



Summer in Israel

Katelyn Li, 2017





Left: Haifa Beach Right: Haifa night view

I spent two and a half months in Israel in summer 2017. With Jennings Global Mathematics Fund, I was able to participate in a summer program at Technion University along with two other CMU students. My summer study focused on entrepreneurship, which included an entrepreneurship class at Technion and an internship at a local startup. My internship lasted 2 months and the class began in the second half of the summer. I also got to explore the country, learn Jewish cultures and history, meet locals and other international students, and try all kinds of Mediterranean food. And I want to thank Jennings Family for this incredible journey.

Bottom: Haifa





Technion Campus

Class at Technion

The entrepreneurship class I took at Technion is called Lean Startup Methodology, given by Rami Gazit. The class focused on learning the methodology to effectively build a startup and actually implementing it in a group project throughout the course. My partner and I initially had this idea about converting pictures of handwritten notes into electronic version where users can modify later on. We applied the knowledge and skills learned over the summer to build a business model, and presented at the final presentation.



Program Kickoff

Another view of the campus



Internship

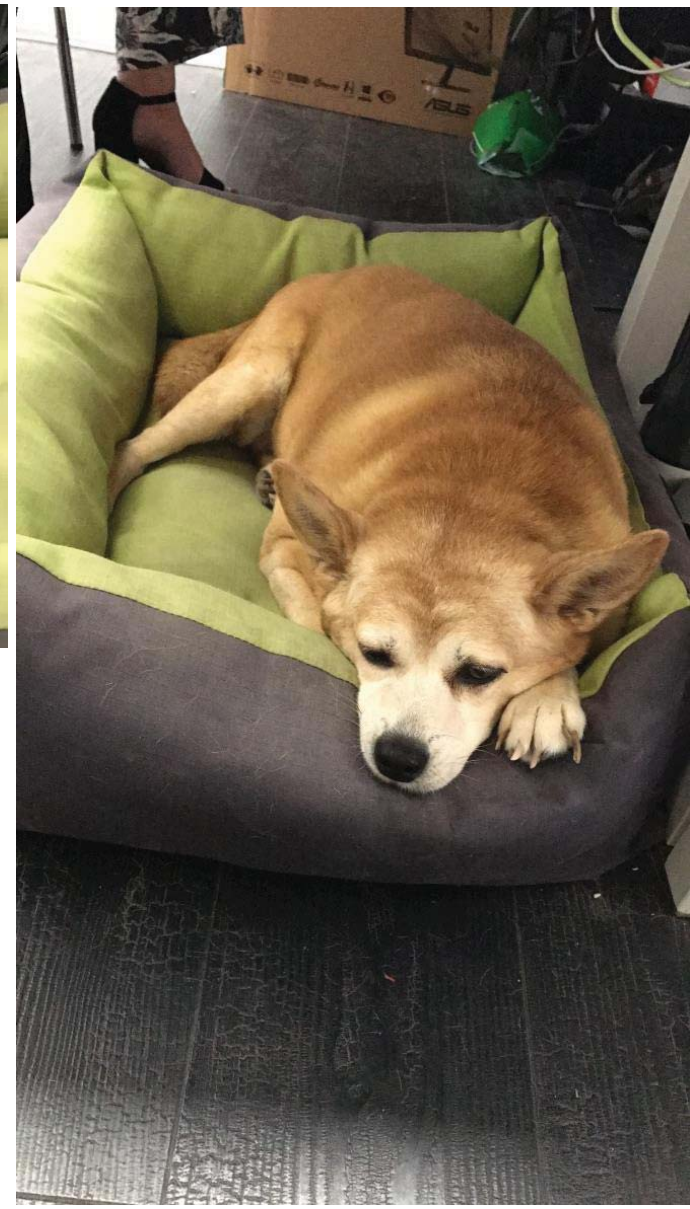
I interned at a computer vision startup in downtown Haifa as a Data Scientist and Machine Learning Engineer. The company was developing an AR platform that helps users virtually apply makeup. As an intern, my projects mostly focused on data analytics, including collecting and cleaning data of cosmetics products to help build a database and training a machine learning model that detects

With my CEO and other interns

facial landmarks. Even though the company is very small, it has very friendly employees and relaxing working environment. At the end of my internship, I built close relationship with people in the company and other interns.



My CEO often brought her dog to work. She spent most of the day sleeping and interacting with us occasionally. But she made our office even more fun and relaxing.



Haifa Beach and Mediterranean Sea



Before moving into Technion apartment, I stayed in the Mediterranean cost west of Haifa. The sea is more beautiful than I expected. There are many people swimming and surfing all day. I ran along the beach every morning for a good workout to start the day.



View outside my apartment. A plot of green plants and I could see the beach.

First meal in
Israel next to the
beach.
Traditional
Israeli breakfast:
Shakshouka,
salads, pita bread
with hummus!





