

My Personal Experience as an IAESTE - Trainee in Graz, Austria

My name is Ahmad. I am a Jordanian student of Industrial Engineering in the University of Jordan who had a training experience in summer 2001 in Graz, Austria. I should honestly say that through my whole stay in Austria I got to experience nothing but kind peoples with gentle souls facing me everywhere I go. In my hostel, at work, in meetings, while walking in the streets, and most likely while waiting for the tram.

My training was in the technical university of Graz. The field of my training was "Research and Development", as I worked on the institute web-site on specific tasks concerned with the upgrading of the pages and introducing new techniques of teaching approaches especially in the field of "E-Learning", which was an extremely exciting field and a new experience to have.

I had my own desk and computer to accomplish the tasks that I was given from time to time. I would always be asked to join the group when they go to lunch, and take me out to some places outside Graz. All of them were nice, trying all the time to speak with me in English, and to speak to each other in English in my presence, but once a German word pops in the air every one shifts to it, and as I had no clue about decoding that language I would finish my dish quietly. The weekend tours were always interesting as a way to break the rou-

tine at each end of the week, so it was always enjoyable to just get out of Graz and meet new people from different countries doing an IAESTE - training in Vienna, Linz, Leoben or any other city in Austria.

weekend-trip on Sonnblick

I always wanted to have the specialty of Austrian food, the one and only "Schnitzel", I had some failed attempts to have this dish in Vienna, as I was faced with the disappointment that the restaurant only provided Schnitzels of pork, and as I couldn't eat pork I would always decline, but the Schnitzel kept haunting me through-out my stay, until one day I heard about a restaurant in Graz that offers Schnitzel from either pork or turkey, so I was automatically there, the restaurant was the "3 Golden Kugel" translated from German, and I had the chance to try the famous turkey Schnitzel after all... nice.



But I have never been surprised as much as I was from the huge amounts of Beer the Austrian people have, maybe only for me because the idea of having alcohol in a drink is out of the question, and it would show most of the time, as for example when we went to a restaurant for lunch during work, we were around twelve people, so when the waitress came to take the drinks order the sequence went like this: "Beer... Beer... Beer... Beer... Ice Tea... Beer... Beer...".

And now, after two months of IAESTE - training in Austria, I found out that the whole period of training in Austria went fast, I was totally glad with this experience, had a proper practical training experience, got to know more about a foreign country - Austria in this case - and got to know more people from different nationalities, which was as fulfilling an experience as can be.

Ahmad El - Naji

