

# HÄ, WAS?



THE ADVENTURES  
OF JOHANNA- AN  
INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENT LIVING  
IN FREIBURG

**LIVIN' LIFE THE  
FREIBURGER WAY**

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INTERCULTURAL MENTORING



# THERE IS NOTHING QUITE AS GREAT AS A CITY WITH SPIRIT

All cities have their quirks and charm, and Freiburg has no shortage of it whatsoever! The first time I came to Freiburg I was amazed by, well, pretty much everything. It's a city that I think has found the perfect balance between nature and city. In fact, you can see the black forest from most parts of the city and you can easily start hiking from different points of the town itself! If you're looking for a young, green city with a personality of its own then Freiburg might be a perfect fit! Here's a couple of my most favorite quirks of the city!



# BICYCLING

Bicycling is a BIG DEAL in Freiburg. In fact, the only other place I've found it to be more intense than Freiburg is in Amsterdam! The people here truly care about their carbon footprint and if they can find ways to cut down the amount of energy they use, leave it up to Freiburgers to do so! The city is laid out in a way where it even makes more sense most of the time to go by bike than by car or sometimes even by tram. You'll see everyone out here on their bikes between old folks and young children, business people, or the good ol' average joe! It's great to be on the bike, enjoy the fresh air, and experience the outdoors in a different way than what you would if you weren't using the bike!

# PROTESTERS IN THE PLATZ DER ALTEN SYNAGOGE

You'll find loads of different people out here protesting about anything and everything. I LOVE the fact that people come together for a cause they care about- there is something so inspiring about people wanting to make a change, organizing a way to get people together with the same mission, and seeing them outside to take a stand! It makes you really believe in the power of unity and can really give others the courage to stand up for the things they want to see a difference in. The square is quite special as well because you can see students here at pretty much anytime of day. You can find them clustered up catching the last rays of sun after a study session in the library, or hanging out and drinking a beer together.



# VEGANISM

One of the things that surprised me when I first got to Germany is that even discount stores had vegan, gluten-free, and fair-trade options. Veganism wasn't something I saw as often back home, but it's incredibly normal in Freiburg to find vegan options here in the city! In fact, I also see graffiti quite often around the city that says "go vegan, save the world" – Obviously people go vegan for a plethora of different reasons, but the simple act of caring for animals and the awareness of how much CO2 is produced in meat factories is a very, very important way people can change their habits to help save the planet!

# REUSABLE BAGS



This isn't only a Freiburg thing, but I had to mention it anyway! Getting plastic bags or using unnecessary uses of plastic are BIG no-gos in this city. The last time I got ice-cream myself I overheard a grandma in complete disbelief that someone would actually use a plastic spoon for an ice cream you're only going to be eating for 5 minutes! She was absolutely LIVID. She proceeded to say "How could someone think it's okay to use a plastic spoon for 5 minutes for it to end up for years on this planet?!" Needless to say, taking your reusables and skipping the plastic helps the planet and people here will speak out about it. Do your part and keep a bag with you at all times- you never know when you may need it!

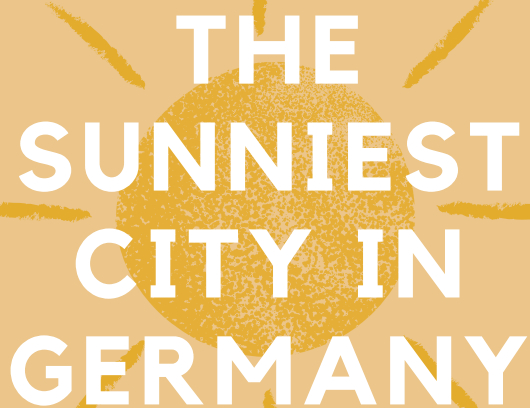


# ENERGY EFFICIENT LIVING

Just go to the neighborhood Vauban known for its excellence in sustainable energy! There are blocks of homes which focus on specific ways to make their living more sustainable, like reusing rain water in their toilets and other similar projects! Alongside with reusability, there is a strong focus on reusing (like mentioned above). Finding a home for items that no longer serve someone in their home. Rather than just tossing something out, people will put the things they no longer need inside of a box and leave it on the street labeled "zum mitnehmen", which means you can take what you see inside! My very own apartment has been furnished from the kindness of strangers and finding fun, eclectic things on the side of the road!

