

Date: December 6, 2003
Location: Punta Arenas, Chile
Subject: Update #15 – Journey to the End of the World, Part I

Dear Friends and Family,

As the official semester down here approaches its end, I've already begun my final "adventure" to the extreme south after a brief 24 hour break in Santiago after my Peru experience. In the past two years that I've been flying back and forth between Los Angeles and Philadelphia, home and school respectively, I've picked up the habit of choosing red-eye flights to make the most of my time. I don't like to be stuck in a flying container (or a rolling one at that either) during the day when I could be doing other things and would prefer to travel through the night. =)

Anyway, as seems to happen to me so many times, I ended up in the seat right in front of the screaming baby yet again. After a very restless flight back to Santiago, I ended up sleeping the whole day and not getting that final paper done. I did manage to finish my research and e-mail it to myself just as my airport transfer arrived to take me away again in the early dawn hours of December 4th.



<left> Starting off again with another random picture, I thought I'd try to take a picture of the camera that has made all these updates possible! After many attempts with different backgrounds, mirrors, lighting, and such, I managed to get one

that looks somewhat good. =D My trusty digital camera that has captured over 2,000 pictures to date. I would definitely recommend that you get a digital camera for traveling around. I know some people who have film cameras and are developing dozens and dozens of rolls... why not just take 2,000 pictures and print the 100-200 you like as I plan to do? =) Just make sure you have enough battery life to keep you going!

<right> Many of you may have known that I was waiting till the end to head down for my "Journey to the End of the World"... As of now, I've made it down to Punta Arenas, Chile which is the



southernmost city that LanChile flies to on the Strait of Magellan. South of here is *Tierra del Fuego* and after the *Cabo de Hornos*... the last continent: Antarctica.

<right> My first glimpse of Punta Arenas was from above. I wasn't entirely sure it was Punta Arenas but there wasn't anything else that looked like it was populated around here as the aircraft descended so it had to have been it. =)



<left> One of the first things to do when you arrive in any Chilean city is to head over to the local tourist office. There generally tends to be about two of them... the local municipal tourist office and the Sernatur national office. I've found that the local office is usually more helpful. =) Punta Arenas' municipal tourist office is in the main plaza and has really friendly and helpful staff. =) They helped me plan out my 3 day blitz

into *Parque Nacional Torres del Paine* and also convinced me to buy a little stove to cook meals for myself. We'll see how that turns out. =)



<right> In the middle of the plaza is a monument to Magellan.

<left> The toe on the Indian statue on the northwest side of the monument has been rubbed so many times for luck and to "ensure a return visit" that it's all nice and shiny. I didn't feel the need to "ensure a return visit" so

I left the silly thing alone for other people to rub. Only God knows if I'll ever be back down here again or not. =)



<right> At 9:37 PM, the sun is still setting into the hills and mountains to the

southwest and turning the clouds into colorful cotton candy. There's still light out past 2200 down here while it gets light out before 0500. Being this close to the end of the world in the summer proves for really, really long days... meanwhile, it's probably dark by 1800 back home where winter is setting in... =)



<left> My study abroad experience wouldn't be complete if I didn't get to see penguins. But... wait a second, these aren't penguins! As I was walking towards the shore, I thought I saw "penguins" sitting on this old rotting pier. From a distance, they look like penguins with their white fronts and black wings and backs... but then, when they started to fly, I knew that I was looking at cormorants. (Well, I was told that they were cormorants, actually. =P)

I didn't have to be disappointed for long though. I managed to get to the small penguin colony at Seno Otway which is about an hour north of Punta Arenas through my hostel's tour.

<right> Region XII of Chile or the *Region de Magallanes y Antartica Chilena* is the only region of Chile that has its own flag. The wind was waving the regional and



national flags at the entrance to the penguin colony at Seno Otway.



<left> The penguins that populate this colony are *pinguinos magallanicos* and there were supposedly about 6,000 breeding pairs at the site. These four were waddling

over to the beach. =)

<right> These penguins spent a long time trying to figure out how to get down from the little ledge. Eventually, one daring fellow just jumped in and the rest quickly followed! =)



<right> On the road between Seno Otway and Punta Arenas, there were a lot of animals roaming around including sheep, cows, ducks... and the *ñandu* (or the



“lesser rhea”) which is part of the ostrich family.



<left> Later that night, as I was looking for a place to eat dinner, I came across this sign. => They served different Patagonian meat from the region... including the *ñandu* and the *guanaco* (which should be

very similar to the alpaca that got away from me in Peru – see Update #14)



<right> So, dinner was a *ñandu* steak with rice. I can't say that it was my favorite meat nor that I really liked it too much... it has a strong “gamey” (?) flavor that is a bit overpowering. I think I prefer llama steaks from northern Chile and Bolivia. =>



<left> To wrap up this update, a little preview of what's coming up! If you look closely, you might be able to make out what it says on the side of the plane. =P Heading off to see my 4th continent (North & South America, Asia were my first three) and hopefully will return safely to tell about it in Update #16! =D

For those of you taking finals, good luck, trust God, don't worry and I hope that you'll finish this semester

strong! One month left till I'm back so see you all soon!

- Dan