

## **Linda Wang – Singapore, Summer 2012**

During the summer of 2012, I travelled to Singapore for a holiday and work experience. I had always been intrigued by Singapore, its relatively new history and multiculturalism, so after being offered internships to work in two of the nation's most established local law firms, I was eager to use the one month both as a test to live in a completely foreign city on my own as well as experience a fruitful internship as a lawyer, as I have never had any legal experience before.

I was very lucky to have made many Singaporean friends in my first two years at Cambridge, so as I was greeted at my arrival in Singapore by my friends and then chauffeured straight away to a friend's birthday party. In one night, I already saw much of the country city's sights as we drove straight across from one part of the city to the other. At the end of the night I was brought back to my home, in which I would live for a month, a single bedroom in an apartment let out to multiple tenants in the centre of the commercial district, near Orchard Road. While the apartment was a very old condominium by Singaporean standards, and the air-conditioning was broken during half of my stay there, I was happy to stay in the centre of town close to all the shopping malls, eateries, and public transport facilities.

In the two days before my internship started, I took the opportunity to look around the city centre, stroll through the expensive shopping centres, took advantage of the cheap VAT in Singapore to buy myself a much needed new laptop, and checked out some of the best recommended sites such as Esplanade, Marina Bay Sands and Gardens by the Bay.

On the third day of my stay, I had to get up at 8am in order arrive at my office on time for the first day and the induction to the office. At my arrival, I was surprised to see so many interns for even though I had done internships before, I never had the chance to work with so many interns at the same time. After the recruitment partner and his assistants each gave a welcome speech we were divided up into the practice groups that we were chose and I was Financial Services department working in Capital Markets. I quickly got to know the interns in the same department as me, who I was to become close to over the course of the two week internship.

In this first role, working in the capital markets division, I was assigned to a mentor and given the task of proofreading prospectuses for soon to be listed IPOs that the firm was underwriting for. I also helped associates with their due diligence by assessing turnovers in Excel and examining financial statements, things, I previously only thought bankers would be doing. It was a very typical 9-5am work day, which gave me plenty of time to meet friends and go sight-seeing afterwards. I also became very good friends with the interns that I worked together as we not had many team activities but also got coffee and ate lunch at the traditional Singaporean "Hawker centres" together. Personally one of the most enjoyable part of my visit was the culinary experience I had in Singapore. For a nation which consisted out of the Chinese, Malaysian, Indian. After work, we would sometimes also go for drinks, dinner or movies.

This thus became my life for most of the days and I quickly found out that I had pretty much seen most of what was interesting to see within the first few days already. However, on special days and during the weekends I did do some more exciting activities with my friends that were more out of the usual. So for example, I went treetop hiking in McRitchie Nature Reserve, visit the Sentosa Universal Studios as well as the abandoned railway lines that used to lead into Malaysia. It was funny and strange that I also met many people from Cambridge, some of whom were strangers, others merely acquaintances but whom we got to know better!

My time in Singapore was thus very exhilarating, productive, educational as well as just plain fun. I made many friends, some of whom were local, others who were expats, staying and visiting for as a

very short time, just as I was. I realised that the reason Singapore was so international was because of the way it attracted foreigners through the ease of integrating and feeling at home with the city-country within a very short period of time. My work experience also, taught me a lot. It gave me my first introduction into legal research, prospectus reading and documentation, gave me the opportunity to see the Singaporean High Court and observe two court cases in real time and taught me how to work and collaborate in a team. All in all, I must say it was one of the best summers I have ever experienced, and I would love to revisit Singapore one day!

Linda Wang