

The Art of Traveling.....

Newsletter: Spring 2012



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Travel...

I really recommend to anyone to travel on your own. A lone traveler meets people more easily and is more approachable. In my travels, I have had opportunities to join other solo travelers from distant parts of the world and spend a few days or a week together and then move on to a new experience. Many times,

because I was alone, I got into really interesting conversations with locals. I was invited inside the 13th century home of an elderly woman in France and was given a tour of her historic building. On another occasion in a train from Vienna to Salzburg, I met an Austrian batik artist who lived year-round in Bali; he invited me to stay in his family's home in the Alps where I spent several glorious days. Getting off that train was one of the most spontaneous and rewarding decisions I ever made. On another occasion, I rode on the back of a truck filled with chickens when I hitch-hiked a ride in Northern Israel with another traveler. I discovered the extraordinary beauty of Bruges, Belgium and Hallstadt, Austria by speaking with people I met along the way.

What's it like for a woman to travel on her own? Well, that depends on the woman and on the destination. I determined that anyone can travel alone or with others as long as they use common sense. In other words, be smart enough to keep your passport on you at all times, and limit the valuables you have in your possession. Stay aware of your surroundings. Arrive at a new destination early in the day so that you can find a safe place to stay that night. Use your judgment about the people you meet, just as you would at home. enjoy my own company and gained confidence in my decision-making abilities.

Further travels around the world on my own and with family and friends have led me to many parts of the world. I came across a quote last year that I firmly embrace: *"I haven't been everywhere yet, but it's on my list."*



Leann Cherkasky Makhni
U.S.
Director, SJSU International House

Swimming with Dolphins



Kristen Pendleton

I am privileged to work at International House; surrounded by people taking on challenges; whether giving a speech for student council, studying in a foreign language, leaving their home for the first time, or jumping out of an airplane! You “feel the fear and do it anyway” and grow as a person.

When I travelled to New Zealand last year with my neighbor and husband, they really wanted to swim in the open ocean and look for dolphins. The prospect frightened me. I don't like to swim where I can't see through the water. I imagine sharks are going to rip me to pieces, even if I am just in a dark swimming pool. (I never should have watched the film *Jaws!*) I would have much preferred to go whale watching from the comfort of a boat.

Fortunately for me, my neighbor said he would go only if we went too. We donned wet suits and sat through a safety video. We were told that the dolphins were not there for our entertainment; we had to arouse their curiosity by appearing intriguing. That got my imagination going; what might be considered fun to a dolphin?

We piled on board the boat, set out to sea, and kept a look out for dolphins. When we spotted some, the captain would maneuver close to see if they looked “interested.” If so, we all jumped in the water and started singing, yelling, whistling, spinning, diving, and flopping around. I wish I had a video, because we must have looked and sounded absolutely ridiculous.

At first nothing happened; the water was freezing; I could not see to the bottom; I felt panic coming over me. I focused on being entertaining, and started humming “Only you can make my brown eyes blue” (inspired by The Platters) in a high-pitched dolphin voice. After a few minutes, an amazing thing happened; three dolphins came charging straight at me! They looked me in the eyes and swam around me several times. It was thrilling to be so close to wild animals, and to know that I had overcome my fear. Exhilarating!

Tidbits from My Desk: Travel Edition

Britney Balzar

Guatemala:

Colorful, intriguing, and enveloped in history. From the locals' clothing to the trinkets for sale, my eyes were dazzled by the most vibrant colors. Unable to resist the tantalizing hues, I came away with many treasures from this trip. However, the biggest treasure of all was being able to view the Mayan ruins that soar above the jungle canopy towards the heavens. In a moment, whilst climbing up the steep ruin stairs, I wished that I could travel back to a time when the Mayans reigned, a time when the ruins were not ruins.

Hawaii:

Tranquil, tropical, and thrilling. Lying on a beach has never felt as nice as when I was in Hawaii. After three trips I still love Hawaii, despite being driven crazy by the word "lush" constantly being uttered by my mom. Most of all, I associate Hawaii with snorkeling. When I am underwater I feel oddly natural, a part of my surroundings, while simultaneously feeling like a fortunate spectator to a profound underwater world.

Egypt:

Unforgettable, breathtaking, and surprising. The pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx will be emblazoned in my mind for years to come. They stood so tall and perfect, just like in the pages of my books in middle school. The Sphinx was smaller than I had imagined, but its beauty left me captivated. As the sun began to set behind these feats of architecture, it was difficult to imagine that an Egyptian revolution would be erupting days later.



A Journey Sarah Kyo

Walking might be one of the slowest ways to get from one place to another. Sometimes, though, the journey can be even more important than the destination.



A good example of this took place last winter when my family and I went on a Caribbean cruise. One of the four ports that we visited was located in San Juan, Puerto Rico. San Juan is the capital of the island, an unincorporated territory of the United States, and the particular area that we visited is known as Old San Juan, which contains Spanish colonial-influenced buildings and stone-cobbled streets.

Multiple cruise ships were docked in the city, so it took some patience to navigate through the narrow streets by foot. On top of that, some Puerto Ricans were preparing for a big upcoming festival with stages, porter potties, and all, so some of the streets were closed off to vehicles.

