



Conner

from Waterloo
to
Brazil

“They call me Surfer Boy”

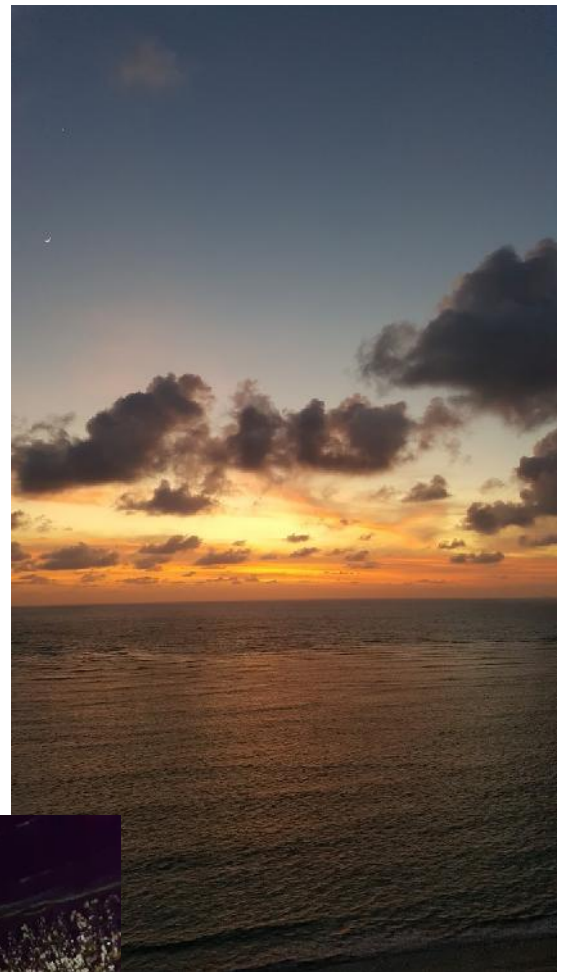
This has been the greatest journey of my life in so many ways, I don't know where to start. It has been the craziest 3 months, it's hard to recall everything I've done since the last BeaverTale, since we've had a busy summer in December & January! We had a big reunion with all the exchange students in a well known city called "Natal". Fun fact that it means Christmas in English. We stayed at a luxurious hotel on the beach where we had a chance to share stories and become closer friends. We had a great time, there were lots of smiles and laughter. One of the highlights was exploring the sand dunes riding in dune buggies.





When night time came we had mystery gifts, we had to figure out which childhood photos belonged to which student. Most of us got it wrong, but it was a fun way to get to know each other.

Christmas was certainly strange due to the fact that I am with a completely different family and there is no snow. This is the first time I have been on a beach on Christmas day. My host family took me to a beautiful place called Pipa. We stayed there with 3 other exchange students from Finland, USA and Poland. It was 2 days of sipping fresh coconuts and surfing all day on the beach and at night we would play cards and compare how different each of our countries are. There were so many amazing restaurants, but the best was this place that served the freshest tuna I've had. I spent New Years with the other exchange students and school friends on the beach. It was a warm night and there was a street show and fireworks over the ocean.



New Year in Recife

February 2019

Here in Recife people wear white wear clothes on the beach during new years smiling and dancing. As I took in the moment realizing that the year just turned to 2019, I wondered what I would be doing at home if I didn't come to this exchange. I'm so glad I did.

I also spent the summer seeing popular Brazilian singers such as Wesley Safadao in a unique place called Tamandare. I stayed for 3 days enjoying the sun and playing "Futebol" on the blazing hot sand and diving in the clear blue ocean to cool off. Unfortunately I was sunkissed for not wearing sunscreen, sorry mom!

Recently I changed to a different host family and it was one of the most confusing moments on my exchange. Being with them I am understanding how Brazilian families function. They are truly welcoming and caring, this is something I'm glad to have and appreciate the nice room that they gave me. I still keep in touch with my first host family that have been so kind, loving, and generous that live close by. I'm a little closer to the sparkling blue ocean and the American exchange student. We go when low tide occurs, so I don't get mauled by sharks. There is an amazing coral reef to see with a wide variety of sea creatures to see perfect for snorkelling and paddle boarding.

My second host family took me to a tiny town called Santa Maria. It was a unique experience being in such a small and dry place. The city was hosting a show and we got to go backstage and take photos with the performers that I will cherish for the rest of my life. These past couple months my Portuguese has gotten noticeably better thanks to my friends and family patiently helping me expand my vocabulary. Being in Brazil has allowed me to step out my comfort zone and try a variety of new things and make so many amazing friends that I will never forget and how much they helped me grow. I even learned to dance to Brazilian music!

I am looking forward to our trip to the Amazon coming up in April.



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