

Exchange Italy -> Czech Republic

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On Sunday, the 18th of March we welcomed our guests from Italy. This was their first time ever in the Czech Republic and I can't say it was a warm welcome – it was -9 °C! Everyone quickly found their partner and hurried home.

Monday was a lot better. After we all got to school on time, we introduced ourselves and let the headmaster of our school do the same. We played a little game to get to know each other and after that we decided to leave the warmth of our assembly hall and the Italian students went to meet the mayor of Velké Meziříčí. Then we went to the castle in Velké Meziříčí and we also visited the local church and its tower. We had lunch and celebrated Audrey's eighteenth birthday with the traditional Czech "hobl". A tradition where one person gets on all fours and pretends to be a goat, the person whose birthday it is lies down and two other people grab their ankles and hands and swing them at the goat. We also had some time to learn a few Italian words and tongue twisters. As we expected, our favourite letter "Ř" was a big issue for them!

On Tuesday we left early in the morning to visit our capital city, Prague. We started at Petřín tower and finished in the Old town square. Some of the places also included in our trip were: Strahovský klášter, Loreta, Charles bridge or Hradčany. It was a very tiring and long day but definitely worth every penny!

Wednesday was one of our favourite days. We stayed at school almost the whole day. The first three hours, the Italian students had a tour at Poex while we were preparing everything for the party on Friday. The Italians took part in a "what's the best Czech candy" contest and after school they had the chance to see Velké Meziříčí from a bird's point of view when we visited the lookout tower on Fajtův kopec. In the afternoon, the boys decided to measure strength and speed in a Football match. Surprisingly enough, the Czechs became the winners after a heated and loud game. In the evening, we went to a restaurant to have a big dinner together.

Thursday was another exhausting day spent in Brno and Moravský kras. We got the chance to see our oldest and biggest caves and also walk around the beautiful city of Brno. A part of our group met up at Vítek's house to play some board games which turned out to be one of the best nights of the whole week. Everyone got really into it and nobody could stop us from playing for hours!

On Friday we added some finishing touches to the programme for our farewell party and parted into four groups to discuss the differences in our cultures, school system, lifestyle and everything that we had noticed over the course of the week that we had spent together.

The party in the evening went very well. The headmaster said a few words, we also prepared a speech. We showed the parents who came the pictures we took throughout the week and explained what we had experienced. Our class band played some great songs for us and we taught the Italians our national dance, polka. Even though the party was supposed to end at 9.pm, we stayed almost until 10 pm because nobody wanted to leave yet!

Saturday was the final day and because their plane was leaving quite early, we didn't have time for any activities. It was a very sad day and it took us about an hour to actually say goodbye and let go. I think I can speak on behalf of everyone who joined this exchange that it was one of the most wonderful and magical weeks of our lives and we cannot wait to get back together, this time in Turin!







