

ULR Dx-pedition, November 2020 - Northeast Brazil



**Text by: Martin Butera
Photographs by: Ligia Katze**



Photo 02: Ligia and Martin, heading for a new adventure



Attractions closed, flights canceled, borders blocked ... The Covid-19 pandemic, declared on March 11, 2020, impacted globally and took everyone by surprise.

Our life has changed a lot with the coronavirus pandemic, the use of masks and alcohol gel, they became part of our daily routine.

Part of the charm of travel and Dxpeditons was sharing them with others. But this also changed, due to the risk of contagion by coronavirus.

It is clear that it is not the ideal or the most appropriate time to travel, but personally I believe that we should not stop our life completely and that, using caution, using a mask and maintaining social distance, you can continue traveling despite the coronavirus.

Here I tell you about my experience of traveling in this new Dxpedition, after months of confinement at home.

Equipment used

I decided to work without SDR, all DXing live, one frequency at a time, for this I chose to take my most compact radio the "Radiwow R-108", without modifications, the purest possible concept, really speaking of Ultralight Radio, it will be just me , my radio and my wife of course (laughs) ...



Photo 05: As an example size of the radio "Radiwow R-108", compared to a pen.

And if we talk about weight, I did not even want to take my WRTH 2020 book, I preferred the iPhone application, called Shortwave Broadcast Schedules, developed by Black Cat Systems.

The app is certainly not a wonder, but you can't ask for much for a dollar, you can buy it here:

<https://www.amazon.com/-/es/dp/B007WE8C52>

I also uploaded several lists in PDF on my cell phone.

Day 1: plane trip to the city of Recife and aerial listening

We left with my wife, on a direct flight very early at dawn, from the Brasília DF International Airport (Presidente Juscelino Kubitschek), heading to the Recife International Airport (Gilberto Freyre), the trip lasts approximately 2 and a half hours, they are more 1600 kilometers in a straight line.

The city of Recife, as I mentioned before, was not chosen by chance for this Dxpedition, Recife is a city located on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean in northeast Brazil, hitting a clear area of central and north Africa.



Image 06: Location of Recife with respect to the African coast

Brazil is a huge country, of continental distances and covers a large part of South America. It is divided between the federal district (the Brazilian capital, Brasilia) and 26 states, each with an independent capital.

Within the state of Pernambuco, Recife is one of the largest capitals in Brazil, with more than 4 million inhabitants in the metropolitan region, and one of the oldest cities in the country, founded on March 12, 1537.

During the Brazilian colonization, the Portuguese needed a large port to bring back to Europe the wealth of the colony. Using the geographical aspect of the region, they founded the Port of Recife, and occasionally the Villa. During the 18th century, the port was considered the busiest port in America, which may give an idea of its size.

The city is full of "Coral Reefs" that cover the entire coast and it is for this reason that Recife got its name.



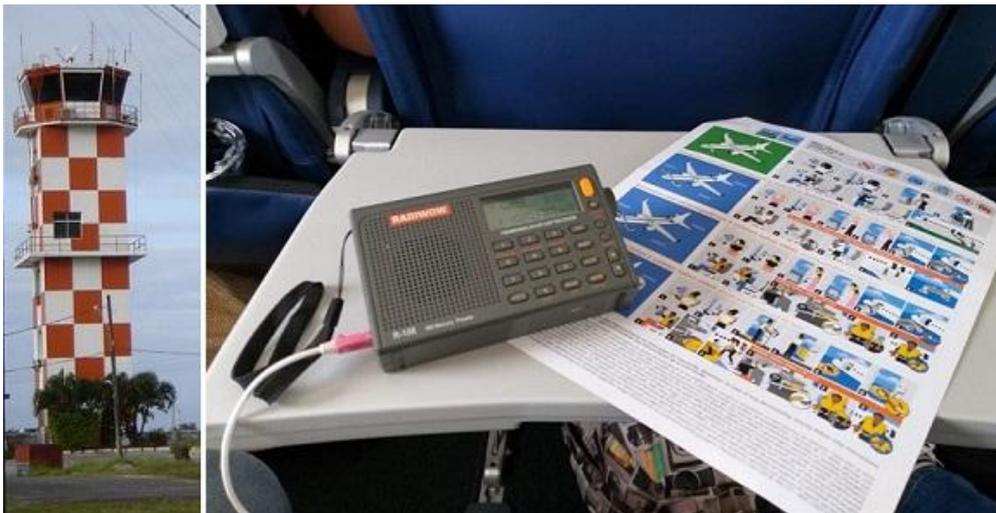
Photographs 07: Images taken from the cockpit of the plane, you can see the extensive coast of Recife

