

lifestyle - abroad - fashion - entertainment

Journal of American and British Studies

JABS

Winter Semester 2015/16

Content

At home	3
Prepare Your Nest – Winter Is Coming	4
Next Fashion Icon? – Only One Accessory Away from It	7
There are many ways to live a healthy life. One of them is called: PETS	9
Expand your horizons	11
Travelling – Everyone Can Afford It	12
10 Good Reasons to Visit Museums (Even If You Hate the Idea)	14
ERASMUS: 28 Years of Moving Students	17
Food as a Gateway to Cultures	20

At home



Prepare Your Nest - Winter Is Coming

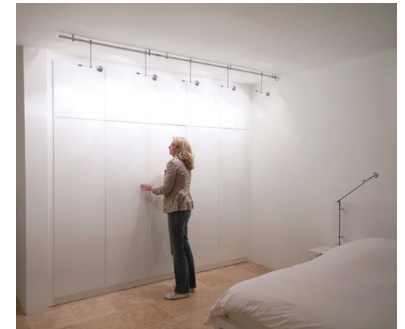
Michelle Weichlein

Lights of a Winter Sky

The cold season is approaching quickly and some of you might be growling that the long summer nights are over. But worry not - with a little help and without raiding your bank account, you can turn your flat (or even your room) into a cosy oasis you will never want to leave!

When nature decides to turn off the lights a bit earlier, colours and lighting are your tools of choice to keep to spirits high at home.

Working spaces such as desks and kitchen counters acquire a lot more light than other rooms, so better use a combination of flexible table lamps and installation emitters here. Fun fact: light from the blue end



of the spectrum highly increases productivity! If you, however, are more in the mood for some relaxation, try lamps made of frosted glass and hang them from your ceiling as low as possibly to achieve maximum comfort. Lifesavers in every aspect are - of course - candles. Huge church candles can provide a great eye-catcher in living rooms whereas compositions of tea lights and indoor lanterns transform every lumber-

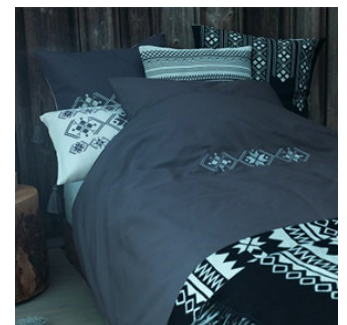
room into a romantic chamber.



Red Carpet Treatment at Home

Apart from lighting colours also play a huge role in influencing our well-being. To bring some tint into your flat (and your life) you do not even need to paint your walls! A great idea for autumn and winter is to embellish your rooms with colourful carpets, (fake) fur rugs and plaids.

Affordable treasures for your floor can easily be found on www.kibek.de or rugbygur.com. Rich varieties of red shades offered by the colour palette (copper, the trend colour Marsala and even brown), combined with warm



yellow tones (just think of spicy mustard sauce!) create a lovely atmosphere and will keep you warm - at least mentally. Another easy and inexpensive way of introducing colour to your home are patterns. Nevertheless, be careful: the more your chosen patterns differ, the more important similar hues of colour are! Otherwise, it can quickly turn into a chaotic downy mess.



A rather unusual couple of materials will take your winter decoration to the next level. Wood is known to be a natural resource that provides stability, warmth and a healthy green conscience for your furnishing, so why not award your old wooden sideboard with some touches of metal or stone?



Warm gold and copper tones combined with cool earthy colours form an atmospheric arrangement that will definitely not make your home any

less cosy during snowfall outside.

Exotic Escape

Still not convinced? Maybe an escape to more exotic destinations will be to your taste. While others wrap up in their furry blankets, you prefer oriental scents and bathing underneath palm trees. No problems for us - we simply invite the sun to come in and be our guest! With



only a few strokes of colour, your window reveal will instantly bring a

positive effect to your room's lighting mood. It is a cheap method to create a sunny

atmosphere even when it is cloudy outside. Keeping the summer locked inside your flat does not mean



you have to forego comfort! A low tea table can do wonders and, complemented with large floor cushions, your desert camp is completed. In order to keep your home well sorted, use metal accessories of only one colour. A silver mirror is not only great for decoration but reflects light and

therefore makes small rooms appear brighter and even more spacious. Who says plates are only made for dining? Put them on the wall - handmade pottery from different holiday destinations serve as a fancy replacement of pictures, give your home a personal touch, and keep memories of your vacations alive.