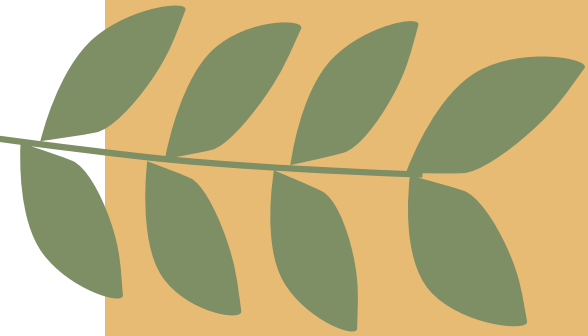
# CLUB MATE

Mate is originally from Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia used as a drink to bring people together. The yerba mate leaves are put in a special cup made out of a gourd along with a special metal straw. Boiling water is then put into the gourd and passed from one person to the next, who take sips of the drink and pass it on to the next person to enjoy. Club mate is different. You don't drink it out of a gourd. It's a fizzy drink, comes in a glass bottle, and although it's not the original it's still something you should try at least once!



## THE SUNNIEST CITY IN GERMANY

Oh, the fact that we all know and love and don't get tired of repeating to any visitor in town! Freiburg is the city with the highest number of hours of sun in Germany. Germany can be cold, wet, and rainy (even in the summer) so for those of you looking to study or live in a place where the days are long, warm, and bright, Freiburg's got your back. There's nothing quite as sweet as Freiburg in the summer with all of the lakes in and nearby the city!



# BÄCHLE

In the old city, there are little canals on the side of the streets with running water. At one time, this was a place to deposit waste and have a way to clean out the city. Nowadays, it's used for fun! You can see little kiddos playing in the Bächle with little wooden boats or you can even find people sitting inside one, resting their feet after a long day in the cold water. But be careful! Legend says that if you fall into a Bächle then you'll marry a Freiburger!





# DANCING

There are quite a few places for dancers in this green city. If you're a dance enthusiast, check out the Tanzbrunnen across from the library! You can find people dancing to Latin American music or doing the lindy hop in the same spot where an old fountain used to stand. In addition to that, one of my favorite parts of my evening walks around Seepark includes watching people learn different African dances. Every few weeks or so you can even catch one of the silent discos that pop up around the city! Whether you're interested in public places to practice bachata, funky nights dancing at a silent disco, or learn some amazingly choreographed African dances, or you feel like taking some private lindy hop lessons- Freiburg's got you covered.

Here's what a few other Freiburgers responded with after asking them what they thought gave the city it's own special spark!

"Guys without shoes!"

*"The free spirits, people can be a lot more open in Freiburg than other countries/cities... The friendly smiles, there are so many here. The street music!"*

"Many wealthy people here don't own a (big) car but a good bike and solar panels on their roof!"

*"80-90% of the people in Vauban vote for the eco-friendly Green Party."*

"The yoga in the parks, the food sharing, the dead Sundays of nothing being open, street-drinking culture!"

"Fraunhofer ISE is only one of three world Institutes that have a solar-cell certification lab (namely, if you want to announce a record of a new solar cell or if you want to certify your solar cells panels), they have to go either to ISE or to Australia or to USA."

"The most typical sentence in Freiburg is 'numme nit huddle!' It means to slow down on something to make it right."

Hope this gives you a bit of insight on what you can expect in Freiburg, although there are WAY too many quirks to list in a single article! Long story short, it's a beautiful place to live filled with eco-conscious people, the black forest, and sunshine! If you've got any questions about the city, don't hesitate to reach out! I'm so thankful to call this sweet city home.

*xoxo, Johanna*

P.S. For more information and inspiration, check out the article BBC did about Freiburg at the link below!

[CLICK HERE!](#)