One of my favorite parts of the Max Kade trip to Munich was the public transportation. Since I’m an engineering student, I take the bus everyday to North Campus, but the public transportation in Munich was so much bigger and better than the M Buses here. Since we were only in Munich for a few days, going places with the S-Bahn was always an adventure. Where would I end up? Nobody knows! It was like magic to end up in the correct final destination. If I lived in Munich, I might not be as enthralled with the public transportation, since I would use it every day. It would be nice to not be so dependent on cars. We say that in Metro Detroit, we’re the Motor City, but Munich also has BWM, a big auto company, and still manages a good public transportation system. I can see many advantages to public transportation – better for the environment, cheaper with no cars, and the whole country (plus Austria!) is connected. If someone wanted to build an S-Bahn in Ann Arbor, I would definitely support that idea! Amanda Klein

I found the atmosphere of the restaurants very interesting. The waiters seemed constantly busy like in America, however they did not have the same customer service attitude. They weren’t rude, the German waiters and waitresses were blunt and direct. They quickly asked us for our orders and tried to act patient when our German language skills suffered. One man even made fun of us when we slowly stumbled through a menu. They didn’t seem to memorize the order like American waiters; they just asked who had what. When we were done eating, they would not give us the check until we asked for it. We all felt it was very different when the check came it was on one for ten people. The waiter handed it to one person and told them to figure it out and pay together. The waiters and waitress were simply efficient and made our dinners a lot of fun. Elaine Meinzer

Although the entire week was unforgettable my favorite experience by far was the trip to Salzburg. We spent most of the week in and around Munich but on our first full day in Germany we had free time to explore on our own. Still jet-lagged most of the students chose to stay in Munich but a group of about ten of us took the two hour train ride to Salzburg without any specific tours or events planned. When we arrived it was pouring rain. We took a bus into town, set up a meeting place for that evening, and two of the older students promptly took off in the direction of a far off castle. Eager to explore we ran after them and spent the next 5 hours wandering around the town and up the mountains in search of the distant castles. When we finally reached the entrance to the magnificent fortress we discovered that the castle closed at 5 o’clock and it was currently 5:10. We continued up and around the mountain path and found several other magnificent buildings and informational placards. We also stumbled across Mozart’s birthplace, the church where he composed, and scenes from the Sound of Music. At the end of the day
we all collapsed, exhausted and slept during the train back to Munich. It was amazing though that as a group of ten students we managed to plan a successful outing on our own not only at the spur of the moment but in another language as well. Amanda Stacer

If I had to describe my trip to Munich in one word, it would be this: muscle-making. This is really a German-sounding adjective, but it accurately describes all the muscle development we had after a long week of strenuous exercises, whether through strolling in the park, walking in the city, running to the U-Bahn or even hours of standing around. But my favorite exercise from this whole week was undoubtedly our debut at a German Ball – the Munich “Bal Clasique”! Elegantly dressed and excited, Mark and I went to Fröttmanig, the temporary location of the “Deutsches Theater” due to the on-going renovation. We were totally ready to infiltrate the Munich haute couture. It was indeed an amazing and memorable cultural experience! The dance floor was completely packed until we could barely move without bumping into somebody, much less actually dance. We had definitely never seen anything like that in Michigan before. Yet somehow this strange situation was completely familiar and normal for the Germans, who were somehow able to dance regardless of the lack of space. Oh well, when in Rome, do as the Romans do! Thus, with Mark’s incredible floor craft we were somehow able to maneuver our way through this high-class mosh pit. In fact, we even managed to survive one of the most difficult ballroom dance (in my opinion), the Viennese waltz, that was rather unsurprisingly popular in Munich. Still, not everything was different and unfamiliar; at least one thing was universal: a good, upright ballroom frame. Even though we could sometimes barely take a proper step, we both tried our hardest to keep up a great, solid frame – brilliant smile included, just like how it was always emphasized in our lessons with the U of M Ballroom Team. In the end, I am almost certain the frame was the main reason that earned us some compliments from the other guests and even got us some “fans” of our dancing. In any case, “Bal Clasique” in Munich was definitely my highlight of the Max Kade trip! Yourui Yeo