DIY - Or how to recycle your junk

You think none of these ideas will help you anyway? You live in a shared

apartment with other students and do not have any space at all? Help is on the way! Many small rooms still offer numerous spots for new designs, mostly unusual places such as corners, the ceiling or doors. Turn your room into a playground with a DIY-nightstand: a good old swing makes a great storage surface for all, who have no space to place a table. With some

DIY-skills you can also build your own shelf, coat hanger or towel rail that only needs a few inches of your wall. Usually the stepchild of every room is the space above the door. A very useful option

to tall people is to install some simple wooden planks above the entrance - done is your personal bookshelf! By the way: books do not always need to be put away, they function as a clever decoration for boring white walls with some slim, vertical wall racks. Moreover, even the corners of your room prove their benefit with this futuristic corner cabinet from Ikea.

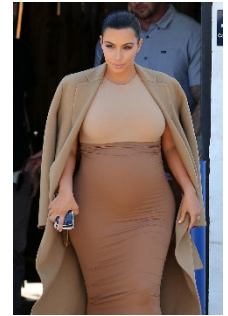


You see, it is not too difficult to give your home a winter upgrade and feel warm and welcomed every time you unlock your apartment door. Soon your friends will be asking to stay over at your house instead of returning home after a relaxed evening with you and some mulled wine.

I guarantee!

Next Fashion Icon? - Only One Accessory Away from It

Laura Seidel



The last look in the mirror before we leave the house is the most important. Are we happy with what we see, do we feel like the next fashion icon? Happy or not, when we look in the mirror, there is one item that can upgrade -or fix- any outfit. But what could it be - this one magical piece?

Coats have been an important fashion accessory for centuries, and though their silhouettes and proportions have changed in that time, they are still as up-to-date as ever. They come in all kinds of different colors, materials, or even with patterns and a belts.



Coats can be made of natural fibers like wool, silk, leather, fur, and cotton or synthetic fibers like polyester.

In any season and for any woman, coats can be a day-, and outfit-saver. They are this one piece needed to complete the outfit - and to feel like the next star of *Paris Fashion Week*.

There are two kind of coats: light ones to cover bare arms on chilly summer evenings, and heavy ones for protection from cold winter days - fashionable and functional additions that protect you from the elements *and* look good at the same time! They can shield you from the harsh, dry, cold winter air, keeping you warm from head to toe, or block the sun's damaging rays. They can insulate you from snow flurries or a fresh breeze.



Of course, there is another beneficial aspect of coats that both types



share - they hide those less-loved body parts every women has. Hips that are too wide or too narrow, a chest that is too small or too large, a bit of a belly or backside, you can hide anything under your coat.

Choose the right silhouette and a coat can also add as many inches as a pair of heels. I was always wondering how Kim Kardashian looked so tall on pictures despite being only 1.60 meters tall. Her secret - coats. They can be almost any length to achieve this effect. Falling anywhere between your mid-thigh and calf will help lengthen your body and make you appear taller. They should not be higher than that or they will visually cut your body in half and make you look even shorter.

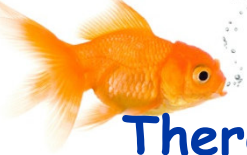
Coats are a truly universal piece. You can combine them with almost anything - jeans and a t-shirt, a little black dress, fancy gowns. Coats are available for any style. Whether you like it sporty, classy, elegant or chic, your coat will upgrade your outfit to another level. They are always an eye-catcher!

They are available for only 20 euros in shops like Mango, H&M, or Zara and are truly a must-have for everyone. So hurry up and get your next favorite piece tomorrow!



Since not everybody likes coat there are of course other pieces that can work in the same way as a coat. Colorful scarves, shoes, or hats can be another special piece that upgrades your outfit. Just pick your favorite garment and wear it as an eye-catcher!





There are many ways to live a healthy life. One of them is called: PETS

Eva-Maria Weichelt

Do you consider your life as balanced? Do you have a partner in your life or rather feel alone? Are you struggling to get into contact with new people? Then a pet might be the solution to your problems.

Pets are good for both your physical and your mental health. Scientists have studied the effects that pets have on their owners for decades now. Interviews and observations have shown results on many different levels.

