

Exploring the World and Meeting Its People

43 Countries: Lessons Learned

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www.HackneysTravel.com



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This Presentation Covers

- International / Overseas Travel
- Travel via Overlanding
- Overlanding = Vehicle Dependent Travel



Bona Fides

- 43 Countries
- Travel by foot, dugout canoe, scooter, rickshaw, automobile, motorcycle, overland expedition vehicle, bus, helicopter, plane, train, sailboat
- Full-time overland living
- Lessons learned from our experiences and other overlanders



Learn more about us on our
web site
www.HackneysTravel.com



Who, What, When, Why, Etc.

- **Who?** – Couple only, kids are grown.
- **What?** – Global travel, developing countries.
- **When?** – Now, while we're healthy.
- **Why?** – To learn, to grow, to experience, to know the reality first hand.
- **How?** – Worked hard and saved our money, made this the priority.
- **Model?** – Sold primary assets, donated the rest.
- **Funding?** – Self-funded, no sponsorships.
- **Modes?** – All the graphics below.



The 3 Ms

- Money
- Murder
- Me



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Money

- It costs less to overland full time in developing countries than to live in the U.S. or western Europe
- Costs vary widely
- Most overlanders live on \$500 to \$2,000 per month

**Background costs are killers
(insurance, storage, etc.)**



Murder

- The world is a very warm and welcoming place
- The world is, generally, safer and less violent than the U.S.

You will worry about safety and security the most prior to departure and the least while you are out there



Me

- Yes, you can do this
- Overseas overlanding is generally pretty easy, in some places, very easy

Your biggest challenge is looking back at you from the mirror



Basics

- **Water** – Bottled water available everywhere on the planet; filter or sterilize the rest
- **Food** – Available everywhere
- **Communications** – Cell available in populated areas, bring sat phone for remote regions
- **Internet** – Available in cities and market towns
- **Fuel** – Gasoline can be challenging
- **Insurance** – Get travelers, medical and liability. Comprehensive is limited and can be cost prohibitive.



Even More Basics

- **Campgrounds** –As you know them, don't exist outside NA & Europe
- **Laundry** – Available everywhere
- **Money** – ATMs in cities & market towns
- **Finances** – Online
- **Bill Payment** - Online
- **Mail** – Box and forwarding service
- **Spare Parts** – Electronic and model specific
- **Pack Lists** – See our web site



And Even More Basics

- **Roads** – Inter-city mostly paved, market town roads dirt to paved, chicken bus roads typically dirt
- **Local Language** – Learn basics (thank you, please, etc.), otherwise smile a lot and draw in the dirt
- **Danger / Safety** – The world is a very welcoming and safe place, generally much more so than the U.S. & Europe



Safety & Security Basics

- **Trust Your Gut** – No exceptions
- **Dress and Behavior** – Don't stand out
- **Firearms** – No viable overseas scenarios, don't even consider it
- **Civil Unrest & Natural Disasters** – Register with U.S. State Dept.

The world is generally much safer than the U.S.



Health Care Basics

- **Health Insurance** – Care will typically be covered as out of network
- **Medical Evacuation** – Travel policy including air evacuation is highly recommended
- **Vaccinations** – Required, see a travel doctor
- **Prescriptions** – Bring a supply for the term of your trip or period between trips back to U.S.
- **Meds** – See our web site
- **Allergies** – Bring EpiPens for severe cases
- **Health Care** – Available, quality varies, usually free to very nominal cost



Required Paperwork Basics

- Passports
- Vaccination record
- International Driver's License(s)
- Vehicle title
- Vehicle registration
- Vehicle insurance
- Health insurance / medivac
- Birth certificate
- Key emergency contact information
- Copies of credit cards



Paperwork Basics

- Never present original docs unless you are returning to the U.S. / Europe
- Carry a color copy of the photo page of your passport in cities
- Keep color copies of all vehicle docs ready for presentation
- Create multiple color copies of all important documents; leave one set in the U.S.



