

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- A note from Kip.
- Stories, poems, reflections
- Language tips: *trip, journey or travel?*
- Famous travel quotes
- A crossword puzzle

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# The Definite Article

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## Kip Talking

I wanted to write about a special journey I've made – it could have been the short trip 'down the aisle' or the long journey accompanying my children to adulthood. But I didn't want to bore you. No, the journey I want to describe wasn't a conventional journey at all, it was physically and mentally the toughest thing I have ever done. The 10km climb by bike up Monte Zoncolan is hard enough but I did it on a racing bike with the wrong gears and about 45kg more weight than Marco Pantani! I know these are old clichés but I really did have to 'dig deep' and 'battle through the pain'. I wouldn't go so far as to say



**A 10km climb up Monte Zoncolan by racing bike—with the wrong gears!**

it was 'voyage of self discovery' but you do learn a lot about yourself at moments like that.

Ovaro to Liariis, a steep but not too steep introduction to the horrors to come; Liariis to Malga Pozof, 6km of living hell, a strip of asphalt that winds its way up through the forest at an average 15% gradient; then three tiny, unlit tunnels and a

last kilometre where you can see the finish line above you and you know you've made it. I have never been so relieved to get to the end of a journey, or proud of myself. Oh yes, and exhausted! Will I ever do it again? Probably not, but you never know!

### STUDY ABROAD THIS SUMMER

Now is the time to start thinking about your summer holiday plans. Why not study English and have a holiday at the same time by doing one of our Courses Abroad? Go to the *Studiare all'estero* pages to get an idea of the courses we offer and then ask Doria in the office for more details.

### KT STUDENT ROOM

Keep checking the website because later this month there will be a new section called the Student Room. This will be a password-protected area of the site just for our students, and will contain lots of specially-recorded podcasts, including interviews and the recording of all the articles in the Definite Article

## Savannah Stars by Dionea Regolin

My best journey experience was one night under the stars far from my home! If I have to think and remember something really beautiful in my life, I can tell you that my best moments of happiness have been my holidays around the world. I experienced a lot of special atmospheres, one of which was in the African Savannah. It was wonderful, to watch

the sky and see the Milky Way and all the night stars, a unique emotion you can only find there. Only you, in a wilderness surrounded by trees, animals and silence. You are alone, you are the only one human there. You can feel peace inside you - no noise, no confusion, no cities, no humans, no war, nothing can disturb your special moment, in touch

with nature, every thing has a different flavour.

The sky too has another, magical appearance. It is not the same sky you see every evening in your town. There, near the equator, at the centre of the world, the real heart of the earth!!!

This is one journey that everyone should make once in their lifetime.





"The journey is an important part of my holiday and every time I can, I travel by car."

## The Best Way to Travel by Luigina Caporlingua

A lot of people think that travelling is just what you have to do to arrive at the place where you want to go.

In my opinion, the journey is an important part of my holiday and every time I can, I travel by car.

I love driving, but apart from this, I like the idea that I can make my own decisions.

In fact, if you travel by car, you can decide whether to stop, where and when to stop and how long to stop for, and you can eat and drink when you want.

Travelling by car is a good way to look around and

realize how the landscape changes.

Your suitcase can be very heavy and when you go back home you can take a lot of big, heavy, or liquid souvenirs.

Of course, you have to know when it's best to set off in order to avoid traffic jams. I really enjoy travelling by car and if the journey takes me one day, I usually leave two or three days early, after choosing some interesting places to visit on my way. In this way I have visited a lot of interesting places that, otherwise, I wouldn't have seen.

Of course travelling by plane is also exciting because you can see the world from a different point of view, which is amazing. Every time I fly, I look down all the time.

On the other hand, flying can sometimes be very boring and annoying. First of all you have to wait for a long time at the airport before leaving and often after arriving as well because you have to wait for your luggage and sometimes, in my experience quite often, they lose your suitcase.

Definitely for me, the best way to travel is by car.



"Don't even think about going by car, there are easier ways of risking your life between heavy trucks, cows, deep holes and flat tyres..."

