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First Impressions of Moldova

By Miss Sidney Dungan from USA.

Chi in u, Moldova - It's a city full of contrast culture vibrant people, interesting architecture, women of every age wearing six-inch heels, and some of the most delicious produce I've eaten in a very long time. As the capital of Moldova, a country that is essentially unknown too much of the Western world, Chi in u offers plenty to do and see, and it is also a wonderful place to sit back and relax. When I first arrived in Chi in u, the city struck me as simultaneously familiar and unique. One of the first things I noticed was the friendliness and hospitality of the local people. My host family is especially amazing. They are fun-loving, social, and respectful people, eager to help out in any way that they can. The food at home, which is acquired entirely from the host family's countryside farm, is more delicious and plentiful than I could have ever imagined. I'm definitely going to miss it when I get back to my college student diet at home. Alternatively, if I want to grab a bite to eat in the city, there is undoubtedly an Andy's Pizza or La Pl cinta within twenty yards of wherever I am (a chain I've grown particularly fond of over the last three weeks). I've been working as a volunteer in the Medical Project at the Mother and Child Hospital for the last two weeks. At the hospital, I have observed some incredible operations that I never expected to see in my lifetime (hermaphroditism reversal and craniopharyngioma removal, for example), and I've come to really admire the knowledgeable doctors and staff there. My translator, Sergiu, has been wonderfully helpful and accommodating—he can always answer any questions I may have and can easily explain the medical terminology. It took me a while to get used to the public transportation in Chi in u, which are mainly trolley buses and minibuses.



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In the short time that I've been here, I've learned that there are few greater joys in life than seeing that the trolley bus you've been waiting for is nearly empty. Seriously, once I got more comfortable with navigating the city, I saw that there are things to do and see at every corner. The other volunteers and I visited the charismatic Museum of Ethnography and History, which is home to some really interesting fossils and Moldovan history. We toured three monasteries situated in the picturesque countryside and lounged in the lovely and spacious city parks. I'm looking forward to seeing Swan Lake at the opera house this weekend, and to all the other future experiences that Moldova holds. Two things that I did not expect to come across in this country that have made my experience all the more enjoyable is the free Wi-Fi all over the city and the cucumbers as they are so delicious. As a third-world country, I did not expect Moldova to have much internet available at all, and certainly not in such abundance and high quality as I have found. As for the cucumbers, I never really liked them before this trip, but now they are my favorite vegetable. After only three weeks, I've come to really love this city, with all its quirks, charming atmosphere and people, and if staying in Chi in u has taught me one thing so far, it's that you are never too old to rock a pair of six-inch heels.



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Medical project

Amazing experience in Moldova

By Kohl Lounsbury from Canada.

My name is Kohl Lounsbury, I am from Canada and I am doing a two month volunteering term in Moldova. I have only been in Chi in u for about a week but it has been an incredible experience. The Projects Abroad team did a great job organizing my travel arrangements from Canada. When I arrived at the Chi in u airport, I was greeted by the friendly Projects Abroad staff that spoke fluent English. I was then escorted to my host family's apartment building and my first impression of Chi in u was that it was very green compared to Canada as there were trees everywhere. In the more rural areas of the city it



almost looked like the apartment buildings were surrounded by forest. When I arrived at my accommodation I was very surprised at how small the apartment was. My host family was very welcoming and friendly even though only one family member spoke English. I am able to easily communicate with the other members using body language and the Projects Abroad staff is very helpful at translating any other communication needs. On my second day I was given a tour of the city, as well as introduced to the other volunteers in Moldova. The city center has a modernized European feel as well as its historical components. I chose to volunteer in the medical program here in Moldova and it has been an amazing experience so far. Currently I am working at the pediatric hospital and it's surprising how different the hospital is from Canadian hospitals. The first thing I noticed was that the lighting in the hallways and corridors was very dim compared to the well-illuminated hospitals back home. During my first day at the hospital I was in the operating room within thirty minutes and observed a spina bifida repair from start to finish. I was literally standing beside the surgeon and watching over his shoulder as he placed an infant's spinal cord back into the vertebrae column. My translator was with me the entire duration of the surgery and communicated all my questions to the surgeon as he performed the repair, as well as translated all his responses. I have only been at the hospital for a few days and I have already seen a scoliosis repair, ovarian tumor removal, VUR repair, hydronephrosis repair, bowel resection, humorous fracture repair and many other cool surgical procedures. This program is perfect for someone like me who is interested in medicine and is just starting their medical training. I am still shocked at how many surgical procedures I have observed in just a short period of time. I have learned so much about medicine and I am so glad that I decided to volunteer here with Projects Abroad. This experience has been amazing so far and I am looking forward to observing more cool surgical procedures here in Moldova.

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My experience at "Academia Copiilor" Lyceum

By Kyle Cornelius from USA.

! My fascination with the Russian language began when I was very young. The exotic alphabet and harsh sound made a huge impression on me. The opportunity arose to study Russian at university, so I chose to pursue a degree in Russian language and International Trade at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Fast-forward four years into the future, and the time has come to gain experience for my future. A very possible career path for me is teaching English as a foreign language in other countries, and I found Projects Abroad's Teaching Project to be exactly what I was looking for and with Moldova's main language being Romanian, but it is quite easy to get by if you know a little Russian. I began researching Moldova, and the more I read, the more I wanted to come here. The history here is intense, and the mixture of the Russian, Romanian, and Moldovan culture is very interesting to me. I was placed at the "Academia Copiilor" Lyceum as a teacher of English. For the first four weeks, I worked mainly with the head English teacher of the school, Mrs. Zinaida, helping her conduct lessons for the Russian speaking students in grades six to 11. I also had a few lessons with the Romanian speaking students. My main responsibilities were to simply converse with the students, providing them with experience talking to a native speaker, and to deliver prepared lessons to the classes. I brought some materials from my home city of Huntsville, Alabama, which they found very interesting. My last two weeks have been spent creating and delivering lessons for a summer camp at the school for grades one to six. Everyone is more relaxed now because school is closed for the summer, and it has been a great way to end my time in Moldova. During my first full day in Chişinău I had the opportunity to witness the school's 20th anniversary celebration, for which the students had prepared songs, dances, speeches, and theatrical performances. I also gave a speech at the graduation ceremony, which was slightly terrifying for me, as I have not made many public speeches in my life. I have loved my stay in Chişinău. It's such an interesting place and has so much to offer. My time here has made me realize that I have been the real student; I have learned so much more from the people here than they could possibly learn from me. Overall, my experience has been rewarding, educational, fascinating, and it's leaving me hungry for more. Till next time, Moldova.



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Volunteer's Happy Moments



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Thank you all for your collaboration!
Thank you for being with us!
If you have anything you'd like to contribute,
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