

Next Time: Another Travelling Adventure

- **Would you do it again?** (Karen)
 - Yes, absolutely, 100%. We each hurt our career paths (or at least put them on hold for a while), we've all but exhausted our savings, we've put off the purchase of a home for a number of years... we have made sacrifices, and lots of them. However, it's our belief that nothing can be more influential in our striving towards being better people than travel. We've learned and experienced things that no book or television show could ever convey.
- **Would you recommend other couples do the same thing?** (Mariëtte)
 - We realize, understand, and appreciate how fortunate and blessed we were to have been able to embark on such a voyage of discovery, but we firmly and steadfastly believe that, if presented with the opportunity, everyone should do something similar. That said, if you are planning on doing something like this, the itinerary you choose must be tailored to *you*: that is, the places you want to visit should "call your name." If you want any suggestions, we're happy to talk! 😊
- **Where would you like to go next time?** (Karen)
 - We've talked at length about this, and although we don't have any definite answers, we have some ideas. We are planning to brush up on our French language skills, and at some point would very much like to travel between Senegal and Nigeria and/or Cameroon. While in Turkey we met a large number of travellers who had come through the Middle East and *raved* about how wonderful their experiences were; with this in mind, at an appropriate (ie. safe) time we would love to travel between Morocco and Iran. In fact, we'd love to go over land between Morocco and India, but the likelihood of this being possible any time soon is, unfortunately, remote.
- **What place will you dream about returning to the next time you're hunched over your taxes at a desk on a rainy Vancouver day?** (Catherine)
 - For places we have yet to visit, read our response to the previous question. In terms of places we have been already, we'd love to return to a few of them. [Malawi](#) won us over almost immediately, and we didn't spend enough time there. We've never needed an excuse to go to [South Africa](#), and will hopefully return there many times in years to come. [Tanzania](#) and Zanzibar were wonderful, and Uganda is close to our hearts (see the [Bufukhula](#) entry). Zambia and Botswana still have our imaginations captured; [Zambia](#) for its "un-tamed-ness," and [Botswana](#) for its remarkable [Okavango Delta](#). We'd return to certain areas of [Turkey](#) in a heartbeat (especially as a *vacation*, not as *travellers*). The Balkans were fascinating and beautiful, particularly [Bosnia & Hercegovina](#), and we'd love to further explore [Slovenia](#). We'd go back and party with the Czechs any day of the week, and we'd talked several times about returning to [Russia](#) during the winter months (we'd probably pack differently for this trip!). [Mongolia](#) definitely deserves a future visit. [China](#) has enough amazing sights to keep us busy for many a future trip, and we've pretty much decided that whenever we go on a "hot/beach" holiday, we're going to [Thailand](#). We'll return to [India](#) one day as well, but we'll concentrate our explorations on the South.
- **What 3 places do you most look forward to revisit?** (Paul & Isabelle)
 - So, we need to narrow the above list down to three places, eh? You're making things difficult for us! OK, well, here is our top-three list:
 1. Africa (sorry, narrowing it down any more simply can't be done!)
 2. Turkey
 3. Thailand
- **Which countries, if any, would you NOT go to again?** (Karen)
 - We'd go back to any of the places we went. Some are lower on the totem pole than others, but none of them are off the list entirely.

- **If you were starting at this point what would you do differently?** (Paul & Isabelle)
 - It's probably easy to say that saving more money would have been nice, so let's do that: if we were starting at this point, we'd like to have more money to travel with. Travelling in India might have been less arduous had it occurred earlier in our trip (that is, before we were exhausted, and not *right* before we were returning home after a year abroad). We'd explore more of south-eastern Turkey, then probably take a ferry from Trabzon or Samsun across the Black Sea to Sevastopol or Odessa in the Ukraine (it's always fascinated us), then continue through Belarus to Russia. This would just be a unique twist on Eastern European travel. From a zoomed-out, big-picture perspective, this is what we might do differently. There are a few instances or moments that we might change (ie. make different decisions at the time), but this isn't unique to travel ("hindsight has 20/20 vision," as they say).
- **What advice would you give to someone considering/planning a travel adventure?** (Paul & Isabelle)
 - The most difficult part of anything like this is actually making the decision to go. So make that decision; commit to going travelling for x number of days/weeks/months, departing on a certain date. Go to places that "call your name." Do your homework, listen to advice, and plan without over-planning.
- **If you could zoom back in time and tell yourselves, as you embarked on this trip, one piece of advice, what would it be?** (Catherine)
 - There are some things about travel that you might *know* before leaving, but don't *understand* until you're actually out there. While overseas it's important to get out of your comfort zone, but keep everything in perspective. Soak it all in; whatever you do, don't think about tomorrow, concentrate on today. Don't forget to make an effort to smile and/or talk to at least one local person a day whenever possible. The trip will be infinitely richer because of these oh-so-simple decisions.
- **Best piece of advice to / from another traveller?** (Sarah)
 - Perhaps the best advice we have given other travellers is that they should (a) smile and/or talk to at least one local person a day whenever possible, and (b) go to Eagle Bar ([Koh Phangan](#), Thailand). ☺ In terms of the best advice we received from other travellers, someone (a hung-over Italian, we think) told us that, when we get to [Olkhon Island](#) (Lake Baikal, Siberia, Russia), to swim when the weather's good... don't wait until it suits you, for the weather in Siberia changes on a dime. And, sure enough, Martin swam when the weather was good, and it's been a highlight ever since. We got lots of advice from other travellers, but for some reason it's this strange and somewhat random example that stands out.
- **Do you have any regrets?** (Steven)
 - Now that we're back, any issues we might be having now are still insufficient to make us regret going on the trip. In terms of on-the-trip regrets, exploring more of Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, and Botswana would have been nice, but it wasn't realistic at the time and can hardly be deemed a "regret." On hindsight, it would have been nice to have been mentally prepared for Mongolia's travel "system." Every country has a "system" that needs figuring out; Mongolia simply demands that travellers join a tour (expensive-seeming at the time, but in reality not all that bad). We wanted to travel independently (as we had been the whole time), so it was a bit of a shock to be told in no uncertain terms that we need to (a) join a tour (which we hate doing, generally), and (b) pay much more than we were prepared to pay. In the end, we decided that we needed to come back to Mongolia on a Mongolia-only trip for three weeks with more money. The regret here is simply that we should have done a little more research into how Mongolia is travelled before we arrived there. We'll go back, and it'll be awesome, but it's unfortunate that we didn't really see Mongolia (outside of Ulaan Bataar). And, on a more superficial note, we regret not watching the ticket-dispenser-guy more closely in Agra (why? ... read [this](#)).