



DISCOVER YOUR INNER TOURIST



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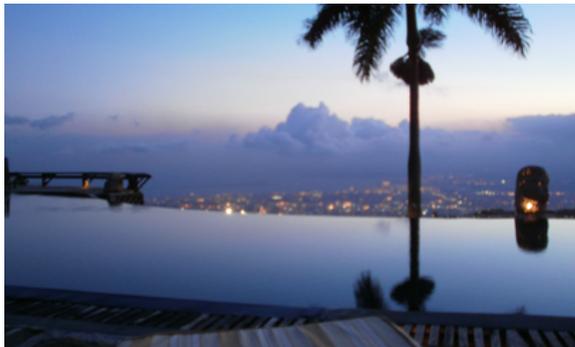


Photo from Janeen Johnson

“People travel to faraway places to watch, in fascination, the kind of people they ignore at home.”-**Dagobert D. Runes**

Travelling can be a life changing experience especially if done for an extended period of time. Some people may be fortunate enough to shed the humdrum routine of their daily lives to wander the globe, but for many traveling remains a deferred dream. How often have you tried convincing yourself that you will travel when you have more time or money, when the kids are older or maybe during retirement? The

fact is there's always something standing between you and your travel ambitions. It's with this realization that I decided to find temporary fixes to quench my constant thirst for travel.

When we travel we are more relaxed, observant and open to experiencing the world so why not adapt the same attitude at home? Connect with your inner traveler, explore your surroundings. Here are a few simple ways that I have found to escape, no passport required:

Try New Restaurants- Food is an important part of the travel experience so make dining out exciting. You don't need to be in Japan to try sushi or France to have escargot. Even if the cuisine is local at least you know a new spot.

Read Guide Books and Do Touristy Things- You'd be surprised how many hidden treasures you can find by reading the Lonely Planet for your country. I discovered budget accommodations and sites that I didn't know before. Don't be quick to dismiss the cliché tourist attractions as they may surprise you. I found the Port Royal Tour and the Bob Marley Museum rather interesting. I also found it fun to climb Dunns River Falls holding hands with the tourists. Some attractions will even offer reduced prices to residents as a perk to encourage local tourism.

Attend Foreign Cultural Events – Art Shows, Music and Foreign Film Festivals are great opportunities to experience other cultures at home. Foreign Embassies and Consulates always host various events to improve transnational relations. I often enjoy watching francophone movies outdoor at the local Alliance Française. With wine and croissants it's like a temporary Parisian escape and it's free.

Try Different Activities- Whether it's Salsa Dancing, Yoga, Kite-Surfing or Capoeira, doing something new is an excellent way to experience the world. In taking yoga I met Monks and people from India. I also learned to prepare Dahl and I tried singing in Bengali, that was a disaster but fun nonetheless. People are usually accommodating to others who show interest in their culture. You may discover a new passion whilst gaining priceless experiences.

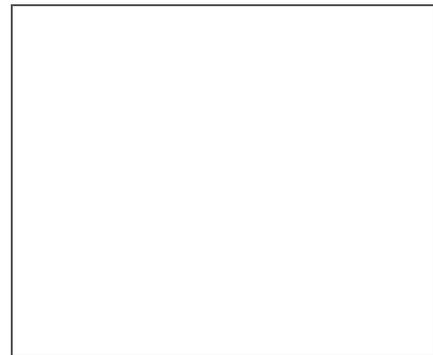
CouchSurfing – Host travelers in your home. Though not for everyone it's a great way to meet like-minded people and learn about their country while sharing your own.

It doesn't matter where in the world you live, there are always things to see just seek and you shall find. When your perspective of travel changes your life experiences become richer.

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