



Erasmus in beautiful Lisbon

Innan avresa

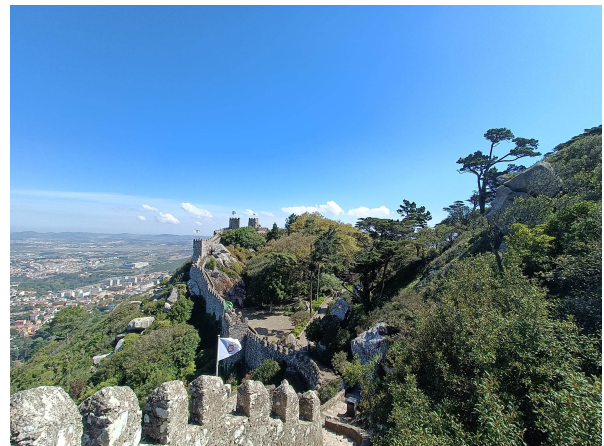
I've always wanted to study abroad ever since I enrolled at KTH. That my Erasmus was spent in Portugal was not really planned. I ultimately chose Portugal due to the generally positive experience of previous students and the weather here.

There were no specific preparations to undertake before coming to Portugal. No visas or vaccines. I took the train down from Stockholm to Portugal, and most of my preparations went into planning the train trip.



Ankomst

I arrived in Lisbon a few days before the courses started, just in time to meet with some friends and explore the city. The reception was organized by the student organization at IST. The reception week had a lot of activities to partake in. For example, you can have a guided tour around Lisbon, one surf lesson or travel to Sintra. I chose to go to Sintra and explore the Moorish castle.



Besides the student organization at IST, there was Erasmus life Lisboa, which organized activities for all Erasmus students in Lisbon. They organized pub crawls, walking tours, boat parties, and trips to the Algarve and Nazaré, to name a few.

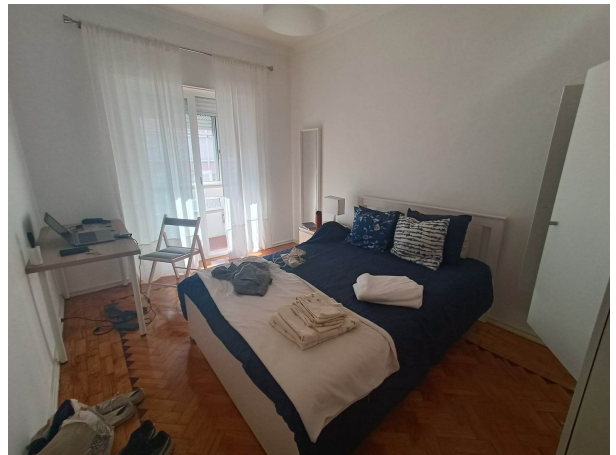
Ekonomi

I applied for the Erasmus+ stipend and extended CSN. I also saved up quite a bit before travelling to Portugal to have money to go to Madeira, for example. Still, I think just the Erasmus+ and extended CSN will suffice. Generally, the cost of living is lower compared to Sweden.

Boende

Lisbon is a very popular destination for Erasmus students, which makes the quest for finding accommodation quite tricky. I recommend looking for housing a few months in advance to maximize the chances of getting a place that suits your preferences. I've heard that some students had to live in hostels for a few weeks before finding something more permanent.

I did exactly the opposite and looked for accommodation 1 week before arriving in Lisbon. I was lucky to find my room, for which I paid 350 euros each month. The downside was that I lived a bit outside the city centre. I found my room on [idealista.pt](https://www.idealista.pt). Be prepared that most Portuguese apartments lack central heating, so it can be pretty cold during the winter.



Universitetet och studierna

IST was not very much different from KTH, and the course structure is similar, with lectures, tutorial sessions and labs. One difference is that the schedule is fixed. I found the buildings of IST to be a bit old compared to KTH. All courses at the master's level are taught in English.

The teachers were very knowledgeable and eager to help. Most of them took the time to learn your name. An annoying part is that, more often than not, the courses lacked a course syllabus, so it was sometimes confusing how the tests would be graded.



Kurser

I only read 24 ECTS in Lisbon since I studied extra at KTH before the exchange. This was a good call since I could relax more in Lisbon. The courses were very interesting.

Computational biology 6 ECTS

A course about computational methods used in biology. There were 2 lectures and 2 tutorial sessions each week. The examination consisted of 2 projects and an exam. You could skip the exam if you completed two smaller tests during the course (kontrollskrivning).

