

My Spring break



Student Voice Newsletter, March 2025



By Sunita Rani (India)

Spring break is usually a period for relaxing and fun for most people, and this year, I got a chance to travel to Omaha, Nevada, for celebrating the 50th wedding anniversary of my uncle and aunt. It was my first time traveling to Omaha, and it totally lived up to the great stories I have heard about it from my husband and family. My uncle and aunt decided to go all out for their 50th wedding anniversary and it was a grand 3 day celebration filled with joy, happiness, laughter, and many treasured moments shared with loved ones.

The first day of the festivities began with a traditional Sangeet(which literally translates to music) style Henna party. The atmosphere was filled with music, drinks, and a variety of delicious finger foods. Everyone sat around and sang folk songs taking me back to my childhood memories. Family and friends gathered to celebrate, women applied intricate henna tattoos on each other hands, symbolizing love and celebration. It was a fun experience, watching everyone come together in such a beautiful and cultural way.



On the second and third days, the events were still more over the top, with a big Indian themed parties and get togethers, with traditional Indian breakfast foods during the day and a grand Indian-style party with vibrant decorations, traditional music, and lots of dancing in the evening. The energy in the parties were was out of this world as guests

moved to the beats of Bollywood and classical Indian music. The food was another highlight of the weekend, with an array of Indian delicacies that I have been dreaming about for years. The food definitely satisfied every craving anybody would have had. The combination of authentic flavors and the warmth of family made these moments even more special.

Apart from the party, , my trip was also special because of the travel experience. This was also my second time on an airplane, and both of our flights got delayed due to highwinds and big sandstorm, which made our journey more difficult.

Looking back at my spring break, I'm really grateful to be contributing to such an important occasion in my uncles and aunts life. It showed me how strong family love is and how happy it is to celebrate together. Even though the travel problems were hard, the trip was amazing, and I would not change it for anything.

By Giorgio Giovanni Costa (Italy)

Well yes, even at my age (59) you never stop having new experiences! For the first time I lived the legendary “Spring Break” week, which obviously doesn’t exist in Italy. My holidays this year were a mix of moments of tranquility and small challenges. I live in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, a place I don’t know, and I found myself spending a lot of time alone with Leo, my girlfriend’s dog, while she was in Italy for two weeks. At first, the idea of staying home without her made me a little anxious, but then I decided to deal with this situation in the best way possible.

On Monday morning I accompanied Isabella to the airport and then, totally alone on American soil, my holidays began. First thing in the afternoon I started by tidying up the yard. It was an activity we had neglected for quite some time and I thought it was the right time to dedicate myself to this task. With Leo following me curiously, I was able to enjoy the spring sun while I uprooted and accumulated the tumbling weeds and cleaned the ground. It was a relaxing moment, and in the end seeing the courtyard nice and tidy, gave me great satisfaction despite the dust and tiny thorns that got stuck in my hands.

On Tuesday, however, things changed. An intense sandstorm hit the area, forcing me to stay indoors all day. All the brushwood I had collected was blown away by the wind and now I will have to start all over again. Not having much to do, I tried to entertain Leo with games and cuddles. Even if it wasn't ideal, I took advantage of all that time to do homework, read a book and watch some movies. The storm made the atmosphere a bit dark and sad, but I tried to keep a positive attitude.

Wednesday was a special day, because I organized a real Italian spaghetti dinner with some university friends. It was a nice opportunity to see friends again and share a meal together. I went around the shops looking for Italian products and then I cooked with enthusiasm, trying to recreate the flavor of Italian cuisine. Lunch was full of laughter and made me feel less alone. Of course, Leo couldn't believe he had new friends at home and, after overcoming his initial distrust, he made himself the protagonist by letting himself be pampered without restraint. It was nice to share stories and moments of our lives, and I realized how important it is to maintain ties with people, especially when you live in a foreign country.

Unfortunately, on Thursday I had an ear problem that put me in a bit of difficulty. I couldn't find a doctor and this made the situation even more frustrating. I tried to manage the discomfort and not let it overwhelm me, but it was really a difficult moment. Fortunately, after asking advice from friends in Italy, I slowly managed to solve the problem.

