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Interview with Masayo Goto

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Masayo is a real all-rounder. A PhD in Political science, she set herself the goal of visiting every country – a goal she obviously achieved! We are very pleased to host her today and launch our Incredible Women Series of Interviews.

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Masayo, tell us something about your early years and how your interest in travel developed.

Up till the age of 18, I never had a passport, I never went overseas, and I never spoke English. I was a typical Japanese teenage girl, happy with being Japanese without speaking English and without going overseas. Moreover,



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curiosity. Some decades later, I ended up traveling to all 193 countries on earth.



Tipasa, Algeria

You are the only Japanese woman we know of who has visited all UN countries. Apart from some visas, what have been the greatest challenges toward this aim? And what have been your greatest rewards?

My greatest challenge was how to overcome fear. Fear was my greatest enemy and the greatest obstacle to my goal. To overcome fear, I began to know about myself, maintain good health with regular exercise and good diet, fix my shortcomings, and carry out a lot of research and preparations. I also made a trip plan up to three contingency plans (sick, injury, safety, evacuation). I learned from my own mistakes, learned from mistakes that others made so that I could avoid the same mistakes. Let alone, I worked



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Tawali, Papua New Guinea

How do your 'non-travel' friends and family see your aim? What are some common reactions you get?

There is no conversation about overseas travel with non-travel friends/family because nothing in common and nothing to share. This includes my siblings who don't even have their passports and never want to fly. Quite a few non-travel people come to my seminars on my trip to different countries and they are impressed with my achievement, courage and become interested in my stories/photos/videos but nothing to share. They just feel like they have been there. People have a different life and



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Lemur Park, Madagascar

How has being Japanese influenced the way you see the world? And to what extent do you feel travel has changed you, if at all?

Japan is a homogenous society. We speak the same language and we share the same culture and values. We all look similar too. The travel has changed me in a great deal because I learned different languages, culture, religion, food, fashion and values. I also learned the importance of accepting and respecting the differences.



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*Bhutan*

Do you feel being a woman traveller has been a plus or a minus for you? Can you give us some examples of travel situations?

A woman traveler has been a plus and a minus and being a Japanese traveler has also been a plus and a minus. I always thought "I wish I were a man (Especially a big European man)" because I would have done more or would have been more adventurous with more power and physical strength." I have been at a minus in many occasions as I was an easy target to take advantage of, to deceive and to steal money. In one African country, I was forced to pay more for the hotel as the money I paid ran out in the middle of the tour. I was told that I stayed at an expensive hotel on the first day, so the money ran out. How can I believe this? In the middle of the tour, my guide and I were not allowed to leave the hotel until we pay. My guide forced me to pay, but I did not want to be deceived and be forced to pay. I was indeed an easy target to take money from. I realised I have got to be tough. I told the hotel that my guide would pay, so I wanted to leave to catch my flight. I left the hotel. After this, I was totally alone with my own money for the last few days.

It has also been a plus to be a woman. Because women are generally regarded as weak, so many men often help women. When I was



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destinations and easy access to obtain visas. There is a minus too. Because the Japanese passport is powerful, it has a high value. It can be stolen anytime and anywhere for sale. Overall, I now appreciate being Japanese and being female. I have achieved my lifetime goal as woman, Japanese, not as a big European man.

North Pole

You've also done a zero gravity flight. What was that like?

During the zero gravity, I experienced the moon gravity and the Mars gravity as well. It means that I am ready to travel to the moon or to the Mars!! A zero gravity flight is a unique experience. I made two rotations in the air, which would be quite impossible to do with gravity. I also flew like a



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Al Fatih Mosque, Manama, Bahrain

You have a PhD in International Politics and are also a figure skater, advanced scuba diver and classical pianist. What is the secret to being such a diverse, well-rounded personality? Any tips for the rest of us?

