



Rebecca

from Tillsonburg

to

Peru

“Peruvians are crazy drivers”

Hola, today was the day, July 23rd, the start of a new adventure the adventure of a lifetime. It still hadn't sunk in that in 8 hours I would be in a new country there would be a new language and a new culture I was excited to dive into the unknown but nervous for all the challenges I know I was going to face. But first I had to face my first challenge of leaving my family and friends for a year walking through those gates saying goodbye to my mom and dad.

I can't believe it has been almost four months since I arrived at the airport and was met by my mom and dad and they took me to a hotel so I could get some rest. It was during that car ride that I learned the Peruvians are crazy drivers. After a little rest we headed to Nasca which is about an eight hour bus ride from Lima where my parents told me my sister, brother and abuela were waiting to meet me. Samantha who is fourteen years old and David who is seventeen years old and is an exchange student in Italy this year were waiting to meet me.

I stayed in Nasca for a couple days before I headed back to Lima for the introduction camp from the 30th of July to the 1st of August where we all got to meet each other for the first time; in our group of exchange students this year we have seventy-eight students from twelve countries. In the first camp we listened to different presentation about the culture, customs and laws to help us adjust to the culture here in Peru. Along with all the presentations we had a lot of activities, team building games, a newspaper fashion show and a talent night on the beach. Following the camp we had the Noche de Blazers; we got to sing our national anthems in front of Rotations, our families and other exchange students. After we sang our national anthems we listened to traditional Peruvian music and watched Peruvian dancing.





After the camp and Noche de Blazers I returned home to Nasca with my family and for the following two weeks I had holidays where I got to travel around and see different things in and around Nasca, like going to Tanaka and swimming in the Pacific Ocean, visiting Chauachi and Chauchilia. Along with all the places I got to visit I also got to try lots of new foods, My favourite food probably has to be chicharron; it is pork. Some foods that I want to try would have to be green mango with come with a little bag salt and picarones which is similar to a donut but is served with a syrup.

After the holidays I started school at I.E.P. Franco Peruano and I am in year three with my sister which is still a little wired for me because they are all three or four years younger than me. I am hoping to go to university in March so I can have a different experience and be with people closer to my age considering that I am the oldest student in my school. Despite the difference in age all my classmate or lovely and I have become good friends with some of them. Currently my favourite subject is Art because it is kind of like a break from all the classes that I can't really understand but know that I have been here for a while and my Spanish is improving; it is becoming easier for my to understand classes.

Outside of school the best experience I have had so far was our first trip where all the Exchange Students were together for the first time since talent night. We went to Cusco, Puno and Arequipa from the 20th of September to the 3rd of October. First we started in Cusco with was quite different from where I am. I spent most of the trip not feeling the best but we started off our trip visiting a church and Sacsayhuaman where we learned about the history, saw llamas and took lots of pictures. The highlights of Cusco where going to Rainbow Mountain even though I didn't make it to the top. I wasn't feeling good do to the altitude.



For Machu Picchu, we took a train to get to a little town closer to Machu Picchu where we stayed there for one night. We got up early the next morning to go to Machu Picchu where we took pictures with all the exchange students, got an explanation of the history of the Incas and

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Machu Picchu before going off to explore, I went to go see the Inca bridge with Caitlyn and Daisy for the United States and Natasha for Denmark. The second part of the trip was to Puno which I was equally excited as for the first part of the trip because we were going to be staying on the island of Amantani for two days, living like the locals and we painted a school. The other reason I was so excited about visiting Amantani was that the exchange student that was in my District from Peru lived on this island before he came on his exchange and I got to meet his parents. It was such nice experience to be there and to be about to help out the people in fixing up the school.

It has been over a month since I returned from the trip and I have stated to become really busy with Rotary events and other activities with friends. I was so excited for October because of Thanksgiving and Halloween unfortunately I didn't get to celebrate Thanksgiving but I did get to dress up for Halloween with my friends.

Other things that happened in October: my Interact club marched to end polio with a neighbouring Rotary club. We, and a lot of other exchange student, participated. I started helping out in a kitchen every Monday Wednesday and Thursday that serves meals to seniors. This past weekend I participated in a dance that portrayed the history of Huacahunia in Inca at a marinera competition and will be doing it again at the upcoming talent night in Lima on the 6th of December along with a dance with just the three exchange students from Nasca.



I have very much enjoyed the past four months of my exchange and still can't believe how fast it has gone by. I love all the experiences that I have so far and I can't wait to see what the rest of the year has in store until next time adios

Rebecca