



A Summer Sunset

Greetings from Chile!

It's hard to believe that we have been here over a year now! Time does fly!

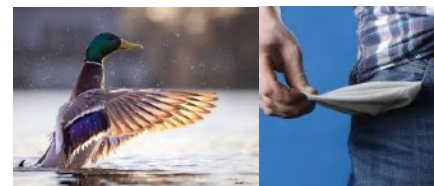
In the Latin world, Chilean Spanish a bit odd. It's different from the Spanish of other countries, to the extent that some people think it's almost another language. The language taught in the schools is officially Spanish, but the every day speech is almost incomprehensible to outsiders. If you speak another version of Spanish, everyone here will understand you, but you are unlikely to understand anyone from here. There are many words adopted from the indigenous people, the Mapuche, that are completely different. They also have a tendency to drop the ends of many words, completely changing the sound. For instance, they often say *“porfa!”* Which is how they say “please”. In regular Spanish the correct term is “por favor”. But it seems convenient to them to drop *“-vor”* completely because, well, who needs it?



They also have a wonderful quantity of animal-based expressions. Some of these are kind of cute. For instance, if your boss “does a sea lion” (chews you out) you might become “duck” (broke). Not “a duck”, just “duck”. As in, “Today I’m duck” (“Today I’m broke”). If this is your situation, then you would have to “make a cow” (hold a fundraiser), but if you get some money, look out for the “Chilean bobcat” (thief). Just don't



be a “terrible chicken” (afraid)!



Some expressions, that are inoffensive and acceptable, or even expected, in Chile can be horribly offensive to other Spanish speakers. For instance, if a young man says that he was hanging out with “dos cabras del barrio”, which literally means “two female goats from the neighborhood”, anyone in Chile would understand that he meant he was hanging out with a couple of girls from his neighborhood. No one would be surprised or offended. But if he said the same thing in another Spanish-speaking country he might get lynched! In most, if not all other Spanish-speaking countries, calling somebody a goat is really offensive. Got to be careful what comes out of your mouth!



You also have to be careful what goes into your mouth. I have a new breakfast favorite! Eggs and octopus for breakfast. Its kind of like steak and eggs, Chilean style. It's probably a result of all that coastline we have here!

We had the worst power outage that Chile has experienced in 15 years. It affected nearly the whole country. They got the power back on in about seven hours, but it makes us reflect on what a blessing it is to be from a country that does not have centralized utilities. Ultimately, it wasn't bad, although I did have to take a shower using a candle to light the bathroom...



sushi.

Ginger and I got to go out for Valentine's Day. In the United States we usually go out to eat the day before or the day after Valentines because we don't like the crowds. We were planning to go out to dinner the day after Valentines but we had to go to the mall to pick up a few things anyway. It wasn't very crowded so we went ahead and ate out. We had

The reason we missed the dinner rush is that we went to the mall at about 6:30pm. In Chile it is normal to begin dinner around 8pm or 9pm. They think we are weird because we have dinner so early! One of my Chilean Spanish professors visited the US when he was younger and ate his dinner at 6 o'clock with everyone else. He said that by 11 o'clock he was starving. He didn't understand how Americans could eat so early and still be comfortable!

Speaking of malls, if you are old enough to remember what the "mall culture" was like in the 1980's you will get an idea of what it is like here. Malls are not places to buy things, they are places to hang out! They are literally a destination. That was normal for us in the 1980s as teenagers in the United States and it is like that here, now. It gives me a weird sense of *déjà vu*.

When we left the mall, we were waiting outside for an Uber to get home and we realized for the first time since being here that we no longer feel like outsiders. Our perspective is different, and we actually feel like we are at home. It's a nice feeling.

I'll leave you with my favorite quote of the month! I think this was from CS Lewis, but I don't remember for sure. ***“Love is a weapon against the darkness!”*** Have you got a fight on your hands? Apply the love of Jesus! The enemy has no idea what to do with it! God bless!

Bill and Ginger

