

Peru Wintermester '22-'23



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My Expectations

When coming to Peru, there were a few expectations for what I would see and experience...

- I expected the food to be very similar to other Latin American countries
- In Lima, I expected to have seafood for many of my meals
- With parts of Peru in the Amazon, I thought Lima would have exotic animals and birds
- I expected daily life to be much different than what I am used to in the USA



Reality

What I came to realize during my trip abroad...

- History is very important in Peru
- Lima is very developed and daily life is luxurious for those who can afford it
- Cuisine is amazing and diverse
- The cliffs are massive! Don't let Google Earth fool you



First Days in Lima

In the first few days, we did lots of walking to see all of the sights in the city. While seeing the areas of San Isidro, Barranco, and Miraflores, I was amazed at the colors and beauty of Lima. We visited the coast, Kennedy Park, the historic downtown, and many other attractions Lima had to offer. I was eager to try the local beer and have Ceviche, which I did as often as I could.



Classes Abroad



Going to class was more enjoyable than my courses back home. Although the lectures were longer and early, they were well paced and allowed for lots of clarification when needed. I was able to understand the concepts quickly and use the software as intended. The coffee breaks every day also helped keep me alert after long days of walking and exploring.

Ceviche Class

We attended a course to learn about the traditional Peruvian dish of ceviche

Chef Adolfo Miguel Perret Bermudez of Punta Sal Cebicheria held our demonstration

He taught us how to make the dish and the importance of balancing the ingredients and flavors on the tongue.



Traditional Peruvian Dances



We had a dance instructor come from the local school to teach us traditional dances from the different regions of Peru. Practicing moves from the areas of Peru's coast, jungle, and high mountains, we got to learn about Peru's culture while getting some exercise. The moves were rather difficult and I was amazed at how nimble our instructor was. This class was lots of fun and worked up a real sweat.

Paracas Adventure

I went on a day trip with some classmates to Paracas, Pisco, and the deserts surrounding these cities. We took a boat tour to see sea lions, penguins, and sea birds. We also rode in dune buggies through the desert to an oasis and to the dunes, where we rode on sandboards. I had fun but was very exhausted and dirty after the long day. The test the next day was tough but the trip was very much worth it.



Cusco Experience

Traveling to Cusco was my favorite part of the trip. I was worried about feeling sick with the altitude and the political instability in the area, but I am so glad I went. While the altitude was intense, getting rest and water helped a lot. The views there were amazing and it was amazing to be in a city that was so old and well preserve. The mix of native and spanish culture was really interesting to me, as well as how the locals today regarded their Incan history with such high esteem. I really enjoyed learning about Peru's past and witnessing the grandeur of the Andes that surrounding this city.



Inca Sites

From Cusco, we travelled to many Inca sites. I quickly learned how advanced this society was. They had become master engineers, scientists, and architects of their landscape, allowing them to conquer such a large area. Trying to imagine how they even began to build their projects was astounding, as well as learning about their complex experiments with farming and construction.



Exploring Lima



Once back in Lima, I tried my best to eat all the foods I felt I needed to before leaving Peru. I went surfing one day and stepped on a sea urchin. It was still lots of fun and my favorite individual activity (unfortunately no pictures of that). I also got closer with my classmates and got more familiar with navigating the city.



And my favorite part...



Cuisine

I loved the food. I was initially worried about getting food poisoning or having a bad meal, but this was never the case. Sure, my stomach had some hard times adjusting to the different bacterias and such that were in local Peruvian meals. However, I never once let this stop me because everything that was served to me was delicious and well cooked. I honestly began to think I should worry more about what I eat on a daily basis back home. The food ranged from fresh produce, to seafood, to Chinese food, to typical Latin American dishes. Peru is definitely one of my favorite places I've travelled to in terms of cuisine.



Group Meals

The organized group meals and the daily meals with friends was the most meaningful part of the trip. It was mostly during meals when I got to work on my Spanish. Also, I found that during these times was when I got to know my classmates, teachers, and guides in the most normal setting. It was fun to share stories and enjoy great food with people I normally wouldn't back home. It was interesting also to see how a Peruvian may spend a night out, observing how dining culture and restaurants function abroad. I found that meals were slower and more relaxing than in the USA, where you can feel rushed out of the door at some places.



Central Restaurante

We ate at Central Restaurante during our last nights in Lima. It was rated the 2nd best restaurant in the world by William Reed Ltd. in 2022. The head chef Virgilio Martinez Veliz creates a menu emphasizing the diverse environments and ingredients throughout Peru. This experience was unlike any meal I've ever had and was truly amazing.



My Biggest Takeaways

After my trip, I left with some extremely unique and important experiences

- In my three weeks abroad, I made more friends in engineering than I had in my previous three years at Texas A&M
- I discovered that Peruvians have a diverse culture and history that is well preserved throughout the country by their traditions and historical sites
- I found that I had a lot in common with Rodrigo, our Peruvian guide who was also attending university, as well as other Peruvians my age
- I was amazed to get to experience life in another country and understand the importance of empathy and kindness to people I didn't share a culture with



A scenic view of a pier building at sunset over the ocean. The building is illuminated with warm lights, and the sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The ocean is dark with white-capped waves. In the foreground, a white railing is visible on the left. A white oval in the upper right corner contains the text "The End".

The End