

TRAVEL

Eat.Run.See.

Two former South Africans are taking three years out of everyday life to explore the world's most interesting trails.

Richard descending into one of the many beautiful valleys along the Berg Lake Trail near Mount Robson in British Columbia, Canada.



BEV and RICHARD ATTFIELD

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Imagine the exhilaration of finding and following one trail to the next across the globe, with nothing but a few essentials in a backpack and a pair (or three) of trail shoes. That's exactly what Richard and Bev Attfield have set out to do.

This 40-something pair from Vancouver, Canada with backgrounds in electrical engineering and marketing, are exploring the world, trail by trail. They started an epic three-year long, round-the-world adventure in November 2013 to realise their dream of long-term travel. As avid runners, they are making it part of their quest to see and hear the sights and sounds of each new

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country on foot, and in particular, to explore the trails, pathways and roads that are often less travelled and most spectacular.

The couple moved to Vancouver from South Africa 16 years ago. The city, with its close proximity to the forest, ocean and mountains, is a trail runner's paradise. Richard and Bev started running five years ago and quickly turned their attention from the asphalt to the rugged rainforest trails hugging Vancouver's north shore and beyond. With a vibrant local community of trail runners (including Ellie Greenwood, Gary Robbins and Adam Campbell) and endless terrain to explore, Richard and Bev were gripped by the camaraderie, beauty, exhilaration, challenge and tranquility of the growing sport of trail running.

Their love of trail running aligns perfectly with their keen sense of environmental stewardship. “Being in nature while running reminds us that we have a responsibility to take care of the world's forests, fields, jungles, waterways and mountains that make our existence possible,” says Richard.

“If we can inspire others through our global adventure to see a little more of this fantastic planet of ours, it may be a little easier to convince everyone to treat it a little better!”

Taking this one step further, Richard and Bev are both vegan, having switched to this plant-based lifestyle almost 10 years ago. “We initially started down the vegan path because we didn't feel right about the horrendous suffering inherent in the production of meat, fish, dairy and eggs for human consumption. Along the way we learned that being vegan is also the single best thing we can do to substantially reduce our environmental footprint. Combined with the fact that a large and growing body of scientific research shows that a well-executed vegan diet is by far the healthiest way to eat; being vegan is a very simple and rewarding choice for us,” explains Bev.

With trail runs and races of varying distances and difficulty under their belts, these plant-powered, dirt-busting vagabonds are excited about expanding and sharing their knowledge of the world, one trail at a time. To set their adventure in motion, they gave up jobs, sold belongings and wished friends and familiar trails in Vancouver a temporary farewell.

Their journey started in Belize, Central America and to date has taken them through 16 countries, including South Africa. Details of how Richard and Bev eat, run and see are chronicled on their blog.

Learn about the team's runs in the Peruvian Andes in a future issue.



Follow the adventures of Richard and Bev in future issues of TRAIL.

GUATEMALA Mayan ruins, caves and lakefront volcanoes. **BEV:** “We're exploring ways to export the ubiquitous Guatemalan hot corn tortillas - delicious fuel for those longish runs.”



HONDURAS Jungles, bandits and craft beer. **RICHARD:** “And in other news, Honduran bandits were today beaten by fleet-footed Team Eat.Run. See. Who knew we could outrun a tuk-tuk crammed with machete-wielding thugs?”



NICARAGUA The magical Isla de Ometepe with her twin volcanoes. **BEV:** “Lifeskill #316 - How to hang over the edge of an active volcano to retrieve your running jacket.”



PERU Ancient Inca trails and Andes mountain passes. **RICHARD:** “If only the Incas were still here. They could teach us so much about nimbly navigating craggy trails and breathing at high altitude. Wait a minute...”

CHILE The magnificent Torres del Paine National Park in Chilean Patagonia. **BEV:** “Lying prone on the trail to avoid being swept off a cliff face by galeforce winds was a first for us!”



ARGENTINA Trail after beautiful trail in Los Glaciares National Park in Argentinian Patagonia. **RICHARD:** “Taking a mid-run skinny dip in a glacier-fed lake dotted with icebergs is not advisable. Seriously.”



SOUTH AFRICA From berg to bush and gorge to coast, a spectacular sampling of South Africa's natural playground including Royal Natal National Park (Northern Berg), Clearwater Trails (South Coast), Nature's Valley (Garden Route) and Misty Mountain (Mpumalanga). **BEV:** “A problem on our trail runs in South Africa was the ever-present tripping hazard on account of the stunning, distracting scenery!”

