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South Pole in Style: The Ultimate Journey 70

This journey has all the extremes: Nature, luxury, exclusivity, challenge with a bit explorer experience. No journey that we have experienced was more intense and made us happier.



- South Pole: Extreme in geography, logistics and costs, but fairly priced. When we reached it, can you imagine our feelings?
- Either from Punta Arenas, a flying experience with superior flexibility, for those who want it quick. Total time for return flight from camp: 11 h (by DC3/Baseler).
- Or from Cape Town for those who want the best quality and highest intensity: 10 days in Antarctica including South Pole with one night explorer experience, luxury and extreme sports: The ultimate in intensity. Total time for return flight from camp: 30 h (by DC3/Baseler). Weatherwise you have to have luck for Pole and Emperors in 10 days. We were not so lucky. We tried it twice. Each time we had to give up the attempt due to a White Out although the camp has best chances: Two colonies east and west.
- If you take it from Cape Town: Pictures you never forget: Driving over glaciers, cliff hanging, climbing an ice wall, kite skiing, skidoo-ing, exploring blue ice tunnels, a sea of ice waves in glittering light, zip-lining over a lake, and the white-out.
- An excellent organization by White Desert: Patrick and Robyn. A unique camp operated by an outstanding team: All world record holders, extraordinary people providing individual service: A Gin ,n Tonic to the glacier? Oysters and champagne? They will do it. You will never forget the ambiance of the Whichaway Camp, the location of the extraterrestrial „pods“ – and these people!

4.1. Global: **The Flight to the South Pole: A Flight like no other** 71

There are two ways to get to the South Pole: With White Desert from Cape Town and by ANI from Punta Arenas. We are describing the way from Cape Town



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After a meticulous check of your equipment at the farm of the tour operator we flew from Capetown to the Russian research station Novolazarevskaya in 5,5 h with an IL 76, a cargo plane and 4 pilots. Well done, but different. On a huge screen we saw the landing difficult to believe: A runway of grounded ice with a good grip (1). We stepped out on ice (2), we were in Queen Maud Land. In our base camp we waited for the right time slot weatherwise. Already next day 2 days of good weather were predicted. We entered our aircraft (3): A DC 3 built in 1942 but refurbished in Canada for landing on very rough snowy terrain. The fascinating flight over a mountain range took us from 70° till 83° latitude to Camp 83 for refuelling: 4.5 h, 1400 km, 320 km/h. We stepped out for 1 h at a height of 2.800 m on the high plateau. The temperature was -28°C. It was another 2,5 h to the South Pole. We landed (4) 100 m away from the Geographic South Pole (5). Another 100m to the Ceremonial Pole with the famous silver ball and 12 flags from the countries which signed the Antarctic Treaty. There is nothing special to be seen, but the feeling is sensational. You reflect about where you are, how difficult it was to get here and you think about the hardships Amundsen had to endure. Due to the katabatic winds sucking the air away from the pole the air is thinner: As if you would be 3.400m high. The real challenge is the way back. The pilots are not allowed to work more than 10 h, so you have to spend a night at Camp 83 (6). Sleeping at -30°C in a small mountaineering tent needs some agility.



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Living in Antarctica: 11 Days

72

In general the environment of Antarctica is the most inhospitable on the planet. We experienced it very differently.

Our home, a plastic ball, called pod, spacious, heated, two beds, in a phantastic surrounding.
Luxury: Oysters, cheese, wine, champagne: FIB: Frank's ice bar.

Trekking, skiing, snowmobile, walking with crampons over a rough frozen lake, scary drives with very special SUVs over glaciers: Total immersion: Beauty

We were trained by world-class experts. Teo showed new capabilities: Climbing up ice walls (he is the first), rock climbing, ziplining and ski kiting

The best experience is to go down to a frozen part of the ocean, into a world of bizarre ice, into caves of deep blue ice, unique and intensive.



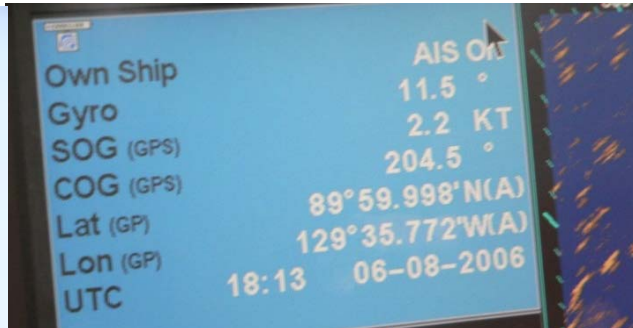
The easiest way to get to the North Pole is with a Russian nuclear ice breaker from and to **Murmansk**. 2006 it was the Yamal. This ship got it all, 75.000 HP, sails through 1,5 m ice with 7 kn. It is one out of four identical ships.

A stop at **Franz Joseph-Land** for landings and heli rides, arguably the most beautiful archipelago in the Arctic.

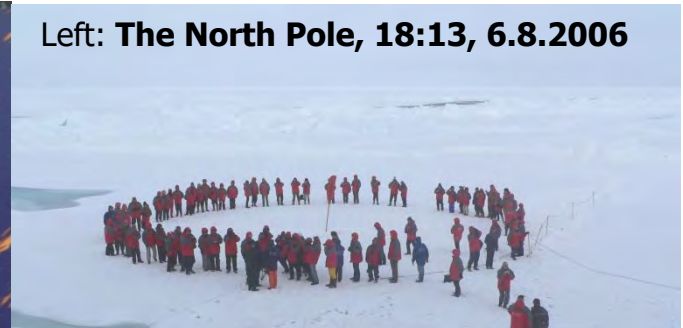
At the **North Pole** the geography is completely reverse to that one of the South Pole. Here the Pole can only be found in the ice drift. Therefore you will be at the North Pole with the ship only for probably a second. We got this second with many maneuvers, but to get a photo of it is a different story, too many want the same, but I got pretty close.