What is air traffic control?

The first audits carried out were from the Air Traffic Control, this is a service provided by controllers, on the ground, who guide and monitor the aircraft, in the air and on the ground, to guarantee a safe, orderly flow of traffic and fast. Air Traffic Controllers provide directions and flight authorizations, according to the operational characteristics of the aircraft and the traffic conditions at a given time. These authorizations can refer to the route, altitude and speed proposed by the aircraft operator for a given flight, and pilots must comply with the instructions and authorizations received.

It should be mentioned that in Brazil the practice of amateurs, capturing aviation frequencies, is not prohibited by law, and it is not a crime, nor a violation of telecommunications according to article 70 of the Brazilian Telecommunications Code. If you practice this hobby outside of Brazil, check the local telecommunications law in your country.

The following wiretaps were carried out with the authorization of the captain (pilot), provided that the plane was stopped on the ground and in the disembarkation hall of the airport of the city of Recife.



Photos 08: (Left) Recife Airport Control Tower,
(Right) Martin listening to air band

Aerial monitoring log

TWR Recife 118.350 MHz
Recife APP 119.100 MHz
Recife APP 119,500 MHz
Recife APP 119.950 MHz
ATIS Recife 127.650 MHz
ACC Recife 128.700 MHz
ACC Recife 134,800 MHz
ACC Recife 125.450 MHz

ACC Recife 126,850 MH

HF: 3452, 5565, 6649, 8855, 8661, 10096, 13315, 13357, 17955.

Abbreviations:

TWE: Control Tower

APP: Approach Control

ATIS: Terminal information service (Weather, runways in use, frequencies, in use, etc)

ACC: Air Control Center

After the pleasant flight and the first aerial surveys carried out at the Recife airport itself, we arrived at the hotel and these are the photographs of the reception place that I will have for a few days in the city, it is a room on a fifth floor (nothing wrong), it may seem a bit obscured by neighboring buildings, but check the aerial photo provided by the hotel.



Photograph 09: Martin in the hotel window



Photographs 010: Martin Butera's reception place, during his stay in the city of Recife.

Complete log of FM Radio listened to during the stay in Recife

88.5 Rádio Aconchego
88.7 Music
88.9 Radio Capital
90.3 Rádio Jornal Recife
91.3 Nova Canaã
91.9 Rede Aleluia
92.7 Transamérica
93.1 Radio Pernambuco
94.3 NovaBrasil
95.1 Radio Tropical
95.9 Jovempan
96.7 Rádio Folha
97.5 Recife FM
98.1 faixa comunitária / Olinda Olinda
98.5 faixa comunitária / Recife Recife
99.1 Clube FM
99.9 Universitária FM
100.7 Evangélica FM
101.5 Frei Caneca FM
102.1 Ynterativa FM
103.1 Radio Hits Recife
104.5 Rádio Dimensão
104.9 Radio Cajueiro
105.3 Rádio Plenitude
105.7 CBN Olinda
106.9 Nossa Rádio Recife
107.9Tribuna FM Recife



Image 011: Flyer Radio "Frei Caneca FM"

During the days I was in the city of Recife, the FM radio station that most caught my attention was the “Frei Caneca FM” station.

