

International student David Gutdeutsch about his studying at Polytechnic University and travelling around Russia

David GUTDEUTSCH is an unusual student. He came to Russia from Germany as part of the Erasmus+ program. After a semester on exchange, David decided to continue his studies at Polytechnic University and began to study the Russian language in the university preparatory program. And David is also an avid traveler, he would give many experienced tourists a head start. Our interview is about pandemic studies, life in Russia, trips to Dagestan, Tuva Republic, Sakhalin Island, and much more.



- David please tell us what it's like to be an international student during a pandemic?

- When the lessons became online in the spring, they have not lost their quality to me. The teachers even probably gave extra lessons more flexibly. Since at the beginning of the pandemic, I did not go outside often, there was nothing to do but better prepare the lessons. But during this time, I almost lost touch with Russian students, including due to the cancellation of student events, such as the university orchestra. Still, I like studying in the classroom with everyone more.

- Our traditional question: why did you choose Polytechnic?

- I'm studying at Technical University in Munich (Germany), TUM offers exchange programs to all continents. I had a big choice. I decided to come to Russia, because I like to get good skills in Russian language, like the people and the country. I chose St. Petersburg because of its cultural heritage and its position next to the sea.

- What did you study as part of your exchange semester at Polytechnic University?

- I studied civil engineering. At the beginning of study in Munich, I read about the possibility of spending a year abroad, so I immediately applied to fulfill one of my dreams besides becoming a civil engineer – learning the Russian language and traveling through Russia. I have very motivated and experienced Russian language teachers, and my program also includes Russian history and literature.

- If we're talking about disciplines, tell us, what are your favorites?

- Since I am currently in a university preparatory program, my favorite subjects are Russian literature, Russian history and Russian language. I concentrate especially seriously on the language lessons.



- Do you remember your first impression of Russia?

- Of course I remember! I was looking out of the window of the train from Helsinki to St. Petersburg, and Russia welcomed me with its endless birch forests. On the train. I have met my now good Russian friend, who is also studying at Polytechnic University.

- Was it difficult to get used to life in another country?

- I can't say that there were any serious difficulties. Thanks to the great Tutor Forces, who caught me at the train station and were overwhelmingly helpful to solve any issues that came up.

- And what about your relationships with other students?

- Good personal relationships I have with some exchange students, but they all went home and there no new ones came for this semester. In addition, I'm spending time together with Russian students I met in PolyUnion student club and German class, which I often join to take part in a language exchange program within Polytechnic University.

- What do you think of the Russian educational system? Does it differ from the German one?

- It's great that Polytechnic University offers such a complete program for preparing foreigners to begin studying at Polytechnic University and that it is also open to any interested, such as future interpreters. As far as I know, my university TUM doesn't offer such an intensive program.

- Do you plan to work in your speciality? How are you going to use the knowledge you gained at SPbPU?

- Having these language skills, I consider the first step towards the possibility to live and work in Russia in the future. Furthermore, the Russian language skills can be useful in Munich.

- What do you think of life in Russia in general?

- I like living in Russia very much, that's why I prolonged my stay in Russia two times. At first I came to study as an exchange student, then I went to study Russian as part of my university preparatory program. During this time I traveled a lot: I visited the Republic of Tuva, Dagestan, and Sakhalin. On Sakhalin, together with a friend, I crossed the island walking along an old railway and through a river, since there was no bridge anymore.

- We can say that not everyone in Russia travels around the country so much! What do you think of the diversity of Russian nature?

- Being the biggest country of the world, Russia has a great variety of nature, far

more than the famous tundra and Lake Baikal. From the biggest sand dune of Europe, which appears like a little desert, to the Mongolia-like landscape in Tuva, and a lot of lakes as salty as the Dead Sea in Israel. In Russia, I found a lot of amazing unique nature.



- And here in the Leningrad region, what have you had time to see?

- I highly recommend a trip to Vyborg which is only one hour by cheap regional train from St Petersburg. In the 13th century, the Swedes built a castle on a little island and founded Vyborg. The rocky islands around Vyborg are very worth of a little walk.

- David, are there any places in Russia you haven't visited yet?

- Since I haven't been to the North, Salekhard and Murmansk are among my favorites.

- We know that as part of your student projects you took part in shooting a video for the social network Instagram. Please share your impressions!

- I enjoyed it although I hate to listen to my own voice. It was the first experience like that and I was very surprised that we [had filmed a video](#) in one take!

- As someone who has studied Russia in detail from the inside, what advice do you have for other international students who are thinking about studying here?

It's 100% worth it to get in touch with very friendly and welcoming Russian people and enjoy the rich cultural life in St. Petersburg. Here they care about tradition but at the same time are open to everything new. By the way, a great bonus for St. Petersburg students is that many cultural events with a student ID have good discounts!

- David, thank you for the interesting interview! We wish you to implement all your plans!

Prepared by the SPbPU International Office

Дата публикации: 2020.12.25

[>>Перейти к новости](#)

[>>Перейти ко всем новостям](#)