At the Pole you have a party, you can walk or fly around with the helicopter – and you can swim... yes some do.

I met Viktor Boyarsky, who swam as well. He holds all the records to the North Pole, 2006 20 times on skis. He was the first to cross Antarctica with dog sleighs. The most prominent Russian polar explorer.



Left: The North Pole, 18:13, 6.8.2006



With Viktor Boyarsky



Polar regions are fascinating, because **they are pure, hostile and extreme**. The Antarctic circumnavigation is far more beautiful and diverse than the Arctic one. Top of tops is the Ross Sea. This circumnavigation - mostly between 60° and 70° S - was first done bei Bellingshausen and Lazarev 1819-1821, who discovered Antarctica and the first islands south of the Antarctic circle.

Pacific Part

This is called the Semi-Circumnavigation



The route:

Along the Southern Ocean: Four legs

1. Pacific : Bluff, Cape Adare (1), Ross Sea (2), Byrd Land (5), Peter I (p. 8), Antarctic Peninsula, Ushuaia
2. Atlantic: Ushuaia, South Sandwich (beautiful Zavodovsky), Bouvet, Cape Town
3. Indian Ocean: Cape Town, Kerguelen, Heard&McD, Fremantle
4. South of Australia: Fremantle, Hobart to Bluff, NZ

The superlatives, the history:

Cape Adare: The end of the longest mountain range in the world, the hut of Borchgrevink, 1899 the first wintering in Antarctica (1). Scott's Terra Nova expedition gave the name to the fantastic bay (2). The unique Ross ice shelf 500km ice barrier, Bay of Whales the most southern point for ships, the closest to the South Pole, from here Amundsen started his victorious race (4).

The ships:

No regular service, „MS Ortelius“ did parts of it: Semi-circumnavigation and Atlantic (only parts)

Indian Ocean: Only parts by „Le Marion Dufresne“ (very restricted capacity). The whole crossing can only be done by private yachts, e.g. „Hanse Merkur“ (but with 34 m quite small), today one problem is to get the permits of France and Australia.

The challenge:

The stormiest waters in the world, the „Roaring forties“, but the Fifties can be equally bad, crossing the Southern Ocean from Bluff, NZ into the Ross Sea can have almost 100 kn wind and 12 m waves, see p. 39. Here you should have „good sea legs“.

Indian Ocean Part

Planned but cancelled

This space was reserved for pictures from

- **Marion,**
- **Crozet,**
- **Kerguelen,**
- **Amsterdam,**
- **Heard and**
- **MacDonald.**

That this couldn't be done is the only sad aspect of our travel career.

See for a different perspective the book of Harry Mitsidis: The curious case of...

The Arctic Circumnavigation

A circumnavigation captures the entirety of polar regions and **reveals their interrelations. Quality traveling aims at coherence.** The interrelationships at the Pole show the threatening of polar bears.

Northwest Passage:

Anadyr via Cape Barrow and Lancaster Sound to Greenland

Devon 8.2015



Devon 8.2015



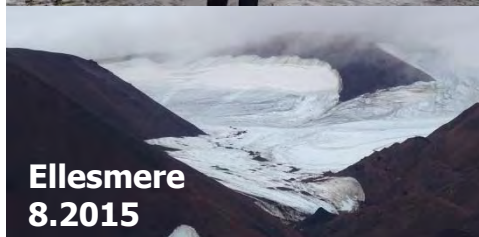
Devon 8.2015



Ellesmere
8.2015



Ellesmere
8.2015



The route: Both passages – Northwest and Northeast Passage – combined are not the full Arctic circumnavigation. The missing link – Murmansk, Spitzbergen to Greenland – can only be done by an icebreaker. Greenland to Resolute will complete the route.

The ships: In 2016 only the „I/B Cap. Klebnikov“ did the full circumnavigation. Again? An icebreaker with helicopters is the best thinkable equipment. „Hanseatic“ (will be replaced) and „Bremen“ do one or the other passage. The Atlantic link can be done by „MS Plancius“.

The history: The Northwest-Passage has been done by Amundsen on his ship Goja in 1907 for the first time. The Northeast-Passage has been done by Nordenskiöld on his boat Vega in 1880 for the first time.

The difficulties:

The full circumnavigation requires the passage around the Northern part of Greenland. This part needs definitely an ice-breaker.

The **Northwest Passage** has even in August sometimes ice jams which require an icebreaker, but rarely. Bottleneck is Peel Sound. The bottleneck of the **Northeast Passage** is the Vilkitsky Strait Severnaya Zemlya, in July even the Klebnikov had to work. In August the Hanseatic got through very smoothly. Fog is often a problem. You must have a bit of luck.

The highlights:

Northeast: Wrangel, Novo Sibirsk, Severnaya Zemlya, Cape Chelyuskin at Taimyr, Maka Bay at Novaya Zemlya. The longest coastline north of the Arctic circle, 8.200 km, all in one country.

Northwest: Cape Barrow, Sax Harbour, Coronation Golf, Beechy Island, Lancaster Sound, Devon and Ellesmere, North Greenland

Northeast Passage:

Spitzbergen or Murmansk via Wrangel to Anadyr, all 7.16

Bering Strait



Wrangel Island



Laptev Sea



Taimyr



Novaya
Zemlya

Norilsk is the gateway to 3 Siberian wonders: Putorana, Jenissei, Taimyr - and a wonder in itself, 300 km north of the Arctic Circle.

