



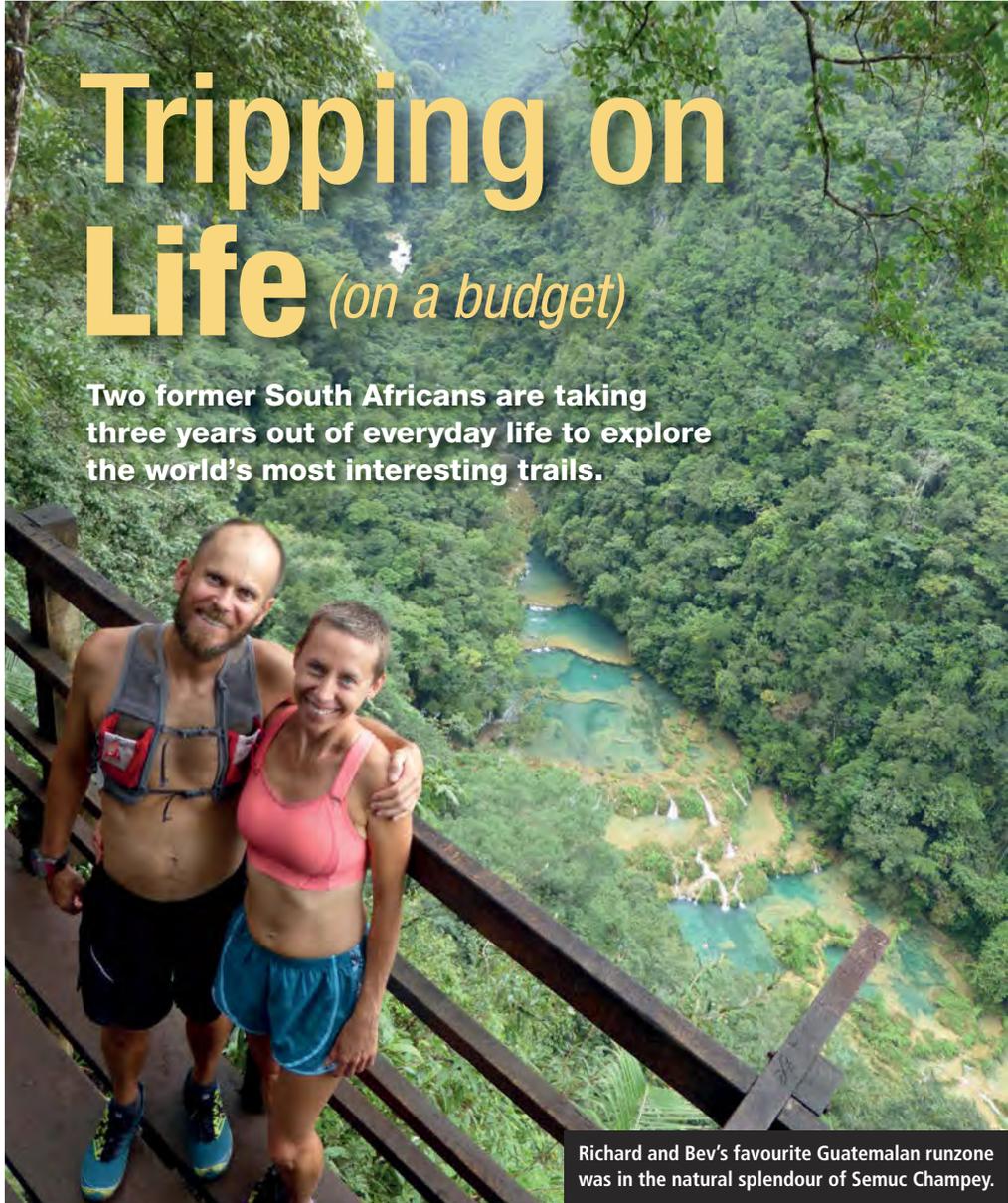
Tikal Ruins are anything but: they're a tourist hit.



Forests are special places, especially to trail runners.



Man considers big Semuc salad; thinks again!



Tripping on Life *(on a budget)*

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

Richard and Bev's favourite Guatemalan runzone was in the natural splendour of Semuc Champey.

*You see things,
and you say
"Why?"
But I dream
things that
never were, and
I say, "Why
not?"
George
Bernard Shaw*

Why not? That's the question that spurred us to embark on a three-year round the world journey. Four years ago we suffered a devastating blow with the death of our long-awaited baby son, Archer.

As we grieved, we took stock of what we wanted from life. Our yearning for a less conventional existence with emphasis on richer experiences increased. And so, we found ourselves in our early forties making a significant decision to act on our dream of extended global travel.

