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Photos: Nepali Culture



by [BARBARA WEIBEL](#) on AUGUST 21, 2011

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A year ago, I booked a flight to Nepal, intending to wander around the country for three weeks or so. Three months later, I was still there. I fell in love with the Nepali culture and was eventually “adopted” by a lovely family in Pokhara. These days I base out of Nepal, staying there four to five months of the year and traveling the rest of the year. Earlier this year, my adopted brother invited me to accompany the family to their ancestral village to participate in a puja – a Hindu religious ceremony – being held in honor of his aunt, who had passed away three years earlier. We trekked for three hours to the mountaintop, where women dressed in their finest garments sat on the porch, while the men gathered under a canvas awning were already chanting prayers from ancient scrolls. After enjoying a traditional meal prepared by women who squatted at open fires next to a rustic cow barn, trays of cotton string were set afire and carried around the compound, symbolizing the release of the soul from this earthly plain. After a final anointment of a sacred cow with holy water, the now joyful assembly began to dance until the men fell into a trance where the gods came into their bodies. The festivities continued throughout the night, but I headed down the mountain before dark, thrilled to have been invited to witness this holy ceremony.

















Article by **Barbara Weibel**

After years of working 70-80 hours per week at jobs that paid the bills but brought no joy, a serious illness made Barbara Weibel realize she felt like the proverbial "hole in the donut" - solid on the outside but empty on the inside. After recovering her health, she walked away from her successful but unfulfilling career, sold or gave away most of her material possessions, donned a backpack and has been traveling the world ever since, pursuing the only things that have ever made her happy: travel, photography and writing. Follow Barbara's adventures on [Hole In The Donut World Travel](#), Twitter at [@holeinthedonut](#) and on her [Facebook Page](#).

Barbara has written 1 awesome articles for AOB.

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paul of walkflypinoy.com

beautiful photos. especially the fourth one. such amazing smiles! :)

11 hours ago

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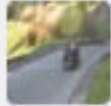


Jamie

Such intriguing photos, great story in the pictures! How blessed you are for the experience. Thank you for sharing Barbara.

11 hours ago

Like Reply



Josh Aggars

Beautiful shots! Great colours and focus. To be afforded such an invite must have been a real privilege.

Cheers

Josh

13 hours ago

Like Reply



Ayngelina

Love the photos Barbara, as always you tell a great story. I love how they are interacting with the camera and seem happy to be photographed by you.

1 day ago

Like Reply

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