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You Can Go Back Home: Going to live in Peru after 40 years in the US (Travel memoirs Book 1)

Humberto Vicetti

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In November of 2013, I finally did what I had been wanting to do for a long time, but couldn't find the guts to do: I quit my job, sold my house, sold my car, gave away most of my material possessions and went to live in Perú, the country I had left 40 years ago. I spent the better part of 2014 travelling up and down Perú, becoming familiar with my homeland for the first time.
I and my wife Janet, had been contemplating this move for a long time; but several reasons finally pushed us to take action. My mother had suffered a stroke and I wanted to spend some time with her. Besides we had been suffering from a sort of malaise; a kind of existential discomfort. We were miserable at our jobs, punching the clock everyday without any sense of fulfillment. Janet had been reassigned to a high stress position that was literally killing her. We were not enjoying life and we asked ourselves: "is this all there is to life." We decided that there had to be more.
I had spent most of my life in the US and living there had profoundly shaped who I am. I think in English; I dream in English; my sense of humor is distinctly American. And yet, deep inside I still think of myself as Peruvian. I prefer the company of Peruvians, I love Peruvian food, and there are many memories of Perú burned in my memory.
I didn't know what would in store for me in Perú. My wife Janet had only been there once for a couple of weeks and both the country and the culture were unfamiliar to her. I was born in Perú but I had lived most of my life in the US. Would we find what we are looking for in Perú? Would we adjust to a different culture, different food, and different system?
Eventually we came to the conclusion that the worst thing we could do was to stay in Miami. We had to find a different way of life. We had to find meaning in our lives. Florida at that point was a wasteland for both of us. Besides a few good friends we had nothing that tied us to it.
So we took the plunge and gave notice at our jobs. We felt a kind of Zen serenity when we finally made the decision. Whatever happened next, we would go with the flow.
As it turned out, our trip was the best experiences of both our lives. We discovered that there is a different way to live; that all of us at some point in our lives need to determine very clearly what is really important. We also discovered that we were still flexible enough, strong enough to make a radical life change like moving to Perú.

We did have our share of trouble: health issues, altitude sickness, marital squabbles, and issues with Peruvian service providers; you can easily go mad trying to get a simple billing error corrected. We also had to overcome our fear of venturing into the unknown. However, we were amply rewarded. Some of the sights we saw will remain with us for the rest of our lives: the lakes and waterfalls created by the Cañete river in the Nor Yauyos nature preserve; seeing Huancayo, my hometown, from the heights of Cochas; the open, hilly, deeply green valleys around Oxapampa; Macchu Picchu in the early morning. There are some truly beautiful places on this earth!
After nearly a year we went back to the States; not because we wanted to, but because we did not have the resources to stay in Perú much longer. We had not worked in all that time and that had put a big dent in our savings. Reintegrating ourselves to the US was not easy; we felt uncomfortable with the traffic, the pace, the food.
I hope that after reading this book you will have a better understanding of Perú, from the perspective of a

Peruvian who has lived in the US most of his life. Maybe after reading this book you will be motivated to visit Perú. It is truly a fantastic place.

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