

David Lee's



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“ Introduction ”

From November 2007 to July 2009, I traveled around the world visiting the countries I most wanted to see in life. Along the way, I kept a travel blog to share my experiences with whomever would read along. I also thought it'd be fun to interact with readers, and thus called upon them to dare me to do odd things.

While winning most of the bets was nice, I gained much more from the experiences than extra beer money. I pushed my boundaries, thus expanding my comfort zone in a variety of unforeseen ways.

In addition to the original text for each dare, I've included a few additional thoughts in **orange**. All of the completed dares have photos, so if I did not include them in the ebook, just click on the **Blue** link at the end of each page. The links will open in a new browser window. If you enjoy this ebook, please forward it to your family, friends, and colleagues.

Many thanks to everyone who submitted a dare.

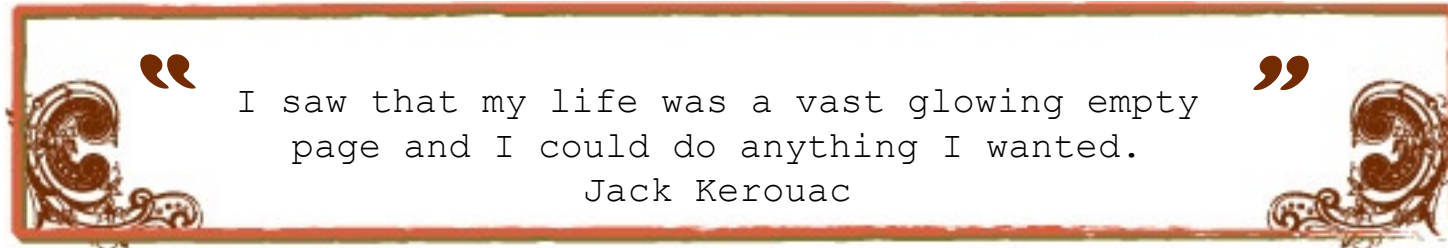
Happy Travels!

David

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The Idea

DARE ME!



The Dream

Traveling around the world has been a dream for me since I was laid off from my first post-college job in March 2002. It has taken me over 5 years to make it happen, and I am at once ridiculously excited about the possibilities, and a bit uneasy about this whole lack of a job and income idea that goes along with it.

Dare Me! Activity

Dare me to do something funny, embarrassing, strange, adventurous or pedestrian. Tell me about it by leaving a comment, or sending me a message, along with a suggested donation amount (and web address if you have one). If I accept, then I'll write about it, post pictures and/or video on the blog, and show my thanks by adding you to the Dare Me! page.

Here are a few ideas...

- ✦ Visit a certain monument (beach, park, etc.)
- ✦ Eat a strange food (insects, birds, brains, etc.)
- ✦ Spend a day trying to get the phone number of a Parisian woman
(note: this is hard enough when you speak the language!)
- ✦ Obtain and mail a souvenir
- ✦ Go 5 days without a shower (warning: this might happen without the dare)

Submit your dares any time you feel like throwing down a challenge.



Dare #1

DARE ME!

“ - Completed - ” Nose Pick @ Sky Tower

From Justin:

I would come up with a sweet dare for you, except that, like you are soon to feel, my bank account has been poured into a not-too-narrow funnel. But if you pick your nose in front of the Sky Tower, I'll buy you a beer.

Reward:

A tasty beer in New Zealand

The Results:

I'll see you in a few days to collect on this one! :)

Location: Wellington, New Zealand.

I was glad Justin threw me a softball to get things started. I met up with him a day later and enjoyed my free beer while joining him and his friends for Trivia Night at a downtown bar. We came in 2nd place, earning a \$50 bar tab and a bottle of Champagne. Karma at work!



[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #1](#)

Dare #2

DARE ME!



From RBL:

I dare you to convince single women (aged 18-35) to have their photo taken with their hand on your shoulder. Reward: \$5 per woman. No limit.