## A Passage to India by Luca Neri

Travelling in India is an amazing experience. Don't even think about going by car, there are easier ways of risking your life than among the heavy trucks, cows, deep holes and flat tyres...

Using IR (Indian Railways) is strongly recommended if you like a comfortable journey with fewer palpitations. Here are some quick rules dictated by experience:

1. Don't buy anything less than A1 class. You will be asked for almost double the A2 fare but you will be in a com-

fortable compartment quite similar to European first class, and not in a compartment separated by curtains, where you will have to keep your belongings with you all night long.

2. Don't be in a hurry. Trains are always late (a one- or two-hour delay is quite common) and it takes an eternity to get to the destination (I spent 8 hours travelling from Bangalore to Kuttack – only 260 km!!).
3. Even if the fares are actually high for Indians, they are really

cheap for Europeans. I spent €12 for a first class sleeping compartment. Only three compartments (12 beds) were available on the whole train!

And finally, if you want to be on the safe side with your luggage, for just a few rupees, hire one of the dozens of porters that will head towards you once you leave your carriage. Your luggage will be safer than in your hands and much, much lighter!

*"Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry, and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends." – Maya Angelou*

# The Two Men

by Vito Di Trapani

Some years ago my wife and I went to Cuba, the beautiful island of the Socialist Revolution, Che Guevara, Fidel Castro and the other "barbudos", old cars, rum, Caribbean music and other romantic stuff.

We aren't big fans of package tours, so we went there without a tour operator. We rented a car and drove around the island for one month with

our sleeping-bag. Actually we slept in private rooms called *casas particulares*, a sort of bed and breakfast, but much more uncomfortable. And we talked. We spoke with a lot of people because the roads there didn't have clear road signs and so it was useful for us to pick up some hitch-hikers who told us the right way and spoke to us about their lives, their opinions, their dreams and their regime. In fact, along the way many posters with political slogans reminded us that Cuba is still under dictatorship.

I don't remember how many people we picked up; maybe forty, maybe fifty, I really don't know. I remember two young brothers who had to go to Havana (about 200 miles from their little village) to buy a tyre for their motorbike, the mother with a little girl who lived in a mud hut, the doctor who told us about the difficulty of working and living there without modern tools and computers, the old lady who

loved Fidel Castro and his endless TV speeches.

Living in Cuba is not easy, but we saw there a dignity we'd never seen before.

Actually, someone told us that giving lifts to strangers could be dangerous, but we didn't listen to him. There were even rumours that some people had been killed.

Anyway, one day we were in a suburb of Havana, the biggest city on the Island. We were

lost because of the lack of road signs and we asked two pedestrians for some information. The two men told us that they would show us the right way and so we picked them up in the car. The first one was small and with a twisted nose. Later he explained to us that he had been a boxer. The other one was a really huge black man. They got in the car and sat behind us. I could see their eyes in the rear-view mirror.

Along the way they talked about their life and their dreams to get away from Cuba. They wanted to see the world outside. After a few miles they asked us to stop. So I stopped the car and waited but they didn't get out. They didn't want to get out. They were staring at us with strange smiles. Then after a few, seemingly endless, minutes they asked us for money. My wife suddenly started to scream, "Don't pay anything to those people!".

"We have to get a taxi to go back" the little man

said firmly. The other one looked like a Buddha, silent and emotionless. They wanted "only" 50 dollars to get out. I thought that with that amount they could go around the island for a whole month but I preferred to keep quiet about that.

We were at a stalemate; my wife was still screaming, the two men were still inside the car and they wouldn't get out without money. In short, I was alone on an island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, in some suburb of an unknown city, between a screaming wife and two dangerous and emotionless men. So I had to "take the bull by the horns": I started a complicated negotiation with the two men and my sweet wife and I succeeded. Finally I offered them "only" 25 dollars and they got out of the car.

The only problem was my wife who continued for hours to tell me that I shouldn't have paid anything.

Ah, women!



