



WHY WE TRAVEL

We asked our country specialists to highlight an 'ah ha' moment during a recent trip that answers the question "Why do you travel?" Here are some of their stories



ALEX PUTNAM Southeast Asia Specialist

Winding through the Tonkinese Alps of Northern Vietnam, we stopped the car alongside one of the rice terraces where some of the Flower Hmong women were cultivating rice. After a few smiles and welcome greetings, we rolled up our sleeves and started plucking and sifting rice. The women and children spoke a Thai dialect and not a word of English, which made the

experience all the more primitive and humanistic. After we shared some laughs, one of the women took her farming hat off of her head and handed it over to me, almost as a gift of thanks. I don't think they realized that we were the thankful ones, having been given the privilege to experience such an amazing afternoon in the midst of the happiest people I've ever encountered.

Arden Dibble Latin America Specialist

On the road to Otavalo I stopped for delicious cookies covered in caramel and practised my Spanish with the shop owner's young daughter. When she hugged me at the end of our conversation I remembered that love and respect transcend cultural and geographic boundaries - I travel to remind myself how many good people there are in this sometimes scary world.

Jess Grise Australia & New Zealand Specialist

Sometimes when I travel I feel like I'm moving so fast that I don't stop and realize the magnitude of what I'm doing. When I was snorkelling at the Great Barrier Reef I actually said "I'm floating on the Great Barrier Reef" out loud and started laughing at how incredible that is. Now, whenever I travel, I'm sure to take a moment to appreciate how amazing the world is.

Brian Dieters Australasia Specialist

I was wading through the water in the caves of Tunnel Creek in Kimberley in Western Australia, when we heard a noise. As I shined my flashlight to the roof of the cave, I realized it was bats flying through the stalactites. Then I spotted a freshwater crocodile floating only five feet away. At that moment I felt immersed in the vast wildness of the region and I thought, "Now this is an adventure."

Jacqui Lewis President and Managing Director of Audley North America

Traveling is my world text book. I am the only one who gets to write it through new experiences, cultures, and people, and it is written in my heart. I can't get that from reading about someone else's journey.

Alex with a girl from a local Thai village in Mu Cang Chai, Vietnam



Scott enjoying views of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



SCOTT HARRINGTON Latin America Specialist

I was traveling through Pulau Palawan in the Philippines and there was a festival in the main square of the small town we were staying in. We spent an entire night dancing and communicating through broken English and drawings with some local children. For the rest of our stay these kids would run up and say 'hi' anytime we saw them, including waving us goodbye as we took our bus to the next destination. Genuine hospitality is part of why I love to travel.

David Clapworthy South Africa & India Specialist

After a long flight to Cape Town, I left the airport and headed to the center of the city. It wasn't until I got out of the taxi and looked up in awe that I saw the majestic Table Mountain looming over me and the Atlantic stretching to the horizon in front. With the sun on my back, I put my bag down, bought a glass of wine and smiled knowing that 11 hours in a plane was more than worth it for this view.



Donna Piccini Africa Specialist

'Blessed are the curious, for they shall have adventures.' This quote always comes to mind when I think about why I travel, and I've been blessed with adventures: the sunrise from Mount Toubkal's summit, sailing around the Galapagos Islands, polar bear cubs on the Arctic ice, meeting a mountain gorilla, ancient art in the Libyan desert, a hot air balloon over the Masai Mara, the Great Migration from the Serengeti... the list is endless.



Brigitte riding a camel through Erg Chebbi, Morocco



BRIGITTE CRUMPLER

Morocco Specialist

In Morocco, I rode with my friendly Berber guide through Erg Chebbi to the top of the immense dunes where we sat in silent companionship as the sun sank over the far mountains, changing the colors of the dunes from gold to orange, red and violet. We then rode our camels down to the Berber tent where a huge feast awaited me as local musicians played quietly. It reminded me that nature is incredibly beautiful in many ways all over the world, and that people everywhere are diverse and fascinating, but above all, they are hospitable, friendly, and pretty much just like you and me.



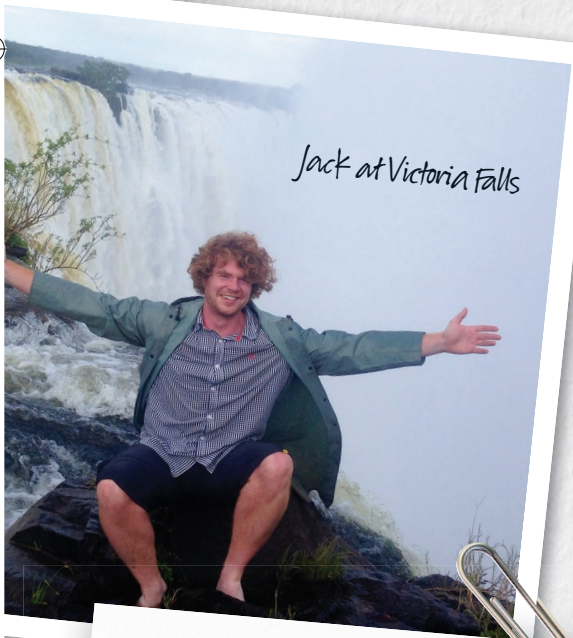
EMMA WEBSTER

Marketing Team

I was staying in a hotel overlooking beautiful and vast rice paddies in the small village of Ping'an in Longji, China. One night, the power in the entire town went out during a thunder storm. With no WiFi to connect to, no social media to scroll through, and no TV channels to browse, I just sat by the window

and watched the lightning sporadically illuminate the otherwise entirely pitch black landscape. It was completely silent except for the thunder, and I realized how wonderfully terrifying and incredible freeing it is to feel you are as far away from home as you can possibly get without falling off the Earth.

Jack at Victoria Falls



JACK MORRIS

Africa Specialist

Last November I stayed in Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp. One day it was like we were driving on Mars and the wind was so harsh and cold it took me by surprise. The next day we came across a very dangerous elephant and, later, the extremely rare – and very wild – desert lions of Namibia.

The following day, we were stranded by a flash flood down our riverbed path so we had to improvise a new route around a mountain pass. These three days were all so unique and far removed from my normal day-to-day. It was a bit of adventure and I love it when things go (slightly) wrong!

Lauren Burzalow

Southeast Asia Specialist

As I stood looking over the amazing, seemingly impossible terraced rice fields in Sapa, Vietnam, the miracle of human ingenuity took my breath away.



Claire Saylor

Marketing Team

I had no clue my first safari drive would be on my own! I rented a car in South Africa's KwaZulu Natal province where a family of baboons awaited me at the gate of Hluhluwe National Park. There I passed antelopes, warthogs, rhino and a pair of elephants, and my fear of getting lost completely melted away as the spirit of adventure took

Harry Stone

Latin America Specialist

On a four day trek on the Inca Trail in Peru, I saw our guide Carlos holding up tea leaves, waving them around and kissing them before putting them in his mouth. It was a blessing to Pachamama, the Andean goddess of Nature and I learned that Carlos prays to her every day for all he has. I travel for these subtle moments of culture that you won't see unless you immerse yourself in it.



Feeling inspired? Speak to one of our specialists to start planning your own memorable journey.