

### **General experience**

I had a fantastic time on exchange at the Indian School of Business. The campus is absolutely beautiful, complete with its own forest, peacocks, stray dogs, and the occasional slithering snake. The students at the ISB are extremely friendly and go out of their way to welcome newcomers. I was there over a period rich with religious festivals including Diwali, “the festival of lights” and Dandiya Raas, “the stick dancing festival”, and it was a privilege to participate in these events, which are celebrated wholeheartedly at the school. I really enjoyed the fact that the students are predominantly Indian (approximately 95%), enabling a truly Indian experience and a lot of exposure to local culture.

### **Tips & important things to be aware of**

Although one should be careful about eating food off campus and generally around India, this shouldn't preclude one from having genuine culinary experiences. There is absolutely amazing food to be tasted, and one should use local knowledge from fellow students and friends to sample street food” Hyderabad is renowned for having the spiciest food in India, and it's especially famous for it's delicious biryani. One needs to register at the local police station in Hyderabad shortly after arriving, however upon departure, deregistration is not necessary. If you're not sure about prices, ask locals how much one should pay.

### **Visa information**

For India, the embassy outsources visa applications through 2 independent agents (<http://www.indembassy.co.il/Visa%20Services.htm#Outsourcing>).

I used Caspi Aviation, which is situated at 1 Ben Yehuda Street. Caspi processes the visa for the applicant and informs one when it's ready to be picked up. The visa costs NIS380 for an Israeli and NIS400 for a foreign applicant, however US applicants need to pay NIS500. Visa fees are accepted in cash only.

### **Housing**

There are 4 student villages on the beautiful ISB campus, and one has the choice between living in a quad-room (INR18,000≈ NIS1386 per term) shared with 3 other students or living in a studio apartment (INR 30,000 ≈ NIS2310 per term). In quad-rooms, 1 bathroom is shared between 2 students, i.e. there are 2 bathrooms per quad-apartment, and there is a communal lounge/ kitchen area. The beds are extremely narrow in the quad-rooms. In studio apartments, one has a lounge with a separate kitchen, a bathroom, and a balcony. All apartments come with appliances, furniture, cable TV, high speed internet, linen, and electric utilities. Included in the fee is a housecleaning service, and if required one can have clothing laundered and meals prepared at an extra charge. Importantly, water is purified and can be drunk directly from the taps on campus.

### **Living expenses**

The cost of living is not great in India. One lives on the ISB campus and many of the meals are eaten there. There is a dining hall with conventional Indian food which serves “European” options occasionally. Cost range from INR90-150 (NIS7-12) for vegetarian and non-vegetarian food, respectively. Other living costs may include transport, eating off campus, and going to bars and clubs.

### **Transportation**

The School has a free shuttle service, which runs between the campus and the city on regular intervals, but we hardly used this service. The cheapest and most convenient way to get around is by using auto-rickshaws. The drivers usually try to charge foreigners astronomical rates. The average calculation is INR7-10 per kilometer (if one knows the distance), but this is an approximation and is a good starting point for negotiation.

### **Courses**

It makes sense to take relevant courses that one either cannot take at one's own University or courses that are being taught by exceptional, world-class lecturers (providing one is interested in the subject of course). Additionally, I would suggest taking courses that are contextually relevant to the host nation, e.g. at the ISB, I attended Rural marketing (RMKT), which provided insights into the challenges and pitfalls of penetrating the massive markets of India and the rest of the developing world. There was also practical hands-on work during RMKT, which included a group visit to a rural village and the development of a micro-business plan for marketing a product or service from rural to rural, from urban, to rural, or from urban to rural settings. I also took the courses on Introduction to Indian Markets and Project Management.

### **Recreation**

There is a Recreation Centre on the ISB campus, which includes a 25m swimming pool, a gymnasium, a room for yoga and aerobics, a basketball court, a football/cricket ground, squash courts and tennis courts. There are instructors for those who need training in any of the above activities. The Fitness Centre is equipped with stationary cycles, steppers, treadmills, cross trainers and a multi-station gym. Proficient fitness instructors are on hand to provide guidance. A yoga instructor conducts classes between 6pm and 8pm on the weekdays. The historical sites in Hyderabad include the Charminar, Birla Mandir, Hussain Sagar and Chowmahalla Palace. There are a few bars and clubs around Hyderabad, but nothing really worth mentioning. Students at the ISB throw a lot of parties, either in their apartments or at the outdoor "08 Lounge", which was dedicated to the school by the class of '08 and often holds themed events.