

Something in Common

By Olympia Hermione Florin Elbech



Brazil Culture Subject 2019-2020, photo by Nolan Fell

Before going to Brazil, I only knew a handful of people that were going with me. Two of my best friends were traveling on this trip, and while I was glad that I would be able to spend time with them, I knew that I wanted to take this opportunity to get to know the other nine people on the trip.

What I didn't know was that I would make lasting friendships and become close friends with those other nine people. There wasn't a single moment where I regretted choosing this trip. We were always cracking jokes and making memories that I'm sure I will remember for years to come.



From left to right: Marcus Ponty, Angus Chan, Kirsten Jensen, photo by Julius Juul

I think one of my favourite moments with my new friends would be the nights we spent together. For the last three days, while we were in a small town called Paraty, we were allowed to stay out pretty late and we were allowed to stay up for as long as we wanted (as long as we were in the hostel by midnight). I'm glad that Nolan allowed us to do this, as it allowed me to get closer to the other students, and we had so much fun.

One night in Paraty, six people and I got pizza from probably the *best* pizza restaurant in Brazil. It was amazing. Andreas and Astrid waited for the pizza while Angus, Clara, Victor, Kirsten, and I went around the whole town trying to find a grocery store to buy soda. After trekking through the entirety of Paraty, we bought Guarana (a typical Brazilian soda which tastes *so so so* good. Apparently, you can buy it in Aarhus. I recommend trying it) and walked back to the pizza place. We took our pizza and walked to the harbour, where there was a stone wall by the church. This is where we sat. It was dark and we were all a little scared of being robbed or shot, but we made a lot of jokes about it, which made us feel a little better.



From left to right: Victor Elsmore, Angus Chan, Clara Kolind, Olympia Elbech, Andreas Nielsen, Astrid Hjerno, photo by Kirsten Jensen

Another memory I don't think I'll ever forget is when Marcus, Angus, Kirsten, Anna-Dina, Natalia, Andreas, Astrid, Victor, Clara, and I walked three kilometres to a beach. The water was so incredibly warm and shallow. You could walk out fifty metres into the ocean and still be able to stand on your feet. It was the most beautiful place I had ever been to. While watching the sun slowly begin to set, Marcus, Kirsten, Angus, and I had deep talks and just hung out, kind of hoping the current would whisk us away and we would never have to leave.

Unfortunately, we were not whisked away by a sudden strong current, and we did have to leave. However, while the others had already gone back to the hostel, I climbed a hill by a cemetery to see if I could get a good view of the mountains and the sunset. It was an alright view, and I told Marcus, Angus, and Kirsten to join me on the hill. We played loud music and hid from the police cars and watched the sun go down. It was so calm and we were being so carefree. I don't think I'll ever have a feeling like that ever again.



Praia do Jabaquara (Jabaquara Beach), photo by Olympia Elbech



The view from the hill, photo by Olympia Elbech

In conclusion, going to Brazil was the best experience of my life. I learnt a lot about Brazilian culture and the struggles of the people living in the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro and the ecological issues concerning the Amazon and the Atlantic Rainforest. I also learnt that I had a lot in common with nine strangers who I never would have become friends with if I hadn't gone on this trip. This trip was truly the definition of togetherness.