

## Testimonials from Students: TCI Summer Camp in China

### Shannon Dyer

When one experiences a life changing event, there are often very few words to be found that adequately explain everything, and even if there were, it would take a whole novel's worth to even remotely be able to cover everything of significance. I shall try my best to do so, however, in the few words allowed me.

As a student of Mandarin, I hold a great love for China and its people, and so when the opportunity came up to participate in a two week trip to China with the Confucius Institute of Tourism, I jumped at the chance and have not looked back since.

The first stage of our trip was a cultural tour through Beijing, where we were able to visit world renowned sites such as The Great Wall (which was amazing, albeit a bit of a work out for the legs), and the Forbidden City. Although the weather in China at this time is quite cold (our summer is their winter), it meant that there were very few crowds to contend with.

From Beijing we went to Harbin, which, although absolutely numbing in its freezing winter temperatures, the chill was worth being able to see the magnificent ice sculptures and light displays - Not to mention the skiing, of course!

With one week down, it was time to progress to Xuzhou and begin Mandarin language and culture classes at the University of Mining and Technology. The classes were fantastic, with opportunities to learn martial arts, painting, calligraphy, and paper cutting during the cultural classes.

The friends that were made during this time, and the experiences we all shared together were unforgettable, and I shall always drool a little when I think of the food we were able to share!

While it is true you may be able to visit some of these sites with a tour, you will never be able to find yourself as immersed into the culture, or have the opportunity to experience as many things as you do in this trip.

There are many more things I would like to say, however there will never be enough words to fully explain the memories of my heart, and therefore the only way for you to fully understand is to go and experience it for yourself!

I assure you, it will be one of the best things you have ever done and I will be envying each and every one of you!

### Lawrence Etheridge

We had a fantastic time at the 2015 summer camp in China. There were lots of cultural activities. We even spent a day on Yabuli ski slopes. I found the time spent at CUMT with classes in calligraphy, language etc. very useful. Classes were taught by volunteer teachers who did an excellent job that was much appreciated by all students. The friendly nature of all involved made our time at CUMT very enjoyable and rewarding. Many thanks to all the staff who made us feel very welcome to their university. We visited many places whilst in China being guided by our tour leader. Thanks to Shannon who did a great job at keeping everything organized. Overall it was a great experience and thanks to TCI for the opportunity to participate.

## Jasi Boppudi

I am very honoured to be the participant, in the first group of TCI students, to visit China. That was the most wonderful trip in my life. It was very well organised. All the credit goes to our organiser who managed the events, and liaised with everyone in Australia and China to make our group feel more comfortable. It was flawless. You are such a wonderful person, friendly, caring, kind hearted, jovial and ... I don't have words to describe you. You are the perfect teacher. The group was awesome.

The trip was like practical experience for all of us, to get to know about the country and their culture, History and the people- we got to know about their life style, their eating habits, their way of approach and many more. Home visit was the perfect opportunity for us to know about families. Classes that were conducted were very helpful. We had the opportunity to meet very talented teachers from China University of Mining and Technology and learnt a lot from them. My favourite part is to know about the history and culture, as it was amazing. I was surprised to see how friendly the people were in China. I felt I was treated like a delegate or a VIP.