



IAESTE
SWITZERLAND

Personal Experience Report

Intern: Octavio Gzain, Argentina

Company: digitalSTROM AG, Schlieren, Switzerland

Internship dates: 16.07.2018 - 15.07.2019

Experience of being abroad

What situation brought you to your limits?

Being so far away from my family and friends for such a long time, one year in my case, was a situation that challenged me many times, making me ask why I was there. I suffered the loss of my grandmother and that was the hardest time.

How did your traineeship influence your personal development?

In my origin country I had always lived with my family, so I had to learn many things to survive alone. I also improved a lot my English and my ability to relate with people from different cultures. I started with no friends in the city, and ended up having many of them.

What are you proud of?

I'm proud of pushing myself out of my comfort zone, and then having such a positive reward like all the friends I made, and the places I visited.



At DigitalSTROM showroom

Experience at work

What was the most valuable thing you learned from a Swiss colleague at work?

The most important thing I learnt is that respecting people is more important than any deadline or work that can be done.

Did you notice any differences regarding the way work is done in Switzerland compared to your home country?

People in Switzerland are much more focus on their job and try to deliver the best quality they can. The consequence of this is that sometimes it is a challenge to connect in a deeper way with coworkers while working.



After a hike, during Appenzell IAESTE weekend

Cultural difference

What was the most special food you had during your stay?

I never had had fondue before, so that was the most special food I tried.

What was the most difficult thing to get used to?

Having to plan hangouts with people with a lot of time in advance. In my country this happens more spontaneously.



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What did you miss most during your stay?

The meat! I couldn't believe it is so expensive. Meat is the main part in my diet so having to live without it was quite shocking for me. I had to look for alternatives.

What will you miss most when back home?

The tranquility in which people live. People behave much more relaxed daily. What I will also miss, is the cultural variety that the city of Zürich has to offer. That was one of the most enriching things I can think of.

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What was your general experience with IAESTE in Switzerland like?

Very positive. Without IAESTE I wouldn't have been able to stay so long in the country. Through the activities organized, I met the people that made me want to stay for one year and that helped me in the hardest moments. Thanks to IAESTE I visited a lot of places within Switzerland that I wouldn't have been able to go on my own. It was helpful to solve questions related to my visa and about living in the country.



Zermatt IAESTE weekend 2018