

An Incurable Case of Wanderlust

“Sometimes a great adventure is born of an idea so inspired and in retrospect, so obvious- that one wonders why it took so long to think of it.” *Colin Fletcher, The Man Who Walked Through Time*

In January, 2015 my partner and I boarded a plane bound for the Philippines. This would be the first country on a yearlong backpacking adventure throughout Southeast Asia. We were in our mid-twenties and just weeks earlier had promising careers, a beautiful apartment in Seattle, and predictable schedules that we had both grown comfortable with. That all changed when we made the decision to take a giant leap into the unknown, and break away from the routine and security of our lives.



Southeast Asia was a part of the world that we always had a desired to see; from the tropical islands and crystal clear waters of Indonesia, to the dense canopy jungles in Vietnam. We were fascinated with the beauty and ancient history.

Over the course of 4 months, we sold our furniture, donated what clothes we didn't need, and stowed our valuable possessions in a family member's garage. Having both traveled extensively before, we knew what type of adventure we wanted to take and how we planned to do it - as light and economically as we could.

We managed to pack a years' worth of clothing and equipment into two 60 liter backpacks. Traveling that way gave us the freedom to wander without being tied down by an oversize suitcase on wheels. We were able to throw the packs on our backs and stomp through the cities, jungles, and beaches with ease and relatively carefree. We adopted the 'replace - not



One of the best ways to learn about a country is through their food. We would roam the markets and sample the local cuisine in every country we would visit. The food we ate, most Americans would never encounter. It was a great way to have conversations with the locals and really get to know the place we were visiting. Often times those conversations would lead us to our next off the beaten path adventure, away from the average tourist hubs. It's surprising how much you can learn about a culture simply by sharing a meal.



A year went by in a blink of an eye. We hiked to the 2,000 year old rice terraces in the Philippines, became "motopackers" while we traveled on motorcycle for 4 month along the Ho Chi Minh trail in Vietnam. We sailed to the southern islands of Indonesia where the komodo dragons roamed freely and lived in a bungalow on a beach off the coast of Malaysia for a

month. Over the course of the year, we backpacked thousands of miles across 5 different countries. For us it wasn't how many countries we saw, but how immersed we were able to become in the country we were traveling in. We grew stronger in our relationship and developed a deeper understanding of ourselves.



After returning home, we were both surprised how quickly we were able to fall back into the swing of things. Within a couple of months we had respectable jobs and a small house back in our old neighborhood. We eased back into the routine of being home. Something was missing though. We could hear a call ringing in our hearts, begging to be answered. We went on weekend trips to keep things exciting and to relive our adventurous spirit just enough before returning to our jobs on Monday mornings. But that never seemed to be enough for us.

It was on one of our weekend adventures in Victoria, British Columbia, that the call was finally answered and it couldn't have been clearer. We found the next vessel that would carry us to the other end of the hemisphere. The [Delica](#).



This story is only the beginning... Read continuation in the July issue.