

The Gringo Lingo:
My South American Adventure



Much to my parents' chagrin, in my junior year I decided to study abroad (again). My first experience had involved stray dogs, morning swims with sharks, and learning Tahitian. To no one's surprise, living on a remote island with strangers I met on the internet didn't exactly work out. And so, my career as an Au Pair in French Polynesia ended shortly after it began.

Luckily, I still had a study abroad requirement to fulfill for Penn State. For months, I tried to decide between the South America and India programs. I flipped a coin. And thus, my South American adventure began with four months of formal class.



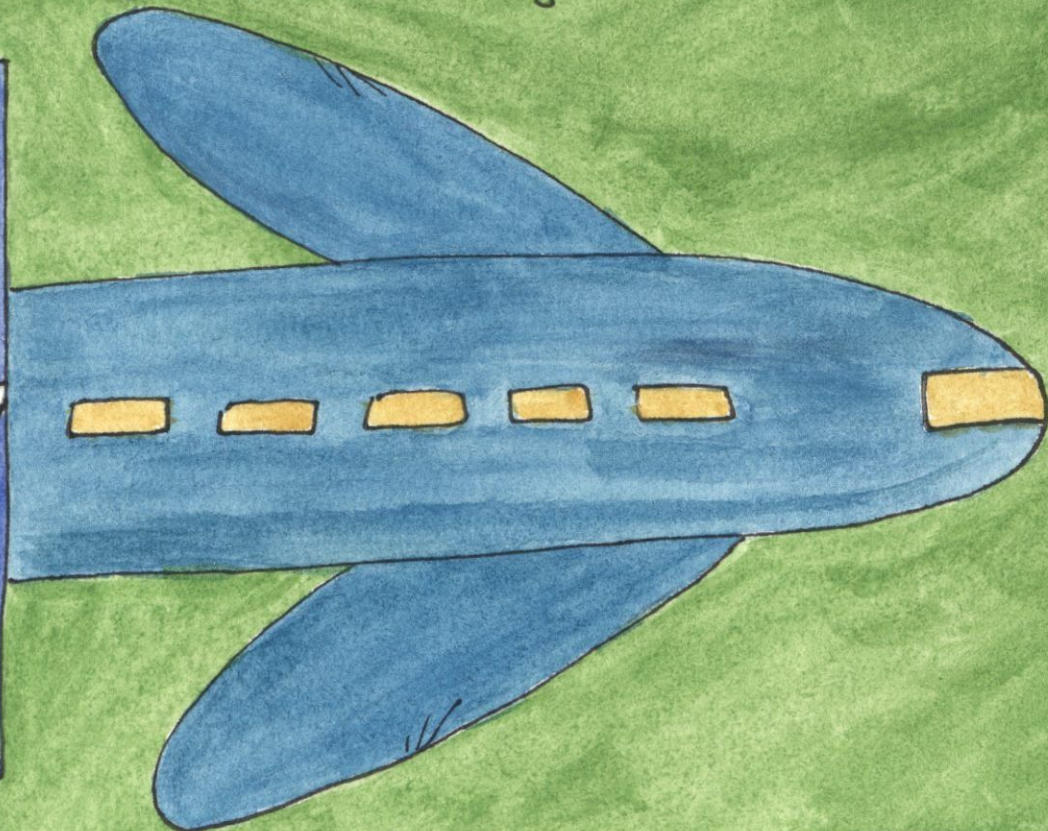
I found myself wanting to see South America instead of reading about it.



Finally the day arrived...

MAY 8th

My suitcase was packed and ready to travel.



Sneha, Ellie, and I checked it out after dinner and you could see lights all across the city. The sunset by the lake. We took pictures by the lake. We took EU ♥ Brasilia sign as the set. Most peaceful. I'm looking forward to tomorrow.

We started off by having breakfast on the rooftop of the hotel St. Moritz. The view looked at over the entire city I sat with Jason, Teresa and Sneha.

We all went back multiple times for more quava jelly, sweet breads, papaya, melon and juices. After breakfast we went to a photography workshop for the first time.

After leaving IESB we went back to the hotel and bought some vodka at the convenience store across from the courtyard and had a small party.

At the festival they were playing the Brazilian equivalent of country music and we sat at a table. We visited our first government building after our time at IESB.

Brasilia was designed as a series of "super blocks" which means that the apartments all exist in this way.

I really like that it's very easy to sit outside for most meals, but I don't really like that many of the streets look the same.

It makes you feel like you're in a unique state of mind. The school is unique because of its commitment to sustainability. Everyone drank out of plastic cups and they had a greenhouse and gardens where they grew food.

In the jitsu class I learned that it is different from wrestling because in jitsu the objective is to essentially choke your opponent until they either pass out or give up and then there is no hitting. The school is very nice and it's centered around a beautiful courtyard with tropical trees and flowers. The school was focused on social justice and only included majors such as nursing. We ate at a bakery and I ordered an orange, apple, and ginger flavored juice and it was delicious. I'm currently writing this at the hotel before we get ready to go to a local club that plays 80s and 90s music. I also had my first legal drink: a caipirinha.

We arrived in Brasilia, Brazil in the middle of the day. During our week in the capital city we studied Portuguese, K-12 educational systems, Niemeyer architecture, and the art of making brigadeiros.

We learned how to pronounce the word acai (ah-sigh-e) while we sat eating Brazilian BBQ on the rooftop deck of a billionaire.

Every morning we would eat our breakfast while we gazed over the city's monuments. Brasilia's traffic never stopped and neither did we. We spent the nights drinking caipirinhas at local bars with IESB University Students.

It was a week spent high above the worries of the world. On the last day, we rappelled down a waterfall - terrified and thrilled at the same time.



In the second city we visited,
Belo Horizonte, I tried to act
like a native Brazilian.

I learned how to play
Samba music.



And how to shop like
a local.



And how to cheer loudly at a soccer game... on National TV