

**Foodorama**

**Letter # 20: From Acatenango to El Salvador**

**By Foodorama, April 02, 2019**



After spending a few weeks in Guatemala, we decide to end our stay here by a trek to the Acatenango volcano at 11,700 feet, to spend the night right in front of Fuego, one of the most active volcanoes in the world. We go on an expedition after a short briefing, accompanied by two guides and a group consisting of half French (France, Quebec, Morocco, and Belgium) and English (England, Canada, EU).



We take small steps in the middle of the lava dust with the Fuego in sight which spits a big cloud of ashes every 5 minutes in a thunderous noise. After a long walk under the sun, we arrive at our base camp to mount our tents. The night begins to fall just like the temperature. We light a big fire to warm us while the guides prepare us a great meal. We are not used to so much luxury!



Gradually, as darkness falls, the eruptions of the Fuego become incandescent. The jets of slag turn into a magnificent flamboyant fireworks. We stay for hours despite the frozen wind, watching this fascinating natural phenomenon.





It's time to go to sleep because the alarm clock is scheduled at 3:30 to climb the summit of the Acatenango and observe the sunrise on an incredible landscape of volcanoes (there were 7). From here we can see Lake Atitlan from where we left two days ago (do you remember our filming on plastic?)





After a speedy descent into the dust of the volcano, a good shower and a night of rest, it's time to hit the road again. Direction El Salvador!



To be honest we were not very reassured to arrive in El Salvador. In France, as well as during our trip, everyone warns us about the security of this country ... But what a pleasant surprise to discover a country where everyone smiles and welcomes us warmly. We follow the coast for 6 days to reach the harbor of "La Union" to cross by boat directly to Nicaragua and thus save two days of travel in Honduras. We must still hurry because Kalima's family is waiting for us on April 11 in Costa Rica. Aside from the stifling heat and the mosquitoes (Kalima has made the experience with her eye swollen) we enjoy the pupusas (corn tortillas stuffed with cheese and frijoles), the beach and unexpected meetings.



It is while stopping to drink a fresh coconut, that we see on the side of the road, 2 other travelers with bicycle. We speak for a few minutes with Rosie and Denis, Scots who speak French too. Denis lived 4 to 17 years in France and Rosie learned French in the boat they took from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean (the crew did not speak English, she started in French!). We get along very well and decide to do 1 day of road together, because after they go to the North and we must stay on the coast. During 24 hours we speak as much French, Spanish as English! Funny mixture.



We learn that they carry with them an artistic project on American immigration and we discover in their trailer.... a giant sculpture of Donald Trump's head that they use to make performances. Denis disguises himself as an American president and builds a wall in the street by preventing people from going by and asking for their passports (Trump wants to build a wall between Mexico and the US, which is subject to a lot of controversy). They take advantage of these moments to record interviews with people in Central America or Mexico to convey a message to the US President.



But the meetings do not stop there... In the space of two days we come across two Quebecers who welcome us to their home. We always travel with Jean Pascal and he is delighted to meet again his compatriots. In "La Perla", after a long day climbing mountains under a blazing sun, we arrive in this village without knowing where to sleep. As we prepare to camp on the pebble beach without fresh water to wash, a fisherman tells us that there is a house next door where passing bicycle travelers stop. We decide to take a tour and arrive in a beautiful house facing the beach with pool, hammock and coconut trees. Ginette comes back from her swim and tells us in a French accent that she is passing through her friend's house (she is absent today) and that we can spend the night without problem. We dine all 4 and spend a wonderful evening talking about El Salvador and Quebec!



Two days later, it was while leaving a small roadside store, that we hear our companion Jean-Pascal converse again with one of his compatriots Quebecers. José is Salvadoran and Canadian. He lived 20 years in Montreal before moving back to his home country but... by bike... Yes he made his move from Montreal to El Salvador, 15 years ago now, with a bike and a small trailer! he took one year and 6,200 miles to connect North America and Central America.



We fill up with pancakes and maple syrup to regain our strength and reach "La Union" harbor where we hope to find a boat to reach Nicaragua. But nothing is less certain here, we will know by 4 hours if there is a fishing boat to take us. Here no official liaison. If there is no boat we will quickly go back on the bikes to cross Honduras ... J-10 to reach Monte Verde in Costa Rica, time is running out!

See you soon for new adventures Sylvain & Kalima