Inspired by the struggle and strength of Frei Joaquim do Amor Divino Caneca, one of the leaders of the Pernambucana Revolution and a great defender of democracy, Radio Frei

Caneca FM (101.5), is the public radio of Recife, linked to the Department of Recife Culture and the Culture Foundation of the City of Recife.

I was able to listen to various programs, such as "Aldeias e Quilombos", a program that told how art is a very important instrument for confronting racism against blacks and indigenous people.

You can also tune in to a Reggae music show, where you hear an interview with Valdi Afonjah, one of the biggest names in black music in Recife.

I didn't get tired of listening to programs on Radio Frei Caneca FM, another one that I found excellent was "Audio Mundi", a program that talked about the real father of Bossa Nova, a certain Johnny Alf, a composer who seemed to be extremely modern his time.

Radio Frei Caneca Fm, an excellent Radio, well eclectic, highly cultural and with a well defined identity, I really enjoyed being able to listen to it on my handheld radio.



Image 012: Radio Studio "Frei Caneca FM"

Day 2: Boa Viagem urban beach

We allocate the whole day to rest on the beach of "Boa Viagem", in the late afternoon night, rest at the hotel listening to local FM radio.

Boa Viagem is a 7 km urban beach, it is one of the richest regions of the city. There you can find everything from the most exquisite gastronomy, large shopping centers, to discos and public parks.



Photographs 013: Martin and Ligia on an afternoon at the beach in Recife



Photo 014: Lunch "fried fish in the praia"

Day 3: Walk through Old Recife

Our favorite part of the city "Old Recife", is halfway between Boa Viagem, Olinda and the North Zone.

The heart of the neighborhood is the "Praça do Marco Zero", where great events take place, such as the main concerts of the Recife carnival. There you will find the large sign that says "Recife" and, on the other side of the sea, the Parque das Esculturas.

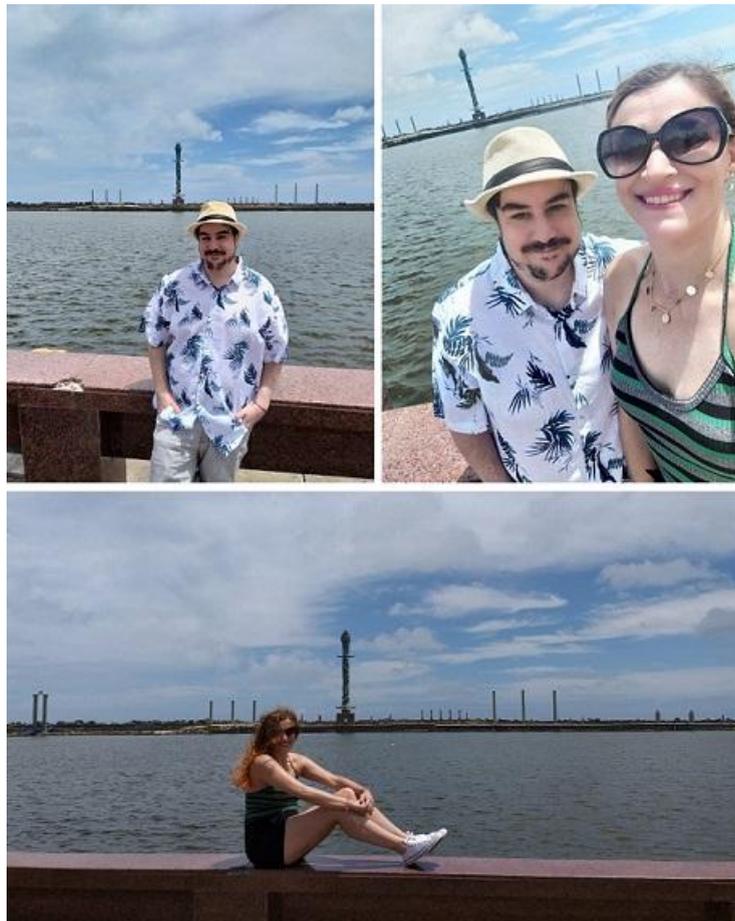
Recife is a city that has grown a lot and has a great past, present and future.



