



Jada

from
Mississauga West
to
Peru

“Ya han pasado seis meses? No puede ser!”

Closer to end of my exchange

It's already been six months? It can't be! In two weeks, it will have been seven months in Peru, and I'm completely astonished. It's getting very close to the end of my exchange, and I'm trying to retain every moment here, whether it be good or bad. Sometimes the bad experiences teach you more than any good experience ever could.

Christmas

My first family and I prepared dinner and invited family over to the house for Christmas. We watched fireworks and ate an amazing supper. I know around holidays a lot of Exchange students get nostalgia, but for me that wasn't the case. I facetimed my family on Christmas and I also felt really welcomed with my host family. I can remember that we also went to the house of their extended family. It was in a poor neighbourhood and around ten people lived in the house. I really enjoyed that experience because of how different the atmosphere was. It was completely different then what I lived with for those five months because they were a huge family with a smaller house and everything was a lot less modern than the house that I'd been living in. I enjoyed that equally if not more because it seemed like a distinct culture from the one I was already adapting to, and everyone in the house was really affectionate and bought me gifts even though they didn't know me. I really enjoyed the way I spent my Christmas in Peru.



Changing families

Changing families was a really weird experience for me. I was living there for 5 months, and I was already so used to it. I had a schedule, a good relationship with my family and I felt like I was at home. To have all of that change a few days after Christmas can be a bit strange. I had long conversations with my host mom and host sister during the days that I was preparing to move families, and I really enjoyed having them since I didn't previously do that with them very often. I also hung out with my host brother and watched YouTube videos and shared some fun memories from when I first arrived in Peru. It was truly heartbreaking hearing him say that I was like a sister to him and that he won't have anymore fun in the house without me. He even kept one of my stuffed animals with him so he could have a memory of me when I was gone. It was also very sad when I said bye to the rest of my family and I cried saying bye to my host grandmother because she truly acted as if I was her other granddaughter and it really hit me as I never met either of my grandmothers. To this day, I still wear the bracelet that she got me for Christmas.

When my second host family came, there were a bunch of hugs and kisses goodbye and also some tears. Once I got in the car of my second family, it was like a new feeling. Not exactly the same feeling as when I first came to Peru, but the feeling of analyzing the situation within seconds and quickly getting used to it. Hopefully that kind of made sense. Once we got to the house, I loved it immediately as I had a TV and a mirror and really nice room in general. The house was also really nice and spacious. I was welcomed to a host mom, a twelve year old host sister, a twenty year old host sister and a host dad. My host mom and I stayed up until around two in the morning talking about rotary and house rules. We both agreed on each others opinions and I felt welcomed in my new house.

My second trip

My second big trip was short but fun. It was up the north of Peru until Ecuador. I went to beach about every single day and I'll never forget about how one day the waves in the ocean were so strong that I was doing back flips in the water when I went swimming. My favourite part of the trip would have to be the resort in Ecuador. We got to pick our roommates and had daily access to free drinks and food, the beach and spa. There was also one day where we went to an iguana park and I almost cried thinking about my little who I miss ever so dearly in Canada... Overall, this trip went incredibly fast and although it was actually longer than my first trip, this one seemed like it went by a lot faster. I equally shared a lot of memories on this trip as on my first one, including being pushed in to the pool with all my clothes on and my phone in my pocket. Everyday I continue to be grateful the trips I went on and with whom I went on them with. We exchange students are a big family and it's nice to know that I'm not alone during my exchange. Another trip is coming up in March to Nasca and I'm very excited.





Mi Español

My Spanish has significantly improved during the almost 7 months. I can now speak with everyone fluently and understand very well. I recently went to the movies with a couple of friends and saw a movie in Spanish and understood everything. When I don't know how to exactly say something, I know how to change it to something else that means the same thing. Also, before the trip, there was a Spanish exam that we all had to take to test our skills. My results were intermediate, and I have to retake the exam to get to advanced. Although I have to retake the test, my Rotary Club president said he was proud because I did better than some of the other kids who learned Spanish before coming to Peru and the only thing I need to work on is my grammar. I'm currently reading two Spanish books and studying to help.

Conclusion

I can't but think about the 4 and a half months I have left and get sad. I know this will probably be the most impactful year of my life and I don't want to think about how quickly it's ending. I'd like to thank my Rotary club for sponsoring me and my parents for helping my exchange happen and for always being so understanding and helping me through the darker parts of my year. Gracias a todos!

Saludos

Jadita