

My Erasmus Story: Four Months on Madeira Island, Portugal

In February 2025, I landed on Madeira Island, Portugal — a small Atlantic paradise I had only dreamed of. It was my first time seeing the ocean, and I had chosen this destination not only for its beauty but also because of my deep love for Lusophone culture and the Portuguese language, which I find incredibly beautiful.

For four months, I studied Computer Engineering at the University of Madeira, diving into subjects like Advanced Programming, Software Engineering, Human-Computer Interaction, Data Science, and Computer Architecture. Most of my classes were designed for third-year students — and I was only in my second year. One course was even at the master's level. It was an academic challenge, no doubt, but it pushed me to improve my IT skills far beyond what I expected.

Despite the intense study load, this experience gave me more than knowledge. I grew emotionally. Leaving my comfort zone was tough — the academic pressure, being away from home, the occasional loneliness — but it all taught me strength. I became more confident, less hesitant. Decisions that once felt heavy due to my overthinking now come more naturally. I've also reached fluency in Portuguese — a huge personal milestone that fills me with pride.

What truly made Erasmus unforgettable were the people. I formed friendships with students from all over the world — Czechia, Ecuador, Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Moldova, Russia, Poland, Spain, Croatia — and together we explored Madeira's stunning nature. I'll never forget hiking through misty mountains, jumping into the ocean, trying surfing for the first time, and speaking Portuguese with locals every day. These moments shaped my view of the world and myself.

To anyone considering Erasmus: take the leap. Don't be afraid to feel vulnerable — being out of your comfort zone can be uncomfortable, but that's where real growth happens. Explore new countries, embrace different cultures, and trust that you'll return stronger, wiser, and more open.



