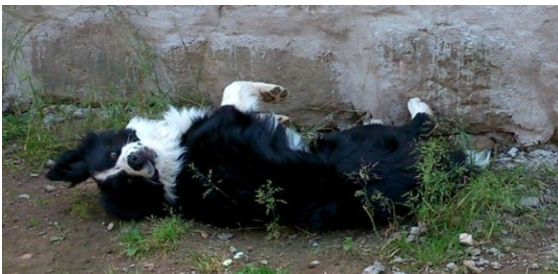
Pet owners are more active and fit

According to an investigation by American scientists, 150 minutes of exercising every week affects your cardiovascular system positively. Dog owners are more likely to achieve this time than people without dogs. Horse owners and horse-riders also benefit from exercising outdoors. Researchers have also found out that physical activity has a positive influence on diseases like diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure and chronic bronchitis.



Pets can calm you down

It is proven scientifically that no matter which animal, its pure presence and especially the petting of it can help to lower your blood pressure and your heart rate. Therefore, your sympathetic nervous system is less active and fewer stress hormones are emitted.



Nevertheless, pets like dogs, cats and other small animals are more likely to cause this effect than fish, for example. You cannot fondle them but watching them at least can calm you down.

Pet owners are better in socializing with others

Pet owners are less likely to feel lonely than people who live alone. In addition, it is easier for pet owners to socialize with others as their pets can be great icebreakers. Very often dog owners are stopped by other pedestrians while walking their dog. This is a good and easy way to get in contact. Cat owners living in multi-family houses experience similar situations. Suddenly you meet unknown neighbours when they ask you for your cat's name and further little details. Pets are perfectly suited for an innocuous start of conversation.



Pets can comfort and motivate you

Most people have a good feeling when they are needed by a pet. If you treat it well, it gives you love and affection. Thereby you feel good yourself. Especially older people that are retiring after many years of working or parents whose children have moved out of the house, feel a lot better with a pet. Pet owners that are ill are more motivated to get better as they have to care for their pet. Above all dogs, cats and other small animals can help you deal with grief as they are great listeners to your sorrows and very talented at giving comfort.



Wanting to know what your pet is doing while you're out and about? Watch the movie "PETS" at the cinema next summer! Release date: July 8, 2016

Expand your horizons



Travelling - Everyone Can Afford It

Jenny Morzik



Many people believe that travelling is a very expensive activity and that only rich people can afford it. However, this is not true. You can travel with (almost) no money and get in contact with people wherever you go. How can this work?

It's simple: you hitchhike to the place you want to visit and stay there with a couchsurfer. All you need for that is some patience and extra time for the journey, and the internet to connect with couchsurfers all over the world. Most people think hitchhiking is very dangerous because they only know the horror stories from television, in which hitchhikers (especially girls) get raped and murdered. But they don't know anything about all the really nice experiences you can have with hitchhiking. You meet new people and can have really inspiring conversations. Sometimes drivers even invite you for a coffee at the petrol station or make a detour for you to take you to your exact target.

When you try to find someone who can give you a lift, it is often the car drivers that are afraid of hitchhikers and not the other way round. And drivers who pick up hitchhikers often ask if they are not afraid and admire their courage to hitchhike. Most people who pick you up were hitchhiking as well when they were younger. If you look nice and have a well-groomed appearance and especially if you travel alone you should have no trouble in finding a car. It also helps to take a musical instrument (or at least the case of a musical instrument, you could also put your clothes into) as people seem to have more trust in musicians and also in dog owners. The big advantage of hitchhiking is that you are very flexible with your departure time. You have no stress with catching a train or something on time. That enables you to travel very spontaneously.



Once you have reached the target of your journey, couchsurfing can save you a lot of money. Couchsurfing is a very nice way of staying somewhere and it is much more personal and closer to the local culture than staying in a hotel could be. You meet new people and you are not alone in the place you are visiting, so you might even have a city guide for free as well. All you have to do is sign in on www.couchsurfing.org and write to a host whose profile appeals to you. As soon as you find someone who has time to host you, you have free accommodation and possibly a new friend.



Couchsurfing is not only a great way of finding accommodation on holiday, but you can also use it for practical purposes. For instance, if you have booked a flight from another city which starts very early, you can stay there for one night with a couchsurfer and go directly to the airport in the morning. Or when you want to move to another city, couchsurfing can be a big help in finding a flat in this city as well. If you have job interviews, do an internship or visit a concert, couchsurfing can be the solution for spending the night in a warm place.

If you are too scared about your safety, you can also use lift-arranging agencies and airbnb, which is also not too expensive. For finding a lift there are several websites. The most useful is www.fahrtfinder.net because it shows you offers from all websites that arrange lifts. Airbnb is similar to couchsurfing. You just pay a certain amount per night (which differs from host to host, but is still cheaper than a hotel room).

