

# INK

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## MY FIRST TIME IN THE UNITED NATIONS MODEL WORLD: CRAZY YET FASCINATING

By Natalia Castiblanco (7th semester FIGRI student, Interculturality elective)

The handling of all these MUN practices was not always a dreamy experience; on the first day, I forgot my name tag, which not only identified me during the entire model but was my main resource to communicate during committee sessions. That day, I had to go back home and bring it back with me... Obviously, that took a while and I arrived late to my first press release - so convenient, right?

It was Friday, April 28 when I set foot for the first time in Universidad del Bosque, headquarters of the 2017 version of COLMUN (United Nations Model of Colombia). Little did I know that it would be the beginning of a crazy yet fascinating process I adore even today. However, United Nations Models are no fairy tale, and the culture shock will inevitably get to you.

### The training

The preparation started in February 2017, approximately three months before the real model, and included earning the actual quota to participate in it. Once I was part of the attending delegation, I started talking to a lot of people—including students and professors, reading thousands of articles written by the NGO/press agent I was representing (The Cato Institute) and thinking about all the possible scenarios in which The Cato could get involved. The most entertaining part was attempting to think like The Cato, trying to give advice, talk and write just as if I was one of their executive writers.

Throughout this entire process, it was as though I had to forget about Natalia Castiblanco. That is how I understood one of the main products of the MUN world: delegates instead of people.

The dress code and the parliamentary procedure My comprehension of this phenomena got deeper when the model started, on Saturday—which is usually the longest and toughest day. I was meant to arrive 30 minutes early, dress according to a very specific code and speak as stated in the COLMUN handbook (which I had already read).

### The fellowship

After two full work days, Sunday night was designated to host the MET Gala Ball (the official COLMUN party). Even though I was not really in the mood to attend it, my entire delegation gave some details about it and my conclusion is: partying in the MUN world is a mixture between the Latin Grammys and the Project X movie. That means fancy clothing, lots of pictures and tons of cheap alcohol... A charming experience for every 20 year old, but surely not for an introvert trying to survive their first MUN.

What warmed my heart during those four intense days wasn't the understanding of my colleagues during Sunday night, but the entire model. Three days before COLMUN 2017 began, my brother was diagnosed with severe depression and hospitalized in a psychiatric clinic in Bogotá. The silence and sadness that surrounded my heart during those days was overcome by all the love and support from my entire delegation, especially from my directive board of the moment... Then, I understood the meaning of the fellowship perspective of the MUN world.

### The awards

Less expected than ever, I won the 'outstanding delegate' award from among my entire committee. The feeling of walking down the hall with a full auditorium with their eyes on me was overwhelming, but in the end, it truly pleased me. The personal growth I accomplished during COLMUN is just impossible to really tell, so, for those of you who are doubting whether to attend one of these enigmatic models or not: go ahead! Doing it will change your world.

**Hello!**

Thank you for joining us for issue 22 of Ink, Externado University's English-language magazine! We hope you enjoy the articles we've collected for you this time. Many thanks to all our contributors for taking part! It's always great to have a variety of articles from students of different levels and faculties. If you'd like to send an article for the next issue, then please ask your English teacher or send us an email. We also have many other articles on our Ink Magazine blog:

[inkenglishmagazine.blogspot.com.co](http://inkenglishmagazine.blogspot.com.co)

**Enjoy!**

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The idea of Ink is to display pieces of writing, in English, by members of the Externado community. As we try to maintain authors' originality as far as possible, you may find some minor mistakes in the articles. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Externado University.



# Home is where the heart is: I beg to differ

By Juanita Botero  
(7th semester FIGRI student, Interculturality elective)

When I first decided to pack my bags and move to a different city for my undergraduate degree, I didn't think much about the differences between

the place and people that I'd meet and interact with for the following 5 years of my life. Of course, I had thought about washing my clothes, cooking, doing groceries, for that was what was expected about moving alone. Throughout my life, I had always heard about how different "rolos", or people from Bogotá, were from "paisas" or people from Medellín or Antioquia.

