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Quito Part Two: Where There's a Whelk, There's a Way!

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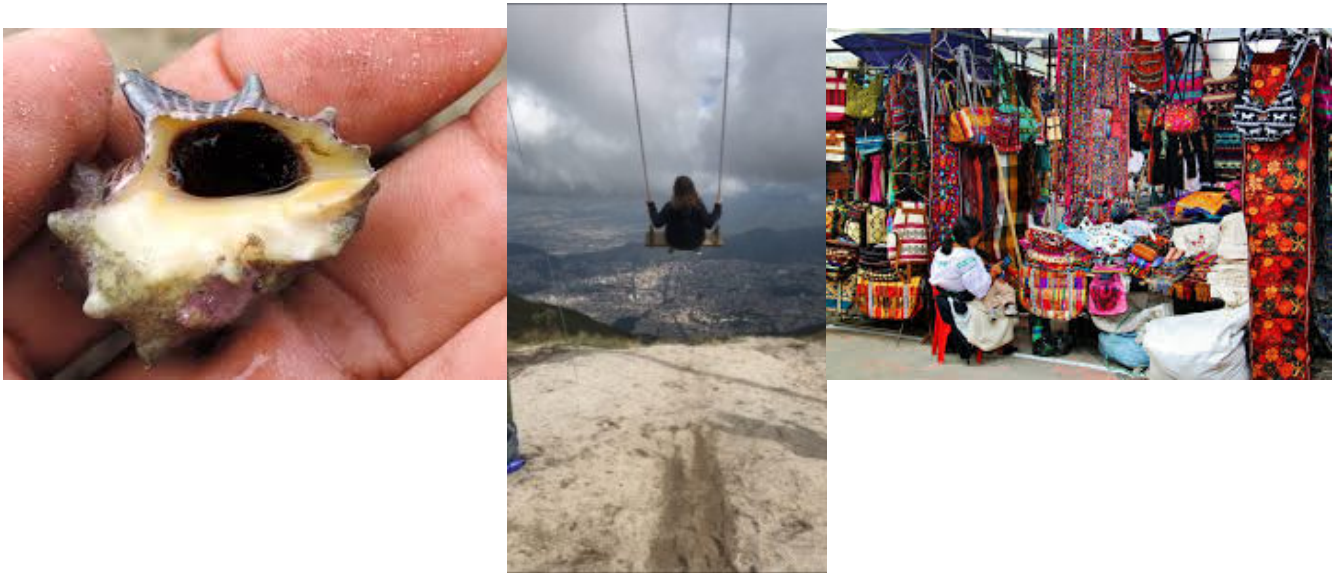
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Sara Heine
Galápagos Islands, Ecuador
March 29, 2019

Quito Part Two: Where There's a Whelk, There's a Way!



Module 1 and my time in Quito are almost over, but the last two weeks have been full of so many adventures. Here's a look into my favorite parts:

–Teleferico: A gondola that takes you up into the mountains surrounding Quito. At the very top you're at almost 15,000 feet of elevation! The views from both the ride up and once at the top were spectacular. We hiked around the mountains a little bit, but none of us wanted to die from the altitude, so we didn't do anything too strenuous. We did find a swing on the edge of the mountain that looked out over the whole city!

–Coast trip: For my Techniques of Marine Research class, we took a field trip to the coast of Ecuador to do research. We went to 3 different towns (Ayampe, Ayangue, and Canoa), and 5 different intertidal beaches to look at the biodiversity there. My job for the week was to look for whelks (carnivorous sea snails) at all of the beaches, and at the end of each day we would weigh, measure, and identify the species of each whelk we were able to find. I did this for over 1,200 whelks by the end of the week! Safe to say I have no interest in seeing any more whelks any time soon.

–Otavalo: One of my favorite places so far! Otavalo is a small town up in the mountains in Ecuador that is home to South America's largest local artisanal market. My friend Emily and I took the bus up there early in the morning and spent the morning shopping at the market. All of the handmade clothes, jewelry and trinkets were pretty and fun to look at. We spent the afternoon

wandering around the rest of the town, and explored a couple old churches and stumbled across what I think is my new all-time favorite ice cream shop.

-Living with my host mom: I have kind of a unique situation, being one of the only kids in the program that lives with just a host mom, and no siblings. But I sure did luck out with my host mom! Her name is Bernadita, she is very classy and fun, and she is an interior designer. Getting to spend time with her (and her boyfriend Georgito) has been the highlight of this study abroad experience for sure. She has been so welcoming and has made my short time in Quito so much more enjoyable.