

Experiencing Culture – My Personal Journey to Kuwait

Katerina Mackaness (aged 9)

News of our move to Kuwait. Daddy came home one day and told us he had been given a job in Kuwait. I had never heard of Kuwait before. Daddy said it was a hot place and it was in the Arabian Gulf. He said there would be lots of sand and desert and palm trees and blue sea. I was sad that I would have to leave my friends behind. I was a little bit puzzled about what was going to happen.

Where we live. We arrived in Kuwait in October. It was very hot. Our house is not far from the airport. Our house is big and cool inside. We have a small pretty garden with bright red and purple flowers. I like all the houses around us. They are big and have different shapes and colours. We have a mosque near us. It has two tall minarets. I like the call to prayer and so does my sister. It wakes me up sometimes but the sound makes me feel safe. All the families around us are Kuwaiti and they are very kind. They always give us presents. Shehade lives opposite us. She is my age and very nice. She started wearing the hejab last year and looks very grown up. Abdullah also lives close to us. He always crosses the road to see Daddy and they kiss each other hello. His father used to be in the Kuwait Army.

My School and my Friends. I go to The English School in Salmiya. There are lots of boys and girls from all over the world at my school. There are many children from Kuwait, England, America, Australia, Lebanon, France and many other countries. I sit next to Hala on the bust to school. She is from Lebanon and she is one of my best friends. She helps me with my Arabic. I like school and all the work we do. I now learn two languages – Arabic and French. Sometimes I get muddled up. I do a lot of sport like benchball, swimming and athletics.

My Hobbies and my Pastimes. During the week, I have lots of hobbies. I go to The Little Gym in Jabriya. I do Brownies and Jazz and Ballet. I am learning the recorder and flute, and the piano. Sometimes I don't have enough time to do my homework because I have so much to do. One thing I really like to do here in Kuwait is go the Climbing Wall. I also like ice-skating and I like to go shopping in the big malls. The Kuwaitis always look so smart – the men in there dishdashas and the ladies in there sparkly hejabs.

Why I like living here. I like living in Kuwait because it is different. I have all sorts of friends and we do things here that I can't do in England. Sometimes we go for picnics in the desert and then we go quad-biking. Daddy has got a boat and sometimes we go out to Kubbar Island. Other times we just water-ski or swim. I love the warm water although I always worry what is underneath.

Living in Kuwait has taught me so much. I think I have learned a lot from living here in Kuwait. I have learned that the world is made up of many different people. And they all have different ways of living. I have been to the Grand Mosque and seen the huge prayer hall. I would like to see when it is full. I have so many friends and I feel that they have taught me not to care about differences. I think I have grown up because of this. I will always remember Kuwait. When I am back in England I will miss the call to prayer.