

Last night Fiona and I walked from home to dinner and back.... another side of Dili. We were planning to get a taxi but there are few taxis at night. I realised I had lost my fear. There is often little street lighting. The streets here at night are busy unlike the mountains. It's hot, so families often sit outside and chat, kids play etc. There are always groups of young men hanging out. When I first arrived it made me nervous but last night we walked quite a long way and not one moment of tension... all we got was "Bonoite" or "Malai, Malai, Malai." .... all friendly. I'm sure it helps being the 2 of us but still it was very good for me.

Can't talk about Dili without mentioning the animals... the roosters crowing in the morning, the pigs wandering around, the odd goat, occasional buffalo, the hundreds of dogs – mostly malnourished and just roaming free, cats, geese, and geckos.



I wouldn't call Dili an attractive city. Many of the old buildings were destroyed and there remain many shells. Slowly these seem to be getting fixed up as there is a housing crisis here in Dili. The big grand buildings of Dili are Parliament and the Presidential Palace. Also some of the Ministry buildings and of course the Embassies are all quite big too and, of course, they are mainly on the water front. I haven't seen too many grand homes. Most are hidden behind large concrete and wire walls. Most housing is small and ranges from the concrete to the flatted bamboo styles. Houses are close together but there are many trees too.



Tonight we will prepare a farewell dinner for the family, and tomorrow.... Hatobuilico

I have so enjoyed my stay in Dili - the experience of staying with a large extended Timorese family, studying Tetum, overcoming fears and prejudices, learning heaps about myself and this totally new and unique culture. Thank you Dili, and thank you to Fiona as her friendship and travel experience have been invaluable for keeping things in perspective