



Image: Eric Koelma



Image: Roy Meredith



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cover star

THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

Aussies Grace, Eric and Leo have been travelling through Asia, Europe and North America for more than two years. Grace is pictured on the cover with 3-year-old Leo on the historic Canmore Engine Bridge in Alberta, Canada; nestled in magnificent mountains, it's one of the secret spots adored by locals. We spoke with Grace to learn more about the family's adventures.

What inspired you to travel full time as a family?

We caught the travel bug before our son came along, but life got busy with building our careers and a mortgage, so travel was put on the backburner. When our son was 1, we decided to take the leap and leave our house (with a white picket fence!) to travel full time. Before we packed it all up and left in 2017, my husband and I were craving a broader experience of life; we wanted to open our minds to see the beauty in all worldviews, traditions and cultural experiences. While there is so much that makes each culture fascinatingly unique, we as humans are the same, wherever we live, whatever language we speak, regardless of political orientation or religion. We all want to fall in love, find meaningful work, laugh with our friends and crush our goals. We all experience heartbreak, failure and grief. Through our travels, we've learnt that we are more alike than we are different.

What's life like on the road?

We've experienced travel in a few different forms. We did Airbnb-hopping in Asia and Europe, which meant a lot of transition days, sometimes catching a bus, tuk tuk, taxi, plane and boat all in one day. Then, in 2018, we bought and renovated an old RV in Canada and lived in it for five months, travelling to the Rocky Mountains and down the US west coast. RV life meant we were constantly road-tripping and free-camping. We had no idea where we'd end up every night and enjoyed simple things like meals cooked in our tiny oven, gorgeous beaches and the luxury of hot showers (few and far between when you live on the road!). We vlogged a lot about our daily life as we travelled - you can check out the vlogs on our YouTube channel, Dare List Family.

What have been some of the travel highlights you've experienced?

We have seen natural beauty in so many forms: colossal cacti in the Saguaro Desert of Arizona, centuries-old buildings in Rome, drinking cappuccinos in sleepy Italian villages, bathing in pools at cleansing temples with our Balinese hosts, catching fireflies on a rickety boat in the pitch black in Malaysia, standing in awe of the magnificent peaks in Yosemite National Park... We also loved living at the foot of

the Canadian Rockies and seeing how they change throughout the seasons.

How did you and Eric make this travel dream a reality?

When we quit our corporate jobs (four months before jetting off), we started freelancing in website design and social-media marketing. For the first year of travel, those clients kept us going, which meant we could travel to some incredible places - but eventually we found keeping up across multiple timezones too difficult. So we launched a photography course through our Instagram (@darelist.family). Off the back of our first course's success, we launched our company CourseFolk, which partners with industry experts and leaders to produce and launch high-quality online courses.

What are your future goals?

We want to continue to expand our business and live in other cultures while our son is still young and doesn't need to be in school. We don't know whether we will ever fully settle down again, but we do know that we want to keep saying yes to opportunities for now.

For #vanlife vlogs, RV renovation tips and the free 'Photography for awkward Instagram husbands' course, visit darelist.family and follow @darelist.family on Instagram. **ft**



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