Help protect Australia.

Food, plant material and animal products from overseas, including many common souvenirs, could introduce some of the world's most serious pests and diseases into Australia. Failing to declare quarantine items on arrival could cost our agriculture, tourism industries and unique environment.

DECLARE OR BEWARE
You must declare for inspection all food, plant material and animal products to check that they are free of pests and diseases.

Quarantine Matters
Every piece of luggage is now screened or x-rayed on arrival in Australia. If you fail to declare or dispose of any quarantine items, or make a false declaration:
• you will get caught;
• you could be prosecuted and fined more than $60,000 and risk up to 10 years imprisonment;
• you could be fined over $200 or on-the-spot.
If you're not sure about items you are carrying, contact a quarantine officer.
Travelling as a means of forgetting...

Itineraries hold us together and stop the world falling apart...

FROM ME TO YOU
It’s a little like Disneyland: in relation to the universal Disneyfication of ordinary life, the amusement parks are merely an alibi, which masks in a certain way the fact that the entire context of life has been Disneyfied.

(Jean Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities*, 2007, p. 120)
Vagabond: ‘Vagabondage has no advance itinerary – its trajectory is patched together bit by bit, one piece at a time. Each place is for the vagabond a stopover ... The vagabond is pushed from behind by hopes already frustrated, and pulled forward by hopes yet untested.’

(Zygmunt Bauman, *Life in Fragments*, 1995, p. 94)
Hey mate. Couldn't organise a night suitable for Rob and Alex to do the dinner thing. A certain card game was more important! I'll keep you informed of my trip via email. I leave first thing Thursday. What's your postal address, John, in case it's easier to send a postcard, etc.?

Take care, mate.
Andy

_John Brown <cinjin@dodo.com.au> wrote:_

Greetings and felicitations,
When are you heading off? When are we catching up before you head off? If you have already left disregard this message!

JB

Find local movie times and trailers on _Yahoo! Movies._
Hey Astra

I miss you already! Hope you are well?

Its been a frightening couple of days since I saw you. It took nearly one day and three flights to get to Buenos Aires. I even stopped in New Zealand for one hour (in the airport, but still). Right now its mid afternoon and Im in the Buenos Aires international airport waiting for a flight to Peru tonight (I have 6 hours to kill). Ive already written you one letter but the internet went down here so ive started again.

When I got here I caught a cab to my hotel in Buenos Aires - it was a hellish ride with a cab driver that drove so fast the car shook. It was a long drive too. I then slept for six hours and woke up and it was night and headed out. It was scary walking the city streets at night. I had no idea where I was or where I was going. This morning though I walked around the city again and took in the enormity of it all, the people, the streets, the insane traffic, the lunatic drivers, the chaos that is this place. I saw some great leather jackets that are a steal (leather is one of Argentina’s best sellers). I will get one for about 80 dollars Australian when Im back here in three weeks. My hotel was comfortable even if I couldnt understand anyone in the city. I just stand there confused when people ask me questions in Spanish - even at the airport. Its hard but fun. I feel like a real observer. My thoughts are still scattered as Im still suffering jetlag I think.

I will write something more sensible and thoughtful when I next come across Internet - this one may cut out again any moment.

Anyway, Ive been thinking about you a lot and youre never far from my mind.

xxoo Andy
3.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Rob Wallace
Date: Saturday, 8 May, 2004 2:26:34 AM
Subject: Buenos Aires

Hey mate

Just jumping online quickly to report that I am well. Waiting around at the Argentinian international airport waiting for a flight to Peru. Buenos Aries is a mad place. Very fast and furious and chaotic. My cab drivers have been lunatics, but kindve safe all the same. So much traffic, so many people. This place is enormous and poverty everywhere. Mile after mile of shanty towns and tenements. Kids sleeping on footpaths, etc. Yet theres plenty to see and great leather jackets to buy. I will get one when i am next here. Quite cheap is leather here.

Hope you and the dog are well
Cheers
Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
4.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Kathy A
Date: Sunday, 9 May, 2004 1:38:53 AM
Subject: South America

Hey Kathy

Hope you are well. I’m in downtown Lima, Peru, right now in some little Internet cafe that seems slightly unreliable. The email may go down at any moment. So I’ll type fast. Very weird couple of days and yet exciting. Buenos Aries was my first stop and I’ll be going back there in three weeks. Very huge place, very fast, the traffic is insane, and the various cabs that I caught drove like lunatics. I don’t know how they survive! I stayed in a nice hotel and was grateful to lock my door at night and sleep. The steaks in Buenos Aries are superb and cheap. I could scarcely understand a soul as I haven’t learned Spanish yet, still it is fun trying to talk through gestures if nothing else.

When I got off the plane in Peru last night, I was amazed at how smelly this place is. Like a garbage dump type smell. Very poor people. Cops stand around with machine guns. I’m staying in this very plush place with all the mod cons. Very safe and very comfortable. I was just told to avoid the beach just down the road as I will probably be mugged if I go there. I might avoid that! Anyway, I’ll keep in touch.

Kisses and hugs
Andy

____________________________________________________
Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey you

Just a quick word to tell you I am alive and well, sitting in downtown in Lima in Peru. Very foggy down here and apparently I won’t ever see the sky while in Lima, as the coastal fog and smog blots it all out. Cops outside have machine guns. I’m in the richest suburb in Lima, where most tourists stay. You’d get mugged anywhere else. Very exciting all the same.

Was in Buenos Aries, Argentina, yesterday, before flying out here. Very amazing city. Huge. Traffic madness, people everywhere, people sleeping in gutters, traffic chaos, etc... I liked it. I had the best steaks while there, and stayed in a very plush hotel, which was nice and safe. Felt overwhelmed at first. The cab ride from the airport had me terrified. We went so damned fast, and there appears to be no road rules. Still, exciting!

I’ll keep in touch.

A big hug for Ally
Andy
Hey Gavin

I’m alive and well in downtown Lima, Peru. Very foggy outside and will be for months apparently (coastal fog that never lifts, they say). This area is the safest and my hotel is superb. Down the road and you’ll get mugged, they say! Very exciting all the same.

Buenos Aries yesterday was fantastic. Very old and slightly ruinous city - a city that’s past its glory years, yet beautiful in a grimy, decadent kind of way. Great steaks and great leather products (nice jackets, very cheap). Stunning women everywhere - dark hair, dark eyes, slim..... Of course I can’t understand a word said to me half the time, and yet people try their best which is nice.

At first I was overwhelmed. Still getting used to the differences I see around me, and the feeling of being very vulnerable and having to have my wits about me constantly.

I’ll write again very soon

Take care
Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Astra

Glad to hear you’ve finished your 5th. Good stuff.

