



SEE THE WORLD IN YOUR CITY

By

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Not enough money or vacation time for international travel? No problem. Here's how you can experience the world for the price of coffee!

Large chain bookstores right in your city, such as Borders and Barnes & Noble, feature cafes that serve beverages from all over the world. Besides cappuccino, café au lait and espresso, exotic soft drinks and teas from around the globe are plentiful. You can even buy international coffees such as Sulawesi from Indonesia, Kenyan from East Africa, and Guatemalan from South America. Sample available varieties by the freshly-brewed cup, or purchase them by the bag. Many coffees come in whichever form you'd like: already ground or whole beans that you can grind in your coffeemaker at home.

These bookstore cafes also allow you to enjoy creative international snacks: croissants and crêpes from France, panini and biscotti from Italy, or baklava and rugulach from the Middle East.

The book departments of these large chain stores offer a plethora of reading materials, music and videos from a host of countries and cultures. Many carry Presspoint's global editions of publications such as *Jornal do Brasil*, from Rio de Janeiro, and *Handelsblatt*, from Frankfurt along with newspapers and magazines from cities on every continent of the planet. And many of these stores allow you free trial readings while you refresh yourself with the beverages and snacks in their cafes.

But these large bookstores offer much more than simply international products. They have a global clientele, and you can swap cultural experiences with the multitude of overseas tourists, students and business travelers who frequently shop there. If you go to the section where materials about regional tourist attractions are displayed, you may find yourself the only American in the aisle. Many of the people interested enough to buy books and photos about your local area are from out of the country. Immerse yourself amongst the foreign students and travelers who are anxiously searching for a true American experience of people, places foods, and events.

Another area of the bookstore to visit is the language and grammar section. Lots of travelers spend time here searching for printed guides, audio books and computerized pocket language aids. It's easy to see why they'd need help in translating their native tongue to ours (and vice-versa). English grammar classes taught on foreign soil don't always cover American phrases that travelers hear often in America such as "What's up?" and "Chill out, dude!" Although some colloquial expressions are known from American movies and songs, lots of street

slang (confusing even to some residents) is now part of typical U.S. speech, particularly among the young.

And even though you've only been able to dream about foreign travel *someday*, these large bookstores actually allow you to begin your overseas trip *today*. Get some quick-learn pamphlets and audio books on a country's language and lay them out on your cafe table. While listening to the lessons on your iPod, repeat the foreign speech with the on-tape instructor. Of course, you'll want to speak quietly enough to not be considered obnoxious by the people around you. When someone who speaks that foreign language sees and hears you, it will provide the perfect ice-breaking catalyst for a close encounter of the "international" kind. Flattered that you're interested enough in their language and culture to attempt to learn it, there will be an instant bond and openness of communication.

Maybe you'll be able to exchange e-mail addresses so that, when you finally do make it to their country, they'll help you to enjoy an insider's local flavor that most American tourists would never taste. And of course, there's always that possibility of meeting some attractive exotic foreigner whose travel plans include dating U.S. locals as part of their American experience! *Ooh, la-la! La bella vita! ¡Mucho gusto!*

So what if you can't afford thousands of dollars and weeks of vacation time traveling for international adventure? At one of the large chain bookstores, you can buy a cup of coffee and simply stir in the flavor of a global experience!



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