The salt is the basis of the Aveiro salt soap and bath salts, which are made in the same saline, with other products (cosmetics and body care).

We have also been in Guimaraes



Here we visited the Castle of Guimarães, located in the parish of Oliveira do Castelo, a city and municipality of Guimarães, the District of Braga, Portugal.

In a dominant position overlooking the Campo de São Mamede, this monument is connected to the foundation of the “Condado Portucalense” and struggles for independence from Portugal, and is popularly known as the cradle of nationality.

Classified as a National Monument in 2007, it was elected informally as one of the Seven Wonders of Portugal.

The castle features a plant shaped like a faceted shell. Its walls, reinforced by four towers, are torn by doors. A battlement, accessed by stairs in the towers, traverses the upper walls, topped by battlements pentagonally cut-out . In the western face, a wooden bridge connects the battlements of the walls and the door of the keep. In the northern section of the walls the ruins of the ancient citadel are visible, probably from the fourteenth century, which is divided into two floors, with emphasis on their exterior windows and two chimneys.



After Guimarães Castle, we stopped to see a beautiful church near Guimareas, named The Church of Santos Passos, also known as the Church of Our Lady of Consolation, built by the Brotherhood of Our Lady of Consolation and the architect Andrés Santos Passos Soares at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The church, located in Guimarães, was built in the same place where a small chapel existed since the sixteenth century.

The imposing temple is topped by two towers added in the middle of the century, by an architect of Porto. They are also currently the staircase and balustrade.

The altarpiece of the main chapel is inspired by classic end of the eighteenth century, painted to imitate marble.





Ribeira

A Ribeira é um dos locais mais antigos e típicos da cidade do Porto, em Portugal.

Localizada na freguesia de São Nicolau, junto ao Rio Douro, faz parte do Centro Histórico do Porto, Património Mundial da UNESCO. É, actualmente, uma zona muito frequentada por turistas e local de concentração de bares e restaurantes.

Na Ribeira merecem destaque a Praça da Ribeira, popularmente também conhecida por *praça do cubo*; a Rua da Fonte Taurina, uma das mais antigas da cidade; o Muro dos Bacalhoeiros e a Casa do Infante, onde se crê que tenha nascido o Infante D. Henrique, em 1394.

Foi nesta zona do Porto que viveu uma das figuras mais carismáticas da cidade, o chamado Duque da Ribeira, conhecido por ter salvo várias pessoas de morrer afogadas.





Casa de Musica

The "House of Music" is the main concert hall in Porto, Portugal.

It was designed by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas as part of the event Porto European Capital of Culture in 2001 (Porto 2001), however, construction was only completed in 2005, immediately becoming an icon of the city. The architecture of the building has been acclaimed internationally. Nicolai Ouroussoff, architecture critic of The New York Times, called it "more attractive than any other project architect Rem Koolhaas has ever built" and as "a building whose intellectual ardour is matched with its sensual beauty." Compare it also "the exuberant" project of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao architect Frank Gehry in Bilbao, Spain. "Looking at just the look of the original building, it appears that this is one of the most important concert halls built in the last 100 years," comparing it to the venue of Walt Disney in Los Angeles and the auditorium of the "Berlin Philharmonic".





Let's start with 10 things you  did not know about Portugal:

- 1. Portugal is the world's largest producer of cork. Cork oak trees are protected by law, and so the cork oak forests are some of the largest forests in southern Europe. They support dozens of endangered species.**
- 2. Europe's only tea plantation, Gorreana, is found amidst the mild climate of the island of São Miguel, in the Azores. The climate contributes to the tea's outstanding flavor.**

3. Portugal is "Pottery Heaven": Regional pottery from Portugal shows up in gourmet shops like Williams-Sonoma because of its high quality and style. Check out "Provençal Platters" or "Alhambra Platters" at that store - just two examples of regional styles, which can also include the fine porcelain of Vista Alegre, the earthen colors of Redondo, and the black pottery of the Centro de Portugal region.

4. Many gourmet and organic food shops in the U.S. offer Portuguese cheeses because of their quality, variety, and flavor, and the traditional methods are still used to produce them. The best way to find the best cheeses is to travel the country and taste them. Look for the hardy goat's cheese of the Alentejo, the rich sheep's cheese of the Beiras, the sharp cow's cheese of the Azores, or the miraculous "Serra" cheese of the Estrela Mountains.

- 5. Forget Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon—how about some new grapes? Fresh, complex and unique, distinctly Portuguese grapes include Touriga Nacional, Loureiro, Alvarinho, Bical, Arinto, Síria, Aragonez, Trincadeira, Castelão and Baga.**
- 6. Portugal has about 530 miles of sandy beaches--all on the Atlantic and all inviting.**
- 7. Some of Europe's coolest new spaces, such as Porto's Casa da Música and Lisbon's Casino, are in Portugal.**
- 8. Portugal has its own architectural style, the Manueline, which was popular from 1498 to 1540, and transcended Gothic and Mannerist styles.**
- 9. Some of the best, most luxurious new hotels in Europe are being built in Portugal, from rural Montes in the Alentejo region, to the banks of the Douro River. One luxury hotel - the DouroQueen - is a floating one, a cruise on the Douro River.**
- 10. Be cool. Some of Europe's best new chefs, coolest new places to eat, and best nightclubs are in cities like Lisbon and Porto.**

The image shows the flag of Romania, which consists of three vertical stripes of blue, yellow, and red. The word "Romania" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the flag.