Norilsk is difficult to reach. Even Russians need a permit. In 2012 only 7 permits were granted to foreigners, 2 for us.

Norilsk has several world records: The world's biggest producer of Nickel, the most northerly - swimming pool, - mosque and - railway (unconnected). But it has a unique Gulag history as well.

The city is formed by "Norilsk Nickel", the world's biggest producer of Nickel and Palladium, one of the biggest and richest Russian companies, the production value is 24 bill US\$, 3% of Russia's GDP, 2 shareholders have 50%. The ecology is the worst in Russia and the world. The main road is beautiful, it could have been built by Rastrelli, it ends in front of "the company".

The city is the gateway to

- the beautiful **Putorana** Plateau, which resembles a Norwegian landscape, the geographical center of Russia
- the splendor of the **Jenissei** and its water landscapes, which epitomizes the problematic of Russian rivers
- the **Taimyr** peninsula, one of the most pristine landscapes of the world, with a unique wildlife.

We chartered a helicopter for 5 hours, a new Eurocopter, 2 pilots, top professionals. The flight over the Putorana Plateau, the landing on top (the first ever), the flight over the mouth of the Jenessei, the landings at its banks and an another one just over the border of the Taimyr Reserve are one of the most spectacular flights you can have.



The least visited area in Russia, 650 km drive from Vladivostok



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We rented a property in Terney at the Japanese Sea, operated by a ranger (5), our guide: A cosy chalet with a sauna (banya), garden and a river (1)**; the pit toilet was not so nice, but far enough.

In the **World Heritage „Central Sikhote-Alin“** moderate and sub-tropical climate overlap in a unique and revealing way:

- The only place in the world, where you can **see tigers and bears in the same territory**. Tigers are too elusive to see*, only by trap cameras (2), but you can see the footprints (3), bear (above) and tiger (below) together.
- Primeaval forests (4)
- Endemic rhododendron (5)
- Cape Severny at the Japanese Sea (6)
- Rare seals in banana posture (7).

*Our host and ranger lived here for 40 years, all years dedicated to the park, she has seen only one tiger once

** All pictures from June 2015



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Sakura in Japan: An Extreme Approach

In no country is spring so beautiful as in Japan. The cherry blossom, the Sakura, *is* Japan.



No nation has a more intimate relationship with a plant than the Japanese with the cherry tree. The elderly don't ask: How many years will I live, but how many Sakuras will I see.

Nothing is more touching in nature - no leaves, only pink blossoms covering the tree tenderly, almost completely.

Arguably we are the only tourists who have seen **all Japan from South to North with blooming cherries**, in 47 days every day (not in the Pacific Islands). Here are the **top 5**, all top, all very different, all a „must see“:

Kakunodate: The most intense Sakura festival, in the town of the Samurai, the Sakura is the symbol of the Samurai, because both have a short life. At the banks of the river you walk in a 2 km tunnel of cherries – unique.

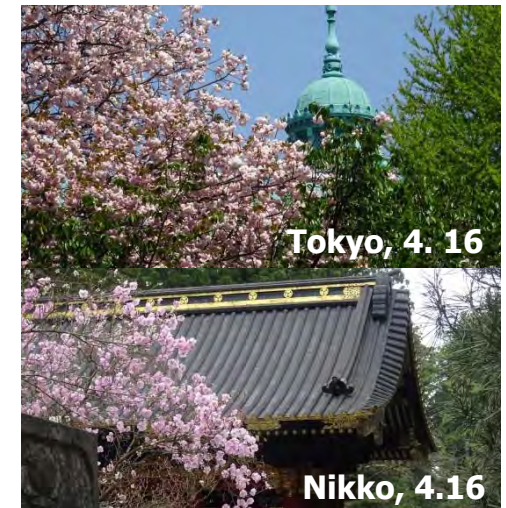
Hirosaki: Ranked by Michelin as the world's best, the oldest cherries and the best weeping cherries, in a castle garden, tunnels along the moats, very dense - unique.

Hakodate: 1600 trees at the walls of a star-shaped fort, an amazing view from the Goryokaku tower - unique.

Tokyo – Ueno Park: The tunnel of cherries is only 400 m, but dense, and the location is most important, from the National Museum to the Ameyoko market – unique.

Kyoto: The philosopher's way is the most romantic way to experience this event –

Sakura: The most romantic expression of nature



China's Route of Superlatives

From the Silk Road with the highest train crossing „The Tibetan Plateau“ into Lhasa, passing the Everest, along the Tsangpo the highest river, with best Himalaya views, passing the Kailash and Zhada into Aksai Chin finally to Kashgar. From and to the Silk Road on a route which can't be more spectacular, 17 nights between 3700 / 4600 m, 25 passes at 4.900m average, 14 passes over 5.000m, we drove 4.000 km, with 4 side trips, not easy, but doable.