But I hadn't paid a lot of attention to those stereotypes; in the end we were all Colombians. How different could we be? It turns out, we were different, even if we did share a lot of common ground as well. The first difference I noticed was how reserved they were. In Medellín, especially in my family and the school where I studied for 14 years, people were loud and outgoing.

Even if you didn't know them, they treated you like lifelong friends; there was a sense of belonging even if you didn't

belong. When I arrived in Bogotá, I noticed that this was somehow different. It was not that they were rude, like some people had warned me, but they did have a way about them, not loud, not instantly friendly, just guarded. It was strange, because I was used to the warmth of my people, but I didn't dislike that distance either.

When I moved to Bogotá, it was a time of rapid changes for me. I had graduated high school and started university in a different city, away from my family, my pets, and my lifelong friends and yet, I got used to this a little bit too fast. When I realized all the changes that I had gone through, it was already too late to back up.

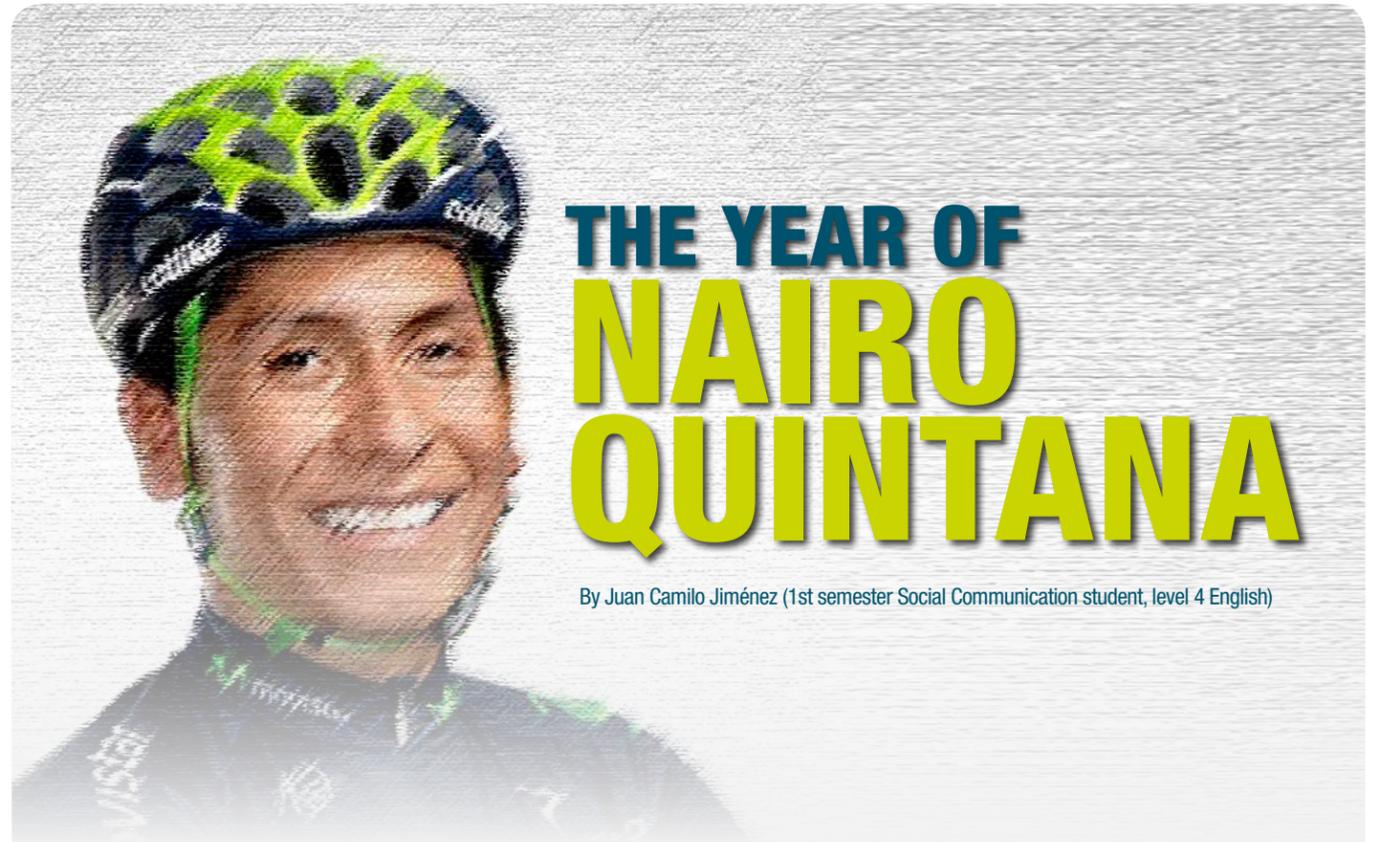
I remember perfectly the day I moved. I didn't feel nervous, I didn't have those butterflies in the pit of my stomach that used to visit me when something new and exciting was happening. But they did come, exactly one year after I first moved. I started noticing more differences between rolos and paisas. And I started missing my old home; I started questioning myself. Had I made the right decision? I started missing the flavor of the food I had eaten for 19 years of my life.