The Results:

It didn't take long for me to complete my first dare (technically the second submitted). I met Christina and Alexandra on Moorea, and as we got to know each other, the cameras came out.

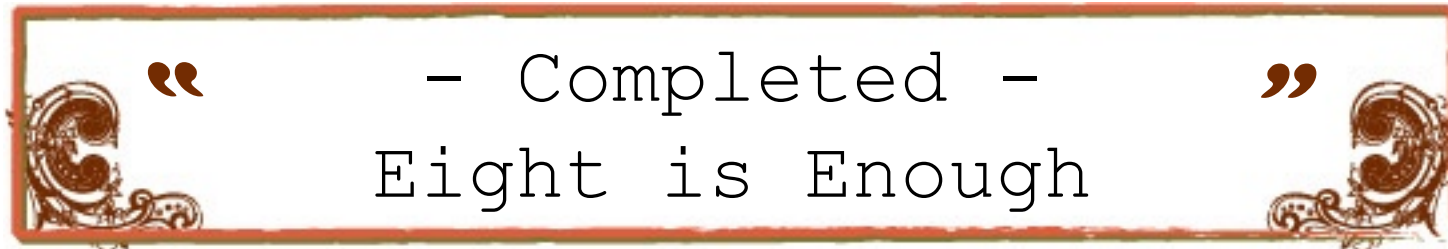
Location: Moorea, French Polynesia

As there was no limit on this dare, it would prove to be my most profitable and often discussed. A great amount of good-humored envy occurred amongst my fellow travelers as a result of my ability to earn money in this manner.

[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #2](#)

Dare #3

DARE ME!



From Kango Suz:

If you can post any pictures of you with more than 6 single women with their hands on your one shoulder I'll give you \$10 per pic!

Reward: \$10 per picture

The Results:

Europe was well represented on the porch of my cabin in Airlie Beach. In the photo, we have 2 Irish lasses, 2 German ladies, 2 Polish girls, and 2 young women from Norway (or was it Finland...does it really matter?).

Location: Airlie Beach, Australia

By the time I received this dare, I'd gotten into the swing of ensuring female travelers' hands ended up on my shoulders for photos, however 6 at once seemed like a tall order. On a rainy Aussie evening, a full-fledged party developed on the porch of my cabin. It was the night before my 3-day sail around the Whitsunday Islands, and all the girls came together to ensure I won this dare.

[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #3](#)

Dare #4

DARE ME!

“ - Completed - ” Aussie Burger With The Lot

From Stu:

I dare you to get a hamburger with the lot in Australia from a real fish and chip shop (that encompasses the following ingredients):

- fried egg (hard yolk/soft yolk optional)
- bacon
- cheese
- grilled pineapple ring
- beetroot
- lettuce
- grilled onion
- tomato

Must include two steamed dim sims with soy sauce as a side. :) Must include photo.

Reward: \$10

The Results:

This burger was massive - and literally the last meal I ate in Australia before heading to the Melbourne airport. I made the mistake of pouring the soy sauce all over the dim sim, which made a real mess of things once I commenced the eating portion of the process.

Location: Melbourne, Australia

Stu was a long time reader and commenter on my blog, and if it weren't for him, I never would've thought to get a burger made up of such random toppings!

[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #4](#)



Dare #5

DARE ME!

“ - Failed - ” Bosom Buddies

From Bob:

Hey, Dave, great job doing this trip! However, now that you've mentioned topless Bondi Beach, I can't resist but dare you to get a nice, clear photo of you with a pretty topless young lady, with her bosom clearly visible. Hopefully with the \$100 I will give you, you can enjoy a dinner together afterward. Or maybe just some liquor! ;) Happy Trippin'!

Reward: \$100

My friend Bob tried to raise the bar, both in terms of risky behavior and money on the line, however I just didn't find the opportunity to make him proud. Not that it wasn't on my mind. Often!



Dare #6

DARE ME!

