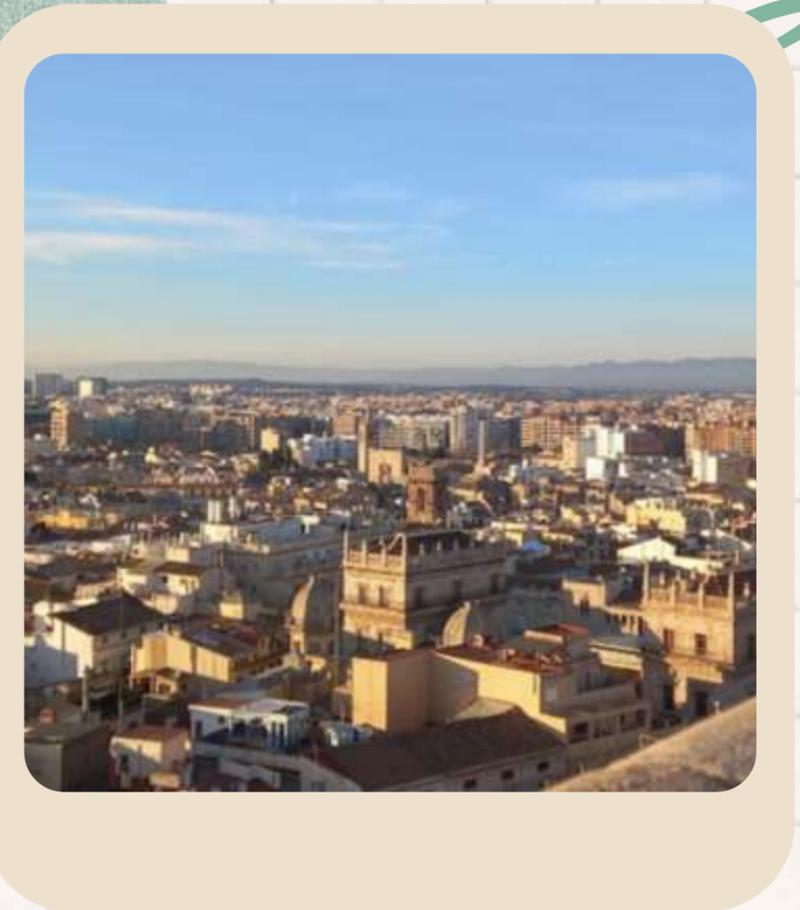


ZOÉ

Valencia

Erasmus 2024



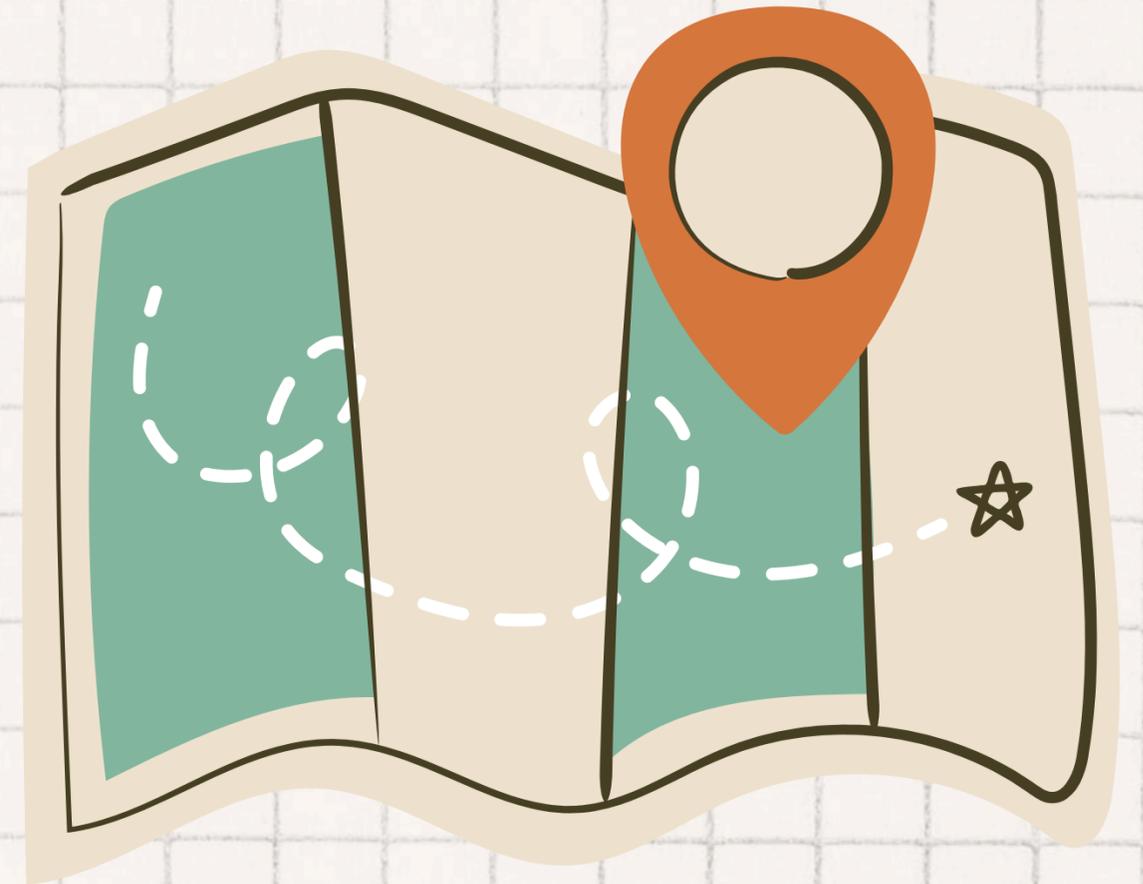
Why ?

