

leaving on a jet plane...

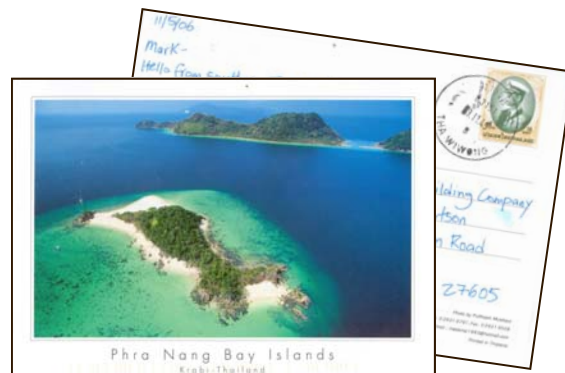
Happy new year to you all!
May 2007 be filled with health, happiness and love.
Jay and I have some pretty big news, so we wanted to share it with our friends and family.

By now most of you, if not all, have heard that my mother passed away on July 29, 2006. After 27 years of sharing everything with my mother and 32 years of loving a remarkable wife, my father and I lost the most important woman in our lives. I fear that he and I will never completely heal from this.

My birthday arrives this week. I was born on my mother's birthday and the thought of it approaching without her here is a horrible feeling. I am skipping celebrations this year and hoping to dream of her that day instead. I cant imagine any day, but that day in particular, without her.

But in all the sorrow and grief that we have experienced in the last 6 months a silver lining has emerged.

A postcard came into our offices in November from Phra Nang Bay Islands, Thailand. A friend of ours and his wife decided to dip into their savings and travel the world for one year. With the emotions of our first Thanksgiving without my mom lingering heavily I looked at this card and longed for the crystal blue and green water and the warmth of the sun.



After showing it to Jay I took it into my dad's office and plopped down in his chair. With misty eyes I said "Daddy I need to get out of here. I need to find myself. I wish I could drop everything like Chris and Jacci and travel the world. I should just sell my house and take that money and leave."

To which he replied, "Do it. Do it Eva, you will never have an opportunity to do this again. You and Jay are young, with no children to hold you back, with no job to lose, with nothing really standing in your way."

My father told me that some of his fondest memories with my mother are when they traveled- They were happy, in love, fearless and adventurous... not a bad combination for two good looking globetrotting hippies....

On December 1, 2006 Jay and I agreed we are going to do this.

We sold our house the very next day, and with the profit of the sale we can travel for a little more than 5 months.

finding ourselves...

It took us a while to research countries, iron out our itinerary, get vaccinations and passports, and calculate just how we will do this– but we finally have it all figured out.

February 26 we will officially close on our house and February 28 we will leave for Los Angeles.

March 1st we will leave the United States, not to return until August 15th.

We will travel to 24 countries with just a backpack and a camera.

We will have no salaries, no home and our pets will be living in different family members' homes.

Of course, the fear of going on a trip like this is leaving behind our families. My father, Lynn and Grandparents are still very sad and there is a little wariness to us being absent for so long. I worry about their loneliness.....

Also, my cousin just got engaged and I will miss out on helping her plan her wedding. My niece and nephew are growing so quickly and the time away will show in their growth spurts. Jay speaks to his sister and mother everyday, and that will not be possible on this trip. So we will have to adjust and try to worry less and hope that everyone stays happy and healthy while we are gone.

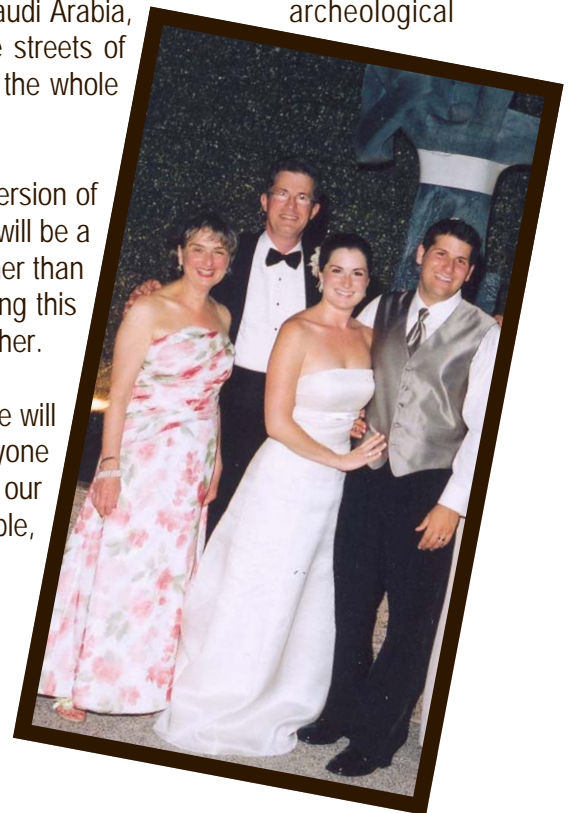
I strongly believe that my mother, though she would be worried about my accommodations, would be tremendously proud and enthusiastic about this journey for us. She and my dad both traveled extensively before they met and after they were married. Growing up, I always heard the crazy stories– whether it was about ice climbing in Germany, living in Spain or Saudi Arabia, digs in Israel and Central and South America, or wandering the streets of Hong Kong at the age of 13 alone... They seemed to have seen the whole world and became better people because of it.

