



following AMELIA

A Modern-Day
'Round-the-World Flight
By Sandi Smith

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What type of airplane did you fly?

The airplane is a six-seat single-engine Piper Malibu, PA-46. The Malibu is no longer made by Piper; they now make the Mirage instead.

2. How did you fly over the oceans?

In the Atlantic, we crossed by way of the Azores Islands, going from Portland, Maine in the U.S. and landing in Faro, Portugal in Europe. Amelia took a more southerly route from South American to Africa.

In the Pacific, we crossed starting at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea and continuing to the Solomon Islands, Kiribatis, Hawaii, and San Francisco.

3. How many other people have flown a single-engine airplane around the world?

Our best guess, as of 1995, was about 200 at most. Very few women have completed a circumnavigation: only about half a dozen Americans and twenty worldwide. Most flights are logged at www.earthrounders.com.

4. What was the longest flight?

The longest flight was from Mombasa, Kenya to Muscat, Oman. It was 2,145 nautical miles and took 12 hours and 41 minutes. We crossed both the Equator and the Tropic of Cancer during that flight.

5. How many total miles did you fly?

We flew 25,303 nautical miles. That's 29,118 statute miles.

6. How much horsepower does the Malibu have?

The Malibu's Continental engine has 310 horsepower. As a comparison, the 2006 Hummer H1 has 300 horsepower and the Honda Accord has 240.

7. What type of gasoline does the airplane use?

The airplane uses aviation gasoline, 100 LL (low lead) or avgas for short. The two wing tanks plus the extra auxiliary tank gave us a capacity of 240 gallons.





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Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

8. Did you have to have permission to do this?

Yes, permissions came in several forms. First we had to have the usual passport and visas to visit the countries that require them. Second many countries outside Europe that we desired to land in required landing permits. Third, some countries that we wanted to fly over required overflight permits. Fourth, each flight required a flight plan to be filed with the country's respective aeronautical division.

9. Were you afraid? How did you overcome your fear?

Yes, fear is normal when you're doing something that stretches you. Fear can be overcome in many ways, including practice, training, studying, preparation, contingency planning, and self-confidence.

10. Does Sandi have a pilot's license?

Sandi had a chance to pass the written test in the Private Pilots license exam, plus take about eight hours of flying lessons before she left on the trip. She did not have a chance to solo. Because she is better at other things, she decided not to get her license.

11. How much did the trip cost?

The trip, including permits, hotel, food, gas, souvenirs, pictures, and fees cost around \$30,000.00. There were no hotel costs while in Mombasa (about three weeks).

12. What was the toughest part of the trip?

For Sandi, it was when her mother underwent exploratory surgery while Sandi was in Bangkok. For Jay, it was the Kathmandu landing.

13. What was the scariest moment?

That's an easy question. It was when the engine quit over the Atlantic. Nothing else came close to being as scary as that moment was for both Jay and Sandi.