We decided to take three of our passions (plant-based eating, trail

running and traveling) and roll them into an epic multi-year adventure called **Eat.Run.See**. Our goal is to see and experience as much of the world as we can, exploring cities and countryside in our running shoes while filling our plates with local vegan fare.

We spent 18 months planning a rough course before our departure from Vancouver, Canada, in November 2013. Since we wished to fund our trip without working, we set aside some of our savings, while reserving a suitable nest egg.

Next step was to research daily living expenses in countries we

planned to visit. We calculated an average daily budget of **R650** for both of us. This included accommodation, food, drinks, laundry, local transport and consumables such as clothing, toiletries, and running gear.

An additional lump sum of **R100,000 for flights** was added. We also factored in a contingency budget for emergencies and incidental costs, as well as continued monthly expenses like medical and life insurance. Setup costs like vaccinations, backpacks, camera and travel documents totaled R25,000. Our three-year time period was determined by dividing our lump

sum less costs by the daily budget amount.

How are we faring? In **Central America** we were comfortably under budget. South America was more expensive, but on average, we remained under budget even with two big ticket items - a boat trip from Panama to Colombia, and a Machu Picchu trek.

South Africa was extremely affordable due to accommodation with family and friends and relatively cheap food costs. As expected, England, France, and Italy completely blew our budget, with daily expenses in the R850-R1,000 range.

Southeastern Europe came in at R700 per day. As we move into cheaper regions like **India** and **Southeast Asia**, we're counting on a reduction in our daily average to keep within budget.

Our budget management typically involves choosing the best value accommodation as this is our biggest daily expense. For example, it's often cheaper as a couple to book a double

room in a hostel than two dorm beds. Accommodation selection includes availability of kitchen facilities.

We shop in **local markets** and prepare our own meals. This is most cost-effective and also gives us a glimpse of product availability to support a plant-based diet and allows us to experience the local culture.

Transportation is typically by bus or train. We only fly when it's more cost effective, or if we have a time constraint, or need to cross oceans.

We mostly use online resources to plan our accommodation and travel, but in some regions, like Central America, it's way less structured and we simply wait at a bus stop or knock on a door. We're extremely frugal and choose our activities and excursions carefully. We look for experiences that are free and informal. We love to combine sightseeing with running - cheap, fun, unique, healthy, and productive! 🐘

Guatemala



This gorgeous Central American country is blessed with incredibly diverse landscapes and ecosystems. Jungles, mountains, lakes, volcanoes, forests, caves, and ancient **Mayan ruins** will excite anyone with a nose for adventure. We explored trails in three key parts of the country.

In the north, we visited the **Mayan ruins of Tikal**, situated in a large national reserve.

There's a good trail system within the reserve, and while it's not technically challenging, it's a meditative place to get your trail shoes dirty. We visited the park at sunrise and explored before the tourist buses descended.

The bulk of our time was spent on the shores of **Lake Atitlan** in southwestern Guatemala, where we attended **Spanish school** and acquired our taste for Guatemalan tortillas fresh off the griddle. The lake is surrounded by three inactive volcanoes and a series of rolling hills nestling fertile farmlands. We ran an organised trail marathon



around the lake and summited Volcan San Pedro, reaching up to 3,020m (9,908ft above sea level) from 1,550m at its base, and shorter exploration runs up and down the hillsides.

Our favourite place to run was in **Semuc Champey**, a natural monument in central Guatemala. This is a beautiful region of



pools, waterfalls and rock formations with water in amazing shades of green and blue.

The reserve has a compact trail system with a stunning viewing deck as a reward after a short but steep climb. Outside of the reserve we ran on dirt roads winding through the lush, hilly rainforest and alongside the river.

Visit **eatrunsee.com** to read more about our Guatemalan adventures or flick us a note if you have a specific travel, trail or food question.

START PLANNING YOUR LIFE ADVENTURES NOW!



Accommodation

- 1 **Airbnb.com** Private lodging rentals
- 2 **Booking.com** Apartments, hostels, hotels
- 3 **Couchsurfing.org** Crash for free
- 3 **Hostelbookers.com** Book hostels
- 3 **Hostelworld.com** Book hostels

Budget planning

- 4 **Trail Wallet** Travel budget app

Flights

- 5 **Hipmunk.com** Budget airfares
- 5 **Skyscanner.com** Budget airfares

Travel experts

- 6 **LonelyPlanet.com** Travel guides
- 7 **NeverEndingVoyage.com** Travel blog
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- 8 **Tripadvisor.com** Travel guides

BEV & RICHARD ATTFIELD

Their journey started in Belize, Central America, and has taken them through 21 countries, including South Africa.



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