Since I first heard about studying abroad, (around 11yo), it became my ultimate goal. Money was one of the main obstacles, so I saved up every birthday and summer job paycheck. Finally, the time has come to put this money to use!

To be honest, I had my heart set on Scotland, but I missed the deadline for the Erasmus program. All my dreams went down the drain. Thankfully, the Forthem association came to my rescue!

There were sooo many incredible universities to choose from, but in the end , I opted for Valencia as it was a great opportunity to improve my Spanish skills.

And you know what? It turned out to be one of the best decisions I have ever made! I fell head over heels in love with this city



A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE CITY

Valencia is a city located on the eastern coast of Spain, in the province of the same name. Although it seems to be less and less used, its people have their own dialect called Valencian (a variant of Catalan).

As for the city itself, it is a perfect mix of old and new. On the one hand, it has many historical landmarks - including the Valencia Cathedral, La Lonja de la Seda (Silk Exchange), and the Torres de Serranos. On the other hand, Valencia is also known for its modern architecture, for instance the City of Arts and Sciences, a futuristic complex designed by the architect Santiago Calatrava.



A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE CITY



However, what truly enhances Valencia's beauty is not just its buildings, but also the omnipresence of nature. The city features many beautiful parks and gardens, such as The Turia Gardens, a former riverbed equipped with walking paths, playgrounds, and sports facilities. Valencia's coastal location also provides easy access to many stunning beaches.

And last but not least, Valencia is an incredibly lively city, hosting several festivities throughout the year, with the most famous being Las Fallas. Held in March, this festival includes street parades, fireworks, and the burning of intricate sculptures known as "fallas."