Photo 015: Ligia in the welcome sign of the city of Recife



Photographs 016: Martin and Ligia in “Praça do Marco Zero”, in Old Recife



Photographs 017: Martin and Ligia, facing the sea, where you can see the Parque das Esculturas, of Recife Antigo

Pernambuco Handicraft Center

A must stop in Recife, is the Pernambuco Craft Center "Roberto Lessa", with views, in front of the "Praça do Marco Zero", the store has more than 25,000 pieces for sale, all of them produced by almost 1,400 artisans of all the regions of the state.

The store has handicrafts made from the most diverse raw materials, such as ceramics, wood, glass, metal, lace, textiles and others.

The Pernambuco Handicraft Center is an integrated action of the State Government, which supports all the artisans of the different fairs throughout Pernambuco.



Photographs 018: images of the center and handicrafts taken by Ligia Katze herself (Martin's wife)

La Rua do Bom Jesus

We continue our tour of Old Recife through one of the most famous in the center of Recife (PE), it was chosen the third most beautiful in the world by the American magazine Architectural Digest, only behind Setenil de Las Bodegas, in Spain, and Washington Street , in Nova. York (United States).



Photographs 019: Ligia in "Rua Bom Jesus"



Photo 020: Ligia in “La Rua do Bom Jesus”, in Recife is the only Brazilian street on the list of the 31 most beautiful in the world



Photo 021: Ligia in “Rua do Bom Jesus”, Recife Antigo

Lunch time

Good travelers need to eat well to recharge their batteries,

In “Sabor do Pernambuco”, it could not be different, located in Old Recife, the place is beautiful with references to Pernambuco and with a menu of regional food and tropical juices.



Photo 022: Front of the restaurant "Sabor do Pernambuco", in Recife Antigo



Photos 023: Martin and Ligia, recharging energy, with a regional lunch in Recife Antigo

The "Galo da Madrugada"

After recovering energy we continue our walk through the beautiful streets of Old Recife, it is common in all Recife to see decorations with roosters.

In Recife, one of the largest carnivals in the world is celebrated and its protagonist is a giant rooster called "Galo da Madrugada", this is a giant doll that is carried around the town and arose because the Rooster should come out and wake up on Saturday Carnival, at dawn, before the opening of the shop in the city center.

His first parade took place on Saturday, January 23, 1978, at 5 in the morning, leaving the streets of Old Recife.



Photographs 024: Ligia in one of the many statues scattered throughout the streets of Old Recife, that allude to the "Galo of the Dawn"



Photographs 025: Ligia in the streets of Old Recife

São José Market

If there is something that we never miss on a trip, it is to visit its Municipal Market the Mercado de "São José", it is a historic market inaugurated in 1875. It was one of the first buildings in Brazil built entirely with an iron structure, following the line from the Grenelle Market in Paris. It has more than 500 stalls that sell a large number of products such as leather crafts, meats, fresh fish, typical foods, clothes and many souvenirs for Ligia to buy (laughs) ...



Photographs 026: Martin and Ligia at the main entrance of the "São José" market



Photos 027: Ligia trying on a beautiful and traditional leather hat (a true distinctive of the Northeast culture of Brazil), in the São José Market

"We are a society built from contrasts"

Recife, like any other city on the planet, does not escape from that. The capital of Pernambuco is said to be one of the most unequal in Brazil.

When we travel, it is not only to see tourist attractions or main museums, we also do it to observe the reality of life in the place, Recife is beautiful, it has the most beautiful beaches in Brazil, but it also has a sad reality.



