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Age : 40

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Tours from Taiwan

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School in Taiwan : Ming Tai High School 明台高中

Feedback :

2009 The Project of Increasing International Vision

Reflection of Ming Tai High School Overseas Skill Learning Study Visit

Speaking of preserving the traditional cuisine art and developing modern international cooking training, Le Cordon Bleu no wonder is the world-leading school of its kind. It is a lifelong dream for many students in hospitality-related field to study in this prestigious school. The number of our students in hospitality management department is the largest of the nation and they perform remarkably in lots of hospitality-related national competitions. In order to broaden the students' international vision, to enhance their professional knowledge and skills, and to experience the different cultures and customs, the international reputation of Le Cordon Bleu Australia had attracted our attention and therefore, we chose it as our destination for this study visit.

We spent 6 months to contact and organize this study visit with Le Cordon Bleu Australia. The first day I stepped into this school, their ordinary campus and school buildings didn't give me a deep impression. However, when I stepped into their professional kitchen, I was amazed and impressed by their standard and professional equipments. During the practicing class, we couldn't even walk into the kitchen without passing the chef's inspection since they had a strict demand on the students' chef wear and hygiene standards and they also insisted that "the secret in making delicious food lies at the close attention that you pay to details." Though the process was stressful, I really appreciated the way they delivered the demonstration in making a perfect dish. These Michelin-star chefs not only shared their sophisticated secrets in cooking openly, they also encouraged our students and patiently directed them step-by-step into the process.

According to my observation, the curriculum design and the way of Le Cordon Bleu demonstrations in cultivating students' creativity and techniques in culinary art between our school and theirs were so much different. For example, they delivered their teaching in small size class; all of our members had been divided into two teams and was offered a working table, cooking materials, a professional toolbox individually. They even hired a full-time cleaner to wash the dishes for us in the kitchen. The schedule was so tight as we had to observe the demonstration and listen carefully to the Chinese translation simultaneously, take notes, and complete our own dishes within 3 hours. However, the process was arranged smoothly and we were able to concentrate on our own work. In order to authentically experience the class setting in Le Cordon Bleu, they also arranged the demonstration classes for us. We could see the chef practicing from the carefully designed sitting area and observed how the students participated actively in the cooking classrooms. The bartending classes even carried out directly in a real bar with the teachers tutoring to small size students. Not until I went through all these experiences did I realize that why the tuition fee of Le Cordon Bleu is so expensive.

At the end of this program, we wished that we could have one more week to learn from these top chefs but couldn't help to leave the school reluctantly. The performance exhibition displayed most of the masterpieces of our hardwork, including Gateau Weekend with Lemon Icing, Sable Diamante, Florentines Coated with Chocolate and Crème Caramel. Some of the delicate dishes were considerately wrapped inside an elegant box with a blue ribbon by Le Cordon Bleu staffs and were offered as graduation presents to us. We were so touched for what they did. At the graduation ceremony, we received a certificate with the signature of the Executive Chef and took photos with them excitedly. This precious learning and cooperating experiences between both schools helped to open a new path for collaborating relationship in the future.

Homestay experience is another part that worth to mention. Australia is a multi-ethnic and multi-culture nation. People in this country migrated from many other nations around the world and hence, there seems no 'typical' Australian. We had encountered a variety of homestays with

different nationalities, such as Australia, Italy, India, Thailand, and Greece, etc. All their unique habits and customs helped our members to experience, understand and further respect the differences between different cultures. Though not all the placements were able to suit the individual needs, the different ethnic background of the host families had challenged our students' abilities to adapt into a foreign surrounding, and yet the interaction and interchange between cultures started from these differences. Among these host families, some of them offered great and bizarre foods every day; some of the families spoke to our students frequently to provide them chances to hone their language skills; while some houses of host families were like magnificent palaces. All this experiences were not only unique but also unforgettable.

Culture visits to the famous Opera House, the Harbour Bridge, the New South Wales Art Museum, Royal Botanical Garden, Sydney Olympic Park, the Darling Harbour, the Hunter Valley and the Bondi Beach had given us chances to better understand the colonized history of Australia and its modern development.

We would like to dedicate our special thanks to Le Cordon Bleu Sydney for the well-organized courses that they offered us, the help of the Chinese interpreter, and especially the airfare sponsored by MOE. We couldn't be able to hold this meaningful activity and make our dreams come true without all the helps. The satisfied rate of our questionnaire survey from our students was 91.5% and they couldn't wait to share what they have experienced in Australia with their teachers and classmates. Some students even started to inquire about the study tour for next year. All these results are not only inspiring but also encouraging in our determination to promote international education in Ming Tai High School.