



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Master Nutrition and Health
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	04/09/2023 until 22/12/2023
Exchange destination: University	AgroParisTech
Faculty	FIPDes (Food Innovation and Product Design, Erasmus Mundus study)
Country	France
City	Paris

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I decided to go on a study exchange mainly to step out of my comfort zone and experience living in a different country than the Netherlands. Also, I wanted to explore new perspectives on food and nutrition. Living and studying in a different country promised a whole set of experiences and learnings that I wouldn't get staying in the Netherlands.

What is the reason you chose for this country/university?

I have chosen Paris as my exchange destination because of its renowned culinary culture and gastronomy. Being passionate about pastry, it felt like the best city for me to explore and deepen my interest. Additionally, AgroParisTech's M2 FIPDes program in Food Design and Engineering aligned with my academic goals and interests.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

Getting to Paris is easy by train, and from there, the train (RER) takes you right to the university. From where I was living, there was a convenient morning bus service directly to the university, which significantly reduced travel time and made commuting hassle-free.

4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

	Course	ECTS	Short description of the contents	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
1	Physical Chemistry for the Structuration of Food Products	6	Lectures about physical chemistry applied to food structure design. Group work in which a paper was critically viewed.	2	
2	Molecular Gastronomy	4	The science behind cooking, exploring new methods and ingredients, and learning about note by note cooking.	3	
3	Product Process Interaction	4	Different unit operations, as drying, freeze-drying, emulsification, expansion, and other texturing thermo mechanical processes were discussed in lectures. Also, you worked on product-process interactions of your senior project (in lab).	4	
4	Senior Project	8	Project work at the experimental kitchen and pilot scale. The project was about scaling-up a food innovation on which the students worked in a different course.	5	
5	Reaction Engineering Applied to Food Matrices	6	Lectures about food reactivity applied to food quality design & research based lab work.	4	
6	French language or foreign language for french speaking students	-	French classes consisted mainly about grammar and speaking as much as possible in French.	3	

What is it like to study there?

E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material.

Studying at AgroParisTech was hands-on and engaging with a focus on project-based learning instead of traditional exams. Most courses involved group projects, while the molecular gastronomy course required an individual paper. Besides group work, lectures were given, from both professors and industry professionals, offering practical insights.

The workload was demanding at times, with needing to work some evenings or weekends to meet deadlines.

What is the culture of the university?

E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with the WUR?

At AgroParisTech, professors are easily accessible, thanks to small classes where questions and discussions are encouraged. In contrast to the WUR, it is expected to be present during all classes, especially since classes are little. Connecting with local students may take some effort, but speaking French can be beneficial. The university offers a range of activities for students to participate in together, so the level of engagement is largely up to you.

What does the university offer students additionally?

E.g. catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?

AgroParisTech provides affordable lunch options at nearby and on-campus cafeterias. Though smaller than WUR, there's ample seating and outdoor areas. Student accommodations are available nearby for those living outside Paris. The university offers various student associations, including sports as well as wine/cheese clubs.

5. Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing?

E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?

In my case, the university arranged a room at the Cité Universitaire, a park with diverse student residences located in Paris. Additionally, there are accommodations available near the university for those preferring to stay closer to campus. Specific rent rates can vary, so it's advisable to check with the university or housing office for more detailed information.

What is the culture of the country like?

E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?

In France, 'joie de vivre' is central to the culture, emphasizing enjoyment of life's pleasures. The country's rich culinary scene is a major cultural aspect. It's important to note that many people in Paris primarily speak French, and English is not universally spoken. Therefore, speaking French can be a significant advantage if you truly want to engage with locals and fully embrace the culture.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?)

Paris has an efficient metro system with frequent trains/metros, running every 5 to 10 minutes. A monthly Navigo pass costs €80 for unlimited travel in the Île-de-France region, but students can get it for around €40 with some paperwork. The university is easily accessible by RER and walking/taking a bus from across the city. Depending on where you live it can take around an hour to reach the university. However, in the morning the university arranged a bus going straight to the University, which significantly reduced travel time and made commuting hassle-free.

6. Expenses

Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

E.g. you can also indicate price differences (higher/lower/equal) in comparison to the Netherlands.

Ticket there: €50

Visa if applicable: -

Vaccinations if applicable: -

Insurances (extra, if applicable): -

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: 600

Groceries: 150-200

Public transport: 40

Restaurant/going out for dinner: varying

Daytrips/sight-seeing: varying

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

Paris can be as expensive as you want it to be. Luckily, many museums offer free admission to European citizens under 25 years old, making it easy to visit places without any costs. Also, with the Navigo monthly pass (public transport) you can travel in the whole Île-de-France region, which makes daytrips very cheap!

7. Free time What are must-sees in the area?

E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?

What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth a visit?

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

9. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
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