

A Fulbright ETA's Guide to San Salvador de Jujuy

by Shana Khader, Fulbright ETA, 2007

Welcome

Consider yourself lucky. I loved Jujuy. The two teaching assistants before me loved Jujuy, too. Don't be fooled by all of the very rural "Quebrada de Humahuaca" pictures on the internet; the capital city, San Salvador de Jujuy, is an actual city with everything you're likely to need, though it's still a generally calm and safe place. Here is some background information (based on my 2007 ETA experience) to help you prepare for and settle into your year as a *Jujeño* ETA.

Work

About the Institutions

You will most likely be placed in one of the two *IFDs*, or *Institutos de Formacion Docente* in San Salvador de Jujuy. An *IFD* is **teacher-training college**, generally referred to as a *profesorado*. There are *profesorados* for all of the different subjects, but the students on the English track at the *profesorado* (ages 17-40+, but mostly in their 20s) are all studying to be English teachers. For this reason, their classes are essentially divided into two different types: the "*materias disciplinares*," which are language and culture classes (taught in English), and the "*materias pedagógicas*," which are theory-based subjects about teaching, learning, etc., almost all of which are given in Spanish.

I worked mostly in **IFD 5, "Jose Eugenio Tello,"** which is located in Ciudad de Nieva (north of the center of Jujuy). It operates between 6:30pm and 11:30pm Monday through Friday in the building that's a high school ("*Escuela Comercial No. 2*") during the day. There are **four years** of students, with first year being the largest (about 40 at the beginning of the year) and fourth year the smallest (about 15). As you can see, there is a high rate of attrition in the program both overall from year to year, and even in some classes from month to month.

The majority of the students take more than four years to finish the program (or the "career," as it's usually referred to, due to a lack of a direct equivalent for Spanish "*carrera*"). Students must pass an **entrance exam** to be admitted, and the school offers a preparatory course for this exam. It's imperative that the students have a background in English before they begin their studies, as the *materias disciplinares* are given in English from the beginning. You'll find, however, that **the level of students varies widely**. Many students will have attended private English institutes for years (abundant in Jujuy and throughout the country), while others will have had little English other than what's taught at secondary school (which isn't much).

IFD 4, "Raul Scalabrini Ortiz," where I worked once a week, is located on Santibañez street (next to the Rio Grande), two blocks from the Hospital Pablo

Soria, near Parque San Martin. It also operates on weeknights from 6:30 to 11:30, in what by day is a secondary school called “*Juanita Stevens*.” The level of English here is generally held to be lower than at Tello, and my experience is that on average it's true. However, the levels vary in both *profesorados*, so it's hard to make a general characterization.

In the Classroom

You'll most likely be given a great deal of freedom in **determining your schedule**. At the beginning, I recommend that you ask teachers what classes they think you might be useful in, and work out a schedule from there. This task was for me and my predecessors harder than it may sound, as there was little formal introduction to teachers (though you most likely have a different *referente* than we did, and I imagine the program will be run somewhat differently). If you find things to be disorganized when you arrive, then it's important that you be proactive. Asking one student from each year to give you a copy of their schedule is the easiest way to get the schedule for the whole *profesorado*. Remember that the ETA program in Jujuy has been active for a few years, so teachers already have some experience working with ETAs (and many of them have been Fulbright exchange teachers in the U.S.).

I mostly attended language and culture classes, with the occasional phonetics appearance. My **role in the classroom** depended heavily upon the teacher; sometimes I prepared entire lessons, and sometimes I gave the lesson the teacher had prepared. Often I prepared shorter activities, and there were also times I simply supported the teacher in the lesson s/he gave. I encourage you, again, to be proactive; if you have an idea for an activity or lesson you would like to do, talk to the teacher about it and decide on a date that you can do it.

The **materials available** are pretty basic. There's a chalkboard in every classroom, and there's also a CD/cassette player and a TV/VCR in the *profesorado*; they're usually available if you request either. I believe there is an overhead projector, as well (*retroproyector*), which could actually be very useful, but I never saw it used. If you will need any additional materials for your lesson, either bring them yourself or let the students know in advance (they're generally good about this, and will bring markers, props, etc. if you just let them know). In most classes, the students work from photocopies of textbooks and even novels (and if you want a copy of what they're working with, you will have to photocopy it, as well). There is a small library in the *profesorado* from which students can check out books, and one bookstore in Jujuy which sells a very few English language books, but for the most part new (printed) materials are not purchased often and are not easily accessible.