After visiting some stores, my family made it to Castillo de San Cristóbal, a 17th century Spanish fort that is nowadays considered as a World Heritage and National Historic Site. My mother was very determined to make it to another fort called Castillo San Felipe del Morro, or simply El Morro. This is a 16th-century fort that is also a World Heritage site and seems much more famous. We heard of El Morro from a travel program we saw before the cruise, and we saw its imposing presence as our ship approached the island.

Amid the heat, my father, sister, and brother decided to head back to the ship. On the other hand, my mother wanted to take advantage of the opportunity of being in Old San Juan, and she took me along for the journey. At first, I was just going along with her, but by the end of the day, I was glad to head over to the other fort. I got to see more of the city and have multiple photos from our trek: neat architecture and cityscapes, ocean views, a park filled with pigeons interacting with people, a historic wall, a plaque designating the birthplace of the piña colada drink, and La Fortaleza, which is the governor's mansion.

All in all, the walk actually ended up being just a few miles, including heading straight back to the cruise ship afterward. I'm glad that we ended up walking instead of taking public transportation or some other vehicle. There's just something special about seeing places firsthand and up close. It's a feeling that you can't capture when you're just whizzing by them to get from one point to another.



Carnival Cruise 2008 Nnamdi Nwaigwe

Usually when people think about travel, they think about flying to an exotic place with blue skies and unyielding sunshine. At least that's how I used to think about travel until the winter of 2008, when my mother surprised me with a cruise to Ensenada, Mexico. I couldn't help but be excited, mainly because I was taking a vacation with my family, but also because I had never been on a cruise ship before. My perception of cruises was that they were only for the well-off, and that they were a deep pocket expense for families. I also thought that it would be hard to find people on the ship that I would have things in common with, besides a likely dose of seasickness.

My Carnival Cruise vacation was as refreshing as a tall glass of cold orange juice. I will never forget the initial feeling of walking onto the ship with my family. We were greeted with warm smiles and asked if we wanted a complimentary Carnival Cruise family photo. I was amazed at the service we received, including; five-star meals, premium shows, and priceless 360 scenic views from the cruise ship.

Each day during breakfast, lunch, and dinner the Carnival Cruise provided a variety of dining choices in a buffet setting. After we ate, there was always an interesting event or activity we could participate in, such as viewing the art and auction gallery - my mother loves classical artwork, so we attended one of these shows. The gallery displayed oil paintings from numerous renowned artists – I could not pronounce the names of most of the artworks but nether the less I could appreciate what I saw. The experience that I had on the cruise was rewarding and memorable. I recommend this trip to anyone who has never been on a cruise and is curious; such as I was, to participate in this relaxing form of travel.

Getting There... Melanie Flanagan

I believe that the adventure of getting to a destination is almost as enlightening as actually being there. I am from Australia but my father works in Thailand, so we have regular holidays to various islands such as Koh Samui and Phi Phi. Our journey begins in Singapore with a week or so of shopping and dining at inexpensive hawker centers where the food tastes better than that of any 5 star restaurant. By the time we are ready to leave Singapore the jet lag has worn off and my feet are itching to walk on the pristine beaches of paradise.

The bus we catch is lavishly decorated with pink drapes and matching head rests. The driver takes pride in his vehicle, placing a wreath of flowers over the rear-view-mirror - the scent of the gardenias wafts down the vacant aisles. As soon as the bus fills with passengers, the packets of unfamiliar snacks are opened, and the smell of fish and confectionaries dance through the freezing cold air-conditioning, suffocating the floral perfume. The Thai karaoke video begins and people recline their seats back onto each other's laps. Tiredness takes hold as the bus winds carelessly around the bends of wild terrain.

My dry eyes open when the bus' momentum slows. People pile out of their temporary home to line up cross-legged, eagerly anticipating either of the two squat toilets. Unfortunately, you are never truly relieved when you realize the state of the restrooms. After that experience the passengers are expected to eat a meal but hardly hungry anymore, mum and I gather goodies to take on board for the rest of the trip. Eighteen hours and six passport stamps later we are able to recover during a stop off in Hatyai in southern Thailand. The next day however, the second leg of the journey begins.

I like to sleep in transit because it feels like every time I wake up I have been teleported to a different place and time. One of the most exceptional ways I have been woken up on the train was at 4 am when the Buddhist monks began chanting. Despite the fatigue, cramped spaces and obligatory bad taste movies, some of my most ridiculous and memorable memories were formed during transit. As T.S. Elliot said it is *"The journey not the arrival [that matters]."*

