

My Cross Cultural Experience

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INTRODUCTION



HOLA! My name is Michelle T. and I am a freshman at York College. I was born in the US, but my family is from a country in South America called Uruguay. I am originally from a small town in New Jersey called West New York. West New York, NJ is predominantly Hispanic, so I didn't really grow up around many different cultures, except for those of the Spanish culture. After moving to New York, I fell in love with the melting pot that New York is. It is so beautiful to see so many different cultures and backgrounds blended together.

ABOUT URUGUAY

- ❖ Population: 3.474 million
- ❖ Location: South America
- ❖ Interesting Facts:
 - *Uruguay is the smallest Spanish speaking country in South America
 - *Uruguay is the biggest consumer of beef in the world.
 - *Uruguay hosted the 1st World Cup ever.
- ❖ Tradition: Eat Gnocchis (potato-based pasta) on the 29th of every month



My Cultural Artifact



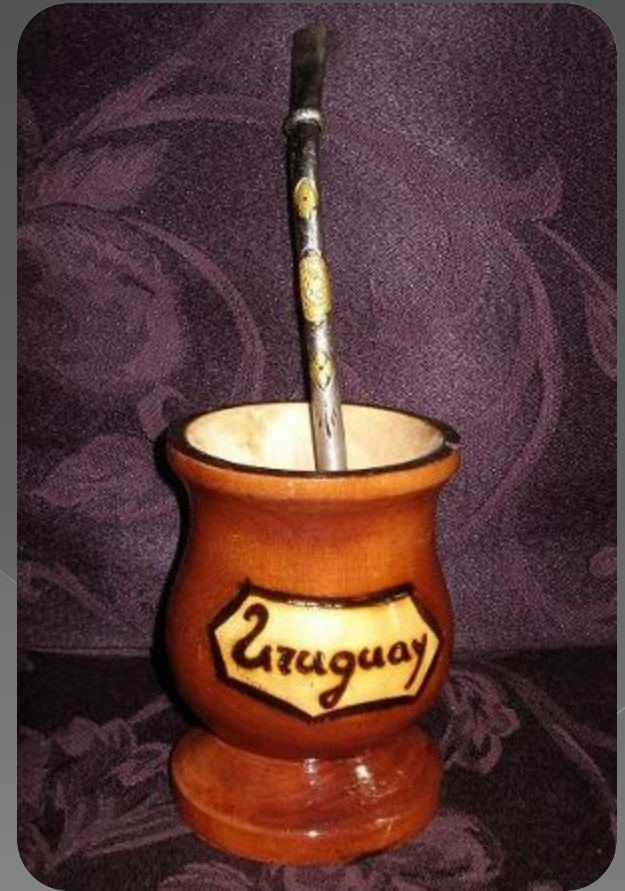
The Azabache is a jet black gemstone that is usually gifted to babies as newborns as a piece of jewelry to be worn on a necklace, bracelet or even an anklet. However, it can be worn at any age. The duty of this beautiful stone is to protect you from evil. It is a very common article used and believed in within the Latin culture. In my home, we believe in the superstition of the “Evil Eye”, or “Mal de Ojo”, as it is called in Spanish. “Mal de Ojo” is typically the effect of jealousy, envy, or fixation which may even be unintentional at times. For this reason, the Azabache is given to babies as a gift to ward off harm and negative energy. As an infant, I always wore an Azabache around my neck on a gold necklace.

Uruguayan Mate



'Mate' is a drink you will most likely see in every Uruguayan's hands. It is an infusion of "yerba mate", which are dehydrated and shredded leaves of an evergreen shrub. It is a tea like beverage and is extremely popular in Uruguay.

-Fill the container with 'yerba', pour HOT water, drink through the straw or "bombilla" and ENJOY!



My Culture DOs

- ❖ Greet each other with a kiss on the cheek
- ❖ Make eye contact when speaking with someone as a sign of respect
- ❖ When speaking to your elders, speak with respect. In Spanish we use "usted" instead of "tu" when talking to our elders. Both terms mean "you", but "usted" is a more formal way of saying "you" - usually used when speaking to elders, or in a business setting.