Here it just wasn't right. I started missing all the green I was used to seeing every day on my commute.

Here it just wasn't enough. I started missing the warmth and tough skin of my people. For me, here, it was just too cold and people were just too touchy-feely.

But, as I had been before, I was wrong. It wasn't too cold, they weren't touchy-feely, the food wasn't bad; I was just homesick, as I hadn't been back for a year. I got the sudden urge to be back in Medellín, and I did go back. But as soon as I was bored back home, I started missing a lot of things that I had back here in Bogotá: friends I'd made, the cold weather and the freedom I had gained.

When people ask me if I love Bogotá, I will always answer the same "I love Bogotá, it's my home, but my heart will always be in Medellín" And I guess I now have two homes; the first is the one that built me, that saw me grow. The second is the one that I made for myself, in a completely different city.



# THE YEAR OF NAIRO QUINTANA

By Juan Camilo Jiménez (1st semester Social Communication student, level 4 English)

Nairo Quintana, the Colombian cyclist, was born in Cóbbita, Boyacá in 1990. After Lucho Herrera, Nairo was the second Colombian to win La Vuelta a España. In the last couple of years, Nairo has been honored as the best Colombian cyclist taking part in the world tour. He also won the Giro d'Italia in 2014.

Nairo is currently considered one of the best climbers worldwide because of his resistance on routes with high slopes. He has always been considered as one of the favorites, and has won some of the hardest laps. Cycling has been one of the most important sports in Colombia since the 1980s when Colombian cyclists were given the nickname *escarabajos* due to their great ability to climb. During that period, great cyclists like Lucho Herrera, Fabio Parra, Patrocinio Jimenez and more won in Europe. That's how Colombians began to get excited about every race and radio broadcast about cycling.

When Nairo and all the other Colombian cyclists take part in a race, people feel excited and anxious about what may happen. They get up in the morning to see the stages and when we are victorious, the country becomes one, manifesting joy and support from the streets of its cities and towns. In my case I am a big fan of cycling, so every victory awakens pride in me. For example on 20th July 2013 when Nairo won the mythical stage of the French Alps on Colombian Independence Day, I have to admit that tears of happiness rolled down my face. In 2014 when Nairo went to the Giro d'Italia, he won and was proclaimed the first Latin American cyclist to take first place in this

race. This caused euphoria in Colombians who came out to celebrate the victory and to give him a magnificent welcome on his return to the country. Then, he went to Spain, but he didn't have a good experience because despite being first in the classification, he fell and had to quit the competition.