Romania

If we were in Romania with this internship, let's see what natal country has to offer my. Romania is situated in the southeastern part of Central Europe and shares borders with Hungary to the northwest, Serbia to the southwest, Bulgaria to the south, the Black Sea to the southeast, Ukraine to the east and to the north and the Republic of Moldova to the east. Roughly the size of Oregon, Romania is the second largest country in the area, after Poland.

Bucharest

The capital city of Romania – is located at the same latitude with the cities of Portland - USA; Montreal - Canada; Venice - Italy; and Bordeaux - France.

Romania's territory features splendid mountains, beautiful rolling hills, fertile plains and numerous rivers and lakes. The Carpathian Mountains traverse the centre of the country, bordered on both sides by foothills and finally the great plains of the outer rim. Forests cover over one quarter of the country and the fauna is one of the richest in Europe including bears, deer, lynx, chamois and wolves.

The legendary Danube River ends its eight-country journey at the Black Sea, after forming one of the largest and most biodiverse wetlands in the world, the Danube Delta.

About a third of the country consists of the Carpathian Mountains (also known as the Transylvanian Alps). Another third is hills and plateaus, rich with orchards and vineyards. The final third is a fertile plain, largely devoted to agriculture.

Special interest

The countryside is the heart and soul of Romania, where peasant culture remains a strong force and medieval life prevails, as it does nowhere else in Europe. A young American couple, researching ancient traditional villages in Europe for post-graduate studies, recently moved in with a host family in Northern Romania in order to document a culture unique in the world.

People are happy to meet foreign visitors, often inviting them into their homes for a meal and conversation. For a true introduction to Romania's traditional villages, consider a home stay. Rates range from \$8 to \$25 per person including two meals. Rooms are clean and comfortable but some do not have private baths. Most hosts do not speak English.



2008/05/14



My City

Pitesti is a city in southern Romania, situated on the bank of the Arges river. It has about 300.000 people. It's 100 km from Bucharest, the capital of Romania. Its name comes from a verb that in Romanian means "to hide" because it's hidden between hills.

It is also called “Tulip’s town” because there are all kinds of tulips planted and they all blossom in spring. The city’s municipality organizes “The tulip’s Symphony” every year an event, where the beauty of flowers is completed by music. People all over the country come here to admire them. A good opportunity for 3 days of party.

Next to Pitesti is a city very appreciated for its fine wine, Stefanesti.

At about 30 km from Pitesti you can visit one of the oldest cities in Romania, Curtea de Arges.

It is famous for its Monastery, one of the greatest European values and also a place where legend is at its home. It is said that a woman was built up in the walls of the monastery, because only that way the monastery wouldn't fall down.

If you want you can visit Vidraru Barrage, built on the Arges river, in Fagaras Mountains. It is one of the most important in the country, and many cities depend on it, but it also offers great views. Stately mountains, shy waterfalls and green trees, almost all year long.



05/07/2005 17:35

Transfagarasanul is the highest road in Romania and it reaches almost 2000 m above the sea level. It connects Muntenia and Transilvania, two historic parts of Romania.



Fun & Interesting Facts about Romania

The capital of Romania is Bucharest, once popular as the 'Paris of the East'.

Romania covers a total area of 237,500 km² and the total population of the place is around 22.5 million. Apart from the official Romanian language, Hungarian and German form two other major languages of Romania.

Romania has a Republic type of government.

The currency of Romania is Romanian 'leu' (RON). Romania's Danube Delta is a World Heritage site and is the second largest delta in the whole of Europe.

The Dacian fortresses of the Orastie Mountains, in Romania, belongs to the Late Iron Age.

Gheorghe Marinescu, a professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest, was the first person to see living nervous cells with a microscope.

More than half of Romania's Jewish population died in the Second World War.

Romania was a part of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation.

After the Second World War, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova was formed, which was earlier a part of Romania.

Romania joined the European Union in 2007, along with Bulgaria.

In the year 2000, 100 tonnes of cyanide, from a gold mine in northern Romania, spilled into rivers in Romania, Hungary and Yugoslavia and destroyed aquatic life for several hundred kilometres.

The Transylvanian city of Sibiu is credited as the European Capital of Culture 2007.

Irish author Bram Stoker based his horror novel 'Dracula' on the fifteenth century Wallachian Prince, Vlad Dracul of Romania.

The Bran Castle, associated with Vlad Dracul, still lies in Romania and forms its most popular tourist attraction.

All these confirm the fact that, student as I am I've surveyed in two opposite peripheries of Europe, with very different socioeconomic backgrounds, I tend to have a mostly Eurocentric vision of the world, generally based on the same major reference points.

