

AEHT – European Association of Hotel and Tourism Schools
organization of competitions between students in different categories

26th Annual Conference and competitions
on Costa cruises along the Mediterranean Sea

Tourist Destination competition:
Hotel Management competition:

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“It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves”

Sir Edmund Percival Hillary

After months of waiting we were finally ready to go: ahead of us a week long cruise on the Mediterranean Sea. Hard to imagine what the experience would have been about: almost 800 guests and competitors from all over Europe participating in the 25th Anniversary of the AEHT.

For the occasion the association organized the annual conference on the Costa Mediterranea ship: Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca, Ajaccio and Marseille were our pit stops during the adventure.

As we started the cruise we were welcomed in the evening with the opening ceremony: music, visuals and the performance of the dancers were amazing. After that the president of the association officially opened the ceremony and all the European countries were presented to the audience.

The Tourist Destination competition started on the second day of the cruise. In the morning Andrea joined his team, build with a guy from France and a girl from Belgium. They started with an exam about Tourism and then they had to answer questions about the 4 different cities the ship was heading to. Right after, the team recieved the main task of the competition: develop a unique and new type of excursion for Costa cruises for the city of Ajaccio. They had one day and a half to prepare a new product and they presented it in front of the judges and the public on day 5.

The Hotel Management competition started on the second day as well. Emanuele started with an exam about Revenue Management and then met the 2 girls he would have worked with: one from Austria and one from Belgium. Their task was to prepare a business plan of an event on board the cruise. The team worked until the presentation on the 5th day in front of the judges and the public.

Even though we had time to prepare our projects every morning, we all had to spend extra time also at night in order to finish our work. In the afternoon we always had the opportunity to visit the cities and enjoy time onshore.

On our last full day on the cruise, we were finally free to relax and enjoy the trip. At dinner we started to be very excited about the closing ceremony but very anxious about the medals. As they started to call the winners of each competition we were getting nervous. We were very happy to hear that our colleagues from Chur won 3 medals but still we were waiting for our turn.

Preparation, determination, creativity and hard work took both of us on stage as winners of the gold medal. We were very relieved and of course very proud and happy with our result!

The entire experience was very enriching not just because of the result, but especially because of the people we met and their different points of view on the tourism and hotel industries.

We would like to thank all the people that cheered for us during the competitions: they gave us energy. But our special thanks goes to Mr. Peter Walliser and Mr. Jacopo Soldini and the school, for believing in us and giving us the opportunity to participate in this unforgettable experience.

Andrea Calzascia & Emanuele Macchi