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Lanzhou (1) :

Silk Road, the most important trade route of all times

Tibetan Plateau (2):

Highest, biggest, with a unique Tectonic

Highest Train (3):

Crossing the „Plateau“ and riding with 2 locs up to 5.133 m

Potala (4):

Biggest lamaistic residence

+Jokhang Temple

most beautiful, most holy

+Sera, Drepung, Sakya:

the 3 biggest monasteries

Everest (5):

The highest mountain. North face is the most beautiful

+Everest Base Camp:

Epitome of mountaineering

+Rongbuk:

Highest monastery

Tsangpo (6):

Highest river, most spectacular cut through the Himalaya

Kailash (7):

Most holy mountain for 4 religions, outstanding pilgrimage

Lake Manasarovar (8):

Highest fresh-water lake

Guge Kingdom, Zhada (9):

One of the most spectacular locations, best Buddhist murals

+ The upper **Indus Valley**

Aksai Chin border road:

highest travel region, (4 hours above 5.000 m)

+Aksai Chin Lake (10):

most beautiful lake, 5000m

+Takla Makan Desert:

The most difficult one

+Kashgar:

Crossroads of the silk roads



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10

Western Tibet: Ruins of Guge Kingdom

There are places that blow your mind away: The Giga Highlights. The ruins of the Guge Kingdom in Western Tibet, Zhada is such a place. Located in a landscape which can be compared with the Grand Canyon (1), at the most important tributary to the Indus, the Sutlej (2). In the 10th ct. King Ösung built his palace on a rock (3) and on the slopes a city (4) and a monastery with Buddhist murals - the best preserved and the most artistic in the world (5).



Here is the story:

In the 9th ct. the ruling monastery Sakya had a weak influence on Western Tibet. The Guge kingdom was established and became powerful under King Osung in the 10th ct. Early 14th ct. the two other kingdoms Ladakh and Burang wanted to unify the area under one kingdom and attacked Guge now being ruled by King Ischi Ö. They won and forced the population of Guge to cut off the supply of the kingdom's palace towering over Guge. If they had refused they would have been killed. The king wanted to save his people and jumped off the cliff of his palace. For his ancestors it was a place of beauty because of the outstanding view, for him it became his grave. The aggressors went back. Sakya took over again. Thus the present borders in this region (India, China, Nepal) had developed.



The Western Border of Tibet and Aksai Chin 81

To pass this area there is only one road: The highest and longest road on this level: **4 hours above 5.000 m**, 270 km (after Durma, before Dahongliotan), four passes with 5.300 m average, 3 hours 360° panorama of snow capped mountains, only antilopes, blue sheep and strong winds. We have travelled more difficult roads in the Cameroon jungle and up to the source of the Ganges, but no road is physically more demanding. The road from Ngari to the Silk Road - 2 days - is 90% fun and 10% fear: Passes Seruk & Okos.



Fundö Pass, the highest



This you have 360° for 3 hours



Rare: World's highest antilopes

Aksai Chin is a disputed area between India and China. Thus the permits are not easy to get. The heart is the **Aksai Chin Lake**, arguably the most beautiful lake of all.

The Aksai Chin Lake is accessible only off-road.

2 options: a flat trail in the valley risking getting stuck in the sand or 500m up the mountains risking to slide: We took the latter because it is much shorter. We had 2 cars, one was the guinea pig, it went first for a test drive. The view from 5500 m down to the 5000 high lake you will never forget.

After 4 hours at 5000m you reach the Tschite Pass to go down from 5.000 to 4.400m to reach the only place to sleep for the night, Dahongliotan, horrible, for us unacceptable.

150 km further a **military outpost**, the Western border of Aksai Chin. An overnight is officially not allowed, although prearranged, we got rejected, but then we talked ... and won ... and slept well.

Our message: **Sometimes you have to fight for quality.** More so: We won the heart of the commander. He wanted a photo of us with soldiers in front of the barracks, although forbidden. But we got no copy. Our experience with the **Chinese Army**.

The controls between Lhasa and Yecheng (Silk Road) are appalling. You need patience and many papers, so-called permits. And a guide who does it.



The entrance of Aksai Chin



Breathtaking: Off-road to the top



The Aksai Chin Lake

How can people survive on plates of sheer rock? With a thin strata of soil the Dogon survived with cattle, onions and millet, built the highest concentration of cliff dwellings in the world, villages full of granaries and created remarkable art works, 200 km cliffs, the highest concentration of African Baobabs - a worldwide unique cultural landscape.

Mali is in a crisis since 2009, tourism is almost dead, we were among the first swallows, but a few swallows don't make a summer. Despite the support of the Vice President of the National Assembly and all security we couldn't fly with the UN to Timbuktu in Feb, 2016, the rebels of NMLA are a substantial threat.

**Yendouma****Yendouma****Koundou****Ireli****Bongho****Banani**

The largest desert in the world has a diversity which is underestimated by most travelers. The heart of the Sahara can be defined by 4 mountain ranges: Hoggar and Djanet in the north, Tibesti and Air in the south. If you want to capture all of its beauty you should extend to the Ounianga Lake, the Ennedi Massif and the oases Gouro and Faya.



Hoggar and Djanet I did three times in the eighties and nineties, first time with my motor bike second time with my car, and thirdly by trekking. The volcanic cones, the rose rock formations and the rock paintings are unique. Now it is not safe.

The southern part we did Dec./Jan. 16/17, one of the greatest travels. 16 days round trip in Chad. You need professional equipment and drivers. It is not easy, but a great experience.

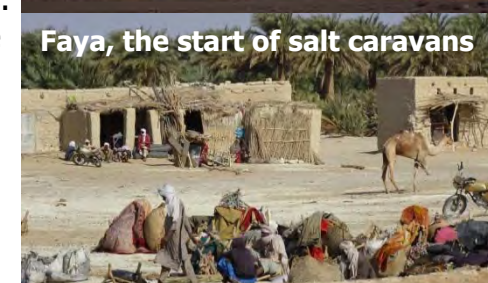
Ennedi (World Heritage) is arguably the most beautiful complex of landscapes on earth, Monument Valley, Arches NP and Bryce C NP together. The main difference: It is not only extremely beautiful but totally pristine. The Aluba Arch is the second largest in the world, Les Pitons is a garden of rock columns, the gueltas – waterholes – are spectacular – water and cliffs, one bears the only Saharan crocodiles. Sometimes you see remnants of the Libyan attack. Now Chad is safe because of the omnipresence of military, but in the vast desert you only see them in the northern oasis.