After that, in 2015 Nairo went to Tour de France. He came second in the general classification, and in La Vuelta he came fourth. 2016 is until now the best year for Nairo Quintana, because he won different races like Tour de Romandie, Volta a Catalunya and last, but not least, La Vuelta a España. In the Tour de France, Nairo once again was the main figure in the race. He came third in the general classification, getting his third podium in three races. Nairo's success in 2016 brought back the love for cycling in Colombia and was the reason for joy and celebration for all Colombians. In 2017 Nairo finished in second place in the Giro d'Italia.

He lost first place in the last stage, but took his place on the podium of this great race. After that, he went to the Tour de France but this time he could not take a place on the podium because he didn't have time to rest between one race and the next. In 2018, after six years of accumulating experience, Nairo only has the Tour de France in mind. Therefore, he will only run one of the three great races, and before the Tour he will have a very light schedule. All Colombians hope that 2018 will be the year when Nairo finally gets the Triple Crown in cycling, and achieves the best, which will turn 2018 into the best year of his career.

By Gabriela Moreno Roa (8th semester FIGRI student, Interculturality elective)

When I turned 15, my uncles and my grandma invited me to Cancun, Mexico. It was a big surprise for me, as I thought I wasn't going to do anything for my birthday, and besides that, I got the chance to travel with both of my favorite cousins in the world: Maquita and Daniela. Although it was amazing, and it would be nice to talk about the incredible things I did there, this piece is not quite about that.

One sunny day, we were at the pool of the hotel when we saw this girl about our age joking with her mom. There was something particular about her that made me stare at her. She had a special face, but I couldn't tell why, so I tried not to be too obvious. The day continued normally, until the hotel entertainers made an announcement: "it's time for the dancing contest", one of them said.

The next thing that happened was that this particular girl stood up and went to the dance floor, but whenever she tried to get out of the pool she needed the help of her mom and the entertainer. That was when I understood that she was a blind girl. Her name is Macarena Dealesandro, she lives in Argentina with her mom, dad and dog, she has a big sister named Pamela and apparently, they love each other a lot.

Macu became our friend after that, as my cousins and I also went to the dancing contest, where of course we all felt embarrassed, yet we had a great time. At this point of the story, I want to say I felt bad for Macu

because of her condition. She once told us she dreamed of taking her bicycle and riding it through all her neighborhood, not telling anyone and not needing anyone's help, so I felt awful as I understood there were little details of life that maybe she wouldn't be able to experience.

That night, we were having dinner with my family and next to our table were Macu's mom and dad. They asked us in a very polite way if we could spend some time after dinner with Macu, as they wanted some time alone to have a romantic evening (after Macu's birth there had been few occasions where they had time for themselves and the relationship). My uncles and my grandma agreed, so we spent some time in Macu's room.

Well, the sleepover started and our friend began to talk about how she got a new computer from her family: a special one for blind people. The computer talked to her, so she could give it instructions about what she wanted to do. The interesting thing about it, besides the fact that none of us had a computer that talked to us, was when she showed us a video where she got to sing with this incredible Argentine singer named Soledad Pastorutti in one of her concerts!

Even though I'm not blind, I haven't had the chance to sing with my favorite singer, so it was amazing that Macu could! It was like a big bucket of cold water for me at that moment. I didn't feel bad any more for Macu; I figured out that despite being blind, that didn't stop her from achieving her dreams. It was shocking for me to see that blind people have a wide range of possibilities and that their destiny is not only to be at home and be cared for by everyone. That's why they say, "We are only as blind as we want to be".

**"We are only as blind as we want to be"**

**- Maya Angelou.**



# Cultural arrangements:

## Are Colombians truly different from other Latin Americans?

By Vanessa Osses Jaramillo (7th semester FIGRI student)

particular cultural mixes. This cultural diversity makes Latin Americans what we are: yes! Including Colombians.

It is undeniable that each Latin American country has its very own identity: every society has its own experiences, history, people and organization. But, at the same time, it is impossible to ignore that countries from this part of the world are characterized by a strong multicultural component: besides their uniqueness, countries from this region are not so different from each other.