Friday and Saturday were too quiet days. I spent time at home, reflecting on how long the week was... Sometimes, the quiet was really too much, but I tried to appreciate these moments of calm by listening to music, reading and reflecting on my past experiences. At some point I made the big decision to tidy up the garage and then everything changed and the hours literally flew by without me realizing it.

Sunday morning I attended mass at the Church of the Incarnation in Rio Rancho (my English skills have a lot of room for improvement!). For lunch I went to the legendary Range Cafe in Bernalillo for Blue Corn Chicken Enchiladas and a nice beer. It was a great way to end the week, enjoying a good meal and the company of some locals. In the afternoon I lay on the couch in front of the TV and binge-watched shows about restoring and tuning American cars.

Finally, Monday arrived, and with it a sense of relief: I am finally going to UNM this morning and I will finally meet someone to talk to! Even though the holidays were not what I had imagined, I learned to

find joy in the little things and to cherish the moments spent with Leo and friends. These experiences have made me realize that, even in unexpected situations, there are always opportunities to grow and have fun. I can't wait to tell my girlfriend all about it when she gets back. I also look forward to planning another Italian cooking event for friends with her!

By Viktoriia Ibatullina (Russia)

It was a wonderful time! A couple of days I just rested at home, cleaned my apartment, and got into a calm mood.

I did a lot of meditation and hypnotherapy practice. I finished my yoga routine for a while, so now I can relax and recover after the yoga challenge. I love having vacations, and I especially enjoy spending time with my husband.

On Wednesday, my friends and I visited our friend's house. It was a beautiful Italian lunch—we felt like we were in Italy! Our friend taught us how to eat pasta properly and how to make it like a real Italian. I also sipped a little dry white wine. After that, we had delicious appetizers: salami, prosciutto, brie cheese, and finally, we tried really good Italian coffee. The house was beautiful, and I loved it. You could see the mountain view, and they had a small, cute dog.

During that time, my husband bought a new car—a Tesla Model Y. It's a beautiful car, and I love it so much because it even helps my husband drive! It tells him when to look at the road and pay attention. I really like this car—it's my bestie now.

At the end of spring break, on Sunday, my husband, our friends, and I went to White Sands National Park. On our way, we visited Pistachio Land, which I expected to be more exciting. However, since it was off-season, it was a bit empty—there were no pistachios on the trees. But the shop was really nice, and we tried some ice cream there—it was amazing!

After Pistachio Land, we arrived at White Sands National Park, which I absolutely loved. It felt like an alien landscape, and we took a lot of cool photos. I had bought three different dresses for pregnant women and several headpieces and headbands. I changed outfits and took many photos with my husband. It was so cute and fun—I loved it!

One problem we had was the camera. We borrowed a professional camera from our friend, but it was so complicated to use. For some reason, it was always out of focus or too bright, so we struggled with it. However, some of the photos turned out great, and surprisingly, the ones we took with an iPhone were even better than the ones taken with the professional camera!

After that, we headed home. On the way, we saw that we were near the Mexican border, so we drove through a checkpoint. The people there asked us some questions, but they were really nice and friendly.

Last night, we finally arrived home, completely exhausted and out of energy. We immediately fell asleep.

By Yaser Khalil (Palestine)

During the spring vacation period I got to experience something fresh and thrilling for me personally. A trip, to Colorado with some of my pals where I finally took up skiing for the very first time, in my life! Skiing had been a long-time aspiration of mine that I never got around to until this occasion.

We set off on our journey bright and early, in the morning in a car filled with music and snacks galore! Though the drive was lengthy and tiresome at times the lively conversations and jokes kept us entertained throughout the trip. Approaching Colorado brought a shift in scenery as snow dusted the trees and mountains creating a winter wonderland, around us.

When we got to the ski resort, for the time I felt a mix of nerves and excitement. I had never tried skiing before. I was unsure of my skills. Initially I stumbled quite a bit. It was a bit embarrassing to be honest. My friends were supportive and laughed along with me than, at me. Gradually I began to find my balance. After an attempt I was able to ski down the easy slopes smoothly. It was a sensation—, to soaring through the sky but, on a blanket of snow.

