

AROUND THE WORLD WITH ... PHIL KEOGHAN

15 essential travel tips from the host of 'The Amazing Race'

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This is Around the World With, a series in which we ask very well-traveled people about the destinations they like best. Happy jetsetting.

Out of the approximately 200 countries in the world, *The Amazing Race* has visited at least half of them during its 29 seasons. Since he's the show's host, Phil Keoghan has done the same.

That said, the New Zealand native has done more than host TV shows during his travels, from breaking a world bungee-jumping record to enjoying a meal on an erupting volcano to renewing his vows underwater while feeding sharks.

His most recent project, [Flying High on the Smithsonian network](#), allows Keoghan to introduce viewers to different countries around the world by interviewing individuals who exemplify the personality of said country. During the pilot episode — in his homeland — Keoghan speaks to Peter Jackson, his dad and a guy who rounds up sheep with a drone.

Given his track record of making tracks worldwide, we thought Keoghan would be a great person to ask for suggestions on a bike ride, shark swim and generally conquering your fears.

From his mouth to your ears, here's the best place in the world to ...

Conquer a fear of something: "It has to be something you want to do. My feeling is that facing fear of any kind is a way of expanding your life, because fear stops us from doing things and manifests itself in other ways. If you can face the fear of jumping off a bridge while tied to a rubber band, you're more apt to take a risk and go for a job that you're scared of — because you're practiced at taking risks. The more you practice something, the better you become at it."

Conduct an interview: "I did a great interview in a hot air balloon over Queenstown with a good friend. That was pretty awesome. At sunrise we floated up over the town and were looking down at the beautiful landscape as it stretches out toward the lake."

Have dinner on a volcano: "That would be Stromboli. In the late '90s, I took a five-star chef on top of the Stromboli volcano and we had him cook us dinner using the heat of the volcano. He actually dug a hole in the volcano and used the heat to cook pasta and fish. And that was our dinner."



Go for a bike ride: “That’s a good question. I think probably the Pyrenees Mountains in France. They separate Spain and France and they were first introduced into the Tour de France in 1910 (I believe). The Col du Tourmalet pass is the most famous in the mountains and has been used in more Tour stages than any other location in the event’s history. When I retraced the 1928 Tour on a bicycle we went from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean Sea in two days of climbing. It was quite steep. I love riding in places where I know other people have been before.”

Get a beer: “I love bars that have character; I love discovering new and different places. Going to a bar is kind of like getting a litmus test on where you’re at. I’m not big on touristy places. I like to find local places and hope that the locals accept me and let me come on in and join them. There’s nothing better than feeling like you’re drinking with the locals in a pub somewhere.”

Take an Instagram photo that’s going to, intentionally or not, provoke jealousy: “New Chum Beach in New Zealand, just because it’s so remote. It’s been voted a top-10 beach in the world by many publications. I would say that place because it’s worth protecting and it’s just beautiful.”

Fight with your spouse or significant other: “I don’t know if there is a place that triggers more fights than any other. It’s really just about the pressure of the , ... it could be anywhere. People have flipped out in all kinds of places. We’ve been to 100 countries probably on *Race* and people have flipped out in every one of them. But who hasn’t? I mean everybody does.”

Drink a glass of wine: “The most memorable glass of wine I’ve had was up on Tasman Glacier in New Zealand. We did a shot with Mount Cook in the background and it’s actually in the show. There’s a shot of me sitting in a lounge chair in a dinner suit having a glass of Pinot Noir from New Zealand. I’m sitting at the edge of a runway and when I say the ‘edge of a runway,’ I really mean the ‘edge of the glacier.’ There was a plane basically flying over my head.”



Swim with sharks: “I think the best overall would be at Stuart Cove down in the Bahamas. If I was going to recommend a place for tourists to go, it would be there. It’s run well, the light is beautiful, the sharks are beautiful, the location is stunning. I’ve known the owner for about 20 years and he runs a fantastic operation down there. It’s safe and you’re guaranteed sharks.”

Jump from a very high altitude: “Norway. Last season we had people jump out over the fjords in Ålesund. It’s hard to beat on a good day. The fjords there are probably my favorite. They’re amazing.”

Learn something new: “Definitely somewhere outside. I think anytime you’re traveling, you’re learning something new. I believe a lot in just going with your gut and being spontaneous. You start with an idea but you don’t really make too many plans, and instead follow your curiosity. I think a lot of us could do more of it; we live such rigid lifestyles. Shift the mundane. You learn by being adaptive.”

Play a round of golf: “This little course in New Zealand called Matarangi. I think probably I have my best memories of playing golf there because I played with some people that I was close to, some of whom are no longer living. I’ve had a lot of fun on that course and I don’t get to play it very often. It’s not the most beautiful course I play, but it has some sentimental value.”



Take a group of friends for the first time: “For a hike on the Milford Track [in New Zealand]. Just get out into the bush. You pare everything down to the bare essentials and you have everything you need in a backpack. You get into the routine of hiking and getting rid of all the clutter and force yourself to spend time with one another by getting rid of all the distractions. Walk away from the outside world and walk off life’s worries. Get away.”

Train for *The Amazing Race*: “I don’t know that there really is anywhere. You want to be reasonably fit, but it’s not crucial. You need to have luck, but you can’t really train for that. You hopefully have a dynamic relationship and can communicate with your partner, but you never really know how that is going to go until you put the relationship under pressure. You need attention to detail, chemistry, luck and a natural ability to take on anything and be open-minded.”

Watch your new show: “I don’t really care. Watch it wherever. This is the great thing about watching content now — we can do it anywhere. Your man cave, lying in bed at night, in your garage while you’re fixing something ... wherever. It’s shot in 4K. I just want people to see it.”