

# Globe

Born with the bug – Leadacy winner  
Marcin Dabek

Discovering Newfoundland

Alternative Christmas in Africa





## Born with the bug

Legacy winner Marcin Dabek describes some of his travel experiences and explains why seeing the world means so much to him.

I WAS born 24 years ago in the small town in the north-west part of Poland. My parents used to travel a lot, when me and my older sister were kids. My first long journey took place when I was ten years old. My parents were brave enough to take us through the eastern Europe to the Bulgarian Black Sea coast in the smallest car ever to come out of Communist Poland.

After the primary school I moved to boarding school and started education at the College of Surveying in Poznan. At that time I joined the boy scout team

and spent a lot of time with them. I also started rock climbing and caving courses.

For the first big adventure I had to wait until I was 18, when, together with other older scouts, we went overland to Nepal. At this time – 1997 – we were the first boy scout team from Poland to undertake such a trip. We travelled through Europe, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and India, using local accommodation and the cheapest transport in every country. We had only one month to complete our main goal, that of trekking to the Annapurna sanctuary.

I'll never forget our two weeks speedy travel through Asia and the magnificent trekking in the Himalayas. It was the most exciting month in my life.

After college I travelled with a friend to discover Morocco. We had only £150 each in our pockets, so we hitch-hiked from Poland to southern Spain in three days and after a month of adventure in Africa we came back in the same way.

Then I decided to do some voluntary work in England. That's how I came to spend almost a year in rural bio-dynamic community with mentally handicapped in the middle of The North York Moors National Park.



Marcin plans to travel to South America after his job teaching disabled children finishes

After that I moved to London to work for a surveying company and study English. At that time I joined The Globetrotters Club.

Exactly one year ago I decided to take off to Mexico and Central America. It was my first solo travel for a long time, and I now believe travelling solo is the best way to travel and discover other countries. I think you are more open to the locals and you are free to do exactly what you want!

During all this time, just over six months, I was hosted by local people, who treated me like a part of their families and gave me the opportunity to experience their lifestyle. I'm very grateful to all of them.

I also did some work on permaculture and organic farms and climbed the highest peaks in Mexico and Guatemala.

During my journey I decided to speak as much Spanish as possible, so I tried to avoid backpackers and most of the time I was hitch-hiking with locals. Another reason for choosing lifts as my main transport was my slim budget of around £3 per day.

I don't bearudae my modest budaget though: I believe the less money you have the better adventure you are going to have!

I'll never forget the hospitality and people of Latin America, who I met on my way. I think that is what makes travelling so excited for me, beside discovering something new about world and yourself.

At the moment I'm working as a volunteer in the hostel for a mentally and physically handicapped children at St. Christopher's School in Bristol. It's very challenging and rewarding work and I enjoy it very much.

I'm very happy I won the Leadacv, which will enable me to travel to South America when I finish my work here. I don't know for how long I'm going to travel, but I'd like to visit and experience as many countries as possible.

Plans for the future? I want to enjoy every moment of my life and try to be better person every day.

Best wishes to all travellers everywhere.

- Marcin Dabek

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# Globe

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