

Grüßi !

After an Erasmus experience in Sweden in the frame of my studies, I decided to take a gap year between my bachelor and my master. Therefore, I packed again my suitcase to live in Vienna for 9 months. I arrived during a warm Indian summer in October. I discovered the sweet vibe of the city under the sun, corona was already far from our minds. I knew barely anything neither about Austria, nor German language. Of course, the beginning was somehow chaotic, but I had the chance to meet wonderful persons, especially during our on-arrival training.

I have been very lucky to be in a great project! I was working in a Kindergruppe in Hütteldorf, in the west part of Vienna, close to the Wienerwald. We were taking care of 13 children between 2 and 6 years old with an amazing team of three pedagogues. My main task was to be with the kids and answer to their needs. In other terms, I was playing with them, reading books, doing DIY, singing, but also dealing with potential conflicts. I was also preparing the breakfast, warming up the meals and cleaning afterwards. I brought a bit of my French culture. We sang together French songs, for example. I also made some crêpes for the Kindergruppe to celebrate a French tradition. I really enjoyed working there. The Kindergruppe was organized by the kids' parents themselves. They were all involved in it which created this kind and sweet atmosphere. I learnt a lot by working with children, especially about pedagogic, that is why I decided to continue my studies in this field with the goal to become teacher.



*In the Kindergruppe, when the kids found funnier to do 'body painting' rather than painting on a boring paper!*

This year has not been always a quiet river though. Indeed, my experience has been widely impacted by governmental restrictions due to covid. Austria was under lockdown 2/3 of my experience. It was anyway one of my best experiences so far. I changed my expectations to make my activities fitting with the lockdowns. Hopefully, I met friends before it started so we were still in touch. I felt also lucky to be able to still work during this time.



*On one of the Stadtwanderwege in Wien*

Vienna is also a good place to spend this time. We were free to walk into nature, which is really close to the city center of Vienna. I took this time to hike a lot in the Wienerwald and do all the Stadtwanderwege around the city, which are hiking paths. I had also more time for myself to write, to read, to do yoga, ... which was also really nice! Starting a life abroad during a pandemic is not an easy thing, but it taught me a lot about myself and about resilience in general. I don't regret having done this experience. It was amazing!

“After the rain comes the sun”: in May, the situation got better. I had the chance to discover “the real” Vienna and beyond with my friends. Austria is a beautiful country, full of wonderful mountains and lakes. Nature is everywhere. Because the country is not that big, it's perfect to travel by train (connections are very good!) to discover it. These nine months were a sweet time, and I was very sad when it came to its end.

Danke sehr für alles, Österreich! Bis nächste Mal 😊



*In the Wien Oper, where we had the chance, with friends, to watch a ballet.*