

## Iguazu - The Sumaj Hostel

This was my attempt to get off the relatively expensive and socially isolated Hotel Accommodation bandwagon and I am so glad I did it because it gave me an idea of what to expect on later travels (fingers crossed) My first internet booking and it appeared I was conversing with the people at the hostel via e-mail. So when I got there, I sort of assumed they'd be taking VISA. Man ! I'm glad I got that PIN sorted out. They only took Argentinian Pesos.

The showers were pretty neat. Well, that's one description for them anyway (he says with tongue in cheek). The internal shower had NO hot water. That didn't bother me too much because after all, during the Great Gas Shortage after the Longford explosion a few years back, I took cold showers at home in Melbourne in Winter. Well, that was until I realised my hot water system was electric. But apart from that, I could hack a cold shower or two if that's what it had to be. Plus it was so bloody hot and humid in Iguazu that cold showers were kind of cool, in so many ways...

That was until while I was having a shower and the water ran out ! Yup ! Mid lather, blinded by soap in the eyes the whole bit. I felt for the taps and tried to turn them all both ways just to make sure, but I got the middle one instead that turns the bath outlets into shower outlets. I cupped my hands in vain as I heard the last of the water stored in the pipes fall to the floor and seep away down the drain...

I jumped out of the tiled bath/shower tub and swaddled (if that's a real word for slowly and carefully making your way over a tiled floor while trying not to slip over with soap laden feet) to the other side of the room to the hand basin to check if those taps were OK. I could hear the same depressing sound as before as the water splashed into the basin and down the sink in what seemed like a single gulp. D O H !!!

So all I could do was to towel myself down and hope no one would really notice. Especially those people at The Falls. I was a bit worried that during exposure to the mist and splashing of the falls that I would spontaneously lather up again on the spot. How would one explain...? There were other showers at the hostel, outside in a small bungalow; but as the water had totally run out or been turned off, these were of no use either.

These were the pretty good showers too. They had HOT water, but for the first few days, they weren't working. Bloody Nora ! But the day they were working... I didn't realise just how good a hot shower could be. That was when I looked up and saw that the water was heated at the showerhead, with a heating element connected to the mains by wires just dangling from the wall. The showerhead was plastic, so I suppose that was OK, you now, as an insulator...

But as an experience to get out of Hotels and meet up with travellers and talk in a known language for a while, this was heaven on a stick. Plus spending New Years Eve there was pretty cool too. Much better than on the road in a bus or something, eh !

Brendan