

I don't know any other way to begin than to tell that it was a lifetime experience. This was the first time I had celebrated pride away from home. Being from Gothenburg, a coastal city with a population between 300.00 and 500.00, I didn't really know what to expect from pride in a big city like Stockholm. I'm obliged to say that my mind was blown in all ways possible.

In Gothenburg we have something called "West pride" which is our equivalent of pride. You have the pride-park, the pride march, etc but when compared to Stockholm pride it feels like a drop in the sea.

The main reason behind me going to Stockholm to celebrate pride was to join the recently created "Pride of color". The project was started by two gay guys in Stockholm that felt, like a lot of us, that those of us who are LBTQ+ and colored (none-white) often are forgotten and that pride often just displays whiteness and completely erases some marginalized groups. With donations from people who wanted to attend they managed to rent a truck with a soundsystem for the pride march.

The truck was boarded with QPOC (Queer people of color) with ancestry from all over the world. You had everything from Kurds and Mexicans to Chinese and Kenyans. In the back of the truck you had DJs all kinds of folkmusic from different none-european countries. Around the truck you could see more people dancing either in their country's flag or the pride flag. We might be from different communities and backgrounds but I could definitely feel a sense of pride and community amongst us.

Most of the time aboard the truck I spent dancing with my Kurdish, Mexican and Bengali friends. They taught me their dances and I returned the favor by showing off some of my Persian moves. One of the guys I had just met the day before but we became very good friends during the 24 hours after we boarded the truck. It felt good to get to know more people who face the same struggles, and/or even more, as you do. The connection is just magical so to say.

The first two hours on the truck we spent dancing in the hot rays of the sun. We we're all covered in sweat and emptying our water bottles faster than expected. All the waving and the dancing eventually tired us out but just as the dancing was coming to a halt we felt drops of water hit us. Within seconds we were all completely soaked in rain. I, myself, was surprised how fast my thick and curly hair got wet as it usually takes about 10 minutes in the shower just for the water to get in through the first layer of hair. I hid my phone in my backpack and joined in on the dancing. People were taking shifts covering the music equipment with their umbrellas so we could keep on dancing to the music.

Eventually we reached our destination outside the Pride park, where I had made some friends the day before at a PoC (People of color) separatistic event for young queers of color. It was still raining but we were ecstatic. Me and my friends quickly made our way down to the tram

and then we split up. Me and two others went off to eat something and then rested at one's aunt's place in the city.

All those attending Pride of Color had been promised free & listed entry to one of those coolest clubs in Stockholm. (Trädgården, Stockholm) Me and the guy that I became close friends with ended up there. The club has several different stages and rooms so there was plenty of different kinds of music played. My friend and I danced a little at the main stage before going up to the highlight of our night. One of our other friends met up with us before heading up to the room where we spent most of our time. We went to this medium sized which was covered in smoke from the smokemachines. Inside there was a bar, a small stage and a corner for the DJs to play their music from. All of the music was middle eastern. Arabic, Assyrian, Kurdish, Persian, etc. You could request anything middle eastern by DMing the DJ on twitter.

Me and my two friends ended the night by running down to the entrance of the club. There was a photo booth where you could take your pictures for a reasonable price. We got inside it twice and had a lot of fun taking the pictures. With the photos in our hands and my friend's Iranian flag wrapped around me we left the club at closing hour. We chatted a little before we had to split up at the tram.

Danial M, 20, Swedish-Iranian Public Administration student at the University of Gothenburg. Instagram: @Perserkatten