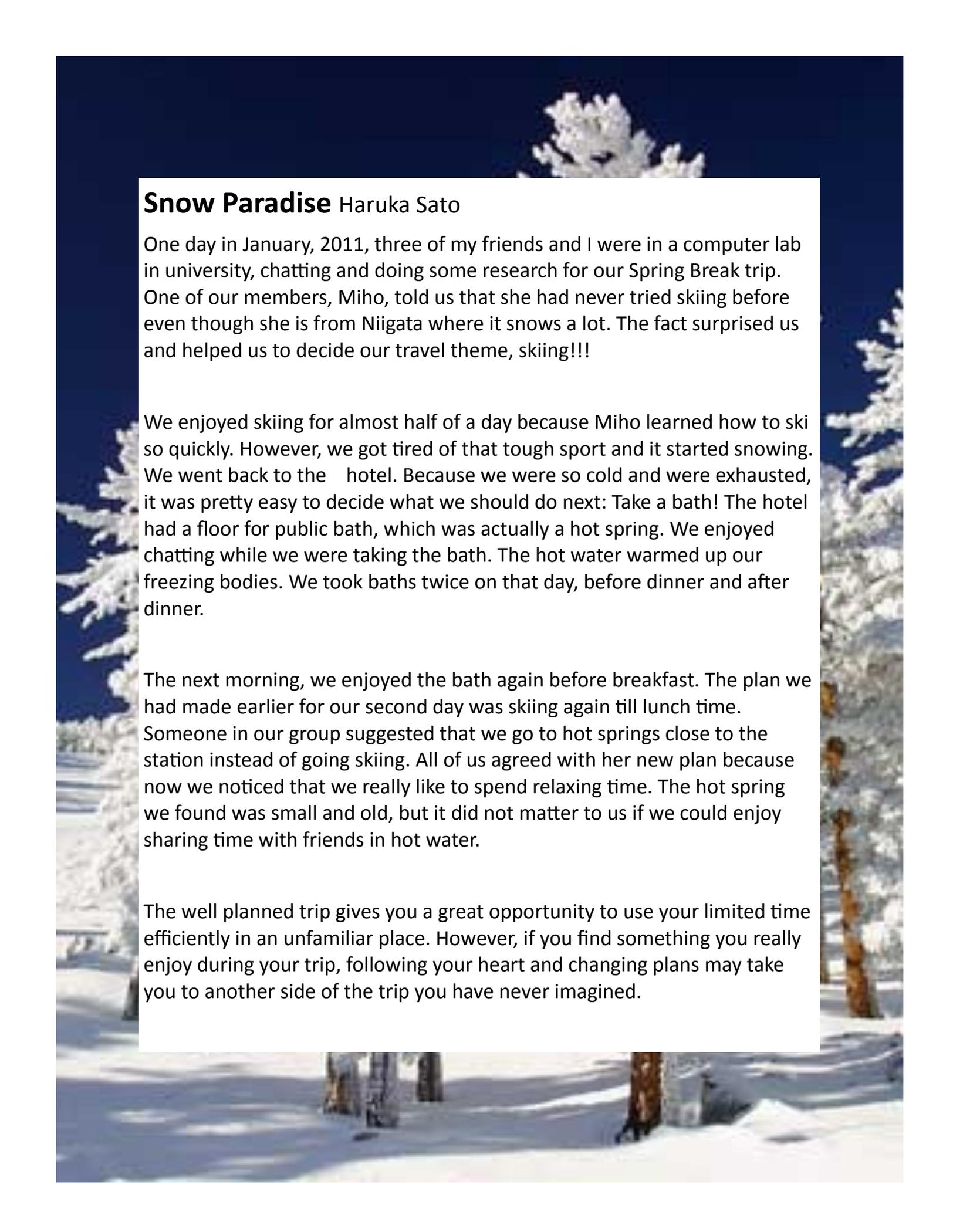


First Adventure in America Dipesh Yadav

My first trip to the United States was an extremely crazy one. It all started off with my flight being delayed by 10 hours. I had heard stories about how bad the airlines was when it came to the exchange of baggage but I was being something of a know it all and decided that people were just being annoying by telling me their horror stories of international travel. So I booked my ticket and had six other friends on the same flight. From India we were informed that instead of going to San Francisco we would go to Las Vegas!! Wooohooo!!

That itself was more incentive to travel to America. So after a grueling 9 hour flight we reached London knowing that we would be late for our connecting flight. We found an airline official who hurried us past the security checks. It feels nice when you don't have to stand in line and they open a separate counter just for your security check. I just call it "VIP style". We got onto our plane and were the last ones entering the plane. I got nasty looks from some of the passengers but I was so tired I really didn't care. Later I found out that those people had been waiting in the plane for 2 hours. Oops! We reached Vegas and did our immigration check and were waiting for our baggage when we realized that everyone's bags were missing!!

Now being in an alien country without baggage is a big hassle but then I was standing in the US. I couldn't decide whether to be happy or sad about the situation. Luckily we found some airport officials who helped us out and guaranteed our baggage would be delivered within two days. Those first few hours in America were one of the most stressful and exciting of my life and I would never forget my first adventure in the States.



Snow Paradise Haruka Sato

One day in January, 2011, three of my friends and I were in a computer lab in university, chatting and doing some research for our Spring Break trip. One of our members, Miho, told us that she had never tried skiing before even though she is from Niigata where it snows a lot. The fact surprised us and helped us to decide our travel theme, skiing!!!

We enjoyed skiing for almost half of a day because Miho learned how to ski so quickly. However, we got tired of that tough sport and it started snowing. We went back to the hotel. Because we were so cold and were exhausted, it was pretty easy to decide what we should do next: Take a bath! The hotel had a floor for public bath, which was actually a hot spring. We enjoyed chatting while we were taking the bath. The hot water warmed up our freezing bodies. We took baths twice on that day, before dinner and after dinner.

