

Youth Camp Exchange 2024

Eliana Sica

Host camp: France, Périgord-Noir

From the 19th of July to the 9th of August.

This summer I've been given the chance to live one of the most beautiful experiences of my entire life: a 3 week stay in the Aquitaine region of France.

My journey started in Naples on the 19th of July. Unfortunately, that day all the airports of the world encountered serious problems with delays and canceled flights due to the worldwide Microsoft crash. In fact, due to a delay in Naples I lost my connection to Bordeaux, so I had to stay one night in Frankfurt.

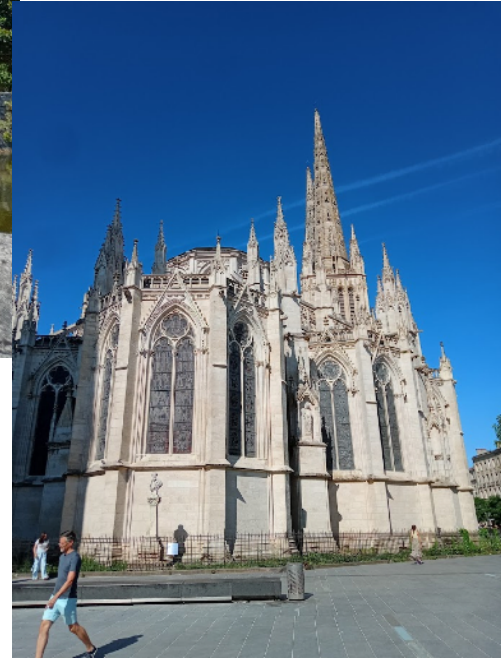
But at the end of the day everything was fine: I was able to perfectly handle the situation and I learnt from that unfortunate experience.

On the 20th I could finally arrive in Bordeaux, where I met my host family. Agnes' family lives in Merignac (a small city in the metropolitan area of Bordeaux) and is composed of her two daughters, Elisabeth and Eloise, her son Emilien, and also a very nice and kind cat whose name is Tigrou. However, Elisabeth and Emilien weren't home during my stay, so I lived only with Agnes and Eloise.

From the start, I immediately was in tune with them: they always showed me friendliness and kindness. I felt like I was part of their own family, as I've got to meet many of their friends and family members. In particular, I've spent many afternoons with Eloise walking around Bordeaux and she introduced me to some of their best friends.



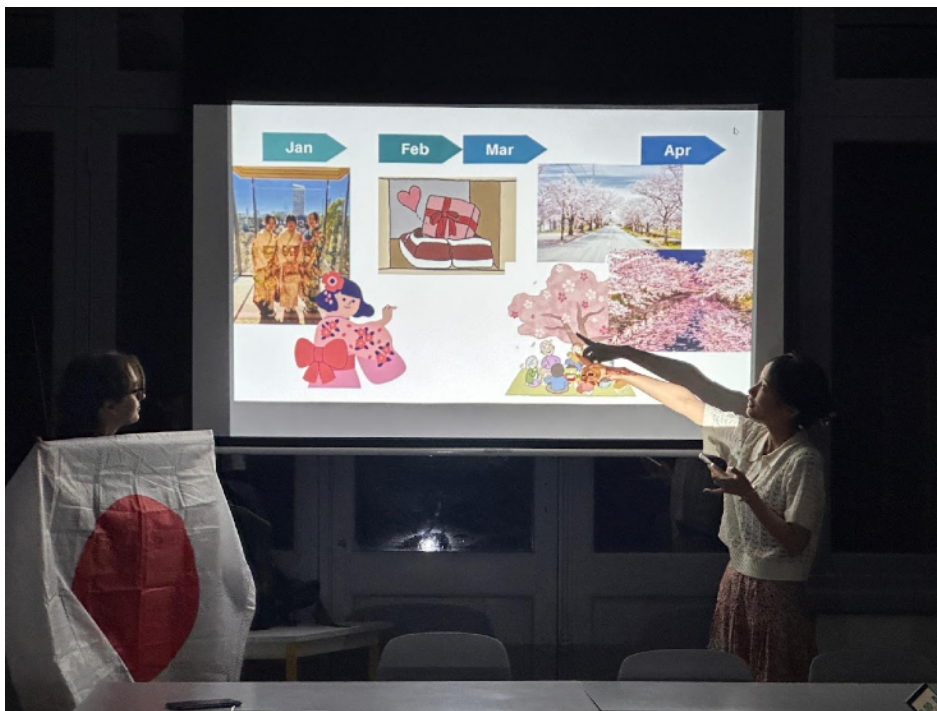
During the host family stay, I had the chance to already meet some guys and girls of the camp and we spent a lot of time together and went lot of places, like visiting the Château de la Brède, the Dune of Pilat, going to the beach in Arcachon, visiting the Museum of Bordeaux and many more!



After eleven days of the host family stay, all of us campers reunited together to finally move to Montignac, where the first stay of the camp was located.

Our days were full of activities and there were no downtimes! We went visiting a lot of places: museums, cities, buildings, etc. This all thanks to the Camp Director and staff's commitment, who put a lot of effort into making our time together memorable.

What I liked the most about this camp I've attended was the importance that was given to our multi-ethnic identities. Not only did I meet people coming from all over the world (Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, India, Brazil and many more), but we had the chance to talk about our Countries and show our traditions, like our typical dishes.



For what concerns my fellow campers, I want to thank all of them for making this experience something priceless. I learnt so many things from them, about their culture and daily life, and to this day I still keep in touch daily with most of them.

Meeting people from diverse backgrounds has been one of the most rewarding aspects of this journey. Interacting with fellow students, travelers, and locals from different countries has broadened my perspective and enriched my understanding of the world. Additionally, during this stay in France I was able to perfectionate my French language skills, as I became way more fluent with it.



I want to thank the family that warmly hosted me, my Camp Director, Isabelle Rolland, my Camp Leaders, Kiia and Matteo, and my camper friends, Charlotte, Cara, Anita, Julija, Soham, Vinicius, Ayaka, Tudor, German, Joel, Kaylee and Giuseppe. Furthermore, I want to thank the Lions Club International and my YEC Maria Martino for offering me this experience.