



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**13,000 MILES ... 96 DAYS ... 15 MODES OF TRANSPORTATION ... 12 TIME ZONES ...
2 KIDS ... 1 FAMILY ... AND NOT A SINGLE AIRPLANE**

**Travel Channel's New Series 'Big Crazy Family Adventure' Follows the Kirkby Family on
Their Incredible, Awe-Inspiring Journey to a Remote Region in the Himalaya – All Via
Surface – Premieres Sunday, June 21 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT**

CHEVY CHASE, MD (April 14, 2015) – Trekking through the Himalaya (with a short stop at Mt. Everest's base camp), sailing the Ganges River, crossing the North Pacific Ocean on a container ship, meditating with monks in a Tibetan monastery – these are not the typical activities you might expect during a family vacation with two young children. But the Kirkby family is on an extraordinary adventure halfway around the globe – and inviting everyone to come along. Travel Channel's mesmerizing and cinematic new series, **"Big Crazy Family Adventure," premiering Sunday, June 21 with back-to-back episodes at 9:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m. ET/PT**, follows wilderness guide, writer and award-winning photographer Bruce Kirkby throughout this epic trip – from his home in Kimberley, British Columbia, to a remote monastery in the Himalaya – with his wife, Christine Pitkanen, and their two young boys: Bodi, 7 and Taj, 3. There's just one catch: on their 13,000-mile adventure they won't be taking ANY airplanes. To fully experience the life-changing and serendipitous moments that exploring the world provides, they'll get to their final destination through surface travel only – canoe, container ship, ferry, high-speed train, river boat, tuk tuk, pony, their own eight feet and more. The series is comprised of nine, hour-long episodes.

Lifelong adventurers Bruce and Christine did not give up their passion for exploration once they had children; and they've been traveling with both kids since they were infants. The couple saw *this* opportunity, their biggest journey yet, as an unforgettable learning experience, but also as a chance to unplug from technology and expose their boys to some of life's simple wonders. The 96-day expedition ends at Karsha Gompa – a secluded cliff-side monastery in Ladakh, India, where they'll live and work for three months with Buddhist monks. Each episode travels alongside the family as they experience four Wonders of the World and make their way through expansive landscapes, challenging climates and unique communities in some of the most remote areas of the northern hemisphere. A complex journey, there are challenges at every corner – from altitude acclimatization and unfamiliar foods, to meltdowns and missed trains. Yet each challenge reaps even bigger rewards and unexpected transformations, especially for eldest son Bodi. On the autism spectrum, a once shy and introverted Bodi matures during the journey in ways his parents never expect. He gains confidence bargaining with sellers in the crowded Asian markets, discovers meditation and overcomes his fear of animals. In three long months on the road, "Tiny T" (Taj) grows from a toddler into an active and curious little boy.

"Travel returns each of us to a state of childhood," says Bruce. "For a moment we look upon the world, crowded with the unrecognizable and incomprehensible, with the same eyes as our kids. And in doing

so, the distance between us shrinks, just a bit. These shared experiences, with all their uncertainties, challenges and enchantments, are like fertilizer for family bonds.”

Highlights from “Big Crazy Family Adventure”:

- **Leg 1:** The first leg of the Kirkby family’s 13,000-mile journey involves canoes, camping, a luxury train and taking a container ship to South Korea. Storms, life vests and a run-in with Russian Border Patrol create challenges. **Location highlights:** *Kimberly, B.C.; Canadian Rocky Mountains; Vancouver, B.C.; Nakhodka, Russia; Busan, South Korea*
- **Leg 2:** In South Korea, the family takes their first-ever bullet train, chow on butterfly larvae snacks and sail the Yellow Sea. Bruce gets up close at the demilitarized zone between South and North Korea, while Christine and the boys take a cable car up to the Seoul Tower for an amazing view of the city. **Location highlights:** *Busan, South Korea; The Seoul Tower; DMZ (Demilitarized Zone between South and North Korea); Qingdao, China; Beijing*
- **Leg 3:** The family climbs a remote section of the Great Wall of China, known as the “Wild Wall.” A 21-hour train ride from Beijing across China brings them to the start of a five-day acclimatization mission where they’ll slowly elevate up to 10,500 feet. But when Taj doesn’t respond well to the altitude, his health and their Tibetan permits are up in the air. **Location highlights:** *Beijing; the Great Wall of China; Xining, China; Qinghai Lake*
- **Leg 4:** A 27-hour ride on the highest railway in the world brings the family into Tibet where Bodi shows a curiosity in Buddhism and learns to meditate. They make their way to the North Base Camp of Mount Everest, at 16,800 feet elevation, for a breathtaking view and unforgettable moment for Bruce. But time is ticking as they race to reach the Nepal border before their Tibetan visas expire. **Location highlights:** *Xining, China; Lhasa, Tibet; Xigaze; Friendship Highway; Mt. Everest base camp; Nepal/Tibet border*
- **Leg 5:** In Nepal, the Kirkby family meets a Hindu goddess, Bodi exhibits excellent bargaining skills and the family rides elephants in the jungle. Bruce photographs rhinos in Nepal’s first national park – a dream come true – while Christine spends her birthday on the trail of the elusive Bengal Tiger. **Location highlights:** *Nepal/Tibet border; Kathmandu; Chitwan National Park; Nepal/India border*
- **Leg 6:** India brings scorching heat, spicy food, a private boat ride on the holy Ganges River, a special lesson in lassi-making, snake charmers and the burning ghats. But the family finds themselves in a race against time to make a train to the Taj Majal. **Location highlights:** *India/Nepal border; Allahabad; Varanasi; the Ganges (the Holy River); Taj Mahal; Agra*
- **Leg 7:** The Kirkby family explores the renowned Taj Mahal, where youngest son Taj learns about his iconic namesake. The kids learn about poverty and take a Bollywood dance class while Christine cooks an authentic Indian dinner for her family. Later, they explore a rock and water-filled adventure park. **Location highlights:** *Taj Mahal; Agra; New Delhi; Old Delhi; Chandigarh*
- **Leg 8:** Moving deeper into the Indian Himalaya, they board a narrow gauge “toy” train, encounter monkeys at Jakhu Temple and Bruce digs into his family history in the town of Shimla. But when Taj becomes feverish, they must call in a doctor to see if their trip can stay on

track. **Location highlights:** Chandigarh; Shimla; Leh Manali Highway; Manali; Rohtang Pass; Palamo

- **Leg 9:** To get to their final stop in Ladakh, the family must trek 100 miles of rugged terrain to elevations of 16,700 feet. Along the way they deliver school supplies to children in remote villages, make their way across winding narrow paths with drop offs of several hundred feet and Bodi overcomes another fear as he rides a pony for the first time. Their arrival at the stunning cliff-side monastery, Karsha Gompa, is an emotional milestone. **Location highlights:** Palamo; Zanskar Sumdo; Chumik Napko; Shingo La Pass; Kargyak River; Testa; Tangzay; Karsha Gompa Monastery

“Big Crazy Family Adventure” is produced by WDE and Generate Entertainment, Inc. for Travel Channel. For WDE, the executive producer is Wes Dening. For Generate Entertainment, the executive producer is Assaf Blecher. For Travel Channel, the executive producer is Dale Roy Robinson.

GET MORE “BIG CRAZY FAMILY ADVENTURE” ON TRAVELCHANNEL.COM

Go to <http://www.travelchannel.com/bcfa> for exclusive content from “Big Crazy Family Adventure,” including travel and packing tips from Bruce and Christine, videos showcasing the family’s top picks from each country, behind-the-scenes vlogs, travel guides and more. Plus, experience the journey through Bruce’s striking on-location photography. Join the conversation and get more exclusive content on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). **@TravelChannel #BCFA**

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