In fact, the people in a lift-arranging agency or on airbnb are as strange to you as are random

drivers and couchsurfers. So why pay money, when you can have it for free?

So let's see the world! You don't need money - you just need some time and curiosity to meet new people.



10 Good Reasons to Visit Museums (Even If You Hate the Idea)

Morgana Meli

It is raining, it is cold, your friends are all busy, the television is broken, and there is no internet connection... What now? How can you fill your afternoon?

It sounds incredibly weird but visiting a museum could be the right solution for you. As you well know, when you go into a museum the chances of getting bored within a couple of rooms are very high. Thousands of busts of dead people, paintings that make no sense, captions longer than the "Never Ending Story" and the list goes on.

But maybe you don't know (or you have never noticed) what a wonderful double-edged sword it could be.

1. Feel incredibly clever

After a visit to a museum you won't remember what you saw 5 minutes beforehand (it is scientifically proven) but that is ok. Don't worry. Remember a couple of names and this is enough to feel much cleverer than before.

2. Fascinate your friends or potential partner

Imagine the scene: You have just finished talking about your last party (of course you were drunk and you can only remember half of the night but half is enough to have caused the craziest things to cross your mind). And then you begin with: "How you ever seen the "Junge Dame mit Zeichengerät" at the Albertinum? Your friends will be stunned: how it is possible that you are so funny and crazy and at the same time so clever. Incredible!



Take a risk - why don't you show your friends a beautiful picture of you and a Canaletto's work of art? (When you take the picture be careful that nobody, and in particular the security guard, are watching you. It isn't always allowed and the situation could be potentially embarrassing)

3. Be comfortable in a warm place with a comfortable couch

As I said, visiting a museum is a perfect excuse when it is raining or when going out is synonymous with freezing. Not only that. But in each museum I have been the couches were incredibly comfortable. Just pretend to be really interested into the picture in front of you so that you will not seem lazy, as you in fact are.



4. Lose weight

Go running in winter? Are you kidding me? A museum is a perfect gym, really, trust me. Each museum has at least 10 rooms and a flight of stairs. So have fun going backwards and forwards, turning around the sculptures, making squats so that you can see all the details at the bottom of a picture, point at the fresco on the ceiling.



5. Find a new hobby

A museum is a perfect place for taking inspiration. Are you searching for something new to do but don't feel like the next Michelangelo? Don't worry-that is the reason why modern art exist: a perfect combination between boredom and a lack of inclination. Find your way and start your artistic career.

6. Dispel the myth of "New generation is too lazy"

How many times have you heard on the bus, in the supermarket, at school: that new generation is too lazy? The next time you hear it, you will congratulate yourself: you are not lazy like the others. You spent your time in a museum and all your selfies are the best testimony.

7. Spend a romantic afternoon like in a movie

In the top ten of "the best place to spend a romantic afternoon with the one you love" there are, of course, places like magic woods, Ikea and museums. Do you know why? There is no place more romantic for play hide and seek, laughing while pointing at the pictures and making all that stuff that when you are in love seem so funny but for the rest of the world are ridiculous.

8. Or in order to reach the 7th point, find a partner like in a movie

It doesn't matter if you are a boy or a girl: you can find your soul mate in one of the museum of you city. He or she has to be clever, he or she has to be interesting, he or she has probably read this article

and is searching for you. So choose the museum that describes you best in order to find the perfect partner (and return to the 7th point).



9. Wear your best museum outfit

Yes, ask to anybody, fashion blogger or aspiring stylist: there is a perfect outfit for everything, also for going into a museum. Use it as your runway. You will feel like the best work of art between works of art.

10. Maybe see something unique you have never seen or you will never see again

The last and the least important point. You are accidentally in a museum, with or without your partner, with your best museum outfit, making a selfie with all the things present in the room and visibly losing weight. That is great, you have reached all the most important points. But sometimes in museums you really can find what catches your attention, find a unique work of art, something that you have only studied in your book and is normally situated somewhere else in the world but casually now is in your own town. When it happens, don't lose the opportunity to see it. It is incredible to think that a human being could find all that ways of expressing himself or herself and most of the time giving you gooseflesh

I really hope that these ten points could be an inspiration for you so that the next rainy day you will organise your visit to the museum near you.

ERASMUS: 28 years of moving students

Francisca Hernández

Have you ever heard about the Erasmus scholarship? Every year approximately 200,000 students take advantage of this grant awarded by the European Union.

