



Kendra

From Georgetown to Brazil

In Brazil Carnaval is a big deal!

At this very moment I am sitting on a bus filled with 51 exchange students from 19 countries, returning from Rio de Janeiro after spending a month travelling all across Brazil (just an average day as an exchange student). These past few months have gone by even faster than the first 3, and it's hard to think I only have 4 ½ months left in this beautiful country.

My Portuguese has improved a lot since my last report. I am almost fluent now, and can actually understand people my age. It is hard sometimes because my accent is very different and a lot of people here have trouble understanding it (even when I speak English). But, overall, things here have gotten a lot better.

This past month I have been travelling through the Northeast of Brazil with all of the other exchange students surrounding my district. By far, it was the best month of my exchange so far. We spent 15 days travelling to a remote city in the northeast of Brazil (Jericoacoara) and another 15 days travelling to the southeast of Brazil (Rio de Janeiro). Every single city we visited was amazing to see and I was sad to leave all of my friends I made.

This week coming up is Carnaval, and I will travel to Joaçaba with my friend from Norway. Joaçaba is supposed to have the 2nd best Carnaval in my state so I am really excited. We will be

going there with my next host family. Carnaval in Brazil is a really big deal so we get the entire week off school (which is always nice).

Next week I will be starting school again and with a new class which I am really excited about. However, this year they are all younger than me by a year, so it might be hard to make friends.

The feelings I have right now about returning home are very mixed. I really want to see my family and friends again, and pet my cat – but I also really will miss Brazil. I have become so used to the lifestyle here and I will have trouble adjusting to life back in Canada once I return.

My exchange so far has been a great experience that I will never forget. I have made so many lifelong friends from so many countries around the world, and with those friendships comes international connections that will be useful in the future. I already have plans to do a Eurotour and visit all of my European friends! Exchange has really changed my life and I'm sure it will also shape my future. So many doors have been opened in the past 6 months, and by overcoming the challenges that have been presented to me I feel I will be able to cope with whatever comes my way in the future.

Beijos,

Kendra