Be interested in or be curious about anything in many different areas; e.g. music, sport, art. Don't limit yourself but always challenge yourself to something new to find your potential. If you think you can do it, just continue as much and as long as you can. Mistakes, regrets, hardship and continuity can be your greatest asset. Use your time wisely and do two or three things at the same time to multiply your time. No one can buy time with money.

You have an extensive website where you mention your travels. Are you very active online or on social media in terms of sharing your travels? Why/why not?

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know about the generations to come and they will continuously be encouraged and inspired by my achievement for hundreds of years. I want future generations to know that a Japanese woman visited every single country on earth with her own money and her own efforts, so anybody can do it.

I also want my name on Wikipedia as the person who visited all 195 countries + North Pole + South Pole + Titanic Wreck (4000m below the sea) but my name has been deleted for some reasons no matter how many times I posted this. I need someone to assist me how to place my name on it permanently. I also applied for the World Record of the Guinness book, but my first attempt was unsuccessful. Please someone help me how to persuade the World Record of the Guinness book!

Pyongyang, North Korea



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territory, passport stamps, photo albums (UNESCO world heritage sites, beautiful scenery, diving scenes, animals, flowers, food, sweets, local dresses, local jewellery, sunsets, my history and etc.). There is commentary for each country in English, Japanese and the local language, travel tips and advice how to be a lucky person will also be included. I hope to find a publisher in the US and/or the UK so that I can publish my book in English-speaking countries. Please someone assist me to find a publisher.

So now that you have done so much, what are your future travel plans for the rest of 2019 and beyond?

I have a plan to visit particular spots that I missed out.. This year, I want to visit New Caledonia for diving to see black mantas and visit Greenland that I missed out due to a flight cancellation last year. Pinpoint travel will be my next plan.

The wreck of the Titanic where I went for a dive



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Chopin

I love classic piano music especially Chopin. I want Chopin to play Chopin Piano Concert No. 1, Ballad No. 1 & 4, Scherzo No. 2, Fantasia Impromptu and Nocturns and many others in a private concert. I want him to give me some piano lessons to play those piano music and chats with me about his music. I also want to take him to the best doctor to fix his illnesses so that he can live longer and compose more beautiful music.

Jesus Christ

I have seen and been to many churches in the world. I want to ask Jesus what he thinks about the modern world from his spiritual point of view, in particular, poverty, human rights, food shortage, climate change, and world conflicts and wars, possibly with some solutions. I also want to know what he thinks about the Bible and the Vatican City that came out after his ascension. Lastly the reasons why Jesus was crucified and why humans still have to suffer.

Alexander the Great

I admire conquerors. Alexander the Great (356-323 BC) is known as a brilliant military commander and strategist and as the conqueror of much of the ancient world. I want to ask him what motivated and inspired him to conquer the world. I also want to ask him what he thinks of me who, as a female, have conquered the world by visiting all 195 countries. I hope he will amuse and praise my courage, efforts and achievement, I am also curious to know Alexander's quest for immortality. Apparently he could not fulfill his quest for immortality but I want to know what he learned and achieved in this quest.

Shotoku Taishi

I am a political scientist. I always think about Japan's direction including Pacifist Constitution and foreign relations. Shotoku Taishi (573-621), the Prince of Holy Virtue, was a Japanese regent, statesman, and scholar. He formulated the Seventeen-article Constitution in 604, the first written law of

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Land, Marine), should be clearly stated as the forces of Japan and legitimate and recognize its existence, considering the reactions of neighboring countries. The Japanese government is keen to revise the Constitution, in particular the pacifist constitution, by Japanese. It is also important to ask him about Japan's relationship with China, Korea and Russia over territorial issues. My opinion is that the Pacifist Constitution should be re-written by Japanese to reflect the Japanese spirit and current world situation, and mutual understanding and agreement (based on give and take) are required for territorial disputes.

Ur, Iraq

The photos in this interview are from Masayo's personal collection and we thank her for sharing her images with us here at **NomadMania! Masayo's virtual home will tell you more about her!**



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