

Logistics and Realities of On-The-Road Travel

- **How have you managed to keep going for so long?** (Tony)
 - Lemme tell ya, Tony, it was hard towards the end! We always tried to schedule or fit breaks into our travel schedule, little respites that would allow us to recharge, re-energize, and recuperate. By the time we reached the closing stages of China, we were pretty exhausted (after coming over land from Istanbul!), so we had the opportunity to chill out on a beach in Thailand for six weeks. Even so, we weren't even half way through our time in India and we were each totally beat. A year is a long time to travel... we made it, but if it wasn't for these "pit-stops" it would have been almost impossible.
- **Did you ever find the security/passport officials helpful - if so where?** (Dave)
 - Actually, yes. And thankfully these officials were all employees of the Government of Canada. We spent a fair bit of time in Canadian Embassies, mostly in Ulaan Bataar, Beijing, and Guangzhou, and in each case, the Canadian officials were supremely helpful. If only the Russian border guards could learn a thing or two from our Canucks! Interestingly, the border officials at each African border we crossed were very friendly and helpful as well, but our Canadians were the best!
- **In which country did you feel completely LOST (in terms of the language / culture / directions etc.)?** (Mariëtte)
 - Interesting question... we never felt *completely* lost, but India was the biggest challenge. It seemed at times like the whole sub-continent was working against us, but that was in part a component that accompanies budget travel. Russia was also quite challenging, but learning the Cyrillic alphabet and a few key phrases in Russian helped out a little. China used to be more of a challenge, but the Beijing Olympics radically spruced up the travellers' scene and made things much easier.
- **Where did you feel the most tired or dejected and did you ever feel like cutting the trip short and coming home?** (Dave)
 - If anywhere, we would have considered coming home early when we were in India. By that point in our travels we were pretty much ready to be back. We were tired, and we missed all our family and friends here in Vancouver. India takes its toll on budget travellers, so that contributed to the overall feeling as well. That said, it was never a realistic option. We were simply *too* close to getting home anyway, and our pride probably wouldn't let us cut the trip short when we were so close to the one-year mark.
- **What did you miss the most about home (besides the people who love you, of course 😊)?** (Angela)
 - Sidewalks (and crosswalks), law and order, understandable language, food we understand, our own bed (and living space), a functioning government, showers that don't get *everything* in the bathroom wet, more clothes, knowing where light switches are and how they work, home-cooked meals, paved roads, construction projects that actually get finished, simple things that don't take *forever* to get done, tap water... shall we go on?
- **What was the one thing you couldn't do without while travelling (aside from each other)?** (Sarah)
 - Aside from our passports and access to money, our malaria pills were pretty essential. Our travel guides, while not fundamental, made life much easier. Many in this world would argue that toilet paper isn't a required item, but we disagree with them. With his shaved head, a hat of some kind was pretty essential for Martin (to keep warm in cold weather, and to avoid burning in hot weather). Comfortable shoes sure made life easier as well.