

Year 12 Physics Visit to Geneva

A few weeks ago, I had what I call one of the best weekends I have had in year 12, when I went to Geneva, in Switzerland. The idea was first pitched to me and the other A level students – around 25 of us at the beginning of the year. Despite the fact that Switzerland is the second most expensive country in the world, topped only by Bermuda, which meant that going for two days summed up to a lot, a huge percentage of us were sold. Geneva seemed exciting, for so many reasons – you had people who had the chance to have one of their lifelong dreams fulfilled: going to CERN, the ‘heart of matter,’ people who loved to travel, and simply people who thought a weekend away would be good for the soul.



The actual trip did not fail to live up to these expectations. We started off very early in the morning, with everyone practically sleeping on top one another, all the way through to Geneva. But when we got to the airport everyone was far too fascinated to sleep, as we saw a new country, with new people. For me, the most fascinating part of a trip is seeing the people and the place, and how it differs from our own country. As we walked to our hostel, it seemed less modern than London – more traditional, almost like France or Germany. Then when we walked near the lake, the view was stunning; you had modern buildings mixed in with high hills and beautiful countryside, and far to the other side we saw Jet d’Eau, a jet of water about 30 metres high, originally created to aid with technical issues. We had some time, so we walked through and then went to go see the old UN building. It was beautifully historic, and the tour guide told us all about the history of the place. We even saw peacocks there – a gift from one of the countries, and learnt why the UN was actually here – because it was the ‘centre of the world’ according to our manmade map.

While all the exploring of these places was definitely enjoyable, my favourite part of the trip was coming back from the UN and walking near the lake again, where we all sat down. The weather was cooler and it was very peaceful there, and it was one of my favourite parts because it was a sort of bonding experience, where we all sat down together and enjoyed each other’s company, sharing our experiences and just taking in the view. There weren’t very many of us, which made it a lot easier, and it was similar the next day, when we were walking on our way to the tram station, to get to the highlight of the trip – CERN was humongous. There was so much to do there. Personally, one of the most unforgettable moments there was the food we ate – absolutely divine and definitely worth the price! Of course, there was a lot more to it than just food. We had a tour guide who took us through it, and she was able to answer any questions anyone had, as she worked there, and so there were lots of questions asked, and many places seen, even though we couldn’t actually go all the way in. No one left there without learning something new, which shows it was a fulfilling trip, on all of our parts, and the best way to learn about something is to actually see it.



Towards the end of our second day, it ended as it began – we were all insanely tired, and then found out our flight was delayed, which actually wasn't too bad – it was late at night so we had the whole airport to ourselves, and we ended the trip sleepy but happy. Geneva was one of those trips which I think I will remember for a very long time – not just for the educational purposes, but because it was our last residential school trip, and the company was unforgettable. You will not find one person who did not enjoy it.



Thank you to Mr Le and Miss Patel for taking us!

Amina, Year 12