

happy diwali



STUDY MALAYSIA WISHES YOU A VERY HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS DIWALI

Study Malaysia Special Issue

MAKING LIVES SINCE 2007

Malaysia My Second Home

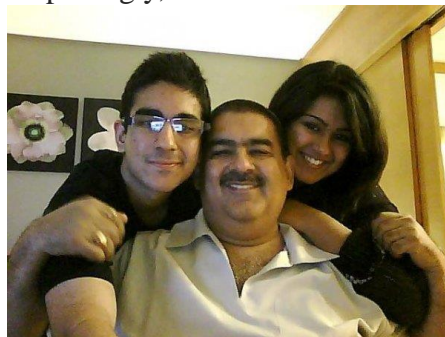
By Mahima Girdhar

Hazy skies, lush greenery and humidity; I was home, after 4 years, I was finally home. As soon as I stepped on Malaysian soil, I knew I belonged there, it was so different to be back after such a long time. I remember the first time, at the age of 16, when I got off the plane with my father right by my side, ready to settle his little princess in a new country with amazing faith and courage.



I was going to live in a jungle-like place called Cyberjaya, it sounded

absolutely magical and once I got there, I was not disappointed. I was awestruck, seeing the greenest, most beautiful forests, amazing roads, fast cars and our wonderful taxi driver, Mohammed who was our tour guide from the airport to the place I was going to call home for the next 5 years and surprisingly, forever.



My first day in Multimedia university was overwhelming, thankfully my dad stuck by me no matter what, he even attended my

Orientation, as awkward as that was, I was grateful to have him sit next to me. I immediately made friends and soon forgot about how my life had changed.



Malaysia was the first foreign country that I had visited, I was just so surprised by how clean and green it was. Coming from India,

The lack of stray dogs, cows and sometimes horses seemed odd, people did not litter in the streets, every single landscape was

immaculate, there were no beggars, and no homeless people and to top it all, people drove in lanes! Supermarkets, malls and stores were gigantic and people were tiny, they were polite, helpful and seemed to mind their own business. I remember my first visit to the Petronas Towers, Time Square, Bukit Bintang and the whole of Kuala Lumpur City, I was nothing but mesmerized, mesmerized and in love. It was surreal! It was also 10 years ago.

Today, Cyberjaya, which was a developing city, also known as the Multimedia Super Corridor, has developed beyond my imagination. With buildings all over, multiple housing complexes, amazing companies, malls, schools, 4 universities and so much more, it is one of the most internationally diverse cities of Malaysia. With people from over 170 countries studying, working and living there, Malaysia truly has become the melting pot of cultures, languages and ethnicities and they are proud to become so.



To send your 16 year old daughter to a country where you don't know anyone, it took great courage, faith and a very strong vision for my parents to follow through with what was probably the toughest decision of their lives,

it was also their best. The way I changed and grew out my shell was commendable. I became much more confident, open minded, brave and hard working. I was doing what I loved, something that I did not get a chance to do in my own country. I decided to go for my Bachelor's in Creative Multimedia, majoring in Media Innovation, and suddenly I transformed from an average 75 percenter to being at the top of my class with a GPA of 3.8/4. That is when I realized how much students back home were missing out on, not just education but the exposure, being in a multicultural environment and just doing different things without being judged.

Malaysia has been ranked as the world's most affordable country for students, this is something that most people in India wouldn't know because they don't see it as an education destination and it is understandable because they have never advertised themselves to be so. Considering the craze that people, especially in North India have to go to US, UK, Australia, Canada and other predominantly Caucasian countries, it is safe to say that Malaysia being this affordable, simple and straightforward, never had a chance to outshine these countries especially among us Punjabis. In spite of the fact that it is a booming economy and Universities have a 95-98% Job Placement rate with great salary packages, we don't really see people opening their minds to new and different opportunities. I have seen and known people who would rather drive cabs or serve at restaurants in Australia than get a good education and a well-paying

job in Malaysia. Unfortunately, this is the mindset of people who just want to run away to a different country provided they can rub shoulders with white people.



When you go overseas for higher education, it is not so much about the academic side of it, but more about the exposure that you get, the friends that you make and the things that you learn outside your own little bubble. After 5 years of living and working in Malaysia, I went back to India and worked there for two years, after which I left to pursue my Master's in Social Entrepreneurship to San Francisco. Somewhere down the line, I thought I needed more exposure than I already had and decided that US was where that exposure will be.



The first incident that took place upon reaching San Francisco was a homeless guy following me to sell \$20 worth of weed, saying that I looked like I could use it. It was hilarious and I knew right away that I would love living there. I did, but it was exactly like Malaysia, education wise. The lecturers were practical, the students were international, the courses interesting and the amount of work was similar to what I had gone through. I was so thankful for my Malaysian experience because I never once felt overwhelmed in my new setting unlike a lot of my peers.

In spite of all these similarities, there was a lot to learn and a lot to adjust to. I had never shared my room with anyone ever in spite of paying \$850 for half a room, no house and no kitchen. I was spending \$15 a meal and it made me sick to think of other things that needed to be spent so much on. It was a setback because I had lived life king size as a student in Malaysia and knew no other way. I made great friends, met people from countries I had known so much about, and experienced what people rave about- Networking with people in the Valley, Gay pride parades, Anti-Abortion Rallies, Halloween, Thanksgiving and of course a really white(snowy) Christmas.



Eventually I got a job, my work visa but no satisfaction, they didn't really need social activists running businesses there, what they needed were IT graduates and Financial Analysts and I was neither qualified nor interested in any of that.