Money Basics

- Businesses do not accept credit cards outside cities and major market towns
- ATMs are in cities and market towns almost everywhere in the world
- For remote areas with no ATMs, stockpile cash in cities / market towns
- Always have more than one card that you can draw cash on
- Cover multiple ATM networks, e.g., Plus, Cirrus



Data Basics

- Backup your data often
- You will generate terabytes of data – high resolution photography, digital video, etc.
- Get a copy of the data off your bike – ship a copy home
- Never have only one copy of the data
- Overseas retail drive capacity lags the U.S. by several to many years; stock up on capacity before you leave and when you visit



Crossing Borders Basics

- First time can be intimidating
- Have all documentation in order
- Have plenty of color copies of all documents
- Bring a language dictionary - know the key words in the local language (license plate, VIN #, driver's license, passport)
- Understand the basic flow of border crossings (see our web site)
- Ensure you get entry and exit stamps



Charity Basics

- You must come to terms with poverty
- Big logo charity doesn't work
- “We know what these people need” doesn't work
- Handouts of cash don't work
- Locally initiated and sustained programs work

Time and personal involvement is infinitely more valuable than cash.



The Important Stuff

- You will learn the basics in the first few weeks
- The important stuff takes longer to learn and is much more valuable
- You learn the important stuff from
 - Your experiences
 - The experiences of others – ask other overlanders!
 - Read the threads on forums written by people actually doing it



Begin With The End

- The ship will come ashore
- You will have changed
- Everyone else will have changed
- The world did not stop turning while you were gone – everyone and everything moved on
- Others are not all that interested in you, your experiences, your perspectives, your insights, etc.; they are more interested in TV.
- Others may resent your experiences



Getting From A to O

- It doesn't happen in one big step
- Start small – local, short duration
- Test methods / styles / platforms – solo vs. group, rigidly scheduled vs. no schedule, small vs. large, etc.
- Consider rental or group trip for initial overseas experience



Misplaced Prep Priorities

- It's not about the bike
- It's not about the stuff
- It's about the experiences

Every \$ spent on things is almost certainly, without exception, better spent on the travel.



Planning

- "No plan survives first contact with the enemy." - Helmuth von Moltke the Elder (1800-1891)
- Much of what you bring you won't need or use
- Most of what you think will happen won't

Remain Flexible



The Big Mistakes

- Seeing a lot and experiencing very little
- Checklist travel
- No permission to change (mission, self, destinations, interests, etc.)
- Never disconnecting / unplugging from home



The Big Challenges

- Understanding the differences between tourism, travel and overland living
- ***Removing*** your cultural goggles
- The reality of poverty
- The corruption and failure of big logo charities
- Understanding that your culture's and country's way is not the way, it is only one way among many possible ways



Cultural Goggles

- Other societies have different norms, customs, practices and standards
- Some are diametrically opposed to yours
- You cannot fully learn about others unless you can set aside those differences and look at them without the filter of your cultural goggles

Your preconceptions, biases and deeply rooted expectations can and will color and shape your experiences – it's up to you.



U.S. Visibility of the World



CNN INTERNATIONAL
.com/world

HOME ASIA EUROPE U.S. **WORLD** WORLD BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY ENTERTAINMENT WORLD SPORT TRAVEL

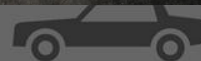
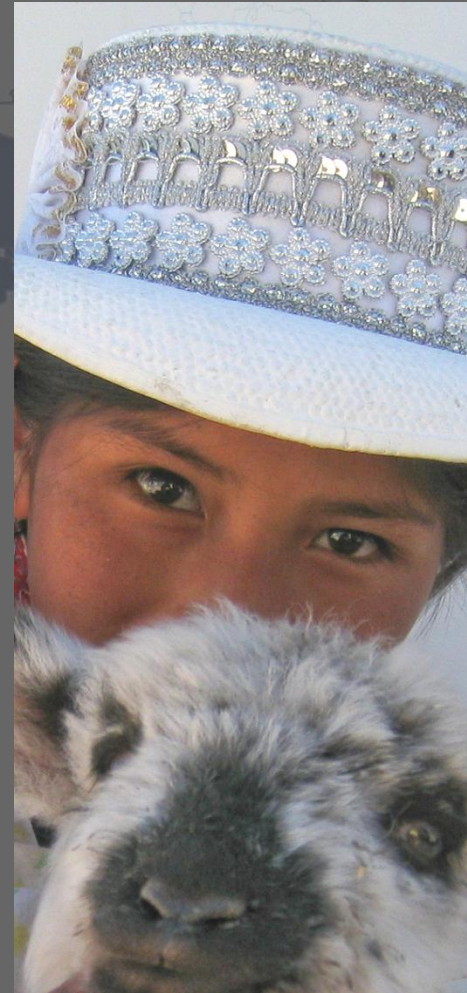
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April 14, 2009 – Updated 1701 GMT (0101 HKT)

At least 20 killed in Peru crash



Reality



The Reality Rule

- The world is very different, almost exactly opposite, of what you have been led to believe.
- The differences between what you expect and what you actually experience will be initially disconcerting.

