

Date: September 22, 2003
Location: Calama, Chile
Subject: Update #8 – The Northern Expedition, Part III

Dear Friends and Family,

This is the third and final installment of The Northern Expedition updates. =) I hope that these updates have let you know how I've been doing and that you've enjoyed the small selection of the 350+ pictures that I was able to take during the past 11 or so days.



<left> This update begins with an image from Avenida Suecia in Santiago. What you are looking at is the home of the “EMPANADIUM: El Templo de la Empanada”. That’s right! This is the home of 30+ different fillings to satisfy all your empanada cravings! =D And if you don’t know what an Empanada is... it’s a half-moon shaped Hot Pockets-type food that comes baked or fried. =)

Empanadas are definitely one of my favorite Chilean foods and I have at least one per week. =D

The entire weekend beginning Sept. 18th through Sept. 21st were devoted to celebrating Chilean independence in all of Chile. Unlike 4th of July barbeques that last one day, the Chilean barbeques go on all weekend for days on end. =)

<right> We experienced the good, cheap food that was present in giant quantities throughout the weekend in Arica and Iquique for the *Fiestas Patrias*. Food included empanadas (of course!), *broceatas* (shish-kabob things), *picarrones* (fried dough with sweet sauce stuff), and of course, tons of slabs of meat. =)

There were also carnival games including target shooting with air rifles... I *almost* won! Haha. Had to score 5 bull’s-eyes with 5 darts to win about \$75. =)





Anyway, the main attraction for going all the way up north to Arica is to go to *Parque Nacional (PN) Lauca*.

<left> The two main volcanoes (Pomerape & Parinacota) with altitudes of about 6000m on the border between Chile and Bolivia were stunning.

<right> *Lago Chungara* with *Volcan Parinacota* as seen from the Chilean border control center.



<left> Heading towards Arica from the Bolivian border, the landscape rapidly changed into dry-barren desert mountains.

After having arrived in Arica through *PN Lauca* from Bolivia,

we made the mistake of taking a *PN Lauca* tour the following day... basically, we saw the same exact things we saw the day before on the bus except with not-so-good explanations and a few additional stops in small towns along the route. Most of my good pictures were taken from the bus heading in from La Paz. =)



<right> In the barren landscape between Arica and *PN Lauca*, there were a good number of candelabras cacti. Here am I standing under one. (wow, that sounds weird, but that's grammatically correct according to Word... =P) =)



<left> On the tour to *PN Lauca*, I finally got some good photos of the much-sought-after vicuña. =)

By the time I took the photo, they had started to move away but you can see that they're a lot sleeker looking than the llama, guanaco and alpaca. They're also wild, unlike the others and protected by the government so we weren't allowed to try them. =D

<right>

Considering that we'd eaten lots of llama, it felt only right to feed this friendly llama that seems to have discovered that tourists will give it cookies and crackers in an attempt to get a photo with it. =)



<below> Before and after our *PN Lauca* disaster tour, we spent the day in the coastal city of Arica. Even though it's supposed to be one of the best beach resorts in Chile, we never bothered to find the beaches because the two days we were there were both overcast and very gloomy. However, the view was littered with Chilean flags EVERYWHERE since we arrived on Chilean Independence Day. =)



<left> Monument on *El Morro* dedicated to the heroes of the battle for Arica during the war between Peru and Chile in the 1890s. Chilean forces defeated fortified Peruvian positions.

In addition to this monument, there was a military museum that glorified the Chilean victory over the Peruvians and mourned the losses of the Chilean heroes. Blatantly obvious that the victors wrote history. =)

<right> On the top of *El Morro* was a statue of Jesus overlooking the cliff with the inscription: “Love one another as I have loved you” (in Spanish of course =P).

Over the course of The Northern Expedition, God kept revealing Himself through the wonders of His creation as well as through people that I found myself encountering. Last week in the small town



of San Juan, Bolivia, I discovered that half of the town was Christian and the other half Catholic.

<left> This past Sunday, I went to the morning service to meet God at an *Iglesia Evangelica Pentecostal* in Iquique. Once again, reminded that I’m an ambassador of Christ in this world and that the body of Christ is everywhere! =)

<right> In Iquique, Plaza Prat and the *Torre de Reloj* which also appears on many postcards. =D



<left> In Iquique, I took a harbor tour... which was basically a nice boat ride and nothing much more...



<right> At the end of the harbor tour, we came near the *Isla de*

Lobos where we got to see lazy seals lounging around on the rocks. Speaking of *lobos*, my “Relato Chileno: Nomadismos” class had to read a bunch of short stories months ago in which *lobos* played a big role. Took us a while to realize that *lobo* also meant seal and not just wolf. =D





<left> I finally got to see a sunset in Iquique. In case you didn't know, I like sunsets, especially into the Pacific and have tons of pictures of sunsets that I've taken over the years. =D



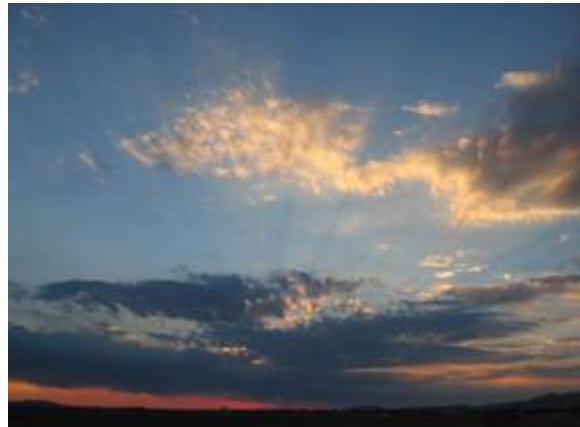
<right> Right before returning to Calama to fly home to Santiago, I dropped by the mining town of Chuquicamata to see the giant copper mine. Luckily there were a lot of people waiting for a special tour and we managed to convince the guides to let us



have a brief glimpse of the mine since we'd come so far! The massive open pit mine is 4.3km long, 3km wide and 850m deep.

<left> The giant trucks at Chuquicamata carry 170- to 330-ton loads on tires more than 3m high (and that cost US\$12,000 each!) I look so tiny standing next to that massive tire. =)

<right> To conclude the updates of The Northern Expedition, this was the final sunset seen from Calama airport right before boarding the flight returning me to Santiago.



Hope my updates are fun to read and that they're providing you a nice break from whatever work or studies you might've been working on! =)

Write back soon and let me know how you're doing!

- Dan