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"Vacation" doesn't quite convey what Lisa Hunt did on her recent three-week break from the office. The 38-year-old Midwest ad manager for Redbook logged 25,000 miles across four continents and 11 countries, following a trail of cryptic clues on an international scavenger hunt and coming away with the title of "World's Greatest Traveler."

Already an accomplished globetrotter with 58 passport stamps before this trip, Hunt was paired with a similarly adventurous Belgian woman against seven other teams in this travel competition created by GreatEscape Foundation, which funds global organizations such as Doctors Without Borders and Habitat for Humanity.

"We'd have to meet in the lobby of the hotel at 2 a.m. to find out where we were going next and get our tickets and clues" printed in the local language, Hunt explains. "We depended on the kindness of strangers in strange lands, and trusted our combined travel instincts."

She and teammate Helen Qubain, a Brussels-based communications consultant, came in first in the cultural-scavenging challenge, deciphering the clues and bringing back proof of missions accomplished. Along the way, Hunt rode a camel to the Egyptian Pyramids, tracked down a Persian rug-dealer-to-the-stars, surveyed Auschwitz on the 60th anniversary of its liberation from the Nazis, witnessed the festival of the Black Madonna in Poland, ate ladies' lips (relax; they're just Turkish pastries), racked up five more passport stamps, and raised \$13,000 through sponsorships...