

OUTDOOR RUSTIC TRAVEL WITH A BABY AND PRESCHOOLER

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My husband Sumit and I did a lot of holidays to foreign destinations before we had our children. That was always the plan. To cram in as many trips abroad so that we could travel closer to home when we had kids. To that effect, since we were doing multiple trips a year our budgets were always slim and we stayed in hostels, 6 bed dorms and homestays mostly whenever we travelled.

Cut to post baby. The very thought of taking baby to homestays and remote places without facilities was daunting. We didn't have anyone to set a precedence and we decided to stick to resorts and fancy hotels that had play areas, swimming pools, room service to whip up delicious but coarsely mashed baby food etc.

We did do one [long trip when N](#) was a year and a half to London and the US but that was still pretty easy as he was much older and eating everything.

With baby A we did our first trip as a family of four when he was 3 months and exclusively nursing and our second when he was 5 months and exclusively nursing both to nice resorts with plenty of facilities. But our almost 3 year old was growing fast and suddenly it dawned on us that his idea of holidays was buffet breakfasts, bathtubs and swimming pools!

Don't get me wrong. Of course I love five star resorts with their spas, swimming pools, lush bathrooms and soft beds with the perfect temperatures to induce long and deep sleep for all of us.

But that's not all I love.

I love long walks in the mountains, homestays, simple earthy food made with homegrown vegetables, nothing to do but talk to each other, cows, goats, rustic spaces.

And it could never be an all or nothing. If we were going to travel India we were going to do it right and make memories rather than just see the insides of another resort.

In November and December of last year we went to two such places. One a cheesemaking farmstay at Coonoor called [Acres Wild](#) and another a coffee plantation in Chikamagalur called [HalliBerri](#). Both places had no room service, simple rustic homestyle food without a menu to order from (we ate what they cooked) the coffee estate had no wifi no mobile connectivity whatsoever, both had cows that were milked in front of us (and fresh grass fed cow milk to be drunk), a vegetable garden, wildlife, lots of walking and both were in the middle of nowhere with frequent power cuts.



frothy fresh grassfed cow milk



and a frothy milk moustache

I was super proud of my big boy for the amount he walked in both trips. The first one had a lot of slopes as it was in the hills, and he trudged up and down without asking to be carried much and was always up for a walk. In the second trip to the coffee estate though he walked for 4 kms on average for 2 days! Here is he studying a dead butterfly.



In his case it helps that we encourage a love for nature by letting them get dirty, muddy, touching, feeling everything (spiderwebs included) so that he enjoys his long walks with us. Yes with a 3 year old it takes that much longer but we could quite literally stop and smell the roses.



Three B's carried us through with the baby

- **Baby led weaning**

Read my posts on BLW [here](#) and [here](#). On trip 1 baby A was just 7 months and I didn't really mind if he didn't eat much as he had just started putting food in this mouth and I knew that he was relying almost 100% on breast milk for his nutrition. Having said that he joined us for all meals and ate what we were eating more or less. I'd hand him bits of food.

On trip two he was nearly 9 months and is eating really well now. He joins us for four meals on his high chair and eats EVERYTHING we are eating, spoons food into his mouth, has almost an entire bowl of yoghurt on his own, lunges for food and does a fantastic job of picking up even small squishy pieces and eating them. The only difference was that on the holiday I'd hand him food (whatever was prepared that day) or a preloaded spoon and he'd feed himself, while at home I'd just put it on his high chair tray and let him make a huge mess.

There were no special baby food requests and the baby ate, oh yeah he ate!

- **Breastfeeding**

No boiled water, no sterilizing, no baggage, no bottles, no pump, no snacks to be carried no nothing. Plus the boob helped a great deal in the long 5-hour car ride! Phew! And though I carried a nursing apron I never used it even once! That's how comfortable and nonchalant I am about nursing in public now! I must add that though at home N sleeps in his own room, on holiday we all snuggle in a big double bed and early morning snuggles are priceless. N still nurses in the morning so it just makes it all the more convenient and delicious.

- **Baby wearing**



For naps, for walks, for when baby felt insecure in a new place, for when we wanted to snuggle with the baby, to make baby sleep at night when dinner got a little late one night, for keeping baby safe, you name it we wore him in our [Anmol](#) SSC (soft structured carrier) and woven wrap. AND that's not all, we carried out toddler [Tula](#) SSC too incase our big boy got tired during our long walks! take a look at some of our pictures ...



Hum do humare do



picnic by a stream



a 95 year old lady finding N a
nice fresh sweet carrot



cows a grazing



with a little help from my folks



this boy LOVES dogs





Have a baby.. Will travel!

Thanks for reading! How do you prefer traveling with a baby?

