



In February 2015 I had my internships in the Hospital Clinico de la Universidad de Chile at the department of traumatology and orthopaedics. This was a very interesting month of my career.

I went there not really knowing what to expect. I was very enthusiastic, because it was the first clinical experience I would have after three years of only seeing books. However I could barely speak any Spanish. I completed one course of 6 months before but this did not make me fluent in Spanish.

This month I stayed at an apartment in the centre of Santiago. I fell in love with this city in this short period of time. It is modern but still old. It is full of culture, the people are so nice, the food is delicious and I found it pretty save as long as you are not wandering through the streets on your own at 3 am. Where most of the other students were staying with a family, I had the choice to have my own apartment in the centre of the city. The metro was on a walking distance of 5 minutes and I could walk to other parts of town and get to see more of the city. Or I could invite friends over and relax at the roof of the flat, with a breathtaking view.



In Chile, most of the students live with their parents, because it is very expensive to live on your own in Santiago. So I was very lucky to have this apartment on my own. On the other hand you see more of the daily Chilean way of life when you are living with a family. However this is how it worked out for me.

So after I left my stuff at the apartment the owner of the place, also a medical student, showed me the way to the hospital I would have my internships for the next month. For me it would take 20 minutes with the metro to get to the hospital. When I arrived, there was not a proper program what to do or not to do. So you just went there and found your way. At first I have to say that I chose to go in February because this month suited me the best. But from December till February it was summer holidays over there and I did not think of that when I made my decision. In summer there are fewer surgeries to see and learn from and surgeons will be on holiday as well. So the first two weeks I was there, the head of the department was not present. And he was the one that accepts the foreign students and shows them around.

Luckily there were a couple of people that could speak English but not too many. The surgeons in general can speak very good English, but the students not at all. So the first week passed by getting to know a little bit more about the department



and how everything worked. It is like night and day in comparison with the European hospitals. For example the hygiene protocols are very different from one another, in Chile they are way less strict.

But the whole atmosphere is very friendly and familiar. Everyone is really trying to help you out and include you with the group even if you barely understand a word of



what they say. Also the relation between doctors and students is very friendly. The busy surgeons would take their time to have a coffee with you and show you around.

So all-in all I went there with the plan of learning as much as possible from the medical point of view. But what I really learned is that there is more besides the medicines. It is very interesting to see how surgeons that have been around the world and have seen the very high end of the medicines, but still choose to go back and achieve the most with what is possible in Chile. I found this the most inspiring part of these internships.

Besides the hospital working days, there was the social program IFMSA set up. This program brought the whole group of exchange students together. I would not have met the other students if it was not for this program. There is room for improvement here and there, but the students were able to pick it up where the organisation failed. I had the best time with the other students of the IFMSA exchange program. Most of them were Spanish speaking and could barely speak any English, but there were a couple of girls in this group that could speak English. We went hiking, partying and visited other towns with this group. It was really interesting to meet other students with the same age and interests but from total different parts of the world. At the end we were more alike than we thought of at first. I found myself making friends all over the world. With them I share the memories I will never forget.

