

Travels With Charley

By: John Steinbeck

When I was very young and the urge to be someplace else was on me, I was assured by mature people that maturity would cure this itch. When years described me as mature, the remedy prescribed was middle age. In middle age I was assured that greater age would calm my fever and now that I am fifty-eight perhaps senility will do the job. Nothing has worked. Four hoarse blasts of a ship's whistle still raise the hair on my neck and set my feet to tapping. The sound of a jet, an engine warming up, even the clapping of shod hooves on pavement brings on the ancient shudder, the dry mouth and vacant eye, the hot palms and the churn of stomach high up under the rib cage. In other words, I don't improve; in further words, once a bum always a bum. I fear the disease is incurable. I set this matter down not to instruct others but to inform myself.

When the virus of restlessness begins to take possession of a wayward man, and the road away from Here seems broad and straight and sweet, the victim must first find in himself a good and sufficient reason for going. This to the practical bum is not difficult. He has a built-in garden of reasons to choose from. Next he must plan his trip in time and space, choose a direction and a destination. And last he must implement the journey. How to go, what to take, how long to stay. This part of the process is invariable and immortal. I set it down only so that newcomers to bumdom, like teen-agers in new-hatched sin, will not think they invented it.

Once a journey is designed, equipped, and put in process; a new factor enters and takes over. A trip, a safari, an exploration, is an entity, different from all other journeys. It has personality, temperament, individuality, uniqueness. A journey is a person in itself; no two are alike. And all plans, safeguards, policing, and coercion are fruitless. We find after years of struggle that we do not take a trip; a trip takes us. Tour masters, schedules, reservations, brass-bound and inevitable, dash themselves to wreckage on the personality of the trip. Only when this is recognized can the blown-in-the-glass bum relax and go along with it. Only then do the frustrations fall away. In this a journey is like marriage. The certain way to be wrong is to think you control it. I feel better now, having said this, although only those who have experienced it will understand it.

What advice do you think this author would give to a young person regarding traveling? Use at least one direct quote to support your answer.



The Perfect Trip

Consider the settings, both *urban* and *rural*, that you have explored during this year.

Given unlimited time and money where would you travel?

Research this location using resources from the media center.

Use the following **3** resources to search for information about your trip:

1. A **BOOK** found in the library catalog: Locate the book on the shelf and use it to answer the following questions:

Title: _____

Author (if one is listed): _____

Copyright date (look on the *copyright* or *small print* page): _____

Publisher (look on the *copyright* or *small print* page): _____

On what pages of the book did you find information about your place?

(If the entire book is about your place, write ENTIRE)

Use the index (in the back) to find information about traveling to your place.
What word(s) did you search in the index? _____

On which pages of your book did you find information about traveling to your place?

2. A **DATABASE** from Michigan Electronic Library: Use the link on the Media Center website to go to the database (<http://school.eb.com/levels/middle>). Search for the name of your place + travel. Choose an article. Click the "Cite" button in the upper right corner of the article (box with check mark).

Write the MLA citation for your article here:

Skim through the article and describe one attraction travellers to your place might like to see:

3. A **TRAVEL WEBSITE**: Use the link on the Media Center website to go to the travel website (<http://www.fodors.com/>). Search for the name of your place. Choose an article. Answer the following questions:

Article title: _____

URL: _____

Website title: _____

Publisher (look at the bottom of the home page): _____

Electronically published (look for a year at the bottom of the home page): _____

Date you used the website for this assignment: _____

What is another travel website you could use to find information about your place?