“ - Completed - ” Monkey Business

From Sara:

I have a good first dare for ya. After seeing your picture with the fluffy koala bear, and reading about the monkey forests full of gray monkeys in Bali, I've decided that your dare is the following:

I dare you to load your day pack with bananas and head into one of the monkey forests. (Sengeh, Jalan, Ubud?) Once there get the help of someone nice to hold your camera and take pictures. Then, quickly peel and hold two handfuls of bananas and extend your arms like a tree. I'll contribute a donation of \$20 for each monkey on your body in one single photograph. From what I read those monkeys can be fast so you have to be too! And very brave! I would think the more bananas you pack up, the better chance you have of attracting mucho monkeys, and therefor getting the very best and busy single shot... I also suggest leaving a trail of nuts to your final photo spot as a pre-banana warm up, but that part is entirely up to you. (Bananas and nuts should be sold at the entrance to the park.) Good Luck.

Reward: \$20 per monkey on my body

The Results:

Upon arrival at the monkey sanctuary in Ubud, I bought a bundle of minibananas to feed the monkeys. My driver/guide took the photos as I tried



Dare #6

DARE ME!



to lure my goal of 5 monkeys upon me for this dare. The best way to get them on you is to hold the bananas above your shoulders, however I found no more than one monkey would jump up at a time.

While I only managed one monkey, I'm grateful to Sara for suggesting I check out the sanctuary. It was a fun part of a 1/2 day trip to the area.

Location: Ubud on the island of Bali, Indonesia

This was a fun dare. I was trying so hard to get multiple monkeys to climb on me, but to no avail.

Check out more photos & comments for Dare #6

Dare #7

DARE ME!

“ - Completed - ”
Let's Here It For Ladyboys

From Overland Travel:

OK Dave, I think I have a particularly unoriginal dare that will nonetheless get you out of your comfort zone! When you get there, I dare you to get your picture taken with one of Thailand's finest ladyboys... And no cheating - we need evidence of a prominent Adam's apple and manly hands! (As you know, get someone reliable to take it for you... don't want anyone running off with your camera!) Since you will need to get your running shoes on shortly after the pic has been taken - straight to a chemical shower no doubt - I will stick the amount at \$50 which should get you a reasonably decent hotel in Thailand for a night. Enjoy!

Reward: \$50 (to go toward a nice night in a Thai hotel)

The Results:

I'd been seeing ladyboys everywhere I went since arriving in Thailand - Th Khao San road in Bangkok, Koh Samui, the Full Moon Party on Koh Phangan. In the throes of an unexpectedly fun first night on Thong Nai Pan Noi, I took a few minutes to have this photo snapped with what in my best judgment (at the time) were 3 ladyboys. Note the light handhold to try and show off "manly" hands.



Location: Thong Nai Pan Noi on the north side of Koh Phangan, Thailand

[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #7](#)

Dare #8

DARE ME!



From Tim:

I'll pay you \$30 to eat a scorpion on a stick from a street vendor in China and describe the experience, either that or \$15 for fried pigeon head from a restaurant. They were available all over the place when I was there in May. Good Luck! :)

Reward: \$30 (scorpion), \$15 (fried pigeon head)

Result:

This dare was my Moby Dick. I searched for scorpions everywhere I visited since Hong Kong, including China, Nepal, India (where a giant black live one confronted me in my budget hotel room), Bangkok's Kho San Road, Cambodia (where I ate plenty of bugs, but was told scorpions were out of season), Laos, and beyond.

My Dare to YOU:

I will pay \$30 to the first person who emails me a personal photo or video link of themselves eating a scorpion as a result of this ebook. In other words, you have to make it a point to go eat a scorpion to win!

My email address is rtwdave@gmail.com

Good Luck!



From Dan:

Looks like you're running low on dares. Now that you're in China I dare you to ride a scooter (as a passenger or driver) down a ridiculously crowded street. Just like in the pictures.

Seems to me you could do this in either China or India, but you can do it where ever you have time/motivation. Provide photographic evidence and your compensation will be \$25 plus rental fee if you have to rent to complete your task. I'll up the winnings if the street is REALLY crowded.

