

Let's go to Straja!

Dear friends, here I am again. This time I am taking you to a beautiful mountain called Straja.

When the coordinator informed us about the trip, I did not have to think twice and I applied immediately. I knew it would help me get to know everyone better, and it is always good to go to new destinations. The whole trip was well planned and soon everything was ready for our departure.

As soon as we took off I met many people. That is also when I finally spoke in Serbian, because I met some "neighbours", a guy and a girl from Bosnia and a girl from Montenegro. We travelled for about three hours, but our coordinators made the time go by quickly by coming up with different games for us. In the beginning of the trip, each of us took a paper with the name of a person who was in the bus. From that moment on, we were supposed to be that person's angel. They could not find out who we were, and it was on us to decide whether we want to be a good or a bad angel. We spent the rest of the trip in getting to know each other, laughing, joking and having fun.

Since the bus could not take us to the apartments we would be staying in, because the road was very steep, he drove as far as he could and we had to walk the rest of the way. This was a bit harder than I had expected, because, of course, typical me – when I do not know what to pack, I pack everything. That was definitely not a good idea. With a backpack too full, I looked like a real mountaineer, just not in the necessary physical shape. After a long walk, we finally arrived. When we walked in, we were greeted by a warm dining hall and many employees' smiles, showing that they would help us with everything we wished. After lunch, we had a short break, and later we continued with different creative games.

In our next game we were divided into four teams: blue, green, red and yellow. Everyone took a piece of paper with one of those colours written on it, and mine had the colour red. As I was the only guy on my team, the girls suggested that I should be the leader, which, of course, I accepted. This is what the game was like: each team got about 20 uncooked spaghetti sticks, a piece of thick string, some duct tape and a piece of soft candy. We were supposed to build a tower with these materials, and the piece of candy was supposed to be on top of it. My friends, I have to say this was pretty hard. We started putting the spaghetti sticks together, but we could not figure out how to make a good stand, the grounds on which the tower could rise. Then one of the coordinators told us that we were allowed to use anything we had on the table as well – which turned out to save us, because we had a winter hat that would later on serve as our new stand. And that way, our tower with a piece of candy on top was built. But then we looked around and realized that one of the teams had a tower taller than ours! We tried to add some height to it, but that did not work at first because everything crashed. Eventually, with team work, we managed to raise the tower again, even taller this time. When the time was up, the towers were measured. We did not win, but we were not sorry because the whole game was full of jokes and laughter. The whole point of the game was to work as a team, which we of course succeeded in.

After that, we had another short break with good music, and then we got a new task. This time we were supposed to show our cooking skills. We peeled vegetables, cut them, spiced up some of them with tears, but we eventually fulfilled all the tasks. When we arranged all the ingredients, we made a stew and barbeque. Finally, we ate all of it with relish. We all went back to our rooms to get ready for the party that our coordinators organized for us. There was another interesting game that day – everyone

wrote what they wanted someone else to do on a piece of paper, and put it in the box of challenges. The party started with an interesting game and lots of laughter. All the teams stood in circles and each team got a balloon that they had to keep in the air. The coordinators ran up to the teams and said: "Now you can't use your left hand", "Now you can't use your right hand either", "Now can't even use your head" and so on. This time our team won. The music got louder, we all danced and had a good time. Around midnight, the box of challenges was opened, so people had to dance, sing, act, tell jokes and do all sorts of interesting things. The party then continued until early in the morning.

The next day, after breakfast, we had a long walk through the steep mountain. I have to say I managed not to fall, although it almost happened about thirty times. We enjoyed the sights, especially at times when we reached the peaks of the mountain and stopped to take a breath and a couple of photos. We went back to the hotel following a forest path. After that, it was time to pack and head home. We brought our luggage down to the bus and hurried back because there was one thing we had not tried – the cable car ride. I have to tell you, it was really an unforgettable experience. The cable car moved fast, which just made the whole ride even better. It was beautiful to watch all the sights from that height. The bus waited for us at the end of the ride, and we headed towards Alba Iulia.

I hope you enjoyed these beautiful photographs. If you ever come to Romania, I strongly recommend visiting this place. Salut!