

My thought of studying abroad started already at the school interview. They told me I was a good candidate to send abroad, haha. After two years studying in Varia, I felt like I wasn't anywhere near ready to graduate. During most of my studies, Covid has been around. Varia handled the situation as well as they could, I got plenty of support. But when you're told to study online... Well. It just doesn't work. I was still pushing my studies through which was great but at the moment I felt (still do tho) like I know nothing. This was one of the major reasons why I wanted to keep studying and the way to do it was to go abroad.

I'm also very interested in getting to know more about different cultures and to learn different ways to better and to learn from our chefs.

I was struggling so much on deciding where to go but now that I look back on it, it seems like an obvious choice.

For the start of my journey I was glad to be able to spend some time with my German friends. I flew to Frankfurt and they picked me up, spent a night at their place in Darmstadt and then drove to another friend in Karlsruhe where I spent a couple of nights! From Karlsruhe I took the train to Freiburg where my German school contact waited for me. Then we organized everything and off I went. Traveling in Germany wasn't really a pleasure. I was lucky with DB being kinda punctual until our trip to Slovenia. And don't even get me started on that hjahaj. For all my finnish followers, think about VR and make it at least 10x worse and then you have DB.

I was very lucky to get offered free accommodation from the hotel I work in. It was a rather small room but had everything I needed. A bed and a bathroom hahah. Living in the same building where you work has its own ups and downs. One of them for sure is the distance to work. In the evening when you're super tired it's great to just walk up the stairs, but in the morning I feel like I would wake up better if I'd have to travel or sometimes you'd just want a bit more distance.

During my free time in Germany I explored a bit of the local area. Freiburg is beautiful, mountains and nature in general. Ah pls take me back. I also did a bit of traveling outside Germany. I went to Switzerland, Slovenia and London. I tried to learn a bit of German but didn't really succeed in it. But hey, I went from A1 to A2 so like, any improvement counts, right?

The restaurant where I worked was fairly new. It was renovated a few years ago. Sometimes when it was super busy and more people were working we kinda struggled to find enough space for everyone to work comfortably. But we managed very well. Even the plates for a group of 100 people fit well!

My colleagues are so lovely! First of all, I'm so grateful they took care of me when I was stuck in my room with covid. When I finally got to work, I had some problems with one of my colleagues. I felt like he didn't really want to teach an intern, but after a bit of time everything got so much better and all my thoughts were proven wrong. With one chef I went to his hometown and met up with his family. Thank you for inviting me, George!

I was also surprised how the waiters were so good with the kitchen! Always running around asking if everything is good, telling their stupid jokes and spreading positivity in general. They also welcomed me to chat with them every evening after work to get to know each other more and to catch up with everything. I really felt like I was a part of the whole staff in Sonne and it was a huge part of my stay. Love you

My tasks varied quite a lot. I was preparing the breakfast, preparing the mise en place together with everyone, helping with the service, cleaning.

Communication with colleagues was fairly good, sometimes it wasn't really working as good but hey, we are all human so can't expect everything to work perfectly all the time. Working with a language barrier was sometimes very difficult. Some of my colleagues improved their English so much though! I'm so proud!

One of the biggest differences with the working culture was split shifts. We went in at 10am, finished with lunch at 2-3pm and went back at around 5.30pm for dinner. I liked how it was, sometimes I went for a run between shifts, sometimes I took a nap. I'm not sure if I'd like this schedule if I would live far from work. Then I would waste time commuting back and forth many times a day.

While I was in Germany I learned that even if I try my best it doesn't always mean that it needs to be perfect. I learned that you need to take care of yourself before taking care of others. And I learned that I deserve better in so many aspects and now I'm going to work for that. I was also thinking about life in general a lot and how society expects you to do everything and ugh. I feel like I'm ready to work for the things that make me happy instead of taking that 9-5 regular job. And for that I'm so grateful, I hope I get the chance to stick to these things.

The biggest problem for me was definitely covid. Besides the fact that I was actually worse than I imagined, I was also very homesick. I was struggling to get tested and everything because some people only spoke german. And when I got back to work I couldn't taste anything and got super tired pretty easily.

The best individual experience is probably the last week when the head chef showed me how to prepare eel. I never got to do it in Finland and I remember that I was super nervous hahah. I didn't want to ruin the whole thing!! But the best thing overall was definitely the people.

For the next student going to the same location I would say that please be open hearted for everything. Be kind and people are kind to you. Explore, you are going to love the surroundings! Maybe study a bit more german than I did hahaha.