When we weren't skiing on the slopes during our trip. Just chilling out instead! We rented this cabin close to the ski resort where we would cook meals as a group and enjoy chatting away the evenings while watching movies and sipping on hot chocolate together in front of a snug fireplace. On one evening, under the mountain skys display of stars—with their brilliance shining so vividly—we even stepped outside just to gaze up at them in awe.

By Israel Muamba Nzambi (Democratic Congo)

During my spring break, I was lucky enough to be invited by Giorgios, Victoria, and Whitney. Upon our arrival, he warmly welcomed us with a classic wine that set the mood. For dinner, he prepared delicious spaghetti, an Italian dish that we all enjoyed. It was a very pleasant time shared around the table.

After dinner, Giorgios offered us an Italian hot chocolate and a mocha, both exquisite. We then spent a lovely time playing with his dog, Leo. It was really fun and added a touch of joy to our day. The rest of the day, I simply enjoyed the time at home, watching television and catching up on my favorite shows while doing homework.

These moments together were memorable, and I truly appreciated this mix of relaxation and fun. It was a wonderful way to enjoy my spring break, filled with good food, time with friends, and relaxing at home. I hope my next vacation will be just as enriching.

By Valeria Lopez Soto (Mexico)

Hi, I'm Valeria. My spring break was actually very calm and relaxing. I didn't do much during the week of vacation, but I always went out to eat at restaurants with someone or sometimes with my family. I also went for walks around my neighborhood with my dog named Taco, and that was it. Then, on Friday and Sunday, I went to watch the UNM tennis match, and that was it. I didn't do much interesting stuff, but I was able to relax.

By Erickson Palacios (Peru&USA)

The 1st day I slept until late. I watched a movie and I went out to run for an hour.

On Saturday we had a meeting for my birthday, we ate Peruvian food like ARROZ CON POLLO, AJÍ DE GALLINA, CAUSA and we drank CHICHA, then we played ping pong, billiards, SAPITO, it is a game that you have to throw chips into a box to get points and CACHITO, is a dice game that people use to bet, they are very typical games in Peru. It was a day full of joy and I felt at home.

On Sunday, I went out with my uncle, my aunt and the dogs for a walk to pass the time, we sat in a park for a while and we must have been in the street for about an hour.

On Monday, I didn't do much, I was talking to my cousins on video call, then I played with my friends for a while and went to bed early.

On Tuesday, I played with my dog for an hour and cleaned my room and went to my bathroom.

On Wednesday I was in my room talking with my friends about the Peru game, Peru was playing the next day.

On Thursday I bet with my friends on the European games that were played in the afternoon, unfortunately we lost that bet but we had hope to win with the Peru game. In the afternoon we went to my uncle's friend's house to watch the Peru game, Peru was playing at 7:30 and we arrived at the house at 7:30, we were there waiting for the game. When the game started, I was nervous, in the second half I was writing with my friends to see how our bets were going. In the end, Peru won 3-1, we won our bets and recovered the money we had lost.

On Friday, I did some homework and washed some of my dirty clothes. Then, with my uncle, my aunt and her granddaughter, we went to dead volcanoes, climbed some mountains and entered a small cave. We went to eat pizza and I ate a brownie but I didn't like it because it was too sweet. We left home at 12pm, and we came back at 10pm and we played monopoly for 2 hours, it was a long game and we could not finish it.

On Saturday, I went to play soccer after 4 months, I felt a little slow but I will recover my physique little by little, after playing we went to eat at a Peruvian restaurant.

On Sunday I was watching the European matches because we had bet with my friends, they were exciting matches but the important thing is that I won my bet. I also did the missing part of my laundry and finished the homework I was missing.

In conclusion, my spring break was very relaxing. I had a lot of fun, I felt relaxed, I am not with my friends and family physically, but doing video calls are important so as not to lose communication, and this week was important because I talked to them what I could not talk to them these last weeks.

By Diana Yamileth Aguilar Perez (Mexico)

Hello I'm Diana, now I'll tell about my week. It was very boring because I only went to the gym and at my uncle's house, so I didn't have new experiences and all the week I did the same, but I did relax and I can sleep. My first day only went to the gym and at my uncle's house and the others days too. Then Tuesday my friends and me went to the mall and take pictures in a booth and eat ice cream.



