

What an accomplishment!

What do you think it would be like to walk across your country? Why?

Read the interview. Why did Mary and Etsuko often have to walk between 30 and 40 kilometers a day?

A Walk Across Japan

Mary King and Etsuko Shimabukuro completed a 7,974-kilometer walk across Japan. Mary takes our questions about their incredible accomplishment.

Why did you walk across Japan?

The mapmaker Ino Tadataka **inspired** me. He spent 17 years **on and off** walking through Japan. He drew the country's first real maps.

How long did it take?

A year and a half. We walked from the island of Hokkaido, in the north, down to Okinawa. In Hokkaido, we walked about 40 kilometers a day, and on the other islands, about 30. We often had no choice about the distance because we had to find a place to sleep.

Describe a typical day.

There really wasn't one, but we tried to start by 7:00 a.m. and walk for 10 to 12 hours. Sometimes we had breakfast on the road. We had to be careful in Hokkaido because the bears there could smell our food. We saw bears twice, which was terrifying!

Did you walk every day?

No. We needed to do our laundry, check our email, and rest. Also, I wanted to interview people for my blog.

What were some of the best parts?

There were many! We stayed in a **haunted** guesthouse, walked on fire at a festival, and visited many wonderful hot springs.

Any low points?

You know, overall, we really enjoyed ourselves, but there were a lot of aches and pains along the way. The traffic could be scary because there weren't always sidewalks for **pedestrians**.

Did you ever think about giving up?

No, we never wanted to stop. Actually, I was sad when it ended. I wanted to walk from Okinawa back to Tokyo, but Etsuko said we had to accept that we accomplished our goal. It was time to go home.

Would you do it over again?

Definitely. I'd love to **retrace** our steps when I'm 80. But I've also set myself the goal of walking across the U.K. or India someday.



Find the words in blue in the article. What do they mean? Write the words next to the correct definitions.

1 inhabited by ghosts haunted

2 quitting _____

3 people who walk _____

4 go back over a route again _____

5 with breaks _____

6 give someone an idea _____