



# **Songs of the Baka and Other Discoveries: Travels after Sixty-Five**

*Dennis James*

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**Abandoning the comfort and security of a typical retirement, a couple travels and treks through the most isolated parts of the world.**

After their retirement, Dennis James and Barbara Grossman decide to travel where tour buses won't and where the US government says "don't," incorporating trekking into their travels as a way to see untouched areas of the world considered inhospitable by many.

Armed with a passport, an interest in non-Western and indigenous cultures, a spirit for adventure, and a sense of humor, they hike through the forests in the highlands of Papua New Guinea; visit the traditional hunter-gatherer Baka Pygmy community in Cameroon; stay with the cliff-dwelling Dogon people in Mali; explore Roman ruins in Algeria; meet a nervous mother rhino in Nepal; and witness bull-jumping, a coming-of-age ritual for young Hamar men in Ethiopia.

In defiance of typical tourist travel, ignoring State Department warnings, and with a curiosity and hardiness that belies their ages, Dennis and Barbara choose to travel the roads not taken so frequently—to places like Cuba, Iran, Venezuela, and Gaza—seeking the truth behind the headlines and exploring the deeper questions about the local cultures they encounter. Why do these people cling to the art, sexual mores, economic and political hierarchies, and spiritualities that govern their lives? And how and why do they remain resistant to the pressures of globalization?

A journey into the other sides of the world, *Songs of the Baka and Other Discoveries* puts aside preconceptions and combines the wisdom of age with the stamina of youth.

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