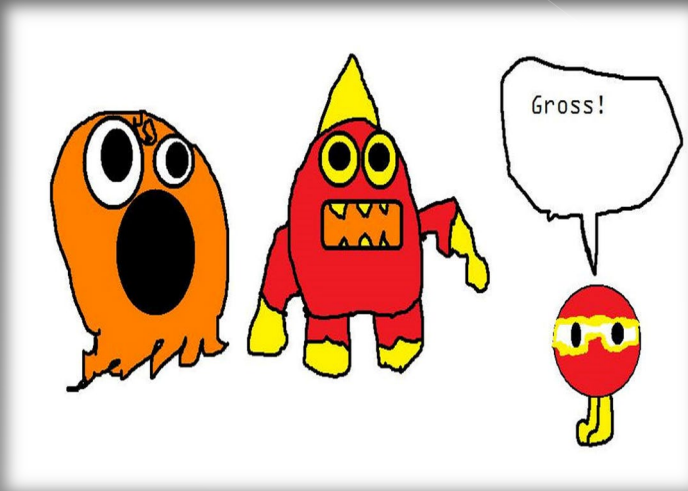
RESPECT YOUR



ELDERS

My Culture DONTs

- ❖ Don't wear a hat to the dinner table. It should be removed
- ❖ Don't burp or belch out loud
- ❖ Don't put your elbows on the dinner table
- ❖ NEVER put your feet up on a desk or table



TRAVEL EXPERIENCES



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

★ ABOUT DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

- ❖ Population: 10.85 million
- ❖ Location: The Caribbean
- ❖ When I visited, we threw rocks at a mango tree and ate a mango right off the tree. We bathed in the river and cooked a pot of rice on the rocks using branches and fire.



TRAVEL EXPERIENCES



SPAIN

ABOUT SPAIN



❖ Population: 47.35 million

❖ Location: Europe

❖ My parents are from Uruguay, but moved to Spain and lived there for 10 years before moving to the United States. I traveled to Spain with my family as a child, but don't remember much. I went again when I was 15 and remember going to the bullfight. Bullfighting is a tradition they have in Spain where the bullfighter subdues or kills the bull in an arena as spectators watch. I remember starting to cry and walking out because it just seemed so cruel to me. It is so harsh and senseless to do this to these animals, but for Spaniards, it is a tradition they enjoy.



TRAVEL EXPERIENCES



PUERTO RICO

★ ABOUT PUERTO RICO

- ❖ Population: 3.194 million
- ❖ Location: The Caribbean
- ❖ I was surprised at how calm and patient the people were. I was literally riding bike in the middle of the road and NO ONE honked!



Social Interactions

- ❖ Social interaction with other cultures can be a unique experience because you are dealing with people who have different customs and norms than yourself. It is a great way to enhance knowledge and prevent ignorance because by communicating and interacting with those from different cultures, you learn, grow and expand your understanding of people who differ from you and your culture.

My worst socialization “taboo” experience:

My worst socialization experience with someone from another culture was one time while I was at work, I was conversing with a fellow coworker who was also Hispanic like myself, so we were speaking in Spanish. There were other coworkers in the room who did not speak or understand Spanish and one of them spoke up and said we were being rude. I felt bad afterwards because I didn't realize how impolite that actually was. But I learned a good lesson and learned to be more aware of my surroundings. If we can both speak in English, then we should do so, so that the other person or people don't think we're talking about them or anything like that.



Verbal & Non Verbal Interaction

★ Uruguayans stand very close when conversing, both socially and in business. It can be considered rude to back away from someone while they are speaking.

★ Brushing the back of the hand against the chin, signifies “I don’t know”

★ Don’t use the American “OK” sign. You’d be symbolizing a bodily orifice or calling someone an A-hole

★ The sound “ch-ch” can be used to get someone’s attention

★ Fingers pinched together means “What are you saying” or “What are you talking about”



→ Reference Page ←

- <https://nomadicboys.com/interesting-facts-about-uruguay>
- http://www.ediplomat.com/np/cultural_etiquette/ce_uy.htm

UNTIL NEXT TIME...

ADIOS
AMIGOS!