ERASMUS is the acronym of *European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students*, but the origin of its name lies with Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, a Dutch philosopher who travelled, worked, studied and lived in several countries of Europe such as Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom and Holland. As an anecdote, he declined several job offers in different European universities because his travelling and independent spirit motivated him to pack his luggage, go to a new destination and increase his knowledge of life and new cultures.

The Erasmus programme was adopted in June 1987. According to a European Commission survey, the number of students who did an Erasmus programme in 2014 was 268,143 students. Considering this fact, what makes these students wanting to get this grant?

One of the main purposes why students decide to do an Erasmus program is improving their knowledge of a foreign language. There is no better decision for refining your skills than facing up to the language in the country where it is spoken.

The best thing is the way of learning. You are not required to spend a lot of money in private academies, expensive grammar books and hundreds of quick-learning methods: you just need to leave your room and look around.



International Coffee Hour - Dresden

Besides, you cannot just improve this language, but you can also learn a new one. It is possible in many different ways: living in a student hall with different international students, having international friends, you can always ask how to say something in their mother tongue. Just as an advance, you will learn how to cheer in many languages.

Another option is attending a lecture, in which you are interested, given in a different language.

You will not just learn a language, but a different culture as well. It doesn't mean only parties or celebration and traditions, but discovering the way of doing something. It refers to those thousands of daily little details that are solved in a different way. It doesn't mean those ways of doing things are better or worse: they are just different and that "different" is responsible for turning you into a more open-minded person.

That exchange of ideas derive from an increase in tolerance and in the critical capacity of the individuals since it allows you to establish comparisons between one reality and others. As an example,

I was shocked the first time that a person shook my hand (the German way), instead of giving two kisses (the Spanish way), gave only one kiss on my cheek (the Chilean way), kissed from right to left (the Italian way), kissed from right to left without any touch with your hand (the Hungarian way) to perform a greeting.



Besides, you will master a personal challenge. Since the first moment in which you decide to take an Erasmus scholarship, you will be in charge of solving all the problems. It has good and bad sides. You will feel elated by all your achievements and you will learn of all the mistakes.

Those situations of panic will make you mature and not act like a teenager. Furthermore, you will acquire self-confidence

and autonomy. An Erasmus experience will teach you how to survive. You will taste a lot of new meals, flavours, tastes and even products that you never thought existed.



Syrian meal

Surviving in Erasmus is not just learning how to cook or eat new things, surviving is going to the bank and open up, or at least trying to open up, a current account without using your mother tongue or trying to arrive at a place without any internet connection, with any map and with the help of anybody to tell you how to go back home if you are lost because, obviously, you either do know.

In Erasmus everything is not just studying or surviving but it is, as I mentioned before, a way of knowing the culture of a country and what better way than going to parties or events for Erasmus. Probably, your university of destiny will have an international student organisation. They will organise events for getting in contact with new people and making new friends.

Probably, you will meet peculiar people in many different situations as when you are returning home and you discuss with a local guy and he tells you that Dresden is the most beautiful city in Germany. Meanwhile he is offering you a piece of pizza that he is carrying.

According to the many opinions of people who have already been abroad via Erasmus, you will never forget those friends that you get to know in your stay abroad. Some situations, some problems, some hobbies or just the same interest will make you approach great people.

These little moments in which you meet new people will stay in your mind forever. For instance, I will never forget how after a party, one friend and I took the tram and we ended up at a strange place that we had never been to before because the tram changed its normal route and we didn't realise

Continuing with friends, what about your friends in your city? Thanks to Erasmus you will realise who your genuine friends are and who truly appreciates your friendship.

Erasmus does not just make you grow up as a person, personally speaking, but it will improve your Curriculum Vitae (CV). Many surveys have shown that one point taken in consideration by employers is if their applicants have spent one year abroad. It is because they consider those people to have a huge adaptation ability.

The benefits of Erasmus are innumerable. Besides, you will lose your apprehension of flying or travelling in general. When you are abroad, you start to value your surroundings and when you go back, you will think that everything and every problem is easier than before and that you can rise to them successfully.

Food as a gateway to cultures

Daniela Dudziak

Do you enjoy cooking? What about a Syrian night? Syrian cuisine is supposed to be one of the best in the Middle East. Whether you are a meat lover, vegetarian or have a sweet tooth, you will enjoy the culinary delicacies. "Cooking for Friends" is a fund-raising campaign initiated by UNICEF and turns every dinner into a delightful occasion.



