

## **Eva's Admonitions**

### Texas XXXs RFC -- Buenos Aires Tour Guide Issue: Numero Seis

Countdown: < Six Weeks!

**Responses needed, PLEASE !!** -- You have been receiving lots of e-mails with details of the trip, augmented by this team newsletter, as well as the official tournament newsletter. It can perhaps be a bit overwhelming, and there may be a tendency to read an e-mail, leave it in your que for future response, and then move on. However, with time running so short, we ask that you please pay attention to the various requests and **respond** as quickly as possible, where called for.

Quite a few folks have not yet sent Pooh-Bah Dave Tutton their **arrival details**. If this includes you, please send it to him TODAY. A few reasons this is important: it MAY be possible to arrange free ground transportation into town via the tournament operator after you have cleared customs. Otherwise, a cab will set you back about \$30 bucks, U.S. Also, we will be able to publish a list of who will be arriving early and when, allowing you to possibly hook-up with other tourists before the main group arrives on Saturday morning. Finally, it is just good sense for the team leader to know when everyone is arriving. (Remember, when using cabs, use **only** those labeled as “**Radio Cab.**”)

For the Houston-area tourists, Ron Britt has come through in a big way and arranged the long-awaited **Tango Lessons!** You have already received an e-mail from Ron (if you're in Houston). Now, **please respond**. And for you guys who think you're getting away with something by conveniently forgetting to tell the wife about these sessions, fuggedaboutit – she will hear about it at the Kit Party and you'll be dead meat. So just go ahead and bite the bullet. We'll find a good place to drink afterwards.

**Travel Tips, y mas** – As the last newsletters dealt with Officer of the Day Assignments and the travelogue provided by Chris Dawson, this issue will focus on more nuts-and-bolts. Many of these details you need to be thinking about now.

We previously touched on the topic of **Cell Phones**. The tournament organizer has sent a stern warning that SIM cards for your phone are not available in BA, and that folks who show up having been assured by their home cellular company that their phone would work in BA have been upset to find this was not true, or shocked at the bill after returning home (we previously reported that you can get a 30-day deal for under \$10 using your existing phone/number, and then calls run about \$1 per minute). However, the aforementioned Mr. Dawson reports that his service and that of others worked as advertised. So the lesson here is: check and double check, and caveat emptor (which is latin meaning: *enjoy your refreshing enema*).

It is not too early to start giving some thought to how and what you will be taking, particularly in your **carry-on bag**. Everyone will be checking a bag or two, so hopefully the plane won't be full of lots of roll-on suitcases. Or will it? You may want to check a large bag, then put your carry-on items into a rolling bag designed to fit in the overhead compartment. While you probably won't need that much room for the items you will want access to on the plane (a handbag under the seat would normally do), the extra space will come in handy on your return when you will have picked up souvenirs. Or you may use your game-day kit bag for your carry-on. (Visit Night Train luggage on Richmond @ Chimney Rock for a selection of styles, sizes matching our Texas flag motif.)

Another favorite travel tip is to buy a **collapsible cooler** for use as your carry-on. This gives you an ice chest for your hotel room once you've unpacked. We are staying a week, you will want to make use of the near-by grocery store.

Since many of us will be flying in the dead of night both going and returning, you probably won't need as many items to pass the time as normal, as most will try to sleep (jet lag should be minimal; BA is only two hours ahead of us). It is typical for the airline to provide a blindfold or sometimes slippers, but don't count on it. Noise reducing earphones are great; Best Buy has a selection, and they are much better for listening to in-flight radio or watching the movie.

If you get to the airport plenty early, a big meal (and a few cocktails) should get you in the mood for a long nap (in Houston, try the big Pappadeaux's on the mezzanine right above the BA gate). **Snacks** (in baggies or plastic bottles) will cure the munchies better than what they are handing out. Don't forget that adult beverages are \$5 each, so you may want to consider a *plastic* flask. And if you sometimes get motion sickness, you may want to get a prescription filled now, or get an over-the-counter product; we learned from Pilot Dawson that we can expect a bumpy ride through the equatorial zone.

If you are taking **electronic devices** (laptop, dvd player, Ipod, etc.), you will probably have enough juice to get you down there, but electronic plugs in Argentina are the 3-pin flat type, 220v, 50mhz. So take a converter for your recharger, or they are available in country.

Give some thought now as to what you might want to wear on the plane. Ken Coulter recommends a **jogging suit** as something stylish, comfortable for an overnight flight, and very slimming. It will also come in handy during south Argentina's early spring. We could see overnight lows in the mid-40s, and the highs in the afternoon might still be under 60. And if you do purchase a jogging suit (or anything else for that matter), you can take it to Monogram Makers where they will be happy to apply our embroidered XXXs logo.

(Speaking of clothing acquisitions ... you do have new – or exceptionally clean – **white shorts**, don't you? And **navy blue playing hose**?)

Make sure your **rugby boots** (or cowboy boots, for that matter), are **very clean**, with no dirt, dried mud, manure, etc. Customs officials tend to be very picky about the import of anything remotely organic.