I arrived in Peru about 4 days ago and was amazed at how putrid the air smelt. As soon as the plane doors opened it smelt of rotting rubbish. Lima, the capital of Peru, is permanently shrouded in a coastal fog, which makes for a generally grey, soggy atmosphere. Very odd.

On the plane to Peru a male attendant asked me if I wanted a whisky. I declined. He asked if I wanted a Tia Maria. I declined. So he put one on my little table and said to have it as a souvenir. He was just trying to be friendly and hospitable, so I graciously accepted and, just yesterday, gave it to a waiter I befriended, called James, a nice young Peruvian lad with big dreams of escaping the poverty of this place. 50% unemployment here. 1 million cars on the road, most of them shitty taxis, all beeping madly at every tourist they see, and driving insanely. Very full on place. I’m constantly mobbed by guys trying to shine my boots. I had to physically place my hand on one of them to get him to take ‘no’ for an answer. Have to be equally harsh and forthright with beggars, children beggars, and so on. I spend most of my days wandering around the busy streets, looking at the malls, shops and general decay that is Lima.
I’m in a 24 hr internet place in Miraflores right now, and Miraflores is the plushest suburb in Peru. Some nice houses here, all enclosed by massive fences with spikes and electric fences, etc, to keep the poor at bay. Yet whilst a rich area, still quite grimy, even though street cleaners are constantly sweeping the streets. It’s 6.30 in the morning as I write and people are sweeping the streets. Not so busy outside now compared to later.

I went on a city tour the other day and visited San Francisco Monastery, which is a famous monastery owned and run by monks. They have an ancient collection of biblical texts, which I saw and a vast array of paintings and sculptures. Under the monastery are catacombs, filled with human skulls and bones, which I took photos of. Chilling place. St Francis was very famous. I also saw the Presidential Palace in downtown Lima, with guards and tanks protecting it. A guy tried to sell me cocaine out the front of the palace. I ignored him.


Yesterday I met my travelling companions. Only 6 of us: A Dutch couple, about my age, a middle-aged English couple, a middle-aged American from Texas, and a trainee tour leader called Lewis. Our guide is a local girl, who speaks fairly good English and obviously Spanish.

When I go to shops I just use gestures most of the time and point a lot because I can’t understand Spanish. ‘Café con leche’ means ‘coffee with milk’. I’ve got that down. Last night when I met my travelling companions was the first good chat I’ve had in days, as we all
speak English. The rest of the time I only really had my own company. We head off today for the coast and 21 days of Peruvian excitement. I’m going to get some breakfast now.

Glad to hear about your 5th step triumph. Thinking of you. Take care. I’ll write soon.

Andy

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HIGHLIGHTS OF PERU

Our most in-depth 3 week cultural exploration of Peru. From your first sip of Pisco Sour you are sure it fall in love with this country of historical marvels. Peru is home to the mysterious Nazca Lines, the spectacular Colca Canyon, the Lost City of the Incas - Machu Picchu - and the highest navigable lake in the world, Lake Titicaca. Finish this superb holiday in a lodge deep in the Amazon rainforest.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Lima  Arrive Lima. Arrive in Lima at any time. There are no planned activities so check into our hotel and enjoy the city.

Day 2: Pisco The morning is free to wander around Lima before catching a bus to the town of Pisco, renowned for the local drink, Pisco Sour and the nearby Ballestas Islands. Compliment an evening on the town with a taste of Peruvian food, the perfect partner for the local brew.

Day 3: Nazca We have an opportunity to visit the nearby Ballestas Islands to view the sea lions, cormorants, penguins and abundant bird life. Back on land, we catch a bus to Nazca stopping on route to see the sand dunes of Huacachina, where sandboarding is an option. We have the chance to take an optional flight over the mysterious Nazca Lines. We visit a fascinating Pre-Inca cemetery in Nazca where you can see 1500-year-old mummies, bones and pottery on the desert floor. Later in the day we catch the night bus to Arequipa.

Day 4: Arequipa Arequipa is 225km (140mi) above sea level. Peru's second largest city exhibits a delightful colonial past. It is surrounded by the Andes mountains and lies in the shadow of El Misti Volcano. You may visit the beautiful Santa Catalina Monastery (optional), or watch the local activities.

Day 5: Arequipa Arequipa is 225km (140mi) above sea level. Peru's second largest city exhibits a delightful colonial past. It is surrounded by the Andes mountains and lies in the shadow of El Misti Volcano. You may visit the beautiful Santa Catalina Monastery (optional), or watch the local activities.

Day 14-15: Machu Picchu / Sacred Valley / Cusco A full day's tour to the Sacred Valley takes us to the ruins of Ollantaytambo and Pisac. We'll also visit the local market in Pisac, a good spot to snap for artisan goods. After a night in the village of Ollantaytambo we take the train to Aguas Calientes. The next day, we rise early to avoid the crowds and to enjoy the morning light over Machu Picchu. Accompanied by a local guide, we explore this lasting legacy of the Inca civilization. Return to Cusco in the afternoon of day 15.

Day 17: Cusco A free day to explore various optional excursions, including mountain biking, rafting and horseback-riding.

Day 18-20: Amazon Jungle (BB, BL, BD) A short flight takes us from high in the Andes to Puerto Maldonado, deep in the heart of the Amazon jungle. From here we travel by motorized canoe to our lodge in the Tambopata Rainforest Area, which holds the world record for the most bird sightings in one area. After exploring the jungle with local guides, we fly to Lima for our final night in the City of Kings.

Day 21: Depart Lima

Day 21 days starting and ending in Lima.

 TOUR CODE: PHP

Is it for me? If you want a taste of the best Peru has to offer in an exciting active itinerary, this is the trip for you. While relatively demanding, the high altitudes and long travel days can be offset by some time savers.

ACCOMMODATION: 16 nights simple hotel/guest houses, 2 nights Jones Lodge, 1 night bus, 1 night hotel.

FOOD INCLUDED: All meals while in the jungle and during homestay.

TRANSPORTATION: Public bus, local flight, train, boat, canoes.

GROUP SIZE: Max 12 (G.A.P. leaders throughout). Local guides in the Nazca cemetery, the Colca Canyon, on Lake Titicaca, in the Sacred Valley, at Machu Picchu, and while in the jungle.

BUDGETING: Allow USD $15 per day for food, for additional expenses, get dollars.