Photographs 028: contrasts of the city of Recife



Photographs 029: contrasts of the city of Recife

After a long day of walking around Recife Antigo, we returned to the hotel, where I continued listening to local medium-wave radios.



Photo 030: Martin's hotel window, during his stay in Recife, we can see your Radio receiver a small but powerful "Radiow R-108"

Complete log of Radio AM listened to during the stay in Recife

- 580 kHz - Rádio RBC (Rádio Boas Novas)
- 720 kHz - Rádio Clube de Pernambuco
- 780 kHz - Rádio Jornal
- 820 kHz - Rádio Paulo Freire
- 890 kHz - Rádio Tamandaré - Olinda
- 1030 kHz - Rádio Olinda - Olinda
- 1120 kHz - Rádio Relógio - Paulista
- 1180 kHz - Rádio Cultural - Vitória de Santo Antão
- 1240 kHz - Rádio Capibaribe Jovem Cap
- 1300 kHz - Rádio Guarany - Camaragibe
- 1380 kHz - Rádio Continental AM Recife (Deus é Amor)



Image 031: Logo Radio Paulo Freire

During the days that I was in the city of Recife, the AM radio station that most caught my attention was the station “Radio Paulo Freire (AM 820 KHz)”.

Rádio Paulo Freire (AM 820 KHz), is the station that acts as a radio school and university extension, marked by the ideas of its founder Paulo Freire, Patron of Brazilian Education.

Rádio Paulo Freire is based on public communication seeking plurality and diversity of voices, with a popular language and an editorial line that addresses political, cultural and social issues that impact the life of the population, the main news of the day reach the listener quickly and efficiently. offering live coverage of the main current events.

It is clear that the programming due to the covid 19 pandemic, at the time of my listening, focused a lot on an excellent selection of original songs by Pernambuco artists and not so much on live programs, since the university is closed for the In-person classes and the radio is no exception, however you can listen to very interesting information programs, without a doubt from the AM radios in Recife, it is one of the most interesting that I could listen to.

Day 4: trip to the southern region of Recife (Porto de Galinhas)

Pernambuco has a total of 187 kilometers of coastline, geographically divided into the North Coast, the Recife Metropolitan Region and the South Coast. Porto de Galinhas (chicken port) is located in the southern region and is definitely a destination not to be missed. Voted the best beach in Brazil more than ten times, Porto de Galinhas is the most popular tourist destination in the entire state of Pernambuco.



Photo 032: Ligia welcoming you at the gateway to Porto de Galinhas

What to do in Porto de Galinhas?

The "star" attraction are the natural pools that form off the coast. Twice a day the tide drops enough so that some two hundred meters from the coast, pools are formed whose walls are the reefs and the bottom is the sand itself. In the warm and transparent water inside the pools, several types of fish are trapped that collaborate in forming a beautiful natural spectacle. You have to consult the tide table to know when the lowest tide is, which makes the formation of these pools possible.

Something highly recommended to do the first day, a good option is a walk along the beach and a ride in jangada (small rafts with colorful candles) leaving the Praia de Porto de Galinhas to the natural pools, where you can observe a little of the incredible marine fauna of the place.

So don't forget your snorkel!



Photo 033: Aerial image of the natural pools of Porto de Galinhas

To get to the pools, you usually go in jangadas, very simple and picturesque traditional wooden boats with a single sail where the jangadeiro takes groups of 6 to 8 people on a short, relaxed and enjoyable ride.



Photographs 034: Martin and Ligia, passionate on the beach of Porto de Galinhas, In the background you can see the jangadas (artisan boats that lead to the natural pools)

Lunch time !

Nothing better than having lunch in the many rustic restaurants on Porto de Galinhas beach, the clear specialty "fried fish".



