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An Ode to Travel

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If departure screens like the one above always provide you a rush of excitement and **possibility**... if the rumbling *clackety-clack* of suitcase wheels over **cobblestones** is music to your ears... if the accent of a **foreign** flight attendant somehow makes the safety instructions sound **riveting**... if a particular smell, from a bar of hotel soap, that **post-rain smell**, or a pungent dish instantly transports you to that restaurant in Barcelona, that beach in the [Bay of Islands](#), or that park in Paris...

Then you too might have an **addiction to travel**. You're not alone.

As Amsterdam continues to unravel its many layers, I am continually amazed at the happiness that traveling brings. There's so much to see, so much knowledge to be gained, so many personal connections to be made. Even the down times (long line-ups, flight cancellations, getting lost, getting ripped off) are perfect for self-reflection. Those times that suck inevitably make us think - Why did I leave the couch?

More often than not, the answer comes unexpectedly and very simply - on a **train ride** to Berlin... an early hour on a beach in **Malaga**... a roast beef sandwich in Amsterdam's **Cafe Festina Lente**... a quiet moment in the shade at the **Marie de Medici** fountain at the Jardin du Luxembourg in Paris... a **Sam Roberts** concert at NYC's Gramercy Theater that was better than U2 the night before... a conversation with an **87-year old** woman who was a war survivor and whose family hid a Jewish family in south Holland ... and a **hundred more moments** that I could (and some I couldn't) print here. Each one reminding me how fortunate I am.



Alain de Botton's awesome book "**The Art of Travel**" sums up the the joy (and occasional misery) of travel far more eloquently than I ever could, and reading it even gives you a sense that there's some joy within that misery. It is full of **philosophical**, historical and social perspectives as to why we travel.

Ultimately, I think traveling provides us the opportunity to create way more **spots of time** than we can if we decide to just stay home. A quote from The Art of Travel:

*There are in our existence spots of time,
That with distinct pre-eminence retain
A renovating virtue...
That penetrates, enables us to mount,
When high, more high, and lifts us up when fallen.*

Wordsworth