Coming back to India was a bittersweet choice and I am happy I made it because not that I ever doubted it, but even if I ever did, I knew now that my parents made the right choice by sending me to Malaysia, the land that welcomes you, where people are hospitable and the population is diverse. Which is what made me go back to apply for my PhD in Sustainable Business Development.

Every experience in your life, positive or negative becomes a learning experience and with age, you would hopefully learn to become more open minded, accepting and generally more knowledgeable. As a child from a middle class family, I along with hundreds of other students, owe my learning experience to what my parents believed in, Education in Malaysia. There is something in it for everyone and I strongly encourage parents as well as students to think about different options because you deserve the experience and the peace of mind without the financial and emotional burden of your child being too far away.



Showing Students the Way Forward

By Deesha Seth, Counselor, Study Malaysia

It has been 3 years since I started working with Study Malaysia. It is safe to say that these have been the most enlightening years of my career.

Why have they been enlightening?

The day I started counseling students to study in Malaysia was the day I realized how hard my job was going to be, it really was. People, including me had no idea about the options that Malaysia has due to sheer ignorance. There is a lot of hard work that goes in to convincing parents and students to even consider Malaysia as an education destination.

What do we do?

We, at Study Malaysia are a really passionate bunch of people. We strive for students to get good quality, affordable education and that is what we deliver. It is with great pride that our team works towards achieving our goals. At Study Malaysia, we, the employees, have the power to make our own decisions and counsel anyway we feel comfortable. Surprisingly, we also get paid to give advice to Senior Management and we get time to work on our own ideas.



What's odd?

Before joining SM I had no idea what a Social Enterprise was, and I had no idea why these people didn't charge their students anything. But this is what makes Study Malaysia different! People here actually care about the future of their students instead of the money that they can make off them and that is why we form such warm, personal relationships with the students that we counsel.

This year has been an especially tough one for the entire SM family. Overcoming the loss of the best boss, brother, father and friend has not been easy but it has given us more of a reason to stick together and work harder. We will continue to strive for perfection and the best possible future for our students.

All Work and No Play Makes Jack a Dumb Boy

By Neeni Masih



I am probably the oldest counselor that Study Malaysia has! I have counseled students for every Malaysian university imaginable, so much so that I, myself will apply to go for my PhD next year. All these years later, I realized that I have no reason to not study further, and there is absolutely no reason at all for me to not go to Malaysia, a country that I have grown to love over the years without even being there!

I have students calling to tell me how happy they are and what amazing jobs they have, so I feel that it is time for me to take my career a step further, that is why, I have decided that it is just never too late to study!

Never did I think that I will go all out to explore different horizons or that I will ever step out of India. I felt that I was being patriotic by staying here; that is just not true. It is after counseling hundreds of students to go to Malaysia, that I realized the importance of being a global citizen. A citizen empowered with international exposure in a multicultural environment, enriched with infinite opportunities!

One just cannot put a price on what you learn and experience in such an environment, I wish many more Indians realize the value of gaining an International education so that we can achieve our goals of living in a Global world.

SEMINARS



Spreading Awareness

We have been working relentlessly on creating awareness about Malaysian education in India for the last 10 years. This year has been different because we have stepped it up a notch!



Seminars et al

From Schools, Universities to the smallest villages, we leave nothing untouched! We believe that everyone deserves good quality, affordable education so we work towards providing exactly that!

FACTS AFTER OUR RESEARCH

82%

Students had no clue about Malaysia as an education destination but were willing to look into it. (After 2 hours of counseling.)

18%

Students were leaning towards other countries because Malaysia did not seem to be their "Dream Destination" and they had never heard of it.

The Anoop Girdhar Memorial Scholarship

By Deepti Dawer

Being a Social Enterprise has worked for us in many ways. From creating awareness to making a positive impact in people's lives, we have been able to do it all! Aside from the services that we provide, we have started an annual scholarship for students who wish to study in Malaysia.

Criteria for the Scholarship:

Unlike most scholarships, this one is not merit based. It will be based on the student's financial strength, extra-curriculars and an interview. The percentage of the scholarship will be based on the interview conducted.



Conducting Seminars to Spread Awareness



Talking to students about life in Malaysia



Introducing our universities



Answering Questions

"For the Team at Study Malaysia, the whole process of enlightening our students is to turn mirrors in to windows of opportunities for them. That is why we do what we do and we do it with utmost passion, honesty, hard work and integrity.

There is no one who is not worth listening to, no student who is not creative and no child that doesn't deserve to gain international exposure to become a global citizen of the world.

I have seen so much change in the last decade, students are more informed, smarter and can make better decisions for themselves. People are opening up to different ideas, possibilities and opportunities. I have seen India and Indians evolving with time and exposure.

This passion for education is what keeps us going. I have two children who made their lives in Malaysia at the age of 16 and I could not be prouder of the people they have become. I am grateful to have this opportunity to spread my knowledge and teach from my experience."

-Mukta Girdhar

COO

Study Malaysia

Forming Partnerships: Let Us Grow Together

A lot of people have come and gone in the last 10 Years, but our franchisees have grown with us. Today, we have a franchisee in almost every major city of India and a few in Thailand as well as Sri Lanka bringing the number up to 23 wonderful people.

We actively provide material, paraphernalia and training to our franchisees so that students get what Study Malaysia wants to deliver. We have an entire team for Franchisee support, they are the ones who make sure that they are updated on new courses, partnerships and changes in Study Malaysia.

To become a partner, please contact us at info@studymalaysia.asia and someone will get back to you within 24-48 hours.

GROUP COUNSELING SESSION



International Brand Ambassadors



Brand Ambassadors in Malaysia



Our Brand ambassadors are the students sent by us who take care of new students, ensuring their acclimatization to the new place.

To know more about the company and what we have been up to, please feel free to visit our website

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