

Where I've Been,

What I've Seen

by David Samuel on November 1, 2010

I left my home heading West and returned from the East.

In California, I saw giant redwood trees, twenty stories high and wide as a house. In Hawaii, it was volcanoes and black sand, landscapes like the moon. In Japan, I saw 2000 temples of Kyoto; the largest wooden building in the world surrounding an immense Buddha, cast in bronze; and Hiroshima recovered from atomic devastation but with pain still in the air. I've been on a boat in a typhoon in the South Japan sea; walked on a grumbling and steaming volcano; I lived the life of a Zen monk in peaceful isolation.

In Taipei, the home of money and power on the little island of Taiwan, I found Taoist masters in hidden corners.

I climbed the Alps and the Himalayas, so high up that airplanes flew below me; walked alone in isolated lands, so peaceful that butterflies landed on my arms; Quiet places become scarcer each year, some by man's interference.

I've flown in airplanes above the clouds and ridden in a submarine beneath the sea. On earth, and in my soul, I've touched the heights and depths. Years spent alone, wandering the planet, I looked deep within by seeing what was without. Crying tears for myself and others, not only for my own suffering, but for those who don't even know of their suffering or appreciate their blessed lives.

The Golden Triangle, jungle villages in the north hills of Thailand; the emerald Buddha with its gold and jeweled palace; Beaches 20 miles long, pure white powder fine sand that squeaks under your feet; oceans still and clear; temples, palaces, ancient Holy places, each a universe of its own.

In India I saw the Taj Mahal; sunrise on the Ganges, New Delhi with its pillar made of a material none can date or define; a Rolls Royce waiting at a traffic light alongside an elephant in Bombay; the Elephanta and Ellora cave temples, as high as ten stories, carved out of a mountain, five hundred-year-old paintings still vividly colored; in Khajuraho, temples decorated from top to bottom with erotic carvings. I wandered on a camel through the Rajasthan desert, sleeping under the stars. Nothing but sand for days on end. How lonely! Yet so close to God I did not feel alone.

I met innumerable types of people, some with nothing more than an ever-present smile.



People with millions and a frown; languages so foreign, yet we communicated just fine; the Dervish in Turkey; gurus in India; Zen Masters in Japan; the Dalai Lama; American Indians and shamans; and a stranger on the train who saw right through me. Wise words when I was down and lost. Who was that man?

Life is such an adventure — the poverty and riches, health and death, the smells, sights and sounds.



Portions of a corpse floating past my boat on the holy Ganges River while a local drank from the same water; I've seen people shot to death and met those who honor the life of a fly, walking side-by-side on the same streets.

In Turkey, robbed but unharmed; left penniless in a strange land with not even enough for a phone call. That night, in a Turkish police station, I saw how they beat captured thieves, but they showered me with incomparable kindness and compassion, giving me food, money and shelter. The next day, faith renewed by seeing a complete rainbow over a mountain lake.

In Egypt I saw the Great Pyramids; King Tut in his tomb, the Valley of the Kings. Temples and eternal homes cut hundreds of feet into the rock of the mountains. A temple still stands in perfect condition after 7,000 years;

safely isolated until modern man opened it to the ever-expanding pollution that will destroy these sacred ancient monuments; Abu Simbel — a feat of ancient man who built it, and of modern man who moved this great temple and the mountain it was built in to save it from flooding by the Aswan High Dam. Modern man makes this planet suit him, drilling the Goddard tunnel, seventeen kilometers long, right through a mountain in the Swiss Alps; man-made, God-made — wonders of art and creativity, ingenuity and pure inspiration. Of the man-made, I pondered in amazement "How?" of the God-made, I wonder even more.

Dead Sea with no life; the Red Sea teeming with life of all colors, shapes and sizes — only hours apart. In the middle of the desert by mount Sinai stand tall, strong Cyprus trees, which have marked a source of fresh water for hundreds of years. I climbed the mountain as did Moses and slept on the rock at its peak.