It was a Saturday night at a cosy café where a good friend of mine and I came up with the idea of launching a fund-raising event. Clinking glasses and joyful laughter; everyone around us seemed to be in a celebratory mood except for us. Sipping our coffees and having a deep conversation, we gave full vent to our anger at the growing resentment against refugees, notably in East Germany. I am referring to a xenophobic movement which staged its first street rally over a year ago and has recently grown again due to Germany welcoming up to 800,000 asylum seekers in 2015. PEGIDA — short for "*Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes*" (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident) is a political movement with several offshoots all over Germany. As the name implies, this movement fears as it perceives a growing influence of Islam in Europe, often justified with the terror threat from the so-called Islamic State (Daesh). The name PEGIDA is a paradox in itself, though, and furthermore an affront to the expressive power of the German language. Terrorism on behalf of Islam is not to be termed as "Islamisierung" (Islamisation), but "Islamismus" (Islamism). Daesh is not aiming at enforcing an Islamic society in the Middle East as this area is already predominantly Islamic. The suffix "-ismus" (-ism) always correlates to a dogmatic ideology, which applies to "Islamismus" (Islamism). Daesh's ambition is to establish an autocratic state based on their doctrine. By doing so, thousands of dissenting people, amongst them Muslims and Christians, get killed. Would you call the killing of those individuals "Islamisierung" (Islamisation)?

It is certainly not my attempt to tar all the people joining PEGIDA with the same brush, but some tend to have black and white world-views. Personally, I think this particular movement stirs up racism and spreads intolerance and hatred amongst our society. Also, recent statistics have shown that tourism in Dresden has decreased since the beginning of the year. Hoteliers consider PEGIDA as the main reason for that. It cannot be denied that the image of Dresden is suffering.

Nonetheless, large networks like "Dresden für alle" or "Nazifrei! - Dresden stellt sich quer" have already taken a stand against that xenophobic movement and will continue organising events/campaigns to open up people's minds.

Driven by our agitation for a change of thinking in our society, my friend and I came up with the idea of hosting a political talk night on the occasion of "Cooking for Friends".

Why Syrian children?

- In four-and-a-half years of armed conflict more than 250,000 Syrians have lost their lives, among them at least 10,000 children.
- Since the start of the conflict more than four million Syrians, including two million children, have fled Syria mostly to neighbouring countries.
- A further 7.6 million Syrians have been internally displaced within the country, making a total of approximately 12 million refugees. That is more than the of the country's pre-crisis population.
- Conditions in refugee camps are often poor, which causes highly contagious illnesses and cases of poliomyelitis have recurred. Furthermore, drinking water gets is becoming rare.
- Roughly two million Syrian children do not have a chance to attend an educational institution. 4,200 schools have been destroyed due to the fighting or are being used as emergency facilities.
- 52,000 teachers have been killed so far or fled Syria.
- Child marriages have increased and a large number of children are traumatised because of the circumstances.

What is the money being used for?

- purification of water
- injections against poliomyelitis
- establishment of camp schools
- supply of teaching material
- psychological and social treatment of children

UNICEF just recently commenced the campaign. The concept is simple: you invite your friends over and instead of bringing a present for one's host, they make a donation which goes directly to Syrian children in need. Participation is quite straightforward and UNICEF even offers you free of charge an event package including information about the project, invitation cards, place cards and Syrian recipes.

The more the merrier: about twenty people accepted our invitation and enjoyed the Oriental cuisine. We offered a range of dishes in the form of a buffet; the lentil-bulgar balls were especially popular. The night was a great success, not only in terms of culinary choice but also financially. In total we raised €121 which now supports the UNICEF aid for Syrian children.



Moreover it was also crucial to us that everyone discussed topics related to Syria, asylum law, PEGIDA and what can be done against racism. Therefore we handed out discussion cards and set up an



information stall where everyone could display informative material or simply be informed. Various points of view contributed to interesting debates and people also exchanged their thoughts on how to engage with refugees in Dresden. All in all, it has been an enlightened evening for

everyone and we all agreed on one thing: What our society needs is fair dialogue between proponents and opponents of asylum seekers to fight xenophobia. The pen is mightier than the sword.

"Cooking for Friends" is a wonderful opportunity to get talking to people and food is a pleasant gateway to different cultures. It has definitely broadened my horizon and I highly recommend launching such an event to everyone. Interested? Go for it!

Further information:
www.unicef.de/kochen
www.bamf.de