



**IAESTE**  
SWITZERLAND

## **Stephanie Malvicini**

From Argentina to Switzerland

Intern at digitalSTROM AG (March 20 – December 20)

### **Experience of being abroad**

My journey to Switzerland meant many first times for me: first time traveling abroad, first time flying, first time living off my own income, first time away from family and friends for a long period of time. My trust on IAESTE helped me face all these new challenges. I'm really proud of myself for being able to live so far away for such a long time during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Experience at work**

I was hired by digitalSTROM AG to work on the release testing team. My boss and I were the only testers located in Switzerland. The other members were living all around the world. So I gained experience working in a diverse team.

My experience at work wasn't as perfect as I imagined. The situation was rather unstable, from people being fired, to moving to another office and finally my boss resigning. However, I had the opportunity to work in a field that we don't have in my country: Smart homes. I learn a lot of things, especially because my studies are software oriented, and at work I was embedded with a lot of hardware oriented tasks.

At lunch time, I learned a lot about life in other countries because my colleagues were from all around the world. Sometimes we went to the river to have lunch, and it was amazing!

### **Cultural differences**

Argentina and Switzerland are completely opposite countries. I felt so secure walking alone on the streets, even at night. It's amazing how people can be trusted, so much that they have small markets without employees, where you take what you want and then place the corresponding money on a box.

People in Argentina are super friendly, we talk like friends to everyone and we show a lot of affection. In Switzerland, it's hard to enter people's lives, they are less easy-going. I think this is the main reason why it was easier for me to make latin friends, I felt a little odd between european people.

Food is also very different, in Switzerland everything is healthy and good quality. I liked that, but I also missed Argentinian food like empanadas.

I learned a lot about different cultures because Switzerland is full of people from all around the world. At work, at home and also in IAESTE meetings it was full of people from different cultures. This made me realize how big the world is.

## IAESTE events and meetings

Since I arrived in March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic started, I had to wait three months for my first IAESTE weekly meeting. I felt a little bit sad and alone those months because I didn't know anyone and my floormates weren't too friendly either. Everything changed when I went to the first weekly meeting post pandemic. There, I met a lot of cool people, and some of them became really good friends. The negative side? They lived far from my house, and it was very difficult to meet because trains were not working late at night. Nevertheless, I'm really happy with all the times we were able to meet.

The most amazing things IAESTE did were the weekend events. Due to COVID-19, they had to cancel a lot of them, but the very few they organized were incredible. I was able to visit some places in Switzerland, and had fun times with fun people.



Bern Rafting Day - 12 July 2020





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Basel Day - 5 September 2020





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Chocolate and Cheese Weekend - 27 September 2020

I also made some trips all around Switzerland with other IAESTE interns, and also a few with my floormates and a work colleague.



Interlaken hiking with two argentinians

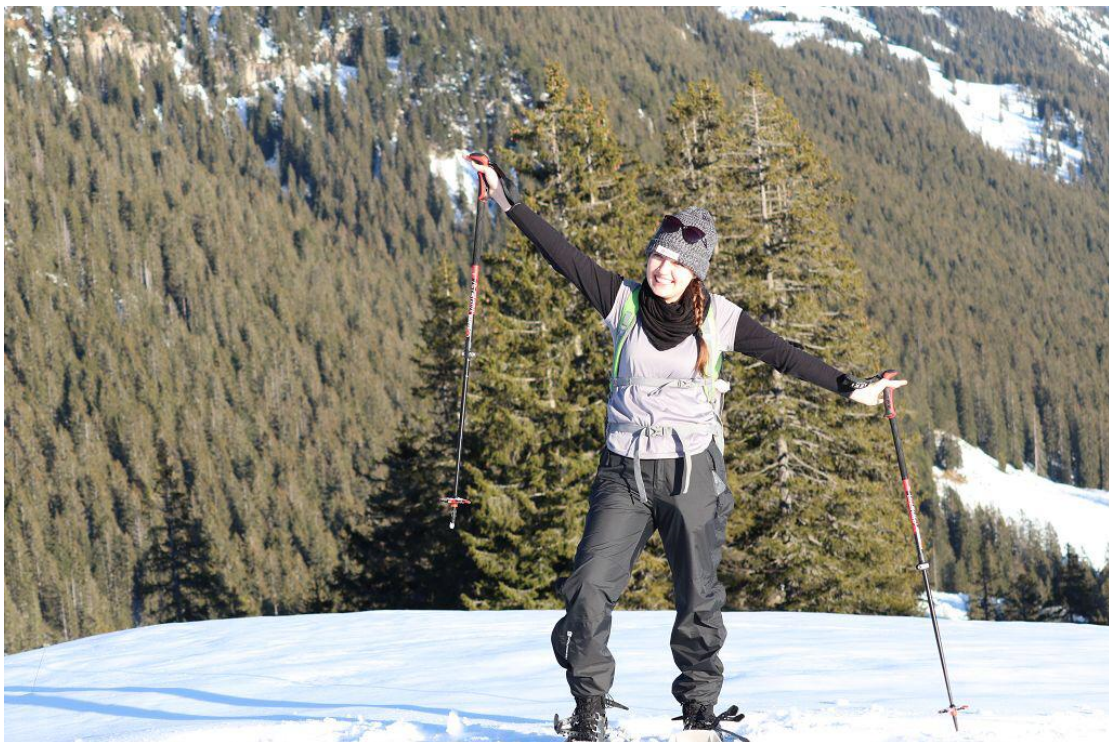




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Freezing at Klein Matterhorn



Pilatus snow walking



I'm very grateful that I was able to have this amazing experience, and I really appreciate all the work of IAESTE members and volunteers to make our journey so much easier, more comfortable and more exciting!