*"They were staring at us with strange smiles. Then after a few, seemingly endless minutes, they asked us for money."*

*Own only what you can carry with you; know language, know countries, know people. Let your memory be your travel bag.*

— Alexander Solzhenitsyn



# A Coming-of-Age Journey by Manuel Cacitti



The Julian Alps between Italy and Slovenia

One of the trips that I remember best dates back almost 12 years, to when I was 16 and still attending high school. The school year had recently finished and I was planning how to spend the summer. I had no particular idea what to do and decided to go and spend a few days in the mountains.

Carnia is full of mountains and so I chose at random. I took the bus. I went to the top of the path and from there went on foot. For

two days I was immersed in the silence of nature. I remember the peace, the sun, the animals and the many beautiful things I saw and appreciated. It was so good that on the way down the mountain, I decided to go on to the next mountain and then the next, and then on to the next again. In this way, in about 2 months, I had visited almost all the mountains of the Carnic and Julian Alps. I learned to do many

things for myself, listening to the rhythms of nature and relying on my abilities. Every so often I found myself in dangerous situations (in the mountains it is a good rule never to go alone), but with patience I managed to solve every problem. It was a fantastic experience that I would happily recommend to anyone who loves nature and open spaces.

*"I think that everybody should take this journey, even if it's for a short period of time because it is an important chance to get to know yourself."*

# The Journey to Myself by Andrea Cargnelutti

Up to now I haven't travelled a lot, but the one journey that I'm going to tell you about now is probably the most important and interesting journey I've ever made: "The journey to Myself". It started about fifteen years ago on a hot summer afternoon and it hasn't finished yet. I was trying to study when I suddenly felt a bad sensation, like a punch in my stomach. I realized that I was feeling lonely, without a well-defined target in my

mind and furthermore nobody seemed to understand me, my thoughts or my desires. This sensation of being alone was anything but good, and I started to ask myself: is everybody else wrong or is it me? I immediately realized that it was me - after all, how can I feel fine with other people if I can't get on with myself? So I started this journey to discover who I am and what I want. Over the years I've discovered a lot about my good and bad

points. It is hard work but I'm satisfied with all the improvements I've made since then. At the same time I know that I still have a lot to do. I think that everybody should take this journey, even if it's for a short period of time because it is an important chance to get to know yourself. Without making this journey, you'll probably never take the time to reflect about your inner self, and you'll always just follow the flow, which is much less fulfilling.

## Language Box: travel, journey or trip???

**Travel** is a verb.

- I love travelling during the summer holidays.

**Travel** can also be a general word we use to talk about going from one place to another. It is \*usually **uncountable** and **abstract**.

- Travel broadens the mind.

Last summer I went on a travel to Egypt. **WRONG!!**

\* exceptions—note the way William uses the word 'travels' on the next page, and do you know the book "Gulliver's Travels"?

**Journey** is the word we use to talk about getting from point A to point B. It is a **countable** noun.

- The journey from London to Newcastle takes about four hours.
- How was the journey? – Oh, terrible. There was so much traffic!

**Trip** is a noun. A trip usually involves more than one single journey (e.g. school trip, day trip to the seaside). It is a **countable** noun.

- He's gone on a business trip to Hong Kong.
- How was the trip? – Oh, terrible. The hotel was next to a building site!

# Impossible Interviews: Roald Amundsen by Andrea Bertolissi



The great explorer Roald Amundsen meets me in Sarpsborg, south-east Norway, near his native Borge. His black and

red wooden house is situated on the river Glomma and is hidden by a Scots pine grove. I come into his drawing room and feel surrounded, not only by the smoke of his pipe, but also by his large collection of relics and trophies, accumulated during his

explorations.

**Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen 1872-1928** *Mr Amundsen, you have visited the Arctic and Antarctic regions, you have crossed the Northwest Passage, what has now led you to cross the national park in the north-east of Greenland?*

Well, there are at least two main reasons. First of all, nostalgia for that particular scent of snow that can only be smelt near the poles, and for the silence, interrupted only by the wind chafing your face or by your own footsteps cracking

the snow. Then for a “green” reason—that is to get to know the people of the polar regions.