The next morning, we enjoyed the bath again before breakfast. The plan we had made earlier for our second day was skiing again till lunch time. Someone in our group suggested that we go to hot springs close to the station instead of going skiing. All of us agreed with her new plan because now we noticed that we really like to spend relaxing time. The hot spring we found was small and old, but it did not matter to us if we could enjoy sharing time with friends in hot water.

The well planned trip gives you a great opportunity to use your limited time efficiently in an unfamiliar place. However, if you find something you really enjoy during your trip, following your heart and changing plans may take you to another side of the trip you have never imagined.

The Greatest Blessings Suelan Zhao

Last year's Thanksgiving trip gives me a lot of good memories. For that trip, the host, my mom's friend, prepared a lot of activities. I really want to share with my readers how wonderful my trip was.

First of all, I learned how to cook turkey and traditional American food. Cooking is always a good way to know a culture and people's lifestyle. It is always a good idea to spend time cooking and to spend dinner together with a family. We spent a whole afternoon preparing dinner for Thanksgiving and we served our best food to our guests. I was both a host and a guest. It was the greatest dinner ever.

Second, I learned a new lifestyle that different people have. The couple just married one year ago. The husband works in a hospital and the wife works in a law firm. They both graduated from UC Berkeley, which is a very famous university in the USA, even in the whole world. She works at home, so she has a very flexible work schedule and she can do whatever she needs to at home. It's the best job and one that I want to have in the future. During the time I stayed there, we jogged together and we studied American law together. The family taught me how important it is to know American law if you want to work or study in the USA. The husband's work is helping people and saving their lives. It made a great impression on me. I know how difficult and tiresome the job is, but he always kept smiling and accompanied me during the trip. He not only helps people physically but also mentally.

Last but not least, I went to three big places during my short three day trip.

It was awesome. I went to LA, San Diego, and some beaches. Each day, I had a different schedule for one big place. They drove me there, and showed me the famous places in the city. I like San Diego most compared to the other ones. It's a very quiet city, and sunny every day. The peacefulness and diversity impressed me most. It's near Mexico, so a lot of Mexican culture and American culture get mixed. The food, the customs, even the people's way of talking was very interesting for me. I almost saw all of San Diego with a perfect "guide" in just one day.

I will remember that trip which gave me a lot of good experiences and a good chance to see more of America. It is almost impossible for me to afford such a trip by myself, but I did it like a miracle. I almost went to Mexico, which I really wanted to visit, but I am glad I chose San Diego. The food, the different viewpoints, even the family's lifestyle impressed me a lot. It was a fantastic trip that I will remember forever.



Road Tripping Jean-Marie Zerilli

I have been in the U.S since August 2011 and I discovered a lot of this country driving through it, and I definitely enjoyed it. The reason why I enjoyed it so much might be because it was actually the first time I was travelling this way. Indeed, no one in France would spend hours travelling by car across the country. The thing is that, when I come to think about it, it's pretty funny; if I had spent the time driving in France that I have spent driving in the U.S., I am pretty sure that I could have crossed almost all of Europe. This is also something that I like in the U.S; this is such a big country that you can spend hours driving without even leaving a State!

The fact that I really like going on a road trip in the U.S is not just because I really like this country and because I want to discover as much as possible of this country. It is mainly because of the ambiance of a road trip. It is definitely something unique. Being 5 or more in a car, driving for hours could sound kind of unbearable, and it can be if the car is really small. But what it was for me was just hours and hours of fun.

Another advantage of using a car instead of flying is that it gives the opportunity to enjoy all the beautiful and amazing landscapes: Mountains or oceans, even the desert is amazing. I would not have thought before crossing it that anything could be so amazing. So far I have been to Los Angeles three times; San Diego, Santa Barbara, Yosemite, Lake Tahoe, Portland, Seattle, Vancouver, Las Vegas and all these trips were amazing. I will probably remember all of them forever. Plus I will definitely do some more. First, because I have so many places to discover but also because, like I said, the ambiance of a road trip is something unique that I really enjoy. Finally, last but not least, road tripping is way cheaper than taking a plane or anything. If someone would ask me what to do, I would definitely encourage this person to go on a road trip have an amazing time!



“The World is a Book....” Adam Svensson

Fed up with airline security checks and being charged for everything from luggage to having too many letters in your name? Alright, you might not be charged for having too many letters in your name, not yet. But still, have you considered taking the train?

I tend to relate travelling to airplanes. Last year I tried something new. It all started with me and a friend trying to find flights from Malmo, Sweden, to Amsterdam. We were actually about to throw in the towel and not go at all, when one of the friends of my friend suggested that we could travel by train. And since we really didn't want to cancel, we decided to give it a go.

We had some trouble making our reservations for the train since the web pages were in Dutch and we don't speak Dutch. We made reservations for a night train and chose no extras. We were supposed to get on the train at 11pm in Malmo and arrive in Amsterdam at 9am after a good night's sleep. We boarded the train in Malmo to realize that, due to language difficulties, had made reservations for regular seating, not beds - damn! To add to that, on this exact train, the bistro had been out of order for three months. Yes, three months. And apparently they didn't really bother to fix it. Fortunately for us, there was a creepy little man sitting in what seemed to be a pantry, selling beer and chocolate.