First of all, it is pertinent to talk about Colombians. The term 'Colombian' includes many communities that are really different from each other: some people assume that we are, as a society, a mix of regions that sometimes can't agree or even understand the other's position. People also think that maybe we are a sort of Yugoslavia of our continent, a country full of misunderstandings and stereotypes.

Colombia has a large biodiversity and also has an enormous human diversity. The main question at this point is if that condition makes us different from the rest of Latin America.

Let's stop here for an instant. It is relevant to emphasize that the case of Colombia is not isolated from the respective cases of other Latin American countries. Is this statement true? Well, let's build it up.

The construction of Latin American societies has been a process based on very

We are not so different because, in essence, we are the mixture of the 'continental' (better called European) cultures that traveled to the 'New World' and the ancient native civilizations that were present in the territory when the colonists arrived. We are the final product that was born between two distant cultures: the indigenous and the European. Our 'Mestizaje' was not a choice: It was the only option that those explorers of the late 15th century gave to our predecessors. Even exceeding our ancestor's will, the imposition of 'correct' ways of developing countries labeled our beginning as one that was full of abuse, discrimination and violence.

Latin American Countries were built with a Spanish, British, French, Portuguese and also an unexpectedly Dutch point of view. This obviously excludes the aboriginal context. That's how societies like Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Surinam, Paraguay, Uruguay, Panamá, Belize, Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras, Ecuador, Peru, etc. appeared on the world map.

In my opinion, this fact is truly relevant as a reminder. Latin America is known around the globe as a region that paradoxically is very racist and abundant in discrimination. And Colombia is not an exception. Sometimes, in our region, we forget that our history is similar and extremely correlated, and that makes us stereotype others. We have built an absurd competition in Latin America of discovering who is the best and which nationality is better. Our problems are increasing the distance between us, and our problems are fed by forgetting that we all are truly similar.

# Happiness guiding a welfare society

By Laura Puerta (5th semester FIGRI student, the World in English elective)



school, etc. We should recognise though that the 21st century is not a time of war anymore; what it is, is a time of selfishness. That is why military service should be replaced by social service and be obligatory for everyone: both men and women.

First of all, it is important to recognise that the Colombian internal conflict is greatly reduced, because of the successful agreement with the FARC and the future one with ELN (the two most important guerrilla groups in the country). As a result, the amount of soldiers we need is less now, while the amount of volunteers we need for reintegration and for the reparation of victims is much more. We do not need people for war anymore: we need to help our bleeding country to heal.

With this in mind, it is time to re-educate our nation to be more peaceful and encompassing, and less violent. When

we force men to be soldiers, we promote a strict, inflexible and rough lifestyle, and we teach them to be macho and insensitive. Besides, sending just men to the war gives the social message that women are weaker and not able to do these public services. Not teaching people this sort of thing is a good way to get people out of the culture of hate and get them into a culture of awareness. Social service makes people more sensitive and merciful, which is what we need right now.

In conclusion, military service is obsolete. It is not an option anymore for our country, and instead, we need a social service, which is equal for both men and women, and productive for our nation in this time of peace. Social service means helping needy people, giving women equality, and advancing to a new Colombia.

Military service has been, historically, a requirement for men of legal age. It is a service that men give to the state, being soldiers during a certain period of time. In most of the world's countries, such as the United States or France, it is voluntary, but in other countries like Austria, it is obligatory. In Colombia it is obligatory too, from the moment a man reaches legal age: 18 years old. However, there are many ways to avoid doing it: paying, proving you are studying, graduating from a military

# The Daily Life within a Man

By Andrés Rengifo (3rd semester Economics student, level 4 English)

On a cloudy day like any other, a man lies tired after a calamitous work day where now his only wish is to reach his sweet home to rest peacefully. The man walks on the sidewalks of the city carefree and immersed in his insatiable thoughts, accompanied by the chaotic sounds of the cars and an immense crowd that together create a cold and dark environment that brings with it the spiritual desolation of each man.

