

***"Paula comes across a very positive girl. She is a committed student and a responsible girl, she knows her priorities and her ambitions."***

## Lär känna Paula

Paula är född 2009 och kommer från Italien. Hon kommer i augusti 2026 och stannar under ett läsår. Intressen är bl. a dans, musik (spelar piano), böcker, simning och utomhusaktiviteter. Paula placeras helst i södra Sverige.

Dear Host Family, My name is Paula, I am currently sixteen years old, and I am an Italian student. You might be imagining the Italy everyone thinks of — warm weather, the sea, and Italian culture. When I visit southern Italy, it is indeed true, but in my case, I live in the northern part of Italy, in South Tyrol, a place where Italian and German traditions meet. I grew up with lots of nature, mountains, small cities, and towns. As a child, I always went up the mountain and played in the woods. I spent part of my childhood, a few weeks in summer or winter for four years, in a cabin in the middle of the forest, where I played all day with my brother and friends. I have grown up surrounded by two languages at the same time. My native language is actually German, not Italian. We have our own South Tyrolean dialect, which I use throughout the whole day, except at school, where I speak standard German with my teachers. I have been studying Italian since the 1st grade in primary school, because it is very important for students to become bilingual, since we have Italian citizenship indeed. Fortunately, I have a few Italian friends, with whom I can speak Italian, which I am very grateful for, because then I have the opportunity to use it in everyday life. Since the 4th grade in primary school, I've been studying English at school. And now, my biggest dream would be learning Swedish. To be honest, since I was a child, I have loved your country. My favourite childhood movies have always been those by Astrid Lindgren. For me, a dream would come true, because I want to get to know Swedish culture and see much of Sweden's nature. I want to experience traditions and special celebrations, like the famous "fika" or even Christmas in Sweden. I want to go to school in a different country, to see how the school system works. I want to understand which differences there are between Italy and Sweden, whether cultural, linguistic, or social. Something about Sweden's beauty has always fascinated me, and now I want to fully experience it and learn as much as I can. I also have a personal connection to Sweden. My confirmation godmother was born in the same city where I was born, but now she has a Swedish husband and two kids. But what is my life in Italy actually like? Thanks to my parents, I had an amazing childhood, and now, we love and appreciate each other and spend as much time as possible as a family together. We are a completely normal family. We love baking, cooking, and eating, and also playing a South Tyrolean card game called "Watten" together. We talk openly if there are any difficult situations that we have to face. We are there for each other and support everyone, no matter what. It would be important to me if I could also talk about many things with my host family in Sweden, and if we could spend a lot of time together. I want to take in, learn, and experience as much as possible, so I will do as much as I can and make every effort to have an exciting and wonderful year abroad with you. But back to my life in Italy: I have an older brother who is seventeen years old. He means a lot to me because we grew up together. We get on very well and trust each other. I also have a five-year-old chocolate Labrador called Toni. Another special person in my life is my best friend; we acted in the theatre together for a year, after that we lost contact, but fortunately we found a way back to each other. Now we are inseparable, and I would consider her a part of my family, even though we don't go to the same school. Two days a week I have school in the afternoon. I like going to school because I can see my friends in class. I have found a nice group of friends there. At school, we have a lot of fun together. My favourite subject is currently human sciences, because I'm interested in Psychology; maybe I'll continue studying it after school. I listen to music every day, especially to songs by Lana del Rey, Coldplay, or ABBA. I also dance three times a week. I started dancing nine years ago, so I tried many different styles, but for two years, I have been focusing on Disco Dance, Contemporary, and a dance style where I can dance with people with disabilities. Dancing is something that means a lot to me. It's more than just movement or music—it's a way for me to express feelings that I can't always put into words. I think I'll be a good exchange student, because I am curious and a student. It is not something that can be taken for granted, so honestly, a big "Thank you for hosting me". I would be truly happy if I could become a part of your family and create wonderful memories with you!

Hej då and warm greetings, Paula

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