By Aliyah Albaqami (Saudi Arabia)

The spring break coincided with the holy month of Ramadan for us Muslims. During this month, Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. This month is characterized by spirituality for Muslims around the world, as good deeds increase and multiply. Fasting makes you feel for others who do not have food, especially the poor, the homeless, and children afflicted by wars. This feeling prompts you to offer charity and help because you feel what they feel of hunger and thirst. Fasting also makes you more in control of your actions, as it refines the human soul because during fasting throughout the day you stay away from all your bad habits and others such as smoking, for example. It develops patience and determination within yourself. It also has health benefits, as it is like a detox that cleanses the body from the inside and restores its vitality and strength. It also contributes to weight loss, thus the person enjoys health. After I mentioned these benefits of fasting, I will talk about my feelings in this month, as we go to the mosque to perform the Tarawih prayer and meet in the mosque with our Muslim brothers to ask about them and check on their conditions. There in the mosque, Providing free breakfast throughout the holy month of Ramadan. The spring break was an opportunity to enjoy the spirituality of this holy month with peace and spirituality.

By Mohammed Alzeer (Palestine)

This spring break was a wonderful combination of relaxation and adventure. I decided to stay in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and began the break with a much-needed break, as I was feeling exhausted from schoolwork. I spent the first few days catching up on sleep and enjoying the peace and quiet of my home.

Midway through the week, I decided to head to Sana'a to try some Arabic food with my friends. I went for a picnic with some friends. The weather was perfect, the scenery was beautiful, and we took lots of pictures and laughed along the way, creating memories that will live long in my mind. One of the highlights was a picnic we had on a mountaintop, where we enjoyed homemade sandwiches and fruit while taking in the stunning views.

I spent the last part of the break with my friends. We gathered at a house for a small get-together, where we cooked traditional dishes and shared stories. We had a great time with our loved ones, and we even played some board games that sparked our competitive spirits. Overall, this spring break was a wonderful combination of relaxation and fun, allowing me to recharge and appreciate the beauty of my surroundings and the company of my loved ones.

By Duy Phung Do (Vietnam)

During my spring break, I had a wonderful time with my family. One of the first things I did was go shopping with my cousins. We spent the afternoon walking around the mall, looking at different stores, and trying on clothes and accessories. I decided to buy a new pair of shoes and a hat, both of which I really liked.

Another highlight of my spring break was going out to eat with my aunt's family. We went to a Korean barbecue restaurant, which was an exciting experience. The food was absolutely delicious, and I enjoyed grilling the meat at our table. Everyone had a great time eating, talking, and enjoying the flavorful dishes. It was a memorable meal, and I would love to go back there again.

One of the most exciting parts of my break was watching my cousin's basketball game. The match was intense and competitive, with both teams playing very well. In the end, my cousin's team won, and it was an incredible moment.

For the rest of my spring break, I stayed home to study and prepare for my upcoming exams. Even though I had fun during my break, I also wanted to make sure I was ready for my tests. I spent time reviewing my notes, practicing problems, and organizing my study materials. While studying wasn't as exciting as shopping or going out, it was important and made me feel productive.

Overall, my spring break was both fun and relaxing. I enjoyed spending time with my family, trying delicious food, and watching an exciting basketball game. At the same time, I was able to stay focused on my studies. It was a great balance of entertainment and productivity, and I feel happy with how I spent my time.

By Valery Andrea Gomez Torres (Colombia)

My spring Break, For a start I'll tell you from the beginning so, the Friday I went to the gym and I did some shopping for my car. I was looking for some things that I needed, and I spent a while checking different stores. After that, I just went back home and rested a little bit.

The Saturday we met with friends of my brother to some shopping and we went to shoot was very funny because was my first time doing that we had a great time, we laughed a lot and enjoyed the experience. At first, I wasn't sure how it was going to be, but after a while, I started getting more comfortable. After shooting we went to eat to restaurant Mexican and was very delicious we ate three pizzas of Birria, also we drink water of Jamaica and Orchata the food was so good that we ended up eating everything really fast because we were very hungry that night we made ice cream and cookies and we had a movie night we stayed up late watching movies and just talking, it was a really fun and relaxed night.

