

NATIVE *foreigner* M A G A Z I N E

Post-travel INSPIRATION

Find out how returning travelers are making a difference in the lives of others.

- + TRAVELER'S GIFT VACATIONS p. 14
- + RUNAWAY BRIDESMAIDS p. 22
- + OIMEI COMPANY p. 30

Drug Hotspot?

Maybe. But Colombia's reputation didn't scare this English teacher. p. 56

THIS ISSUE

- Editor's Picks p. 8
- Travel Reads p. 38
- Photo Showcase p. 78



JOSEPH STRZEMPKO

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE DESTINATION?

Dominican Republic.

FAVORITE MODE OF TRANSPORTATION?

Motoconcho (motorcycle taxis found in the Dominican Republic).

WHAT WAS THE MOST EXOTIC FOOD YOU ATE?

Chicken Feet Soup.



ELLEN RHUDY

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE DESTINATION?

Probably Petra, for the opportunity it afforded me to spend a day pretending I was Indiana Jones.

WHAT ITEM CAN'T YOU TRAVEL WITHOUT?

A book...or several books.

WHAT DID YOU MISS LEAST ABOUT THE U.S.?

The fast pace of life in the U.S. — the sense that you have to always be working or doing something “valuable” with your time.

MIKE HOWER

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE DESTINATION?

Cartagena, Colombia.

MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

Sitting in the surf on Playa Blanca on Isla Baru, sipping beer with friends until the wee hours of the night.

WHAT WAS THE MOST EXOTIC FOOD YOU ATE?

Mondongo Soup — or what I call the Gringo Buster. It's a type of soup with vegetables and the key ingredient... tripe.



HEATHER MORTON

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE DESTINATION?

India is by far my favorite destination.

WHAT DID YOU MISS MOST ABOUT CANADA?

I missed not being able to make a phone call easily.

MOST INTERESTING PERSON YOU MET?

I met a very interesting artist in Hardiwar, India, who collected driftwood from the Ganges (the sacred river to the Hindus). He lets each piece speak to him before he begins carving it.



RACHEL JONES

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE DESTINATION?

Barcelona. It was a gorgeous city and nothing like any other city I've been to in Europe.

MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

Walking the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival. I will never forget that moment.

WHAT WAS THE MOST EXOTIC FOOD YOU ATE?

Escargot. I've had it before but everyone thought I was crazy for eating it!



Travel Idols

TRUE TRAVEL TALES

Learn a little more about this issue's travel contributors and some of their incredible travel moments.

WANT TO BE
FEATURED IN
OUR NEXT ISSUE?

Send your travel story to
submissions@nativefor-
eignermag.com and YOU
could be one of our next
featured contributors!



India Travel:

Things I wish I had Known

by Heather Morton

PART2: TRAVEL TRUTHS AS I LEARNED THEM...

The saying, “Things never are as they appear to be,” holds a lot of truth while traveling in India. It was not just the first lesson I was taught, but also one I was constantly trying to remember. Having an idea about what to expect is helpful, but not quite the same as experiencing it for yourself.

DRESSING LIKE THE NATIVES

I never rebelled against dressing ‘Indian-ish.’ Dressing Indian shows respect for the culture and its people. I avoided shorts and tanks and took advantage of the brightly colored shawls (or pashchima) and draped them over my shoulder. However, I did find it a bit of a double-standard that Indian women were allowed to show their bellies, but never their cleavage.

That said, with many Westerners traveling to India today, the dress code is not as rigid as it used to be with respect to wearing saris and/or looking Indian. In large cities like Delhi and Mumbai, both men and women wear Western clothes. However, this can be a bit deceiving because the attitudes are not necessarily Western. For example, an Indian shopkeeper dressed in jeans and a t-shirt once told me his wife would never be allowed to drive a scooter.



Backwater tour, Kerala

TRAVEL IS RISKY

Traveling does have potential risks, but I don’t find this makes me fearful. In 2003, there was escalated concern that Pakistan and India were on the verge of starting WWII. This resulted in a travel advisory warning foreigners about the risks traveling to India. Because of this I was going to cancel my trip. In the end, I decided to go. When I got to Delhi I heard from the

locals that the situation in Kashmir was not any different than before. Down in Kerala (the south of India) people were oblivious to the situation. It was business as usual.

This does not mean that political issues should be taken lightly. While traveling, be aware of current events and be cautious. In addition, it might not be a bad idea to register at the nearest Consulate.

DEATH BY DISEASE OR ACCIDENT

In tropical climates there are usually many malaria-infected areas. Taking a few bottles of some mosquito repellent is always a good idea, because the coils in India are understood to be carcinogenic. These are dry rings that are ignited with a match and left to burn. They give off an aroma that mosquitoes dislike. However, I think a better option is to turn on the ceiling fan (usually most hotels/rooms have one). A woman traveler told me the mosquitoes get dizzy and fall down! It's almost impossible to avoid being bitten. But it's not the end of the world and I never contracted malaria.

Despite the widespread concern over malaria, I am more worried about being killed in a traffic accident than contracting malaria. Statistics show traffic accidents are three times higher in countries like India than in developed ones (read more here). In India, "big" rules the road. Many pedestrians — and not just foreigners — have been killed because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time.



Udaipur Taj Lake Palace Hotel

HOSPITALITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Hospitality is not a thing of the past in India. I've been lucky enough to befriend some of the locals and be invited to their homes for a home-cooked meal. Things obviously went well, because I was invited back several times. Indians love to please and be good hosts. Noth-

ing compares to an Indian dinner lovingly cooked by an Indian woman.

Being a customer is not bad, either. It is customary, as well as auspicious, that by offering the first customer of the day a discount, more shoppers will appear. When eating out, I was encouraged to bring all

my friends and was handed several business cards for distribution.

POVERTY

One of the hardest things to deal with in India is the poverty. Sometimes just coping with it is the best I could do. It

could get nasty with beggars following me and grabbing my clothing. Something equally as distressing was when the little children showed up cradling a 5-month-old baby. Unfortunately, as good as it feels to give money, it usually encourages more beggars to arrive. It's one of the most difficult things to handle as a foreigner.

When faced with such a situation I learned it is wise to remember I had the money to get to India, to leave India and to pay for food.

Learning as you go makes for the best stories to tell later. Often people perceive travel as only a great adventure. It is indeed, but woven deep into its fabric are some serious things to contend



Thar Desert, Jaisalmer



Ranakpur Temple, Rajathan

with. Unforeseen issues, such as having a credit card blocked can be stressful when you are flat out of cash. Still, the magic of traveling prevails.

Had I known what I know

now, I doubt I would have been able to do it differently. I might have laughed harder and enjoyed the ride more. Just something to think about for the next time! *



India Gate, Delhi

Fast Facts

India

- 2nd most populous country in the world
- Leads the world in banana exports
- Birthplace of chess
- Largest city: Mumbai
- Most popular sport: cricket

Source: Random Facts

Note: If you missed Part I of Heather's adventures, *Travel Myths as I Experienced Them*, check it out in the Summer Issue of Native Foreigner on page 38.