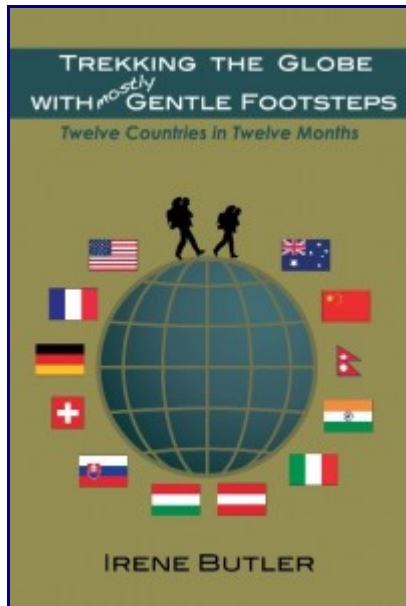


Trekking the Globe with Mostly Gentle Footsteps – A Book Review

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A trip around the world clearly isn't the sole domain of the fresh graduate or the twenty something crowd. In [Trekking the Globe with Mostly Gentle Footsteps](#) Irene and Rick Butler, newly retired baby boomers, share their 12 month global circumnavigation via 12 countries. Their goal, which was pursued with impressive dedication, was to travel around the world spending no more funds than their yearly household budget. Suffering wasn't supposed to be on the agenda and perhaps it's a matter of degree but how many 50-60 something's are willing to stay in a hostel or share a bathroom?

Yearly vacations to exotic locales like Egypt and Morocco sparked an interest in the Butlers to travel for longer periods. The opportunity to take a year off presented itself with the sale of a business. So...their journey began in Canada and took them to Australia, China, Tibet, Nepal, India, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, Switzerland (3 days only!), Germany, France and the United States.

A total of 32 days were spent in Australia, 208 days in Asia, 101 days in Europe and 14 days in the US. A chapter is devoted to each country and you'll find great maps for each continent with the visited cities pinpointed.

Irene has a talent for serving up just the right amount of information on cities, sites and customs. She shares travel tips, a few of which will affirm armchair traveling as the right choice for some. The Butler's had a golden rule on street food – consume only food that is piping hot. They waivered once and you can just imagine that sinking feeling of doom when your tummy starts talking back.

I love Irene's explanations of the heritage of some common sayings. Learn what 'saving face' means in the Chinese culture. Find out how the Black Hole of Calcutta got its name. Look for information on Indian customs concerning cremations. Have you heard of India's third sex – the hijra? Italy's Vestal Virgins are explained as are the musical and artistic genius of many European artists. These factual tidbits were a delight.

I do have to mention THE BUDGET. Rick spent considerable time with the help of guide books drawing up a budget. For example, in Australia he budgeted \$115 per day and they spent \$120 per day. I'm impressed with how close they came to hitting the targets but by the end of the book I was ready for him to loosen up and splurge occasionally; or at least, not think about the money. But my hat goes off to the Butlers for accomplishing their goal and for sharing their journey. For your information, a year of traveling without plane tickets cost them \$35,808.

I plan to keep this book on hand as Irene's thorough research is a valuable resource for my own yet to be realized, round the world trip. This is a great read and Irene's compelling narrative will inspire many would-be adventurers, especially the baby boomer crowd with time, money and health on their side. Could that be you?

Leigh McAdam

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The book *Trekking the Globe with Mostly Gentle Footsteps: Twelve Countries in Twelve Months* was provided free to me for review by Jo Blackmore of [Granville Island Publishing](#). It will be available in June 2010.