

Chicken Bus Roads

12 September 2008

One common denominator of developing country travel is chicken bus roads.

No matter where you go in the world, if you get off the tourist trail and out into the places where the regular people live, work and travel, you will find yourself on a chicken bus road.

A chicken bus road has several distinguishing features.

They usually cling to cliffs somewhere between 100 to more than 5,000 feet (30.5 to more than 1,524 meters) above a river valley.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

Chicken Bus Roads

They feature bridges of narrow dimensions.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

Chicken Bus Roads

And dubious strength.



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Chicken Bus Roads

Chicken bus roads are known for a clear and distinct choice between scraping off the side of your vehicle on the ragged, hungry cliffs –



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

Chicken Bus Roads



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Chicken Bus Roads

- or rolling the vehicle off the narrow road's edge.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

Chicken Bus Roads

On a chicken bus road, you never know what awaits you, whether it's through the next tunnel –



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

- or around the next bend.



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Chicken Bus Roads

But on a chicken bus road, some things are certain.

There will always be sections so narrow the road crumbles away under your rear tire and tumbles down the cliff into the hungry abyss.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

There will always be stunning vistas.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

Chicken Bus Roads

There will always be the best campsites.



Photo by Douglas Hackney

Chicken Bus Roads

There will always be unique scenes of authentic local life.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney



Photo by Douglas Hackney



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Chicken Bus Roads

There will always be the very best places to stop and take a break and look around -



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- even if it's only at a rock -



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Chicken Bus Roads

- or a little waterfall.



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Chicken Bus Roads

And there will always, without exception, be other things on the road, such as local livestock -



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

- or oncoming trucks.

Little ones -



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- and not so little ones.



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Chicken Bus Roads

And of course, it wouldn't be a chicken bus road without chicken busses, so you are sure to meet plenty of them too.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney



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Chicken Bus Roads

Of course, the issue isn't with the other vehicles being on the road, the issue is what to do when you meet one on a narrow, single lane, cliff side chicken bus road.



Photo by Douglas Hackney

What usually ensues is a brief, non-verbal negotiation about who is going to back up a ways, say a half mile (.8 km) or so around blind corners along a sheer cliff, to the closest spot wide enough to execute a pass.

Sometimes those negotiations become verbal.

Sometimes they become headcounts as to who has the most male bodies willing to enforce the decision.

The bigger bus usually wins.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

Chicken Bus Roads

But regardless of what happens along a chicken bus road –



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- even two flat tires at once on a cliff side –



Photo by Stephanie Hackney

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- you always know that a chicken bus road will be worth the effort and will consistently deliver a new adventure around every corner.



Photo by Douglas Hackney

Chicken Bus Roads

Chicken busses are so named not because any sane person would be chicken to ride them, they are so named because you are very likely to share your seat with someone holding a chicken in their lap – or holding one yourself.

Some chicken busses also include other farm animals in the interior, but the ones we saw all required livestock to ride on top.



Photo by Stephanie Hackney



Photo by Jorge Valdes

Douglas and Stephanie Hackney are on a two to three year global overland expedition.

You can learn more about their travels at: <http://www.hackneys.com/travel>