As time passes a small drop of water falls onto the dry pavement. It is the arrival of rain. A feeling of freshness and tranquility floods the city, as people run hastily to avoid getting wet but the man without any concern walks slower, trying to think that the rain will only get his clothes wet anyway, forgetting that the rain will also make his skin wet. Given his level of unconsciousness though, he has forgotten the pleasure of feeling the rain touching his skin and it makes him feel closer and closer to nature, reflecting at last on the loss of sensitivity of a man who once enjoyed getting wet in the rain.



# My volleyball experience

By Sara Baez (1st semester FIGRI student, level 4 English)

Volleyball is the sport that has changed my way of thinking, and since I started to play this sport I started to have a different perspective about my life. This is a story about when I learnt an important lesson.

In 2016, I was part of my school's volleyball team. At that time, we were in a competition between all the schools in Bucaramanga, and after a lot of sacrifice my team managed to arrive to the game that would decide third place. When the match date arrived we were so nervous because this was our last game together as a team. At the same time, we were so excited because in this game we would have a chance to show all the things that we had learnt during the year.

We had the game on August 26, 2016, in a school located in Florida Blanca Santander, a town that is only a few minutes away from Bucaramanga. In the school's coliseum, the temperature was very high and the roof was made of metal, which just concentrated the heat.

The game began and we started to lose. We were all too distracted and our coach was angry with us because we were not showing our true potential. Two sets went by like that, until only one was left to lose the whole match, and suddenly we managed to focus, and we started to play well. We all made our best effort that we could in that set, and so we won: not just that set, but also the fourth one (in finals the matches are of five sets, so to win you have to lead three of them). Only one final set was left for us to win the match, and in that set all the girls played in the best possible way. In that set each player made her best shot, serve, reset, etc. We made an impact. We all entered a state where the game was the only important thing: we no longer needed water, or were bothered by the terrible heat that there was in that place. Finally, after all that effort, we won, and all of us felt a deep happiness and we started to cry and hug each other while our coach congratulated us. That day I realized that with sacrifice and dedication you can get what you want.

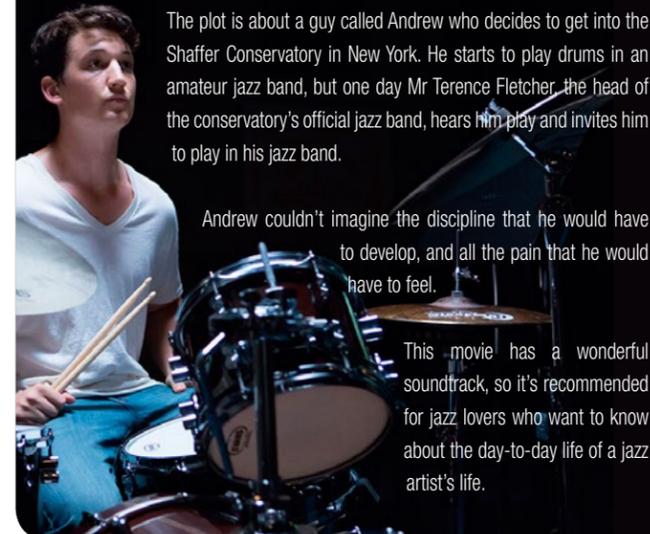


# Whiplash

By Jean Carlo (3rd semester Economy student, level 4 English) and Carolina Mora (5th semester Social Communication student, level 3 English)

Whiplash is an amazing film. It was directed by Damien Chazelle and it was released at the Cannes Film Festival in 2014.

The plot is about a guy called Andrew who decides to get into the Shaffer Conservatory in New York. He starts to play drums in an amateur jazz band, but one day Mr Terence Fletcher, the head of the conservatory's official jazz band, hears him play and invites him to play in his jazz band.



Andrew couldn't imagine the discipline that he would have to develop, and all the pain that he would have to feel.