*And?*

Unfortunately, I found a very depressing situation. The presence of man is perceptible everywhere, even at such extreme latitudes—glaciers are receding, the snow is polluted, and as for the wilderness... I felt uneasy to find so many amateur explorers, ready to be rescued from trouble, and, I'm sorry to say, I have already lost one life because of them.

*“The presence of man is perceptible everywhere, even at such extreme latitudes.”*

## A Journey I Would Love to Make by Caterina Bernardis

A journey I would like to make, perhaps, is special only for me. It is interesting for how and where I would like to go - across the Apennines in a vintage Fiat 500, a car I drove when I was twenty. Three years ago, in *La Repubblica* the reporter and writer Paolo Rumiz related, in thirty instalments, his

**I would like to cross the Apennines in a vintage Fiat 500.**

trip from the west of Liguria to the south of Calabria across the mountains and the hills that are the backbone of Italy. He travelled 2000 km, only on the back roads, never motorways, in

an old car called a *Topolino* that was very famous in the middle of the twentieth century. He drove up and down the hills and the mountains far away from the noise, lights, traffic and dangers of the busy motorways. Going slowly he met new people in every bed and breakfast, guesthouse or monastery where he stopped to have dinner and stay the night. He related stories of people who live in small villages where life is hard and where only old people with their friendly animals can live. He wrote about the genuine food of the country, about the hard work on the farms, about the roaming of the animals around the town,

about the daily routine of the monks and villagers, and about the wild animals that go down the mountains at night to find food. He also wrote about the hunters and poachers. He could understand the things and people he met, not simply observe them. To write about these people and these places he wanted a car that was as slow as walking. I would like to have the some experience, to travel back in time and discover the important places of the last century in my 500.



## On Travel by William Nardone

The human race has written the most fundamental pages of its history, since the beginning thanks only to the journeys it has undertaken, starting from the first steps of the prehistoric tribes of nomads who first populated the earth, up to the air travel of today, and passing through the conquests

of ancient civilizations and the explorations of recent ages. In fact humans have never stopped travelling, so that history itself can be seen as a long trip, still ongoing. In all these travels humans have been pushed on by a need for knowledge and discovery.

I think this should be the aim of any journey, even today.

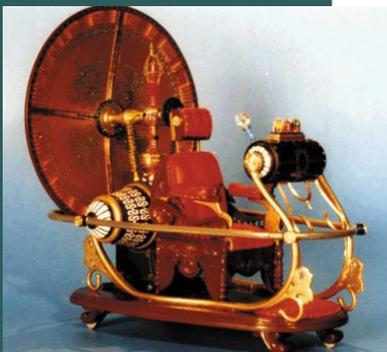
*“The whole object of travel is not to set foot on foreign land; it is at last to set foot on one's own country as a foreign land.” – G.K. Chesterton*



*"Look after that baby, tied quickly on your back."*

*"A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step." – Lao Tzu*

## Prize Article!!!



*"To be in the front row during the main events of our history!"*

# Hiruth

Ethiopia: a small, great memory of a journey, by Paola Mondini

Hiruth, hair of thorns,  
glare of fire in your eyes.  
Sunset of blinding, violent red;  
fire in a hut of straw, dung, clay.

Hiruth, mucus from the nose, thin legs,  
go quickly home, you know that the night falls suddenly here.  
You could run into a pack of wild dogs,  
you could meet a spiteful monkey, a hyena.

Hiruth, broken rags of dust and mud,  
white smile, let yourself be seized, stop escaping.  
But you are always in front of the lens,  
coy little girl, aware of future beauty.

Hiruth, bare feet, red with land-slid mud,  
mind the brambles, don't run, don't fall.  
You are now the oldest, they have entrusted the baby to you.  
Look after that baby, tied quickly on your back.

Hiruth, fantastic eyes of velvet and flies,  
you don't allow an approach, not even when I'm leaving.  
Laughing clever, from behind a little wall, you look at a white woman,  
a lot of flesh on the bones, old as the world, heart already orphaned by you.