The German 312 trip to Munich Germany during spring break 2011 was a fantastic experience. It was the first time I had ever left the country. The plane ride there was a bit uncomfortable because of a person reclining their seat in front of me. My first impression of Munich was that it smelled like a farm. I never could figure out why it smelled liked that. The first day I toured around the city with Ryan and Albert so Ryan could practice the tour he was giving Monday. It really is a beautiful city. Sunday we took a trip to
Salzburg Austria which was a great decision. It wasn’t that long of a train ride and the area along the route and Salzburg were so pretty. I love mountains so I particularly enjoyed the trip there. Unfortunately the fortress was closed when we got to it but we still wandered around the top of the mountain and got some great pictures. I did learn my first big lesson in Germany. Be careful when ordering water because their normal water is mineral water, not tap water. That was nearly a 4 Euro mistake. We took a lot of tours while we were in Germany. Ryan led us around the city, we visited the Weihnenstephaner brewery, Schloss Neuschwanstein and Linderhoff, BMW World, and Dachau. All of them were really interesting, but my German isn’t that great so I had trouble understanding most of the tours which was really disappointing. The point of the trip was to practice your German and hopefully improve, which I think I did. Some things that really surprised me were the number of people who smoked and how casual everyone was with alcohol. People walk around with beer like it was coke. The plane ride back was a lot better and I got a lot of reading done. Overall it was a great trip.

Brian Lange

This trip is one of the best opportunities the German department offers its students. Two years ago I went with the Kade House to Berlin. Munich is a completely different city from Berlin. It is more modern and more expensive. Four years ago I was in Munich with my high school. Because I had already been there, this year I focused more on the culture rather than the tourist sites. Even though the sightseeing is very educational, I had seen it all. I tried to speak with the native Germans more often. My favorite activity was the tour we took of the Weihenstephan brewery. Beer is a huge part of German culture; so going on a brewery tour was really cool! The steps of the brewing process were really interesting and educational. I learned a lot even though I have really gotten into beer since I turned twenty-one. This trip was a lot of fun, while still being really educational. I would recommend this trip to every German student at the University of Michigan. Adam Powers

I do not speak German well. However, students who are in different levels of German can all improve their German in the Max Kade House, especially during our annual trips to Germany. Different from learning German in classrooms, our Munich trip allow us to experience the normal lives of German people. I think it is important to learn the textbook German, but it is also important (and more fun) to learn it in real life. You may find is
strange but some of us had never ordered in a German restaurant before. Or lack of real
life experience in class was made up when we could order a “döner without onions” and
we had to read signs in German. I also found it interesting to listen to different German
accents. Last year we did not have any problem to speak with people from Hamburg, but
there are people in Munich who cannot understand High German. We almost could not
order in Löwenbräu. Luckily Ryan was with us, and he can speak Bayrisch!

