

## Cultural Comparisons and Discoveries about Places

- **What did you discover about each continent, about transportation (and your level of endurance!), about churches, holy places, the way people worship/play/think, about their country/ambitions, things we have in common, those sorts of things?** (Wilna)
  - That's a HUGE question! To put it in an over-simplistic nutshell, people are just people. There are plenty of things around us to denote us and separate us from another group of people, but at our core we want the same things. In the vast majority of places, people are much more open about their need for spiritual fulfillment: churches and mosques and temples there are what Starbucks is here. India, for example, might be a vast, disparate country, but 80-90% of its population is aligned by a common background ideology, and this is their faith system. This pattern is echoed all over the world; here in North America / Canada / Vancouver we are, for whatever reason, more sheltered about this aspect of life. Regarding transportation, everyone's just trying to get from A to B, and whether that's in a [matatu](#) or private vehicle is somewhat irrelevant as it has to do more with the country's per capita GDP than what someone actually wants. We did discover, however, that people in developing nations are much more accepting of being uncomfortable for long periods of time; where we whinge and complain, they grin and bear it.
- **What qualities - positive or negative or interesting - do human beings all around the world share?** (Paula, with a very similar question from Steven)
  - Only teachers would ask for a [PNI](#) assessment of something! ☺ This is a great question, and it's something we have discussed time and time again while we were overseas. At our most foundational level, we all want the same things: food, water, shelter, health, safety, and companionship. It's our experience that any negative qualities (scamming, thievery, and so on) are more a product of society, developed priorities, and unfortunate necessity rather than inherent human traits. And, from our perspective, it's our shared basic, essential qualities that kept us safe in some of the more "unsafe" parts of the world. The people there, after all, just wanted visitors to feel safe and sound and enjoy some semblance of control... come to think of it, that's just what Vancouverites wanted Olympic visitors to feel. Hmm...