

Nova SBE Lisbon

2016 Semester 1

BSc COMP & BA ARTH

My exchange semester in Lisbon was undoubtedly one of the greatest experiences of my life. Lisbon was the most amazing city to live in and with the affordable cost of living and the ease to communicate in English I would recommend this place to all looking at going on an exchange. The temperatures when I arrived were around 20 and although there was a cold spring it was 30 degrees when I left at the end of June. With the sun and relaxed lifestyle, it was not hard to fall in love with Portugal.

Accommodation

When I first arrived I found accommodation hard to find with a wide range of prices within the standards of flats. I took the advice from previous exchange students and stayed in a hostel for a week before I found my flat. A lot of nice flats with a good price had been booked in advance so I was quite stressed in the process. Ignoring all warnings about noise, the flat I decided in on in the end was in Bairro Alto where I paid 250 euros a month, utilities included. There I flatmated with 2 Italians, 1 Spanish, 1 Greek and 1 Turkish. The cheap rent meant the flat wasn't in the best condition and there was a lot of noise every night until late but I wouldn't have had it any other way as my flatmates became my best friends. I would recommend that exchange students definitely flat in downtown Lisbon with a quieter option being Rossio, Baixa/Chaido or Avenida where all options are in good locations and in proximity of the metro to Uni. The average price can range between 250-400 euros with Bairro Alto being cheaper due to the bar culture in the area. Keep in mind that many rooms for a low price don't have a window. An option for booking in advance is Uniplaces which shows the flat and makes sure the images are legit, many people I knew booked in advance through this.



Bairro Alto



Lisbon

Money

The cost of living in Lisbon is one of the cheapest in Europe. Drinks are very cheap with beer and sangria starting from 1 euro. Prices increase at clubs but as you have to pay for entry you often have drinks included. Food is marginally cheaper than NZ at supermarkets and there are many bakeries

and cafes about selling pastries and bread at low prices and espresso for around 1 euro. At restaurants you can find a good authentic Portuguese meal for under 10 euro. Transport is around 35euro a month for a metro card (includes buses). Taxis are also affordable but most places in Lisbon (especially downtown) are within walking distance. Again accommodation costs can vary but I would say the average would be 350 for a nice flat. In travelling to other European cities I noticed the extreme difference in pricing, so keeping the cost of living low in Lisbon was an advantage to be able to spend savings on travel.

Academic

Nova University is around 40% international and all classes are taught in English. Most students are therefore very fluent in English and are helpful towards Exchange students, as a lot have been, or are going on their own exchange. Nova SBE is a business school so I chose electives for my degree to be able to study. I found most of my courses reasonably easy with only one paper causing problems. A lot of the work is done in group projects and presentations and I found myself in a different group for all four subjects. However, the work load isn't bad and it is easy to take time off for further travel. In enrolling I was required to choose my papers 6 weeks in advance, I made it into all of my choices and on the waiting list for one, but as far as I knew there was no problems for people making it into their required classes so the process was reasonably straight forward.

Places to Visit

From Lisbon there are many day trips you can take and you can easily take a bus or a train to the beaches which definitely worth visiting. Other places include Cascais and Sintra which is a nice wee town with multiple castles. I didn't get to go down south but everyone who went loved Algarve. I did go on a couple of trips in North Portugal and places worth seeing were Peniche, a nice little surfing town, and from there, a boat to Berlenga Island. Porto as also an amazing place to visit and on the 23rd of June they celebrate Sao Joao which is definitely an amazing night to experience Portugal's culture.

Language

Most people spoke English in Lisbon but it's worth learning some of the language and its especially more useful when travelling throughout Portugal. I chose not to do the course through the university but rather an independent one which wasn't very successful. Another option was a school called Language craft which had crash courses as well as lessons throughout the semester.

On a final note the ELL network in Lisbon is designed for exchange students so any information needed is provided on their website <http://erasmuslifelisboa.com/>