I really need to discover the world... I have had such a dimmed version of reality lately that seeing other people, other issues, other lifestyles will be a welcomed change. I could not imagine doing this with anyone other than Jay and I am lucky he has been so supportive and wonderful during this excruciating time. It will be nice to rediscover ourselves in one another.

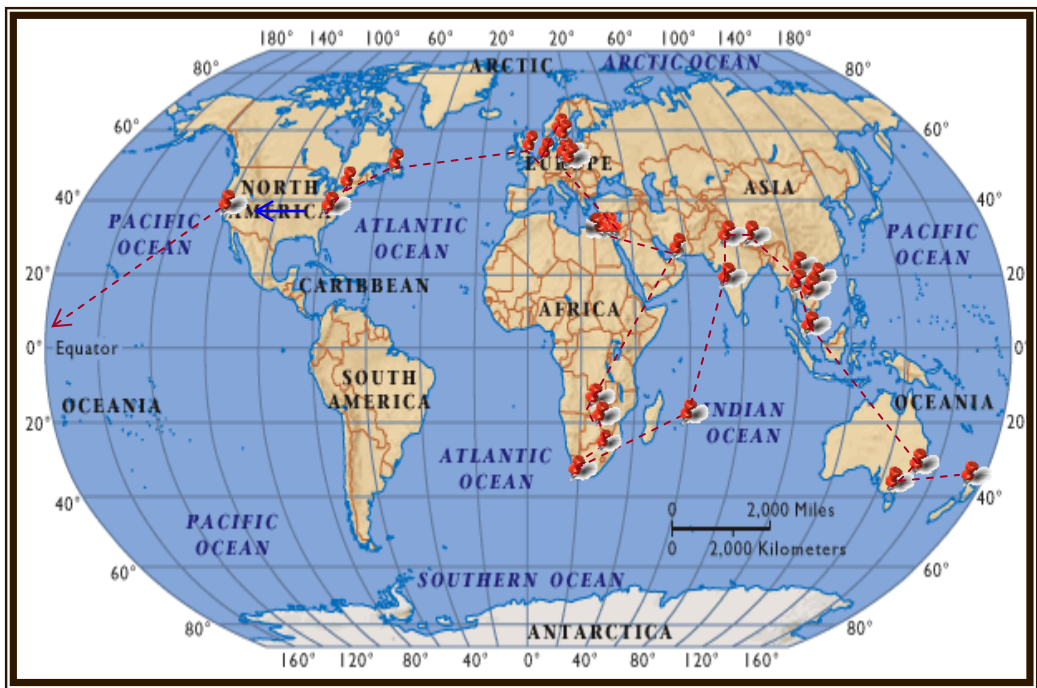
We will have an email account, so we hope you will write to us. We will also have a blog/website up and running for this trip. That way anyone who is interested in seeing our photos or reading about our experiences may. We will post to the site as much as possible, though we will be in some pretty remote places.

So far we have seven people who are planning on visiting us and traveling part of our journey with us. All I can say to that is, the more the merrier! We have a wonderful air broker who can book amazing flights– so anyone interested, just let us know and we can make sure our schedules meet up appropriately....

We are leaving big parts of the world out of this trip– due to money and time– but we plan on trying to travel to them eventually. Hopefully this trip won't be the last for a while.



the itinerary..(loosely) .



	Los Angeles, CA.....	2/28 - 3/1
	Auckland, New Zealand.....	3/3 - 3/10
	Melbourne, Australia.....	3/10 - 3/15
	Sydney, Australia.....	3/15 - 3/20
	Singapore.....	3/20 - 3/26
	Malaysia.....	3/26 - 3/31
Seder in Phuket! ←	Thailand.....	3/31 - 4/10
	Laos.....	4/10 - 4/16
	Vietnam.....	4/16 - 4/22
	Cambodia.....	4/22 - 4/28
	Thailand.....	4/28 - 4/30
	Katmandu, Nepal.....	4/30 - 5/8
	Delhi, India.....	5/8- ?
	Mumbai (Bombay).....	?- 5/25
	Mauritius.....	5/25 - 6/7
	Cape Town, South Africa.....	6/7 - 6/17
Safari thru Kruger to Vic Falls & Livingston	Johannesburg, South Africa.....	6/17-
	Botswana	
	Zambia.....	6/26
	Dubai.....	6/26 - 6/29
	Cairo.....	6/29 - 7/4
	Sinai.....	7/4 - 7/10
	Israel.....	7/10 - 7/17
	Budapest, Hungary.....	7/17 - 7/21
	Prague, Czech Republic.....	7/21 - 7/25
	Copenhagen, Denmark.....	7/25 - 7/29
	Gothenburg, Sweden.....	7/29 - 8/5
	Amsterdam, Holland.....	8/5 - 8/8
	London, England.....	8/8 - 8/11
	Reykjavic, Iceland.....	8/11- 8/15
	New York, NY.....	8/15

★ So far these are the places we know of, we will probably expand our destination list and so the dates may change- updates will be posted on the blog!

how to reach us...•



www.melamedtrip.com

themelameds@gmail.com



Our blog is currently under construction– hopefully we will have the final version up before February 16th.

If you are interested in emailing with us for this trip, please email us now so that we can save your address and send you a note when our blog is really up and running!

Air broker: www.justfares.com

I hope you all have a wonderful 2007 and that you will take sometime out for yourselves and do something that will make you smile.....

Our trip is open to anyone who wants to visit us!

With much love,

EVa TOBa



How could you leave
me for so long...?