

YEAST (Young European Apprentices' Special Training) moves into the second round

Since 2014 there is an opportunity for brewers and maltsters within the Erasmus+ Project to gain some experience working abroad in Scotland and Sweden.

YEAST 1.0 came to a successful end in May 2016.

Now the YEAST 2.0 Project which started in July 2016 gives 40 people with a background in the industry of brewing the possibility to get a work experience abroad over the next two years.

Apprentices still in training or finished, already employed or people with special interest in beer can go abroad for varying periods of time, to gain experience in their field of interest and/or share their experience.

The project is organized by
Vereinigung der Haus- und Hobbybrauer in Deutschland e.V. (VHD)
www.hausgebraut.de

Early December two female and four male apprentices, who are attending the public vocational school Main-Spessart, were over in Edinburgh to complete a 2 weeks' internship.

One of the attendants was Frauke Flemming.
She reviews her Scotland experience:

For university students it's completely normal to spend one or two terms abroad and getting financial support doing so. But apprentices generally only leave their federal state to attend vocational school.

That's why I'm more than excited, that with the expansion of the YEAST Project it's even possible for students at the vocational school, to look beyond their own nose. Since I visited Scotland with my parents as a child, I always wanted to go back to this country, in which someone might question if the people living there really speak English.

The application was written in no time and that was basically all we had to do. On site in Edinburgh we were excellently curated and so not only got a peek behind the curtain of the brewery scene in Edinburgh, but also into their world of pubs and through our partner, the Scottish Craft Brewers (SCB), we learned a lot about the Scottish Craft Brewing Scene. We were invited to a Craft Beer Festival, where we took part in a tasting organized by SCB and even brewed our own YEAST-Beer, for which each one of us had to bring a special ingredient. So that's how turnips or the Scottish national drink of choice „Irn Bru“ can end up in a brew.

Especially the size of the breweries were exciting for us, since we all work in bigger companies and now had to work with 10 hl brewing plants. Each step in the process you could follow in exact detail, even if it had nothing to do with the practice in the breweries we work in or theoretical stuff that we knew from school. But anyway, the end result was beer: Scottish Beer.

Within the breweries we worked during our experience abroad and amongst the beer enthusiasts we were surround with we felt right at home. The Scots were as eager to know about German brewing techniques and our training in the field of brewing, as we wanted to know why in Scotland air bladder from fish is added to beer and what's the difference between casks and kegs. So we always had intense discussions, which quickly made us forget about the beer prices in the pubs.



Laura and Frauke at work and during their spare time.



While you can't compare a two week internship to a student's semester abroad – especially when we started to feel really at home, while the last days are approaching – Edinburgh showed off with almost two weeks of straight sunshine in November and I don't want to miss all the experience and wonderful impressions even once. And as a “Heidelbergerin” in Franconia it's also not too hard to understand the Scots in Edinburgh.

At the same time two of our male trainees were at our Swedish partner. Holger Ludwig, one of the two interns, sums up his experience at „Närke Kulturbryggeri:

If you come down to it, there's not a single moment in our internship abroad that we would recall as bad experience. The time in Örebro was really fascinating and time just flew by.

Our Swedish colleagues gave us a warm welcome. They took their time, to take care of us with all we needed and showed and explained their ways of production and brewing process in great detail.

The Närke Kulturbryggeri is a small brewery that takes pride in their craft, which specialises in new and exciting beers that are most of the time unknown in Germany. It starts with a classic Braggot (Beer brewed with Honey) or a Bitter Style and expands on to special IPAs (Indian Pale Ale), Gingerbeer and Gransus, a dark Beer with young fir sprouts.

Per brew we casked around 1000 liter. The biggest difference to our breweries in Germany was that almost every step along the brewing process was done by hand. In the process of making beer at Närke nothing was automatised, not even the heating of the wort kettle.

So for an example the crushed malt packed in 25 kg bags was added into the mashing vat and after the lautering the spent grains had to be removed by a scraper.



Removing spent grains manually

This kind of approach was not unknown to us - working in the brewing industry but also brewing in our free time - but especially in this environment a great experience.

Even if it was later season in the year we had luck with the weather. In the 16 days we spent there, was only one on which it was raining. Overall lots of sunshine and approaching the end some snowy days. With such a weather it was even more fun to spend our free time outside the brewery exploring the city and it's surrounding areas.

To make a long story short: The time just flew by way too fast.



My project partner Julian and me at our festival booth; on the right: Jörgen, brewer at Närke.

My personal highlight was the Örebro Öl & Whiskey Festival at the weekend were a lot of the many breweries and distilleries from all over Sweden come together and exhibit their products.

On Friday we started with helping setting up our stand and after that and the following Saturday we helped a couple of hours managing the selling of the beers. Already here we could talk to a lot of interested people, the YEAST Project came to topic during our discussions quiet often.

After our shift we wandered around the halls and visited other stands to get to know completely new beers to us and had good talks.

At the moment there are already applications from more students and instructors in the line.

It's already clear to see, that the 40 spots for a internship will not be enough because of the great demand.

For more information about the Erasmus+ Project: yeast-project.eu