What was funny is that my mistake probably turned out to be one of my best mistakes ever. Having to sit in the least comfy seat ever made, next to eight random people (some of them snoring very loudly), made it hard to get any sleep. We decided to go explore the train. It was amazing that we met so many extraordinary people. Everyone was so very nice that I kind of wanted to tip them all just for being grand. We ended up rambling around the train all night. .

To go by train might not sound that cool. But think about it. You don't need to check in any luggage, you don't have to pass through tons of security checks, you don't have to arrive hours before departure, you are free to use any electronic devices, there are no air-pockets freaking you out, it's cheap, it's green and there is an old-fashioned charm to it.

To sum up, we had a great time in Rotterdam. And we did take the same train back, the exact same train with the same weird “beer-man” sitting in his pantry. And yes, we had a blast!

Travels in 3 words Sonja Leslie

Travelling is one of my favourite things in life! The people you meet, the places you see, the fun you have, and the amount you learn about a country and yourself is incredible. There are moments whilst travelling where I stop and think to myself that this is what makes life amazing.

If I had to describe travelling in 3 words, they would be uncertainty, freedom and happiness. Normally uncertainty makes me nervous, as I like to have things planned out in my everyday life. But with travelling it's different, I feel free and excited and whatever happens is unpredictable.

My father used to say one of the best ways to see a country is to get lost. On a road trip through Ireland, my friends and I didn't plan where we would stay at night or where to head the next day. It worked out perfectly and I loved every second of it. I celebrated St. Patrick's Day in Dublin, had my first 'couch surfing' experience in Limerick, looked for the dolphin Fungi in Dingle, visited Father Ted's house, had pints of beer in several pubs, and much more.

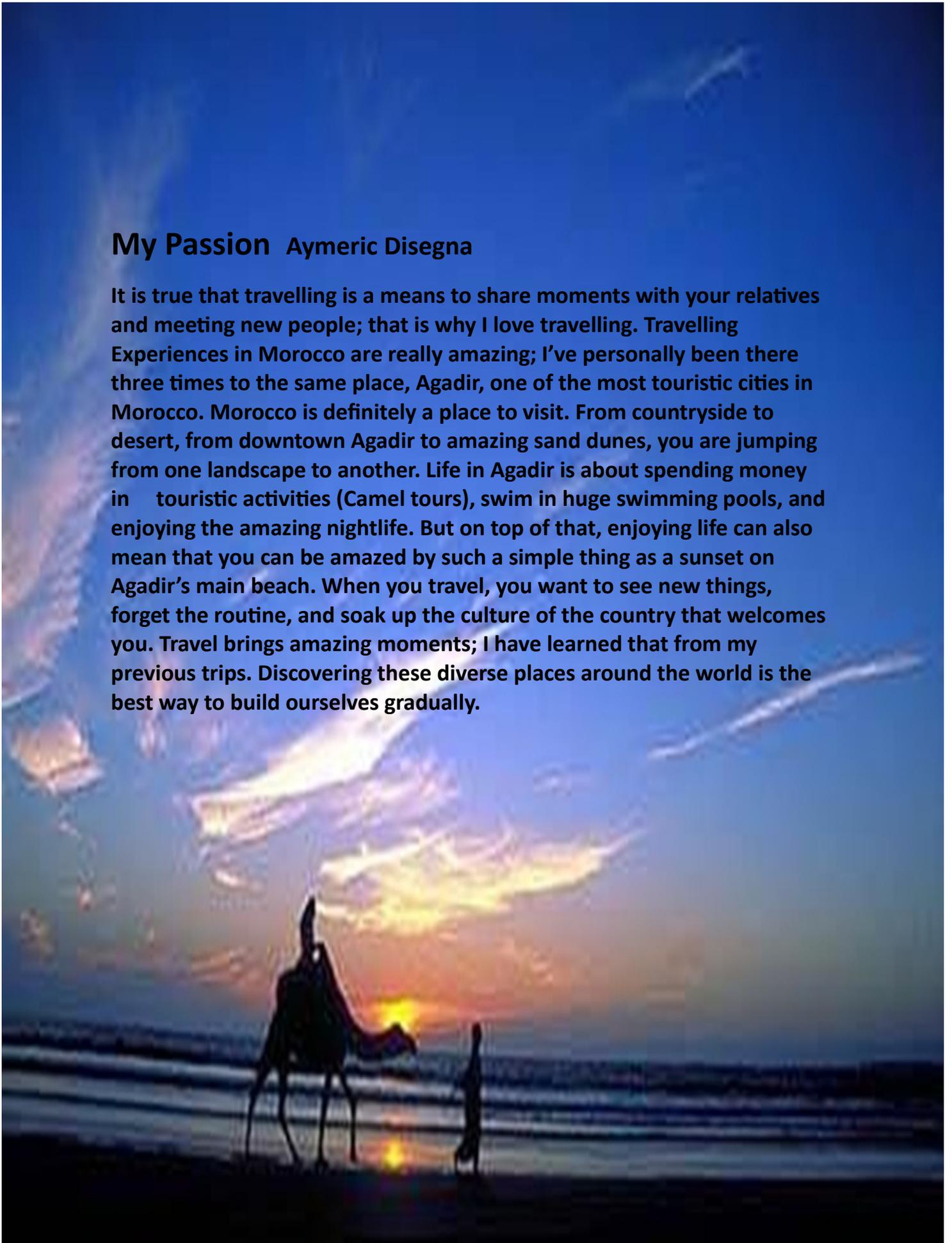
Looking back, some of my past travels seem so surreal. One of my favourite memories is from my time in Australia. Honestly, I never thought I would drive 3 days through the outback to get to Alice Springs and sleep on a lonely farm in the desert on the way. Let alone having a spider as big as my hand on my kitchen window for weeks while living on Magnetic Island. Nobody wanted to remove it, so I called the spider Berta and got used to it. It became comforting that Berta was in my eyesight rather than gone, not knowing where she is.