Gouro is a beautiful oasis, the gate to Tibesti. It is one of the traditional crossroads of trade.

The volcanic landscapes of **Tibesti** is another out of the world experience. We drove to the volcano Emi Koussi, the highest point.

Faya has with 84 km the longest palm plantation, unique mud architecture, a saline. From here the arab guided caravans cross the desert to Abeche.

From Kouba you drive through the sand of the **Erg Jourab**, the bed of the ancient Chad Lake visible by diatomees, home of Toumai, p.87



Ounianga Lakes in Chad

The extreme beauty of this World Heritage landscape can only be fully admired after you have traveled for days in deep sand always close to getting stuck and lost: Picture above left - and then you see them... the Ounianga lakes, small ones and big ones, 18 in total. Unbelievable in the middle of the largest desert. At the big lake – panorama below - I was moved to tears.



Sometimes we didn't expect anything and then it turned out to be something great. In Puntland, Horn of Africa, we knew we were the first to Qhardo, the heart of Puntland, the residence of the king. A land, known to us as the land of smugglers and pirates. Here – because of being the first – we got the warmest welcome ever, despite the guns protecting the car and omnipresent security.

We had a confirmed date with the king, a meeting with the mayor and two governors, we gave two speeches about the tourist potential, had a common walk to the water sources financed by the EU, drank camel milk in the market and attended a party under the bird trees – all published by the media. A phantastic surprise.



The source: Africa Cradles of mankind



Toumai,
Chad,
7 Ma



Mrs. Ples,
2,5 Ma

Sterk-
fontein,
RSA, 3.2013

Lower Awash
Valley,
Ethiopia,
1. 2016



Lucy,
3,2 Ma,
National Museum,
Addis, 3. 2016



With
Louise Leakey
in Koobi Fora,
8.2005

1. The oldest hominids are the group of **Australopithecines**. The oldest lived in **Chad at Toros-Menalla, 7 Ma** (million years ago), we saw „Toumai“ Jan, 2017. **Lucy**, only 1 m short, was found in Ethiopia, Hadar 1974 but probably lived in the Lower Awash Valley, 3,2 Ma. She was considered to be the oldest hominid, was named after a song of the Beatles and became the most famous one. But not anymore. More were found, in Chad, but in Ethiopia as well: Ardi 3,2 and Selam, 3,3, together with Lucy in the National Museum of Addis. In the **Olduvai Gorge**, in Tanzania Louis and Mary Leakey discovered in 1961 the **foot prints of Laetoli**, 3,5 Ma

2. The Leakey family found the **Homo habilis**, 1, 7 Ma, which had a larger brain and a more gracile face, more developed, the first hominid in the Homo lineage. I visited Koobi Fora at Lake Turkana, Kenya, with Louise Leakey, the grand daughter.

3. In **Sterkfontein** they found the biggest amount of hominids, Paranthropus, 2,5 Ma, thus this site, 60 km away from Jo'burg, is called the cradle of mankind. The Paranthropus discoveries changed the thinking about evolution. It was not a single chain of adaptations, it was a tree of parallel lineages. The term Paranthropus means „parallel to human“. They lived at about the same time as our direct predecessors in the Homo genus, Homo habilis and Homo ergaster. Homo habilis survived because he was a tool maker, while the Paranthropus, which was not a tool-maker, mainly a vegetarian, became extinct about 1 Ma. Thus the term Cradle of Mankind for Sterkfontein is misleading.

4. Already **Darwin** was convinced that the mankind had developed in Africa, which is in line with modern thinking (see The route).

5. The homo habilis evolved into the **Homo erectus**, the first who used fire, walked like modern humans and lived in all continents of the old world.

6. In the cave of **Zhoukoudian**, near Beijing, the **Peking Man**, a homo erectus, was found, who lived around 0,6 Ma. In **Sangiran**, Java, around 1 Ma, another.

7. 1991 in **Dmanisi**, Georgia the missing link between Homo erectus in Africa and Asia was found, 1,8 Ma old.

8. Out of him evolved the **Archaic Homo sapiens**. Large brow ridges, a large face, and thick cranial bones. One archaic group, the **Neanderthals** in Eurasia, 0,2 Ma, were found in Engis, Belgium, Gibraltar and Neander Valley, Germany; they became extinct around 40.000 BC.

9. The **South American** men could have come about 0,1 Ma via landbridges from Africa or around 12.000 via Bering landbridge from Asia. Paintings are 25.000 y old.
10. Other archaic groups developed into the **Modern Homo sapiens**, e.g. the bushmen. Thus 3 cradles: (1) Toumai, Lucy, (2) Homo habilis. (3) Homo erectus

The Destination: The whole world



The
route



Dmanisi,
Georgia,
5.2012



Sangiran,
Surakarta,
11.2012



Sangiran

Serra de
Capivara,
Brazil,
2.2010

The Most Fascinating Ethnics

In traveling probably the most rewarding aspect is to meet people. We learned that all travelers agree on that - no matter what style they prefer. When you travel you meet three kinds of people.

(1) those that you meet on the way – we think that openness is the key, contacting locals is essential for traveling

(2) those who support your travel – we think that selecting the best is decisive, getting recommendations should be profound

(3) those who are one of the objectives of your travel: Ethnics. **We are striving for greatest ethnical diversity.**

The following 48 ethnics we met more intensely. We plan to visit Yaomani, Asmats, Dervishes of Konya in Turkey and the Evenks in Russia, and more. The most inaccessible groups live in Andamans and Nicobars (Jarawas) and the Amazon Jungle (Yaomani) - strictly protected.