Pre/Post Accommodation & Arrival Transfers: Please refer to prices on page 2.
Hey Rob

Hope all is well. I’m in Nazca, a smallish town near the Andes. Been travelling with my GAP group for a few days and it’s going well. This morning we went out on a boat and visited these islands. Saw birds, millions of them, penguins, seals, etc. And in the afternoon we visited an oasis in the middle of the desert. Basically we’ve been bussing it through desert for two days, and yesterday we got stranded in a blockade with dozens of other buses, trucks, cars, etc. Some local people apparently ambushed the highway and stoned buses in a protest over land rights. Thankfully we were warned and able to stop and sit it out, out of harm’s way. We were at this filthy bus station for hours in the desert, waiting. Still, we weren’t hurt. Wait til you see the pictures I took of the blockade. Awesome stuff. Lima itself, the capital of Peru, where I stayed for 4 nights, was bleak. Down town Lima is ruinous, poverty stricken, grim, alarming, threatening and something I’ll never forget. We’ve got it so good where we live. That was hell, and I’m glad I was only visiting it. Still, interesting, and a good shake up of what’s really important in the world. They do it tough in Lima. Yet I stayed in the plumpest suburb in Lima called Miraflores, where it still looks a bit seedy but is otherwise safe enough. I was occasionally harassed by beggars and shoe-shine guys, but not too severely.

Taking a plane flight tomorrow over Nazca Lines, a series of giant, I mean giant, land icons carved by some very ancient people, before Christ. These lines are spooky looking and only visible from the sky, they are that big.

Anyway, I’ll write soon, and take care. Give the dog a pat for me. And hope the car situation isn’t too difficult for you, not that there’s a hurry on them fixing my car.

Cheers
Andy
9.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Jody B
Date: Thursday, 13 May, 2004 12:09:50 PM
Subject: Andy’s adventure

hey mate

hope you are well. I’m having a great time. A guy tried to sell me cocaine in the capital city of Peru, right in front of the President’s Palace, where hoards of police and military are situated. I ignored the rather bold drug peddler. If caught I would be jailed for life in a hideous prison. Also, a flight attendant tried to give me a scotch on the plane from Buenos Aires to Lima, Peru. I declined and he tried to give me a Tia Maria. I declined. He then put one on my plate and insisted I have it as a souvenir. I graciously accepted and two days ago finally offloaded it on a humble Peruvian waiter I befriended at one of the hotels I stayed. He was grateful, I was pleased, and that damned bottle of whisky was out of my possession!

Been travelling through the desert in Peru for two days, on bus. We got caught in a blockade in the desert, where some angry mobs ambushed buses on the highway to protest over land rights. We escaped but were delayed for hours. Got some good pictures of the dozens and dozens of vehicles all banked up in the desert, waiting to pass.

Tomorrow I’m taking a light aircraft tour over the Nazca Lines, which are gigantic land carvings only viewable from the sky. They were carved by an ancient, unknown people way back before Christ and recorded history. They look spooky looking and there are many of them. It will take 30 minutes of flying around the desert to see them all. Should be good.

You take care, Jody. Hope you are remaining positive and things are ever looking up. I’ll write again...

You friend
Andy
Hey John

I’m in an internet cafe in Nazca, in Peru, in the desert basically. Been a hectic week in this part of the world. The capital of Peru, Lima, is a very bleak and poverty stricken place - it has you holding your passport and wallet very close to you. Exciting all the same, if for only the fact that it reinforces how bloody lucky we really are. Down town Lima is a very grim place!

I’m on a GAP tour with 6 other people, which means we have a Spanish speaking guide. Thank God, for I’ve had some interesting times trying to purchase things without speaking Spanish. Can be frustrating. Everyone recognises cold hard cash, however.

Two days ago we were travelling by bus through the desert and got stranded for several hours at a shitty bus station as a mob of angry local people were blockading the highway as a protest over land rights. Apparently they had ambushed several buses and trucks and had stoned them off the road. We were lucky to avoid this fate ourselves. There were literally hundreds of vehicles all lined up, stopped, in the desert, people standing around, etc. It was very hot.

Today I went up in a small, single engine plane to view the Nazca Lines. These lines date back before Christ and cover the desert. Interestingly, the lines make up pictures of animals and can only be viewed from the sky. Why an ancient race were making icons that couldn’t be viewed from land baffles everyone. Some say it was to notify aliens and provide landing signals. Do a Google search on the Nazca Lines to see what I mean. You’ll be fascinated. Spooky and exciting stuff, and I saw all of them from this little plane. It cost me US$40.

Anyway, I’ll keep you posted. Take care, John.
Andy
Hey Astra

Sorry to hear you were feeling flat after finishing your 5th. I hope the camp recharges your batteries.

Since last writing I’ve had an interesting few days in the Peruvian desert. Our bus got stopped because up ahead angry mobs blockaded the highway to protest over land rights. They ambushed buses and trucks and stoned them off the road. We were stranded for hours in the heat with hundreds of other buses, trucks, cars and people. Shit happens in Peru. It’s a hard place.

I’ve seen so much already I’m slightly overwhelmed. Yet my travel companions are good people and it’s safe travelling together. Sorry I haven’t sent any photos, it’s easier said than done. I need my photos on a CD and then an internet cafe that has a CD-Rom. Still, I have taken tonnes of good shots - here’s hoping they turn out. I look forward to showing you them. I will try to send some soon when the right equipment and situation arises.
Today I went up in a small, single-engine plane to view the Nazca Lines. What are they? About 400 years before the birth of Christ the Nazca people made these giant line drawings of animals in the desert. These drawings, strangely, are only viewable from the sky. So, it begs the question: What was an ancient race of people doing making pictures that couldn’t be seen from land, and only from the sky? Very odd. They certainly couldn’t fly. Experts think they may have been drawing them for aliens to see and help direct them to earth. Spooky. If you get a chance, do an internet search on the ‘Nazca Lines’ if you want to see what I mean. Or else wait for the postcard I’m about to send you of one of the designs. There are many of these giant drawings in the desert and I saw most of them from the small plane. Quite scary in the plane, I might add.

Anyway, I’ll keep you posted. Thinking of you... xx

Andy

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From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Robert Wallace
Date: Tuesday, 18 May, 2004 5:08:12 AM
Subject: RE: Hey squire

Thanks Mate. Im up in the Andes, in a town called Puno, Peru, near Bolivia. Feel quite homesick actually. Been quite ill while in Andes the last 4 days - suffering altitude sickness. I could barely stand up when I was at 4910 metres above sea level, and have had a fatigued feeling with headaches, etc. Its a shame because the scenery otherwise is sensational. I’ll write again when im feeling a bit better.

Andy

Robert Wallace <rbwallace@hotmail.com> wrote:

Cool ... cant wait to see some pics. Car is fixed and just needing picking up at some stage ... they seem very un-phased about when. Dog is a bit sooky at nights, but cool ... paw all healed up.

