

**Polina Nemoy; spolkan@gmail.com**

**Degree Program at TAU: MBA**

**Host University: NUS (National University of Singapore)**

**Exchange term: Summer semester, terms 1 and 2, 2017**

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### Exchange Experience

#### **Intro:**

When choosing where to make an exchange semester we luckily have a lot of choice that Tel Aviv University offers. I personally wanted to make this experience in Asia as I have never been to Asia before and saw this as a great opportunity to study and to travel. Nowadays Asia is a leading region and I'm convinced that it is to our benefit to understand more of their culture and to have an opportunity to build our network there.

#### **About Singapore:**

Singapore was my first choice both due to the quality of the university (NUS is #1 University in Asia for its MBA program and is in top 30 world universities for MBA degree) and for its perfect location to travel the region. Singapore might be called "light Asia" as it is very clean, well-organized, have a lot of expats and the national language is English, which makes the communication in the university and the city itself very easy.

The history of this city-state is unique and impressive. In some points it can be compared to Israel. Have a look at this short video to find out more:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLWUBWiviuA>

#### **NUS (National University of Singapore):**

The university is located in the west of the city, however as the city is relatively small it is just 20-30 minutes away from the city center by taxi or public transportation.

The campus is quite big and has dormitories to offer.

The atmosphere is pleasant and "convenience" is the main word I would use for my experience in the university and the city itself.

As the weather is hot and very humid there are free shuttle buses every 15 minutes to help you get between different buildings, however all MBA courses are held in one building. Shuttle busses also passes the region of all the dormitories and bring you to the MRT (local metro) station for free.

The MBA campus is relatively new and very well equipped. There is a cafeteria inside the campus that offers food and drinks. Classes are not very big, in the courses I attended the size was not more than 40-50 students. Most of the students are Asian, but from all over Asia and a few Europeans and Americans.

Professors are international, very competent and the university offers a lot of interesting courses. I would advise taking courses that include connection to Asian world as this is a unique opportunity to study something our university doesn't offer in such depth.

The school has full time and part time MBA program, so there are lectures both during day and evening hours.

Summer semester, however, is part time only (only evening classes) as most of the local students make summer internships in different companies in Singapore.

MBA coordinators are nice and helpful, so once you are accepted to the exchange program you may contact them directly to ask questions already from Israel prior to your arrival.

There is a career center available in the university in case this is interesting for you, you may schedule a 30 minutes free meeting with one of the career advisors.

A campus offers free pool and gym for students (when you arrive at the university just ask other students or coordinators about it).

**Accommodation:**

I personally lived in dormitories so I cannot advise much about flats in the city. In general accommodation in Singapore is very expensive, so dormitories is probably the cheapest option. However, I guess you may find a flat to share with other students in the city center if you wish. There is a Facebook group that offers some options in the city: <https://www.facebook.com/FindYourRoomInSG/>

Regarding dormitories there are a few options:

**PGP accommodation** (where I lived) have studio apartments besides shared ones, but do not have a pool (for this you can take a 10-min shuttle to other U-town dormitories). They are more quiet than U-town, but have less MBA students, mostly couples live there. They are closer to the MRT station though.

**U-town** are in the center of the campus life, a lot is happening there and the atmosphere is more social.

Just check the prices and my most valuable recommendation would be: **take a room with AC 😊**.

**Visa:**

I wouldn't elaborate too much about this. The process is very easy and all done within one of the first days in Singapore. As you may enter the country without visa (for less than 3 months) you do not have a problem to enter. If you stay more than 3 months or have a 1 way ticket as you intend to travel afterwards (which I highly recommend), a printed email confirmation of your exchange in NUS is enough.

Further detailed guidance you'll receive from the MBA coordinators in NUS.

**Transportation:**

Transportation in Singapore is very convenient and relatively cheap. For buses and MRT buy an EZ-Link card that can be top-upped in every MRT station. When traveling by bus, the drivers do not give back small change, so EZ-Link solve this, just buy it the first time you use MRT. Public transport runs until 00:00 approx.

Uber and Grab taxi applications are available and useful, taxis are cheap relatively to Israel.

**Insurance and Health Services:**

University offers a compulsory health-insurance which is not expensive and covers most of the simple stuff. Ask MBA coordinators for more details.

**Living expenses:**

Cost of living can be compared to Tel Aviv. Accommodation is more expensive and would be the most expensive component in your monthly expenses. Food can be from very very cheap to more expensive, all according to your preferences and ability. Alcohol is expensive, though for girls there is Wednesday night, when a lot of bars offer discounted or even free alcohol (google "Wednesday ladies night Singapore"). I encourage you to travel as much as you can in the region, however this all depends on your budget.

**Food:**

Food is a "national hobby" as in Israel, so you'll find a variety of delicious food in Singapore. Food Courts and Hawker Centers offer cheap (\$3-6) and tasty food though in a very basic conditions sometimes without AC. Majority of restaurants offer more expensive food from all over the world.

**Night life:**

For night life check Clarke Quay, Boat Quay or Orchard regions. Though my favorite were bars next to Haji Lane, which reminded me Florentine of Tel Aviv and had a lot of life music to offer.

**Tips:**

Enjoy your time, travel, mingle and google all the info you need.

Free city tours that I'll recommend are <http://www.indiesingapore.com/>, they will take you through all the main parts of the city.

There are more free city tours and some food tours, just google them.

Connect to FB group of Israelis in Singapore if you want some more tips:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/647085368733053/>

**General experience:**

My general experience was very positive and I'd definitely recommend you to take this unique opportunity!

You may consider though taking the exchange during fall or spring semesters as usually there are much more exchange students during those periods and your social life can be more diverse.

**Some photos to make you more curious:**





