

I guess the question is would I do this again? Travel to another country for three weeks, away from family and friends, to a country where English isn't the national language. The answer, without reservation, is yes.

Romina was amazing. She is a natural hostess and guide. It seems, to me, like she has found her true calling in life. She is very professional, but very warm and friendly too. She made me feel comfortable and relaxed. Anything I needed help with, she helped. She showed me around Rosario, even organising a guided tour of the city. I saw her every day, sometimes twice. She never made me feel like I was just another job to complete or box to tick. She is very generous and I feel I can now count her as a (wonderful) friend. She came to all of my appointments acting as interpreter and advocate. She also took me on a number of therapy sessions (of the retail variety) and picked up food and other necessities when I needed it. She also organised everything with the hotel so that after my surgery I didn't need to leave the room unnecessarily.

The hotel was in a great location, within walking distance of everything I needed. I felt safe walking to the supermarket down the road, or a store around the corner.

The people of Argentina and Rosario in particular were wonderful, always trying to help me. I could almost always find someone in most places who would try and speak to me in English to help me shopping and they seemed to genuinely enjoy the opportunity to practice their English language skills. Whether they could speak English or not, everyone I came across would attempt to satisfy my needs, or they'd find an English speaker who could assist. Failing that I became relatively adept at charades, though thankfully that particular skill set wasn't called upon too often.

The surgeons were out of this world. I really don't think I'd have gotten the same sort of care or empathy from a NZ based surgeon. I invested a lot of time, researching having the procedure done in NZ; and money, paying for consultations. The medical professionals I spoke to here gave me the impression I was just another down payment on their new jet ski. Not that I knew how the Argentinean surgeons would be, but my experience here and of course the difference in cost made it easier to consider going abroad.

My surgeon, Mariano, was really amazing. I could tell when I met him that he really cares about his patients and his work. He gave me the impression of being a real perfectionist. I never felt like any question I asked was a bother or that I was being a pain. He spoke English very well (much better than my Spanish), and if he did not understand, Romina was always there to help translate.

Mariano came and saw me in the hotel each day, for about a week after my procedure, to change my dressings and check on my healing and well being. He

addressed any problems or concerns I had there and then. I felt very comfortable and even now that I'm back home, have no concerns or worries concerning the whole experience. He still rings Romina to get progress reports on my recovery and it's been over two and a half months since my procedure.

The hospital was modern and clean. My room had all of the mod cons you would expect from a first class facility including my own en suite bathroom, conversation nook with recliner chairs and large flat screen TV. The nurses were really attentive to my every need and personal request.

The surgeons really do have your best interests at heart and did little extras to ensure I look 'in proportion' and balanced. They did this at no extra cost, unlike, I believe, what would've occurred back home. The all up cost also included follow up treatments for the bruising and swelling.

The surgeon's skills are really amazing. As part of my procedure my old caesarean scars were removed. In comparison my new scar is brilliant. Gone is the old puckered gash; in its place is a beautiful flat 'line' across my stomach which hides below my bikini line. I'm looking forward to summer and the chance, after three children, two caesareans and lots of stretch marks, to wearing a bikini. It really has changed my life. I look better today than I have in a long, long time even before I had kids.

After my surgery and during my recovery I found that it was better to get out there and carry on as you would back home. The shopping was fantastic and Romina knows where all of the good shops and markets are. I thought I'd get homesick but in the end I had enough distractions, and the people and places allowed me to enjoy my time and relax. I put in a lot of hard work getting fit and losing weight before the trip and this also helped to make my surgery and recovery easier.

It wasn't an easy decision to make and my husband and I had a lot of people questioning our choice, but I'm proud of myself for having the courage to travel to Argentina to undergo my procedures. Sure, saving over NZ\$12,000 was a rather compelling incentive, but it was a pretty big leap of faith on my part to travel for twelve hours with someone I'd met only weeks beforehand, to a country where I didn't speak the native language, for an operation by surgeons who I'd not yet met.

If my experience is anything to go by, travelling with Romina on an organised Silhouette Makeover Tour is a no brainer. I have friends and family considering cosmetic procedures asking about my experience and I'm happy to recommend to them that they seriously consider doing it like I did.

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