

# Foodorama

## Letter # 23: Little detour through Paradise

By Foodorama, May 24, 2019



Hi everyone! We are finally arrived in Colombia after a lot of adventures with the boats. We had arrived at the port of Portobelo on the Caribbean coast of Panama (where Christopher Columbus made his fourth and last trip to America!), Where we had an appointment with Jules, the captain of a catamaran, to go to Colombia. Unfortunately arriving at the port this one announces us an engine problem that delays us by one day... Next morning, we are optimistic and always ready to leave... But the captain announces us this time that we will not be able to leave with him because his engine problem is bigger than expected. It will be an opportunity to visit this port city, one of the most important in America during the colonial era, from where Spain embarked most of wealth to Europe.



We are very disappointed (especially for we had negotiated a great price with him) but we don't give up!!! We send lots of emails to all the boat agencies that make the trip regularly and after some negotiations we agree with Paul and Sindry to leave 6 days later on their boat. With a few photos and videos we come to find a common ground on a price lower than the one announced. So we leave May 17 aboard the Ave Maria with 7 other travelers: 2 Germans, a Swiss, a French, a Spanish, a Maltese and an English, with Paul the captain who is Australian and Sindry the head who is Colombian we have 8 nationalities on board!



We first spend three days in the San Blas, an archipelago of islands on the edge of Panama where live the Kuna, an indigenous community organized in a matriarchal society where women hold the power! Do you know of other communities where women have more power than men? Rather rare by us no? There are more than 360 islands in San Blas, most of them uninhabited and very small. We saw some with only 2 or 3 coconut trees on them! If you have to imagine and describe paradise on earth, it would probably look like these islands. Rosaries of islands of white sand and coconut trees surrounded by turquoise waters where corals and multicolored fishes live...



We enjoy this incredible underwater life and we spend a lot of time with mask and snorkel to admire fish and corals. Near a wreck we even come across a moray eel and a turtle looking for food.



On the boat, the atmosphere is good (despite some rain showers). Our companions are good living and we spend the rainy moments talking and playing cards together.



We slept at 11 in the sailboat in small beds close to each other. The first night was difficult. A lot of swell, hollows of several meters, impression of sleeping on a roller coaster especially as we slept at the bow of the boat (where it moves the most). Like the rest of the passengers, we are forced to take medicine against seasickness to spend this first delicate night. Fortunately the 2nd day is much quieter and we are getting used to it.



In short we spent 5 days really nice. It's always good to have a break without computers (or internet) or bikes. They are securely tied on the deck of the boat and packed in garbage bags to protect them from sea salt... a real holiday!!!



We had to arrive in Cartagena but we had another motor problem that forces us to stop before, in Carpu-gana, a small fishing village without any road to access and deprived of electricity for 2 weeks. The government has still not restored electricity and residents are demonstrating in the street to express their dissatisfaction. After a night on dry land (where we feel this time the earth sickness after a few days at sea), we take a last boat with our bikes for Turbo and join the road. From there we head to Medellin where another French school is waiting for a new conference on our trip.

We cannot wait to give you our impressions of Colombia!!

See you soon! Sylvain and Kalima