Photos 035: Ligia and Martin, having lunch on the beach, fried fish and natural juices

After the pleasant day at the beach, we arrived at the hotel and these are the photographs of the reception place that I will have for a few days in the city of Porto de Galinhas, it is a room in an inn, with a large balcony, clear a few meters from the sea, it does not have a great height, but it has the advantage that I will no longer have the interference of the great city of Recife, the place excites me and promises that I can carry out what I came to look for (you hear from the other side of the ocean in medium wave).



Photo 036: Martin Butera's listening place in Porto de Galinhas (Brazil)

Day 5: Brazilian Caribbean, Pernambucano

Known as the Pernambuco Caribbean thanks to its clear waters and coconut trees, the "Praia de Porto de Galinhas" is one of the most paradisiacal in the region.

We travelers have some secret promises, which I will tell you in this report, it is said that at least you have to get drunk at least once in every new city you meet. (I think we got it right).

Many piña coladas on the seashore, gasoline machines, which provide "very cold beer" as fuel. I confess that it was not difficult to keep the promise.



Photos 037: Martin and Ligia, enjoying cocktails by the sea



Photo 038: Ligia loading fuel "Very cold beer"

In the afternoon at sunset, I returned to the inn and started my listening in medium wave



Photo 039: Martin tuning in to the first stations on the other side of the ocean ,, by simply entering your handheld radio



Photo 040: Martin tuning in to stations across the ocean on his handheld radio, on the coast of Porto de Galinhas.

Listening to radios from the other side of the ocean, from the Brazilian coast, only with my Mano radio

My experience of listening to Radios from the other side of the ocean, without an external antenna, directly from my “Radiowow R-108”, I can say that it was more than excellent.

These can be tuned easily, with an audio quality that almost looks like medium wave stations from a neighboring city.

In principle I will place 3 captures here. I also have to say that these AM radios transmit with a lot of power.

These three radios that you pick up, are super popular in the world of DX in medium wave, they are nothing new. However, I was thrilled to hear them like the first day.

It is Radio Jil FM of Algeria, in 531 Khz (AM), accusing a power of 600 KW, located in North Africa.

The other 2 stations correspond to the country of Iran, located in South Asia, they are 1188 Khz Radio Payam and 1332 Khz Radio Tehran.

All these stations were picked up, without an external antenna, directly on the balcony of my hotel room, with my handheld radio, from the Brazilian northeast coast, with absolute ease at sunset.

To celebrate the listening and the excellent trip to “Porto de Galinhas”, we took an excellent Brazilian wine “Terranova Vintage Cabernet Shiraz”, vintage 2019.

A ruby-colored wine with violet and purple tones. Aroma of red fruits with spicy notes, a slight and delicate flavor that harmonizes well with soft and elegant tannins "excellent".



Photos 041: Martin and Ligia celebrating listening by drinking an excellent Brazilian wine

After the wine, we went for a walk through the small center of “Porto de Galinhas and to close the night by having dinner in an excellent restaurant called“ Mardioca ”.