Have fun
Rob

SEEK: Now with over 50,000 dream jobs! Click here:

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Hey Ally. Miss you too. Been quite homesick the last few days because I've been in the Andes, up very high, and suffering altitude sickness. It's awful. Feel permanently hung-over and delirious, because of the altitude. No, I haven't been to any meetings yet. Won't get a chance for another two weeks, because I'm in the mountains and soon going up even further, and then to the jungle. It's a freak out. Overwhelming to say the least. Been in a bus all day going through the mountains and am not feeling very well. Feel drained. I've been saying the serenity prayer a lot just to calm down. It's another world, Peru. And I did get your message from you phone. Tomorrow I'm going to stay with some Peruvian tribes people on a floating reed island in the middle of an enormous lake. This will test me. I can't understand a single word anyone says to me. I need some rest. Hugs for you too.

Take care, Ally.

Andy

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14.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: John Brown
Date: Saturday, 22 May, 2004 6:31:01 AM
Subject: Travel

Hey John

I don't know whether I told you, but in my GAP tour group there are 6 people, and one of them is an avid digital photographer who plans to put all his Peruvian snaps onto a website. As he is going everywhere I am, this means I can give you his website address and you can check out some of the sights I've seen. As yet, since he's in Peru with me, he's only got 4 shots on the site, but later he will have hundreds, some of which will contain group photos, including me, etc. The web address is

www.mysite.demon.nl/peru

I think there are 4 shots on already, two of some Condors we saw in the Andes, at the Colca Canyon, one group photo, and one with he and his girlfriend. Check it out.

Take care, JB
Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Dear Astra

Glad you got something from the camp. I've tried to write you twice recently and have attached some pictures, but they keep being returned to me because your inbox is too full. You might want to get Bull or someone to show you how to move the contents of your inbox into another folder on his computer, so I can send pics.

Anyway, what I wrote was that about a week ago I came down with Altitude sickness in the Andes Mountains. For 4 days or so I suffered fatigue, sore stomach, headaches, loss of appetite, etc. This happens to most people in the Andes - particularly Australians. Still, it wasn't fun. Then, just as I got over this illness, I had an omelette in Puno, a small town in the Andes, and got the worst case of food poisoning I've ever suffered. I was bedridden and delirious for two days, thought I was dead, but finally got some antibiotics into me and have more-or-less recovered. It was awful. I just wanted to go home. I really felt alone. The rest of the group in my tour had to leave me and come back for me, because I couldn't move. All's well now, thank God. Believe me, I prayed.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Astra Parker
Date: Saturday, 22 May, 2004 7:15:57 AM
Subject: Peru

Dear Astra

Glad you got something from the camp. I've tried to write you twice recently and have attached some pictures, but they keep being returned to me because your inbox is too full. You might want to get Bull or someone to show you how to move the contents of your inbox into another folder on his computer, so I can send pics.

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Today I'm in Cusco, a very famous town in the Andes, near Machu Picchu, the old Inca ruins. I'll see them in a day or two. Can't wait! Also, one of the guys on my trip is making a website with all his digital photos taken while travelling. The other day he put 4 pictures on the site. Later he will add hundreds. If you want to see the 4 pictures go to his site, at

www.mysite.demon.nl/peru

type this address in at the top of the screen or possibly just press on it. One of the pictures has our whole group together, in the Colca Canyon, where we went to see the famous Andean Condors, also featured. The last pic is of the guy I mentioned, and his girlfriend.

Anyway, hope no more creepy guys stare at you while online. I'll be thinking of you. In fact, bought some nice little things in the markets here that you might like. I'll give them to you when I get home.

Love Andy

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From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Rob Wallace
Date: Saturday, 22 May, 2004 7:19:28 AM
Subject: Peru

Hey mate

Check out this site

www.mysite.demon.nl/peru

One of the guys on my GAP tour is making a site with all his digital photos. So far he has only put 4 pics on the site, as it is difficult to add them all while we are all still travelling. Later he will add hundreds of pics, of all the same things I've seen. One of the 4 pics has a group photo, with the others and me. 2 are of Andean Condors, which we saw in the Colca Canyon.

Take care
Andy

---

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Hey Astra

Yes, tomorrow morning I’m off to the Sacred Valley. But the last two days we’ve been in Cusco, which is nice, since we usually move on every day. Nice to unpack a bit and send emails, shop, etc... Sorry to hear about you cold. Is the weather bleak? Oddly, even though we’re 3500 metres above sea level, the temperature is very nice, the skies are blue, and you can get quite burnt because of the altitude. Also, nice to hear you’re doing your 9th and were able to make some gains with your brother.

I’ve attached 2 pics: 1 of the blockade in the desert, where we were stranded for many an hour; and the 2nd is of an oasis we visited in the desert the day after the blockade. I have so many pics to show you when I get back, believe me. If you keep checking that site I told you about more pics may be added. I’ll have to talk to Ed about his plans there.

Haven’t done a meeting in ages, yet I pray every day and even read some of the 12x12 the other night. None of the others scarcely drink anyway. They have one beer with dinner, and that’s their binge. Funny, eh!

Hope these pics get to you.
Love Andy

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18.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Astra Parker
Date: Wednesday, 26 May, 2004 12:30:32 PM
Subject: Machu Picchu

Hey Astra

Hope you are over your cold. Check out the pics. The most wonderful day. Last night we stayed at the bottom of Machu Picchu, and this morning we took a bus up the mountain. And behold! Just after 7am this morning we saw the lost Inca city. Fantastic. These two pics, taken with minimal resolution so I could send them to you, were among the first pics I took. All for you. I wish you were here to see this place for yourself. Imagine, when the first archaeologists came here this place was completely covered in Jungle - thick, Amazonian jungle - and now look, all cleared away to unearth an ancient world. Truly remarkable. Machu Picchu is also the beginning of the Amazon, and the hotel we stayed in last night was perched within it. The road up was nothing more than a dirt track, winding up through the thick growth.

I wondered around the lost city for about 4 hours. Even despite the altitude it was really warm, hot even. I even got a little burnt. Worth it though.

In two days we fly even deeper into the jungle, and I can’t wait. Should be superb. I’ve just started my malaria medication to be prepared against all the mosquitoes.

Anyway, just wanted to share this remarkable spectacle with you. And I hope you are happy. Miss you despite all the distractions.
Love Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Rob

Hope all is well at home. It’s Sunday morning and I’m awaiting my flight to Buenos Aires tonight, so just finished my 21 day GAP tour. A blast, despite the various sicknesses, etc. Just been to the Amazon jungle. Awesome. No heart of darkness for me while in there, quite the reverse. It felt metaphysical, vast, and powerful. An amazing place. I went out on a hike by myself and these monkeys passed right over my head, paused, and stared at me before swinging away. Saw strange rodents on the track before me. Heard all sorts of loud noises, crackling, dropping fruit, trees falling, insects, noise noise noise. The jungle’s just teeming with life and vitality. I felt small and yet not fearful. I certainly didn’t expect any pumas or jaguars to appear. Did see alligators, and one endangered variety, which came right up to our group at the river. I gave it a biscuit!