Africa

1. Hammer in Ethiopia
2. Mursi in Ethiopia
3. Karo in Ethiopia
4. Touareg in Chad
5. Yorouba in Oyo, Nigeria
6. Bushmen in the Kalahari
7. Afar in the Danakil Depression
8. Tariqa Dervishes at Omdurman
9. Dogon in Mali
10. Massai in Kenya
11. Fulani in Burkina Faso and Senegal
12. Pygmies in Cameroon

Americas

13. Inuit in Canada and Greenland
14. Haida in West Canada
15. Navajo Indians
16. Apaches near Phoenix
17. Sioux in Dakota
18. Cherokee near Asheville
19. Kuna on San Blas, Panama
20. Woonan Indians in Dairen, Panama
21. Machiguengas at the Manu in Madre de Dios, Peru
22. Uros on Titicaca Lake
23. Xingu Indios

Asia

24. Yan pa doun (giraffe women) in Thailand
25. Chin in Myanmar
26. Bamar (Main ethnic in Myanmar)
27. Mon at the Andaman Sea
28. Mountain tribes around Sapa in Vietnam
29. Dervishes in Konya
30. Dani in Irian Jaya
31. Huli Wigmen in Tari, Papua New Guinea
32. Sing Sings at the Sepik River, PNG
33. Hani und Yi in Shengcun, China
34. Ping An, Huang Luo und Naxi in China
35. Miao and Dong in China
36. Dai in Xishuangbanna
37. Eveni near Ochotsk
38. Evenks in Salechard and Tura, Russia
39. Mongoles
40. Balinese
41. Tibetians
42. Bataks in Samosir
43. Toradjas in Sulawesi
44. Dayaks at the Skrang River and Kalimantan

Australia, Oceania

45. Aboriginals
46. Melanesians
47. Polynesian
48. Maori



**Alone with the Mudman,
Papua New Guinea, 8.2014**



**Living with the Eveni
near Ochotsk, 6.2015**



Fulani in Touba, Senegal, 2.2013

Religion was an outstanding theme in our traveling. We list here those which touched us the most. Some of them inspired us. We are not listing monuments, but sites in which we experienced that religion was **vividly practiced**.

Judaism

1. Wailing wall in Jerusalem
2. Main Synagoge in Derbent, Dagestan
3. Synagoge in Birobidjan, Russia
4. B'nai Jeshurun Synagoge in New York
5. Josefov, Jewish quarter of Prague

Christianity

6. St. Peter's Dome in Rome
7. Buildings of Vatican City
8. Semana Santa at the Giralda in Sevilla
9. Santiago de Compostella and pilgrimage
10. Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem
11. Pampanga crucifixion in Luzon, Philippines
12. Lourdes in France
13. Tschenstochau in Poland
14. Mormone Temple in Salt Lake City
15. Mother Teresa's House in Calcutta
16. Mt. Sinai and Burning Bush in Egypt
17. Passion Play in Oberammergau
18. Rock-hewn churches of Lalibela
19. Monasteries of Mount Athos, Greece
20. Monasteries of Meteora, Greece
21. Christmas Market in Nuremburg

Islam

22. Sheikh Zayed Mosque in Abu Dhabi
23. Imam Reza shrine in Mashad
24. Meidan Square in Isfahan
25. Registan Square in Samarkand
26. Kul-Scharif-Mosque in Kazan, Russia
27. Sheikh Zayed Mosque in Dubai
28. Sultan Quboos Mosque in Muscat
29. Feisal Mosque in Islamabad
30. Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca
31. Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta

Buddhism

32. Shwedagon Pagoda in Myanmar
33. Mahamuni Temple Mandalay
34. Mahabodi Temple in Bhodgaya, India
35. Tawang Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh
36. Wat Po in Bangkok
37. Maya Dewi Temple in Lumpini, Nepal
38. Durbar Square in Kathmandu
39. Bodhnath Stupa in Kathmandu
40. Horyuji Temple in Nara, Japan
41. Todaiji Temple in Nara, Japan
42. Monastery Kumbum near Lanzhou
43. Potala, Barkor and monasteries in Lhasa
44. Sakya Monastery in Tibet
45. Monasteries Gyantse und Shigatse in Tibet

Hinduism

46. Pilgrimage from Darshen around Kailash
47. Ghats of Varanasi
48. Temples of Bubeshnavar in Odisha, India
49. Jagannath Temple in Puri and Konarak T.
50. Ashrams of Rishikesch, incl. Beatles Ashr.
51. Ganga Aarti und Har ki Pauri in Haridwar
52. Pilgrimage to Pushkar
53. Nataraja temple in Chidambaram
54. Minakshi Temple in Madurai
55. Pashupatinath in Kathmandu
56. Dakshinkali in Kathmandu
57. Temple and funeral festivals at Bali

In addition to the so-called world religions

Folk religions

- Taoism, Konfucianism, Shintoismus

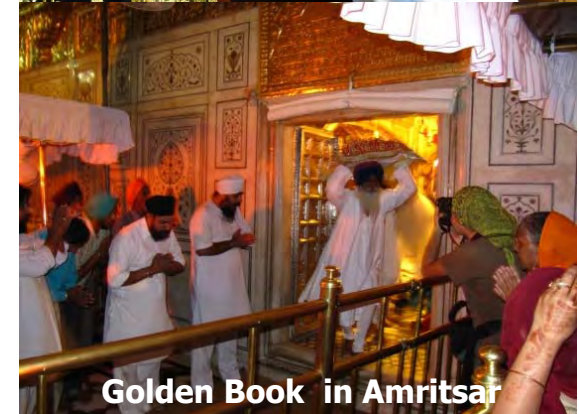
Tribal religions

- Animism and traditions

Syncretism



Thora in the Main Synagoge, Derbent Dagestan



Golden Book in Amritsar



Imam Reza Shrine Mashad, 5.2011

The Most Entertaining Festivals

It makes sense to concentrate on festivals. Always a spectacular scenery, a guarantee for outstanding photos, often a lot of fun and emotions, always excitement. But never the everyday life. Although we traveled so much, we attended only 70% of the festivals listed below, for the others we visited the venue and signs of it. The challenge: It is very difficult to integrate a specific festival day into your itinerary. Compare: TBT Series lists 1280 festivals, the top group has seen only 20 on an average. 61 is very ambitious.