You should also be aware that the school buildings are neither air-conditioned nor heated, and that they are poorly insulated. This means that, especially in the winter, the buildings can get quite cold; make sure you're prepared with **warm clothes** that you can teach in (sweaters, closed-toed shoes, jacket, scarf, and even sometimes a hat and/or gloves).

Outside the Classroom

Though organizing outside-the-classroom activities is certainly not required, it can be enriching for both you and the students. You should be aware, though, that many students are extremely busy (working, studying, parenting, etc.) and may not be able to attend your scheduled activities; if you do try to schedule something, do your best to work with interested students to find a time and place that works for everybody. I was, for example, successfully able to organize a first-year **conversation group** (hosted initially at Escuela Comercial No. 2, then moved to a student's home), which was one of my favorite activities.

Outside San Salvador

There are *profesorados* located in a number of different cities throughout the province, including San Pedro, Tilcara, Humahuaca, La Quiaca, El Carmen, Perico, and Ledesma. The students at these institutions have less access to native speakers and to foreigners in general, and have fewer educational and English language resources. Because of this, both the students and teachers are very excited to host ETAs. I visited almost all of these *IFDs* for an evening; Carolyn visited a number of them for a few days at a time. Both of us had excellent experiences, and, if this is something you're interested in doing, I highly recommend it.

If you aren't introduced to teachers from other *profesorados*, ask the current English coordinator at the *profesorado* where you're assigned if s/he has contact information. Or ask for the contact information of the **ESNU** office (*Educacion Superior No-Universitaria*), located on Belgrano just before the Parque San Martin, which administers all of the *profesorados* in the province.

Housing

When I arrived in Jujuy, my housing had been arranged by the Ministry of Education. If you are looking for housing, consider contacting **Laila Quintar** (0388-423-2280) with whom I shared her very-lovely *Ciudad de Nieva* house. Laila had also received previous teachers and researchers through the Ministry, and is very outgoing and helpful. My living arrangement cost approximately US\$230 each month, which was quite high for Jujuy, so it may be worthwhile to shop around. In the end, though, I was very satisfied with my living situation.

Unfortunately, I can't offer much practical advice with regards to finding housing other than to ask around and physically look around—many places are not listed officially, and are advertised by word-of-mouth or signs on the door. There are, though, rental/real estate agencies, called *inmobiliarias*, that can help you find a place (they usually charge one month's rent). In general, though, *Ciudad de Nieva* and the *centro* itself are probably the safest and most convenient neighborhoods, though you may have other options.

“Extra-Curricular” Activities

The **Universidad Nacional de Jujuy** (UNJu) is located on Otero street between Belgrano and San Martin, and offers courses in a wide variety of disciplines. Though officially registering might be difficult, it’s very easy to sit in on a class (just ask the professor’s permission). The professors and administrators were generally very helpful. I attended a Spanish Philology class, as well as an Argentine Literature class, both of which I enjoyed.

The University also has a **Casa de Cultura** located on Belgrano between Ramirez de Velazco and Senador Perez, or thereabouts. They offer some classes and workshops (music, dance, etc.) at different times during the year, and are very helpful.

The **Galpones Recuperados de la Vieja Estacion** (big metal warehouses just past the Vieja Estacion) host a number of informal community-organized workshops. There is usually a schedule posted inside, but ask around. I attended a great Quechua workshop there every week.

There are also a number of **gyms** (two good options: Fox on La Madrid between Belgrano and Alvear, and Hermanos Hernandez on the Parque San Martin next to Grido), dance studios, language schools, etc. for some ongoing non-work activities.

Travel

I’m sure you can consult your travel guide for basic information about the province, but I’ll just add that the **Quebrada de Humahuaca** really is very accessible and worthwhile. In addition to the very-regular buses, there are usually cars that take passengers to the north (much faster for the same price, though a bit more crowded), which you can find behind the bus station. Ask about events happening in the north; other than Carnival (which you’ll certainly hear quite a bit about), there’s also Enero Tilcareño, Festival de los Copleros, concerts, etc. There’s also a lot more to Jujuy than the Quebrada, so I encourage you to explore some of this as well. Also note that there are *profesorados* in Tilcara, Humahuaca, and La Quiaca, that would certainly be more than happy to receive you for as much time as you’d like to give them—from one class period to a week.