Anyway, take care. Hope the dog is well.
Andy

P.S. Machu Picchu was like no other place I have ever seen. Check out the pics I took at 7am one morning. Fantastic.

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Hey Brooke

I’m alive and well in Buenos Aires. Dare I say it - wish you were here! In the few days I knew you and the few moments I shared with you, you left quite an impression on me. You know, Brooke, we met in the jungle, shared a bus through the Andes, and ate pizza and chatted in a place they call ‘Café Café’ - alas, somewhere above and beyond the swarthy Lima fog. I hope you are well. :)

Andy

P.S. You’re living testimony to the fact that the age of miracles is still upon us. Thank God for that!

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Rob

Wow. Big news. How the world changes so rapidly. I get back at the end of the month, or thereabouts. Is it okay for me to move in? Is there enough room? Is dog-proofing viable, etc? Give us a bit of a run down on your new pad. I take it you have the finances all sorted, etc. Do you need any quids, etc?

I’ve just finished my Peru experience and am recovering in Buenos Aires, in a very plush hotel in a very plush part of town. Still plenty of beggars, etc. I’ve lost a bit of weight with sickness and not training, so joined a gym in BA for a week, for about 10 Aussie dollars. Trying to eat steak every opportunity. Very good steak here, thick and juicy, and not very costly. About to hook up with next GAP tour and head off again. The women here - uh!!! No wonder they have won so many miss universes... It’s painful.

Anyway, happy to hear that the dog’s settled. I was worried. Thanks for sorting that out. Also, the car is likely to be outside in their lot, which is okay. Glad the insurance covered the gears. Also, make sure they fixed the brakes (pads, I think it was). Cheers.

The news about your recent acquisition is still freaking me out. Well done.

Adios Amigos

Andy
Hey Astra

Hope you are well. Finished my Peru experience and am resting in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Feeding myself up on steak, as I was getting a bit lean. Peru was a blast, and the jungle amazing. Got bitten by some little bug all over my legs. Still itchy. I went out on a walk in the jungle by myself and saw these monkeys jumping through the trees over my head. They were cool. Saw Caiman (alligators) on the river banks and even a very endangered Black Caiman! I fed him biscuits!

I tried to catch a Piranha but the little buggers weren’t biting. Took many pictures of the Amazon so I look forward to showing you. Very lush and very insect ridden. Still, awesome.

Buenos Aires is very huge. About 13 million people live in this city, and about 3 million live in CBD. Very busy and loud place. People stare, knowing I’m not local. Probably think I’m American. Bought a nice leather jacket, the jacket of choice for these rather stylish inhabitants, but otherwise have just wondered around trying not to get harassed or mugged. Went to a Salvador Dali exhibition this morning, wasn’t bad, but not much of his surrealist work was there. Also went to the art gallery the other day and saw many French impressionist pieces, etc. Great stuff.

Hope your Art ambitions are coming along.

Thinking of you

Andy
Hey Astra

Been in Buenos Aires all week now and tonight will meet up with my next GAP tour group. In the last five or six days I haven't had one conversation, as no one speaks English, so it will be nice to speak again tonight. Strange thing living without language! I do know how to order coffee and steak in Spanish, though, so I've at least had those comforts. Today while I was walking down Florida Mall, downtown BA, a lady tried to sell me something and spoke very quickly in Spanish. I brushed her off but she kept at it, even though it was clear I spoke no Spanish. My alcoholism kicked in and I turned to her and shouted 'fuck off'. Not nice, but effective. She didn't hassle me after that. Anyway, hope you are well and everyone's doing well.

Take care

Andy

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Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Gully
Date: Sunday, 6 June, 2004 8:15:21 AM
Subject: South America

Hola Amigo

Hey squire. Hope you and the family are well. I've just finished 4 weeks of travelling through Peru. Amazing place, particularly the Andes, Machu Picchu, the Amazon and the markets. I suffered badly from altitude sickness while in the mountains, and also suffered the worst case of food poisoning ever. That was fucked. Survived nonetheless.

Spent the last five days in Buenos Aires, Argentina, resting. Tomorrow I leave with another GAP tour group and head for Uruguay, then Brazil. Should be good. This keyboard is fucking. Anyway, alive and well so far. Did you hear that Rob has bought a house! These keys don't work.

Take care. Adios.
Andy

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IN SEARCH OF IGUAASSU

17 days off the tourist track through Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil will have you in love with Latin America’s road less traveled. Many years ago, the young Che Guevara left his home in Argentina on a journey across South America to seek out a new life - to found Castro, and the rest is history. Follow in the footsteps of Che Guevara on your own voyage of self-discovery from the home of Tango in the land of Sambas.

Sophisticated Buenos Aires’ Portenos, and Rio de Janeiro’s fun-loving Capibocos are perfect bookends for your joie through this fascinating region. The search for Iguaçu Falls leads us away from the spectacular beaches of the Atlantic Coast into the Paraguayan jungle before finishing in the ‘wild’ city in all of the Americas.

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Day 1 Buenos Aires The colourful districts of La Boca, Recoleta and San Telmo are waiting, along with the famed nightclub Tangos. So try to arrive early.

Day 2-7 Colonia / Montevideo / Pagas Jas We cross the jungle-lined Rio de la Plata by ferry to reach Uruguay. Colonia definitely ranks as a must-visit destination. The unique culture, rich history, and captivating architecture all combine to make the cobblestone streets come alive. A night in the nation’s capital, Montevideo, prepares us for a return to Argentina and the Jesuit Missions region.

Day 2-15 Iguaçu Falls / Curitiba Our visit to Brazil begins with a switch into Portuguese and a visit to the magnificent Iguaçu Falls, bordering Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina. Sit back and soak in the stunning beauty and raw power that is Iguaçu, or opt for an exhilarating boat trip into the spray of the falls.

Latin America: G.A.P Adventures. 2003, p. 41
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Rob Wallace
Date: Monday, 7 June, 2004 1:29:48 AM
Subject: House

That's fucking excellent! Good on ya. Prim location really, very accessible, etc. Love the look and style of the place, as obviously do you. With the Stanley s trreet place what's the vacation date moreorless^.

Look forward to the move now that it"s sunk in. No point you paying a ll t hat money out in rent, etc. And be happy to hide a chunk of loot in your property, if and when t hat loot comes through.

Went out clubbing in Buenos Aires last night. Won't do that again, too painful. The women are too good looking and I just don't have the moves. Did meet a girl from Sydney in the Amazon that I can't get out of my head, so hope to see her again some day. The keys on thi s compute are fucked.

Take care
Andy
Hey Astra

Sorry to hear about your conversation with your papa, but in the end maybe it’s a blessing in disguise and will inspire you even more. Hope so. What’s this forum you mentioned? Is that something to do with the camp?