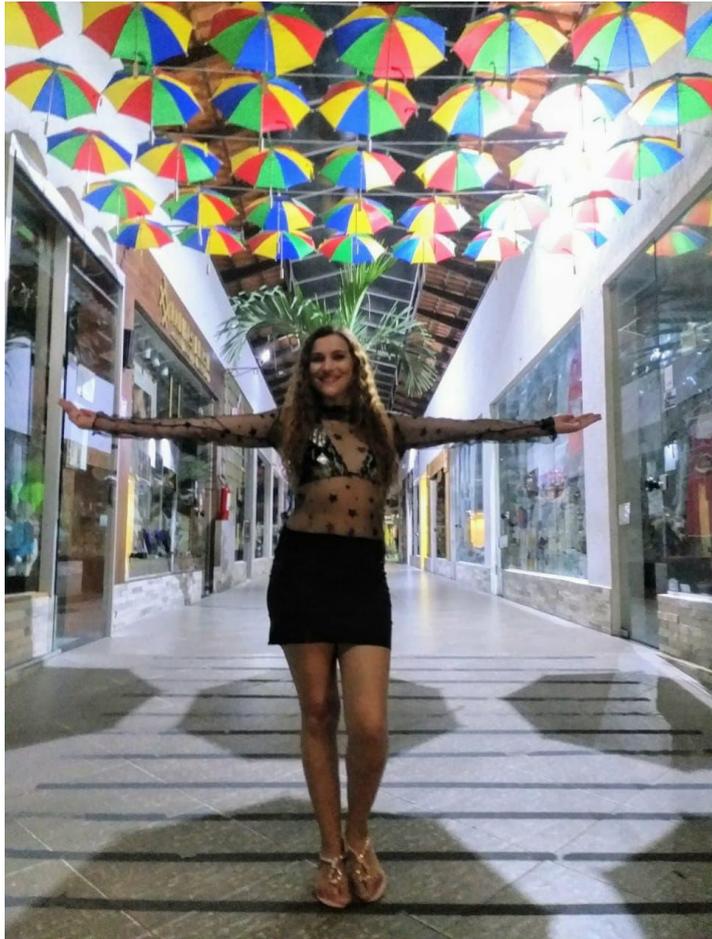
You always have to try what is typical of the restaurants, the Mardioca specializes in the famous "Espetinhos", these are small brooches of roast meats served until one is satisfied.



Photos 042: Ligia and Martin, dining on the classic Brazilian “espetinhos”



Photo 043: Downtown Porto de Galinhas, Recife Brazil 2020



Photograph 044: The beautiful Ligia (Martin's wife), in one of the galleries of Porto de Galinhas, Kind of Recife decorated with colorful umbrellas.

Day 6: Farewell to Porto de Galinhas Beach

On the last day of the trip, we dedicated everything to the beach. We arrived very early and were the last to leave the beach.



Photo 045: Ligia in search of another Drink



Photographs 046: Ligia (Martin's wife),
connected with the nature of the place,
until the last ray of sunshine

We take advantage of every moment of this new trip. After months of confinement at home due to the pandemic, we are not sure if Brazil, like other countries, will have a new wave of infections, so every second of this trip we try to enjoy it to the fullest . Now we have to return to our home in Brasilia DF, where we will carry out a new preventive quarantine for our care and that of all our loved ones.

Personally, I am very satisfied with this new Dx-pedition, because you can see that it is feasible to be able to listen to radios from the other side of the ocean, with a simple "Radiwow R-108" handheld radio, without the need for external antennas, or amplifiers, absolutely nothing ...

Some reader, especially Dxers may find this report irrelevant, in fact perhaps it is, but I recommend that before giving an opinion, ask yourself if the hobby of radio listening (Dxing), to you: Is it still as fun as before ?

If the answer is "yes," then you understand that I enjoy the hobby as much as you do.

Until the next adventure !!

Martin Butera, special for RadioUser November 2020



Photographs 047: Ligia (Martin's wife), asleep on the plane, on her way home



Photographs 048: Martin with the souvenirs bought during the trip
(Coffee, spices and local crafts)

Martín Butera: He is a Radio Amateur and Radio Listener (Dxers), with more than 30 years of experience, and has participated in DX expeditions throughout South and Central America, under the Argentine radio call sign "LU9EFO" and the Brazilian call sign "PT2ZDX".

He is one of our collaborators in South America Brazil and he also does it for several newsletters that cover the topic of world radio around the planet.

He is the founder of the CREW Radio Listeners' Club for Brazilian listeners, known as 15 point 61 (15.61). Currently only CREW 61.

Martín is Argentine, born in the capital city of Buenos Aires. He currently lives in Brasilia DF, the capital of Brazil, with his wife.

He is also a journalist, documentary maker and was a founding member of Radio Atomika 106.1 MHz (Buenos Aires, Argentina).

Ligia Katze: She is the wife of Martin Butera and accompanied him on his radio activities all over the planet. She is also a radio listener, journalist and professional photographer.