

People in Liechtenstein

“Lithuania, Latvia or Luxembourg?”

Adventure: Alex Kindlen from Australia is currently attending the University of Liechtenstein. However, it was a while before his friends and family knew exactly where he was heading.

A few weeks ago, the moment of truth arrived for Alex Kindlen, and his great adventure began. From the other side of the world, to be precise from Australia, he set off for the principality. The 21-year-old architecture student will be spending a semester here at the University of Liechtenstein. Yet it was only by chance that he ended up in Liechtenstein. “The exchange opportunities at our university in Adelaide are unfortunately very limited.”

A newly signed agreement between Kindlen’s university in his Australian homeland and the University of Liechtenstein has made it possible for students to come to the principality on an exchange. “I jumped at the chance straight away. As the Architecture programme is offered in English, it wasn’t too much of a big decision to come here,” says Alex Kindlen. So the programme itself was no problem for the Australian.

There were, however, a few problems pinpointing exactly where the student would be staying. “Most people in Australia have never heard of Liechtenstein. That’s why it was a while before everybody knew where I was going,” explains the student with a grin. And so his family and friends went through all the countries in Europe beginning with L – Luxembourg, Latvia or Lithuania? There were quite a few assumptions made about the exchange student’s destination.

Despite the uncertainties about where exactly he was heading, the 21-year-old is happy to be here. “The country is really impressive and the people are very nice. Everything is obviously much smaller than I am used to, but you feel a totally different sense of community,” says Kindlen, impressed by what he has experienced so far.

Architectural gems

In terms of architecture, there is a lot for him to see in the country. “In many of the buildings and squares, you can literally see history. The fortresses, castles and things like cobbled stones are impressive. Australia is relatively young, and the oldest buildings are at most 200 years old,” explains a fascinated Kindlen. For this very reason, the architecture student is hoping to view some more of the region’s architectural gems over the coming months. “I am planning to travel around a bit, as long as I’m here.”

Seeing “real” snow

The climatic differences between “down under” and the principality are indeed considerable, and it is therefore no surprise that there is one thing Kindlen is missing, even after only a few weeks: the beach. Nevertheless, Liechtenstein does have one thing to offer in terms of weather that the Australian is really looking forward to: “Seeing real snow,” answers a beaming Kindlen.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Alex Kindlen

Date of birth: 19 August 1992

What I do: architecture student

Where I am at home: Adelaide, Vaduz

What I like: architecture, art, design, music, football

Not my thing: people who eat with their mouth open

What I like about Liechtenstein: up to now, everything!

My motto: when you are thinking of giving up, you have only reached 25 per cent of your potential.