



*NOTA AOS AMIGOS:* Desde 1994 aproveitamos o final de ano para enviar votos de boas festas acompanhados de uma atualização sobre nossas andanças e façanhas. Com o privilégio de ter amigos espalhados pelos quatro cantos do planeta, simplificamos e mandamos uma mensagem única em inglês. A todos, nosso carinho e votos de Feliz Natal e um ótimo 2012!

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#### **Christmas 2011**

Dear friends, for the first time since 1994 last year we did not send out our “traditional” Christmas update, for which I take the blame and full responsibility... Here are the highlights from the Santos’ for another great year:

Rebecca (15) just finished 9<sup>th</sup> grade and is now ready for high school. She has turned into a beautiful and graceful young lady; with so many friends around her it becomes difficult to keep track of all of their names. In 2011, Rebecca remained actively involved with volleyball and jazz dancing. She is now looking forward to a trip next month to Orlando, Florida, with some of her best friends from school to celebrate their birthdays and the “promotion” to high school. Dorinha and I are proud of Rebecca, especially for her ability to make important decisions

on her own and for having the will and courage to take action and change what needs improvement.

Luisa (13) remains as charming as they can possibly be. She just completed 7<sup>th</sup> grade and remains a compulsive reader – virtually any genre will do although her favorite seem to be plots involving teenage vampires and the vibrant ecosystem that comes along with them! Luisa also remains very dedicated to music and tennis, as well as an enthusiastic soccer fan of *Cruzeiro* – even after a horrible season – and a great company to her dad in watching soccer matches.

Joana (8) remains colorful, sweet and full of energy. She is everyone's favorite at school and in the neighborhood. There is not a week that goes by without an invitation for a play date! In 2011, after a very successful swimming career, she decided it was time for change and moved into gymnastics. Music, art and soccer are her other areas interest.

This year's highlight was a family biking trip Dorinha and I took with the girls in the Loire Valley (France) to celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In Joana's own words, "the best trip of our lives!" Yet, another trip is already on the family's radar screen. After nine beautiful years living in our home town of Belo Horizonte, it has come time for change and we will move back to São Paulo next January. For the past 18 months my professional responsibilities imposed weekly commutes between São Paulo and Belo Horizonte forcing me to recognize I was not born to be a husband and a father on a weekend basis...

As we prepare for the move, we feel confronted with strong and opposing feelings. On one hand, we look forward to the new friendships and learning opportunities that come along with change. On the other, we know we will miss the close contact with our relatives and friends, some of whom have been part of our lives since Dorinha and I were children. In the process of deciding about the relocation, I was again given a great opportunity to realize how fortunate I am. Although I know the girls are perfectly happy and fine with the *status quo*, they have

been nothing but supportive and positive about this situation. At their own pace and style, each of them is fully engaged in preparing to join me in our new home in São Paulo; and I am happy and thankful for that!

Please keep in touch and remember to write to us sometime soon. We wish you all happy holidays and a great 2012!

*Levindo (Vico), Dorinha, Rebecca, Luisa and Joana*