The Sunday we went to church and we returned to the house and in the night we left for dinner and ate burgers. It was a chill day, and we just enjoyed the moment. The Monday at the morning I went to gym and we left with my sister-in to shopping that day there was a sunset very beautiful, the colors in the sky looked amazing, and we took some time to admire it. We also walked around for a bit and talked while we shopped. The Tuesday take the car to the shop and after we went gym with Diana and when we finished we went to pick up Luisa and we went to eat and go to a shopping mall after we went for ice cream, we had great time. We spent the whole afternoon together, laughing, talking, and just enjoying the time.

The Wednesday we went with Luisa to have my car tested and in the afternoon we went gym with my sister – and I was with some friends. We also talked for a while after the gym, just hanging out and having a good time. The Thursday we went to get the cars license plates and went the gym and after went to a dinner at the church. The dinner was nice, and we saw some people we hadn't seen in a while, so we got to catch up.

Yesterday at morning I went gym and at afternoon I went to the house to Diana and we bought eat and we talk late it was very funny. We had a lot of things to talk about, and time passed by so fast.

The Saturday I went gym and played basketball with my friends, we played for a long time and had a really fun match.

The Sunday at the morning I went church and I went eat and after I went play basket, it was a good way to end the week, playing and spending time with good company

The spring break was very funny I like. Only my parents and my little brother was missing otherwise I like it a lot and have great time. I did many things in the week I go out with my friends I spend time with family and I enjoying very much. Even my parents and my little brother not there I still having a lot fun and make good memories. I go gym many time I go shopping I eated very good food I play basketball and I see movies in night. Also I go church and talk and laughed with my friends. Every day different and I like because I always have thing to do. I think this spring break very special because I do new things like shooting first time and I enjoying simple moment like see the sunset or eat ice cream with friends. I feeling very happy and relax all week and I like very much time with everyone. Even I miss my parents and little brother I know next time we all together and it more better. But in general I like a lot and have great time.

By Farhan Naufal (Indonesia)

I spent Spring Break only at Albuquerque and did not go out of town.

My family went to Hayashi Japanese Restaurant for celebrating my mother's birthday.

I always love Japanese foods especially sushi foods. Here in Albuquerque,

I saw a variety of sushi being made and sold in restaurants or groceries.

What I realized is that the kind of sushi is quite different with

the kind of sushi that I ate in Japan. In Japan, I ate a lot of raw fishes

when I ate sushi. But here, in Albuquerque, the sushi are mostly

cooked fishes with some kind of dressing. I believe this difference

is due to American people mostly cannot eat raw fishes.

Luckily for me, I am good for both sushis.

I also went to Round1 amusement center at Coronado Mall.

Round1 is a game center company that comes from Japan.

I used to play in Round1 when I was in Japan.

The games, that are available at Round1 Coronado Mall, are

surprisingly almost the same like the games I played in Japan.

It makes me happy to feel the atmosphere of playing game just like in Japan.

For me, Albuquerque has a lot of Japanese cultures, it is good for me,

because I feel familiar In my life. Even I remember there is a Japanese garden

in Albuquerque (ABQ) BioPark. The name of Japanese garden is Sasebo Japanese Garden.

By Luisa Margarita Perinan Pereira (Colombia)

Have you ever had a relaxing but fun spring break? Or with days when you did nothing and others when sometimes you didn't have time for so many things? Well, I had it.

