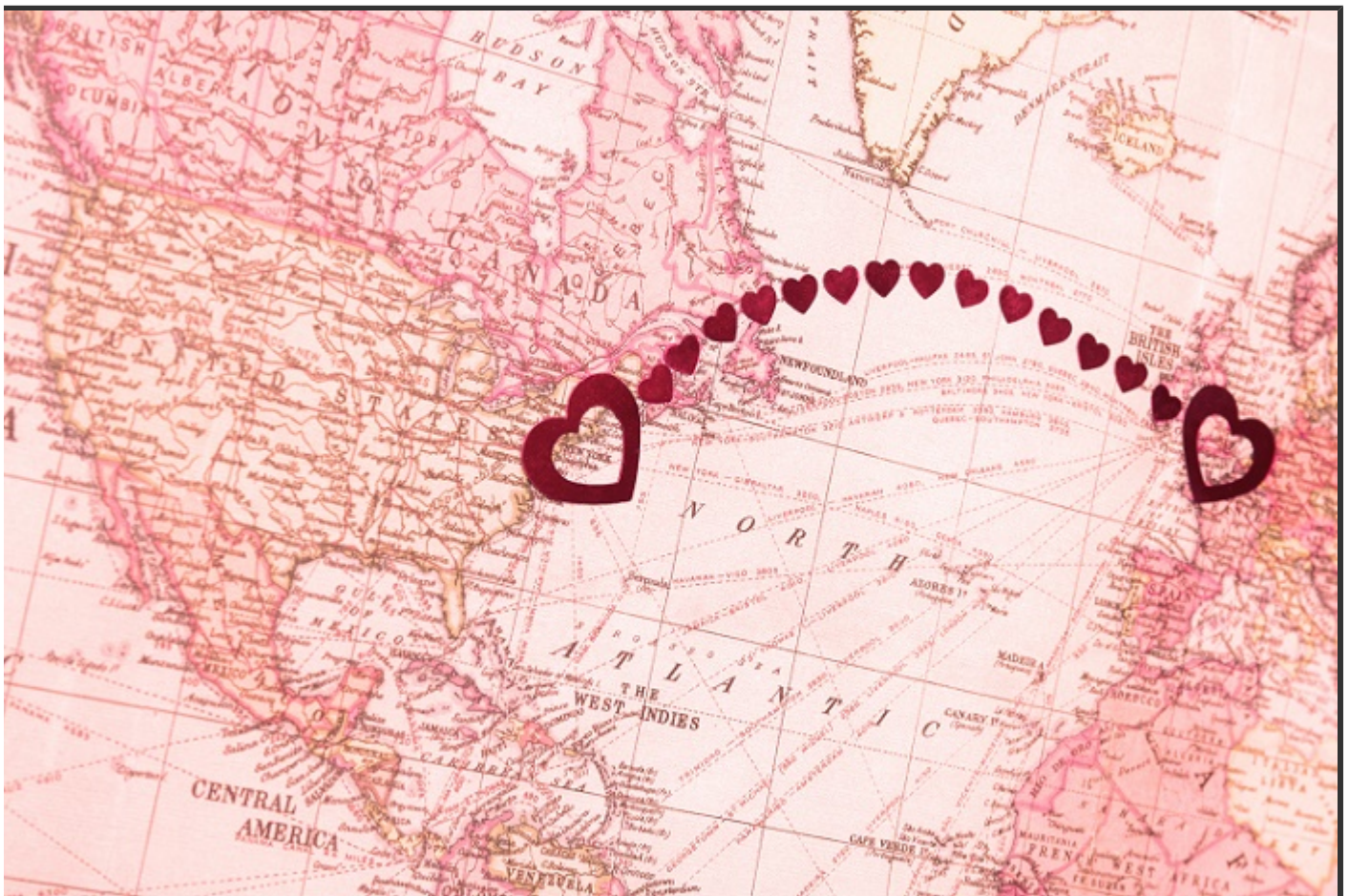


# Episode 3 : Erasmus Love & Relationship

Hi! My name's Richard. I'm a student from England on my Erasmus year at Nanterre. I arrived in Paris in September, and in the first two articles of this blog I've contrasted Nanterre with England in terms of the campuses, social lives, and food. We can move on now to what you really want to know: what love and relationships to expect on an Erasmus year.



According to the European Commission (who run the Erasmus program), 27% of Erasmus alumni met their current

Big stats. But even if we do believe them, I doubt that 1 in 4 of Erasmus students at Nanterre meet their love there. This statistic is averaged across all 33 countries participating in the Erasmus programme; the proportion of Erasmus students coupling up in each city will vary widely.

Let's take Nanterre as an example. As I explained in episode 1 (link), it's relatively difficult here to make local friends - let alone boy-/girl-friends. Some Parisiennes in class seem so grumpy that you start doubting your right to start conversations, and even if you do pluck up the courage to do so you're rarely sure if they really care or are just being polite. Keeping their attention once you've got it is the next hurdle, especially when like me your French isn't fluent. The French person has to repeat themselves, and your lines are so limited that you can't even make up for lack of fluency with well-formed stories or cracking wit. Even if you can follow rapid conversation you can still make faux pas: once in a bar I informed 3 girls that, in England, cocktails are "normalement" more of a girls' drink than a boys' drink (when I meant "généralement") - turning a neutral observation into a sexist remark.

That said, plenty of Erasmus students do get in relationships, especially with people of the same nationality and/or language. The Spanish and the Italians are particularly keen on each other - but they're also fond of drama so we'll see if any couples survive. Living in a country that doesn't speak your mother tongue brings you closer to the people who do, so naturally many Erasmus team up for friendship or more. Some even get back together with the ex's they broke up with to go on the Erasmus year. Meanwhile, a friend of mine is so popular with young Maghrebians that several have asked her hand in marriage.

Casual relationships, at the other end of the spectrum, are as abundant as they are in England and probably anywhere in the West. Tinder and its French equivalent Happn are well-populated, though beware that through you could, as my German friend often does, meet someone you don't actually like. I wonder how many of these transition into the 27% of serious Erasmus relationships

At the end of the day, relationships aren't the biggest deal in the world. But if it matters to you, then with such a variety on offer, I wouldn't worry.

#### **Next time**

**Check back in a couple of weeks for more on the Erasmus life - I'll be discussing sport, academics, and more. A bientôt!**

*Author : Richard Waller*  
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Find me on my [Instagram](#) :



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<https://phareouest-nanterre.parisnanterre.fr/episode-3-erasmus-love-relationship-757985.kjsp?RH=1479916157564>