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Ramadan in Qatar – A personal experience

- by Scott Webber

I lived in Doha, Qatar for 12 years and have some vivid memories of my time there. One such memory is Ramadan. According to Islamic belief, Ramadan is a time to celebrate the first revelation of the Qu’ran, to Mohammed. Muslims honor this event by not eating or drinking from sunrise to sunset. At sunset they break their fast and then have Iftar (a special evening meal).

For myself not being Muslim, Ramadan brings back memories of happiness and despair. I marveled at the extravagance and dedication the Muslim community devoted to this event. All the major hotels offered nightly feasts. There were sales everywhere. Another great part of Ramadan, for myself and colleagues at work, was reduced working hours. Each hour of classes was reduced by 20 minutes. Also, there were two official prayer break times instead of the one prayer break. For me, this meant time to catch-up on work. But it was not all wonderful. Not only did Ramadan alter my working schedule it changed my leisure and shopping activities. During the day only supermarkets and petrol stations were open. If you wanted to



Iftar - Doha

buy a TV for instance, you needed to buy it at night. This would not be a problem if the traffic was not insane. Driving on the roads during Ramadan, especially before sunset and at night was a nightmare. There were always more traffic accidents during Ramadan than the rest of the year.



Ramadan traffic – Doha

Just before sunset, for instance, many people, who had not had any food all day, would drive as fast as they could so they could break their fast with family and friends. This resulted in increased traffic accidents and deaths. And at night the roads were clogged with vehicles. People are going shopping or to an Iftar. A trip that would normally take 20 minutes, took 2 hours during Ramadan. To avoid these situations I made sure to be home an hour before sunset. You also need to alter your eating habits. You are not allowed to eat or drink in public even if you are not Muslim. If you were caught eating or drinking, you might end-up in jail or worst case scenario kicked out of the country. So I loved and hated Ramadan in Doha.

(In the solar calendar, or Gregorian calendar, Ramadan in 2018 is from May 15 to June 14. -- Editor)

A Report of an Internship Program

400 days in the “Dream Land”

- by Shunsuke Hamamura (Faculty of Education, International Understanding)

I have just finished my mission of 400 days in Walt Disney World, the happiest place in the world. I worked as a bartender at a “Sake Bar” in the Japan pavilion at EPCOT, which is one of the exciting theme parks at Disney World.

For the first few weeks, I often faced difficult situations since I had rarely drunk sake before. That’s why I couldn’t answer questions from our guests; such as “Where was this sake made?” or “What type of sake is the most popular?” But finally, I could suggest many types of sake smoothly in accordance to their preference.

The most surprising thing to me is that Japanese sake is really famous among foreign people. Many guests came to the sake bar saying “Sake! Sake!”, and especially Americans they love “Hot sake”.

Also I could enjoy talking about different cultures and spending a memorable time while drinking Japanese sake with wonderful guests. I was really proud of working as a bartender at

the Japan pavilion. My clumsy guest service, including my suggestion about sake, gradually improved day by day through discussion with those guests.

I spent a precious time in Walt Disney World as a cast member for a year. It was not always fun, because sometimes my English made my guests disappointed. But these trial and error experiences encouraged me to realize the satisfaction of the guests. “Disney”, is the happiest place in the world and always creates a gorgeous time for guests, in a real “Dream Land”.



Finally, if you have a dream to help people realize their dreams come true, or you hope to work for “Disney”, you too can have such a memorable experience.

“If you can dream it, you can do it!”

A Studying Abroad Report from an Aidai Graduate

My Days at the University of California, Irvine

- by Tomoya Okamura (Graduate of Faculty of Law and Letters)

Hi y'all! I've been to California on a study abroad program for 9 months (from September 2016 to June 2017). Although I've experienced some short-term stays in foreign countries, I had not had a long stay, and studying abroad was one of my wishes to achieve in my college life. Fortunately, thanks to a scholarship "TOBITATE! Young Ambassador Program", I could finally study abroad.

I studied at the University of California, Irvine as an international student of California Academic Program. The main feature of this program is that students can take both English and several undergraduate courses. Actually, it depends on your English level, how many English classes you need to take. If you already have enough English skills, you can register for some undergraduate courses even in the first quarter. Still, you have to take one English class anyway. In my case, I mainly had to take English classes in the first quarter. After completing the first quarter, I was allowed to take a few undergraduate courses.

I mostly took the classes provided by the faculty of International Studies and Political Science such as International Relations, International Organizations, Model United Nations, and Conflict Resolution. In addition, I took a Spanish class and tried to learn a new language in the last quarter. Since I had to learn the third language in the second language, I had a lot of difficulties to catch up with the class, but it was fun. Also I had a chance to teach Japanese to those who are studying Japanese as a conversation partner outside of class. There's a bunch of options, and you can study whatever you want anyway!

While I was staying in the United States, I had some opportunities to visit other cities. In fact, I've been to Boston twice. The first time was for job hunting, and the second was to attend an international conference. Every November, the Boston Carrere Forum, the largest job fair which mainly targets stu-

dents who can speak English and Japanese in the world, is held in Boston. This event is held for three days, and the applicants are able to get offers from companies if they pass the interviews. Fortunately, I got an offer from a company which I was interested in. In February, I went to Boston again to attend the conference. This conference is held by students at Harvard University twice a year. Although it had nothing to do with my study abroad program, I applied for the conference just for fun. Boston, which is the oldest city in the United States, is a truly beautiful place. I came to love this wonderful city through these experiences.



Throughout my stay in the United States, I learned and experienced a lot, but I just wrote only a part of them in this essay. Of course, there were a lot of fun times, but many difficulties which I countlessly faced occupy the biggest part of my memory rather than good the ones. To be honest, most of the time during the stay, things did not go well. There was no end to my troubles. Still, I cannot help recommending you to go to study abroad **EVEN IF YOU HAVE ONLY A LITTLE INTEREST**. I believe this experience made me stronger.

Last but not least, studying abroad has the possibility to change your life. Going to a university similar to mine is not your only choice. When and where are you going to go? And what are you going to do there? You can make **YOUR ORIGINAL PLAN** on your own. If you don't have enough money, you can apply for scholarship programs. There are plenty of scholarship programs for studying abroad, just utilize the resources around you. Don't be afraid of trying new things. No one can take responsibility for your life because it is not theirs. I hope this essay encourages you to try something new, even just a little. Best of luck!



Now On - Let's Enjoy English!

"Let's Enjoy English!" is a theme based free English conversation class. You will have a chance to talk with native English speakers in a social atmosphere. Students can take a 45-minute conversation lesson in a small group (maximum 6 participants). Many students have already signed up for this exciting and interesting program. Classes are held until July 25 during this semester, the autumn course usually starts from late October.

If you want to join this program, please sign up at the EEC office in advance.

Day	Time	Teacher	Theme
Mon	13:00 - 13:45	Chris	English through Music
Tue	9:00 - 9:45	Andrew	Internet Culture
	16:30 - 17:15	Kristin	Life Skills
Wed	10:30 - 11:15	Scott	Creating Stories through Simple Programming
	13:00 - 13:45	Adrian	Social Skills and Strategies
	14:30 - 15:15	Magee	The Music of the Foo Fighters
Thu	16:30 - 17:15	Lexi	Freeze Frame : Iconic Images in History
Fri	9:00 - 9:45	Danielle	Learning Communication Strategies from Shrek
	16:30 - 17:15	Zhou	Fun Conversation Games!

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