Anyway, met my new travelling crew and they are okay: we have two other Aussies, 3 yanks, a pom, a girl from Wales, a guy from Norway, 2 Canadians and some other horrible woman. Good diversity. We all get on okay so it should be fine. We left Argentina and the stunning Buenos Aires the other day and caught a ferry to Uruguay, where we stayed in a beautiful colonial city in the aptly named city - Colonia. Very nice place, with beautiful old buildings. Today we left Colonia and caught a bus for three hours to the capital of Uruguay called Montevideo, which has a population of 1.5 million and many ancient buildings. Beautiful place. I had to room with an Aussie guy the last two nights but tonight I’ve got a room to myself, which is great. But enough of that, it must all just be a bunch of words that make no sense to anyone unless they are in the places mentioned.

Did I mention that I had an email from Rob (my flatmate back home) the other day saying that he has just bought a house and that he and I will be leaving North Adelaide shortly after I get back? Basically, he has invited me to move in with him, which is good of him, when I return. Apparently the house is in Goodwood, just off King William Road, and is an old villa. He paid a fortune for it - half his luck! This has slightly unsettled me, but at the same time I’m kind of excited. Just a bit of a pain having to pack everything up. Also, apparently my dog has been a nightmare and escaped frequently, damaged all sorts of things, and so on. She’s missing me a lot it sounds.

So I hope your amends and portfolio stuff keeps progressing. In the meantime, take care, be happy, and know that out there in the world you’re on my mind from time to time (between taking photos and stuff, of course). xx

Andy
Did I mention that I had an email from Rob (my flatmate back home) the other day saying that he has just bought a house and that he and I will be leaving North Adelaide shortly after I get back? Basically, he has invited me to move in with him, which is good of him, when I return. Apparently the house is in Goodwood, just off King William Road, and is an old villa. He paid a fortune for it - half his luck! This has slightly unsettled me, but at the same time I’m kind of excited. Just a bit of a pain having to pack everything up. Also, apparently my dog has been a nightmare and escaped frequently, damaged all sorts of things, and so on. She’s missing me a lot it sounds.

So I hope your amends and portfolio stuff keeps progressing. In the meantime, take care, be happy, and know that out there in the world you’re on my mind from time to time (between taking photos and stuff, of course). xx

Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Gavin

Hope you are well? Can’t remember what I last wrote about, but nevertheless I’ve been in good health, spiritually and mentally. The jungle in Peru was just amazing, and even connected with a girl from Sydney while staying in a jungle lodge. I only spoke a couple of times with her but she quite inspired me. Unexpected conversations like that just make me happy to be alive. Rare people don’t grow on trees.

After Peru I spent a week in Buenos Aries, Argentina, and marvelled at its enormity and deteriorating splendour. Unbelievably beautiful women are the Argentine girls! Then I hooked up with my second GAP tour group and we’ve been travelling through Uruguay. Very pretty cities but my alcoholism has been a little troubling. Can’t say I really click with any of these people, and there’s 13 of them! Still, I get along okay, and that’s all that matters I guess. Looking forward to Brazil - that should be a blast. And look forward to getting to a meeting sooner or later. I need my own kind, that’s what I miss.

Anyway, I hope all is well with you. Take care.
Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Surfie Girl!

Glad to hear from you. Sounds like you’ve had a good time on the coast. You’ll be forecasting surf conditions soon, and dreaming in waves.

Since seeing you I’ve spent a full week in Buenos Aires and loved it. The deteriorating grandeur is quite stunning and a little sad. The people were beautiful and the tango alluring. There is, of course, a dark side with much poverty and much desperation. That’s Sth America for you.

Also, spent nearly a week in Uruguay, which is beautiful and a little sleepy, with many charming colonial buildings and monuments. Iguassu falls, however, took my breath away. We viewed them from both the Brazilian and Argentinian sides and I took so many pictures it’s not funny (hence the pics). Taller than Niagara and wider than Victoria Falls, they are massive, not to mention deafening. I thanked God then and there for the experience, and felt very peaceful and serene. I saw about 15 monkeys in the surrounding jungle and felt blessed.
Right now - wait for it - I’m in Rio, Copacabana Beach, and it’s a balmy evening. This city heaves with sexuality, but in an unpleasant kind of way. Still, the beach is spectacular and I haven’t yet been mugged (fingers crossed it remains that way).

You know, Brooke, and forgive me for sounding sentimental, you have a lot of pizzazz, and just reading your email reminded me of how attractive you are as a person and a woman. Bless you for that. Glad to know people like you are in the world. Most of my current GAP group are somewhat perverted and struggle to speak or think about anything other than getting laid, the women too, as often as possible, so my contact with them has been a little strained.

Hope work treats you well and life is good.

Take care, Andy
P.S. I hope our paths cross again!

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29.

From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Astra Parker
Date: Thursday, 17 June, 2004 7:27:49 AM
Subject: South America

Hey Astra

Check out the pics. These waterfalls are a part - only a part - of Iguassu Falls, which lie on the Brazilian/Argentinian borders. These pics were taken from the Brazilian side, but the Argentinian side was probably more spectacular.

I hope you are well. I’m quite homesick and look forward to seeing you. I’ll be back in in just over 2 weeks now - pretty soon! I’ll give you the dates later (don’t know them offhand).

Right now I’m in Rio! How about that. It’s a balmy evening and Copacabana beach is abuzz with activity, not all of it legal. There are perverts and hookers galore here. My GAP group seems to be made up of people who think of nothing but sex, which means I don’t exactly get along with them much. All they want to do is go to nightclubs and try and pick up guys or girls. It’s sickening, but I suppose I should let them be judge of their own lives.

The beach here is everything everyone says about it - massive, stunning and picture-perfect. Plenty of eyes follow us tourists about though, so I need to be careful. Anyway, you look after yourself. Thinking of you.

Andy

P.S. Maybe you could pick me up from the airport if you don’t have any commitments? I’ll let you know when I’m returning and let you decide. Cheers.

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From: Astra Parker (astraelectra@hotmail.com)
To: andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au
Date: Thursday, 17 June, 2004 3:35:43 PM
Subject: Hi Andy,

Thanks for the pictures. They are stunning.

I probalbly should tell you straight off, and I don't know if you've been told yet, but Roe was killed on Monday night in a house fire. Every one was in shock as most of the fellowship found out from the news on TV. The strangest thing was that he'd just been dropped off home a few hours earlier by a couple the guys after our steps camp. We dont think the funeral will be just yet as they dont know the exact cause of death apparently. Sorry to dump that on you but I thought you'd like to know -If you don't already.

All else is fine exect for fear about speaking at the forum on Saturday -but how important is it realy?

Hope your home sickness is not making too much of an impact on your holliday fun.

