

4-1-2010

## Last Day in Oaxaca

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### Recommended Citation

Pate, Alison, "Last Day in Oaxaca" (2010). *2009-10 Postcards*. Article. Submission 17.  
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Today is our very last day in Oaxaca. I can hardly believe it. We board tomorrow and leave from the Oaxaca airport at 8:30 am, and from there we stop in Mexico City, and then Texas, and then finally home to Oregon (and then I have a long drive home to Washington the next day). Yesterday we all presented the research projects we've been working on this term. My project was about the designs at the site of Mitla and how they compared to contemporary Zapotec weaving. It was a really fun project to do, but there is still a lot of work that could be done (potentially someone's dissertation could be on this subject!). Everyone did a really great job, and we were all so relieved to finally be done with our work. Being stressed right until the last day was a little hard. As ready as I am to see my family and go home to the US, I am sincerely going to miss Oaxaca. I'm going to especially miss my host family. They have been so amazing, and have really included me as a part of their family. They tried very hard to accommodate my vegetarian diet (vegetarians are extremely rare in Mexico). I was so happy to be a part of such a large, busy family with lots of children, because my family is small and quiet. Yesterday, my host brother, who is 5 years old, was told by my host mother that I'd be leaving. And he thought about it for a few minutes and then said. "*I think it would be better if Alison stayed in Oaxaca, because what if it's hotter where she lives? And her parents aren't doctors so they won't know what to do if she gets sick again.*" (His parents took care of me when I got extremely sick from heatstroke/dehydration.) And then he asked me if there were doctors in the U.S. I almost cried--he is the sweetest kid! This semester has been a real challenge, full of ups and downs. But it was also full of unforgettable experiences, and I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to study abroad. I bet I will be crying at the airport tomorrow. Thank you so much for reading!

con cario,  
Alison Pate

