



Latin America

## **The Perfect Trip**

by **Alisa Clickenger** on January 22, 2010 at 07:37AM



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Yesterday I rode through the lush and mountainous farmland in the northwest of Honduras. I was leaving Copan Ruinas, headed for the capital, Tegucigalpa. It was early in the morning; the air was rather cool, and I was enjoying the deliciously curvy road that wound through the semi-jungle.

Going to see Copan was an afterthought. On my motorcycle trip from Rhode Island, USA, to the tip of South America, I'd already spent about 6 weeks just traveling through Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador. One day, in a conversation with another traveler, it suddenly occurred to me that I had not seen any ruins. In my hurry to ride South, I had not ridden the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico. This was my last chance to see any of the Mayan ruins that everyone visits in this region.

And so I always seem to be asking myself, as I travel, what is the "right" way to travel. Do I get out the guidebook and try to chase down every artifact, museum, ruin, so that when I get back home I have a feeling of accomplishment, of having "seen it all?" Do I spend hours each day researching the next destination? Do I break out the highly detailed road maps and choose the curviest roads, the ones that look the most motorcycle friendly, and let that determine my path of travel?

I have decided to try to let it flow, and this is a very hard decision for me. After the monumental effort it took to plan, save, and finally break free of my stateside commitments in order to travel on the motorbike for a year, I want the trip to be "perfect." I do not want to have any regrets when I get home, I do not want to think "Oh, gosh, I should have seen that, I should have done that..." For a while I was stuck in having to have the "perfect" trip, and it was torture.



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I have come to realize that this trip is *my* trip. I am following the blogs of other motorcycle travelers, and every time I read one of their posts, I marvel at how vastly different their journeys are than mine. Different problems at the border crossings, different people met, different motorcycle troubles, different places seen.

We each have our own journey. There is no "correct" or "perfect" trip. The trick, at least for me, is to let go of the idea of the ideal trip, to let go of all the outside influences, to let go of what I think the trip "should" look like, and to relax and enjoy. Experience everything each day offers, and try to be happy in each day. Revel in the experience of travel, rather than how many monuments I can tick off my list.

Once I relaxed and gave up the idea of HAVING to see everything, to do everything, my trip became infinitely better. Over time, I have come to see that my personal journey is rich as it is, however it unfolds. And ultimately, *that* is what will make my trip "perfect."

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### About The Author

Alisa Clickenger (aka MotoAdventureGal) is riding her dream. Calling it her "Year of Motorcycle Vagabonding," she's quit her job, has rented out her home and business, and is riding through Latin America in the name of freedom and adventure. You can follow Alisa's adventures from the road her colum, *Have Bike, Will Travel*, which runs weekly on Rumbum.com.