MY 2 SPOTS



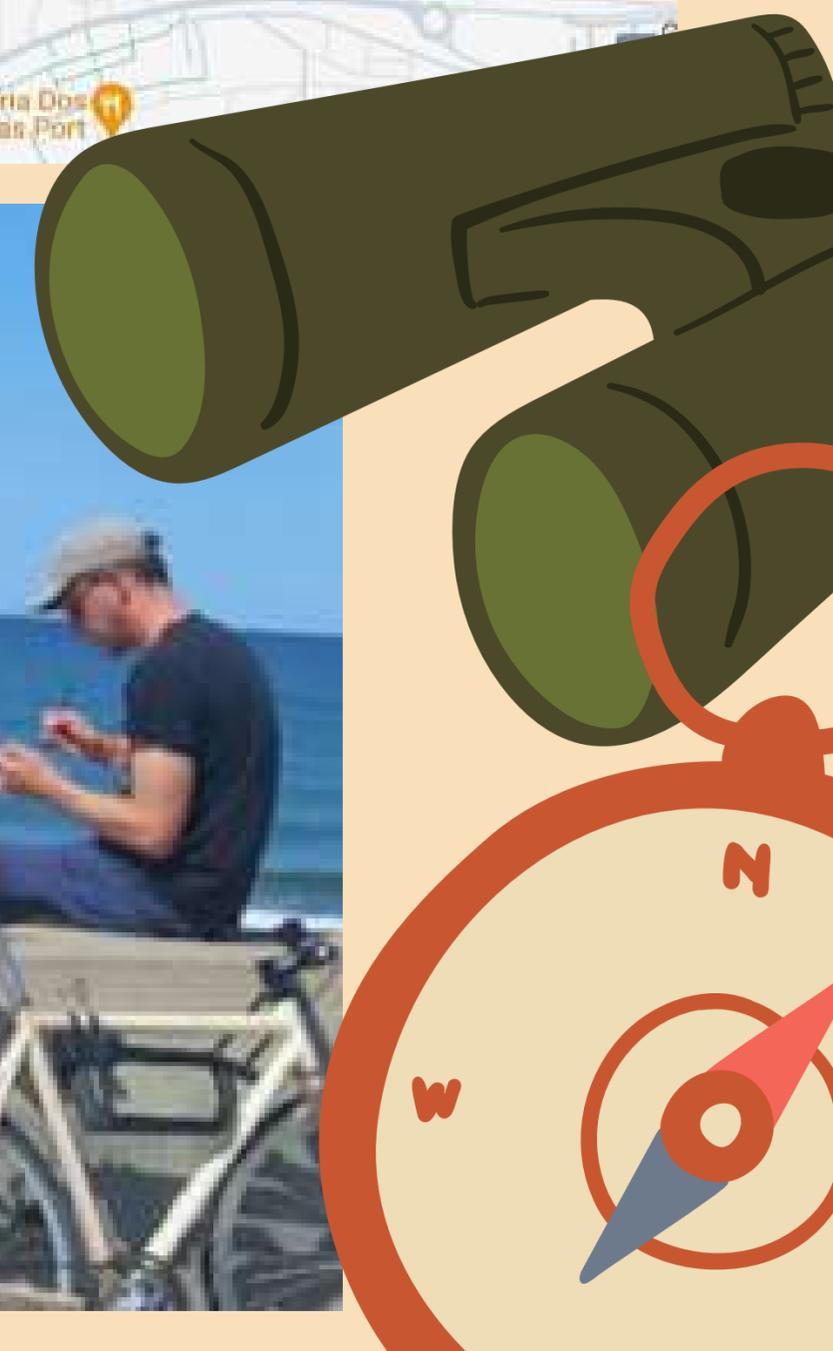
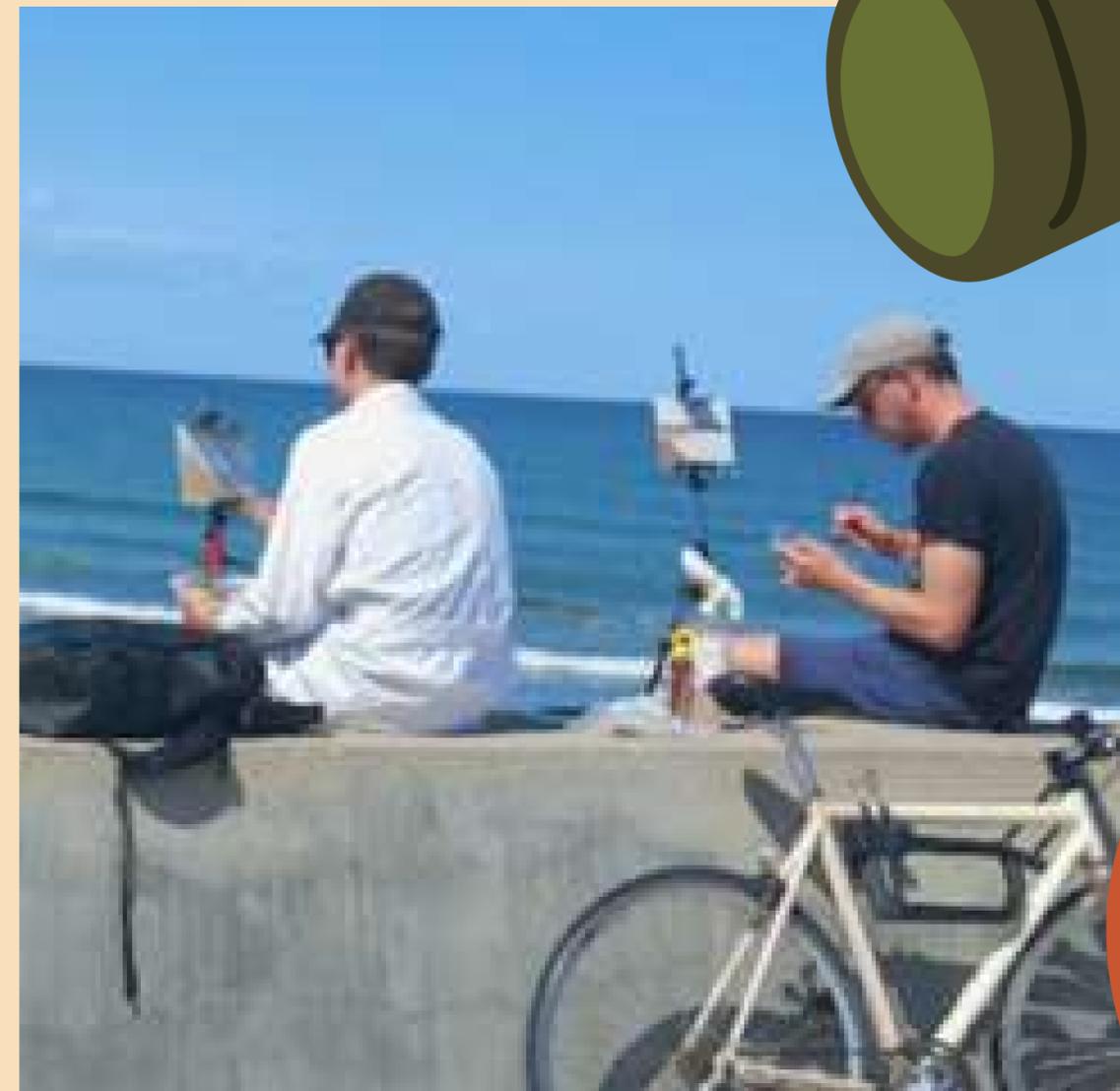
