

Summer 2018, 8 weeks, Tehran, Iran

First, to all those who are on the verge of going on something like this: I say, do it.

Arriving:

At the beginning I was not sure, if this adventure will be the right way to discover Iran. But after only one day on this internship I was convinced that this was the best decision. IAESTE organized the accommodation and picked me up from the airport. The accommodation was at the student dorm of the Tehran University. It was semester break, so the IAESTE-Student had plenty of space. It was a funny mix putting international students together in one dorm who have never seen or met before. My Iranian Mentor Pedram bought me a sim- and metro card to get around in the city.

Life in Iran:

The other IAESTE-students and mentors become your new family. You spend most of your free time with them. Talking about everything and the different cultures. Being with International students in a foreign country is an amazing combination with a lot of fun. And the best off all... You discover the beauty of IRAN together.

Trying delicious Iranian food, spend a lot of your time with locals and have a unique work experience in your major.

However, you get to know the real Iranian way of life with its positive and negative sites. In my two months in Iran, USA put sanctions on the trade of Iran. Due to this reason, a big inflation started. When I arrived in Tehran the exchange rate was 1€ = 9.000 Tomans. Now it is 1€ = 21000 Tomans and it is still rising. The living cost for us were cheap but it is a hard time for the Iranian people. I would recommend to IAESTE to change the salary of the offers to USD or Euros and not to keep them in IRR. Never the less,



IAESTE-trainees and mentors holding an international food competition in the village of Damavand.

the media show a completely other view of this country and its people. The Iranian people are one of the friendliest people I have met in my life. Tarooof is funny and respectful but sometimes a bit too much.

The genders are separated here. So, there are different areas for women and men in public transport and in the dorms. You get used to it after a time. It is quite uncomfortable for women especially that they must be back at dorm before 9 pm.

Work:

I was working at the K. N. Toosi University of Technology at the faculty of material science and engineering. I got my own project about *investigation of the mechanical and tribological behaviour of epoxy containing graphene and nanoclay*. It was an interesting topic I have not worked on before.

I learnt about innovative composites and the behaviour of nanoparticles in resin and thanks to IAESTE for making this Internship possible.

A lot of materials were missing. And it is sad that the university can not finance the project of his students. The students have to pay for their own equipment and due to the sanction, it was not possible to get all the materials. My mentor Farid, who supported me a lot during my stay, became a good friend of mine. Without him, my work would not have been the same.

Travel:



Weekend trip to Alamut with a local guide and IAESTE-trainees

Spontaneous day trips along the city, weekend-trips to Isfahan, Yazd and Shiras – there was always something to do. A desert trip with 4-wheel-drive in the desert of Kashan or hiking in Alamut. There was a lot to discover in this beautiful country. Tehran is busy, so I was happy to get out on the weekends. You always found someone who joined you on the tour.

Booking flights in Iran is complicated. The websites are in Farsi and you can only pay by Iranian debit card, so you

always need a local to help. It is easy to travel around in the city with metro (10 cent) or by snap (like uber).

After all I spend an amazing time during my internship in Tehran and I will miss my Iranian friends, the IAESTE-students and mentors. Feeling like home in a foreign city you have just been to, for two months, is a weird feeling. But knowing the way better than the taxi driver is kind of amusing.