

Internship in Cape Town (Daniel, 30 years old)

"After two weeks you will have been fallen in love with the mother city!" told me a guy as I arrived in Cape Town – and he was right.

First of all I want to explain why I write this report in English instead of German. It is a very simple reason. Because now I am able to do it. Before my internship I had vast problems and hardly spoke proper English. Secondly just a few sentences about my person and the situation how I found First Step Ahead: My name is Daniel and I was 30 years old while I was doing my internship. I did not plan to do an internship in Cape Town. It was pure luck. I was looking for a job in Berlin or Munich as a page popped up "Internships in Cape Town, New York and Sydney". And I thought "why not, let's apply for a job abroad!" First Step Ahead immediately emailed me back and from that point on the decision was made. I hope the following report about my experiences and impressions may help you in some of the questions and concerns you wondering about.



First Step Ahead

FSA is a small but very professional business in the internship placement sector. They have lots of different options for interns and volunteers. Therefore it is important to answer Susanne (the owner of the business) honestly, what your wishes and aims for your stay in South Africa are. In my case Susanne really found the perfect place for me. And it was not the company I applied for in the first place; it was a recommendation from Susanne after I told her my expectations.

After I got the job I had to pay the "finders or mediation fee". Due to former experience I had my doubts with transferring money to a foreign country without any security. I expected to never hear from Susanne again, but the contrary happened. FSA emailed quite often and did everything to support me during the preparations – and I had a lot of questions. I do not count now everything you need to do before you leave to Cape Town because I am sure Susanne will be happy to answer all of these questions once more ;-)

During my stay in Cape Town I was given help by FSA whenever needed. Susanne is very concerned about "her interns" and if something is not as you expected she would assist you in every matter. This you cannot take for granted! I met guys from other placement agencies who saw their "agents" just at the airport. With Susanne it is totally different – it is a 24/7 support. You can call here any time and the relationship between her and the interns is more like a friendship. You do not feel like a "client".



All in all: I like!

Cape Town

The Mother City is one of the most breath-taking cities I have ever visited. I do not really know where to start or how I can describe the awesome experiences and wonderful impressions I made. So just a few remarks:

- Crime: It is by far not that bad as the reputation is. In four months I had not had a single critical situation.
- Cuisine: If you like braais (barbecues), perfect. South Africans are like Germans – when the sun is shining the braai is on! ;-) Especially the sushi I can recommend (Beluga, Green Point). In Germany I did not like sushi but in Cape Town it was amazing. And of course the vast choices of affordable red and white wines! Lekker!



- Surfing: A must do – even if you do not snowboard, ski or anything else. It is simple and makes a lot of fun. Don't be afraid of the sharks – there are only three attacks each year ;-)

- Hiking: One of the most amazing trips was a two-day hike from Cape Town to Kalk Bay (a small village approximately 40 km away). We started at my place in CT and walked just with a small backpack via various mountains until we reached Kalk Bay 36 hours later. And during the whole trip

we just met approximately 10 other people. Absolute solitude; no people, no cars, no noise, nothing.

English

As mentioned above, my English was very bad as I arrived in Cape Town. For me, it was the first time in an English speaking country for more than three weeks. Due to that reason I decided to start with a two-week English course at Kurus English. In the morning I had English lessons (fortunately the first week I was the only student and had private lessons) and in the afternoon I explored Cape Town. In the third week I started with my internship and Susanne found a company where I was the only German. So I was forced to talk and write in English. At the beginning I was a little bit concerned that the guys would laugh or that they would not understand me. But the objections were totally causeless and my English improved rapidly. I do not speak perfect English now but I am able to express myself in a way most people understand - at least I hope they do understand me ;-)



I hope my report has been of help and if you decide to go to Cape Town I wish you a nice stay and enjoy the life in the Mother City.