

## **Interview with Yvonne Tegelaers**

Internship at Conrad Istanbul Hotel

13 Feb - 20 Aug 2005

Yvonne is already graduated from the School of Professional Education of Tourism and Transport in Breda. Although she always wanted to become a pilot, she couldn't realize that dream because of a problem with her eyes. Instead she decided to satisfy her enthusiasm for traveling by studying tourism: *"I like to be broad minded. That is why I like traveling and meeting new people. I always have to be on the go."* Naturally she has been an exchange student several times. She studied in France, Italy, Ireland and also in Turkey. So it is not her first time here. She has been studying at the Dokuz Eylul University in Izmir for six months, during the second year of her studies. Moreover, despite her young age, she also had some work experience in Bangkok.

Yvonne is working in the Conrad Hotel in Istanbul. The job is very demanding and she has to work very hard. However she seems to enjoy the challenge: *"I had expected to find lots of work and I found it! Everybody here works very hard. However the atmosphere is nice, so work doesn't seem to be too exhausting. I have nice colleagues. There is a nice ambiance. I have already made some good friends"*. However, she can not hide her astonishment about the temper of Turkish people: *"One minute they flare up in anger, and the second moment they are best friends with each other again"*

As she has already been to Turkey before we asked her to compare her experiences: *"Izmir is totally different than Istanbul. It is more like Greece or Italy. It looks Mediterranean. It is a calm city with middle class people. On the other hand, Istanbul is wild! In this city anything can happen. You can expect just anything!"*

She does not have concrete plans for the future: *"I prefer not to plan in advance. Of course I do plan a bit. It is in my genes. I am Dutch! But I do not carry an agenda with me, or a watch."* However she still knows quite well what she wants and what she doesn't: *"In Holland I grew up in a generation where money was not a concern. That is why this generation is more concerned with today and not necessarily with future. It is not the job that we do, but the people who we work with that is important. I can go and work in any country. It doesn't have to be the Netherlands."* Maybe I find a job here in Istanbul!

In couple of years from today, she hopes to find a place where she feels at ease, which she can call home: *"Traveling is good, but it is addictive. The ball never stops rolling."* And then she adds: *"I am still not thinking of what to do after Istanbul. I feel fine here. So maybe Istanbul is the place for me to settle!"*

Well, home is where the heart is. We wish her all the best to find her home in this little, big world.

***Interview by Elif Yarsuvat***

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