



> Ebbwell: the stunning lake of Changuo at 12,400 feet in Gangtok, Sikkim. This image is one among the many licensed by Getty Images on their stock agency.

• When did the travel bug bite and which was your first tour?

Travel and writing has been an integral part of me from my formative years. But only during 2000-2003 when I travelled extensively to United Kingdom on work did I realize that travelling gives me a high that nothing else does. When I kept traveling on road in the countryside in my rented car in and around UK, Scotland and Wales for two long years, somewhere in between 'Photography' hitch hiked a ride with me, as well!

And with time I started truly believing in what St Augustine had said: "The world is a book and those who do not travel, read only one page." From then, there has been no looking back and at the slightest of opportunities, I travel.

I feel I have been a unique traveler. Hard to explain, but I traveled differently compared to my friends or family. I observed more intently and patiently. I recorded things both in mind, on paper and in some media or the other about people, local essence, lifestyle, nuances and so on. While the rest stopped for clothes and bags, I stopped for masks, shot glasses, dishes, pebbles, maps and guidebooks. My home is filled with them! And went on to record dif-

ferent FM stations playing in the countries I visited.

Finally, no journey was complete, without a travelogue in my personal diary with pen and paper. Well, since 2007, I went 'public' and have been writing for many Indian National Dailies, Travel Magazines and Portals, Blogs (travel & technology).

• How did the shutterbug in you awaken?

Just like everyone, I too held on to a camera and clicked away. It was funny that though I had a teeny weeny camera in those days, I clicked away massive structures

visualized, is it not? But I will try. Several short journeys the six of us, IT friends undertook over three years to photograph the state of Karnataka. We traveled every other weekend and every other holiday - the strategies of how to shoot, the journeys themselves and moments we shared.

Once, due to a storm near Stonehenge in UK, the breeze literally carried me away even as my friend tried capturing the act of nature's fury!

Transforming terrains of Ladakh just bowled me over and having hot cuppa chai and noodles with my good friends atop the world's highest coffee shop at the Kharglungla Pass is a memory etched for time.

Walking with my family through the thick jungles of Periyar Tiger Reserve at 10 in the night, for 3 long hours and 6 odd kilometres armed with just a stick, with merely two forest guards was the height of insanity. If only a tiger, a bear or an elephant, decided to make a special appearance - well, would we be in a position to say, Hello?

Traveling all alone in a land,

India,

As for work, today, apart from being a writer and photojournalist, I teach photography on different genres in Bangalore and also to the young children of The International School of Bangalore (TISB). I undertake many photography assignments in magazines and contribute photographs to many publishing houses. I have judged a few contests and have exhibited works in the city on different subjects.

• Some interesting thoughts

Waiting for 'one fine day' is good - but when will that day arrive? The worst risk is the one that is never taken.

Having a reasonable bank balance before venturing out, feels secure at times. Easier to dream but harder to execute. Plungo, first, without over analyzing the what-ifs.

Passion is a good term. But perseverance is a better one. Passion without perseverance is non-consequential.

Think of it as a Marathon Race - its easier to achieve your goal, if you start small, do small

'THE WORLD IS MY BOOK!'

Mother, teacher, writer, photojournalist, traveler, consultant Hema Narayanan wears many hats with elan. As she follows her heart in her journey through life, she captures the beauty of life itself in captivating frames and forms. This resident of Trinity Woods tells us what she loves doing best

like Windsor Castle or Big Ben. My IT job as a Technology Consultant in the telecom industry took me to a few countries and with it soared my interest in photography. With every travel, the quality of my photographs got better & better - and soon I was saving all the money 'only' to buy camera gear.

The shutterbug and the travel bug bit me so deeply that it soon became a passion, from being a hobby. It is such a different world that I got to see through the viewfinder of a camera. I took to photography like fish to water.

And I took a bold but beautiful decision to quit my flourishing IT career four years ago to pursue a new journey of Photojournalism and Writing. To chase what I wanted to do in an absolutely virgin territory, after being a post-graduate in Engineering, took courage and self-confidence. Today, I am a Photojournalist, Writer and Technology Consultant, working independently. Recently I was chosen to become a contributor to Getty Images, the largest image stock agency.

• The fondest memories of your travels...

Fondest memories are hard to describe in words - they are best

where food, language and cuisine were difficult. I had my best memory - Beijing in China. Neither did I know Chinese, ate non-vegetarian, nor could I converse with a cab driver, but I managed my way to scale 6 kilometers of the Great Wall of China.

Taking a boat ride on Chao Phraya River in Bangkok along with my parents - it seemed like Venice, because there women who rode on other boats with a market setup in it, and came up to us to sell things. Shopping in the middle of a river!

• Your work-home balance

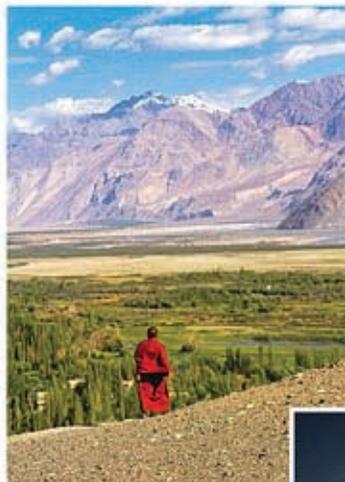
If you think it is easy, it is easy. If you think it is hard, then it is hard. Not over engineering the problem helped me handle both work and home fairly well because I have chosen to do 'hard' work that I love doing. So it does not seem like work - that is why bringing in a balance is very doable.

When I travel, my family simply steps in and helps out 100 percent. Rest of the time, I juggle between the three different things I do - Photography, Writing and Consulting - thanks to the support system we have in



things, achieve smaller things and then build up. I started at 0.42Kms and will one day reach 42 Kms!

SOME OF HEMA'S TREASURED IMAGES



> Pungong Tso Lake of 3 Altitudes Fame



> A Day in the Life of a Ladakhi



> The Star mood: A very long exposure shot over Shanti Stupa in Leh (Jammu and Kashmir) yielded a Star Trail.



> Instrumentalist: a silhouette of a Rajasthan Singer on the deserts of Pushkar. This image was chosen by the Edinburg International Festival 2011 for their banners, advertisements and website for showcasing Indian Culture



> Cycle of Life



The Black Taj: this monument DaraShah Rauza in Bijapur is the inspiration behind The Taj Mahal - does everyone know?

royal rajasthan
VEGETARIAN

traditional thalis and chaats

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