

My exchange in Kiev

Prior to this exchange I had no idea how it would be to live in another country for an extended period of time. I had never spent more than a week abroad and to be honest I wasn't sure if I would like it, so naturally I had my doubts. But respectively I can say now, that all my concerns were unfounded, I had one of my greatest times in my life. For this reason, I want to share my experience with you and hopefully inspire you to make an exchange and maybe even choose Ukraine.



Upon arrival three Med-students were picking me up from the airport, they gave me a sim-card for internet (making my life a lot easier) and I was brought to the apartment where I would stay with another exchange from Italy. Then they made some pizza for me and surprised with a small tour through Kiev. Next day two other Med-students took me through Kiev and showed me beautiful sights of Kiev. The other exchange Marco arrived on that day and suddenly we had a great mix of different cultural-mentalities, explore Kiev and surely that was fun. In the following few weeks I would have a lot of fun and win many friends. Everyday someone from the University or Hospital wanted to spend time with Marco and me.



We saw all of Kiev, had many nice evenings, going to bars and clubs for dancing. On one weekend we traveled to Liviv, on another to Vinnystia and Odessa. There we met local students which showed us around and gave us a great time. Additionally, we made some daily trips near Kiev to a food festival, Pirogovo and Meschyhirja.



The medical part of this exchange was a valuable experience, improving my knowledge and skills. I went to different hospitals to see a lot of operations from cardiovascular-, abdominal- to pediatrics surgery. I saw different techniques from open to laparoscopic surgery. A young doctor enabled Marco and me to practice laparoscopic surgery on a simulator. For the second week I went to a hospital specialized for HIV patients. There my mentor prepared a nice program for me that split the day into a practical and a theoretical part. It was an interesting experience and I improved my skills in taking blood a lot. In my third week I went to different hospitals again watching operations at two of the best private



hospitals. The last week I was at the infectious disease department which improved my skills in manipulation and I saw some interesting cases like a leptospirosis patient.

Finally, I would highly recommend other students to take the opportunity to go on exchange in the Ukraine. A perfectly organized and very friendly local committee, took care of me. They were very motivated and full of energy. Kiev is an amazing city with many beautiful sights and really good food, also public transport is good and easy to understand, which makes getting around well and exploring the city easy. The communication with the hospital was smooth and very well organized. All in all, I felt immediately welcome, and thanks to the great committee work and highly sociable coworkers at the hospital I had a joyful experience.

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