

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Over the years Asia Exchange has enabled thousands of students to take part in exchange programs in Asia. For some, the exchange has played a major role in defining their future career. Asia Exchange contacts former students in order to find out what they are up to now that their exchange is over. One of our students from previous years is Marvin Dreifert who studied in Bali

There are two major steps **Marvin Dreifert** describes to being the mark points of his life; moving to Bali for studying in the BIPAS-program the semester autumn 2014 was one of them.



Marvin Dreifert

Marvin always wanted to travel and see the world – an ordinary life did not feel like his thing. Studying abroad for a semester was something he was interested in. Instead of studying in Europe, he made a Google-search “semester abroad on a beautiful island”. And that was it – Asia Exchange and Bali, Indonesia. Asia Exchange had many interesting destinations and a wide course selection to offer, which enabled him to study also something else than only business courses. The cultural courses and the rich Balinese culture were something that really attracted Marvin.

When Marvin is looking back at his studying time in Bali, he remembers the time was “ridiculously awesome” and it was flying extremely fast. “One semester felt like one year. So many ‘first times’, new friends and experiences.” His main goal for the semester in Bali was to learn the local language, and the goal was reached very well by studying the language at the university, making local friends, and getting invited to their villages, homes and ceremonies.

One study semester in Bali was not enough for this man who loved to dig deep into the local culture and life. His dream was to be creative while doing business and being the boss for him self. That’s why in addition to all the adventures and exploring he did in Bali, he also used the semester time for finding business partners to start his own business in Bali.

Marvin returned to Germany only for one semester, and after finishing that he hurried back to the island he had fallen in love with. Today he has his own start-up, local-based business; producing 100% handmade wooden watches and sunglasses in Bali. Doing business in Indonesia requires open-mind, and ability to be able to deal with the fact that things are working differently than they would in your home country. Nothing should be taken for granted and one has to respect the cultural differences.

The first major step in Marvin's life was getting independent and moving away from home in Germany. That time he might not have known that someday he was going to move out from Germany for good –and be based in Bali, instead. Of course, he will keep returning back to Germany to visit his loved family, but the home is now in Bali.

The encouraging words Marvin Dreifert wants to share with the future exchange students are as follows:

“When ordering your nasi campur, instead of “rice” say “nasi”, and instead of “vegetables”, use “sayur”. Don't be afraid to use the Indonesian language daily. Take the most out of your studies abroad. Karma works fast in Bali. Don't waste your time here, do something good with it instead. Be open-minded and try to understand the local culture, and then you will definitely have an awesome experience”

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www.facebook.com/marvjoo
www.facebook.com/jivanabealive

Instagram:

@marv_jo
@jivanabealive

