

Leave of the blue, going to a city far from one's own leaving parents, friends and their habits is not a simple thing. Two months could seem like many, but they passed so fast without realizing it. Making a choice like this for some kids of my age might seem crazy, but I wanted to test myself, discover new cultures, meet new people. The Finnish family is different from the Italian one. Starting from the fact that as soon as 18 years old the children leave the house and begin to provide for themselves, without asking the family for help. I think this is the biggest difference, I have not noticed many differences in my host family. At first the idea of spending two months in an unknown family frightened me, but fortunately I can say that I found myself at ease, they were very welcoming, almost similar to mine.





Definitely the Finnish cuisine is not the Italian one, in fact it is very far away. You eat at a lot of times in advance and different from ours and it was difficult to get used to. This kitchen does not have a wide variety of dishes, in fact the typical dishes can be counted on the fingers (like: karjalanpiirakka, kalakukko, ruisrekäleipä, mämmi, pulla etc... ). The Finns have very different eating habits.

Breakfast is salty such as rye bread, butter and ham. Lunch consists mainly of meat, fish, soups and above all POTATOES. Their snack is similar to breakfast and you should not forget the porridge (puuro). The dinner is very similar to lunch. The pasta is not eaten often and this has been another problem being used to eating it every day, but you can survive. Usually the Finns use milk to drink during lunch or dinner !!





The school is totally different starting from kindergarten up to high school. At the age of seven, Finnish children start compulsory schooling, which lasts nine years. At about sixteen they can decide whether to continue their studies or not, like us. In high school there are no subjects and programs that are the same for everyone; this means that students can choose the subjects they want to study. The program of higher secondary education includes a minimum of 75 courses, each of which is developed in 38 lessons. The program includes 45 to 49 compulsory courses; at the end of each course there is an exam that allows the student to go to the next course. Classes are always divided by courses, so every end of the

time the student has to change class. Plus lunch is consumed at school, all for free!!





For us Italians it is difficult to understand the lifestyle of the Finns. A very silent population that walks quickly I would say. They are an independent people, in fact in Finland you go to live alone very early as I said. Leaving out these details, their hobbies are similar to ours (dance, music, sport, etc.), like work; everyone has their own commitments.

Finland is the country of forests, lakes and nature. Most of Finland is covered by waters. It's not coincidence that the lake region is the best place to admire the blue of the country. Some of the most beautiful views of Finland are right here, among the clearest waters in the world. Surely from this point of view compared, Italy and Finland are two very different countries. The green of Finland is not found in our regions!





Finland is the first country abroad I have visited, and it was the best experience I could ever do! I am so happy to be able to share a little thought with you.

“To become part of that city, to recognize those people, to realize that this is life and that they are not just external spectators, but creator. So as to live intensely regardless of the how and why of my actions, simply making every single day a unique. In the end these two months turned out to be better than I could imagine. But now it's time to say goodbye, and it's far from easy to deal with them. We knew from the beginning that this would be the case, that each of us would return to their pre-Erasmus life, to everything that was there before and that never stopped being there despite the distance. In spite of this it is not easy to get away, even if it was something foreseen, like an ending already written that is at the bottom of a book and that you can read, flipping through the pages to the end, at any point in the reading. How much we have grown, how many situations we have learned to manage, how many experiences we have shared, how many secrets we have kept and how much life shines through our smiles. Smiles that turn into melancholic expressions as soon as we realize that all this is about to come to an end. We have enriched ourselves, we will bring home so much, more than what we have come to, even leaving behind us something. I found myself embracing the children who changed my days, Kurdish Turkish friends and even some Finnish people of which a few months ago I did not even know the name and that now they are my family, and not by way of speaking, it is not a sterile sentence made. They were part of my joys, my jealousies and my madness. Never, and I never say, I will be able to forget about them, about the beautiful people I am, about how they changed me and how I became a part of their life and they of mine. Without the memory of one of them, I would miss a piece of my puzzle. People do not pass through our lives without leaving a trace, they change us, enrich us, leave us new ideas and thoughts. Saying goodbye is really difficult, but in this case I hope with all of myself that this is just a goodbye!



See you Finland, KIITOS.”





Sara Sorrentino