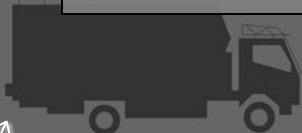
You will only know the reality of the world by experiencing it yourself.



Being an American

- “Everyone hates us.” is the biggest lie ever perpetrated on the American public.
- The people of the world have a tremendous reservoir of affection for the American people.
- The people of the world understand the difference between a country’s people and their government, much more than we do here.

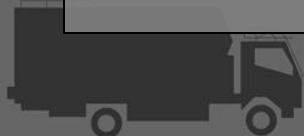
You are an ambassador for your country - represent us well.



The Director of Dotting

- Borders, ports, airports, etc.
- Their only domain - their only power
- That “ i ” must be, and will be, dotted
- Be patient, be friendly, keep smiling

Tomorrow you will be somewhere else and they will be in the same place – probably forever.



Beware the Mission

- Western travelers, especially Americans, tend to overland within the context of a mission
 - Commercial / Sponsorship / Marketing
 - Personal Growth / Fulfillment / Adventure
 - First / Fastest / Most / Least
 - Service / Charity / Philanthropic
 - Media / Video / Photography / Writing
 - Research / Science



The Mission / Purpose

- Why are we doing this?
 - Revisit this question regularly
 - Start at 40,000 feet and work down from there
- Don't be afraid of changing the answer

The Mission Does Not Define You
You Define The Mission



Ride Your Own Ride

- Do not become a guidebook zombie
- Others will seek to shape your experience
- Please yourself first
- Do what you want as you want to do it

It's not about *their* journey
It's about **YOUR** journey



Overlanding Realities

- Tourism is not Travel is not Overland Living
- Full time overlanding is full time living
- Overlanding is a market town road experience – not a single track trail experience
- Overlanding is about experiences with people and places, not about experiences with your bike



Vehicle Realities

- International overlanding is about using market town roads to get from one interesting place to another.
- You can see at least 90% of the interesting places in the world with a scooter
- You will adapt your lifestyle to your vehicle.

It's not about the bike
It's about the experiences



Experience Realities

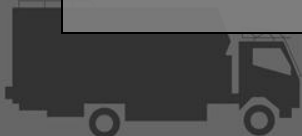
- If you unplug, there are consequences
 - Identity
 - Disassociation
 - Tribelessness
- If you don't unplug, there are consequences
 - Missed opportunities
 - Cocooned experience



Time Realities

- By far the most precious commodity
- The most important variable
- Will shape your experience more than any other factor
- Time is dangerous – drives compromises to safety, limits, goals, etc.

Time gated overlanding alters the experience



The Three Golden Rules of Travel

Doug's

- Don't #&%@ with the locals.
- Always remember you are a guest - act accordingly.
- Don't be stupid.

Steph's

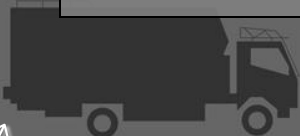
- Trust your gut.
- Be respectful at all times.
- Focus on where you are - not where you are going.



How To Do This

- Must be the #1 Priority – top life goal
- Test modes / methods / platforms
- Clear the decks
- Prioritize destinations
- Remain flexible

**Go sooner with less
vs. later with more**



Prerequisites

- Understand and accept the realities of international overlanding
- Establish exit gating factors, e.g., health of parents, financial limits, etc.
- All parties must be on board and comfortable with all known risk factors, e.g., financial, health, career



The Good News

- After you make this the #1 Priority, everything else is easy
- The rewards far outweigh the sacrifices
- What you learn and witness is only available for those who are out there

The world is a very warm and welcoming place.



Learn More

Details on the lessons in this presentation
and more are available at:

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