

Insights from the Editor

(Comments from Dan Prescher, Publisher)

1. Who writes for *International Living*?

Readers, acquaintances, local contacts, and complete strangers. We have few "professional" writers working for us regularly and none full-time. We value local intelligence and firsthand experience more than anything. Yes, we appreciate the ability to communicate clearly and to entertain, but our best writers (including Steenie, for example) didn't come to us as writers, per se.

2. Can you tell me about one of the best articles you remember? What makes it stand out in your mind?

One of the best pieces we've published was from a reader. Telling the story of how he and his wife bought a lot and built a home on the Caribbean coast of Mexico. Then a hurricane hit, and the place was leveled. They lost everything. Had to deal with putting in an insurance claim, which turned out to be a big hassle. Went through a real ordeal. But decided, in the end, to rebuild. They're in the process of that right now. I liked this piece so much (and will remember it, as I think the readers will) because it was so real. Because it was a good story, told in a simple, straightforward way, and giving real-world insights.

3. What is a mistake you typically see new writers make?

Forgetting their reader. If you forget the reader, you end up writing for yourself, which is always a mistake.

4. What separates an OK travel article from one that's truly inspired?

Judgment. Being able to decipher what's special, unique, new, important, valuable in a place. Putting the place in context, historically and otherwise. Understanding what you're seeing and seeing beyond the tourist layer of a place.

5. When it comes to writers, what is a pet peeve of yours?

Resisting criticism and edits.

6. Think about the writer you most like to work with... what makes him or her so special?

I can think of two -- and both for the same reasons. They're reliable, professional, and accommodating. They don't resist input. And they bring tremendous experience to the table... experience both with writing and with travel. They have the judgment and the perspective I'm referring to above.

Writer's Guidelines

We are always on the look out for more people to write for *International Living*. In particular we publish what we call postcards from people all over the world, telling us about undiscovered international gems...cities, restaurants, hotels/B&B's, festivals, golf courses, sports facilities or unusual sporting events, fishing, real estate, where to buy bargain goods, get any form of good value etc. etc.

It's also a great idea to read our free daily E-letter. (You can sign up at www.internationalliving.com.) This E-letter will keep you informed on what we're 'hot' on at the moment...and hopefully will entertain and inform you into the bargain.

By way of full disclosure, we aren't able to cover travel expenses for our writers and pay upon publication (\$25 to \$50 per note used on the website, in the E-letter, or in the actuality section of the monthly print issue...more for articles published in our monthly print publications).

Generally we start by getting potential contributors to write a few of these postcards on spec. Postcards (250-500 words) should be sent to our Postcards Editor, Len Galvin, at Postcards@Internationalliving.com. Please do not send photos with first submissions.

Full-length articles (1500-2500 words) can be sent to me, Laura Sheridan, at editor@internationalliving.com

Sincerely,

Laura Sheridan
Managing Editor
International Living