

Christina Gräfenhan – Internship Report

AUGUST

I am doing really well here in Kuala Lumpur and I have found some very nice new friends. One friend, Nina Melissa, takes very good care of me and tries to entertain me as often as possible. I was even invited to her sister's wedding, where I was one of the bridesmaids! It was so fantastic to see how a Malay wedding is celebrated; it is a very interesting culture.

At work I have done a lot of internet research for the AOS database in the few weeks that I have been here and I joined a lot of restaurant and hotel inspections. Another task was helping with a brochure for an exhibition which AOS will organise next year.

We also had some meetings about the product development of AOS' tours including a brainstorm. It was very interesting to see how the company operates and works. It is different from the company where I did my last internship, and I have learned a lot.

My colleagues have been very nice and friendly. If I do not understand anything that I am doing, I only have to ask them and they explain it to me again. They always ask me about my plans, and my mentors, Nina Melissa and Eddie Lim, give me interesting work.

Last week I had to move to a new apartment which is nearer to work so that I can walk to the office. The one where I lived before was a little bit further away so that I had to take the LRT and the bus to get to the office. I was accompanied by my flat mate, Eric Chou. My new roommate is a girl called Justine who is also very nice and friendly. She goes back to her sister's house every weekend and she has invited me to join her one weekend, which I plan to do once I have seen everything here in Kuala Lumpur.

So far in my free time I have been to the Batu Caves and to the Central Market as well as to the Petronas Twin Towers. I went jungle trekking at the Jungle Lodge with Eddie, and Nina took me out clubbing. I also visited some of the big shopping malls to buy some presents and other things. Last weekend I went to the East Coast of Malaysia to visit one of the small islands. There I went snorkelling and saw turtles, sharks and many different types of fish. It was a very beautiful island and I could have stayed there longer. Next weekend I plan to do a city sightseeing bus tour.

SEPTEMBER

My new roommate Justine and I have had a lot of fun together during the past few weeks. I went with her to her sister's house and we celebrated the moon cake festival with her relatives. It was very funny and I talked to so many interesting people.

My mum came out here to visit me and we went to Melacca at the weekend and visited Chinatown, Aquaria KLCC, the observation deck at Kuala Lumpur Tower and then went to the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia to walk through the rainforest there. I have also been to the famous Lake Gardens to visit the Bird Park and the Orchid Garden, both of which are very beautiful. I plan to go there again if the weather is nice and I plan to do a hop-on hop-off city bus tour.

At work we have had a lot of hotel inspections including dinners at the hotels due to Ramadan. We tasted a wide variety of nice food, I have never tasted so many delicacies before. The first two weeks of September I worked in the MICE department and had to do some proposals with costings and requests to the hotels. I am learning more and

more about the work in the event sector. I also had the opportunity to run a group with my colleagues Eddie, Jennifer and Farred. I accompanied the group to a city tour by night and went jungle trekking with them. It was a good experience for me, because I have not run a group before.

For two weeks I was transferred to the European Market department, where I was introduced to the booking system and helped to book hotel rooms and make special requests to the hotels.

Now I am back in the MICE department where some groups are coming this month so I am looking forward to gaining more experience and learning even more.

OCTOBER

At the beginning of October I was transferred back to the MICE department at my request, where they had an incentive group from Mexico. I was able to help the team with all of the preparation leading up to the event. The group arrived on the 16th October and stayed for two days in the Genting Highlands Hotel, which meant I had the opportunity to see more of Kuala Lumpur!

Added to this I also completed/helped my colleagues complete some proposals for groups planning to come in 2009 and did further internet research for upcoming events. As part of this work we completed some site inspections of hotels and restaurants. For example we visited one of the restaurants for the Mexican group in advance to get an idea of the service they provide and how the food tasted!

The Mexican group was the second group I was able to work on with the team and it was a great experience for me. It made me more self-confident in dealing with clients and guests and I learnt a lot from the team regarding how to handle myself in event situations. At the end of my internship Mrs. Wong very generously offered me a three day / two night holiday at the Frangipani Resort in Langkawi! Unfortunately I could not take her up on this fantastic offer because my time was already fully occupied with activities I wanted to do before my departure. But I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Wong for such a wonderful offer.

In my free time I was busy all the time. My birthday was during the month of October and for this we had a small celebration at a restaurant in one of the big shopping malls. I also visited the Kuala Lumpur Tower observation deck, Putraya on a tour with the Mexican group, and KLCC Park with my friends. I went to Titiwangsa Lake and to Sha Alam to see the biggest mosque in Malaysia. On my last two days I tried to visit all places where I have not yet been and see all the city sites again. My colleagues organised a farewell at Sunway Lagoon theme park with an overnight stay at the hotel so we could go clubbing! On my last day I met up with some friends for lunch before they took me to the airport. It was very hard to say goodbye after such a wonderful and adventurous three months. In fact I am thinking about going back next year to go to another wedding and to travel around Malaysia to see more and more!