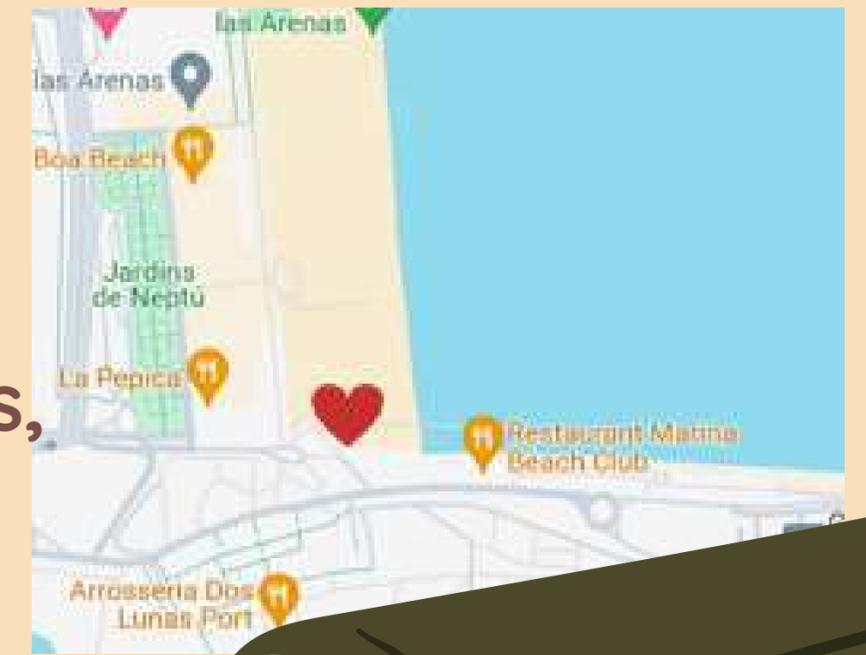
EL MIRADOR
DEL PUERTO