Asia

1. Naga Fest. Leshi, Khamti, Lahe, Myanmar
2. Ananda Festival in Mandalay
3. Paong Daw Oo Pagoda F., Inle Lake
4. Hemis Gompa in Ladakh
5. Harbin Ice and Snow Festival, China
6. Vegetarian festival in Phuket
7. Loy Krathong in Bangkok (Menam Chao Praya) and Chiang Mai (Tapae Gate)
8. Full Moon Party, Kho Pangan, Thailand
9. Elephant festival in Surin, Thailand
10. Ati-Atihan in Kalibo and Cebu, Phil.
11. Diwali in N. Dehli, Kathmandu, Colombo
12. Drepung picture festival at Lhasa
13. Nadam in Ulan Bator
14. Funeral festivals in Bali
15. Funeral festival of the Toradjas, Sulawesi
16. Pingxi Lantern Festival in Taiwan
17. Sakura festivals in Japan
18. Yuki Matsuri (Snow festival) Sapporo
19. Nebuta Matsuri in Aomori, Japan
20. Gion Matsuri, Kyoto
21. Awa Odori Matsuri, Tokushima
22. Tenjin Matsuri, Osaka
23. Kishiwada Danjiri Matsuri, Osaka
24. Chinese New Year in Shanghai
25. Temple festivals of Kerala
26. Esala festival of Kandy

Europe

27. Folk carnaval in the Rhine cities
28. Oktoberfest in Munich
29. Medieval festival in Landshut
30. Music festivals in Salzburg and Bayreuth
31. Show carnaval in Venice

32. Horse racing Palio di Siena
33. Spoleto Festival
34. Racing with the bulls in Pamplona
35. Film festival in Cannes
36. Montreux Jazz Festival
37. Edinburgh International Festival

Australia, Oceania

38. Sydney festival of lights
39. New Years Eve in Sydney
40. Pasifika Festival in Auckland
41. Aloha Festivals in Hawaii
42. Naghol Land Diving, Pentecost Isl, Vanuatu
43. Mount Hagen Festival in New Guinea
44. Goroka Festival in New Guinea

Americas

45. Show carnaval in Rio
46. Carnaval in Trinidad
47. Carnaval in Recife
48. Folk carnaval in Santiago de Cuba
49. Dia de los muertos, Mexico
50. Folk carnaval in Belem
51. Folk carnaval in Cayenne
52. Mardi Gras in New Orleans
53. Albuquerque Int'l Balloon Fiesta
54. Burning Man in Nevada
55. Oscar Award in Hollywood
56. Iowa State Fair
57. Festival Int'l de Jazz de Montreal

Africa

58. Timkat Festival, Lalibela, Gondar, Ethiopia
59. Cape Town Jazz Festival, South Africa
60. Gnaoua World Music Festival, Morocco
61. Osun Festival in Oshogun, Nigeria



Full Moon Party, Kho Pha Ngan, 10.2006



Vegetarian Fest. Phuket, 10.2006



Carnival in
Trinidad
3.2014

No other material has influenced mankind more than gold. It was the goal of the discoverers, so it triggered global traveling, it financed wars and fascinated as artworks. We visited all gold sites.

- A. Johannesburg Anglo Gold Ashanti – deepest mine
- B. Magadan Road of Bones to Kolyma river – most horrible
1. Bogota Museo del Oro
2. Ermitage
3. Astrakhan Museum
4. Rostov Museum
5. Azov Museum
6. Kysyl Museum
7. Ufa Museum
8. Kiev Museum
9. Kiev Sophia Monastery
10. Tokyo National Museum hosting Kabul Nat. Museum
11. Ayala Museum, Manila

Mining:

A: The deepest

Canada has the biggest gold mining companies, South Africa the deepest mines. In the main mine of „Anglo Gold Ashanti“ formerly „Western Deep Level“ I achieved with 3.777m in 1992 a world record. Today they can go up to 4.000m deep.

B: The most horrible

The company Dalstroy developed the Russian Far East north of Ma-gadan. 1937 they built in 2 years a 300km road, the road to the tin and gold mining sites (1), 10.000 people died, most of the corpses filled the road surface, thus the „Road of Bones“ to the sites at the Kolyma river (2). The „Mask of Sorrow“ (3) commemorates this history of death, of Gulag and gold mining. The gold financed the „Große Vaterländische Krieg“ 1941-1945.

Gold as artworks:

Colombia: The Spanish „conquistadores“ started with the dream of „Eldorado“. The „Museo del Oro“ in Bogota has the biggest collection of pre-Columbian gold in the world. Here you can imagine „Eldorado“. The Muisca raft is the main piece of the museum (4).

The Scythians: All done by Greek, from 4th ct. BC on Russia: Ermitage, Astrakhan horse decoration (5), Rostov with the quiver for arrows (6), Azov with the royal sword (7), Kysyl and Ufa. Ukraine: Kiev Museum, Kiev Sophia Monastery with the pectoral

Kabul (now hosted by Tokyo Nat. Museum): The Gold of Bactria.

