



# Report of a once in a lifetime experience

## **Pre-departure planning**

I found out about this program from a student at my home university by looking at her Facebook pictures and I was amazed! After the decision to go to Thailand was made signing up for the Asia Exchange program was very easy. I just visited their homepage [www.asiaexchange.org](http://www.asiaexchange.org), selected the University I wanted to go to, filled in the application form and attached a transcript of records and a passport copy. After less than two weeks I got the E-Mail that I was accepted – you can't believe how happy I was!

Then the real planning started: First me and my friends (we were four girls from the same study program in Austria) booked our flights with the help of a travel agency. There we also got an offer for a health insurance. When you plan your flights make sure you arrive a little earlier in Phuket to find an accommodation and that you also have some time for traveling. The second thing we got was our Visa. In Austria it's very easy to get one. Just visit [www.thaiconsulate-salzburg.at](http://www.thaiconsulate-salzburg.at) for further information. Make sure you get a "multiple entry visa" otherwise there can be problems when you travel and want to get back to Thailand.

Asia Exchange offers a scholarship that covers the study program fees. I applied for it on the Asia Exchange website with a statement of purpose and my transcript of records. Grades are not the most important thing to get the scholarship – you have to convince the AE team why you want to study in Asia! On the homepage you also find further information about other scholarships and financial aid.

## **Accommodation**

During our planning phase we already tried to find an accommodation in Phuket, but unfortunately that's almost impossible. Make sure that you arrive in Phuket before the university starts and book a hotel near the area where you want to live. One week is

more than enough time to find an accommodation, but you maybe have to adjust your expectations. You will not find a big villa with a pool for 100 € per month, but you can sure find some nice accommodations for about 200 to 300 €. We lived in a house with 3 bedrooms two minutes walking distance from the university. The price was around 25.000 THB per month – that's about 200 € per person.

Our landlords were incredibly nice and always very helpful. They even invited us to have dinner with them and helped us whenever we had a problem. For contact details you can send me an E-Mail ([brigitte\\_reiner@hotmail.com](mailto:brigitte_reiner@hotmail.com)).



Here is a short list of accommodations where other students lived:

- Ratchaporn condominium
- dCondo
- plusCondo
- Delight Village
- Anuphas Golf Ville

### **Host University and courses**

The Prince of Songkla University has five campuses in Thailand and Phuket campus is one of them. The campus offers a wide variety of courses. You can find a course list on the Asia Exchange website. My home university demanded a learning agreement with all the courses that fit my study program. In the end I took five courses: Human resource management, international business, international finance,

strategic management and international economics. The lectures were held by international and Thai professors. Most of the courses were interesting and not too difficult. In my opinion going on a semester abroad is not too much about learning a lot in University, but more about learning a lot about a different culture, kind of living and myself. Still I was able to pass all my courses with a good grade.

The University life itself was not too different from the one at home, although we had to wear a school uniform, which I think was very nice. Furthermore the University offered a lot of activities like a homestay at a Thai family, participation at the Loy Krathong festival, a cooking course or a visit of the Vegetarian Festival. All in all the organization at PSU is very good and the staff is helpful and friendly.



### **How to spend your free-time:**

There is a lot to see and to do around Phuket. There are beautiful beaches, the Big Buddha, weekend markets, party at the famous bangla road, a wake park, many attractions, Phuket Town and a lot more. The best way to get around in Phuket is by scooter, because taxis and "tucktucks" are pretty expensive. We rented one for approximately 65 € per month.

Also outside Phuket and Thailand there is a lot to experience. Traveling is the most fun part about studying abroad. I tried to visit as many places as possible, for example Dubai, Bangkok, Singapore, Koh Phi Phi, Koh Samui, Krabi, Koh Phangan, Kuala Lumpur and again Koh Phi Phi. It's pretty easy and cheap to visit an island. Just get to the bus terminal in Phuket, hop on a bus and take the next ferry to an enjoyable trip.

The best trips were definitely the two to Koh Phi Phi. Asia Exchange organized an ice breaking weekend on the island and it was so much fun that we had to go back there for a second time.



## Conclusion

After the semester was over and I opened the exit door at the Airport in Munich I turned around and said: “I want to go back! When does the next plane leave?” I think this says it all! Joining Asia Exchanges study abroad program maybe was the best decision I have ever made. I never was a big traveller – I have never been outside Europe before. I was afraid like hell when the day of the departure got closer, but I took this as a chance and it turned out to be the best time of my life. I know this sounds like a lame phrase, but it’s the truth. I had the chance to experience a completely different culture, meet a lot of great people, travel around and just enjoy life. Thailand is a beautiful country full of great people and I can truly say that I am in love with the land of smiles.

