

# **LIONS YOUTH EXCHANGE 2015 REPORT**

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**Destination: AUSTRIA**

This year I took part in the Lion Youth Exchange 2015 program; my destination was Austria. I left from Italy on the 11<sup>th</sup> July and I was back on the 1<sup>st</sup> August.

I arrived at Salzburg in the late evening and at the station my host parents, with their 18-years old daughter, were waiting for me. My host family doesn't in Salzburg but they lives in a really nice house which is located in Neumarkt am Wallersee.

I stayed with them for a week and I really enjoyed all the time with them: they let me visit a lot of remarkable places in Salzburg neighborhood. In particular, in the first day, I visited the center of Salzburg with them and I had the opportunity to have lunch in a traditional restaurant where I could try some very typical Austrian food.

In the second day we went to visit the Salzburg salt mine. It was really nice and interesting because the guide told us about how salt extraction was performed in the past when Salzburg was very known all over the world for its huge salt production.

What's more, we also went to the "Top of Salzburg glacier", a place which is more than 3000 meters above sea level, where you have such a wonderful view of Salzburg and nearby places.

The day before leaving, on Friday, I had lunch with some Lions from Neumarkt and some of my host father's friends.

Then on Saturday we moved to the Voralberg region, where the Up & Down camp was located. It was really a long and tiring travel as we even passed through Munich, Germany.

During my stay with the host family I also met Katy, a girl from the USA who then went with me to the Up & Down camp, as we had two guided tour of Salzburg together. The first tour was a bus tour about "Sound of music" movie where they show us all the places which you can also see in this production and second one was a historical seightseeing of Salzburg.

Camp was amazing as I met so many people from so many different countries (I think there were people of 17 different nationalities) and we had a great good opportunity to learn more about our respective countries.

In particular, I've made friends with some girls from Russia and Finland. I was really amazed as they showed me pictures of their countries wonderful landscapes, so I am planning to visit Finland this winter.

Since the camp was set in the mountain the core-activity was hiking and I think it has been a good idea to organize a camp like this, which is different from the usual camps where you just visit cities and museum, because we could enjoy completely the time we spent together.

In fact, we enjoyed a lot of different activities together: the one I liked most was the Team building day, when we experienced a lot of different sports (archery, climbing, hiking, ecc..).

I actually liked the Bavarian Days too: we went to Munich and we visit BMW Museum, Allianz Arena and Neuschwanstein Castel, which is the castel which inspired Walt Disney for his company logo.

Unfortunately by the 31 July the camp was over; the last day we visited a huge Power Plant and then we had a farewell party at the Constance Lake. It was so hard to say goodbye to the other campers, even if nowadays it's really easy to keep in touch with each other.

I am really glad of participating in this exchange program because it allowed me to visit a country I've never been to before and also to meet a lot of very friendly and nice people that I probably wouldn't have meet otherwise.

