

University of Tübingen

Semester 2 2016
BA- Linguistics

Accommodation

I stayed at the student apartment building Georg-Fahrbach House at Heuberger-Tor-Weg 15. My rent included power and internet, though you'll probably want to buy your own router, and it came to 314 per month. It is a close walk to the nearby forest and monastery if you like a walk. It isn't convenient if you were looking to bike around in terms of transportation, due to the hills. It is about 30 minutes walk from campus, or a 15 minute bus ride. It also had large rooms, but it didn't have a community atmosphere, as most people on the floor kept to themselves. If you were looking for a student housing complex with lots of other exchange students, I would recommend Fichtenweg. I took the six minute bus ride to Fichtenweg, the most popular student residence, many times.



Money Matters

Opening a German bank account is necessary in order to pay the student residence rent, and it is free to do. I opened one with Sparkasse, which has two locations close to campus, and to the residences. I opted to just use a cash passport for money transactions, which enables you to transfer money from New Zealand dollars to many different currencies. Food and drinks are cheaper than in New Zealand.

Academics

The Tübingen semester and assessment structure is quite different from the Otago University assessments, which I struggled with. Most of the assessments are exams, and towards the end of the semester. There is also a different class structure, with classes only once a week, for two hours, and a higher number of classes taken to make up the same amount of credit points. Most students attend at least five classes. All of my Linguistics courses were in English, but I got some German study with the German as a Second Language Department. One of the positives is that Tübingen has a lot of interesting options for courses, which is a great opportunity.

Transportation

Tübingen has a good bus system that runs until 2am, and you can get a reduced student ticket for a semester. This is how I travelled around most of the time. It is also really convenient to travel by train, if you're travelling outside of city. Biking is also a viable option, depending on where you stay, as some areas of Tübingen are hilly.

Things to Do

There is a castle in Tübingen that is worth a visit, as well as other historical buildings. I also enjoyed hiking to the monastery there and to the hot pools in a nearby town. In terms of music, Tübingen has a lot of EDM concerts and pubs. If you're around in the Winter semester, there are Christmas markets, Oktoberfest, and Karneval, towards the end of February.

Places to Visit

Stuttgart is an hour away from Tübingen and has a much larger selection of shops and concerts, and Munich and the Badensee are also popular destinations. If you're travelling outside of Germany, Prague is relatively close by train and is absolutely beautiful.

Food

German cuisine around Christmas time is something to really experience. Particular favourites are mulled wine, bratwurst, local bakery cakes and fresh-baked bread and spätzle (German noodles). If you're near campus, there's a cheap burger place called 'X', that always serves good portions and is open late: great for after a night out.

General Tips

Try and make some German friends, if you're there to improve your language skills. It's very easy to find yourself in a group comprised entirely of exchange students, in which it's easy to fall back into English. It's a good idea to find a Stammtisch (talking table) relating to some of your interests, and to attend a German language course that occurs before the semester starts. This way you'll also make friends before classes begin with whom you can adapt to academic life with.

