

Eva's Admonitions

Texas XXXs RFC -- Buenos Aires Tour Guide

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Another Precinct Heard From: Below you will find an unedited report (well, mostly unedited ... this is a family publication, after all) from longtime XXXs member Chris Dawson. It's been so long since he's been on tour, however, that many of you may be as blissfully unaware of his existence as he is about the rules of golf. He and his wife, Tawana, have provided us with many, uh, moments, and those of you who have not heard the "jewelry joke" definitely must ask to hear it. In fact, this is one of several "signature" stories we have all come to look forward to, including Marty Parrishes' famous "Precious," and Ken Coulter's "Rose." And there is one other story that must remain a secret for reasons which will become obvious on tour.

But we digress. Chris is a pilot for Delta living large in Hotlanta, where he manages to snare some plum international routes. He recently "volunteered" – at great sacrifice – to go to Buenos Aires specifically as our advance scout. He is hopeful of landing a flight there during tournament week and hang out with us for a few days. While we are happy to have him, if only for one game day (wingers with wings being in short supply), we are sad not to be able to see his family. Perhaps they can join us for the kit party or arrange another pre-tour visit to Texas?

Travel Tip: We will return to a more newsy format in subsequent issues, but we need to pass along one quick tip. Now would be a good time to check into cell phone service while away. Cingular has a deal where you can sign up for international service for about \$6 per month, then pay roaming charges depending on the country you are in. It ain't real cheap, about a buck-a-minute for BA service, but very convenient for quick checks back home. Surely other companies have the something similar? If you have an older phone, you may need a new SIM card. Some companies, I'm told, may also have a three month minimum, so you can enroll in international calling now, then cancel after the trip.

By *Chris Dawson*
Correspondent Especial

Buenos Aires, July, 2006 – I returned yesterday from my latest Buenos Aires trip and have completed my scouting mission. My report:

The **Aspen Towers** is good hotel, it has six rooms per floor that are accessed from a pair of glass elevators. The rooms themselves are in good shape, large and adequate. The hotel does have a pool on the roof, and a small spa and workout room. The pool looks more like an oversized tub, I would put the max capacity at one Al Mazur and one Joe Luna.

The hotel lobby is a little small. It does have a bar/cafe, but it is not going to be functional for group gatherings. There are five stools at the bar and they don't have draft beer. I did a little walk around the neighborhood to find other potential watering holes. (The hotel is only about two blocks from our layover hotel over on Cordoba.)

The Aspen Towers is in a very good location for seeing and getting around B.A.. When you come out the front door you are on Paraguay Street. If you go left a half block, there is "**San Moritz**," a confiteria/cafe on the corner. If you go right out the front door a half block you come to Suipacha street and "**Kaldi's**" on the corner, a tapas, panini and pizza cafe. Take a right on Suipacha and go one block to M. T. de Alvear Street. You will pass a **supermercado** (grocery store) in about a block; it's a good place to stock up on essentials: wine, beer – maybe food – more beer, etc.

When you are standing on the corner of Suipacha and de Alvear streets look left, a half block up on the right on M.T. de Alvear and you will see Heinekin, Quilmes and Warsteiner beer signs outside drawing you into "**The Temple Bar**." That in my humble opinion will do very nicely as the drinkup location. It has a full-sized bar and serves food. Their happy hour runs from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. The Quilmes (local beer) is two pints for 14.00 pesos (or about \$2.33 a pint). They have Heinekin, Kilkenny, Guinness, Bud, Warsteiner, and their own house brewed dark beer on draft; plus a full complement of bottled others. They have a band at night, a pool table and dart board. One of the bartenders, Gabriella, knew about the rugby tournament coming in September and is looking forward to the boys from Texas arriving (attention, Bryant Winn).

Other nearby watering holes include **Kilkenny's** and **Downtown Matias**. Come out of the hotel, go left 4.5 blocks to Reconquista. If you go three blocks to the right, you'll hit Downtown Matias on the corner; a good pub/club. If you go left on Reconquista, one block from Paraguay street, you'll hit Kilkenny's, a large local Irish bar and meat market. Be warned, however, one of our pilots met a local girl there and married her!

Other B.A. info; Getting there

The flight down will be about 10 hours (the same for us from Atlanta). The time change will be two hours earlier for you guys in Texas. The route of flight is pretty much the same for all carriers down through South America; we're on the radios with American and Continental the whole way. Coming out of Houston, you will go over the Gulf and Caribbean, and enter South America over Colombia. It's all night flying so there won't be anything to see outside. You transit down the eastern edge of the Andes, through far western Brazil, cut across a small corner of Peru, across Bolivia and the edge of Paraguay, then into Argentina.

The area from 10 degrees North to 10 degrees South of the equator is called the **Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ)**. You can expect weather in that area at all times of the year so the ride may be a bit bumpy. The ride from the airport to the hotel will be 45 minutes to an hour depending on traffic.

The area the hotel is in is called the **Retiro District**. Out the door and 2.5 blocks to the left you will hit Florida St. It's a walking and shopping street that goes for quite a ways. The good deals are leather and cashmir. Some of the crew get measured and fitted the day we get in, and pick up their outfits the next day before we leave. Many of the flight attendants come down to B.A. to take tango dance lessons on their layovers. There is an active night life in B.A. Many of the clubs don't get started until late. Good food and good wine! We joke you can eat half a cow for \$10.00, which isn't far from the truth.

I am sure the tournament has trips planned, but **getting around the city** on your own is easy. There is a city bike tour that operates from Plaza San Martin about three blocks from the hotel. I have taken similar tours in European cities and it's a good way to see the sites up close and friendly-like. The tours go through the different districts of Buenos Aires, leave twice a day at 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., and they have three different tours. Their website is www.biketours.com.ar The city taxis are abundant and cheap. There is also a subway system that is easy to use; the price for a roundtrip ticket is less than 50-cents, U.S.

Many clubs and good restuarants abound in the Recoleta area (where Evita is buried, a short distance from the hotel). San Telmo is the Tango District, and just past there is La Boca where they strongly support their local soccer team the, Boca Juniors, home of Diego Maradonna. Watching a game in their stadium is an experience. Also in La Boca is an artsy/fartsy area that is nice to walk through; I believe one of the bike tours takes you there.

This is just a quick synopsis, there is plenty more to see and do. The usual disclaimer applies to the above information: past returns are no guarantee of future earnings, and no animals or small children were hurt in the making of this report.

Thanks, Chris ... that should whet everyone's appetite for tour. Can you believe we will be "wheels up" in just eight weeks!?!? Be sure to stick this handy report with your tickets, passport or something so you can remember all the places listed.

Entre más viejo el violín, más dulce la música

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