Let's tell you the story day by day. My first day of spring breaks was Thursday 13rd of march, I arrived home, organized my room, took a bath and took a 3-hour nap to help my aunt make dinner and wash dishes. The days we eat together we always watch a movie, so that day we watched a movie called "princess exchange 2", we already watched that movie, but I put it in my list to watch it in english and practice and she watched it with me, after that we went to bed and sleep together in my aunt's room. The second day of spring was a Friday, normally on Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's I go to the gym, that Friday I woke up late, so I had lunch instead of breakfast and went to the gym with my aunt and when we arrived to the house I took a shower and straight my hair and my aunt has a friend that invited her to a play about hadestown acted by her seniors students, it was so great and a very professional guys. Next day. Saturday 15 of march, in the morning I started to see universities and UNM scholarships for international students while I had my breakfast, when I finished, I talked with my parents because I miss them so much and asked them about their days, after that my aunt and I ate lunch and started yo get ready to go to the cinema with a friend of her and watched a movie called "rule breakers" and was about an all-girl high school robotics team is formed and enters its first world competition, competing against more than 160 other countries. In the face of discrimination from both the United States and their own country, the girls remain brave and demonstrate tremendous teamwork and perseverance, before that we went to eat. On Sunday, I slept until lunch, but I don't had lunch I ate a little bit and then we went out with my cousin because we see each other always at home and talk but we don't hang out too much because he is busy, so we went out to saggio's and ate pizza, I wanted to go again because since I tried the bbq chicken pizza in the CELAC welcome party I loved so much and i still love it. On Monday 17, I stayed home and help my aunt organize their books, because she told me that she needs a list of all of her books, and she will pay me if i do it, so I did it and I spend all afternoon doing that because she has so many books, and after that I just stayed in my bed scrolling in my phone. On Tuesday, I had a volunteer about physical therapy in UNM hospital and after that I was kind of sad because I don't understand the instructor well and I get frustrated when I don't understand something. And the not exciting part of my spring break was the camping, I enjoyed that so much, I laughed a lot, played board games that I also like a lot, and we ate very well.

And that was my relaxing but fun spring break.

By Wang Xu (China)

After a month of language learning, it was time for my first holiday at UNM, spring break. I think the happiest people is my son. Because I will have much time together with him. Children will be lively in front of their mothers because their mothers make them feel safer.

Last Saturday I came back from UNM to White Rock. Start our Spring Break with my son. It's a happiness thing with important people, even nothing to do. Just accompany my son, enjoy ourself time, it's important than go out play. We did a lot of things together, such as: draw, Lego puzzle, Dentist and patient games, and so on.

Have you ever seen a blue sun, red clouds and black rivers? Yes. I have seen them in the picture my son draws. Children's imagination is rich and colorful. I feel excited when he showed the draw for me. My son has his own world of color cognition. This is interesting.

I think no boy don't like Lego puzzle. if your house has boy you will get many weirdly shaped cars, houses, trees, etc. Of cause, they are made from Lego puzzle. When your boy looks at you smugly, no matter how weird the Lego puzzle is, you'll feel happies.

He also sometimes worked as a dentist. So, I need became a patient that time. He checked my mouth like a real dentist. Helped me to repair my teeth very seriously. I think maybe he wants to be a dentist, but who knows? Children's dreams change all the time.

Most of the time the naughty boys like to run around, and laughter surrounds me, which makes me very happy.

My week off passed peacefully and warmly with my family. After busy days of studying and working, I had the opportunity to enjoy a relaxing time, doing what I love and enjoying the familiar atmosphere in my small house. Every evening, my family and I gathered together, raised our glasses of wine and shared stories about life. The laughter echoed in the cozy kitchen, making me feel truly happy. Under the soft yellow light, the sparkling glasses of wine seemed to warm my heart. Those moments were not simply about drinking together but also about family bonding, memories that I will cherish forever. During the day, I spent more time reading books - a hobby that I usually don't have enough time to pursue. I like to sit by the window, where a white flower tree is in full bloom. The small white flowers sway in the gentle breeze, exuding a pure fragrance. Every time I look up from the page, I look at that flower and feel strangely peaceful. I read romance novels, immerse myself in the world of the characters, and feel the emotions of love and life. Those stories make me dream and sometimes reflect on feelings and the beautiful things in life. Not only enjoying my own time, I also occasionally go into the kitchen to cook. Although I am not a very good cook, I still like to experiment with new dishes. From simple dishes like fried eggs, soup, to more complicated dishes like Hue beef noodle soup, banh canh, I try to make them carefully. Every time I see my dishes being enjoyed and praised by everyone, I feel very happy and have more motivation to learn to cook more. A week of vacation passed without too much excitement but it was very meaningful. I not only had time to rest but also had time to enjoy the simple joys in life. Those were warm moments with family, quiet moments with a book, and the joy of cooking delicious dishes. After this vacation, I felt more excited, ready to return to daily life with lots of positive energy.



By Thi Anh Dieu Tran (Vietnam)