My 25 Most Memorable Experiences in Cuba, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Patagonia

1 – Watching the first sunrise light illuminate the Fitzroy mountain range in Patagonia

2 – Clouds lifting and unveiling Machu Picchu for the first time in days

3 – Riding a horse down into the Quatoa volcano and lake in the central highlands of Ecuador

4 – Early morning at the Otavalo marketplace in Ecuador seeing and smelling the wide variety of foods for sale.

5 – Diving in the ocean and relaxing on a beautiful beach after a two hour hike in Colombia’s Tayrona National Park.

6 – Joining the dancers in front of the clock tower in the historic section of Cartagena, Colombia

7 – Climbing a small mountain in the Ecuadorian Andes and spending several hours with potato farmers

8 – Joining over 100 family members on a picnic and barbecue on the side of a backroad on the Ecuador and Peru border

9 – Wandering the streets at 6AM in Santiago de Cuba and hearing the women yelling out “un pan en venta” (bread for sale) over and over again

10 – A late night horse and carriage ride in Trinidad, Cuba

11 – Hanging out with Cuban gauchos for a day at their ranch and learning about their way of life

12 – Taking a 10 day road trip from Camguey to Baracoa, Cuba in a 1953 Chevrolet

13 – Spending a morning with one of the best cigar farmers in Cuba and learning the art of cigar making

14 – Spending 3 hours at the Moray ruin in the Sacred Valley in Peru in total silence

15 – walking on a Peruvian backroad for hours, high in the Andes, and witnessing the day to day life at such a high altitude - old men herding livestock and women gathering firewood and carrying large loads on their backs

16 – Hiking the Fitzroy Range in Los Glaciares National Park in Patagonia reaching Laguna de Los Tres and encountering floating icebergs with spectacular views in the distance

17 – Riding with the gauchos one morning in Patagonia and watching them round up horses and then go about conduction their chores back at the estancia.

18 – Riding a motorcycle high in the mountains near Minca, Colombia and discovering a series of waterfalls

19 – Hiking in Colombia’s Tayrona National Park and unexpectedly encountering Kogi tribal members who were gathering coconuts

20- Riding an oxen cart in Humbolt National Park, the furthest point east in Cuba, after a swim in a remote waterfall

21 – Watching five boys from Santa Marta, Colombia repeatedly dive into the water off of very high wall looking for coins

22 – Riding down a raging river in the Amazon in a hand carved wooden boat and watching native people spear fishing along the way

23 – Going into a school in the northern highlands of Ecuador observing students studying and laughing

24 – Sitting on the wall at the malecon in Havana, Cuba as a never ending parade of colorful people, street musicians and performing artists go by

25 – Eating dinner outside a restaurant next to Novios Park in Santa Marta, Colombia while artists sell their imaginative creations