

Learning Diary

Write a learning diary with selected photos.

-Where did we visit?

-What interesting facts or details did you learn and experience.

Thursday/11.8 2022

It was our first night at Slovakia and we slept well. It was surprisingly cold in the morning compared to daytime, when was quite hot. But as the sun rose, the temperature got warmer quickly. The tour to the higher Nitra was pleasant. The old buildings were beautifully detailed and colorful. The statue, whose toe is supposed to bring strength if you wipe it, was a fun piece of local folklore. The view from the castle tower we climbed up to was incredible.

It was nice to visit Gymnazium Golianova in Nitra and notice how much students' art was placed in the hallways. It makes the atmosphere very comforting. The boards of the graduated students were interesting and creative. It's something we could do in Finland as well. One thing that surprised us were the animals at the school. Those birds and fish really made our mind. It is very fun way to add comfort.



Castle in higher Nitra Photo: Päivi Parkkonen

When we walked into the Hidepark, we saw how varied city Nitra is. Nature is close by, there are many restaurants and basic grocery stores, different kinds of neighborhoods in the old town and the new town. Especially at night Nitra was very nice city to wander around.

At the Hidepark we were introduced to zero waste life by Perta Slezáková. Good about the presentation was that it was presented through solutions rather than problems. Of course, the presentation covered the problems of overconsumption but it was not the main part of the presentation. Constantly hearing about problems creates more stress while presenting the solutions reduces the climate anxiety. Solutions bring hope.

Solutions to reducing waste were, for example, the reuse of packing materials. A glass jar can be reused as a pot, a storage, a decoration, a container for makeup or food. Metal containers can be easily recycled many times.

After the presentation, we got to make a bag out of a t-shirt. It was an activity that was meant to expand understanding of how many things can actually be reused. There was also a drumming event in the park, to which anyone could join to. We joined for a while after some encouragement of few Slovakian students. I'm very glad that we joined. It was a fun, new and unique experience.



We took a group photo in front of the luck bringing statue.

Photo: Jacub Remeň



Workshop at hidepark

Photo: Jacub Remeň

Jami Lehtinen & Nikolas Vesalainen

Friday / 12.8 2022

On Friday, we set off right from the morning at around 8:15 a.m. by bus towards the EMO Mochovce nuclear power plant. There was a nice presentation of a nuclear power plant, with different equipment that you could try. Among other things, we got to see a 3D film about this topic. However, we had a guided tour lasting about an hour was organized for us, where we toured the entire center and at the same time were told about the operation of the nuclear power plant. After that, we jumped back on the bus and headed for a famous Slovak fish restaurant, where we even got to catch the fish ourselves. After fishing, we were served smoked fish for everyone. After that, we traveled for a couple of hours to a village called Vlkolínec, which is one of the UNESCO sites. There we had our own guide who introduced the village to us, which was very nice, because it was located high on the mountainside and you could see great landscapes from there.

After that, we left for our next destination, which was the High Tatras. We got there in the evening, so we went straight to the hotel and the next day we went hiking in the Tatra mountains. The day was varied and I got to learn a lot about Slovakian culture.

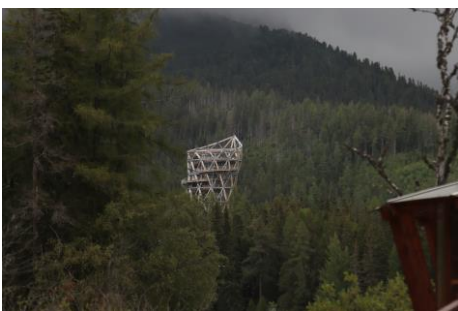


Vlkolinec village, picture by Päivi Parkkonen

Onni Ranta

Saturday/13.8.2022

On Saturday morning we left the hotel for a long bus trip to Hrebienok Studenovodské vodopády, which was an interesting looking area in the High Tatras mountains. The place had really nice waterfalls, which were not very huge, but still especially nice. It wasn't a long walk from the parking lot, so it didn't have to be terribly long. In the mountains, we went to eat at Self-service restaurant Hrebienoki, where you could choose what you ate. At two o'clock we took the train to **Štrbské pleso**, which was a small holiday village with a skiing center and opportunities for other sports practiced on the slopes, but we didn't have time to try them. However, we did get to try the ski lift, which took us to a height of two thousand meters. The main event at the place was a small mountain pond, around which we walked and looked at the scenery. At six thirty we took the bus back to the hotel to spend the night, where we also ate dinner.



Štrbské pleso

Photo: Jacub Remeň

Ossi and Aleksí

Sunday/14.8.2022

Sunday morning came and we hopped on the bus again. We were heading to Demänovská Dolina, where we would explore the Demänovska ice cave. Once we came to a stop, we realized that a long rise was still waiting us to get to the entrance of the cave. After a nice walk we were greeted by the amazing view.

Right after stepping into the cave, we could feel the chilly air, which was a nice change compared to the heatwave. In the cave our guide showed us around and we learned about the geology and the history of the cave. For example, many important people in Slovakian history had written their names to the walls of the cave. It was fascinating to see the many centuries old names there, kind of as ghosts of the past. We also saw some bats flying around, which was very exciting.

Then it was time to hit the road again. Eventually we stopped and ate at restaurant Kozí Vŕšok. Our next stop was at a Unesco world heritage site, the wooden articular church in Hronsek. It was built during the years 1725- 1726 and it was declared a heritage site in 2008. An interesting fact we learned was that originally, no metal parts were used in the structure of the church. Wooden pins held the structure together, and even the decorations around the altar were all made from wood. This was not the case anymore when we visited, of course.

Finally at about 5 in the afternoon we arrived to Nitra and our Slovakian friends reached their final destination for the trip. We waved goodbyes and continued towards the capital of Slovakia.

The bus ride to Bratislava went by quite fast and we had an orientation tour. During the tour we drove next to Danube and that was quite remarkable considering its historical value. After that the bus took us to our hotel and we left our stuff there. The day was still young so we decided to explore Bratislava for a bit. We visited the Eurovea shopping mall for some clothing and then we took a cab to the old town. We found a nice restaurant along a pedestrian street and had some delicious burgers. After a quick cab ride back to the hotel we hit the sheets.



The Wooden church and the ice cave.

Pictures by Päivi Franzon and Päivi Parkkonen

Toni Karjalainen & Juho Simola