

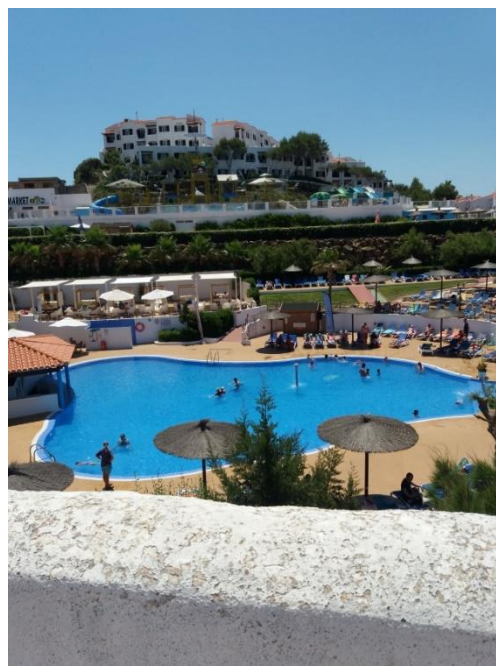
Erasmus story: A summer in Menorca



I am Kristina Milosavljevic and I study Business and Management in tourism at Doba Faculty in Slovenia.

I did my internship (which belongs to my studies) at Carema Hotels Club Resort in Menorca, Spain, between 1st of June 2018 until 1st of September 2018. As a part of the Erasmus + program, I received financial resources for conducting the professional practice at the hotel, which I found the Animafest agency.

Before practice, it is necessary to arrange the documentation and this requires a certain amount of time and patience. When I finished all the paperwork, I was ready for the trip. My practice was in the hotel- Carema Club Resort on the northern part of the island. With students from different countries, I worked in the buffet, as well as in the kitchen (one day in a week). Buffet is big and we have 800 guests during the high season. Business was not always the easiest, because it required skill and speed. Working in a buffet also means that some days/weeks can be quite strong and stressful. At the beginning, it was a big challenge for me but after a while, I got used to it. Now I see it in a positive way since I learnt so much about business and myself. In addition to setting tables, serving guests, part of the work is also communication with guests. I have learned how much smile and patience are important in working with people.



Working hours in the hotel are 8 hours, divided into 3 shifts, when guests have breakfast, lunch and dinner. As a student you have 2 free days, which is quite enough to get rest from work and explore the island. Apart from financial support from Erasmus, you get a salary from the hotel, which is usually 300 euros per month. Food and accommodation are free and good, I have shared the room with two other girls.

I am very appreciated to Ms. Lasly Pons, my mentor at Carema. Lasly gave me very in-time valuable instructions. I also would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Carl T. Suarez for his permission to be my academic supervisor and more importantly for his enthusiastic encouragements and precious instructions during my internship period.

Our mentor at the beginning explained to us how things functioned and what was expected of us at the workplace. Coaching with the mentor was more than excellent. For every question, problem, he was here to help us.

When you work in a hotel with people and guests from all around the world, you learn a lot new things. Work in such a large hotel is a great experience. You start to understand better that in tourism it is important for each item to function perfectly and that team work is one of the most important things for a successful business. My personal development increased a lot in this period. I learnt how to handle stressfully situations in daily business life as well as taking responsibility and solving problems in different ways. Collaboration and communication are key points in tourism, in this case the team spirit was amazing so that the working level was quite high and effective.

Life in another country brings a lot of benefits for you personal growth. You learn how to work with different people. You learn how to be polite in every situation. You learn how to find solution by yourself in some situation. You learn when to rise your voice for yourself and when you need to be quiet. What I find most important is that you learn how to function in a large collective. In general, I felt really comfortable at my work place. My colleagues are friendly, helpful and open-minded.

The advantage of practice abroad is, besides learning about Spain, I learned a lot about other countries. The colleges were mostly from Italy, France, Argentina, but also from China, India and Mexico. I had the opportunity to learn a lot about tourism and life in those countries. We compared life, culture, economy, tourism, and broaden our horizons.

What is important for leaving abroad is the English language. Practice abroad means working with people from different parts of the world, and as work requires constant communication, knowledge of English is very important. During work, the commercial language was English. My knowledge of Spanish language was at the beginner level. However, at work not all of colleagues spoke English, as well as hotel guests, it was quite normal for me to have a motivation to learn Spanish. The Erasmus course OLS helped me, but also everyday communication with the employees at the hotel. I can say that now I understand Spanish language much better before leaving, and that my level is now B1.

Looking back, I would say that all my expectations have been absolutely fulfilled! I have definitely learned a lot. I would recommend Erasmus to everyone. Thanks to DOBA Faculty and Erasmus + Program I had a great chance to sharpen my skills in a professional working environment. I have improved my communication skills, my English and Spanish, and learned a lot about working in tourism. Throughout the internship, I have also learnt many things about Spanish culture whose benefits are far beyond what I could learn with some other project.

I would like to thank Doba Faculty and Animafest organization for introducing me to this opportunity in which I have developed myself both academically and socially, and recommend to students that this is the best way to do their internship. I have learned a lot and I face the last semesters of my studies with a high motivation.

Kristina Milosavljević

