

400-word report on Sao Paulo, Brazil

I thoroughly enjoyed spending a month in Brazil at Faculdade de Economia, Administração e Contabilidade de Ribeirão Preto learning about the economy and culture and how as a country they are implementing methods to pioneer change in organic agri-food production and sustainability practices, the trip to Fazenda da Toca helped facilitate this. I also had the pleasure to give a presentation on the agribusiness industry in Brazil and how the production and exportation of arabica and Robusta coffee has helped fuelled jobs and improve development. The course has really helped to redefine some of the initiatives, I had basic understanding of prior; for example, sustainability. The organised trips were also very academically intuitive and aided in the learning of this course. More than anything it was the immersion of the culture and the people that made this experience priceless. All I can think now, is how much I would have missed out on if I didn't take the chance and just apply. I now understand more so the benefits and the potential, a trip like this could have on someone's life, outlook and academia. I made relationships with people I wouldn't normally cross paths with as well as discovering new ways of thinking from my peers as I was able to integrate with people from all different backgrounds and walks of life. This goes for both the students that embarked on the trip to São Paulo with me as well as the beautiful people of Brazil.

Another trip that I remembered fondly was the trip to Brotas which was a fun way to break down boundaries and get to know my peers. There was a myriad of activities like zip-lining and tree walking which for some of us enabled us to conquer fears of height and was a good bonding experience. The trip to São Paulo city was again, amazing as we got to experience the hustle and bustle of the city and try foods that were famous to the state as well as see famous landmarks. It was all very picturesque and reminded me of something out of a post card.

Studying economics for my degree meant that I didn't find any of the content taught in modules challenging but I enjoyed the exposure to Brazilian economics and how it compares with the UK. Learning Portuguese was probably one of the highlights as it enabled us to communicate with the other students better as well as the Uber drivers. I discovered that I can pick up languages quickly and enjoyed trying to use it to communicate with the other Surrey students who went on the trip also. I would most definitely recommend this summer school.

