

## The Cargo Ship Diaries



EVER wonder what it would be like to spend a month at sea? To travel the world without flying? To have your life threatened in Nepal? To run out of money in the Middle East? To flirt with one hundred women in the Netherlands? The Cargo Ship Diaries, by Waterford native Niall Doherty, is a memoir of highs and lows of his last two and a half years travelling the world by, yes, you've guessed it, cargo ship. The book starts off in Japan as he's about to board the ship, with the narrative moving to Amsterdam, Bucharest, Kathmandu, Bangkok and the likes. Niall quit his job as a web designer in New Orleans back in 2010 and set off on his journey to travel the world overland. He gets around on trains, buses, boats and sometimes by hitchhiking, breaking up his journey for a few months at a time to experience living locally. The catalyst for his life change, he says, was the realisation that he was simply going through the motions without growing as a person: "You'd think crossing the Pacific Ocean on a cargo ship would be a bit of a nightmare. But, here I am twenty-five days in, due to disembark in Peru tomorrow, and I must admit, these few weeks aboard a freighter have been a highlight of my trip around the world without flying. "I have my own cabin with a private bathroom, double-bed, mini-fridge, couch and desk. Twice a day we're served three course meals prepared by a French chef. There's a fitness room and a swimming pool and multiple lounges. We crossed the equator a few days ago and I watched dolphins dancing in the reflection of the most spectacular sunset I'd ever seen. "I set out on this journey two-and-a-half years ago from my parents house in Ireland. I grew up just outside Waterford city, went to school at De La Salle and graduated from WIT with a degree in Multimedia and IT. I wish I could tell you that this trip has been one long holiday for me, but I've been working all along the way. Mostly I use my computer skills to earn a living online. It's like I have a full-time job, but my office can be anywhere. "The first few months of my travels took me through Europe, with significant stops in Amsterdam, Zurich, Budapest and Bucharest. I stay a few hours in some places, weeks or months in others. My first real adventure came in the Netherlands, where I overcame some lingering shyness by flirting with more than one hundred women in two weeks. My first real test came in Iran, where I discovered too late that my bank cards were useless. I spent ten days there with enough cash to last five, but found myself saved by the overwhelming kindness of countless Iranians who gifted me meals and accommodation. "I spent eight months in Nepal and India, riding motorcycles and sticking my head out the side of moving trains. You learn a lot about yourself in India, such a mix as it is of happiness and hardship. As it turns out, it's also a very difficult place to escape without flying. A half-dozen options fell through and I was approaching desperation before scoring a free cruise to Thailand. It was there that I got ripped, lived rich and fell in love. "The cargo ship left from Japan, so from Thailand I wound my way northeast through Laos, Vietnam, China and South Korea. It will be another eighteen months or so before I return home. The entire Americas lie ahead of me, and I hope to spend several months this summer living with friends in Brazil, soaking up the World Cup atmosphere. "Why don't I fly? I have nothing against air travel, but I figured sticking to land and sea would make for a more challenging, adventurous and interesting trip. That's certainly proved true so far. I've been through twenty-five countries and seen people laugh, dance, pray and cry. We're all in it together."

\*Niall's second book, The Cargo Ship Diaries, tells of the highs and the lows and the lessons learned on his trip around the world without flying. It's available now via [ndoherty.com/books/cargo](http://ndoherty.com/books/cargo)