Talk to you soon.
Astra

Get a Virgin Credit Card and win an adventure. www.virgincreditcard.com.au
Hey Astra

That’s very sad news indeed. Poor guy. Hope he’s with his mum now. Good luck with your talk. Believe it or not, I’m on an Island now, with the most beautiful beaches. Strange place to have a heavy heart. But that’s life. You take care.

xx Andy

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From: Gavin Kerslake (sedge808@hotmail.com)
To: andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au
Date: Friday, 18 June, 2004 1:20:09 PM
Subject: Rowe.

Hi Andy,

Bad news mate. Rowe has died. His house (with him in it) has burnt down. Apparently he was smoking in bed when it happened.

Gavin.

Take no thought in the morrow,
For the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.

Get a Virgin Credit Card and win an adventure:  http://ad.doubleclick.net/clk;8661322;9498324;s?
Hey mate

That’s very sad news. I hope he’s at rest now and with his mum. See you in about 2 weeks. Until then, take care...

Andy

---

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Hey mate

I've just finished my second GAP tour and am kicking back in my hotel on Copacabana beach. This place is awesome, with a roof bar/cafe that overlooks the whole beach. Stunning! My room also overlooks the beach and is very comfortable, and so it should for the money I paid for it. Whilst a little dangerous, Rio is an exciting place, with beaches, hookers and, for some reason, many Hells Angels from all over the world (they're having a convention here!!!!!). I'll be back on the 1st of next month. Hope your house purchase is going well. Hope the dog is well. C u soon.

Andy

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Hey Astra

Glad to hear the forum went well. The news about Rowe didn't spoil my holiday, just reminded me of the reality behind life - it's fucking precious, etc. The weather here is perfect - about 25 every day. I have the best views from my room. Look forward to flying home though.

I'm arriving in Adelaide at the domestic terminal (where you dropped me off) on the 1st of next month at 12.30 pm (i think the time is right). I'll double-check and get back to you. I'm fairly certain it's at 12.30 pm (lunchtime) and not later. Definitely the 1st though!

Check out the pics. The first one is Copacabana beach, taken from my hotel, and the other is Ipanema beach, down the road. Awesome place.

Thinking of ya.

Andy

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34.

From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Rob Wallace
Date: Wednesday, 23 June, 2004 7:56:53 AM
Subject: Rio

Hey Rob

New jacket for the dog? Sounds strange. Thanks for the offer of a lift, but Astra can handle it, hopefully. Heard recently that my friend Rowe in AA died. Sad news.

Good luck with your interview, I'm sure you'll do well.

Check out the pics. The first is Copacabana beach, from my hotel, and the other is Ipanema beach, just down the road.

Stunning shots. I'll be home lunchtime, so you'll be at work.

Until then...
Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Astra Parker
Date: Thursday, 24 June, 2004 5:06:53 AM
Subject: flight

Hey

The time the plane comes in is supposed to be at 11.50am, but they are often a little late. Up to you if you get there at 11.50 or 12, depending on if the 1st of next month is a good day for you. I don't know what day of the week that is? Let me know if you can make it. I can always catch a cab home.

Cheers,
Andy

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Hey Gavin

Good move changing to yahoo. Lots of space. Check out these pics - the first is from my hotel on Copacabana beach, and the second is Ipanema beach, just down the road.

Be home in a week or so. See you then.

Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Jody B
Date: Thursday, 24 June, 2004 5:15:28 AM
Subject: Rio

Hey squire

Welcome to Rio. The first pic is from my hotel on Copacabana beach, and the second is Ipanema beach, just down the road. Loved that email of the serenity prayer, just what I needed on that day. Hope your meeting is still going well, Jody.

See you in a week, or so.

Andy

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Oh well, live and learn (over and over). Funny, I remember Emma getting up on stage at Brompton and telling all us younger AAs not to ever get into relationships with other AAs, even though she confessed to doing so often. At the time I resented her sentiments, since I wanted to start something up with Astra. So, if you ever hear me get up and thump my fist and tell all the younger AAs to avoid inter-AA relationships, slap me! I don't listen to it anyway.

Whatever happens, Jody, just be true to yourself and remember we all land in it sooner or later, some of us often. At least the chicks are looking at ya. Can't say any of these golden beauties over here have ever looked at me, not that I'm looking, it'd just be nice for the ego!!!! Anyway, I look forward to seeing Astra when I get back - absence makes the heart grow fonder, and all that.

Good luck with it, Jody, old boy, and pray!
Andy
Hey Andy,
Timely email mate, I'm over here having a nice big stress about my favourite topic, chicks!!!
Seems I've gone and landed myself in the shit nicely, I was seeing a bit of this girly (all the right bits too I might add) and then this other-ee came along so I've been seeing a bit of her as well and now my serenity is up to shit as you can well imagine, frankly I don't really want to see either of them at the moment coz' I'm having this big stress and spitting the dummy in a royal fashion about it, but my conscience is giving me curry and I just know I'm going to have to come clean at some point.
In fairness, I never actually said I was keen to pursue anything with either of them, but I didn't really set them straight either.
All a big mess!!! Worst of all, one of them is in AA, (Emma, from Brompton) I am a bit keener on her than the other but it's really messing with my head being around her and I've been avoiding the other and that's messing with my head. Oooooh big mess!!!!!!
Hope all is well with you,
Speak to you soon mate,

Cheers

Jody

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Hey Astra

The Domestic terminal where you dropped me off, not the International terminal on the way into the airport. In other words, when you turn off Sir Donald Bradman Drive (think that's what they call it now), don't turn into the International airport but keep going to the Domestic terminal, which is where we parked last time. I'm flying in with Qantas, which you can't miss, on the left I think as you enter the Domestic terminal. Thanks for that. If in doubt just wonder around, you'll figure it out soon enough. Our airport is so small compared to all others and only has about two areas of entry, Qantas and Virgin.

Weather is still great here, yet I'm rather bored. Seen Rio now and ready to go home. Thanks again.

Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)  
To: John Brown  
Date: Sunday, 27 June, 2004 1:13:35 AM  
Subject: Rio

Hey JB

Hope you are well. In Rio right now and it's a pretty wild place. Very sunny, very sandy, and of course the girls are hot. Still, I'm looking forward to getting home and almost a bit bored here. If you don't drink, don't use hookers, don't surf, and don't sun tan, then Rio ain't the place to be. Heading home next week, so look forward to catching up. Have to show you all my pics some time, they're great.

Until then... Take care.
Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Gully

Hope you and the family are well. In Rio now and enjoying the relaxation. Very sunny, very sandy, and very sexy place. However, if you don't drink, don't use hookers, don't surf, and don't sun tan, then this ain't the place to be. I walk around admiring the views, not much else. My hotel is on Copacabana beach, with great beach views, but there are a lot of beggars, hookers and so on all over. Sad really. Paradise lost! Look forward to catching up when I get back (next week I return). Until then... Take care.

Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Ally

Hope you are well. I'm in Rio right now and it's hot and the surf's up. Wild place, but a little too fast for me. Can't wait to get home. Hope all is well in Adelaide town. See you next week.

Love, Andy

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43.
From: Andrew Miller (andymiller7777@yahoo.com.au)
To: Astra Parker
Date: Monday, 28 June, 2004 7:57:02 AM
Subject: Rio

Hey Astra

Just a quick note. I thought it was very loud in my room tonight so I looked out the window and noticed people gathering, so I went out. Crowds gathered on Copacabana beach and a massive street parade began. There must have been 100,000 people or something. Largely a Gay Mardi Gras by the looks of it, with many boys with breasts and so on. It's heaving out there, with much erotic dancing, hugging, cheering, etc. Amazing sight. Got heaps of pics. These Brazilians know how to move and they are without inhibitions. It's thumping outside with bodies, music and dance. Wish you were here to see this. Anyway, see you in a couple of days. I'll go out and get in amongst it (not really).

:) Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Maree

Yes, sad news indeed. I heard about the tragedy when I was in Ilha Grande, a small island off the coast of Brazil, an oasis in fact, and it left me heavy of heart despite the idyllic surroundings. Rowe was a decent if troubled guy. I'm glad to hear that your life in Sydney is all you hoped for and that you'll be heading overseas in the future. To inspire you, I've attached two pics from my travels. The first pic is of Copacabana beach, Rio, Brazil, and the second is of Iguassu Falls, which sit on the border between Basil and Argentina. Awesome stuff. I'm about to head home tomorrow, and these last two months away have been a mixture of good and bad times, as is life. My disease certainly came with me! Still, didn't pick up and didn't act out. Peru was probably the most remarkable place I went. Very poor country but some of the sights (eg. the Amazon jungle) fucking incredible (excuse the language). Buenos Aires, Argentina, also an amazing place.

I think about you too, Maree. Funny you wrote, since I had planned to send you some holiday pics to inspire your travel plans. Good on you, and thanks for writing.

Keep smiling...
Andy xxoo

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Hey Maree

That was a beautiful email you sent me, and I thank you for that. I was just thinking about you the other day, and alas the angels send me another opportunity to think about you again. And that's nice.

Since my overseas adventure I've slotted back into regular suburban life and plenty of AA meetings. It's been great. I had to go away to recognise what I had in my own world, where my heart was (is), and what a remarkable life-changing two years I have lived. It's miraculous stuff.

To think I stood in the jungle and breathed in the world, and was able to thank God for loving me (a far cry from the maniac who would have spat in the face of such an anecdote). So much has come to pass, and much more is always on the way. My spiritual journey seems to have a momentum of its own and I marvel at the transformative energy that this brings me. I am seldom rattled the way I used to be, although, of course, I have my moments of insanity, egoism, resentment and self-pity, but nothing like the amounts of these things I used to endure.

I hope to see you again someday, Maree. One of my persistent background yearnings is to see you again, and whilst I don't actively feed this yearning as I did once upon a time ago, it's certainly there beneath the surface of things. When I flew into Sydney on my way back from South America, this yearning was very strong, and yet I resisted it, naturally enough, and wrote it off as too difficult and too terrifying. It was a nice idea though, one that recognises, if nothing else, the enormous place you have in my heart, and that's God given, for I was incapable of such feelings two short years ago.

But enough of my sentimentality. It's nice to think about you once again, and even nicer to think Maree is still sending beautiful feelings into the universe. Hope all your (healthy) dreams come true!!!!

Love, Andy
I've been actively writing again, something that had left me for three or four years, and that has been another wonderful and unexpected gift of recovery. I had to let it go absolutely before it returned, although it is so different now, and even more enriching. Amazing the things that happen.

I hope to see you again someday, Maree. One of my persistent background yearnings is to see you again, and whilst I don't actively feed this yearning as I did once upon a time ago, it's certainly there beneath the surface of things. When I flew into Sydney on my way back from South America, this yearning was very strong, and yet I resisted it, naturally enough, and wrote it off as too difficult and too terrifying. It was a nice idea though, one that recognises, if nothing else, the enormous place you have in my heart, and that's God given, for I was incapable of such feelings two short years ago.

But enough of my sentimentality. It's nice to think about you once again, and even nicer to think Maree is still sending beautiful feelings into the universe. Hope all your (healthy) dreams come true!!!!!

Love, Andy

Find local movie times and trailers on Yahoo! Movies.
Great to hear from you, Richard!

I hope your Christmas was enjoyable and your family is well. I was bed-ridden with the flu over Christmas, as were many of my friends, despite the fact that it is summer here! Wasn't much fun, I can assure you.

Sounds like you are quite the pilgrim, Richard, and having fun at that! Half your luck. Since last seeing you, of course, I continued on through Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. Must say, I enjoyed Peru the most, over all, even though there were many stunning sights elsewhere. Way too much bus travel on this GAP tour and not openly advertised. Most of us complained about the fact that GAP didn't make it obvious that much of this trip is travel! A few of us ended up catching a flight from the Iguazu Falls to Rio rather than bus it down, and then later caught up with everyone. Made things rather expensive. I enjoyed Rio and Copacabana, but not as much as I did the Andes in Peru (even though I was sick for most of that). I guess things always look a little nicer in retrospect. Rio, for all its splendour, felt seedy, a little unsafe, and too racy for my tastes. The others absolutely loved (and revelled in) these things, so there you have it!

I am about to return to Flinders University to do a two year Bachelor Degree in Education, which should keep me busy. Am quite excited actually. Basically I enter 3rd year via graduate entry, so I guess I'll have to get up to speed as quickly as I can if I am going to make this work. I do like challenges.

Once again, Richard, it was nice to hear from you. I hope you got snow over Christmas (if that's what you wanted) and I hope your travels fare well. Take care, mate!

Andy
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We are built from layers of text, meaning, & experience
...

which means we can rewrite & reimagine the texts that write our lives...

Behind the excitement of every holiday lies the anxiety of paradise lost. Behind the expectation of joy and adventure lies the possibility of misery and misadventure. As sensation-gatherers, tourists risk experiencing chaos and suffering rather than idyllic sunsets and postcard snaps. The promontory view may give way to disturbing glimpses into the underbelly of paradise. All adventures risk ruin or else they are not adventures.
Tourist: ‘Like the vagabond, the tourist is on the move. Like the vagabond, everywhere he goes he is in, but nowhere of the place ... The tourist moves on purpose ... the tourist is a conscious and systematic seeker of experience, of new and different experience ... as the joys of the familiar wear off quickly and cease to allure.’
