

11-14-2012

Person to Person in Costa Rica

Mariah Gonzales
Linfield College, magonzal@linfield.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/intl_fieldnotes_1213

Recommended Citation

Gonzales, Mariah, "Person to Person in Costa Rica" (2012). *2012-13 Field Notes*. Essay. Submission 3.
https://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/intl_fieldnotes_1213/3

This Essay is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It is brought to you for free via open access, courtesy of DigitalCommons@Linfield, with permission from the rights-holder(s). Your use of this Essay must comply with the [Terms of Use](#) for material posted in DigitalCommons@Linfield, or with other stated terms (such as a Creative Commons license) indicated in the record and/or on the work itself. For more information, or if you have questions about permitted uses, please contact digitalcommons@linfield.edu.

Field Notes from Abroad: Person to Person in Costa Rica

I interviewed a friend, Sophie Barboza, who was born and raised in San Ramon, Costa Rica. The culture and lifestyle between hers and mine have similarities and differences. Our interests are very similar however, for example, we both are dedicated to our studies, we both like to go dancing, pass time with friends and be with family. There are some differences in our interests, just like one has with any friend in another country or back home. One really starts to see the differences in the culture of the people. For example, the people here in Costa Rica are more relaxed and laid back than the people in the United States. The term “tico time” is used to describe a common custom here in Costa Rica where it is common that the ticos here are usually 15 -30 minutes late to a party, meeting or social event. When one is meeting a tico friend for coffee it is custom for that friend to be on “tico time”, whereas, in the United States people are expected to be on time no matter what. Also, the kids in Costa Rica usually live with their parents until they are 28 years old, done with school and have a stable career. In the States many kids become autonomous and move out of their parents’ house around the ages of 18 and 22. The people in Costa Rica are all very warm and friendly and love to help each other out, as well as the foreigners that come to their country. They live very “pura vida”, which means they live a good, relaxed and easygoing life.

Sophie definitely has a very easy-going attitude and hardly ever stresses. I have had to learn to have a tranquil mind and not stress as much over the small things in life. For one to learn to live in tranquility is a meditation for the mind, and a practice of time management. For example, I began to do my studying for tests, writing my essays and such ahead of time instead of waiting for the last minute. This is a huge reason why people stress out. Give yourself time. Also, teach your mind to think of one thing at a time. The week my class and I came back from

a field trip from Nicaragua I had four days of class until Thanksgiving break. Within those four days I had to do three essays and had to study a history exam. I began to stress while I was in Nicaragua about all I had to do when I got back, but then I realized there was nothing I could do about it and I would just have to prioritize my time and studies when I got back to Costa Rica. One just learns to deal with things as they come and manage time, instead of staying up all night worrying.

One huge culture difference between the U.S. and Costa Rica is the value of family here. This was reflected a little bit when I mentioned that the kids may live with their parents into their late 20's. The parents provide for their kids for a long time, and a lot of the kids don't even work 'til after they graduate from college. There are many people here who live very close to their extended families and/or their parents. For example, my host parents live across the street from my host dad's parents, and in the next town over lives my host mom's mom. Sophie lives a couple blocks away from her mom's sisters: her aunts and cousins. Many holidays are spent with all the relatives of one's family, and it's rare someone lives or attends college in another country or even city for a long time. I am fortunate to be familiar with this, because my family back in the states is very family orientated.

Sophie and I are from very different cultures, but I love to analyze and see the differences and similarities. I love Costa Rica and its pura vida mentality, but at this point in my life right now I wouldn't change my life in the states for anything. There is so much I love and respect about the States and Costa Rica, and now I have two homes. I should have dual citizenship!

Interviewee: Shophie Barboza (Host Mother)