

Moodbidri: Girl from Switzerland Earns Ayurveda Degree

Pics: Shekar Ajekar

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Moodbidri, Mar 28: **Carole Zinsel**, a girl from Switzerland, came to Moodbidri four and half years ago all the way from her homeland, to study Ayurveda system of medicine. She successfully completed BAMS course in Alva's Medical College here, passing the same with 71 percent marks! Perhaps she is the first foreign lady to have taken interest and strenuously learnt this form of medicine under Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, and getting a bachelors degree.





It has to be noted that learning Ayurveda is a daunting prospect for a lady of foreign origin, particularly so because it is heavily dependent on Sanskrit texts. Carole has successfully faced this challenge and learnt Ayurveda, along with the mythology, culture, and other aspects of our country. She also had to bear with the vagaries of the climate here, as she hails from a country where the temperature is very cool.

Carole says she got interested in Ayurveda at an early age, and hence she chose to study this subject. Her father is a principal of a college in her country. Carole's mother, Marian, came to know about Moodbidri through a friend, Dr Hunziker, who had participated in Alva's Virasat sometime back. During her visit here, Dr Hunziker also was enormously influenced by 'Shobhavana' garden of medicinal plants, medicines manufacturing facilities, and the educational institutions here. Influenced by what she learnt through her friend about the facilities here, Marian brought her daughter here to admit her into Ayurveda course.

Seeing the zest and determination of the girl from Switzerland to learn Ayurveda system of medicine, Dr M Mohan Alva supported her efforts by following up her attempts to get admission here. Ayurveda is not the only thing Carole has learnt here. She has tried to imbibe the cultural richness of India, by wearing saris, consuming rich Indian food, and trying to adjust to the entertainment habits of the region. In various programmes organized at Alva's campus, she was seen performing Arati, sprinkling of scented water etc.

The teachers of the college too are proud about her. She is vastly different from other students. She never applies leave, nor has complained about food, climate, etc. Everyone who teaches her has liked her discipline, concentration and hard work. She now plans to work as house surgeon for six months each in Coimbatore and Gujarat, before pursuing postgraduate course in 'Panchakarma' form of treatment.

It is heartening to note that a foreign lady took pains to come to an alien country and learn a

method of treatment that she was totally new to, at a time when most Indians have preferred to ignore this system of treatment. Carole feels that Ayurveda has the ability to heal a number of ailments, and is therefore, interested to study more about it. If the same keenness and interest is shown by our own people, Ayurveda, the system of treatment handed over by our ancestors that aims at tapping the richness of nature for the benefit of the sick, can surely flourish and bloom in spite of efforts being made to smother it.