Ayala Museum, Manila: 1000 gold objects show the sophisticated cultures that existed in the Philippines before colonization in the 16th ct.



The Most Authentic Food

4.4. Themes:

Top restaurants, like Michelin Star restaurants, you find everywhere. To collect them has little to do with traveling. We go for local specialities, the best food, not the best restaurants. What should you have eaten to have been „everywhere“? In which town do you get local food in the best quality? Here a selections of our favorites.

Asia

1. Fugu in Shimonoseki
2. Kobe Steak in Kobe
3. Kaiseki in Kyoto
4. Sashimi in Katsuar, Japan
5. Snakes in Guilin, China
6. Scorpions in Beijing
7. Peking duck in Beijing
8. Seafood YiQing Lou in Qingdao
9. Snakes in Can Tho, Vietnam
10. Food scene in Hanoi
11. Black pepper crabs in Singapore
12. Street food in Singapore (Food courts and Hawkers)
13. Indian Food in Little India, Singapore
14. Lechon in the Philippines
15. Nasi Goreng Gila Gondrong in Jakarta
16. „Rijsttafel“ in Jakarta
17. Seafood in Padang, Indonesia
18. Korean BBQ in Seoul
19. Mongolian BBQ in Ulan Bator
20. Tandoori Chicken in Mumbai
21. Grasshoppers in Thailand
22. Bird's nest in Bangkok, Thailand
23. Ant eggs (Kai mot daeng) in Ubon Rachathani, Thailand
24. Tom yam gung in Satun, Thailand
25. Sea urchines in Petropavlovsk

Europe

25. Byzantion Bistro in Istanbul
26. Caviar in Astrakhan
27. Truffels in Perigord, Piedmont and Livade (Istria)
28. Bouillabaisse in Marseille

29. Onion Soup in Paris
30. Oysters in Honfleur
31. Restaurants in Lyon
32. Restaurants in Dijon und Colmar
33. Pig knuckles in Munich (Haxnbaur)
34. Sausages in Berlin (Meisterstück)
35. Eel soup at the fish market of Hamburg
36. Matjes herring in Schiermonnikoog, Netherlands
37. Caldereta de langosta in Fornell, Menorca
38. Tapas in San Sebastian
39. Paella in Valencia
40. Jamón Ibérico in Madrid
41. Raw Scallops in the Outer Hebrides
42. Pizza at Pizzeria da Michele in Naples
43. Spaghetti Napoli in Naples
44. Parma ham in Langhirano, near Parma
45. Foie gras and goulash at Gundel, Budapest
46. Grilled octopus and gyros in Greece
47. Cheese fondue in Gruyère

Australia and Oceania

48. Mussels in Havelock, New Zealand
49. Abalone in Hobart

Americas

50. Centollas (King crabs) in Ushuaia
51. Sopa Picoroco in the fish market of Santiago
52. Ceviche in Chiclayo or Trujillo (Fiesta), Peru
53. Rodizio in Rio de Janeiro
54. Fejoada in Rio de Janeiro
55. Langustinos in Las Roques (Venezuela)
56. Fajitas in Patzcuaro
57. Steak at Cattleman in Oklahoma
58. Spare Ribs in Memphis
59. Lobster in Maine and Nova Scotia
60. Snow crabs in Nova Scotia



The Most Touching Animal Encounters 92

The following 21 sites are unique and offer more than one species. They are the most moving ones.



Land

1. Mountain Gorillas, Rwanda
2. Lowland Gorilla, Central African Rep. (1)
3. Masai Mara: The big five, Kenya
4. Land animal migration, Serengeti, Tanz. (2)
5. Pandas in Wolong, China, (3)
6. Lemurs in Berenty Res, Madagascar (4)
7. Land crab migration, Christmas Island (5)

Sea

8. Marine Iguanas, Galapagos (6)
9. Swimming with whales in Tonga, Vavau
10. Whale sharks in Oslob, Cebu, Philippines
11. Diving with mantas, Yap, Marianas
12. Diving with hammer sharks, Cocos
13. Whale watching in Hermanus, RSA
14. Swimming among jelly fish, Palau

Birds

15. Lesser birds of paradise, Papua New Guinea
16. Flamingos, Nakuru Lake, Kenya (7)
17. White eagles in Rausu, Hokkaido
18. Emperor penguins in Arka, Queen Maud
19. Wandering Albatross in Kaikoura, NZ
20. King penguins in South Georgia, Kerguelen, Macquarie (8)

Insects

21. Monarcas, Michoacan, Mexico



Volcanoes: The Pacific Ring of Fire

We define the line only based on the subduction zones of the Pacific plate. We close the southern part of the ring not via the Pacific but via Antarctica and include the Scotia Arch.

Modern research supports this hypothesis because a large part of a ring of volcanoes has been found in Antarctica. We have been to 70% of major volcanoes of the whole ring. It is a very fascinating goal to see all the typical and important ones. The line starts with the Novarupta in Alaska, the birth of the ring, one of the biggest eruptions in history.



American-Russian Line

1. Alaskan Peninsula: Mt Katmai, Novarupta
2. Aleutians. Segoum

The Asian Line

3. Kamtchatka : Petropavlovsk
4. The Kurils
5. Japan: Iwaki, Aogoshima
6. Philippines: Mayon
7. Indonesia: Merapi

The Austral Line

8. New Guinea
9. Solomon
10. Vanuatu
11. Tonga

The Antarctic Line

12. Bellany
13. Antarctica
14. Scotia Arch

The American Line

15. South American Cordilleres
16. Central American Volcanoes
17. US Cascade Volcanoes
18. Canadian Volcanoes