# A Journey into Time by Enrica Simaz



The journey of my dreams: a trip back and forth in time, being in the front row during the main events of our history!

A blink and I'm in pre-history, curious to see how big those dinosaurs, leading actors in so many Hollywood productions, really are. Or, a "few" years later, how priceless the emotion is of standing at the centre of the Stonehenge circle during a Druid ceremony, and maybe being able to solve the mystery of the purpose of those monumental stones!

Another blink and I'm in the Middle Ages, a period full of contrasts, during

which the same people that lived in ignorance and followed popular superstitions, at the same time were capable of creating monumental literary or artistic masterpieces.

And why not visit Paris during the French Revolution, such an attractive period for the stirring events that caused a lot of heads to be cut off!

A jump and I'm in the Italian Risorgimento, the historical period that makes me so proud to be Italian. I can see myself fighting side by side with Mazzini, Garibaldi and with all the people that gave their life to free Italy from foreign supremacy - French, Austrian or German.

The thirst for knowledge leads me to the worst period for humanity, between the two world wars, trying to understand the madness of the people that killed so many human beings just for belonging to the wrong race.

The last blink, but I'm still doubtful if I'm blinking or not, is forward into the future, just to see where are we all going and if we really will succeed in destroying the planet on which we live. Will our government be able to take the right decisions that will permit mankind to survive for centuries to come? Maybe it's better not to know the answer...



# Sarajevo

by Luca Cestari



As I pass across the old-fashioned soviet-style bridge at Slavonski Brod, I soon realize that I am not only crossing a territorial border between Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina, but that I am also starting a journey into the theatre of one of the darkest pages in our recent history.

Everywhere I can see that the war has left wounds that are still far from being healed. The countryside looks like a battleground, there isn't a single house without the scars left by bombs and bullets, the road signs in two languages show names that tell of tragic events: Srebrenica, Tuzla, Gorazde. The quest for normality here collides with an age-old hatred which is still alive, as can be understood when you see that all the public writing in Cyrillic has been obscured by spray paint in the Muslim regions.

When I reach Sarajevo, everything still calls to mind the war - the build-

ings bombed during the long siege, the endless lines of graves in the cemeteries, the pride of the people that expresses itself in the tunnel museum, dug to build a link between the city under siege and the liberated area outside, sneaking out from the basement of a house where an old woman welcomed soldiers with water and food and now is still growing her vegetables and making slivovitz for her guests.

But there is also another Sarajevo that is struggling to emerge, which combines tradition and modernity - the majestic outline of the great mosque, and veiled girls with beautiful eyes wearing jeans and writing text messages on their mobiles, the flavours and tastes and the noisy hospitality of the Bascarsija, the centre of the old Ottoman town, and a film festival, among the most innova-

tive and vibrant in the whole of Europe. And leaving this country, another bridge in Mostar, which was destroyed during the war and has been recently rebuilt in all its magnificence, reminds me what this country has always been and shall be again - a stunning crossroads of different cultures, arts and religions, that try to live together despite their diverging political and economic interests. But the main questions that I had in mind at the beginning of this trip still remain unanswered, how was it possible that all these crimes were committed so close to us and how could we have let it all happen?

## Crossword 31 Journeys

1. someone who thumbs a lift (10)
2. not the driver (9)
3. a break during a flight (8)
4. Heathrow, for example (7)
5. a journey by sea – or in space (6)
6. H.G. Wells novel about time travel (3,4,7)
7. someone who travels with just a rucksack and a train ticket (10)
8. how you may feel after you've been away for a long time (8)
9. the noun from 'fly' (6)
10. stranded, like Robinson Crusoe (11)
12. you might hope for a warm one when you arrive home from your travels (7)
13. If you don't want to carry cash, you might take \_\_\_\_\_ cheques on holiday (10)
14. a fast train (7)
15. business-, school-, day-, LSD- (4)
16. these can ruin a holiday experience: cancellations and \_\_\_\_\_ (6)
17. this helps sailors to avoid crashing into the rocks (10)
18. what travel does to the mind (8)
19. phrasal verb: to start your journey (3,3)