THE TURIA
GARDENS

THE BEACH

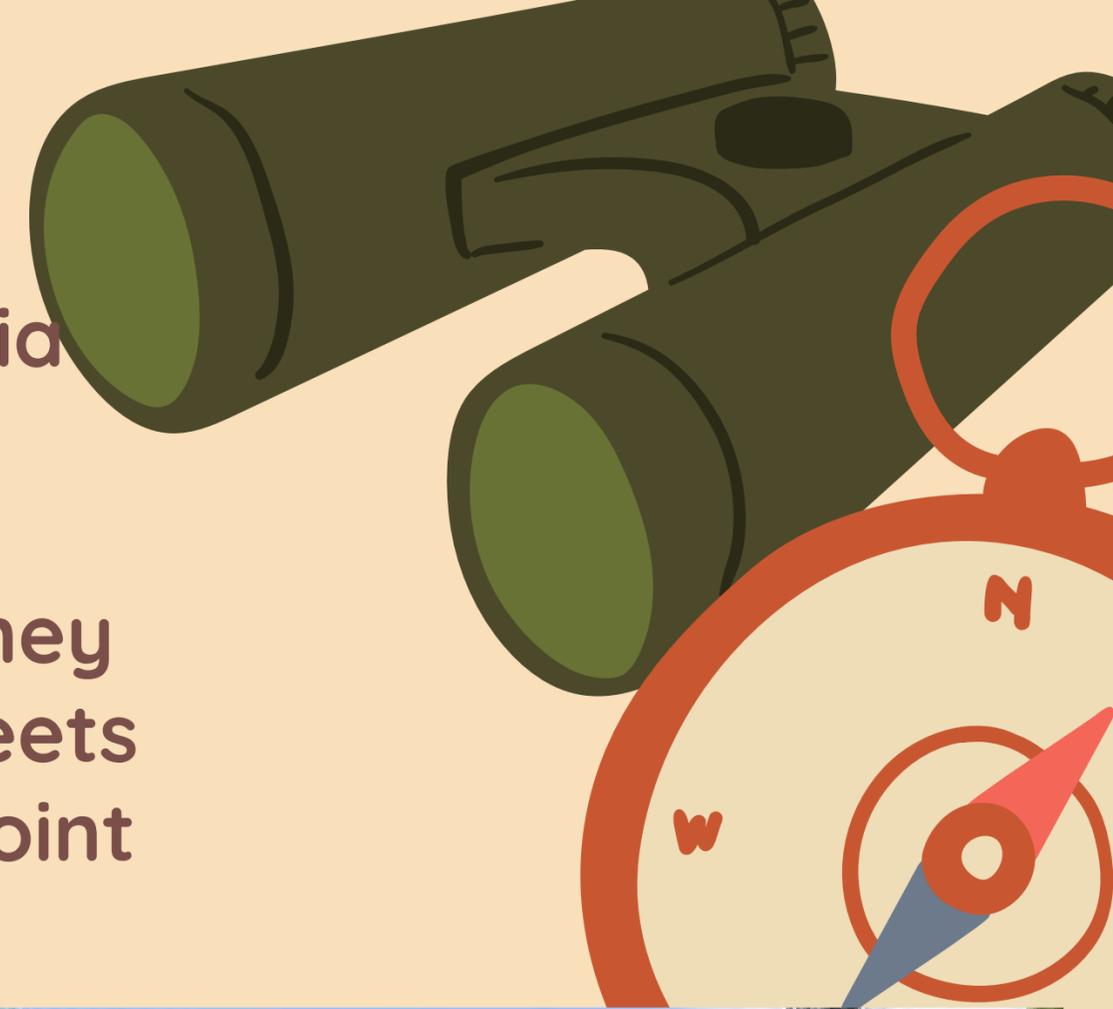
My favorite spot is near 'El Mirador del Puerto'.
I would go there every week, just to sit, listen to the waves,
read, paint...

And as you can see, I'm not the only one!

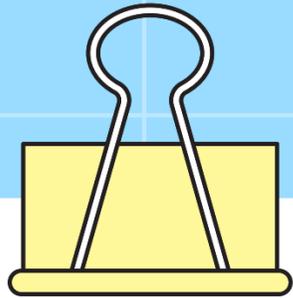


THE TURIA GARDENS.

