

La Tirana

16 July 2008

Every year there is a festival at La Tirana, Chile.

La Tirana has about 250 full time residents.

Over 10,000 people come to La Tirana for the festival.

This year, we were two of those people.

People come to La Tirana for many different reasons in many different ways.

Some people come for the grandkids.



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Some come to sell their wares.



Some people come to beg for change.



And some come for the food.



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Some people come to make memories.



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Some come to make music.



And some people come to be interviewed for Chilean radio.



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But of all the thousands who flock to La Tirana.



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Most come for the color,



The dancing,



The prancing,



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The posing,



And the costumes.



Of which, some are sedate,



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And others, not so sedate.



But not all are in La Tirana for the snapshots.



Others are here for different reasons, higher reasons.



They seek a miracle.



Or a message from God.



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Because, after all, La Tirana isn't just a festival, it's a religious festival.

A festival for the Virgin del Carmen.



And though she may be viewed as just another festival prop by some attendees.



La Tirana

To others, she is worth dragging yourself through the gutter by only your arms.



All the way there.



So while many come for the cute children,



And others for the show.



And some may miss what it is all about.



There are others there who know.



As I wrote in our [Christmas message of 2004](#) we have seen similar examples of devotion and manifestation of faith throughout the world by people of many different beliefs. I remain in deep respect and profound awe of seekers of God of all faiths such as those illustrated in this story.

All photos by Douglas Hackney



Photo by Jorge Valdes

Douglas and Stephanie Hackney are on a two to three year global overland expedition.

You can learn more about their travels at: <http://www.hackneys.com/travel>