



“BIG CRAZY FAMILY ADVENTURE”

Episode Descriptions

SERIES PREMIERE

EPISODE 1 – “Leg 1: Storms, Stuffies and Unexpected Russians”

Sunday, June 21 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT

Adventurer, guide and photojournalist Bruce Kirkby is taking his entire family on a 13,000-mile journey from their home in British Columbia to a remote monastery in the Himalaya, all without taking a single plane. Bruce, his wife Christine and sons, seven-year-old Bodi and three-year-old Taj, begin their 96-day adventure with a 100-mile drive to the Columbia River. Here, they launch a five-day canoe and camping trip, making their way through log jams and rain storms to the small Canadian town of Golden. Having arranged a whistle stop to hop on the luxurious Rocky Mountaineer double-decker train, they relax on a 21-hour ride to Vancouver where they reconnect with family before taking a container ship across the Pacific Ocean. But port delays in Vancouver leave the family anxiously waiting to find out when they can board their South Korea-bound ship, the *Hanjin Ottawa*. Once aboard, the 16 days at sea prove to be everything the family hoped for when they planned this entire trip solely by surface. The boys gain once-in-a-lifetime experiences, like steering the ship in open sea, eating roast pig with the captain, and quality time with their usually on-the-road dad. But when the ship makes an unexpected stop in Russia for fuel, the family faces uncertainty and serious fines – they do not have the required visas to be in Russian territory. 5,707 miles from home...7,293 miles to go.

EPISODE 2 – “Leg 2: The DMZ, Scorpions and Peking Duck”

Sunday, June 21 at 10:00 p.m. ET/PT

Twenty-five days into their journey, the Kirkby family arrives in Busan, South Korea. With only one day to explore, they're ready to taste everything the city has to offer – from lotus root to moth larvae. But the boys have more on their mind than just food – they want to try their hand shopping at the local markets. From Busan, the family boards their first bullet train to the capital, Seoul, where Bruce visits the demilitarized zone between South Korea and North Korea. Bruce's journalistic instinct leads him as close as possible to the infamous and tense border, while Christine takes Bodi and Taj on a cable car ride to the Seoul Tower. After two days in Seoul, they make their way to Incheon and board an overnight ferry across the Yellow Sea to Qingdao, China. In Qingdao, the family has their first chance to relax since arriving in Asia. But when they reach the Qingdao train station, things don't go as planned. They cannot find the ticket agent they purchased their train tickets from and, with only minutes to spare, they find themselves racing to catch the train. When the mission isn't a success, they must work out an alternate schedule to make it to Beijing. 6,881 miles from home...6,119 miles to go.

EPISODE 3 – “Leg 3: Trains, a Wild Wall and Yaks at Altitude”

Sunday, June 28 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT

The Kirkby family has just arrived in Beijing, and Bodi is excited to experience two things in China's capital that he has been talking about for quite some time: shopping at the city's famous Panjiayuan Antique Market and tasting Peking Duck. Bruce, Christine and the kids make their way to the Great

Wall of China, where together they climb a remote section known as the “Wild Wall.” After two days in Beijing, they board a train for a 21-hour ride across China to the city of Xining, on their route into Tibet. Since Tibet will bring extreme altitudes, Bruce leads his family on a 5-day acclimatization mission, slowly elevating from 7,000 feet in Xining to 10,500 feet at Qinghai Lake. But on their first day, Taj starts showing symptoms of possible altitude sickness, forcing Bruce and Christine to alter their itinerary and closely monitor his health. Meanwhile, the family anxiously awaits approval for their Tibetan travel permit for the next leg of their journey. If they don’t get the document, they will be forced to drastically reroute their entire trip, adding weeks of arduous and dangerous travel. 8,124 miles from home...4,876 miles to go.