Reward: \$25+

The Results:

After a few days in Bangkok without meeting anyone, I was starting to feel like my bang-up start was more like a bust. I was feeling lonely. Invariably, I've found this happens when I have the highest expectations for socializing. Then, when I'm asleep at the wheel, I end up meeting and hanging out with cool people. To entertain myself, and hopefully earn a few bucks, I took on Dan's dare.

My friend Charlie in Chengdu had a motorcycle, but it was broken at the time I was staying with him. After a mentally traumatic miniscooter accident when I was a kid at day camp, I lost any desire to ride motorized bikes. I prefer to be encased in metal, especially after seeing the way people drive in India. Motorcycle taxis are commonplace in Thailand, so I hired one for a loop around Democracy Monument near Khao San. It took a little translation support to ensure the driver knew what I wanted, and he delivered in great fashion. Surely agreeing to what was likely a generous overpayment didn't hurt.

Dare #9

DARE ME!

“ - Completed - ” Motorcycle Mayhem

Unlike paragliding, taking photos and video on the back of a bike was a breeze. I'm sure it would've been a dirtier, dustier, bumpier affair in India or Nepal, but there was plenty of traffic which we weaved in and out of at red lights. It turned out to be a memorable experience which helped to lift my mood.

Location: Bangkok, Thailand

This dare greatly eased my comfort level riding on motorbikes, which is practically a necessity in Southeast Asia. While I never decided to drive one myself, I did enjoy a few village tours on the backs of motorbikes in rural Cambodia.

[Check out more photos, video & comments for Dare #9](#)

Dare #10

DARE ME!



From Jon:

I'd put up \$200 to see you get a tattoo, maybe a mandala or something all buddhasty. You know you want one, so what better story than 'this one time in Nepal I ...'

Reward: \$200

My brother makes a good point with this dare - I did want a souvenir from my trip around the world in the form of a tattoo, however I could never decide on exactly what I'd want branded on me for life. Despite tattoo parlors everywhere I went from Pokhara, Nepal to Cartagena, Colombia, I returned home without getting inked.

Dare #11

DARE ME!

“ - Failed - ”

Ride the Roof of an Indian Train

From Stefan:

Here's a new dare for \$20...take a ride on the roof of a train in India.

Reward: \$20

The Results:

I must admit defeat with regard to this dare. I don't have a choice.... the beaches of Thailand are calling. I only saw people on a train rooftop once, and never saw the opportunity arise for anyone at the stations I visited. Maybe it's more common in the south, on local routes, or in more remote regions of the country.

Even though I didn't have the opportunity to ride the roof of a barreling train in India, I had a feel for what it would've been like when I road the roof of a Nepali bus on the way back to Pokhara after my Annapurna trek. The whole thing was packed, and people began joining us on the roof - I counted about 18 in total. Many of the guys were dressed well, as though on their way home from work. The young ticket collector, who was wearing a Britney Spears t-shirt, confidently maneuvered himself around the edges of the bus as it rolled down the mountain roads. He could easily have been a stuntman in a Hollywood movie, and all to collect a few bucks worth of fare. The epic views were worth the resulting sore ass from bumping up and down on the metal luggage rack.



[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #11](#)

Dare #12

DARE ME!



From Jeff:

I dare you to eat an Indian dish called Vindaloo in India.

Reward: \$10

The Results:

As my journeys in India have already come to a close, you might be wondering why I'm just now touching on the vindaloo dare. My attempts to find the fiery curry dish from Goa towards the end of my trip ended in vain, and my ego wouldn't let it go. The rooftop train failure I could handle, not trying a spicy curry I couldn't.

Backtracking to India, I received the dare while in northern McLeod Ganj, a Tibetan community more apt to offer Italian food (inextricably), momo's and standard Indian fare than a regional dish like vindaloo. When I mentioned the dare to Marie, she said it was a dish that men ate in England after drinking to prove their manliness. Apparently it was hotter than hell, and I was a bit relieved I couldn't find it right off the bat.

