

Jonathans Erfahrungsbericht

TEIL 1

Here we go: Six months in Los Angeles, California. I've never been to California so I was really excited to experience the Lifestyle, the weather, the people, the work and so much more.

It all started on August 31, when I flew to LAX. Hardly arrived, buying a car was the name of the first challenge I had to face. When you want to make your way in LA, you'll definitely gonna need a car since LA is so widespread (my commute was 14 miles one-way) and the public transportation is awfully bad. At the end of the first week, after hours of research and encounterings with some of the creepiest car sellers, I made it to buy a cute little car: A 2006 Kia Rio5. My first car ever. Now I was ready.

But let's start from scratch: I study film and media in Wiesbaden, Germany, and part of the degree program is an international internship. I decided to go to Los Angeles for it is a real hotspot for film and media and besides I wanted to improve my English. The internship is at an advertising agency called "The Miller Group".

In the first days at the advertising agency I have already learnt a lot about general office tasks, Customer Relationship Management tools, website management and much other marketing stuff. I really like that the agency is not too big since this allows me to be a lot deeper involved in all of the marketing processes and workflows as if it was a bigger agency. Social media, Website, Print, Strategy, ... - I learn everything from soup to nuts in the advertising world.

Beside the work, I have already visited most of the must-see-tourist-attractions in Los Angeles: I visited Downtown LA, hiked to the Hollywood Sign, skated in Venice Beach and so much more. Venice Beach was definitely my favourite spot. A German friend that has been living in LA for quite a time showed me around the greatest spots in Venice Beach and I really enjoyed it. Here you can breath in the Los Angeles Lifestyle. Musicians and artists, skaters and hipsters. You can all find them here. What's more, I have been to the beach a couple of times and even went swimming. The weather is sunny all year which is awesome but I think in the winter it is too cold to swim so I take every chance I get now to go swimming as long as it is not too cold. I'm so excited what else I will experience here in the US, but I'm sure this internship is a valuable time for me in both personal as well as professional aspects.

TEIL 2

Halloween, Thanksgiving and Weekend Trips. Time is passing by so quickly in the still pretty warm Los Angeles! It's been almost 3 months since I have been living in the American Hotspot of Media, Arts and Film. As Halloween was approaching, I got really excited to experience the real American Halloween which is by far bigger than in Germany. I visited a big, annual Halloween Carnaval in West Hollywood. Cinderella, a herd of pigs and a toilet cycling on a unicycle – You won't believe what crazy costumes were dancing on and staggering around the well known celebration on Santa Monica Blvd. 200,00 from all over America gather here every year to horse around and have fun. I had a blast curiously experiencing what Halloween's like in Los Angeles.

A lot of Angelenos – Yes, that's how the inhabitants of Los Angeles are called – love to go hiking since the mountains are so close and I must say I also started to like it. The mountains nearby are really beautiful although pretty dry. I wanted to hike to a waterfall the other day, there was not a single drop of water, though. Yet, the nature was amazing.

Recently, I made a weekend trip to San Diego with two friends. After being in LA, it was pretty enjoyable to be in a smaller city. Everything was in walking distance and so we could cover everything quite well in the two days. Starting off, we explored Little Italy, a sweet little remake of the European country with one Italian restaurant after another. Also, we saw the harbor, the gas lamp quarter, Seaport village and the baseball stadium. A burger later, we ended our first day at the National Comedy theatre San Diego. We watched an improvised show that also involved the audience which made it not only entertaining but also quite interactive. On the next day we visited Balboa park which is a really big park with painters, artists, stunning nature and – of course – a lot of tourists. Unfortunately, the weekend was almost over and so we hit the road home to LA. Oh, and not to forget, on the way we stopped at La Jolla, a sympathetic little part in the North of San Diego, ate Mexican food and watched seals hanging out on the shores. What a great trip and an amazing city!

Not to forget: I celebrated Thanksgiving, of course. For lunch, I was at a families house in Santa Clarita, which is far in the north of Los Angeles. I was invited by a friend of a friend of a friend and so on of my parents. The whole extended family gathered at the big house in this rural area and since they had Korean roots, the feast as well as the food was kind of a mixture of American and Korean which was amazing because this way I killed two birds with one stone. As the feast was coming to an end I headed off to another families house in Hollywood. I was very happy that a friend of my coworker invited me to that thanksgiving dinner which was actually more a friendsgiving dinner since they invited lots of friends of my age. I think it was really exciting to get to know and talk to all those great people that are all working in the film industry and with the big movie stars. The food was delicious and I felt like it tasted like the season of fall – I don't know why. Maybe because everything was brown and orange. Anyway, I enjoyed the day with two thanksgiving celebrations and am really happy I had the chance to experience a little bit more of American culture.