Another thing that I will never forget is jumping out of a plane over Byron Bay's beautiful beach. I cannot describe the feeling, but it is truly incredible!



My Passion Aymeric Disegna

It is true that travelling is a means to share moments with your relatives and meeting new people; that is why I love travelling. Travelling Experiences in Morocco are really amazing; I've personally been there three times to the same place, Agadir, one of the most touristic cities in Morocco. Morocco is definitely a place to visit. From countryside to desert, from downtown Agadir to amazing sand dunes, you are jumping from one landscape to another. Life in Agadir is about spending money in touristic activities (Camel tours), swim in huge swimming pools, and enjoying the amazing nightlife. But on top of that, enjoying life can also mean that you can be amazed by such a simple thing as a sunset on Agadir's main beach. When you travel, you want to see new things, forget the routine, and soak up the culture of the country that welcomes you. Travel brings amazing moments; I have learned that from my previous trips. Discovering these diverse places around the world is the best way to build ourselves gradually.



A memory, an inspiration. Vilok 'Villy' Bhatia

The journey to Leh by road wasn't just like the usual "means to an end", where you would plod along for hours to reach the destination, rather it was an adventure in itself. As we crossed the Tanglangla pass which is one of the highest passes on the earth, it snowed. The snow covered the road, the mountains, the car, everything. At that time, there were few travelers on the road. The snow seemed to amplify the profound silence around us.

Finally after seemingly endless hours of travel, we reached Pangong tso lake. Simply put, it was one of the prettiest sights I've ever seen. The first thing that struck me was the array of different colors congregated in one place. The sheer variety of colors that my eyes could see made it an astounding sight. The light played on the lake and it seemed that the lake had a life of its own and was constantly changing its color according to its moods!



Not to be outdone by the lake, the mountains had equal (if not more) shades. They ranged from light purple to rust to deep green. Between the colors of the mountain and the lake, it was a study in contrast. While, the mountains seemed to be stoic and majestic, the lake seemed serene and tranquil.

I still remember the cool breeze lightly ruffling my hair and sending tingling sensations down my spine. Such was its beauty that it seemed almost fictitious. It looked like something dreamed up by Van Gogh or Monet. Yet I was there, I could see it with my own eyes, watch the light play on those lofty mountains and the placid lake. Feel the wind play with my hair. As far as I could see, there was nothing except the lake, the mountains and the blue skies ahead flecked with clouds.

So I stared mesmerized and thought that god himself must have painted this as a testament to the beauty of the earth. Most of all, I remember the feeling of tranquility that overcame me as I sat back and let nature beguile me with its unblemished beauty.

An English girl meets the Outdoors..... Shamimah M-H

The beauty of outdoor adventures is that they can allow you to get back in touch with nature and your inner self. The calm serenity and stunning views nature has to offer can bring a sense of peace to your mind. The other key element outdoor adventures can offer is, the great self achievement and pride you feel completing an adventure. Fortunately, I myself have had the opportunity to achieve this self pride when I completed an eight mile hike in Big Sur.

This hike gave me the chance to experience some of the most beautiful sights from high up in the forests, which only a few people (who are brave enough) are able to see. I won't lie, the hiking trail wasn't easy, but it wasn't the death of me. The one thousand one hundred feet elevation was enough of a challenge without being too much. The great sense of accomplishment I felt once I reached the top of the mountain was incredible. The whole trek was completely worth it just to see the entire magnificence of Big Sur with its stunning coastal regions and beautiful beaches. It literally took my breath away.

Ever since this great experience I have pushed myself to do more outdoor activities, such as kayaking in Monterey Bay, camping and hiking in Yosemite National Park, bike riding over Golden Gate bridge and having my first surf lesson at Rio Del Mar beach.

I have never been the type of girl who loves to be outdoors in nature, unless I was at an outdoor shopping mall. Yet for some odd reason being in a different, foreign country has caused me to become fearless. This doesn't mean I'm about to jump out of a plane and risk my life, only a fool would do that. But being placed in a new and exciting country for a short period of time has encouraged me to do things out of the ordinary and make the most of every opportunity offered to me. This is a characteristic which I am not used to, however I have fallen completely and utterly in love with it.