EPISODE 4 – “Leg 4: Barley Beer, Everest and Expiring Visas”

Sunday, July 5 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT

On the fourth leg of their adventure, the Kirkby family boards China’s Qinghai-Tibet Railway from Xining, China to Lhasa, Tibet – a 27-hour ride on the highest railway in the world. In Tibet, they visit the former home of the Dalai Lama, the Potala Palace, and explore the Drepung Monastery – Tibet’s largest. At the Drepung Monastery, Bodi surprises his parents with his curiosity in Buddhism and learns how to meditate for the first time. From Lhasa, the Kirkby family travels 500 miles along the historic Friendship Highway, a famous trade route connecting China and Nepal. They visit the home of a local Tibetan family where they taste the local beer, chang, and the boys get to play with kids from the village and farm animals. Back on the road, the family stops at Old Tingri – a small town in Tibet renowned for being the gateway to Mount Everest. Bruce takes his family to the North Base Camp of Everest, at 16,800 feet elevation. From Mount Everest, they must race against the clock to get out of Tibet and into Nepal before their Tibetan visas expire. If they don’t make it over the Nepali border in time, they could face serious fines. 9,936 miles from home...3,036 miles to go.

EPISODE 5 – “Leg 5: Child Princess, Leaches and Chocolate Cake”

Sunday, July 12 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT

After 9,936 miles on the road, the Kirkby family crosses into Nepal, making their way to the country’s capital, Kathmandu. After a late night, they hire a driver and head to the small town of Bungamati to see a real-life Hindu goddess, who’s the same age as Bodi. To receive a blessing, they must touch the seven-year-old girl’s feet and make an offering. Later, Christine takes everyone to visit an orphanage in Jorpati where her childhood friend Sarah and her family are working. Bodi gets introduced to a classroom full of kids, and despite his usual reluctance to meet new people, has a great time. With Christine’s birthday approaching, Bruce takes Bodi and Taj to Durbar Square, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and shops for birthday presents. Bodi impresses his dad with his natural bargaining methods. From Kathmandu, the family takes a local bus into Chitwan National Park, where they’ll stay for a few days, riding elephants and seeing rhinos up close in the jungle – something Bruce has always wanted to photograph. On Christine’s birthday, Bruce presents her with a guided tour around the park, except this time she’s on the trail of the rarely sighted Bengal Tiger. Meanwhile, Bruce, Bodi and Taj take over the lodge’s kitchen to bake a surprise cake for Christine. 10,328 miles from home...2,672 miles to go.

EPISODE 6 – “Leg 6: Sailing the Ganges, Lassis and Burning Ghats”

Sunday, July 19 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT

The Kirkby family has finally made it to India, and it’s hotter and crazier than they imagined. They travel by hired car to Allahabad and charter an inexpensive but luxurious river ferry to Varanasi – India’s most holy city. Sailing the holy Ganges River, the temperature rises well over 100 degrees. As night falls, they stop for a picnic-style Indian dinner along the riverbank, prepared by their ferry crew – but the spices are a bit much for the kids to handle. It’s not long before the bugs begin to swarm and to keep them from coming inside their sleeping quarters on the boat, they have to close all of the windows. With no air-conditioning inside the sweltering cabin, it’s a sleepless night for the parents. In Varanasi, the

boys learn how to make lassi – a sweet yogurt-based drink, come face-to-face with a giant cobra and learn Indian drumming at a music ashram. Before walking to the burning ghats of Varanasi, where bodies are cremated on the banks of the Ganges, Bruce and Christine explain to Bodi and Taj that Hindus believe in a perpetual cycle of life and death. The next day, the family finds themselves in a race for the open-door train to Agra to reach the fourth of the Wonders of the World on this trip, and their youngest son’s namesake, the Taj Mahal. 10,788 miles from home... 2,212 miles to go.

