

THE WORLD IS OUR OYSTER

Marta Garcia and Gerard Valls go on a fantastic tour of discovery, travelling to some of the most amazing destinations in Asia.

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: MARTA GARCIA AND GERARD VALLS

We are a Spanish couple travelling around the world. We took a break from our daily routine living in Barcelona to discover a whole new world out there: New cultures, new food, new ways of travelling etc. It was a good experience and a great opportunity to open up our minds while visiting some exotic countries. In the beginning, it was not easy making the decision to leave our lives in Barcelona and visit the world, but we can confidently say now that it was one of the best things that we have ever done in our lives!

THE SOUTH CONTINENT

We started our journey last summer with India. This is a country of contrasts that often cannot be adequately described with words.

The only thing we both agreed was that every traveller needs to live and experience the wonder that is India.

The second stop in our adventure was Nepal where we enjoyed a fantastic trip into the wild at Chitwan Park and later, mountain trekking in the Himalayas. Nepal is not a big country but it has many different landscapes that make it a very diverse country for adventure seekers.

One of the moments we will never forget was the sunrise at Annapurna Base Camp. Seeing the peaks up close, contemplating their beauty and the challenge they posed for climbers, we understood why some people would risk their lives to climb them.

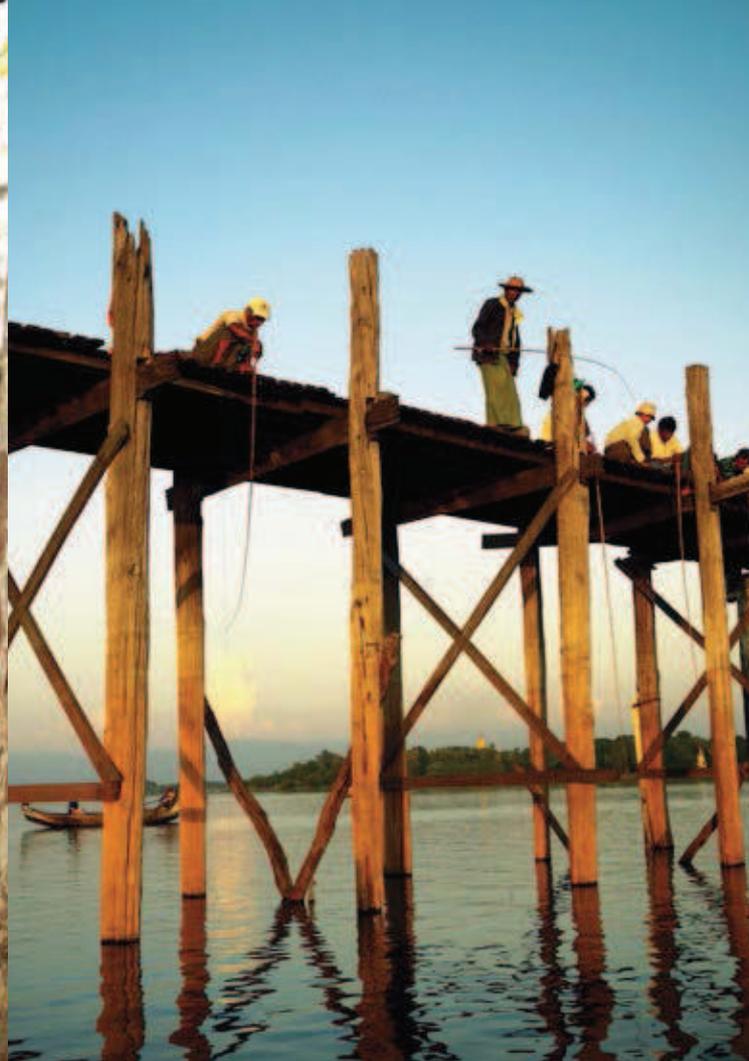


LEFT: Marta and Gerard at the Bayon temple grounds near Siem Reap.

OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE: Fisherman at Inle Lake in Myanmar.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW: Local women who live along Inle Lake in Myanmar.





RIGHT: Having some fun in front of the Taj Mahal in Agra, India.

OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

LEFT: A lone passenger onboard a train to Myitkyina in Myanmar; street scene in Nepal; the U-Bein Bridge in Amarapura, Myanmar; an elderly woman from Myanmar.



SOUTHEAST ASIA

After a nine-day trek through the Himalayas, we decided to hop over to Thailand and chill out in one of its many islands. Having suitably recovered, we took an AirAsia flight to Yangon in Myanmar, a relatively undiscovered country with loads of opportunity for adventure. If you want to visit Myanmar and have more than two weeks to spare, we strongly recommend visiting the northern part and, taking an incredible boat trip from Myitkyina to Mandalay, which takes around five days. During the trip, you will truly experience the real Myanmar, away from most touristic areas.

November and December were dedicated to countries that the Mekong River runs through. In Cambodia, we visited the famous temples of Angkor, a spectacular symbiosis of culture and nature that really impressed us. But the Angkor Wat alone doesn't make up Cambodia. We also truly enjoyed the gorgeous and deserted sandy beaches on the south coast of the country. At times, we both felt that we should have spent more time in this country, not only for its amazing landscape but also for the country's greatest treasure – its people.

Next, we headed to Vietnam, where we spent a few weeks visiting major attractions of this country such as Hanoi, Halong Bay and the Mekong Delta.

This is what we did on the first leg of our trip. But our adventure doesn't end there. After crossing over to Laos, we hope to head over to the country with 7,107

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islands – Philippines – with AirAsia. So many of our friends and fellow travellers have recommended amazing destinations in Philippines and we are both so excited to personally visit and experience these places. We know it is going to be a fantastic journey, especially with the easy connectivity made available with AirAsia.

What next? Well, although we don't have a fixed route, we also plan to visit Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia before leaving Asia and starting the second part of our adventure in Australia and South America.

We know visiting these countries for short periods doesn't really give insights or a full understanding of the country and the people, but it does allow us to take back a thousand memories and life altering experiences that will last forever. For those who are thinking of embarking on such adventures, all we have to say is, “Go for it!” 🇰🇷

DEAD-STICK GLIDE LANDING

Can a plane still fly and land safely should it lose both its engines? This is a question that is frequently asked and needs to be answered to dispel doubts. Capt. Lim Khoy Hing explains what a Dead-Stick glide is and why, despite engine failures, it is possible for any trained pilots to safely land an aircraft on any flat open ground.



A Dead-Stick landing is when all the engines of a plane are lost and the pilot is forced to land on any flat open ground ahead. This term was coined a long time ago and refers to the old wooden propellers (stick) of planes. The description, when used, is often misunderstood as the flight controls in most planes are either fully or partially functional even with no engine power. The plane is still controllable in such situations.

This reminds me of when I won the Dead-Stick spot landing competition in a flying club (Royal Selangor Flying Club) many years back. In this competition, the

pilots flew single engine planes and the object of the game was to touchdown nearest to the threshold (beginning) of the runway. If a pilot landed short of the threshold, it'd get him disqualified. Those were the good old days when flying was cheaper (petrol was less than USD30 per barrel) and pilots not only had loads of fun flying but were also able to sharpen their skills.

LANDING IN DIRE STRAITS

The Dead-Stick landing comes in handy if one has to cope with a

glide landing. This was precisely what happened to a Canadian pilot in 1983. He managed to glide-land a Boeing 767 safely on a disused runway when it ran out of fuel due to an error in the refuelling process.

In my 45 years of flying, I've practised for and been tested many times on how to cope with either one- or two-engine failure (in a 4-engined plane). However, I have never had the misfortune of encountering any such incidents in real life. Thus, it comes as no surprise when safety experts say that the odds of an engine failure is one in 800,000

and two engine failure is even more remote – one in 8 million! In fact, you'd have a better chance of winning a state lottery.

ENSURING CONTINUED SAFETY

The airline industry continues to promote engine failure training and takes no chances in their efforts to ensure the safety of air travellers.

When I attended the pilot selection process before becoming one, one of the ways to check our flying potential was to test our psychomotor skills (mental