Adventure! Serena Organ

You know the journey was memorable when you can start a conversation with: “Remember that trip when we got kicked out of the kiddy-car!”

It was so long ago that I can’t even recall where my friend and I were going, or how old I was - possibly eight - but we were obsessed with playing the card game *War*, and on a long train ride with short attention spans the best thing we could do was hold up in the kiddy-car and play to our heart’s content; or at least until we were asked to leave.

I still smile thinking of how loud and excited we were over a simple card game, as if we were opposing armies, facing each other for the last time. It had been a long and bloody battle, casualties on all sides, war-stricken countries at each other’s throats, hoping and praying for an ace, a king, anything other than the endless stream of low valued cards. I cannot remember whether it was the war cries, or the arguing that finally provoked an attendant to come in and check that we were not actually killing each other.

Either way, a woman with a scowling face and a miffed look in her eyes came marching across the battlefield. She eyed our weary, red-faced soldiers and sneered. “I’m sorry” (she most certainly was not sorry) “but you’ll have to go back to your seats. You are disturbing the other passengers.” Chastened, we gathered our men and sulked back to our seats.

A couple of kids getting out-of-hand with boredom is not the most remarkable story; but I will personally remember it as one of the most epic imaginary battles I’ve ever had!

The Thrill Shinpei Shiota

Drive, drive, drive. It made us crazy. Where is the restroom? Where is the restaurant? It is USA, not Japan.

We went on a road trip all over the west coast of USA for over 2 weeks. We departed from San Jose and went north to Seattle, and then went down to southern California. The whole distance was over 4000 miles. This experience showed me how huge the United States actually is, especially when compared to Japan, which only has land as big as California.

Every day we drove such long distances. Especially when we drove from Seattle to Salt Lake city, it was just exhausting, it took 16 hours. We had 4 drivers and changed periodically. I was one of the drivers. The north side of the USA had so much snow, it was scary to drive. Fighting against drowsiness was also one of the problems with driving. We helped each other and made sure that the drivers didn't sleep by talking all the time with them.

There were problems with driving, but also so many fun experiences. Driving in the vast wildness is my favorite. I saw so much impressive scenery when I was driving on the trip. These scenes were definitely America's essential fortunes: Dynamic canyons, magnificent mountains, brilliant valleys, also free wild animals. Everything was different from Japan.

These amazing experiences made me feel like I definitely wanted to go all over the world in the future. I'm sure that there is a lot more amazing scenery in this world. If I could, driving would be the best way to feel these places. I can drop by wherever I want, and stay there however long I want.





Travel vs. Trouble Christian Hip

"When I travel, trouble travels with me."

Travel is much related to trouble for me. I cannot recall a time when I travelled and trouble was not there. Trouble can be in the form of anything, and it is unexpected. In every place I travel, I have encountered trouble, in the form of getting lost, missing my plane, spending more money than I should, and more trouble.

The first time I got into trouble was when I traveled to San Francisco when I was 5 years old. I can't remember very well what happened, but my mom tells everyone that I got lost in Chinatown, and that was the scariest thing that happened to my mom and me even though I don't remember.

The second time trouble travelled with me was when I missed my plane to Peru. This made me think: who doesn't have problems in the airport? When travelling, a person better catch his plane or he is going to be in big trouble. Trouble in this case is like a chain that leads to mini troubles like sleeping in the airport, delaying the hours of fun you are missing for the delay, people worrying about you, etc.

The third time I got into trouble was in Las Vegas, people who have been there, and are big time gamblers may know what I am talking about. I just don't know when to quit, and that led me into big troubles. Not only did I lose my money that I could wisely spend in the rest of my travel, but I got into trouble because when you are in Vegas, and you are broke, why are you still in Vegas!



Some may think troubles are part of an unlucky person, but truth is: luck is not real, trouble is.

What happens in Vegas... Rhona Shaughnessy

Ever since I was old enough to sin; I have dreamed of going to Las Vegas. My friends used to say they were going to go for their 21st, and I would think to myself - as if that will ever happen. But when I found myself in America a year later, I decided that as soon as I was legal I would go.

My two friends and I decided to go to the Palms for our first night in Vegas. We arrived at the VIP entry and walked straight up to an open bar. We all knew it was going to be an adventure. Within five minutes we had lost one of our wolf pack; later we discovered that she had ended in the DJ booth with a rather interesting new BFF .I danced all night, making a number of new friends including someone who I ended up agreeing to move to Idaho with. It wasn't until I had lost my shoes, and my remaining friend, that I decided that it was time for bed. One of my favorite things about going out is waking up the next morning and sharing the many hilarious stories. We slept for the remainder of the day and did not rise until it was time to prepare for round two. The Bellagio!



The club was appropriately named the *Bank*, as you needed to own your own bank in order to afford anything; however, we succeeded again to bag free entry and drinks. I found it amusing that when I ordered a drink, the man right next to me was charged \$35 for the same thing. Once again our group was split amidst all of the excitement; so we waited until the morning to share our antics.



