

Singapore Inspiration: Sorrows in Study and Joys in Travelling

Introduction

I am Malcolm, a year-three Quantitative Finance major. I have participated in SHHo College Exchange Programme in academic year 2012-13 Term 2. My host university was Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore and I was admitted to Nanyang Business School (NBS).



Expectation

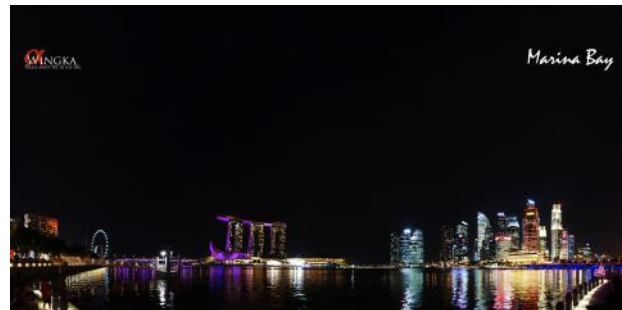
To begin with, I quoted part of what I said in my interview to the programme:

“As Singapore is one the “Four Asian Dragons” so as Hong Kong, it is currently quite an important financial centre in Asian Pacific Region. In addition, Singapore has been striving to become the first foreign market in



the history as a market using RMB as a medium of exchange.

Therefore, I forecast the cooperation between Singapore, China and Hong Kong will become more and more frequent in the near future, so we must grasp the opportunities to learn more about Singapore. I expect the exchange in Singapore can offer me a closer look in to this economy and obtain valuable first-hand information in the development of the country’s economy.



I expect I would benefit a lot in different aspects through the exchange experience. Generally speaking, the experience gained from exchange can certainly increase my awareness about the world. Specifically, my future goal as a successful fund manager in banking industry will be more easily to achieve if I can learn more about the Singapore’s economy during my exchange period. As a Business Administration student, networking is important. If I can successfully go to Singapore for exchange, I will be able to expand my social network, meet more friends, especially the potential business partners in banking industry.”



After the journey

Now, when I look back to my previous expectation, I do think Singapore is really quite a competitor of Hong Kong. Singapore has a strong government, striking the best for their citizens. The whole city is growing in a very fast pace and it is somehow better than Hong Kong in some aspects like housing and education.



Quite a good place for living

I guess some of you may have already been to Singapore for travelling or study. Indeed, Singapore is a lovely place for travel and living. You can experience the food from all the south-east Asian countries such as Malaysian, Indonesian, Thai and India food. The first impression of Singapore to me was that the city is well-managed and the environment there is very comfortable and therefore it is very suitable for living.



Poor arrangement by NTU

“Exchange makes one grows faster than one can expect.” This is possibly always right for any exchange student. Due to the poor arrangement of my host university, only half of the exchange students were offered on-campus accommodation. Unfortunately, I was one of the unlucky guys and I was not allocated any

hostel. I can only see this was quite an irresponsible action to exchange students. The school should not admit so many exchange students if they could not handle it and provide on-campus accommodation. I used two days to find a Housing & Development Board (HDB) apartment. I finally rent a small room with a friend from CUHK. It was an unforgettable experience to me and also many other exchange students to NTU. I could not imagine the first time I found a flat myself was not in Hong Kong but Singapore. What the!



Studying in Singapore

Exchange students from all over the world might feel that the Singaporeans are indeed very diligent. I studied five courses during my exchange but the course workloads were very heavy when compared to that in Chinese University of Hong Kong. If you want to enjoy your whole exchange experience by filling all the available free time with travelling, I actually don't recommend you to go Singapore for exchange. Only if you want to learn advanced yet useful stuff or you are limited by GPA requirement, then NTU would be a nice place for you to go for exchange. Up till now, I still cannot make sure whether my exchange to Singapore is a right choice. But I actually thank SHHo very much to give me such an opportunity and I am sure this was the best result I could attain given the constraints.



The hard time

Although my time in Singapore was quite hard, I met friends and formed a group of eight to travel to south-east Asian countries nearby. This was probably quite a rewarding part in my exchange life. When you are travelling to some unknown nations, the only thing you can do is to trust your friends and rely on each other so can we finish all the trips safely. As a result, we built up a strong friendship after so many trips.



Cheap to travel

The price level in Singapore is more or like the same as that in Hong Kong but the price level in the surrounding less developed south-east Asia countries is much lower. I have been to Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia during term break and weekends. Every time when we travelled to a poor country, we thought that we have already possessed a lot and we should treasure what we already have.



Finally back to Hong Kong (sigh)

I could not wait to head back to Hong Kong immediately after the final examination.

Nevertheless, I have to thank SHHo College to provide me a chance to go on exchange again.

Hardly can I forget that the sorrows and joys

during my exchange. My friends, do think about going on an exchange. I am sure that you can meet friends and also experience difficult cultures, which could be part of your meaningful university life.