And the final travel tip this issue has to do with **money exchange**. The Houston airport currency kiosks do not handle Argentine pesos. And the Houston consulate says there is no place in the city which does. Those arriving Saturday should probably get a decent supply of cash at the airport in Argentina. No, the exchange rate there is not as good as in-town banks, but the banks are closed on weekends. ATM machines are plentiful and work just like ours, but they tend to run out of cash pretty quickly after Friday night and aren't restocked until Monday. Travelers cheques are NOT recommended.

**Insurance** – this should not be a major concern, but every person on tour is required to have health insurance. Before each match, the OD or Pooh-bah must turn in a declaration in this regard. Please make sure you (1) have it, and (2) it will not lapse while on tour.

**A good joke:** Texas has its Longhorns and Aggies going at each other, with an occasional Okie chiming in. In South America, the Argies and Brazilians go it pretty good, while Argentinians have no love lost for the Brits.

An Brazilian, an Englishman and an Argentinian, walking along the beach together find a bottle, from which a genie appears offering each one a wish. The Brazilian fisherman, being descended from a long line of fisherman, wishes for the sea to be filled with a perpetual, bountiful harvest; wish fulfilled. The Argentinian wishes for a wall around his country so no one can enter or leave for all eternity. The genie promises it will be done.

The Englishman, curious, asks the genie to tell him more about the wall. “It is 150 high, and 50 feet thick. Now, what is your wish?” To which the Englishman replies, “fill it up with water.”

**ODCs: What's Planned?** – The ODC and ADC assignments have been made. Hopefully by now, you and your “bitch” have started to map out plans for the day on tour for which you are in charge. If you would care to tease us with what we have to look forward to, send details (or generalities) to [paul@mabrytexas.com](mailto:paul@mabrytexas.com). The tour committee has received a few inquiries from veteran tourists inquiring as to the plans, particularly for the first day, and what should be worn/brought to the opening ceremonies and welcome reception. Other daily planners may wish to share “themes” or other elements which may require some pre-thinking by the rest of us. Also, a teaser helps us all get in the mood for the tour, and puts the other ODCs and ADCs on notice that you intend for your day to be the topper. So please pass along a preview and it will be included in future newsletters. Don't leave your planning until the last minute!

**Opening Day** – We will pass along the details on all the days on tour in subsequent newsletters. Here's a peek at the first: After registering at our hotel and receiving our ID passes (to be worn to all events and on tournament transportation), along with tickets to certain events (do not lose!), we will be transported to a “special area” near Punta

Carasco, arriving around 4:30 p.m. The opening ceremonies, with the attendant speeches and puffery, will begin at 5 p.m., followed by a short parade of teams to the Salon Terrazas on the River Plate. Veterans of past tours can attest to the colorfulness of the parade, with each team appearing in creative attire, usually associated with their region or club name.

Once at the venue, we will be entertained for three full hours by bands and other art forms, and you will be well lubricated with continuous “complimentary” (though we already paid for it) beer (Quilmes Cristal), wine (Finca Flichman Malbec red; Finca Flichman Sauvignon white), and soft drinks. Hot finger foods will include a selection of smoked ham, smoked salmon, shrimp and onion, stuffed mushrooms, and carved leg of beef (of course). A selection of traditional Argentine empanadas will also be offered.

It’s back on the bus an to the hotel at 9 p.m., just in time for us old folks to get the Denny’s Special at restuarants which will just be opening for dinner. But don’t forget we have two games on Monday!

(Speaking of buses – not only will you always need your ID pass, but you will need to bring some patience, as it is Argentine law that each bus must have a manifest, meaning a list of all passengers has to be completed as we get on ... anywhere, every time.)

**Souvenir apparel** – For a sneak peek at some of the clothing and other goodies for sale at the tournament venues, go to [www.argiesports.com](http://www.argiesports.com). Hard to tell the quality, but the designs are very nice and the prices are good. If you are planning to buy jerseys (\$30), polos (\$20), or hats (\$10), you may want to cut back on the packing of these items and wear what you buy. Also, since it will be “sweater weather,” you may want to skip packing one, and buy a tournament sweater (\$25). We are also told that leather merchants will be plying their wares at the playing grounds and at other venues.

**Cool Web Site** – You can spend a lot of time researching Argentina on the web, or perusing travel books at the corner mega Bookstore. One of the better tips sheets is the “Snap Guide” found at [www.budgettravelonline.com](http://www.budgettravelonline.com).