Gods of all sorts. Crocodiles in Egypt, mountains in Tibet, Ganesh, the elephant-headed god with a man's body, one of ten thousand gods in India; With all these

gods I see only the love and devotion of the people who honor them. That love is the true God.

Walls go up in Cyprus and come down in Berlin. Rebels bombing, protests for peace, villagers who don't know about the world outside. And Stonehenge still stands. Why?

I saw Mayan temples in Belize; a tiny country where the adventurous can live freely on the beach under a lean-to made of grass, eating fruit picked off the trees and fish from the ocean.

Waking up, in place after place, not knowing where I'd go each day until I reached the bus station. Alone but free, with faith that all would be well.

So many animals. Rhinos in the jungles of Nepal with their armor-like skin; eagles soaring through the sky, only a few feet away from me on the mountain peak in the Himalayas; painted elephants; a lone baby seal on a deserted beach; jaguars, leopards, tigers, and varieties of monkeys; peacocks and parrots; tiny fluorescent blue-green insects; the amazing metamorphosis of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly.

I experienced the many moods of nature; rugged mountains giving way to rolling hills and fields. Flatlands for miles that run into 10,000-foot peaks standing like guards to heaven. Scottish weather changing so quickly I feel am watching a film. The clouds form animals, faces, abstractions that allow

the imagination to run wild and create its own universe. God's entertainment for the seeking mind; the power of a thunderstorm rising from a valley below as I stood on the mountain peak. The cloud engulfed me and bombarded the mountain with golf ball-sized hailstones. In minutes the storm cleared, the sky was calm with gentle wisps of high white clouds above. The sun can be hidden by clouds but never extinguished. I remember a particular small cloud that tried to hide the orange glow of the setting sun shining from behind the cloud, giving it a bright golden aura and sunbeams in all directions. I felt comforted as a sunbeam touched me like a warm hand, enlightening me about nature's power within us all. Fear vanishes when the unknown becomes known; the depths of the horizon are limited only by the minds reins.

Flowers of royal purples, of vibrant blues, fire-like yellows, and oranges and reds, white, pure as heavenly light. A mixture of shapes — tiny dots of open petals, long slender cups looking upward or hanging shyly down. The bright glowing green of new leaves in spring.



Let me not forget the children, everywhere in the world, with smiles full of love and warmth. The hug of a child fills my heart with the food I need to continue, for the child gives pure love, without question or reserve. Is that not what we all seek? Let us learn to give this kind of love again.

By boat and plane, train and car, elephant and camel, donkey and ox-cart, riding on the roof of a bus or gliding on a graceful Arabian horse across the desert. Sunrise, sunset, sunrise, sunset — fiery red to gold, blue to black, black to blue, gold to fiery red. Is it morning or night? Or is it just NOW?

Age takes its toll — wrinkles deepen and dust collects on the surface, but my heart gets cleaner and lighter each day. I wonder where I will end my journey; will I have gone far and deep enough within? Will I have opened myself to the knowledge of what all this really is? We are all a creation of the Divine, who we are today is what has been molded by the world, our search is to return to the divine beings we were created to be. Someday I shall be left somewhere, my body returning to the earth, my soul traveling freely like the wind. I may be getting old, but knowing we are One, I am not afraid.

If only I could tell you, make you understand — the power is within each of us. But you must see for yourself, learn by your own experience. I wait now at the airport for the next flight, the next adventure. There is still so much to see and do, to grow and learn. My path begins anew each morning.



David Samuel is The Entrepreneur Monk. David is a rag to riches story, making his first million at 25. Reaching his financial target by the age of 29, he sold six of the eight companies he had created to travel internationally for several years. To date, David has owned companies in over 25 industries and 15 countries. Combined with his business ventures, teaching and consulting, David is devoted to the never ending exploration of the nature of the mind. He has resolved the riddle of why we do what we know is bad for us yet do not do what we know is beneficial and teaches that very effectively.

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