Josephine Au

I first became aware of the differences between German and American public-restrooms
at Frankfurt airport where the first German toilet I used was not much larger than the one
on the plane. In America bathrooms are usually quite large and clean with large rolls of
toilet paper and paper towels. In Germany the bathrooms, if you’re lucky to find one, are
not always clean, have small toilets, brown toilet paper and most of the time no paper
towels. In addition, it is not uncommon to be expected to pay to use or leave a tip after
using a German restroom. On a more positive note, one of the best things about being in
Germany was the public transportation. Throughout our stay in München we used the
Deutsche Bahn as our primary source of transportation. The cost of transportation in
Germany is much cheaper than in US. We traveled from Munich to Austria, a distance of
about 90 miles, on less than 10 dollars per person. The only time we actually needed to
hire a chauffeur was when we visited the Alps. German highways to my disappointment
are not much better laid out then I-94, where the cars that are entering the highway have
to share a stretch of road with those slowing down and exiting the highway. This seemed
like a safety concern especially considering how much faster people drive in Germany.
The third and final observation I have made is the comparison of a typical German versus
American Restaurant. On a Friday night a group of us walked into the Hofbräuhaus
München, and instead of waiting to be seated, simply wandered around looking for an
empty place to sit. This to me seems more old-fashioned and welcoming than being
greeted by a "please wait to be seated" sign. A waiter or waitress will then usually come
to your table and take your order, however when you have finished eating it is not always
so easy to leave. You may either be in for a long wait, or have to chase the waiter down
so that you can pay. They don't use cash registers but instead come around with a wallet
filled with cash. This is better in a way because after waiting for the waiter to come back
so you can pay you don't have to wait for him to bring you change. All in all I think the
cultural differences balance each other out. I enjoyed my stay in Germany and look
forward to returning, but it’s good to be home.   Molly Albertson
FC Bayern Munich is the largest professional soccer club in Germany. Luckily, they were slated to play some big and important games during our trip. First, they faced the league leader from Dortmund, and also a German Cup game against Schalke 04. As a sufferer from soccer-fever, I relished the opportunity to be in the soccer-capital of Germany during these games, though the same couldn’t be said for all the other Max Kade vacationers. On the first night in Germany, I split from the group and searched for a place to watch the game. I finally stumbled across a small bar on the city outskirts with a projector and large group of soccer fans huddled around it. Some older fans wore the traditional blue-white checkered patterns of the flag, and others were younger and enjoying large plates of schnitzel. I ordered a drink and sat next to a middle-aged Munich resident who didn’t act surprised that I was familiar with the team. Bayern lost the game in what became a pivotal moment in their season, but I couldn’t help but smile having experienced the “we” feeling that permeates German soccer and brings the city together. Mark Rudolph

The Max Kade House Spring break trip to Munich was an amazing amazing experience, and surprisingly it began with an adventure to Salzburg, Austria. We took the Deutschbahn train to Salzburg, and then a bus took us from the train station to the middle of the city. Immediately we tried to find food, and we found a restaurant and ate lunch. I had wiener schnitzel and käsespätzle. Then, we visited two churches and shops. We walked through a graveyard, which was full of flowers and century old gravestones. Next to the graveyard was a mountain, and we hiked up it to the castle. The castle, Hohensalzburg, was enormous. Then we walked along the mountain to another peak, which looked out through the countryside. After the trip to Salzburg, we explored Munich. We went to restaurants and churches, and the Viktualienmarkt. We also went to the deutsches museum, the castle Neuschwanstein, the mansion Linderhof, the Weihenstephaner brewery and the Munich Opera. It was thrilling to explore Munich and practice German the whole time. Matt Rumschlag

It was my first time in Germany when I travelled with the Max Kade Program to Munich. The trip was the opportunity of a life time. I loved that I was completely immersed in the German language. I will never forget the busy Marienplatz and the historic church. In the historic church were extreamley beautiful paintings. The massive transportation system of München was amazing. I was surprised how fast you could travel from place to place. We travelled on the second day to Austria. After studying classical music and composers
for many years it was amazing to have the history right in front of my eyes. The castle Neuschwanstein appeared as if it was from a fairy tale. The castle was surrounded by a snow covered forest. The castle belonged to King Ludwig II and the castle has long winding stair cases and long hallways. The throne room was covered with gold and jewels. It would be hard to believe that anyone lived in there besides a king.

