

COFFEE WITH GRINGOS - EPISODE 11 TRANSCRIPT

Paige: You're listening to Coffee with Gringos. I'm Paige Sutherland.

Mariah: And I'm Mariah Wika. Welcome back. Remember, as you listen to this episode, if you get lost, check out our transcript and vocabulary guide on our website. And today, we're talking about a topic that we all know and love - the weather. Well, whether we love it or not, we talk about it every single day. And here in Chile, the winter is coming to an end, and everybody is so relieved. They're like: "Oh, thank goodness the winter is ending! It's been terrible!" I'm from Minnesota, and I feel like this was the easiest winter of my entire life. It WAS the easiest winter of my entire life. I thought it was mild. I thought it was beautiful. I didn't have to wear gloves once. It's been amazing. And it blows my mind that everybody here is like, "Oh thank goodness the winter is ending!" I thought the winter was pretty nice.

Paige: No, I couldn't agree more. I'm from Boston, and winter for us is snowstorm after snowstorm. The wind...

Mariah: Exactly. Oh my god, wind chill...

Paige: The feeling of your face being so numb your eyes are watering. And you just can't wait to get inside.

Mariah: Paige and I are accustomed to the type of cold that hurts. Like it's painful to be outside! Sometimes in Minnesota, they have to cancel school for kids because it's physically dangerous for them to wait outside for the bus. I have memories of walking back to my dorm room in college and the wind blowing, and you've got your backpack on, and you're holding things in your arms, and the snow is just hitting the side of your face, your eyelashes are frozen together, your hair is frozen... it's a type of cold that you cannot understand unless you actually experience it.

Paige: Yeah, yeah. To us, that's winter.

Mariah: That's winter to me! Walking through the park in a light jacket with a hat on... oh my gosh, that's perfect. That's not cold!

Paige: It was crazy too because when you're in Santiago, the weather during the winter sometimes can be in the high 20s to mid 20s. It gets very hot, and you look up into the mountains, and you see snow. So, it's weird that you're in this city where I'm wearing a t-shirt and shorts, and I look up and I'm like, "Oh! It is winter! I can see the snow in the mountains." And I even went skiing a couple weeks ago, and honestly Mariah, I could have skied in shorts and a t-shirt.

Mariah: Seriously?!

Paige: I got a sunburn! My whole face, my arms... everything was burnt because it was gorgeous out. It was so hot, but yet I was skiing! At home when I ski, I don't think any part of my skin is showing because it would freeze.

Mariah: You would get frostbite.

Paige: Yeah.

Mariah: I will say that one big difference and one reason that the winter is difficult for a lot of people here is because it's not necessarily standard to have heat inside of your house. And so, for example, here in my apartment in Santiago, we don't have heat, we have little heaters to help warm the house, but we don't have an actual heating system, and that does make the winter difficult for people, for sure.

Paige: Absolutely. At home, it's without question, every building has central heating.

Mariah: In general, yeah.

Paige: It's just part of the culture.

Mariah: It kind of has to be because the temperatures are so cold that your pipes will freeze if you don't have central heating.

Paige: The other thing that's different here with winter is I've noticed besides the cooler temperatures, how people associate winter with the smog. In Santiago, the smog is so bad in the winter. I mean, I live in a building that has 29 floors, and when you look out over the city from the 29th floor, all you see is smog. You can barely see the city! That's something from Boston and Minnesota we don't experience at all anytime of the year.

Mariah: Right, they're cities that are much less polluted. But of course we're talking about our experiences of winter in Santiago, but if you go to the North of Chile or the South of Chile, the weather's totally different right now because one thing that's really unique about this country is that there are several climatic zones in one country. So if you go north, you're in the desert, and it's sunny, and it's beautiful, and you're in shorts and a t-shirt. But if you go far south right now... oh my gosh, that is real cold. Y'know? That's the type of cold we're used to.

Paige: Yeah, no, that's very true. I went to Atacama a couple months ago, and it was winter, but yet again, I was in the desert, so I was wearing shorts and flip-flops and a t-shirt. And I had sunblock on!

Mariah: Exactly, exactly. I think one thing that makes Santiago's heat in the summer more bearable is that it's a dry heat. Humidity is the worst. It's just the worst.

Paige: That's what's interesting to me too is that when I talk to my students, everyone, like you said from the get-go is dreading winter, can't wait for it to be over, excited for the warm weather. They say that spring is their favorite because summer is too hot. It's too hot here in the city, but they don't have humidity... it's a dry heat, so I'm like, "How bad is this going to be?!" Because for us, it's 90 degrees (fahrenheit) in Boston, but with humidity, it feels like 110.

Mariah: Right, fahrenheit.

Paige: So, thinking about the summer here without humidity... is it gonna be that bad?

Mariah: It's still really hot. I can say from experience that it's still really hot - especially when you take the train or the bus. It's a different type of heat. I mean, there are places that are so humid that when you step outside, you're instantly sweaty. And it's not really like that from my experience here.