Surely Delhi, capital of India, would proffer such a feisty dish. My attempt to get a restaurant referral from a street hustler crashed and burned, and I was running out of time to hit the pavement around Connaught, so I mentioned the dare to Neil and his wife, who both offered to help me win the bet (to my great appreciation). The clock was ticking. On my last night, we found a Goan joint in a Delhi restaurant guide.

Neil drove us over to the popular marketplace which he used to visit regularly with his mom. Stalls offered souvenirs and there was a food court with restaurants representing all of the regional cuisines of India. The only problem was we were informed the Goan place closed shop. Apparently vindaloo wasn't so popular in the big city. I was bummed, but Neil still

“ - Completed - ” Vindaloo Consumption

took me to a great Italian place, The Big Chill, where I devoured some risotto and chocolate cake as my last supper on the Indian subcontinent.

The first Indian restaurant I spotted around Khao San served vindaloo. I ordered a beer to build nerve, a 1.5 liter bottle of water to soothe my tongue, and the chicken vindaloo. It arrived quickly and I dug in only to find it mildly hot. Clearly, the mighty English would not prove their manhood with such a dish. It had been dumbed down for tourists. I vowed to return and explicitly request an intenser heat, but I ran across another restaurant first, and decided to make my last stand. I didn't know what awaited me on the islands, so it was now or never. I told the waiter my plight for intensely hot vindaloo. We understood each other. I skipped the beer this time, simply ensuring the water was readily available, along with a cooling dish of cucumber raita (yogurt). I'm happy to report the curry was very hot. When I swallowed the green peppers, it sharply burned my throat. My tongue, and to a lesser extent, my lips, felt hot for a good 10-15 minutes. I quietly hoped I didn't just sabotage my overnight bus ride.

Location: Bangkok, Thailand

[Check out more photos, video, & comments for Dare #12](#)

Dare #13

DARE ME!



From Stefan:

Go to an underground Muai Thai fight in Thailand, Cambodia or Laos. Any bare knuckle competition that is not sanctioned will do. I guess I've been watching too many fight videos lately =)

Reward: \$20

The Results:

Steve had trained in Thailand's national sport, Muay Thai, for three years back in England so he was excited to see his first match, and myself, Chrissy, and Diana joined him for a night out on Koh Phangan. The ride there was about 30 minutes, with the first half spent twisting, turning, and bumping around on the dirt roads in the back of the modified pickup.

The "stadium" felt more like someones backyard. There was a small bar, a few bleachers, and tables/chairs around the ring for those who payed extra. I was glad to attend the fights with Steve because he was able to appreciate some of the technique, and answer questions. The format was similar to what we'd have seen anywhere else.

The whole event lasted about 3 hours, and started out with tiny little kids fighting. We'd heard about this so it wasn't a surprise, yet it was mildly disturbing. In this case, the tots were girls. At first it was novel to have the small kids fighting intermittently as the night progressed, however it then seemed to become more of a filler between bouts with increasingly older guys. In fact, the two best fights of the night, which came at the end (of course), resulted in KO's within the first round. Before one of the fights started, I picked a guy in red trunks to win. He was short, tan, with welldefined muscles, and a good game face. His opponent was a beanpole by comparison, and while taller, seemed to lack muscle mass and any sense that he was going to come out of it a winner.

Dare #13

DARE ME!



Earlier in the evening, the audience was almost all tourists, however as the fighters got older, more Thais filtered in to give the experience a better sense of authenticity. Steve was disappointed that his first fights in Thailand were not so fantastic, and resolved to watch some matches at Lumpini, the big stadium in Bangkok. When it was all over, we rumbled our way back to Thong Nai Pan Noi for late-night cheeseburgers.

Location: Koh Phangan, Thailand

[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #13](#)

Dare #14

DARE ME!

“ – Completed – ”
It's A Dog Eat Dog World

From Erica:

You knew someone would dare you to eat dog while you were in Vietnam, didn't you?