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**Ask Eva** –

*Dear Eva ...*

*My husband – whose idea of a vacation is going on a rugby tour – has finally succumbed and is going to take tango lessons before our trip to your enchanted country. I want to explain a bit of the culture tango to him so he won’t come off as a complete rube. Besides, he’ll never be able to get the steps down in two lessons, but like his rugby, he can at least talk a good game.*

That Woman in Texas

*Dear Twit ...*

*There are some parallels between your husband's culture and Tango that he might find interesting. Okay, so maybe it's a stretch, but when I hear that "baseball is a metaphor for life," I mean, you can't be too deep up there in Texas, can you? Anyway, let him know that much as rugby is a "ruffian's sport played by gentlemen," the Tango was the original "dirty dancing," invented and perfected by the so-called lower classes. That is, until the uppers decided it was art, and soon everyone was humping all over the place. Sort of like Polo starting its own line of rugby fashion.*

*One thing you will like about the Tango (but he won't), is the fact that couples usually stand silently, bodies pressed sinuously against each other for about 30 seconds into the song before moving their feet. Now, he may think he's going to enjoy this, but this time is really reserved for small talk. So be thinking of what you are going to whisper into his ear. Something different than, "what time did you get home last night?" And he should be prepared to share something more than, "so, did you see my try in the corner?"*

*Like Buddy Holly, Patsy Cline and Stevie Ray Vaughan, some of our most legendary singers should have avoided plane travel. If you really want to impress the nortenos, understand our Tango heroes like Gardel, and then Piazzolla, who lived in the Bronx but missed the flight that killed Gardel. I've included a little bio of both below for your further education. In fact, Gardel could play for the Texas XXXs, as there is a popular saying in Buenos Aires; even though Gardel has been long dead, "his playing gets better every day."*

*Finally, dear, just remind him that the two-step is not nearly as international as our Tango. But then, neither are your men. Of our men, they say "an Argentine is an Italian who speaks Spanish, who thinks he is English."*

*See you in a few weeks, my children ...*

Eva

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**Final Reminders** – Don't forget to send flight info to Dave Tutton (go to our website, send it to the Pooh-Bah link). RSVP to Ron Britt for Tango lessons. And save September 4 on your calendar for the Kit Distribution Party, details TBD.

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Carlos Gardel arrived in [Buenos Aires](#) at the age of two. As a young man he became known in the clubs and cafés of the barrios (districts) in Buenos Aires, establishing a

famous folk singing duo with José Razzano. But it was in the 1920s, when he began to specialise in tango singing, that he rose to extraordinary fame.

Known as El Zorzal Criollo, the songbird of Buenos Aires, Carlos Gardel is a legendary figure in Argentina. The charismatic French-born singer's career coincided with the development of that intrinsically Argentine cultural icon, the tango (the vulgar music and dance of Buenos Aires' tenements). Gardel made the music his own by inventing the tango-song, and was an instant popular hit in Latin American countries. The elite overcame their aversion to the tango's humble origins and open sensuality only when the man and his music were already widely accepted in New York and Paris. Radio performances and a film career extended this appeal.

Gardel's sky-rocketing career was cut short in 1935, when he lost his life in a plane crash in Colombia. An orgy of grief swept from New York to Puerto Rico, and a woman in Havana suicided. Hordes of people thronged to pay their respects as the singer's body made the journey to its final resting place in a Buenos Aires cemetery, travelling via Colombia, New York and Rio de Janeiro. Instantly immortal and preserved forever young, his enduring fame is measured by the oft-heard Argentine expression 'Gardel sings better every day'. Sixty years after his death, a devoted following keeps the legend blazing, playing Gardel's music daily, placing a lit cigarette in the hand of the life-sized statue which graces his tomb and keeping his few films in circulation.

The Maestro... If you wanted to reflect the pure concept of passion in music, that would be Astor Piazzolla's music. Born in Mar del Plata, on March 11th. 1921, he was living in the Bronx in New York, when at the age of 15, [Carlos Gardel](#) asked him to play the bandoneon in the film "El día que me quieras" ("The day you love me"). Gardel was so impressed by his performance that he offered Piazzolla to go with him on a tour around South America. He rejected the offer, and went back to Buenos Aires. It might have been destiny... who knows?... but the fact was that during that tour, the aircraft accident in which Gardel lost his life took place.

Back in Argentina, Piazzolla played with Anibal Troilo's band until 1944, when he created his own band and started to study classical music. In 1954, he got a grant to study with Nadia Boulanger. Astor was ashamed of his beginning in cabarets as a tango player. But one day, Nadia Boulanger asked him about his early stage and Piazzolla performed one of his tangos for her. "This is Piazzolla", his mentor said, "You never give it up!" These words really sank in and Piazzolla started to overlap his tango background with classical jazz influences and from that mixture the real Piazzolla emerged.

On his return to Buenos Aires, Piazzolla revolutionized the world of Tango, endowing it with new contents and taking it away from the lack of ideas it had fallen into. After trying different combinations, he formed the Quinteto Tango Nuevo (New Tango Quintet) in 1960. In that period, he composed pieces as splendid as "Adios Nonino" (in the memory of his father), and introduced contemporary and improvised jazz elements which were suspiciously observed by classical tango supporters, when not completely scorn. But

Piazzolla managed to create a new music style which kept the romanticism, the passion and the violence of traditional tango.

*Entre más viejo el violín, más dulce la música*  
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