

Persönlicher Erfahrungsbericht

PROMOS 2015/2016

Gasthochschule / Institution: UFPR

Stadt, Land: Curitiba, Brazil

Fakultät (KIT): Resources Engineering

Aufenthaltsdauer: 1 Month

Unterbringung: Airbnb

Für den Aufenthalt nützliche Links: -

Belegte Kurse (ggf.): -

My experience in the research programme in Brazil

During my master studies I had a chance to spend one month in Curitiba in Brazil, where I was conducting my research for the master thesis. One month is definitely not enough to settle and get to know a city of a size of Curitiba, however it can give a feeling of how the life in the certain place could be. My situation during the stay is not the common one, as everything was already organized, I came and the room for me was rented, I did not have to attend the classes, the work place was provided and my activities were well organized. All of that could not be done without the amazing people I had a chance to meet in Curitiba, who made the whole experience less stressful and more pleasurable for me, for that I am very grateful.

Firstly, I will present couple of information, which might be helpful while planning a short stay in Brazil.

Having nationality from the country belonging to the European Union I did not need visa for a stay shorter than 90 days. For the stay a flat from the Airbnb portal was provided, which was perfect for our duration of stay, as it is more comfortable than a hostel and cheaper than a hotel. Also, the location was perfect, as it was located near the university, where I was working and near the botanic garden, where I could relax during the free time. For the longer stay, for example a semester I think it is better to find a room via facebook or some other portal, as it is usually much cheaper than Airbnb.

When it comes to the shopping, the supermarkets have quite a broad range of products, however they are completely different to the goods I usually buy at home. What was a little bit disturbing for me was the fact, that the tap water had such a strong smell and taste, that even for cooking (boiling pasta or making tea) I had to use the bottled water. The drugstore products are the same as back in Europe, however a bit more expensive.

Before traveling I was wondering, whether it is better to withdraw money from the ATM or change euros for the Brazilian currency in Brazil. It turned out, that in Brazil paying by card is the most common way of paying. Card payments are possible even in taxis and little shops, there are no limits, so even when spending equivalent of one euro it is nothing extraordinary to use a card.

For everyday traveling, the bus is the most comfortable mean of transport. The cost of the single ticket is around 1 euro. When commuting around the city with more than 2 people, it is actually more worthy to take a taxi, as it is usually cheaper to split the taxi cost, than to take couple of buses. For the traveling outside the city, I was encouraged to use the bus or if the trip is planned in advance the plane. I did only one trip due to high workload, even though the booking was done one week before, the difference in price of plane and bus was not more than 30 euros, taking into account how much time I could save with the plane travel, I decided on the plane.

My stay regarded collecting the data for the master thesis and processing the collected samples in the laboratory belonging to the university. I also had to use the lab facility from the private institute, which was located on campus. The

cooperation at the campus with the students and professors from the UFPR, I recollect as very positive. Everyone was always very eager to help, not only when it comes to the issues connected with the university work, but also when it comes to everyday problems (mostly due to not knowing the language) or questions about traveling. I always believed, that if both sides are willing to communicate, there is a way to. As I do not speak Portuguese, I tried to communicate using Spanish or English, however outside the university it was quite challenging to get the information I needed.

All in all I am very pleased with the whole experience and I recommend it to every person that is willing to learn and gain experience regarding living abroad.