Statistical methods in data mining 6 ECTS

A course about supervised and unsupervised methods in machine learning. 2 labs and 1 exam to pass.

Complex analysis 6 ECTS

A continuation course on complex analysis. I wasn't aware that this was a continuation course, and I struggled a bit. Still, the course was not impossible, and with a little bit of work, I passed. The examination consisted of solving 5 problem sets and an exam.

Numerical functional analysis and optimization 6 ECTS

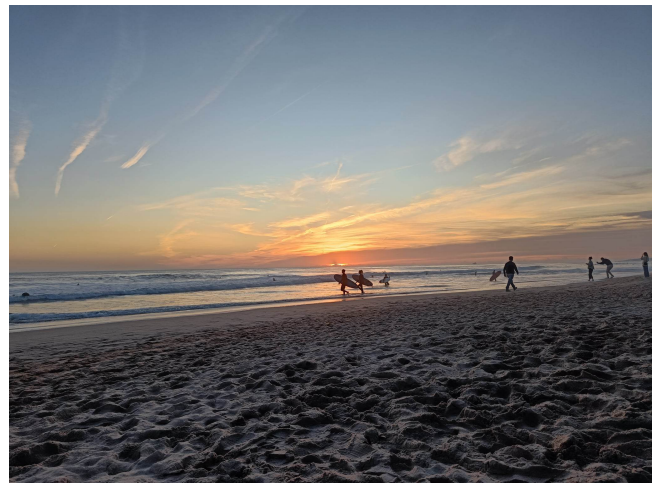
This course focused on solving non-linear systems of equations and non-linear optimization problems numerically. The examination consisted of 2 smaller tests and an exam. If you've passed the smaller tests, you only had to do half of the exam.

Portuguese language course

In this course, you will learn the basics of Portuguese. The course started in the middle of October and lasted until the end of November. I had classes Monday-Friday from 19.00-21.00. The course is relatively easy, as it is designed for people with no experience in Portuguese. I had an excellent teacher who made the lessons very fun.

Staden och landet

Lisbon is a lovely city, with everything you could wish for. History, culture and art in the old town of Alfama, where you can cruise through on the tram. Surfing or relaxing on the beautiful beaches of Carcavelos and Costa de Caparica. Visiting the many bars and restaurants in the downtown area, especially in Bairro alto.

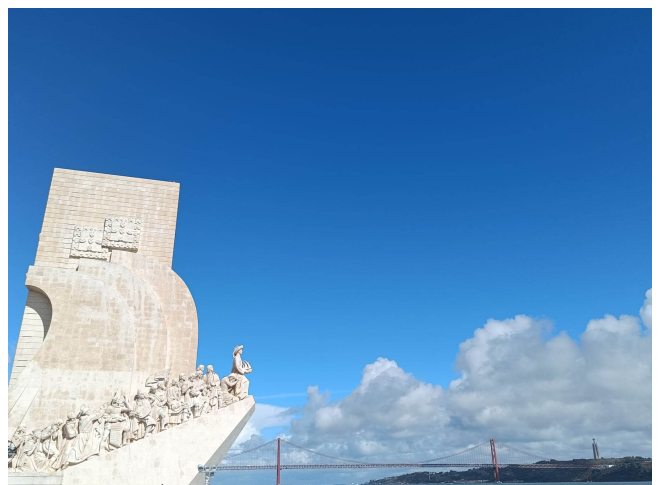


Fritid och sociala aktiviteter

My free time in Lisbon was spent hanging out with my friends and exploring Lisbon and Portugal. My favourite areas are Belém and the area around Cristo Rei, a giant Jesus statue on the other side of the Tagus river.

There are also lots of beautiful hikes around Lisbon. My favourite is Cabo da Roca, the western point of continental Portugal.

I also visited the Algarve, Madeira, Porto and the national park of Gerês. One highlight was Madeira, where my friends and I watched the sunrise atop Pico Arreiro, after which we had a beautiful hike.





Hållbarhet

I took the train down to Lisbon, so it is possible to travel there sustainably. That was an enjoyable experience, and I think KTH will help to pay for your tickets if you choose to travel to your exchange by bus or train. Lisbon has a good public transport system, but buses can sometimes be unreliable.

Rekommendationer och övriga reflektioner

I highly recommend Portugal as an exchange destination and hope you will have a wonderful time there!