Gold-domed Shrine of the Bab, on middle section

View of Bahai Garden from German Colony



Bahai Garden on Mount Camel in Haifa, the most holy site of Bahai faith.

The garden was divided into three sections. Upper, middle and lower. Since it was built on a steep mountain with length of 1 kilometer, we started exploring from the top and walked all the way down to the lowest gate at German Colony.





Left: me sitting on an Instagram frame in Tel Aviv Right: Tel Aviv White Night

I also spent most weekends traveling and exploring other places in Israel, and some of the trips were organized by Technion for all students in the program. They not only include modern cities like Tel Aviv, but also natural sights and cities with rich history and culture.

In Tel Aviv, White Night is a whole-city event that happens every quarter throughout the year. I was able to make it to the one at end of June. People from all over the country came here to celebrate. There were many concerts, performances, food and drinks! Tel Aviv is also famous for art. I visited Ilana Goor Museum located in the old city of Jaffa, which contains over 500 works of the famous Israeli artist and sculptor Ilana Goor.



Artworks by Ilana Goor

White Night street performance





Caesarea—ruins of Roman Empire



Me with other students in the program. The two girls on my right are also CMU students.



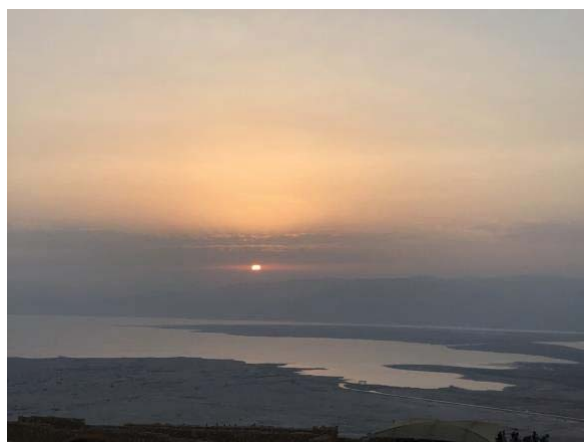
Temple Mount in the Old City

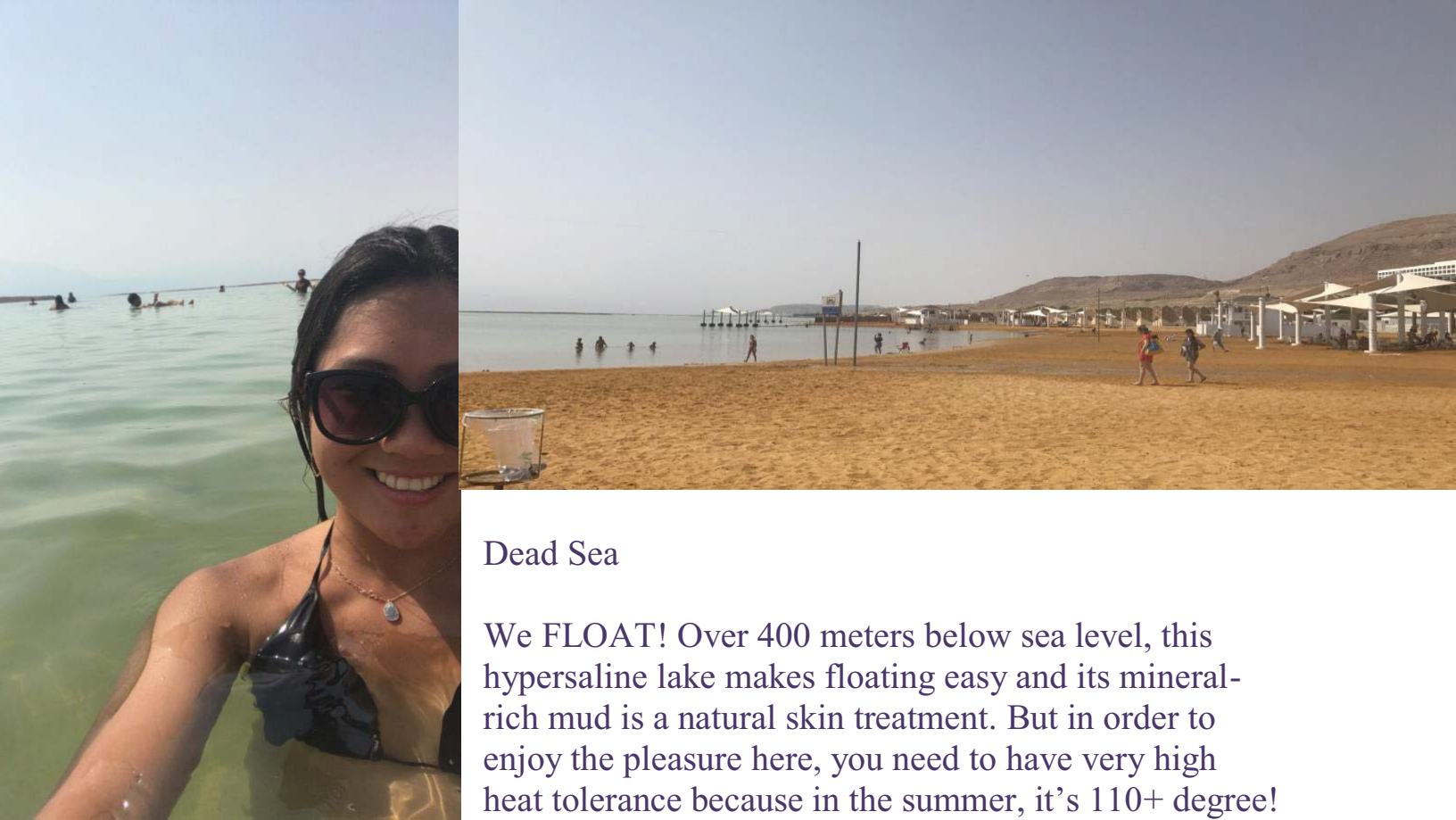


Western Wall

Jerusalem

Masada—desert. We woke up at 4am and climbed to the top of the mountain to catch the beautiful sunrise.



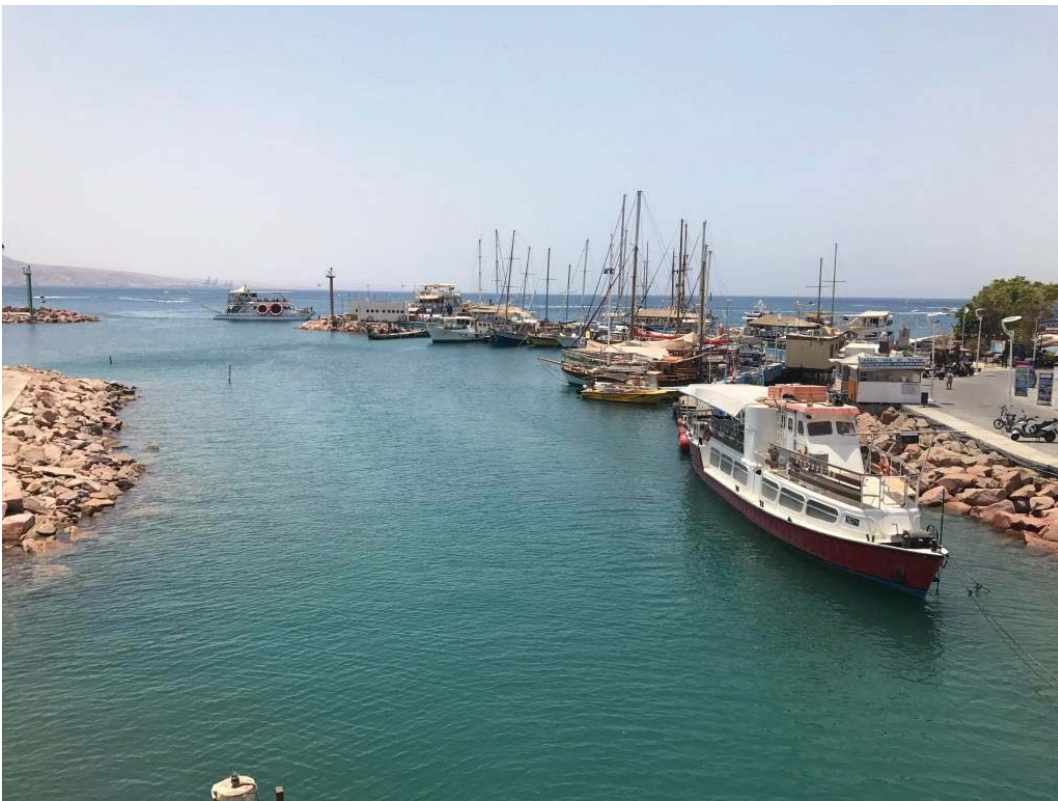


Dead Sea

We FLOAT! Over 400 meters below sea level, this hypersaline lake makes floating easy and its mineral-rich mud is a natural skin treatment. But in order to enjoy the pleasure here, you need to have very high heat tolerance because in the summer, it's 110+ degree!

Another city famous for its beautiful sea view is Eilat, the southernmost city in Israel. This time, it's the Red Sea. This city is most famous for its water activities, including swimming with dolphins, diving, snorkeling, etc. However, I was fainted due to the humid air and extreme high temperature of

100+ degrees, and couldn't enjoy all the fun.





All Israeli dishes we made for dinner



Baklava—pastry filled with nuts and sweets

Another fun event Technion organized for us is to learn to make Israeli food! A famous Israeli chef was invited to introduce Israeli food culture and teach us how to make some of the most authentic Israeli dishes using fresh ingredients. We learned the techniques to make pita bread, fresh hummus, falafel, salads, and grilled eggplants with tahini, and more!



Making pita bread dough!

Freshly baked pita bread!