Reward \$20

The Results:

At some point in Thailand, I resolved to skip traveling through Vietnam to hasten my departure from the Asian continent. As a result, I targeted Cambodia as my best shot at eating dog to complete Erica's dare (clearly she is a cat person!). After wetting my palette with bugs, Phi-lay dropped me off at the hotel so I could shower the day's accumulation of red dirt off my body.

He picked me up again at 4pm and took me to a local restaurant where the chef/owner has served dog for the last 10 years. I imagine the last time a Westerner ate there was NEVER! Yet there were several tables of Cambodians and it wasn't even the dinner rush. I required a beer for this one, and Phi-lay joined me on that note. As we awaited our food, I took a photo of the chef, and upon showing him, he proudly ran around the place showing people the photo of him holding a giant pot of dog parts. Who are we to judge whether this delicacy is right or wrong?



Dare #14

DARE ME!



I asked to try both of the available dog dishes - grilled and a greasier, bone-inclusive stew (complete with kidneys). Phi-lay assured me the food was safe as doctors visit the farms where the dogs are raised. Mint leaves and sliced young banana were accompaniments, along with a tasty curry dipping sauce. After a few bites of the grilled dog meat, which seemed to be in the shape of sausage, and the yuckier stew, I tried to be polite and focused on gobbling up the crunchy and delicious young banana slices which went well with the now dog-flavored dipping sauce.

Phi-lay admitted to not being keen on dog either (he needed a beer with the meal too), though I was glad he joined me. Thankfully, his wife was beginning to prepare a proper dinner back at home, and I was invited!

P.S. - I love dogs. Especially Bernese Mountain Dogs. I even scratch the scruffy beach dogs. Just not the possibly rabid ones that look like the living dead.

Location: Battambang, Cambodia

[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #14](#)

Dare #15

DARE ME!

“ - Completed - ” Mastering the Art of Muay Thai Boxing

From Jay:

I dare you to take a Walk In Muay Thai class for one day. It will be the best workout of your life, and it is fairly cheap! Since you are in Phuket, may I suggest Rawai Muay Thai, or Tiger Muay Thai? They are the most Americanized. I'll buy ya a beer.

Reward: A beer

The Results:

Jay's dare provided me with yet another experience I wouldn't have sought out on my own, especially given a complete lack of martial arts experience in life and an aversion for fighting in general. I first heard about Muay Thai boxing in the context of The Travel Channel's "5 Takes" show which sends 5 lucky travelers to a region of the world equipped with laptops and video cameras. The sporty guy on the show went through a 2-hour training, and now it was my turn.

A few blocks from Kent's Guest House was one of Chiang Mai's boxing stadiums (think boxing ring inside a large bar). Fresh from 6 hours of cooking and eating Thai food, I took on the dare knowing I'd have to work for that beer. Mr. K, the 1987 Muay Thai champion of Thailand, was my trainer. A couple of other real Thai fighters were also hanging around, with one in particular helping me out. He went out to buy me some tape to wrap my



“ - Completed - ” Mastering the Art of Muay Thai Boxing

wrists (an additional cost for any other novices out there) and took all of the photos while I punched and kicked with all my Muay Thai might.

A young Texan guy also joined the training session, trying to work off the weight gained from being on the road for 6 months. I could relate all too well, having recently confirmed a weight gain of 20 pounds (9 kg) since leaving home 11 months ago.

Before Mr. K showed me a single move, he had me spend 10 minutes bouncing left and right around a tire. A few minutes later, my calves were burning and I lost any sense of shyness, removing my already sweat-soaked shirt. The boxing shorts were on loan, after a quick smell from Mr. K, deemed they were wearable by a customer.

Mr. K taught me the basic moves - right/left jab, kick, knee (to opponent's face), and arm/leg blocks. We started without the gloves in the corner training area, then with gloves on the heavy bags, and finally Mr. K donned the training pads and we got into the ring. He gave commands, and I did my best to follow, forgetting to keep my arms up to protect my face after each move. He was incessant about reminding me to keep my hands up. If I were in a real fight, I'd have been KO'd within seconds of the opening bell. The thought scared me. The thought of the Thai fighters kicking and kneeing the hell out of each other on a regular basis also didn't sit well with me.

