



YFA TRAVEL DOCUMENT

Seeing the world with the YFC Discovery Programme

NAME: Lucy Hill

CLUB: Ridware YFC

DESTINATION: Sweden

TYPE OF TRIP: Youth Camp

DURATION: 1 week

DATES OF TRAVEL: 2008



DESCRIPTION OF TRIP:

I was lucky enough to be selected to travel with around 20 other UK Young Farmers to Gotland, an island just off the east coast of Sweden and compete as the International team at their annual camp.



After meeting up with some girls from the north at Birmingham to catch a bus to Gatwick we arrived at 4am on Friday 25th July. We had a long journey ahead of us so we set up camp in the airport to wait for the others to arrive to check in at 7.30. We met up with the rest of the YFC crew and checked in, after a leisurely breakfast we realised that our plane left in 10 minutes and had no idea where the gate was, after a quick dash and a spot of indigestion we managed to catch the flight without too many other problems.



After a 2hour flight we arrived in Stockholm. We took two buses to get the ferry which took us across to Gotland. The ferry was a four hour trip. We arrived at about 9pm to meet our translator, whose name was too complicated for us to remember so we aptly name him The Messiah. Once we arrived at the camp we were pleased to find our tents had been put up for us, so we wouldn't be scrabbling around in the dark trying to put up military tents.

The first morning at camp we were woken at 6.45am by loud music being played on the back of a quad bike that was being driven around the camp. We thought it was time to check out the showers, so myself and two other girls went only to find outdoor, cold, communal showers,

which certainly woke us up!! The first day was filled with competitions on the near by beach. In the evening we had to decide on a theme for our camp and then dress up. We decided on Tribal and set about by putting large quantities of make-up on everyone and socialised with other camps.

Sunday was a fairly lazy day for us as the Swedish were taking part in national competitions so we went to the beach and practiced our song for the idol competition that evening. We finally found a song we all knew the words to and came up with dance moves!

On the Monday a 6 mile Nature Trail awaited us, we were in teams of 5. I spent the day with 4 Swedish people whose ages ranged from 12 to 26. After a very long day we all got dressed up for a pirate disco where we learnt a traditional Swedish dance, which was fairly complicated but it was all explained in English which made it a whole lot easier!

Tuesday was a day that we'd been looking forward to as



we were going to the local town of Visby. We spent the morning exploring the medieval town. In the afternoon we went to the beach for a 4H spa, which included face masks, foot massages, hair conditioning, which was much appreciated after the long walk the previous day.

On the Wednesday there were more competitions that we took part in. Including a charades game where we competed against other teams to guess the word. There was also an entertainments production where we had to come up with a performance to do with our tribal theme. Then in the evening there was a professional theatre company who came and performed in English, which was very good and fairly interesting.

Thursday was our last day at camp, we got up and started to pack our suitcases, which took quite a lot of effort, and I wasn't looking forward to unpacking at home due the number of Swedish bugs that had taken a liking to my suitcase. There was volleyball, which was one of the main competitions of the week. I played for the UK team and we lost to the overall winners. That evening was a closing ceremony with fireworks on the beach, which were spectacular.

Friday morning came with the long journey ahead. Overall the camp was a fantastic experience and a lot of fun. I met some amazing people that I will keep in touch with and I would like to thank YFC for the opportunities that they supply for travel, and I would definitely recommend it to anyone!!



How to apply

All you have to do to apply for this trip is fill in a form! It's that simple. This is an 18 or under Youth camp that is put on by the Swedish 4H. 4H is the equivalent to YFC, except that there is very little to do with farming. It's more of just a youth organisation. The camp is held annually and it is the Swedish equivalent to our AGM, without the drinking though!! Each county has its own camp and each camp has its own theme, which are judged and marks go towards the final score.

The Rikslager camp is held in a different place in Sweden every year and hosted by a different county.

There are many other programmes available to YFC members, but most of them you have to be over the age of 18.

This is the only trip that doesn't require an interview, as most other programmes select their candidates by an interview process.

Travelling with Discovery is a fantastic and exceptional experience, it allows you the opportunity to take part in new activities and learn new skills and experience different cultures. It's also great for meeting new people and make new friends, which will be contacts for life. And overall widen your horizons. There are many choices with the Discovery Programme, you can choose between Homestay, Team Travel or Development, Educational and Working Exchanges.

Overall it is a fantastic experience and one that should be grabbed with two hands! I would definitely recommend it to anyone, as there is a trip suited for everyone what ever you hope to get out of the experience!



Lucy Hill