When we visited the University of Munich, I saw the exact place where Sophie Scholl and Hans Scholl had dropped the leaflets. I have always admired the courage of The White Rose against Nazism. The last day of my trip was the coldest. We also visited the concentration camp, Dachau. I learned a lot of information about the Holocaust. An important quote from the camp stated that „may the example of those who were exterminated here between 1933-1945 because they resisted Nazism help to unite the living for the defense of peace and freedom and in respect of their fellow men.“ The quote is still pertinent today. I have learned that there is still hope for the future if we can learn from history’s mistakes.    Alexandra Banks

Before the Max Kade trip to Munich, I had been to Germany before. I was only seventeen, though, and it was rather overwhelming. There was a lot of Germany to take in: German words, German keyboards, German bakeries, German-Turkish doner kebabs, German beer. (I didn’t take in that much German beer.) Looking back on it, though, all that Germany was a little too much. I was a little too young to fully embrace the culture.

This year’s Max Kade trip was different. Although the trip was only one week, we stayed in Munich the entire time, allowing us to become quite at home in a faraway land. Even with Munich’s neatly cropped skyline outside our hostel, the dorm room feel within felt just like, well, our dorm rooms at home.

It sounds weird, but that is exactly what I took away from Germany. It is a place that is a lot like the United States, but at the same time, it is a place that is appreciably different. You can still go running through the city. The streets just aren’t as rectangular. You can still go out to eat. You just have to remember to seat yourself, specify non-carbonated water, and hold yourself back while tipping. In general, you can still enjoy yourself in any way. You will have no trouble remembering that you are in a much different, very interesting place called Germany.    Tyler Johnson
My trip to Munich was very enlightening. It was nice to experience another country's customs and traditions. I successfully navigated Munich’s underground, swam in an Olympic pool, and ate traditional Bavarian food and drinks. My favorite part of the trip was experiencing the art that Munich had to offer. I visited die Alte Pinakothek and Pinakothek der Moderne on the second day. On Mondays tickets to the Museums are only one Euro. I liked Pinakothek der Moderne the best and I think I stayed in the Surrealist room for more than an hour! I also met with people from der Akadime der bildenden Künste for possibly studying there next year. My trip to Germany was fulfilling.

Patrick Kipper

This was my first year in Max Kade Haus, and I couldn’t be happier about my decision to live here. The trip to Munich was amazing. What I found very interesting is that Germans are very straightforward and blunt. One day of the trip Ryan, one of the senior members of Kade Haus, showed us around Munich, because he lived there for a year and knew it very well. After a long, but very interesting tour, we ended up going to one of Munich’s main breweries, Löwenbräu Keller. One of the girls and I were very thirsty, so we ordered water with our dinner. When we did, the waitress very bluntly said “You’re at a brewery, you don’t order water at a brewery.” I was really taken aback by her attitude and ended up getting a Radler, a mix of lemonade and beer. In a sense she was right, but the difference in delivery really made me realize how different German and American cultures are. Ann Krayushkina

Hello everyone!

This year, I traveled to Munich, Germany for spring break. It was my first time in Germany! During the trip, we saw many things. Beautiful castles, Dachau’s Concentration Camp, a Bayern Film studio/city, and naturally a tour of the oldest brewery in the world, to name a few! Also, we spoke in German the entire trip. It was so helpful for me. Before the trip, my German was O.K. and I saw that, only after one week in Germany, I could speak much better! I would recommend Max Kade to everyone interested in German. ~Nathan Hrivnak
We did and learned many things during our week in Munich. From the first day there until our (sad) departure home, no time was wasted. Perhaps one of the highlights of our trip was a day trip made out to Salzburg, Austria. In Salzburg, we have seen and done as many things as you could in a day, as well as learn a little bit about Austrian culture (and the small differences between Austria and Germany). It was also really nice to see a lot of the major landmarks and sights in Salzburg, such as the Hohensalzburg Castle, the birth house of Mozart, the abbey as featured in the Sound of Music, and many other sights. A very nice sight in Salzburg was perhaps the view of the river (from any of the bridges) at night with all the city lights. Albert Defluri

My favorite experience from the German trip is staying up all night and just talking with local Germans. I loved how much of the culture I was able to absorb. I was amazed at how much the rich history of Munich mixed with its modernism. Every day I learned new things about Germany and Germans and every day I grew to love German culture even more. Jacob Herman