

And what's for lunch #Bolivia



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By Floriane

Tourista wreaks havoc, and almost all the travelers we met had been affected by it during their stay in Bolivia. So we didn't leave feeling very reassured. And, of course, we were not spared... The culprit: a fresh cheese (Philadelphia type) bought in a supermarket (Auchan type), which seemed to us to be the safest thing in the world. The scene of the tragedy, a night bus with no toilet and a driver who wouldn't stop... combo! It was the longest 3 hours of our lives.

Anyway, all that to say that we weren't safe anywhere, so we continued to eat our meals in the markets. Always for 3 times nothing with very generous quantities. Still, it was generally better in Peru for fairly similar dishes. The town of Tarija in the south stands out, thanks in no small part to its proximity to the Argentine border. That's why we went there in the first place: good food, come on down, we weren't disappointed!

The Tarija market, one of our favourites

Some specialties are always “muy muy rico”, which is probably where our extra few kilos come from:

- **Saice:** basic dish of minced meat, onions and tomatoes served with rice or pasta. We've eaten it many times, so it came as no surprise that we knew we'd like it.
- **Pique Macho:** a typical dish made with chunks of beef, sausages, French fries, peppers and onions, topped with a fried egg and a beer or wine sauce. We loved it, and after that it was straight to siesta.
- **Soups:** there's something for everyone, from quinoa and vegetable soups to potato soups and Mani (peanut) soups, whose peanut cream goes perfectly with beef and potatoes. It's a delight, our favorite.
- **Saltenas:** the other name for Empanadas, turnovers stuffed with meat or chicken. Tarija's were excellent.
- Street **hamburger:** every evening, the little gargotes were out and about, and we cracked quite often!

Saice

Vegetarian Saice

In terms of sweet treats,

- breakfast was rarely included, so in the mornings it was a market too, and we really spent our lives there. We ate **Bunelos**, sugar or cheese doughnuts, and even had **crêpes** in the south.

- the rest of the day, it was **fruit bowl** party. The saleswoman's objective was to fill the cup as full as possible, first with fruit, then with whatever was available on her stall... yoghurt, cereals, ice cream... Muy muy rico!

Waking up gently

The famous giant fruit bowl

And what else do we drink?

- **Maté de coca:** an infusion of coca leaves, mainly consumed for its altitude-fighting properties. It's very bitter, so we used to add a tea bag to soften the taste.
- **Api:** a hot, thick liquid made from a mixture of corn and cinnamon. To be eaten for breakfast, we weren't really fans...
- **Mocochinchi:** dried peaches soaked in sugar water. Consumed mainly at lunchtime, a little too sweet for our taste.
- **Wine:** in the south, the Tarija region is a wine producer. They are generally very sweet, very similar to our Pinot, and we had to test quite a few to find what we liked. I'm partial to the Aranjuez Tannat 2013.
- **Singiani:** a fermented grape-based drink, often drunk in cocktails with sprite or hot milk. It's surprisingly good and, above all, warming. Tested and approved at the Copacabana ferria!
- **The beers** are fairly light, with each major city having its own, such as Pacena in La Paz and Potosina in Potosia.

Tasting with Bolivian quantities

Our darling

To keep our taste buds entertained, we also went to a few more Western restaurants: here are our favorites in La Paz: In **Sucre: Pueblo Chico** for its excellent **Pique Nacho** + **Condor Café** for its affordable vegetarian menu, and in Tarija: **Andano** for its succulent homemade Italian pasta.

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