November 26. A half-day boat tour today. First some view points. The coast is full of spectacular views of waves crashing against the rocks in great sprays of foam and water—angry water tormenting the coast. We went by some rocks that were totally undercut by the water and flared out above narrower pedestals. Our guide the day before said that the whole island was like that—undercut by the water. As best I could understand him, the island also flared out from a pedestal. My vision is of a great eruption spreading lava on the landscape, but with the volcano continuing to grow. So, the land bed below the lava eroded while the harder lava flair above survived. In addition to that, there are the surviving walls of the volcano, rising even higher, other uplifts, as well. I don’t know anything about the size and scale of the original volcano. Reading since I came home, I learned that there were two volcanic epochs, millennia apart. That would also help to explain the flared upper layer with a softer interim layer eroding faster to make pedestals on a grand scale.

We went on to another spot where the rock façade showed vertical cracks. However, we soon heard a roar, as if from a great lion. Apparently, the fissures run deep, the waves fill them rapidly and then the equally rapid withdrawal of the water causes the air to rush back in, roaring at jet-engine speeds. There were about a half-dozen of these along the rock face. Eventually, the boat weighed anchor for snorkeling. The fish were abundant! They seemed unaffected by the people. Of course, Judy went off exploring. I went in for a while, did a little better with the snorkel, but decided that enough saltwater was enough!

After the tour, we took a bus over to another per-kilo restaurant and then bussed back to our posada for a lazy afternoon of napping, downloading images, etc.

Our five new Brazilian friends were on this tour today, as well. We met four of them for dinner; Gloria pleaded fatigue. They actually had a 9 PM shuttle to the airport for their flight back to Recife. We ate in a charming place—Tom Marron—open air under a roof. The owner, Moreno, also played guitar and sang although he was a little pressed this evening because some of his help didn’t show up. Nonetheless, as things settled into routine, he performed. First song was Hey, Jude, in honor of Judy, in Portuguese, of course. He then performed an assortment of Brazilian music and American/English music for which there were Portuguese adaptations. I sang English lyrics with him for a few songs. An enjoyable evening.

The new friends gave Judy a pair of flip-flops that were the favor for guests at the wedding over the weekend. The have the date and the names of the bride and
groom – white with red paint. They also wrote a very sweet note, the same text in both English and Portuguese. One of them promised to make feijoado for us if we visit them in Recife. Parting was very sweet.

We walked a little, looking for possible subjects for moonlight images. Nothing right there and nothing accessible to us at night that we could think of. However, we passed a caipoeira (kuy po AIR a) school with a class in session. This is a Bantu creation designed to hide the fact that the slaves were doing military drills in preparation for revolts against their Portuguese masters. Capoeira was actually outlawed until around 1927.

The instructor had a body that was all muscle, but supple enough for some extraordinary moves. In the most difficult of moves, only a few of the students could match his strength and balance to hold the position. This is a beautiful art form that mimics hand-to-hand combat with kicks and slashes. Now, it is practiced by men, women and children. Watching children go through the movements is a joy!

Has this been only our third day here? Our days are so full of experiences that it seems much longer. We are crowding a lot of adventure into a very small space in time.

The photos.

Waves crashing against the rocks spectacularly. Moreno, the owner, singer, guitar player at Tom Marron. His notes were crisp and clear, a delight to hear. A view of a narrow beach against a steep basalt wall. Pedro, “the boy next door.” His wife, Alexandra, was ill that day and Pedro was going off surfing, right down the hill from Tom Marron at Praia do Cachorro. A lift! Bus? Fuhgedabouditt! Of course, Judy always sat up top in the back in dune buggies. Yee-ha!!!