Another place I went to (almost every day) is The Turia Gardens. I have never been the sporty type, but something about this place changed everything. The gardens cover a significant portion of the city. They are like a quiet, green haven away from the busy streets and roads. It became my favorite route to go from point A to point B.



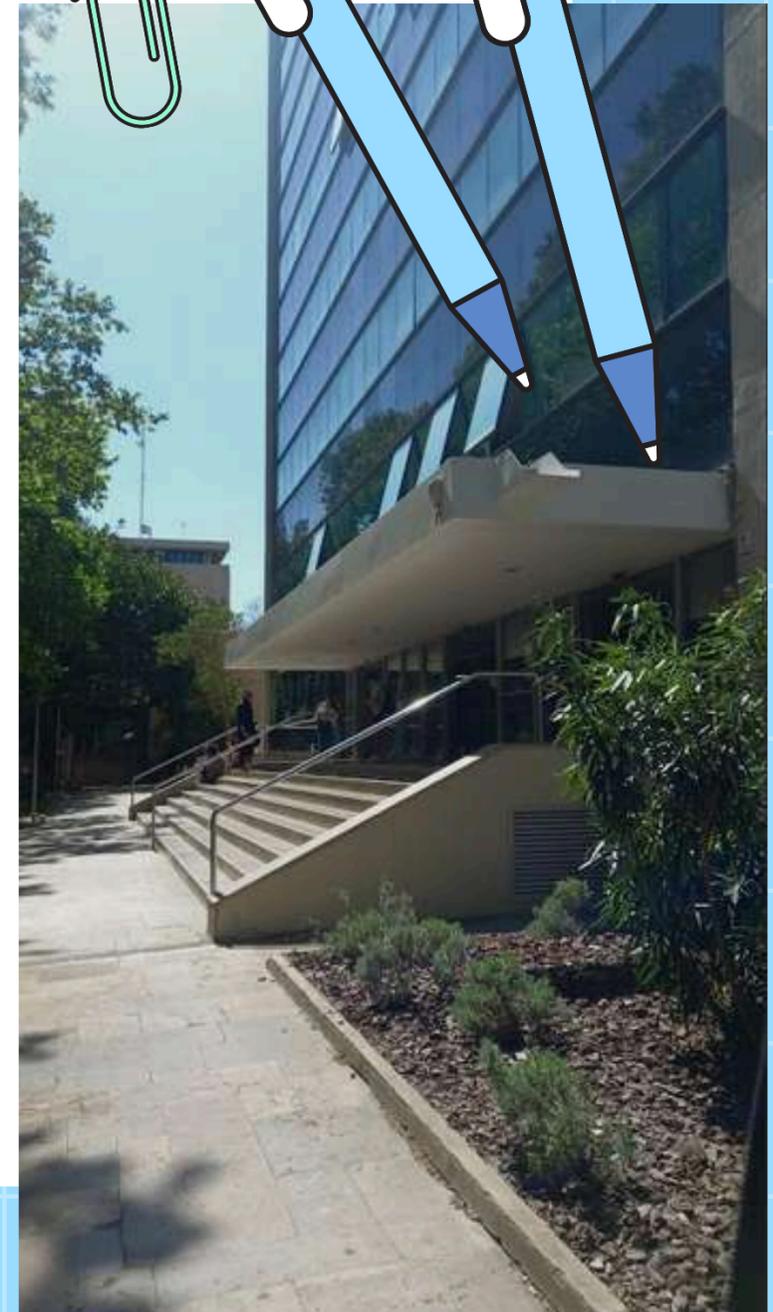
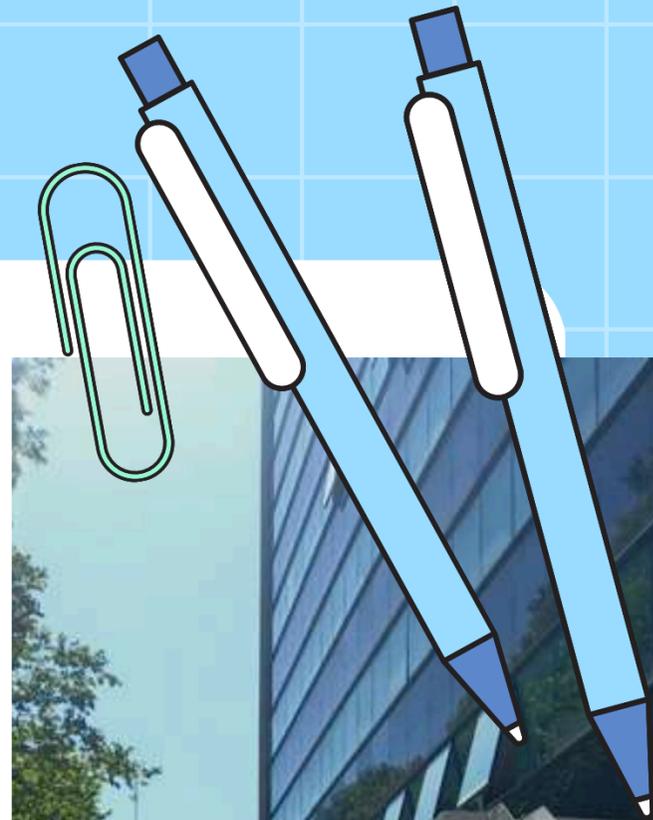
School life



