Argentinian adventure for UK dental study tour participants

Dentist MARION INERFIELD reminisces on a dental study tour to Argentina, which included such contrasts as snow-capped mountains and glacier fields to steaming rain forests and exhilarating waterfalls... before flying north to Calafate. Our last meal in Ushuaia was as the lastestest of some friends of Estevan in their wooden headstone overlooking the town. We were well fed and dare I say, it not a steak in sight! We were sorry to leave Estevan and Ushuaia but the ice fields beckoned.

After a short flight and coach ride the Perito Moreno Glacier came into view; a little hazy in the mist and rain, but as we drew nearer the sky cleared and we took the newly built walkway to within 500 metres of the base of the glacier and stood in awe of its sheer size and its beautiful blue colour, an optical illusion caused by the compression of snow over many years. Leaving the glacier, we spotted condors flying gracefully over the surrounding peaks. Later that day we visited a private ranch, the Estancia El Gabon, to learn of farming and rural life in Patagonia. We watched a gaucho sheep shearing, then had a dinner of steak and lamb, followed by a very sexy tango show. We also had a pre-dinner lecture and discussion on ‘when to treat and when to refer to the periododontist’ given by our resident expert Prof Dowell which was very stimulating as it questioned our reasons for referral and our diagnostic techniques.

Catamaran cruising

Early next morning we drove along the southern edge of Lago Argentina and boarded a luxury catamaran to cruise past gigantic ice bergs that blocked our way to the Upsala Glacier. After a Month in these wonders of nature, we had time to relax and catch up on some reading while cruising back for a final shop in town and to pack again before returning to Buenos Aires for a day of leisure and farewell dinner.

Iguazu Falls

We bid adieu to five of our new friends, including Phillip, who appointed the avuncular Frank Shields to replace him on the extension north to the Iguazu Falls. We flew north to the Brazilian border of Argentina, where the tropical climate and lush green landscape was a welcome change from the icy south. Walking through the jungle on the Brazilian side, which boasts the more spectacular panoramic views, we could hear the mighty roar of the falls. The Cataratas, as they are known locally, were quite breathtaking and sailing into the mist was an exhilarating drenching, before walking across the Devil’s Throat, a series of waterfalls where the water plunges 240ft into the caudron below. We ended the day with a Brazilian cabaret, made all the more fun by spotting how many performers wore fixed appliances – not easy to spot above the gyrating hips and minuscule g-string!

All too soon we were on our journey home with memories to last and wonderful experiences shared with new friends...

This tour was organised by Jon Baines Tours, an organiser of small specialist cultural tours and medical study tours, as well as small group tours, for more information go to www.jonbainestours.co.uk or call 020 7223 9485.