Day three, and the majority of us felt raring to take in the sights of Vegas. It is a fabulous place, full of beautiful people, wealth and amazing hotels and attractions. We walked through Paris, Venice and New York before deciding to go out for the third and final night. Not going to lie, this was a major struggle, but I reminded myself 'how often are you in Vegas?' and off we went to TAO. This place was immaculate, but it didn't interest me. There were bouncers everywhere and when I tried to sit down I was told that I had to pay \$1000 to do so. Later, when I found myself waking in a corridor of an unknown hotel, with a number of bouncers with torches asking if I was all right, I decided to call it a night.

With plenty of brilliant memories, including being recognized by the local homeless community, we were gutted to be going home, but it is for this reason that I love travelling, and I love Vegas! We need to do these things now as before we know it we'll all be old with mortgages and too many kids!

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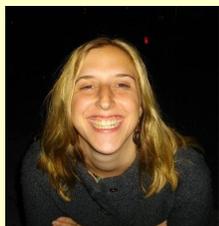
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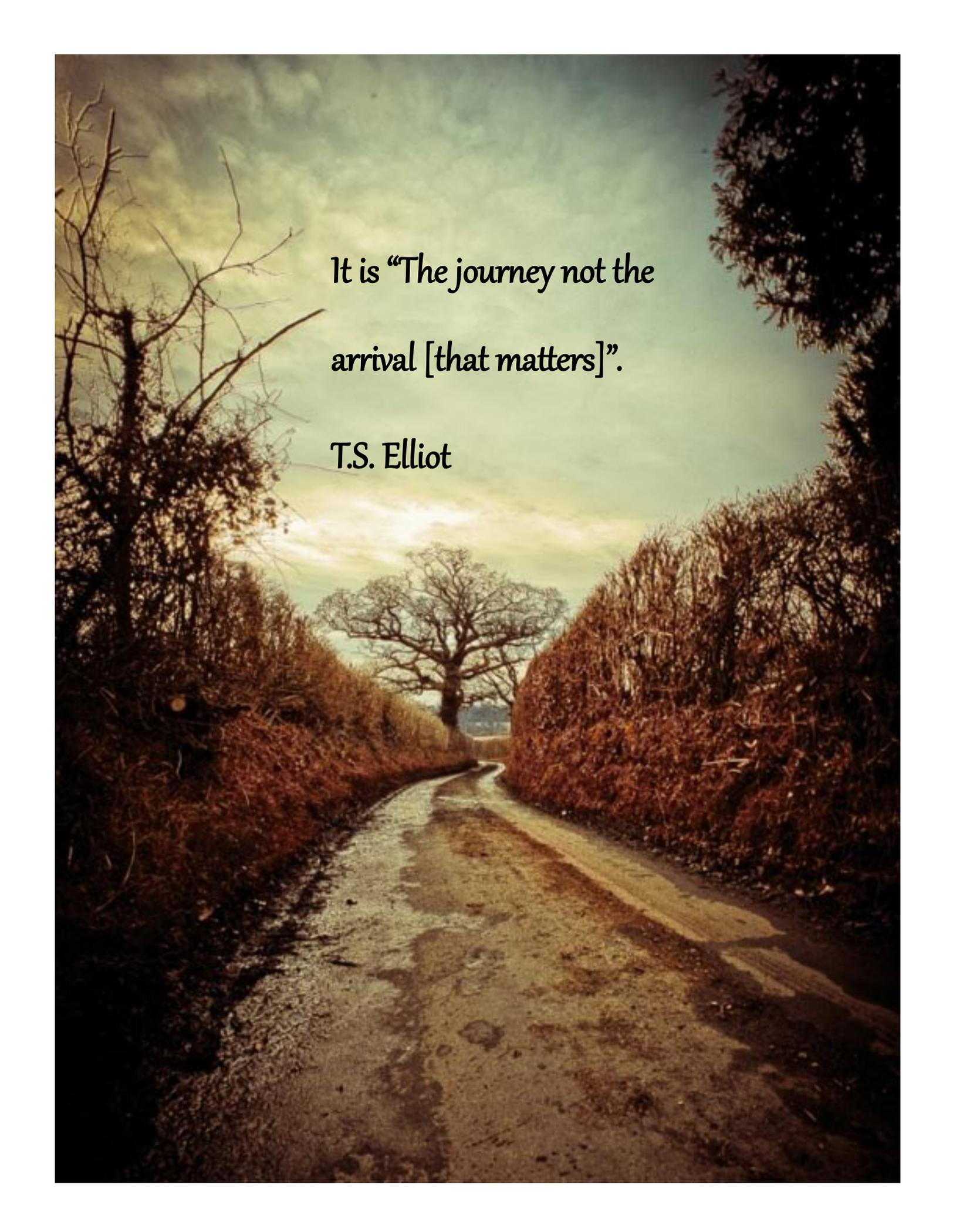
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A photograph of a dirt path winding through a wooded area. The path is the central focus, leading the eye from the bottom towards the center. The trees on either side are mostly bare, with some brown leaves still clinging to the branches, suggesting an autumn or winter setting. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds, and a faint light source is visible in the distance, creating a hazy atmosphere. The overall color palette is muted, with browns, greys, and soft blues.

It is “The journey not the
arrival [that matters]”.

T.S. Elliot