The teachers here are amazing. (Not that the ones in Dijon aren't) They have an approach that is quite different from what we're used to in France. They are, in a way, less 'rigid'.

On this subject, something funny I have noticed is that Spanish people are not very punctual. In France, you would have to be there at least 5 minutes before class starts. Here, the teacher might show up 8 minutes late, and students could stroll in 10 to even 30 minutes late without anyone batting an eye.

By the way, the students are also lovely. They made me feel so welcomed! Let it be the Spanish students who immediately set out to make us discover their city and culture, Or the other eramsus from any country that help each other.



Classes

As you can see, this timetable is pretty awesome. There was plenty of time to explore the city while still focusing on school.

"Monographic Course"

Victorian Literature.

It was incredibly interesting because we had covered this topic in L2 in Dijon, but the teacher here had a completely different approach, making it feel like we were discovering the subject all over again.

"English Language 6"

In this class, we focused on meeting the criterias for the Cambridge exam. We worked on expressing ourselves and conveying ideas in english. There were loads of group activities, which were perfect for making new friends. It really helped me connect with classmates!



	Lundi	Mardi	Mercredi	Jeudi	Vendredi
8					
9	Mono. 203	Mono. 407			
9					
10					
11			Intro. 403		Intro. 403
12					
12					
13					
14					
14					
15					
15					
16	Lang. 203	Lang. 203	French 101		French 101
16					
17					
17					
17					

"Introduction to English Literature"

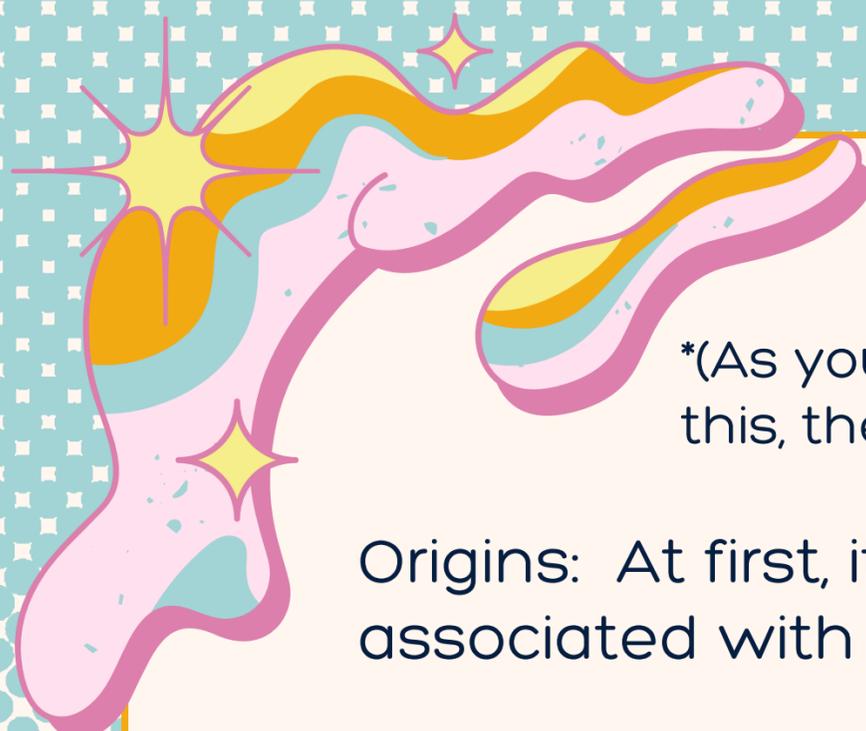
Just as the name suggests. Again, it is something we did in year 1, but we actually learned a ton of new things! The teacher was incredibly passionate and would dive into all sorts of fascinating anecdotes about English history and literature. We even went to see a play: "Les Troianes : Fucking Nowhere."

