

Cold, freezing cold, wind, 4 degrees Celsius, clouds, rain, mist... When you look out of the window, do you recognize, see or feel any of this? (except for the wind, which is, I must admit, impressive in Cape Town) My guess is you will not. Regrettably I do, since I am back home in Amsterdam. I am a sixth year, Dutch medical student. In August 2010 I got the once in a lifetime opportunity to do an elective in gastroenterology at the Groote Schuur Hospital. I decided to go for it and never regretted this. In fact, I would recommend an international elective or rotation to any medical student.

These last few days I have thought a lot about the time I spent in Cape Town. It was fantastic in a number of ways. Not only did I gain a lot of medical knowledge; theoretical, clinical and practical, I also learned about the South African health care system, the culture(s), the city and how it is to live in Cape Town. It felt great to be part of the team at E23 and G12. I got to know the people in the hospital: staff, colleagues and patients. They made me feel at home. Six weeks went by faster than I could have imagined. I guess time flies when you are having fun.

The highlight of my rotation was the Gastroenterology Foundation weekend for Fellows at Spier, Stellenbosch. To be honest, the Dutch landscape is very boring and as good as flat. The more reason for me to envy your beautiful country with so many stunning mountains. To be at a trainee weekend and simultaneously enjoying the scenery, tasteful food, nice

company and great organization was wonderful.

South Africa and the Groote Schuur Hospital both have made such a big impression on me that I am absolutely sure I will be back.

Oh, one last thing: thank you so much for Malva Pudding.

Anna de Jong