The Texan and I swapped time with Mr. K, and then a fighter set to headline a 100,000 Baht (\$2,900) fight in a few days did a demo. He even took a few minutes to help me with my technique. The personal attention made for a great experience. The next day, I had a sore right shin from my more forceful right kicks, and a set of ridiculous photos. Hopefully I lost a pound in the process too.

Location: Chiang Mai, Thailand

[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #15](#)

“ – Completed – ” Cage Diving With Great White Sharks

From Chris:

Cage diving with great white sharks in South Africa.

Reward: \$100

The Results:

Boarding the Barracuda, I was acutely aware of the potential for seasickness. At the time, I was more concerned about an upset stomach than getting in the cage. A clearly stated rule of the trip was “no vomiting” in the toilet on board, and a red sign on the small door to the restroom reinforced this message.

The skipper gunned it out of the unassuming harbor and we were quickly bouncing up and down as we crossed the Atlantic. Dyer Island, off the coast, is home to an abundant staple of the sharks' diet, Cape Fur seals, however the waters were still too rough for us to venture there. Instead, we made our way along the coast toward calmer, shallower waters where the sharks feed on fish.

Immediately upon arrival at the anchored cage (left in place after the morning trip), we spotted a large gray profile in the water. There was no mistaking the sharks in these waters, they were all Great Whites. Everyone jostled for good positions to take photos, and before I knew it, people were



“ - Completed - ” Cage Diving With Great White Sharks

dressed in full body wet suits (boots to hood) and grabbing masks to get in the water. To my surprise, we didn't use snorkels. We would have to hold our breath!!

The crew was clear about setting our expectations. The visibility was practically zero, so we could get in the cage for the experience but should not expect to see anything. I don't think anyone skipped gearing up in a wet suit for the opportunity, no matter how small, to see the sharks at eye level. Changing into the suits on a crowded, rocking boat while sharks angle for fish heads a few meters away is not an easy task.

The first group in the water reported, for the record, no visibility. As expected, surface viewing offered the best chance to see the sharks, yet I knew I had to brave the waters to win the dare (and satisfy my sense of adventure). Getting in and out of the cage is as haphazard as it might seem. The boat is constantly rocking with a constant lean toward the cage side. Five other people are already squeezed in there. And of course there are giant sharks circling us at all times!

Cage Diving Procedure:

- 1. Crew throws out fish head on a line as bait, while pouring chum (fish guts and blood) in the water.
- 2. Cage diver puts knees on a low horizontal bar under the water's surface, and holds onto bars above their head whilst his/her back is leaned against the boat-side of the cage.
- 3. When a shark is seen coming toward the bait, it is pulled away leading the shark toward the cage.
- 4. The crew yell “get down.”
- 5. Divers take a deep breath, let go of the overhead bars, sink down into the cage (courtesy of weight belts),

“ – Completed – ” Cage Diving With Great White Sharks

and grab the bar where their knees previously rested. Between people's excitement, confusion, and varying degrees of comfort, it was a more chaotic experience than I expected. It took a few cycles of “get down” for me to get into the rhythm. Going underwater was important lest you risk being knocked unconscious by a flailing shark tail.

One French man preferred to watch from above water....and he was eventually moved to my right, meaning I was the second person in from the left end of the cage.

I was in the cage about 15 minutes when it happened. The crew yelled “get down” and I went under to see Jaws ram straight into the cage, inches from my fingers and face. All I can remember was a mouth full of teeth grinding on the metal cage. Because the bars that make up the cage are far wider than I'd prefer, it would not be an exaggeration to say the shark's mouth was within the cage. Taken completely aback by this sudden, close-up confrontation, I glided a few inches to my right so my fingers were in less danger of being (albeit inadvertently on the shark's part) sliced off. A few seconds later, it let go and quickly disappeared.