"French"

Once again, it might seem like an easy way to get a good grade. And yes, it was, but it was more than that. We got a true taste of what it would be like to be a FLE teacher. The teachers made us their assistants, and we even got to teach our own classes

Las Fallas

The image features the text "Las Fallas" in a highly stylized, bubbly, and rounded font. The letters are white with a thick purple outline. The text is set against a light pink background with a halftone dot pattern. The word "Las" is on the left, and "Fallas" is on the right. The text is surrounded by various decorative elements: a large, multi-colored flower (pink, orange, and blue) is positioned above "Las"; a yellow lightning bolt with a purple outline is above "Fallas"; a yellow starburst is to the right of "Fallas"; and several smaller flowers and abstract shapes in shades of pink, orange, and yellow are scattered around the text. The overall style is playful and celebratory.



“The Fallas” is a traditional celebration held every year in the month of March. This year, it was from march 1st to march 19th*.

*(As you might have heard, there was a terrible fire on the 22 of February. In regard to this, there was three days of mourning and so the start of the fallas was offset.)

Origins: At first, it was celebrating the arrival of spring. Over the time, it became associated with Saint Joseph (a carpenter).

It is a vibrant and colourful event that attracts tourists from all over the world !

The name **“Fallas”** refers to the elaborate cardboard, wood, and papier-mâché sculptures, called **“fallas”**, which are constructed and displayed throughout the city. At the end of the celebrations, those artworks are burned.*





“La Cremà” (the burning): on the night of March 19th All of the fallas monuments are set on fire. It symbolizes the end of the festival and the renewal that comes with the arrival of spring.

(Not my favourite part If I may add. I really appreciate the symbolism behind it, but seeing all those gorgeous creations being destroyed broke my heart)

The **“Mascletàs”**: a daily event. It is basically daytime fireworks displays and firecrackers, with rhymed and deafening blasts.

But there is also colourful parades with a lot of music, traditional dances (and costumes), throughout the streets.





PROMOTING PUBLIC TRANSPORTS AND YOUTH MOBILITY !

Monthly free public transport for young people. I repeat, it was free! You can take as many buses, metro, and trams as you want, all thanks to the Abono Jove gratuito. I just had to schedule an appointment and provide my ID information to prove my age, and they gave me the card. This is one of the many example why this city is perfect for students;

“a single-person ticket called ‘free Temporal Jove season ticket’ valid for travel in the zones of Metrovalencia, MetroBús and EMT, with no limit on the number of trips, for people under 31 years of age, until June 30, 2024.”

<https://www.metrovalencia.es/en/free-temporal-jove-season-ticket-terms-of-use/>

TIPS :

Familiarize yourself with the means of transportations and the routes you will have to take. Every country and city have a different system and I can be overwhelming to discover this once arrived.

I MISSED MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY :(

Going far away from the people I love, even though I went with classmates I knew, made me feel really alone and isolated.

A trip is something you plan ahead

However, something I did not plan for was how much I would miss my parents, my friends, and even my cat. (Thankfully, I was gifted a pillow with her on it, so we still sleep together every night as we used to !)

And thank goodness for this era of internet and social media. In the end, I can still stay connected to the ones I love everyday and share my Valencian adventures with them!

On top of that, I made a lot of friends coming from everywhere in the whole planet! so this is worth everything !

Tip : Do not hesitate to make friends with the other erasmus students. It is always funnier to do tourism in groups (ex: see [HappyErasmusValencia](#))

(I promise she is prettier in real life)





THERE IS SO
MUCH MORE TO
SAY, BUT I WILL
STOP THERE :)