

## Iguazu - New Years Eve

This would have to rate as one of the most memorable ever had I reckon. It wasn't the huge smoochfest that all good New Years should be; but then again, it didn't need to be either.

Half a world away from family and friends, it managed to really feel like one of those gigs back home (almost) when I hooked up with a couple of Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans and an American at the Hostel. Not only did we ALL speak English (or various forms of it) but we just seemed to have a common bond being so far away from home at this time. That language thing was a real winner too! In a land where a grasp of the language is key to help reduce the isolation, just being able to talk to someone else and have them understand was ACE !

In my morning after sending all the sms 's back home and before going to the falls, I saw Sydney Harbour with the Bridge celebrating on the TV. That looked impressive and bought a bit of a twinge. Then it was off to The Falls before returning for the festivities. When the locals tuned into Rio and Buenos Aires celebrating, the sea of people was just overwhelming! Overhead shots of Rio were just a mass of millions of people on the beaches as the fireworks went off. Buenos Aires had a Rock Concert (Not quite as good as Rock at The Falls when Blondie played though) with a lead singer from Titas that looked like a Groovin' Rolf Harris.

And here I was in another rural town and celebrating with 7 or 8 travellers from around the world and the staff of the Sumaj Hostel in Iguazu, Argentina, South America. That kind of blew me away... On top of that, I'd also met some other Australians from Perth and Sale who had also done the Antarctic gig, but with Peregrine.

For the few days leading up to New Years, the sound of 'bangs', 'booms' and 'cracks' could be heard all over town as people let off fireworks and other incendiary devices. It must've looked a bit funny as all the tourists appeared gun shy, but from the look of the surrounding township, it was probably no wonder. During most of the day, and well into the night and The New Year, explosives ranging in size from 'Penny Bungers' right up to 'Letter-Box Renovators', 'Finger and Hand Removers' and the Full Bottle 'Bruce Willis Bus Destroyers' were going off and being felt. We were all constantly waiting for the shower of kiddy fingers. Then at midnight, one of the most amazing fireworks displays I reckon I have ever seen was happening in what appeared to be coming from a neighbour's back yard.

Think of Fox FM Sky Show. Think of Sydney Harbour Bridge and it was nothing like that, but to us (me), it was just so much better! As we stood outside the Hostel near the pool with the frogs still croaking through all the noise, we all Oohed and Aahed for maybe 20 minutes; and we were pretty much in a front row seat.

After seeing in the New Year at The Hostel, it was off into The Big Smoke, Town, The City or as the locals call it, Central, to catch up with the others from the Falls and Antarctica. All of about 10 minutes walk away in this thriving metropolis. That was pretty neat as well as they were having dinner and a show in their hotel. Some Rockin' local band performed a couple of Hot Top 40 covers and then some mighty fine Latin tunes that had the locals cutting some moves on the dance floor.

All in all, a pretty good day and way to see in 2004.  
Hope yours was a 'blast' as well.

See Ya !

Brendan