I burst out of the water for air, put my knees back on the bar, and feeling I just got five times my money's worth, exited the cage in the least graceful manner. The videographer harnessed the trip's most exciting moment to reinforce the need to put your hands in the right place “because you can see what happens.” It wasn't until later, watching the video footage



Dare #16

DARE ME!



back at the office, that I would see the same view as everyone on the boat. Unlike all the other sharks on our trip, the one I met face to face didn't turn away from the cage at the last second.

Location: Gansbaai, South Africa

[Check out more photos & comments for Dare #16](#)

“ – Completed – ” Sunday Smiley

From Matthew:

Ok here's one for South Africa. Try an apparent South African delicacy called Skop: “Skop. Head of a cow, sheep or goat. The head is first scrubbed with a sharp instrument like a razor to remove skin and unwanted parts like ears and the nose are then cut out. The head is then boiled and allowed to simmer. Favored by African men.”

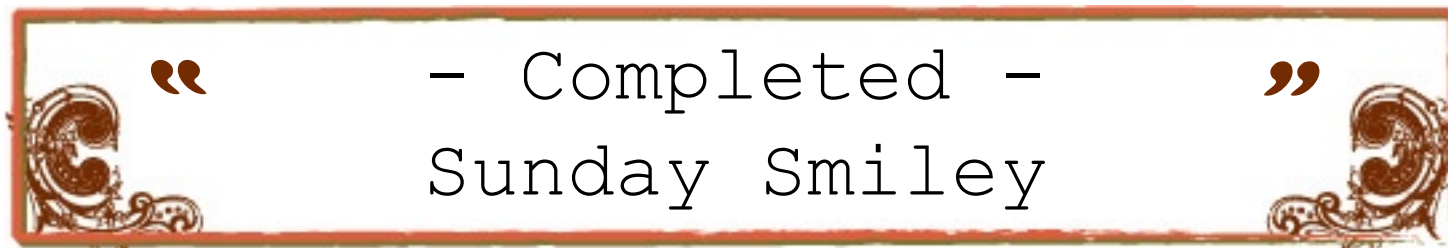
Reward: \$20

The Results:

At first, I wondered how on Earth I could track down sheep's head. It sounded like an old tribal meal. I learned they were still popular amongst the urban poor after reading Steven Otter's “Khayelitsha – An Umlungu In A Township.” Nicknamed smiley because of the grin which develops on the sheep's head as the hair is burned off it over a fire, I knew my Soweto tour would be the one and only chance to get one.

Luckily, the guide was all too happy to make an unscheduled stop. It was Sunday morning, and the queue was at least 20 minutes. At \$2 a head, they were half the price of a McDonald's meal. The guide gave my money to someone further ahead in the line so we wouldn't have to hold up the tour too long, and brought the head, wrapped in plastic and newspaper, back to the van. Before we entered the Hector Pierson museum (a young





boy whose untimely death at a peaceful march sparked major momentum against apartheid), the smiley was unwrapped over the van's center console.

The guide began to show us (me and a horrified Spanish couple) how to take the head apart. It was already split in half down the middle, but apparently there was a special way to pop the pupil out of the eye before eating the latter. I couldn't stomach an eye, but I did try the tongue which tasted like chicken, and a bit of the brain, which was mushy, and tasted just as bland as the pig's brain I sampled in China. Two brains to my credit, I no longer felt the need to eat them going forward. The flavor is bland, so it is more the texture I find unappetizingly gross.

To our surprise, the Spanish couple offered a little of their own traditional food. From a bag, they produced thin slices of raw pig's leg on buns. A stopover in Spain suddenly seemed more appetizing!

Location: Soweto, South Africa

The photos look a lot worse than it seemed in the van. The reddish color to the head is not blood, but rather a spicy sauce that was added to provide some flavor and kick the taste up a notch. Believe it or not, this is still a widely popular meal, and the customers get a lot of meat for very little money.

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