EPISODE 7 – “Leg 7: Swimming in Luxury, Beggars and Bollywood”

Sunday, July 26 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT

Now 11,788 miles into their journey, the Kirkby family is standing at the base of India’s crown jewel: the Taj Mahal. After taking family photos in front of son Taj’s namesake, they head back to their hotel for a swim in the pool. It’s a hot and humid four-hour drive to India’s capital, Delhi, and Bruce is determined to make it special for his wife and two boys. He’s booked India’s famous car – an air-conditioned Ambassador – to take them there. After driving north through Indian suburbs and drenching monsoons, they check into a five-star hotel, their final big splurge of the trip. Christine learns how to cook authentic Northern Indian food from a local in his family home and, afterwards, Bruce brings the kids for a family meal. They learn the tradition of serving the Hindu god before eating, and like most of the food in India, it’s too spicy for both kids. On the way back to the hotel, Bodi is approached by a beggar his own age, and Bruce does his best to explain India’s heartbreaking poverty. They visit the Dilli Haat Bazaar, get elaborate henna tattoos and when Taj wants a bracelet, big brother Bodi steps in to buy it for him. The next day, they brave the dust and chaos of Old Delhi and its markets before finally finding their way to a Bollywood dance class with local children. It’s a chance to unwind and have a little fun before venturing further north into India’s Himalaya. From Delhi, the family boards India’s epic railway system to the city of Chandigarh – home to a famous rock garden where one man turned thousands of scrap items into a stunning sculpture and adventure park. 12,400 miles from home...600 miles to go.

EPISODE 8 – “Leg 8: Toy Trains, Monkey Thieves and a Fever”

Sunday, August 2 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT

Continuing on their journey, the Kirkby family faces 600 challenging miles as they move into the Indian Himalaya. Departing Chandigarh, India, they board a narrow gauge train, also known as a “toy” train, making their way up the foothills of the Himalaya. Once they arrive in the picturesque mountain town of Shimla, the family visits the Jakhu Temple – affectionately known as the Monkey Temple. The town holds a special place in Kirkby family history – Bruce’s grandfather was stationed here during World War II. Bruce schedules a meeting with the remaining members of India’s royal family in the hopes that they can share some insight into his grandfather’s time here more than 60 years ago. But when Taj becomes sick, Bruce and Christine have no choice but to call a local doctor. With only days until their trek to Ladakh, Taj’s health is their number one priority. From Shimla, the family drives eight hours to Manali, the last sizable town they will visit on their journey. The drive takes them along twisting and turning Himalayan roads, susceptible to rock and landslides, whose aftermath they witness firsthand. In Manali, the Kirkby family meets their guide and pick up supplies for the final leg of their journey. They camp at Palamo, a remote base camp in the Himalaya, and the trailhead for their 10-day trek. 12,900 miles from home...100 miles to go.

FINALE

EPISODE 9 – “Leg 9: The Final 100, a Pony and Monks with a View”

Sunday, August 9 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT

After 88 days, 15 modes of transportation and 12,898 miles, the Kirkby family is just 100 miles from their final destination – Karsha Gompa, a cliff-side monastery in Ladakh, India. They will trek the last 100 miles through a rugged and wild Himalayan landscape in a part of the world that’s hardly been touched. The trail takes them on an ancient trading route that is slowly being turned into a road by the

Indian government. Once complete, it will connect Ladakh with the modern world. The family hikes over the Shingo La Pass, at an elevation of 16,700 feet, and into the Zaskar Valley. After a little convincing, Bodi decides to ride on a pony for the remainder of the trek, something very outside of his comfort zone. They ford the Kargyak River, wading through frigid waters, and make their way down narrow, winding paths with drop offs of several hundred feet. Along the way, they stop at a small village where they offer school supplies to the local children. Fully expecting to trek all the way to the monastery, the family is surprised to learn the change that they have been rushing to beat has already arrived: a road leads the way for the last 20 miles. With a short taxi ride, they arrive at the monastery that will be their home for the next three months. Greeted by Lama Wangyal, they are welcomed into the Lama's self-built home and the happy and exhausted Kirkby family settle into one room of his small, low-ceilinged abode. They're 13,000 miles from home and have successfully completed their mission to take a most amazing family journey, all without ever leaving the Earth's surface.

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