



## GoNOMAD.com Awards \$500 to Promising Travel Writer

By Jessica Taryn

GoNOMAD is always looking for travel writers with new and exciting stories to tell. As an incentive for travel writers to submit their work to GoNOMAD, as well as assisting writers financially so that they have the ability to travel and fulfill their dream stories, GoNOMAD started a writing contest. After careful review of the many one-page synopses submitted, every three months a promising author is chosen to win a \$500 cash award.

### Top Five Finalists

GoNOMAD received so many great submissions that it was difficult to narrow it down. While Atkinson's proposal clearly stood out from the bunch, the top five stories we chose are also very deserving of notice.

Author and photographer, **Kathryn Brockman** is interested in writing about tourism in Laos. She says, "A history of colonization, and civil and political conflicts isolated the country since the 1970s from the outside world. Today, modern services are being developed so that travelers can enjoy a simpler way of life in a country still unaffected by mass tourism...My proposed feature, 'Laos Renewed', will cover the people, lodges, food, temples, caves and rafting that attract adventure travelers and travelers looking to break fresh ground in an unspoiled paradise."

In an article she will title, "Tackling the Touragut Pass", **Jessica Hayden** plans on writing about her 700km journey from Bishkek to Kashgar. In her proposal she writes, "The road to Kashgar takes the daring traveler through some of the most remote and narrow mountain passes in the world. The most beautiful, and dangerous, of these is the Torugart pass, which reaches 3752 meters. It is here that I will cross the border into China."

**Irvina Lew**, a free-lance food and travel writer, proposed writing about Elba. She writes. "One destination that draws me is Elba, a tiny island in the Mediterranean off the coast of Italy and France. Napoleon—who was born nearby on Corsica— was exiled to Elba; he escaped at the end of February, 1815."

A newspaper and magazine travel writer, **Peter Mandel**, proposed writing about an unusual method of getting from one East Coast city to another. He says, "The idea, in a nutshell, is to complete and report on in text and photos a combination "coastal walk/kayak" between two major East Coast cities—tracing the beaches, ports, boardwalks, jetties, etc. directly along the oceanfront between the two."

Our last finalist, **Julian Smith**, proposed an article called, "Pyrenees Trek". He says, "The Pyrenees have always been much less accessible and famous than their higher cousins. Few roads and only one railroad cross the range, leaving much of the icy peaks, glacial lakes, dense forests, twisting canyons and alpine meadows undisturbed. The isolation has produced its own unique cultures, including the Catalans and the fiercely independent Basques. This is the scenery that inspired Dali and Picasso; painted caves, castles, churches, forts and monasteries reveal a history that extends from Charlemagne to the present day."

KATHRYN BROCKMAN  
Cell: 714. 529. 2340  
[brockmankb6@yahoo.com](mailto:brockmankb6@yahoo.com)  
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