TEIL 3

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in Los Angeles! As the feast is approaching, more and more shopping Centers, front yards and public streets are changing into a Christmas world. But honestly, despite that it really doesn't feel like Christmas and no matter how hard I try, I can't get into that Christmas mood. Why? It's because I am not used to this warm weather in Christmas time! It feels so weird celebrating Christmas with this weather! Well, the good old cheesy Christmas music does its bit to help me getting in the mood.

What else happened in the last days? I moved from Culver City to West LA! After being woken up by a mouse or a rat that was in my room in the middle of the night, I was really scared. Since the accommodation was not really great anyway (I was living at a family's house), I moved to another room in West LA. It was a real blessing I was able to find another place so quickly. It has a better location, I got great roommates and is even cheaper. So, this whole moving and the thing with the rat/mouse turned out better than expected and I am so happy in my new place. I live with a 60 year old actress and director of an acting school which is pretty inspiring and there's always a lot to talk about.

Time flies. And so does my internship. I have now completed $\frac{3}{4}$ of my internship here. On the one hand side, this is sad and I don't want this to end. Yet, thinking of my friends and family in Germany - And of course the German food! -, I must assume I am also looking forward to being home again. My internship is still fun, though, and I enjoy working at the advertising agency. I can learn a lot and get more and more responsibilities: I tackle big tasks on my own, participate actively in client meetings and can work not only in the office, but also on shoots and out and about.

Socially, I get more and more accustomed to the Angeleno-Lifestyle. I almost feel like a local and get to know more and more places. Also, I have gotten to know more and more friends and people I can hang out with. That's tremendously important and makes my time here so much more fun. I wish you guys happy Christmas and a happy new year!

Another real cool thing I have experienced is a screening of the new movie Ben is back. At CAA, a tremendously big agency with locations all over the world that represents artists of all industries, I was invited to see the movie. And the best: Julia Roberts (lead in the movie) and Peter Hedges (director of the movie) were there, too, and you could talk to them while eating! I definitely enjoyed that experience (and the food of course!). You don't get that every day!

TEIL 4

After five months and countless experiences and gained knowledge later, my internship ended on February 8. I have learned so many things about marketing and all the facets it has. But not only professional knowledge, but also experience in culture, making new friends, nature and so much more.

After my internship, my brother came to visit me and we had three more weeks to travel the west coast. It was such a great trip! We started off from LA to San Francisco, which despite rain was just gorgeous. Cute houses and a great atmosphere. The next stop was planned to be Yosemite and Sequoia National Park but due to loads of snow in the parks we weren't able to make it in the parks. Anyway, we ended up skipping the parks and went to Death Valley which gladly was not as cold as the other Parks as well as San Francisco. Of course, Las Vegas was also on our plan. We loved the awesome buildings and hotels in the city, but it's a special kind of city that you really have to like ...or not. I thought it was interesting but also kind of weird and not nice at all. I don't know. Then, we headed off to Grand Canyon National Park. It was ungraspable to understand the size of the big rocks. Just breathtaking, although the sight was not at it's best because of snow and fog. We were really happy when it got warmer on our way to the next stop which was Joshua Tree National Park. That was pretty amazing, too! It is so impressive how many extremes there are in the westside of the United States: Terribly cold weather and a few hours by car away summer weather. The climate is very special! San Diego was the last stop on our trip and I really have to say: I just love San Diego! I have been there in November already and loved it, but also this time it was just great! It is so multifaceted: Balboa Park, Gaslamp Quarter, Coronado Island, Beaches, the harbor and so much more. After San Diego, we headed back to Los Angeles. It was kind of a coming home and a saying goodbye at once.

I loved the time in Los Angeles. Of course, not everything was easy and not everything was great, but looking back I realize that it has truly broadened my horizon and given me so much life experience. Would I do it again? Definitely! But for now, I am happy to get out of the airplane that I am sitting in right now and to see my family and all my friends again. Aaand not to forget: Eat German food! Hmm...