



Kia Ora!

I am Gabriel, and I spent one year in New Zealand, from July 2018 to July 2019. I lived in Invercargill and attended James Hargest College. I am from Cologne, Germany, but didn't really want to go back there.

When I first came here, it took me some time to get used to everything, like wearing a school uniform, having assembly (all classes meet once a week, to talk about upcoming events, to award sports people, or see performances), and speaking English all the time.

But I got used to all of that very fast and the Kiwis are very open to meeting new people, so it wasn't a problem at all for me to find new friends. We hang out at Interval, at Lunch, all the time. Speaking English stopped being a problem for me very fast, so I had no problems with making connections with other people.

I really enjoyed having only five periods of school a day and studying just six subjects. Three subjects, Maths, Science and English, are compulsory. The other three you can choose for yourself. I chose Music, DGT (Digital Technology) and

Outdoor Education for two terms and then I took French, Latin and Outdoor Education for the second half of my time at James Hargest.

You might be wondering what Outdoor Education is. It is my absolute favourite subject here in New Zealand. Instead of sitting in the classroom and doing writing and talking you are going out of town to do stuff like mountain biking, abseiling, climbing, kayaking and also tramping. We also went to Wanaka to the snow camp, where we did Cross Country skiing and slept in a self made snow shelter. In April I also went to Stewart Island, for a three day tramp and I will never forget these days.

I also really enjoyed the Kayaking and

Mountain Biking, because they are both hobbies I do in my free time. I played Canoe Polo for my school team, which was great fun. I started playing it here in New Zealand and when I'm back in Germany I will go on playing it. Just out of Invercargill is an awesome mountain bike track where I often went. But my favourite hobby is still music. I play the trumpet and cornet, so I started playing here in the school band and just after that I also joined two different brass bands in town. With these bands I went to the provincial contest in Roxburgh and I also went to Hamilton in the North Island for the National Contest, where we got awesome results. I also joined the JHC Choir, which was great fun and we participated in the NZ Big Sing, a New Zealand wide





Ice skating

competition for youth choirs. I was busy all the time here in New Zealand, and never got bored.

A very important aspect of my time in New Zealand, was my host family who were fantastic. They included me in their life, their activities and took me on trips all around Southland. While with my host family I met so many new people, which was an awesome experience. We usually had dinner together, where we talked about what happened during the day. Sometimes we watched TV in the evenings, unless I had activities which was often the case.

My family from Germany came over for three weeks in the summer holidays and went all around the South Island, from the top to the bottom, which was absolutely awesome, because I saw so much of New Zealand. During the holidays between Term 1 and 2, I went on a two week trip around the North Island, which was absolutely awesome. I saw so much and did many extreme sports like skydiving and rafting. I also met new people who are now my friends. I am so grateful that

I could do this trip. Many Kiwis have told me that they haven't been to as many places as I have here in New Zealand.

I am so happy that I could come here to New Zealand, to Invercargill, to James Hargest. I met so many people I will never forget. This is one of the most awesome places on Earth - one that I don't want to leave. I know that I will return here many times in my life.

I would suggest everyone who has the possibility to come here should take up the opportunity and experience this for themselves. If you want to know more about the school or have any questions at all, feel free to contact the International Student Coordinator (jelder@jameshargest.school.nz) who has helped me heaps and has made sure that this year has been one of the best ones in my life.

If you have any questions about my experience, want to know more, or are keen to talk to me, just send me an email: gabrielgabrielquack@gmail.com.



Above: Gabriel talking to PE teacher Miss Raynes



Right: Gabriel and Florence McKenzie, also from James Hargest College, received 1st place in the Under 19 Duet section, at the The New Zealand Brass Band Championships 2019