

Internship Report

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11th January 2010 - Vienna Airport – heavy snowfall and minus 2°C - that was the day of my departure for Kuala Lumpur.

Since I received the confirmation of my internship with Asian Overland Service Tours & Travel I could not wait to travel to this special South-Eastern Asian country. Research prior to my departure revealed some stunning facts about their religion, the diverse ethnic population, the amazing landscape and its climate. I could not wait to experience all this first hand. Getting off the plane – still wearing boots due to heavy snowfall in Vienna – I was confronted with a 30°C heat! On the journey from the airport we passed several palm plantations, and as we reached Kuala Lumpur city centre, I could not suppress my excitement for the upcoming months.

When looking back now on the first month spending here in Kuala Lumpur, I have to admit, that I am still impressed by the city, its lifestyle and local people. Especially the first few days when I explored our neighborhood, my workplace and the city centre. My flat mate and work colleague Andy took good care of me and showed me around and took me to lots of social events and dinners. So it was really easy for me to get to know my new colleagues and it was not difficult at all to make new friends. Needless to say, all of my colleagues at the office are very open-minded, respectful and extremely helpful.

My internship at Asian Overland Services Tours & Travel has taken place in the Marketing & Sales Department for the Asian and European Market. Up to now, I have been assigned to various tasks. One of my first projects was a comparison of the AOS contract rates of the cooperating hotels to the rates of the B2C online booking platforms such as Agoda, Wotif or Expedia. Furthermore, I had to compile quotations and packages for different clients. Due to the fact that I am the only person who speaks French in the office, I am responsible for enquiries from our French Agents. I am in charge of handling all the translations from French into English and replying to our clients from France, Tunis, Algeria and Morocco. Ms Sook Ling, my supervisor, tries to give me as much responsibility as possible, allows me to work on my own, but at the same time always offers me a helping hand.

Since starting work in the office I have also been able to assist with a couple of incoming incentive groups. Some of the other office staff and I were in charge of handling a big Indian group in the Genting Highlands, a huge entertainment and casino complex on the peak of a mountain, situated outside of Kuala Lumpur. Facing some challenges, such as the check-in for 140 people in the biggest hotel of Malaysia (over 6000 rooms), was a good experience in order to understand what can go wrong and on which details attention has to be drawn. Since then, I have been sent a couple of times to the Genting Highlands for assisting various groups. This experience is of such importance to me, as you get an idea how different nationalities behave and what is important for them. In the next weeks I will also be able to collect groups from the airport and assist for arranged dinners and check in and check out at diverse hotels.

Since my arrival, we have had a lot of bank holidays due to various festivities going on in Kuala Lumpur. I had the opportunity to celebrate the Chinese New Year, experiencing the hospitality of Chinese people. Moreover, the Thaipusam, an Indian religious festival took place at the Batu Caves, where thousands of Indians were heading to the holy caves. I will remember these experiences for a lifetime and I am looking forward to the upcoming months here in Kuala Lumpur.