

ERASMUS 2020-2021 SPRING SEMESTER

Accademia della Moda | ITALY

Didem Altunkılıç

I am Didem Altunkılıç. I am a 4th grade Interior Architecture and Environmental Design student in Yasar University. I completed my Erasmus exchange year in Accademia della Moda that is located in Napoli, Italy.

I have always had the goal of attending this program ever since I can remember. I was always interested in learning a new culture and language, meeting with new people. And on the other side take my education one step further was really important to expand my horizon. Eventually, as a result of some efforts, I made this goal come true. And as I see after this experience; this process gave me way more than my expectations. In this process every person you meet, every teacher trains you, every country you visit, every challenge you face with and every moment makes you happy; give a lot to you. You become aware of yourself more than ever and turn back as a totally new person.

Even within our country; to change the city we live in for our educations is challenging and here we are talking about moving to another country and living in another culture. Spending months in a place far away from your family and friends, where you do not know maybe a single person. So, of course at the first place you may have some confusions such as where am I, what do I do here all alone and how do I manage this all by myself. Specially after feeling already quite tired with a lot of documentation process and preparations. But just give yourself a couple of weeks or maybe even less and you will see that all these challenges you have been through just put you in one of the best period of your life. Probably most of you heard this classic expression "you cry only before and after Erasmus". That is really the truth. I went to Italy with a lot of question marks in my mind. What if I will regret this decision and want to turn back, how can I manage this on my own? But now when I go back and take a look at this whole experience, I believe it was one of the best decisions in my life. Even if you start to this journey by yourself, the fact is you will never be alone in this. There are a lot of organizations that help to Erasmus students. Both your university and these organizations help you during this period to find the best accommodation, improve your language and let you have this experience in the best way possible.

This experience helped me to find myself and know myself better. All the challenges and the ways I handled them, moving to another country, having such amazing friends in this place and building a new life for myself even for this time grew my confidence in myself. All the project works I did with my new teachers and with different education methods gave me a lot of inspirations and broaden my horizon a lot. New design and presentation techniques, all the information and different point of views that I gained made me move a huge step

forward both in my education and profession. I learned a new language that I would have probably never given a try if I did not attend this program. I built a lot of friendships from all around the world that will last forever. Even if I used to feel a shy and introverted person in the past, now I feel myself very assertive. I feel myself more equipped in lots of ways. It helped me to understand myself, find the best path for me and shape my future.

First of all; put all of your doubts and worries aside. Most of us miss the best opportunities because of our fears. This is an opportunity that you may find only once in your life which will give you more than you might think and make you way more equipped in many ways. If it happens that you get this opportunity, go all the way through it and never give up. Once your decision is determined, try to follow the social media accounts for Erasmus students in the city you are going to move in. The people from the organizations that I mentioned before contact you before your arrival and you can already meet with some people in advance. For example; I found my housemates on one of these accounts before even moving there. Make a deep search about the city. Ask advices to your teachers and students that have been in that city before both for educational and touristic purposes. When you are there these advices will be very useful for you. And then just let yourself enjoy with every moment of it. One of the best period of your life awaits you... :)