This movie has a wonderful soundtrack, so it's recommended for jazz lovers who want to know about the day-to-day life of a jazz artist's life.

# The Legalisation of Drugs

By Mónica Vasquez & Gabriela Useche (1st semester FIGRI students, level 3 English)

Drugs have been legalised in some countries in Europe. For example, in Portugal, which was the first country to formally decriminalise them. In these countries drug trafficking and drugs use have decreased drastically. On the other hand, drug use and drug trafficking in the United States have increased because the illegality of drugs make it more expensive and good business for drug dealers.

We agree with the legalisation of drugs because if drugs are legal their cost will be lower and the rate of consumption will be reduced as happened in Portugal. This is now the European country with the lowest rate of drug consumption.

By **Juan Felipe Álvarez** (1st semester FIGRI student, level 4 English)

There are thousands of restaurants near the university: some of them are fast food restaurants, while others are traditional food restaurants. People think they can only eat fast food because that's what the nearest places sell, and they need to eat somewhere close to the university so they won't be late for class. But this isn't healthy. A much better option is the "Saludable Restaurant", which is in Mandolinas street.

People need to change their eating habits, and for that reason, I recommend this place. The owner is so kind with the customers, and she makes delicious parfaits and fruit juice. The best is that all these food is organic, which is healthier than eating fast food! It's close to the university, too. The fruit she uses is fresh and she makes all these with love. So, you really need to go there, not only for the service, but also because of the taste. The taste is excellent!

From my experience in this place, I've got to tell you: the first time I went there was in January, when I started my university life. I really liked the smoothies, parfaits and the fruit. All the food in that place is delicious and healthier than the food you find on the street.

Why is it healthy? Because the ingredients that they use to prepare the food are organic, so it's better for you. Also, all the juice has different purposes like detox, anti-flu, antioxidants, refreshing and energizing. This place doesn't just offer you what I already told you, but they also offer a healthy lunch for a low price, healthy cookies, and more. I recommend everything there, so you need to try it now!

You can recognize the restaurant because it's a small orange house in front of the Mandolinas university building. They have small chairs next to a white door, and the healthy restaurant is divided into two parts. At the front, you can see the place where they prepare juices, parfaits, smoothies and sandwiches and at the back, there's the place where they prepare the lunches.

Near to the university you can find many restaurants that offer you fast food and many of them are not healthy, but this one offers you the possibility to eat healthily for a good price. The service is also pleasant and it's a good option when you're deciding where to have lunch.



## Time to be a Fit Person!

By **María Paula Vega Urrea**  
(2nd semester Public Accountancy student)

Do you want to be fit? If that's what you want, you should do it for your health, but not for fashion. Being a fit person means being well physically and spiritually. The first thing to do is to love yourself, and to want to be the best version that you can be.

This would be an excellent idea for Externado students, because at university, many students have a lot of stress and having a fitter life could help us not only to reduce our stress, but also to have a better body, have good health and be better students.

Here are some recommendations if you want to feel better:

You need to eat! Yes: eating six times a day is important, because if you don't eat breakfast, for example, you will feel anxious about wanting to eat more. We should eat more vegetables and less fats and carbohydrates. Between class, you can eat some fruit.

Exercise is very important because it helps to reduce heart problems and obesity as well as treating stress. At university you can go to the gym, take part in different activities that Bienestar has, or go to Alcazar with your friends and do some sport.

Don't forget to sleep. Your body needs rest because if you don't sleep, you will have concentration problems, your physical appearance won't be very good, and you'll feel anxious. You can take advantage of your free time by sleeping in "El Solar" or in the university's hammocks.

Invite friends to do these activities with you, so you have more fun and you can support and encourage each other.

Make a list of your goals so it's easier to fulfil them and you can evaluate your own progress.

My most important recommendation is never give up; always be positive, and do the exercise that you like best. For example, you can dance, do yoga, go to the gym, or go for walks and you will see the results.



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