Paige: I will say since I've been here... I never thought I would say this in my life, but I actually miss rain!

Mariah: Yeah, me too!

Paige: I love at home those rainy days where... "Oh, I guess I have to read inside today!" It's just that...

Mariah: Cozy feeling!

Paige: Yeah and here, it rains... I think it's rained three, maybe four times since I've been here.

Mariah: In Santiago. Yeah. I know that in the South of Chile it rains a lot more, but here in Santiago, yeah, it hasn't rained very frequently this year. And I agree, I definitely miss it too. There's something comforting about that gray and rainy type of day.

Paige: Exactly. And here, I love when it rains, the few times that it has. Because then the skies clear. The day after it rains, all of the smog kind of gets cleared away for a little bit, and you can see the city and the mountains again - in its beautiful glory!

Mariah: Right, you can actually see the Andes! Yeah. Yeah, I completely agree.

Paige: And it is funny how weather is so attached to your time of reference. Where right now, it's going to be Spring, and I'm like, "Okay... so it's April?" What month is it?!"

Mariah: Our seasons are totally flipped. And sometimes I completely forget what month it is because it doesn't match with my perception of the weather.

Paige: Absolutely. I do it constantly. It's hard for me to remember when peoples' birthdays are or holidays coming up because for 28 years, my time of reference has been the weather.

Mariah: Right.

Paige: And it was funny, I was teaching months with my students the other day, and one of the questions was: What's your favorite month? And everyone was saying: December, January. And for us, those are the coldest times of year in our cities. And I was like, "What?! Why would your favorite months be December and January?!" But here, that's their summer. That's our July and August.

Mariah: Totally. I was teaching the seasons, and I had the same type of experience. I was like, okay, Spring is April and May! And that was, that was not right. Because for them, Spring would be September, October.

Paige: Well, luckily for us, Winter is ending, and warm weather is coming.

Mariah: Yeah, even though it was a mild winter, I'm still happy that Spring is on its way because it's such a beautiful time here - especially with all of the different trees and the flowers. Although, we'll have to prepare for allergy season.

Paige: But that's another episode.

Mariah: Exactly. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk to you soon.

KEY VOCABULARY, PHRASES, AND SLANG

Check out (phrasal verb) - look at something

Example: If you get lost, check out our transcript and vocabulary guide on our website.

Whether (conjunction) - if, used commonly when expressing doubts or questions

Example: Well, whether we love the weather or not, we talk about it all the time.

Mild (adjective) - not severe or extreme

Example: I thought that winter in Santiago was very mild!

It blows my mind! (idiom) - I can't believe it, it's shocking to me

Example: It blows my mind that people think Santiago is a very cold place.

Thank goodness! (phrase/saying) - used as an expression of relief

Example: Thank goodness the winter is over!

Snowstorm (noun) - a heavy fall of snow

Example: In Boston, there are many snowstorms in the winter.

Wind chill (noun) - the impact that wind has on how cold the air feels

Example: The wind chill is terrible during Minnesota winter. It feels so much colder than the actual temperature!

Numb (adjective) - unable to feel

Example: Sometimes, it's so cold that your fingers go numb if you don't wear gloves.

Eyelashes (noun) - the short, curved hairs on the edge of your eyelids

Example: It was so cold that my eyelashes froze together.

Frozen (adjective) - turned to ice because of extreme cold

Example: My hair was completely frozen after a few minutes outside.

Sunburn (noun) - damage to the skin caused by sun exposure

Example: When Paige went skiing, the weather was so warm that she skied in a t-shirt and got a sunburn!

Frostbite (noun) - damage to the skin caused by overexposure to intense cold

Example: It can be dangerous for kids to wait outside for the bus on cold days in Minnesota because they can get frostbite.

Central heating (noun) - a system for warming a building

Example: The winter can be more difficult in Chile because not everybody has central heating.

Smog (noun) - the cloudy haze caused by pollution and contamination

Example: The smog is worst in Santiago during winter time.

Sunblock/Sunscreen (noun) - a cream used to prevent sunburn

Example: It's important to remember to wear sunscreen when you're spending time in the sun.

Humidity (noun) - the amount of water vapour in the air

Example: Humidity is awful because when you step outside, you're instantly sweaty.

Rainy (adjective) - an adjective used to describe a day, season, or place impacted by rainfall

Example: It hasn't rained much in Santiago recently. I actually miss rainy days!

Cozy (adjective) - giving a feeling of comfort, warmth, and relaxation

Example: Rainy days can be very cozy.

Floors (noun) - levels in a building

Example: I live in a building that has 29 floors.

Gray (adjective) - used to describe cloudy days without sun

Example: There was no sun; it was a gray day.

From the get-go (phrase) - from the beginning

Example: Like you said from the get-go, everyone is dreading winter.

Dread (adjective) - anticipate with fear or worry

Example: I'm dreading cold weather.