



Anika Stanic

To Taiwan

2020



This month has been one hell of an emotional roller coaster to put it lightly. Earlier this month my Rotary district had another trip for exchange students to go on for one last time, everyone left in the district went which was about 30 people. Unfortunately my friend, Nell couldn't make it as she came down with a cold.

We met early morning at Banqiao station in Taipei and I got to see and say hi to people I hadn't seen from the last trip and it was really fun. After we all arrived we got on the bus and started our 6 hour journey to Kenting at the bottom of Taiwan. While on the bus I got to sing songs with the other kids using a speaker some people brought. The songs we played were ones everyone knows so now I've found out when I hear those songs I'm reminded of being on the bus with everyone which can either be a really good or bad thing later in life.

After we got to Kenting we all did some water sports, my group (6 people) went on a few different floaty things attached to the back of a JetSki and pulled around the ocean. We only fell off two times so that's a win for us. After that we got to swim in the shallow waters near the sand and saw some Taiwanese students who came to say hi. On the second day we went dune bugging up a mountain cliff side and we got all wet when we went through the water which was so much fun. We also went to paintball and go-karting. After that we had to say goodbye to Alex (German) as his plane flight home was later that afternoon. After that we all hopped on a boat and went to a small island off the side of Taiwan and stayed there for a night. That night we had 爌肉 which is like a Korean bbq place but better. On the third day we visited a Buddha museum which holds the largest Buddha in the world and I'd recommend to see it one day before you die! This is a must see place. We also went snorkeling and to Monster village later that day as well. On the fourth day we went for a LONG hike up a mountain and took a boat around Sun Moon lake where we got to see the solar eclipse in person with the help of a special piece of glass so we could look directly at what was happening. We quickly jumped off the boat and ran to the sky cars to see the eclipse at its peak but unfortunately we missed the peak but it was so beautiful to see and be able to witness in person. On the last day we went to a water/amusement park and it was so much fun. Once it was dark we got back to Taipei and all went to eat the last dinner together. During dinner everyone was signing more people's flags for the last time. Everyone was leaving very soon so all throughout the bus rides, the dinner, flags and the ceremony there were plenty of tears shed by everyone.

The next week went by in a flash and before I knew it I was at the airport saying goodbye to my best friend in Taiwan and sending her back home. I'd love to tell you it was a happy goodbye and it was but it was also filled with tears after she left. I wish saying good bye to her was the last time I went to the airport but I've been so many times in the last 3 days and said goodbye to so many people I don't think I have any more tears in me anymore. I know for certain the next half of my exchange is going to get quite lonely and difficult but I'm lucky I still have 2 friends who stay the same amount of time as I do and I still have some classmates to hang out with. Most other countries start at the half year along with the Taiwanese school year but Australia doesn't do this so that means we normally get to see all knew students come in but since corona happened this year there is no exchange students coming to Taiwan so there are 3 people in my district for the rest of the year.

I'm very happy for my friends that they get to go back to their countries though and get to see their families and friends again after 10 long months and I know I'll never forget them and see them again someday in the future. I'll never forget the memories we shared together and I wish them all well and to have a good life until I see them next.