One more tip: there are also cars to the city of **Salta** (in addition to regular buses), located across the street from the bus station. Salta is the nearest big city, and is very beautiful, has a number of tourist destinations, nightlife, restaurants, shopping, etc.

As far as long-distance travel is concerned, you can take a bus to just about anywhere, but buying tickets and finding out schedules can sometimes be a process (going from bus counter to bus counter in the bus station). Oftentimes, travel agencies (there are many in the center) can tell you the schedules and let you purchase the tickets there at no extra charge. Also, visit **www.plataforma10.com** for

a listing of the routes, times, and fares of many major companies. I only wish I had discovered this website sooner!

Plane travel is much less common in Argentina (because it's much more expensive than buses, and the bus system is really quite good), but it is an option. *Aerolíneas Argentinas*, which is the only airline that flies in and out of Jujuy, charges a much higher price to foreigners, and so is usually not the most economical option. Other airlines which fly in and out of Salta, though, charge the same price to all and are often much more reasonable; travel agencies can help you with airlines, fares, and schedules. Also, every Sunday there's a charter flight from Jujuy to Buenos Aires that takes 15 passengers and costs Arg. \$260; you can find out about this at travel agencies, too.

Staying Connected

There are a number of places to use the **internet** (called *cybers*) in the *centro* and the *barrios*; it usually costs about US\$.50 each hour. My favorite was *Ciudad Cyber*, on the pedestrian section of Belgrano.

It's easy and cheap to buy a SIM card in Argentina (less than US\$5), and most people use prepaid phone cards (purchased at *kioskos*) instead of fixed plans. Texting is very common, as **cell-phone** calls are very expensive. You may want to consider buying a used or refurbished phone in the U.S. before departing (make sure it's de-blocked and can be used outside the U.S.! Many U.S. phones don't work abroad.), as it's harder to get a cheap phone in Argentina. I took my de-blocked phone from the U.S and switched the SIM card.

It's free to receive calls on cell phones, which makes it a good way to stay in touch with friends and family in the U.S. Note that in order to dial an Argentine cell phone from the U.S. you must dial 011-54-9-city code-cellphonenumber, omitting the "15" from the cell number. For example, if your number in Jujuy is 155-123-456. you would dial 011-54-9-388-5123456.

And in case you want to send a package or postcard, the post office ("*Correo Argentino*") is on Belgrano between Balcarce and Neococha. International mail, though, tends to be fairly expensive (including postcards).

Around Jujuy

The biggest **grocery stores** in Jujuy are *Comodin* and *Norte* (soon to be Carrefour), both of which have stores in the center. Comodin also has a store in Ciudad de Nieva. You can get most of what you need there, though fruit and veggie prices are usually lower at local *verdulerias* (and quality and selection often better). If you're looking for specialty items, healthier foods, or spices, try a *dietetica*. There are number of them around, but I liked *Thanta Sara* on Balcare and Alvear. Also, *Monarca* (Lavalle and Alvear) has a number of interesting specialty items.

“La Peluqueria” is the pizzeria-bar recently opened by *“Los Tekis”*, the only nationally-famous *Jujeño* band. It’s on Alvear between Lavalle and Otero, and has live music, good pizza, and a draws a diverse crowd.

“El Churqui” (on Senador Perez between Alvear and Guemes) is a great place for a *picada* or a sandwich, with some of the best *fiambres* (cold cuts) in town, and a nice selection of beer and wine.

Panaderia de Dios (Lavalle and Alvear) is generally considered to sell the best *facturas* (pastries) in Jujuy (though they still don’t compare to the *facturas* in Buenos Aires).

Closing and Contact

Jujuy is a very unique place, and I wish you all the best as you build your own life there. I hope that this guide is helpful to you, but if you have any further questions or would like to contact me for any reason, please **feel free to email** me at shana.khader@gmail.com. You can also reach Carolyn Shemwell (Fulbright ETA 2006) at caso@lehigh.edu.

¡Suerte!